



SIXTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

FIRST SESSION

TUESDAY 18 JUNE 2019

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Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth	Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon. Ivan Leslie Collendavelloo, GCSK, SC	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities
Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC	Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues
Hon. Mrs Fazila Jeewa-Daureeawoo	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare
Hon. Yogida Sawmynaden	Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation
Hon. Nandcoomar Bodha, GCSK	Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
Hon. Mrs Leela Devi Dookun-Luchoomun	Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research
Hon. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, SC	Minister of Tourism
Dr. the Hon. Mohammad Anwar Husnoo	Minister of Health and Quality of Life
Hon. Prithvirajsing Roopun	Minister of Arts and Culture
Hon. Marie Joseph Noël Etienne Ghislain Sinatambou	Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development
Hon. Mahen Kumar Seeruttun	Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security
Hon. Ashit Kumar Gungah	Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection
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Hon. Jean Christophe Stephan Toussaint	Minister of Youth and Sports

Hon. Soomilduth Bholah	Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives
Hon. Marie Roland Alain Wong Yen Cheong, MSK	Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment
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Hon. Soodesh Satkam Callichurn	Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training
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Hon. Marie Cyril Eddy Boissézon	Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms
Hon. Dharmendar Sesungkur	Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance

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MAURITIUS

Sixth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 13 of 2019

Sitting of 18 June 2019

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis at 11.30 a.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

PAPER LAID

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, the Paper has been laid on the Table.

Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives

The Financial Statements of the Co-operative Development Fund for the year ended 30 June 2018. (In Original)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SUGAR CANE SECTOR – CROP 2019

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr X. L. Duval) (*by Private Notice*) asked the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security whether, in regard to the sugar cane planters, he will -

- (a) provide an analysis of the proposed price of Rs25,000 per ton of sugar for Crop 2019 for the first 60 tons of sugar accruing thereto, giving the estimated international price per ton of sugar together with other revenues accruing and grants to be provided, indicating the sources thereof, and
- (b) state the medium and long term measures that will be taken to ensure the survival and prosperity of the sugar cane sector and, especially, those of the small planters.

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, everybody in this House is fully alive to the fact that the sugar cane sector is going through a very tough phase for the past years.

The primary cause of this situation is due to a continuous decline in the world price of sugar arising from excess supply on the world market taking into consideration overproduction in EU, India, Brazil, Thailand and other countries. Land abandonment is another major cause of concern.

Accordingly, since 2015, this Government has taken bold measures with a view to ensuring the sustainability of this sector, namely -

- waiving of cess;
- waiving of insurance premium for planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar;
- writing off of cash advance and contribution due by small planters under FORIP;
- assistance to small planters under the Cane Replantation Scheme;
- assistance to small planters for cane harvesting by providing them with bell loaders;
- increase in import tariff of cane sugar from 15% to 80%, and
- assistance for purchase of fertilizers to small planters.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, as the House is aware, in the Budget Speech 2019/2020, it was announced that for Crop 2019, all planters will benefit from

an all-inclusive price of Rs25,000 per ton of sugar for the first 60 tons of sugar accrued to them.

This price includes –

- expected ex-MSS price of sugar per ton of Rs10,000;
- other revenues, including molasses and bagasse of Rs2,625 per ton of sugar;
- grants from CEB, State Investment Financial Corporation (SIFCOR) and SIFB of around Rs12,375 per ton of sugar.

The total grant will thus amount to Rs650 m. and the bulk of this amount will come from the CEB to the tune of Rs500 m.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) of the question, the Government is taking a series of measures to ensure the medium and long-term sustainability of the sugar cane sector.

These measures include –

- diversification of products, namely organic sugar and bioplastics;
- generation 2 products derived from molasses;
- compliance with international sugar standards, namely Altromercato and Bonsucro;
- encourage more planters to comply with fair trade requirements;
- introduction of AI and precision agriculture to reduce cost of production;
- development of software to optimise use of cane lands, and access to new markets, namely China, India, and make more inroads in our regional markets such as SADC and COMESA.

Madam Speaker, in addition to all the measures I had just mentioned, Government has enlisted the services of the World Bank to carry out a thorough study of the sugar cane sector. The salient Terms of Reference of the study, *inter alia*, include –

- (a) development of an economic and financial analysis (EFA) tool to undertake an assessment of the performance of the sugar cane industry (smallholder growers, producers, millers and traders);
- (b) undertake an estimate of the value of externalities produced by the sugar cane industry (the multiplier effect in other economic sectors, socio-environmental impacts, etc.);

- (c) develop a value chain risk assessment tool to assess the main risks to the sugar cane industry sector, including world market sugar price volatility, energy price volatility, weather, and plant health shocks;
- (d) undertake an assessment of the performance of public sector institutions supporting the sugar cane industry, including the MCIA, the MSS, the SIFB and also the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security;
- (e) develop scenarios of a sustainable sugar cane industry and develop public policy and program options to transition to a sustainable state;
- (f) agriculture policy and program recommendations to manage the likely impact on sector stakeholders, giving a particular attention to the small planters, the most vulnerable ones, with a view to ensuring the long-term viability and sustainability of the Mauritian sugarcane industry, and
- (g) review the operation of all institutions directly involved in servicing all the industry stakeholders and propose institutional reform measures for the support to be provided in an efficiently and cost effectively manner.

Madam Speaker, to conclude, let me reassure the House that this Government, throughout its mandate, has been very sensitive to the plight of sugar cane planters, especially the 12,000 small planters whose livelihood depend on the income derived from sugar. We will not leave any stone unturned to ensure the sustainability and viability of this industry.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, may I ask the hon. Minister when were the terms of reference finalised for the World Bank and have they already been submitted to the World Bank and, if so, when, please?

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, as far as I am informed, there were discussions with technical people from the World Bank. I have not got the date, but I know it has been finalised and submitted. There have been exchanges as well but, in the end, it has been finalised and the works have already started.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, I understand that the terms of reference had not been submitted until a few days ago. I would like to ask the hon. Minister why it has taken so long. After the Ministerial Committee was appointed last year, already announced in the Budget, why has it taken 12 months or so for the World Bank to be appointed?

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, we had to have discussions with the people from the World Bank. We had to agree on the terms of reference. Like I said, we have had exchanges with them to, at least, come to the finalisation of the terms of reference, and that has been done. Now the work has already started.

Mr X. L. Duval: I understand that someone came from the World Bank to discuss, but not finalised. The big complaint obviously from everyone is that there are no long-lasting measures, no long-term measures. Even the big planters, the small planters, everyone agrees on one thing: that there are no long-term measures. These discussions about increasing the price of bagasse paid by the CEB to Rs5,000, I note with some pleasure that CEB is going to bear the bulk of this compensation this year. Can I ask the hon. Minister why can't we finalise on a decent price of bagasse per ton of sugar, let's say? Why can't this be finalised? Why has it taken four years or so?

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, we have to recognise the fact that there are contracts between those independent power-producing enterprises and the CEB. There are contracts that span over a certain number of years and we cannot, half way, down the line, come up with amendments to contracts. We are in a state of law country. We cannot change the contract down the line. But renewals of contracts will come at a point in time where we will have to, of course, look into those issues to ensure that the bagasse is being fairly recognised in the production of energy out of sugarcane.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister has now been four years in this post. Can he say that the price of bagasse that will be included in the next contract is going to be Rs5,000 per equivalent ton of sugar?

Mr Seeruttun: Again, Madam Speaker, when we look at the terms of reference that we have agreed upon with the World Bank, it is also to look into, not only for bagasse but for other products that came out of sugarcane, what is the fair value that should be imposed upon so that the growers, the planters, especially the small planters, get their *cote-part* in that particular industry.

Mr X. L. Duval: The same obviously goes for molasses. The terms of reference are so vast, very vast. Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Minister how long he has given the World Bank to complete this report.

Mr Seeruttun: Well, according to the timeline that we have set, by May 2020, it should be already over.

Mr X. L. Duval: May 2020. Okay, next Government. There is also this argument - I am sure he is aware - that bagasse should be counted on its own weight, same for molasses on its own volume, etc. Is that something that the hon. Minister is agreeable with; that he agrees with this principle, and he will support this vis-à-vis the World Bank?

Mr Seeruttun: Well, all the way, it is true, Madam Speaker, we have been fighting for the bagasse to be recognised having an economic value in the production of energy. It is still the fact that, previously, when contracts were made between IPPs and CEB, that was not taken into consideration. It is a fact, and that is why I have always been pressing so that, henceforth, in new contracts, we have to consider the economic value of bagasse in the production of energy so that growers are fairly remunerated for the bagasse they are supplying to the IPPs.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, I think the hon. Minister will want to know that the people outside want commitments from Government at this point in time, a few months before the end of Parliament. Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Minister - he mentioned SIFB - whether he is aware that SIFB, through all this assistance that it has given in the past, has now breached its solvency test - It is technically now no longer solvent as an insurance entity - and what is the Government doing about this. I see that the hon. Minister is expecting SIFB to contribute more this year also.

Mr Seeruttun: Well, Madam Speaker, I can state to the House that, as at June 2019, the fund of the Sugar Insurance Fund Board stands at Rs3.8 billion, and if we are to take out some money from that fund, we still will be at around Rs3.7 billion, which is well above the solvency level. I must say that before going into the kitty of the SIFB, we have looked into that and we have made sure that that shouldn't pose a problem with regard to the solvency of the SIFB.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, I do not want to go into technicalities today, but my information is that it is now below, at about Rs3.3 billion, but perhaps the hon. Minister will look at this again. I would like to ask the hon. Minister, again on SIFB, there has been an attempt to defraud the planters of Rs450 m. Now, the same people, except for the Board, but the Board was not responsible for this, who had attempted to defraud are still today, now at SIFB. How do you want the planters' community to trust the SIFB now?

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, first, I must say that we have now a new Board, with a new Chairperson, at the level of the SIFB. We have also a new CEO at the level of the

SIFB. We have, in fact, set up a Fact-Finding Committee to look at two issues that were levelled up here itself, and we received Part II of the report only two weeks back. We have set up a committee, which is being chaired by the Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry, to look into all the issues that were raised in the report and the recommendations made so that we can address the problem that arose.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, the first report was months ago - The hon. Minister announced it himself in Parliament - and the CEO, particularly - I don't want to give his name - who was, according to me, responsible for the attempt to defraud, is still sitting there months after this has been found out. Similarly, the overvaluation of this famous land at Trianon, the people responsible, as far as employees are concerned, are still there. This is not acceptable. I would suggest if the hon. Minister could arrange for these people to be suspended and for disciplinary action to be taken as and when a Disciplinary Committee can give its findings.

Mr Seeruttun: Like I said, Madam Speaker, we are proceeding by steps. We have received the report, we have put in place that committee to look into the details of the report, the facts of the report and, obviously, those who have been responsible for the *maldonne* will be taken to task. I am also aware that there is also an inquiry at the level of the ICAC with regard to the land acquisition. That too is being looked at.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, the whole Cabinet, I think, the hon. Prime Minister and everyone met with all the IPPs, a famous meeting on, I think, 04 June, and he requested Rs300 m. to be taken, a bit like doing with the Bank of Mauritius but, this time, these guys refused to do so. Now, this meeting, Madam Speaker, ended - it says here - 'unfortunately, on a sour note', with the people flatly refusing to concede to what Government had requested on the ground that we did not foresee, addressing any of the long-term concerns of the industry. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he has responded to that letter in writing and, if he has done so, whether he will kindly grace Parliament with his response?

Mr Seeruttun: At first, Madam Speaker, I don't know which letter he is referring to...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Which letter are you referring to, hon. Leader of the Opposition? Can you give information?

Mr Seeruttun: I do confirm that we have had meeting with the partners of the sugar industry, and at a time when we are facing these kinds of difficulties, we have been looking for ways and means to support the industry. True it is that we have also looked at how some of the partners, who have been in a way less affected by that situation, can contribute or assist in that patriotic move that we want to undertake to support the industry, especially for the small growers.

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, the letter is dated 06 June. I will not table it because he has a copy, I am sure, and it is, in fact, addressed to the hon. Prime Minister, copied to him. Does he know whether there has been a response?

(Interruptions)

No, I do not want to table it. Has he sent a response?

Mr Seeruttun: Well, again, we have to look at the letter first because the hon. Leader of the Opposition is referring to one particular letter. I would rather have a look at it first before I respond to that.

Mr X. L. Duval: Do I take it that the hon. Minister receives such letters every day that he does not remember this one? Nevertheless, Madam Speaker, let me...

(Interruptions)

I presume so! I presume this is common practice in Government to be told that these meetings end on a sour note, etc. Anyway, I think he knows exactly what I am saying. I am going to my last point, Madam Speaker, before giving the floor. I want to talk to the hon. Minister about millers. Now, whatever you can say, everybody needs sugar mills to crush the canes and *patati patata*, and get everything else.

Now, the closure of Medine has caused a lot of concern, especially people in my constituency who are just next door, to the cane planting community as to, obviously, transport of canes, etc. What is he doing to prevent another mill closing and has there been an attempt to close another mill? I do not know, I am asking. What is he doing in the future that would be disastrous for the sugar cane industry?

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, centralisation has been an ongoing process over the years. If we go years back, there used to be some 300 mills on the island. Over the years, we have seen a decline in the number of mills. Of course, it is a question of the amount of cane that we have and what each mill can crush. So, there was some report in the past that felt that

there should be four mills on the island, which are situated on four different locations of the island so as to ensure that they are close to the areas where we plant sugar cane.

Now, with this decline in the price of sugar, they are also facing difficulties because they derive their revenue from proceeds of sugar that are being sold on the market. And I must say that, out of the four mills, Medine is the one that did not really invest or diversify in other sectors, unlike Terra, into special sugars or the others into refineries, and they were in a way, only depending on the proceeds from raw sugar. That is why, with the decline in the price of sugar, they were facing financial difficulties and they could not carry on with that particular activity and they had applied for a closure, which we have agreed upon, and today, we are going to be left with only three factories.

Now, like I said, those three factories that we have, have diversified within different clusters and, so far, I say, with this situation, they are coping with the situation. So, as far as we are concerned, we are trying to do everything to support the whole industry and, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition rightly mentioned, we can't do away with mills because we need to have workers, planters, millers and also buyers, and they are all interdependent on the other. That is why, in all the exercise that we are going to undertake with the World Bank, we will also look at how we can protect all the partners in that particular industry so that no one is affected, which will have a cascading effect on the others.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Can I know from the hon. Minister whether he has received requests from the trade unions with regard to the workers of the sugar industry, represented by Mr Subron, who has made public statements that he has made requests to Government? Can I know whether he has met the workers and their representatives recently, especially with regard to the request for a new VRS and whether he has discussed with the workers? Can the hon. Minister let us know where matters stand?

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, with regard to the workers, we have had a meeting with them some time back, including Mr Subron, together with the Minister of Labour, because one of their plights was to have a common national negotiating forum to discuss with regard to salary revision. Previously, there used to be the MSPA and discussions with regard to salary negotiations were being held at that level. Now, we don't have that anymore, and each Sugar Estate has its own way of working and they deal with their employees separately. So, discussions are being done at that level. I was informed by the technicians from the

Labour Office that Government should not get involved in collective bargaining. In fact, that was something that was criticised at the ILO.

In fact, at one time, Government had intervened and we were criticised for having intervened in collective bargaining negotiations. So, that is where it is with regard to that particular issue.

Now, with regard to VRS, I must say, Madam Speaker, when we came in 2015, there were 4,600 workers who had taken the privilege of going on VRS. That dates back to 2007. And I have, myself, been chairing committees to look at ways and means to expedite that process so that those beneficiaries could get their land that they are entitled to under the VRS. I must say also that, in that particular process, there are so many different authorities that are involved, and they all have to give their clearances so that we can finalise the matter. I must say, as at now, we have about 800 cases that are still left. Just to show again the commitment of this Government, we had now set up an Inter-Ministerial Committee being chaired by the hon. Vice-Prime Minister herself to look at those pending matters and, hopefully, we will see all those cases that are still pending completed very soon.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker – I like the tone. Can I impress upon the hon. Minister that it is time to act and we need to reposition the sector, knowing perfectly well that, since 2017, there is no free lunch at all in the sector? Can I impress upon him to reposition the sector, to bring all the stakeholders together and to make sure that we implement findings of the reports that have been submitted? I have in mind Landell Mills Reports and the Joint Technical Committee, although the report of the Joint Technical Committee is lopsided and skewed towards the corporate sector. Can I impress upon him to do that?

Mr Seeruttun: That's what we have been doing...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, don't start by making provocations! Everything was calm.

Mr Seeruttun: Madam Speaker, like I said, the sugar cane industry, when we talk about it, there are passionate things that come up, and we are all concerned with it. I mean, if we are what we are today, it has a lot to do with the sugar industry. We, at the level of this

Government, we have been doing everything to, at least, in the short-term, to give all the support necessary to keep that industry afloat. We are looking now for the medium and long-term. And, like I said, we have already come up with a series of measures to support them in the very immediate term, but we also need to look at the medium-term and long-term, and that's what we are doing. So, rest assured, former Minister of Agriculture, that we are doing everything to keep this industry viable for the future.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Rutnah, and then last question.

Mr Rutnah: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, can the hon. Minister state, other than the current proposed price of Rs25,000 per ton for this year's crop, whether his Ministry has developed any strategies, as yet, to protect small planters in the long-term?

Mr Seeruttun: Again, Madam Speaker, in my reply, I did mention a series of measures, be it with regard to help them to do the harvest...

Madam Speaker: He already replied to this.

Mr Seeruttun:... in terms of equipment that we are providing, in terms of support for fertilizers and other support that we are providing.

Madam Speaker: That was already in your reply.

Mr Seeruttun: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Leader of the Opposition!

Mr X. L. Duval: Madam Speaker, may I ask this as a final question to the hon. Minister. We expect the World Bank report in May 2020. It would have to be studied, and there will be a Ministerial Committee, all this. In the meantime, we all know that the situation is desperate, that people will continue, maybe even accelerate abandonment of land. Therefore, I'll perhaps join what my friend, hon. Dr. Arvin Boolell just said, whether it is now not urgent for the hon. Minister to organise some sort of *Assises de l'agriculture*, all the parties together and discuss the situation and give back confidence to the sector, because we really cannot wait another year, year and a half or two years for this sector to be reformed.

Mr Seeruttun: I must say, Madam Speaker, even though if we have asked the World Bank to conduct that study, we are not waiting for the report to be out to start acting. I must say, with regard to the market itself, we have been looking for new markets. And I must say, thanks to the intervention of the hon. Prime Minister himself, we have been able to secure some of our sugar to get into the Chinese market, which is a very protected market. 50,000

tons of sugar! We are producing about roughly 350,000 tons of sugar and 50,000 tons of sugar is quite significant, and it is going to help a lot this industry. We are discussing with India under the CECPA. Let's hope that also comes to some fruition. We are looking at the regional market, be it with Kenya and other countries within the SADC and COMESA region. These are the actions which we have been taking for some time to, at least, relieve the industry from the problems they are facing with the reduction of price. And like I said, we are investing in new technologies. We have been discussing with an Indian promoter, who is going to make use of satellite remote sensing equipment to do, what we call, a mapping of all the land under sugar cane, to make sure where there are gaps, where there need to be irrigation, where there need to be application of fertilizers. These are the kind of technologies that we are going to use, which is, according to their findings, going to increase the yield by 10% and, at the same time, reduce the cost of production. So, these are the kind of things that we have already been implementing. We have a system that we have developed to identify lands that are being abandoned so that we can get them back into either the cane industry or in other agricultural sector. So, like I said, we are not kind of sitting back and waiting for the World Bank to come up with its report to start doing things. Like I said, we are also concerned; we have always shown concern to that sugar industry, not now. It has been for years now, and we will continue to do it. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Time is over!

Hon. Members, the Table has advised that PQ B/449, in regard to the negative comments of Reporters without Borders be replied by the hon. Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms.

PQ B/450, in regard to the construction of an airstrip and Terminal Airport in Agalega, and PQ B/451, in regard to the construction of a new jetty in Agalega will be replied by the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender of Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare.

Hon. Osman Mahomed!

LAND DRAINAGE AUTHORITY – MASTER PLAN

(No. B/435) Mr Osman Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic

Development whether, in regard to drains, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Land Drainage Authority, information as to if –

- (a) the Land Drainage Master Plan is ready and, if so, table copy thereof and
- (b) it is ensuring -
 - (i) co-ordination of the construction of drainage infrastructure by local authorities, National Development Unit, Road Development Authority and other stakeholders, if any, and
 - (ii) that contractors of projects thereof, presently under implementation, possess the required competences and resources.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, one of the objects of the Land Drainage Authority under section (4) of the Land Drainage Authority Act 2017 is the development and implementation of a Land Drainage Master Plan.

Since its setting up in 2017, the Authority has benefited from technical assistance from the '*Agence Française de Développement*' for the setting up and operationalisation of the Land Drainage Authority and the development of a Land Drainage Master Plan.

Under the technical assistance, a vulnerability assessment and baseline assessment were carried out to identify prerequisites for the elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan. The prerequisites identified are –

- (i) critical rainfall data;
- (ii) new Intensity Frequency Duration (IFD) curves;
- (iii) hydrological and flow data for rivers and water courses around the Island, and
- (iv) inventory of existing drains and inventory of flood prone areas.

The recommendations of the vulnerability and baseline assessments will be integrated in the Land Drainage Master Plan.

Madam Speaker, another pre-requisite to elaborate the Land Drainage Master Plan is the acquisition of a Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and an Aerial Imagery.

The Digital Elevation Model is a very important tool used to identify waterways, including potential water accumulation and flood prone areas. It is also used in the inventory and mapping of drains and canals, and, more importantly, in the rehabilitation, upgrading and

in the design and implementation of new drainage networks required to mitigate risks of flooding in flood prone areas, thereby enhancing resilience of property and lives at risks from flash floods. The Digital Elevation Model is expected to be delivered by end of August 2019, which coincides with the planned mobilisation of the Consultant for the formulation of the Land Drainage Master Plan.

Madam Speaker, the Terms of Reference for the elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan have been finalised in collaboration with the *Agence Française de Développement* and bids will be invited in the coming days. The expected duration of the assignment is 15 months. The Land Drainage Master Plan will also incorporate an action plan for the next 10 years to ensure there is an integrated catchment-based approach to mitigate flooding.

The elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan will comprise the following -

- (i) identification and mapping of flood prone areas for land drainage system and drainage infrastructures;
- (ii) hydrology study;
- (iii) assessment of the existing capacity of the drainage system;
- (iv) definition of achievable level of protection by modelling, and
- (v) elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan and its local application.

The Land Drainage Master Plan is expected to be ready by September 2020.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) (i) of the question, the Land Drainage Authority is indeed coordinating the construction of drainage infrastructure by the National Development Unit, the Local Authorities, the Road Development Unit, and any other relevant stakeholder in accordance with its mandate as stipulated under section 4(b) of the Land Drainage Authority Act of 2017.

A Coordination and Maintenance Committee on drainage infrastructure has been set up at the Land Drainage Authority for this purpose since January 2018. The Committee normally meets on a monthly basis.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) (ii) of the question, the Land Drainage Authority is not an implementing body. In fact, it has the mandate to coordinate the construction of drainage infrastructure by the Local Authorities, the National Development Unit and the Road Development Authority and any other relevant stakeholder. It is up to

these implementing agencies to ensure that Contractors of projects thereof have the required competencies and resources.

Mr Osman Mahomed: Madam Speaker, hundreds of millions of rupees are being invested in trade, and this is important work, the Land Drainage Authority. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister, since he has mentioned local application and inventory of existing drains, whether the covering of drains actually occurring in Port Louis and elsewhere in the country be given special attention? Because covering the drains is creating a lot of problems. I can rest my case.

Madam Speaker: You don't have to rest your case, please. Resume your seat! You have made your point. I think the hon. Prime Minister can reply.

The Prime Minister: Well, Madam Speaker, the hon. Member can rest assured that we are giving due attention to the problem of flooding and the problem which arises as regards specific areas which have been identified as being flood prone areas. Of course, these are priority areas to which we are addressing. I am not talking about this Authority. I am talking about all the relevant authorities which I have mentioned, local authority, the NDU, the RDA and other institutions also which are also involved in this work. But, if there is, of course, covering of drains, is also a technical matter. It will be for the technical people of those institutions to tell us in what way we have to cover drains, but if there is any specific area which the hon. Member wishes to highlight, of course, I will look into it and seek the necessary information in order to pass it on to the House and to the hon. Member.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Yes, there is a specific area. I will table it for the attention of mostly the technicians.

Contractors implementing the project, sometimes they have a lot of work, and this creates a problem of resources and this causes a lot of hardship. Since the Land Drainage Authority is coordinating the work, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether this aspect can be looked into as well? Because if the contractor does not have the necessary resources, people are put under undue hardship while construction is ongoing.

The Prime Minister: I am happy that the hon. Member does recognise the fact that contractors have a lot of work. It is, I believe, thanks to the policy and the vision of this Government. The contracting industry was in a negative growth, but now we have moved on to a positive growth. But let me also remind the hon. Member that it is, as I have said, for the

implementing agency to see to it and to monitor that the works are being done according to the *cahier des charges*. So, again, it is a general question. Of course, it is the responsibility of Government and the implementing agencies to see to it that we get value for money and that those who have been given the specific project to be undertaken, whether it is by way of a tender or a framework agreement, of course, they have to abide by the conditions of the contract. So, if there is any specific case which probably, according to the hon. Member, the contractor is not delivering, again, let me know. If the question would have come with regard to those specific cases, I would have enquired and I would have been able to give an answer to the House.

Madam Speaker: Last question, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. I had raised the case of La Paix Street in Port Louis where the contractor, Square Deal Company Ltd - hon. Collendavelloo replied at adjournment time - is facing a lot of problems, and the CD that I have tabled is at Champ de Mars. So, these are the two specific cases I wanted to raise this morning. Thank you.

The Prime Minister: Again, Madam Speaker, let me say also that the hon. Member did mention in the past a number of cases, which we have enquired, we have looked into, and I must say that the works were being undertaken according to the contract. The hon. Member mentioned about Square Deal. I will look into that.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Bhagwan!

AIRPORT TERMINAL OPERATION LTD - BOARD - COMPOSITION

(No. B/436) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Airport Terminal Operation Ltd., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the composition of the Board thereof, indicating the name of the Chairperson and date of appointment thereof and quantum of allowances paid thereto.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I am tabling the composition of the Board of Directors as requested by the hon. Member.

In regard to the quantum of allowances paid, the remuneration of the Chairperson and Board Directors of Government-owned private companies is published in the Annual Report of these companies.

Mr Baboo: Can the hon. Prime Minister provide the qualification of the Chairperson and the number of times the Board has met from 2017 till date?

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I will have to look into my file, but I can undertake to circulate the name and the qualifications of that person. But how many times they have sat also, I don't think I have this information. I see, at least, four times, I do not know what it means. I will check and provide the right information to the House.

MONT ROCHES - VERGER BISSAMBAR - DRAINS

(No. B/437) Mr G. Lepoigneur (Fifth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the construction of drains at Verger Bisambar at Mont Roches, he will state where matters stand.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, in view of the complexity of the project to address the flooding problem at the lower region of Mont Roches, which includes Verger Bissambar, the National Development Unit decided to appoint a Consultant to, *inter alia* -

- (i) effect topographical surveys and undertake an inventory of the existing drainage infrastructure;
- (ii) identify causes of flooding and forecast their evolution with future developments;
- (iii) identify possible alternatives to address the flooding problems;
- (iv) prepare the preliminary design of the selected drainage system and work out the cost estimate, and
- (v) prepare bidding documents.

In September 2018, Luxconsult Ltd was appointed as consultant and the latter has submitted a Preliminary Design Report in January 2019, which includes the following proposals -

- (i) the reconstruction of the existing drain/irrigation canal along Subramanian Bharat Road constructed more than 20 years back and which is in a poor condition and of inadequate capacity;

- (ii) the construction of a drain along part of St Martin Road (B101) through Chellumbrum Street to an existing earth canal downstream of the reservoir, and
- (iii) drains at Verger Bissambar and along other lateral Streets.

At present, the Consultant is working on the Detailed Design Report and the latter is expected to submit the report by July 2019.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Bhagwan!

GRA - LEGAL ADVISORS/LAWYERS & ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW

(No. B/438) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Gambling Regulatory Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, a list of the Legal Advisors/Lawyers and Attorneys-at-law whose services have been retained thereat since January 2015 to date, indicating the retaining and/or other fees claimed and paid thereto.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Gambling Regulatory Authority that the services of the following Legal Advisers/Lawyers and Attorneys-at-Law have been retained since January 2015 to date -

- a) Me L. Aujayeb, Legal Counsel;
- b) Me Y. C. Jean Louis, Legal Counsel;
- c) Royds Chambers from UK in two cases of appeals at the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and
- d) Me R. Yerrigadoo, Legal Counsel.

Madam Speaker, the House may wish to note that the services of Me Antoine Domingue, Senior Counsel and Me R. Bucktowonsing, Solicitor were retained prior to 2015 for one particular case and for which payment was effected after 2015.

The fees paid are as follows -

SN	NAME OF LEGAL ADVISORS/LAWYERS AND ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW	AMOUNT CLAIMED AND PAID Rs
1.	Me L. AUJAYEB	500, 000
2.	Me Y. C. JEAN LOUIS	455, 000
3.	Royds Chambers from the UK with respect to two cases of appeals at the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council	3, 336,727
4.	Me Antoine DOMINGUE and Me R. BUCKTOWONSING for services provided in 2011	264, 500
5.	Me R. YERRIGADOO, Legal Counsel	207,000

LAND DRAINAGE AUTHORITY – DIRECTOR, BOARD MEMBERS & MEETINGS

(No. B/439) **Mr P. Armance (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Land Drainage Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the –

- (a) composition of the Board thereof, indicating the remuneration and fringe benefits drawn;
- (b) if the Director thereof has been appointed, indicating the remuneration and benefits drawn, and
- (c) number of Board meetings held.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, the Land Drainage Board was set up on 15 of September 2017. The Chairperson, Members and Secretary of the Board are remunerated in

accordance with the 2016 PRB Report. I am tabling a copy of the composition of the Board together with the remuneration and fringe benefits drawn.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the Director of the Land Drainage Authority has been appointed since 02 of May 2019 and he draws a monthly salary of Rs95,000 plus salary compensation. In accordance with the 2016 PRB Report, he benefits from -

- (i) 100% duty free exemption on a car of engine capacity up to 1850cc once every five years, and
- (ii) a monthly fixed cost allowance of Rs2,390 and a monthly travelling allowance of Rs11,500.

With regard to part (c) of the question, I am further informed that 19 meetings of the Land Drainage Board have been held as at date.

Mr Armance: Thank you. Since now we know that there have been 19 meetings of the Board, may we know what has been the major output of the meetings? What is the action plan that the Land Drainage Authority is putting forward in the short-term and long-term?

The Prime Minister: Well, I have information that, during those meetings, since September 2017, they have been looking at recruitment of technical staff, the procurement of the high-resolution digital elevation model. They have elaborated a plan to carry out sensitisation and awareness along the island on land drainage issues. They have been looking at the drainage impact assessment guidelines in line with the Budget Speech of 2018-2019 and also the technical assistance from the European Union for the review of existing legislation on land drainage issues. A study, in fact, has been effected, and I am being informed that the report is being finalised. So, those are the things that they have been looking, amongst others. There are quite a lot of other issues that they have been dealing with, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Adrien Duval!

Mr A. Duval: Thank you, Madam Speaker. With regard to the drainage impact assessment, which works together with the EIA requirements when applying for a construction permit, will the hon. Prime Minister say whether this is now being implemented by the Land Drainage Authority, as at date, for any new project? Do they have to submit a Land Impact Assessment and is there, therefore, a review of it, as at date?

The Prime Minister: Well, this is a different question altogether.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Adrien Duval, it does not fall within the main question, I am sorry. Hon. Armance, next question!

LAND DRAINAGE AUTHORITY – MASTER PLAN

(No. B/440) Mr P. Armance (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Land Drainage Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to where matters stand as to the –

- (a) development and implementation of a Land Drainage Master Plan, and
- (b) inventory and mapping of the existing natural and manmade drainage infrastructure.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I will refer the hon. Member to my earlier reply to PQ B/435 whereby I gave an update on the elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the mapping of the existing natural drainage has been completed by the Land Drainage Authority using Geographical Information System over a total length of about 4,800 kms around Mauritius.

As regards manmade drainage infrastructure, the mapping is ongoing and is being carried out in consultation with the respective Local Authorities and through site visits. As at date, some 500 kms of drains have already been mapped, and this exercise is expected to be completed by end of July 2019.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Armance!

Mr Armance: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Since I understand from the first PQ of my learned friend, the hon. Prime Minister mentioned that this required high-level technical topography. So, may I know from him whether the Land Drainage Authority has hired any Consultant to do the survey and, if yes, what are the terms and references?

The Prime Minister: Well, I know that they have retained the services of specialised people in that field because they do not have these expertise themselves. But, of course, I can find out whose consultancy has been retained and what work they are doing. I can also say -

maybe, if I have the information - this will be taken up in line with the Drainage Master Plan Consultant. Well, again, this is not, I believe, the information that the hon. Member has requested, but I will give specific information on that.

Mr Armance: From the Budget Estimates, Madam Speaker, there is a budget of Rs650 m. that is earmarked and a list of projects is provided. So, now, I understand that the Master Plan will be ready in September 2020. So, how does the hon. Prime Minister reconcile that he has a list of projects that he is going to do now and the Master Plan is not ready. Is he going to do the project and then wait for the Master Plan? Is he going to wait for the Master Plan to come in 2020 and then implement the project?

The Prime Minister: No, I must say that we are doing both simultaneously, Madam Speaker. When the Master Plan is being looked at and will be ready, we cannot just wait for that Master Plan. The hon. Member, himself, knows the number of problems that we face in his Constituency, especially when we have these flash floods and the rain. So, let us say the infrastructural projects that have been planned have not been planned by us. We have worked with the technical people of the different Ministries, RDA, Local Authority, NDU, because they also have expertise.

I just mentioned about Bissambar earlier, just to give an example, so that the House will understand. There has been, first of all, an assessment with regard to that area, but when we looked at what was happening, we thought that it would be better; instead of tackling this issue on a piecemeal approach, we retained the services of a Consultant, Luxconsult (Mtius) Ltd. They have come up with this recommendation that we should look at it in a holistic manner and, therefore, we are going ahead with that. The detailed design is already completed and, therefore, works will eventually, due process for tendering and so on. So, this is what we are doing in order to address the different localities where there is an urgency with regard to problems that are being faced by inhabitants. So, this is progressing, but the Master Plan, eventually, will have to take into consideration those infrastructural works that have been carried out in the meantime.

Mr Armance: I also picked up that there is no budget allocated to the NDU for drains. Who is going to be responsible for ...

(Interruptions)

It is in the Estimates, there is nothing, zero! So, who is going to be responsible for the implementation of the project? Is it going to be the NDU or the Local Authority?

The Prime Minister: Well, I would be surprised if the NDU has not got a budget, Madam Speaker. I think, this Government has voted; never before have we seen such budget being voted, especially for infrastructural, but for drains. I am sure they will provide me with ...

(Interruptions)

NDU has been provided with Rs550 m. in the Budget. I believe the Local Authority with Rs100 m. also.

Madam Speaker: Next question!

Mr Armance: It is a clarification. Madam Speaker, he gave an answer ...

Madam Speaker: We are nearly spending eight minutes on that question.

Mr Armance: This is a clarification on the same answer, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Armance, please resume your seat. I think it is fair that all the questions which are on the agenda be replied by the hon. Prime Minister. It is for me to see to it that we make most of the time of the hon. Prime Minister's replies to give to all the questions which are on the agenda. So, I grant you the next question!

PEOPLE FACILITATION BILL - INTRODUCTION

(No. B/441) Mr P. Armance (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the proposed introduction of the People Facilitation Bill, as announced in the Budget Speech 2017-2018, he will state where matters stand.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, during my Budget Speech 2017-2018, I mentioned that we will come forward with a People Facilitation Bill to spare our population the hassles of office hopping to get public services, to reduce costs and queuing time and enable them to use fully their rights.

The aim is to have one single legislation to cover the numerous Government policies and procedures to enable all citizens to have easy access to the wide array of public services through the People Facilitation Bill.

Madam Speaker, in this regard, my Office had initiated consultations with all stakeholders. I am informed that, so far, inputs from some 55 organisations have been

received and these are currently being analysed by the Monitoring and Evaluation Team of the Citizen Support Unit with a view to grouping similar and related services in different clusters. Thereafter, the citizens will be invited to submit their views and suggestions on the proposals which will form the basis for the preparation of the People Facilitation Bill.

Madam Speaker, the House will understand that the drafting of such a legislation requires an in-depth assessment of all current services, the administrative and financial set-up, existing legislation, and the implications of future changes. We also need to assess the problems being faced by citizens with current policies and procedures and how to address those problems in a holistic manner.

Furthermore, Government is already providing a common platform, that is, the Citizens Support Portal for all citizens to send their complaints, suggestions and general inquiries on issues concerning all Ministries, Departments, Parastatals and Local Authorities. The citizens may also go to the 35 Citizen Advice Bureaux and 95 Post Offices around the island.

Since its launching on 28 April 2017, the CSU has received some 85,000 complaints and suggestions, out of which 82% have been resolved. In the light of data gathered on the portal, a monitoring and evaluation exercise is also being carried out by the Citizen Support Unit (CSU) and proposals will be made to render public services more citizen friendly across Ministries/Departments. In the same vein, we have been able to identify which sectors require specific attention and propose common solutions in a co-ordinated manner.

Madam Speaker, in addition, we have the e-services provided by some Ministries as well as the e-licensing platform of the Economic Development Board, which is a key Government initiative to improve the investment and ease of doing business in Mauritius. This project is being implemented to roll over the next three years. In this context, around 140 licences/permits/clearances services have been identified in 14 Ministries.

As at today, three e-services have been integrated on the e-licensing platform, namely the Building and Land Use Permit operationalised in 10 local authorities, the Occupation Certificate for the construction sector and the Occupation/Residence Permit.

Madam Speaker, the House will agree that the preparation of such a complex legislation will take the time it requires.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Armance!

Mr Armance: Madam Speaker, the hon. Prime Minister, himself, in his speech, mentioned that it is a crucial issue to facilitate the day-to-day life of our citizens, and yet, after two years he comes to the House saying: ‘This is very complex.’ Can he give me a timeframe when he will propose to bring the Bill to the House, when, at least, we can have a draft?

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I have just lengthily explained the implications with regard to the process that has already been undertaken in order for us to come with such a Bill. I hope the hon. Member will understand. Maybe I will appeal to him - and I do not want to give so many examples of what we are doing in the meantime. Again, let me say, we are not waiting for the Bill to come. There are so many initiatives that Government has taken, the last one being the application together with the collaboration of the Ministry of Technology and Mokaro. I mean, these are ongoing, but preparation of such a Bill will require, of course, the input of all those stakeholders which I mentioned.

Madam Speaker: Time is over!

Hon. Members, the Table has been advised that PQ B/481 has been withdrawn. PQ B/484, in regard to cleanliness and waste removal island-wide will be replied by the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare.

Hon. Osman Mahomed!

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS – WASHINGTON ACCORD – ENGINEERING ACADEMIC DEGREES

(No. B/453) Mr Osman Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research whether, in regard to the professional engineering academic degrees being dispensed/conferred by the University of Mauritius, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the University of Mauritius, information as to if consideration will be given for the accreditation thereof under the Washington Accord and, if so, when.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Speaker, the University of Mauritius has started the process for the accreditation of its engineering courses under the Washington Accord. In line with the Washington Accord Charter, the Institution of Engineers Mauritius has been identified to carry out accreditation in the Mauritian territories through its Engineering Accreditation Board. The IEM has been collaborating with the Engineering Council of South

Africa which is a member of the Washington Accord regarding capacity building of accreditors and assessors of the engineering programme.

A number of capacity building programmes have been carried out as from September 2017 itself. Following a desktop review undertaken by the Engineering Council of South Africa, in April 2019, on the evaluation documentation submitted by the University of Mauritius, it has been found that the engineering programmes offered by the UM qualify for accreditation.

Madam Speaker, in line with the procedures of the Engineering Council of South Africa, through which the process of accreditation is being held, a full report is being awaited by July 2019 and a full accreditation visit by the Engineering Council of South Africa is planned for end of 2020 when the first cohort of students of the reviewed engineering programme will graduate.

The IEM will apply for the provisional membership of the Washington Accord by end of 2020 and a full membership by 2022, by which time it will have complied with most of the requirements of the Washington Accord.

To be admitted as a full-fledged member of the Accord, the IEM needs to train a number of engineers from both academic institutions and from the industry to act as accreditors and assessors, and secondly, ensure that engineering courses run by our universities, meet the outcome based standard expected by the Washington Accord.

And finally, to carry out two accreditation exercises at two Universities in Mauritius for two cohorts during successive years under the control and supervision of the Washington Accord.

Mr Osman Mahomed: The hon. Minister has mentioned about the Engineering Council of South Africa. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether, once the listing has been set up, University of Mauritius students and all other engineering students of Mauritius, *Université des Mascareignes* and UTM, their degree will allow them to have more mobility to practise engineering outside of Mauritius? Because currently this is not quite the case.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Certainly, Madam Speaker, the very idea of having the Washington Accord is to make our qualifications recognised elsewhere in the world. In fact, it has been noted as from this year only that whatever we are providing at the level of the University of Mauritius is to the standard required by the Accord, but then it is a long procedure and we will have to wait for the different steps to be attained. We have, first of all,

to get the provisional membership and then, by 2020 we are expecting to get the full membership of the Washington Accord.

Mr Osman Mahomed: So, engineers who are graduating by 2020 will be under the Washington Accord, if I get it correctly. So, can I ask the hon. Minister, for this programme to be sustainable, investment would have to be made at the level of the University of Mauritius in terms of the people who teach there and the facilities that are available there, laboratories, for example, whether accompanying budget is being made for this programme to be sustainable in time?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Speaker, as at date, all the labs, etc, we have at the University of Mauritius are to the standard. So, we don't have any problem on that side. As far as the Washington Accord process is concerned, the Ministry is providing financial support to the IEM for that matter.

Madam Speaker: Last question!

Mr Osman Mahomed: One last question. Maybe I interrupted just now. So, the batch graduating in 2022 will be fully recognised under the Washington Accord. Is that correct?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The accreditation has been done. The courses have been reviewed as from 2015 itself. The first batch, cohort will come out after this span of four years and will be still under the Engineering Council of South Africa which is a member of the Washington Accord. So, as such even those coming out at the end of the first cohort would be approved and recognised.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Osman Mahomed, next question!

CEB - STANDBY GENERATORS

(No. B/454) Mr Osman Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the essential sectors, including the hotel and manufacturing sectors, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to the estimated Standby Capacity of electricity generation available island-wide therefor, indicating the policy regarding the use thereof to cater for peak demands.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Central Electricity Board that standby generators are owned privately or by public or parapublic

institutions. These are not connected to the grid and are used only in situations of emergency in cases of power cuts.

Hence, the CEB does not hold information on the standby capacity available in particular sectors.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: In a workshop held last year, the big prosumers of CEB, textile industries and hotels have said that there was 100 MW available in standby which is used only 10% of that time, they had proposed during the workshop that this be used because CEB produces peak load right now and IPPs base load and CEB has the problem to meet peak load. Can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy whether that standby capacity of 100 MW which is staying idle and given that those prosumers want to sell electricity to the CEB, whether this cannot be envisaged in terms of managing the peak load of the CEB?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I understand where you are getting at. That proposal, in fact, was made. So, what it means, in fact, is that there are lots of people who have little, little sets when accumulated, you reach many megawatts. I don't know whether 100 is fair and accurate estimate, but many megawatts, and then, you sell it to the grid when there is no peak time or when there is no cyclone. I have not been informed that this is a possibility that is envisaged, but I can, of course, go back and ask what is the stand of CEB on this matter.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Osman Mahomed!

CEB – PEAK DEMAND

(No. B/455) Mr Osman Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to electricity, he will, for the benefit of House, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to the –

- (a) highest peak demand thereof recorded on a month to month basis since 2016 to date, indicating the –
 - (i) corresponding energy generated, and
 - (ii) gap between the capacity thereof at the disposal of the Board and the highest peak demand recorded as at to date, and

- (b) 10 year supply demand matrix, including the Board, the Independent Power Producers and renewable generations and table same.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I am tabling the information. There is a note to the explanations which has to be studied about a variance between what Statistics Mauritius says and what CEB says.

Mr Osman Mahomed: Insofar as IPPs are concerned, which is part of the question, FUEL, CEL, CTBV, CTDS, CTSav, which are producing electricity by coal bagasse right now, can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether cane trash by Alteo is being discussed with Government or with the authorities concerned right now for production of electricity?

The Deputy Prime Minister: In fact, there are two teams of professionals, one retained at the level of the Ministry and/or CEB and one retained by Alteo. They are lawyers; they are discussing all the matters. Nothing has been finalised up to now. Let the experts sort out these matters and then, it will come to the policy makers. For the moment, I cannot enlighten you any further. I know the hon. Member brandished an article yesterday, etc.

Mr Osman Mahomed: Yes, but I would like to have your clarification, because what I read is quite perturbing. Is it correct - at least you have an opportunity to clear the air now - that the price proposed initially and was agreed by CEB is Rs3.09 kWh? But then, after discussion at the level of your Ministry - I am not saying you - this price was increased to Rs4.45, thereby meaning an increase of 44%. Is that correct, hon. Deputy Prime Minister?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I do not want to be rude, but I think there are some people on Friday night, they dreamed of me, and then they write something on Sunday morning. I do not know where all this came from. I cannot be responsible for people who print whatever comes to their mind on Friday evening, whatever they do on Friday evenings, and I do not bother with this.

What I know is that there are technical meetings which are being held, then everything will come to our Management Committee of the Ministry and, at that time, we will study and, of course, we will come to Cabinet. I will go to the Prime Minister and tell him: "This is the position about cane trash, what do you think", and we will discuss with the Minister of Agriculture who is extremely involved in this matter. After that, we will come to Cabinet. It is too early to talk about this.

Mr Osman Mahomed: Well, I do not know who is dreaming about you, but it's not me for sure.

So, can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister - I have just received the table - whether the trend at the CEB right now, in terms of peak, is a descending one rather than an increasing one; the peak load.

The trend, meaning the tendency rather than increasing because of economic development, the trend is on a decreasing incline because maybe a lot of factories are closing shops and all that. Is that correct?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I will have to check. I am not now off the cuff in a position to just pull out a card with the answer.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Bhagwan, next question!

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS - MINISTER-COUNSELLOR/DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER

(No. B/456) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade whether, following the recent decision of the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal to quash the appointment of Mrs N. P. to the post of Minister Counsellor, he will state –

- (a) how the post will now be filled, and
- (b) post presently occupied by the said officer, indicating since when.

Mr Bodha: Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, the vacancy as Minister-Counsellor/Deputy High Commissioner should occur upon the appointment of Mrs N. P. being quashed by the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal (PBAT) was reported to the Public Service Commission (PSC) on the 28 March 2019.

The Secretary of the Commission in a letter dated 27 May 2019 informed the Ministry that the Commission having considered the suitability of the qualified candidates at the last competition has decided in exercise of the power vested in it by Section 89 of the Constitution that Mrs J. M., First Secretary, be appointed as Minister-Counsellor/Deputy High Commissioner in a temporary capacity for a period of six months in the first instance as from the date of assumption of duty.

On 30 May 2019, a letter of offer of appointment as Minister-Counsellor/Deputy High Commissioner in a temporary capacity has been made to Mrs J. M. who has accepted same and assumed duty with effect to 31 May 2019.

With regard to part (b) of the question, Madam Speaker, following the determination of the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal on 12 February 2019, the PSC has on 31 March 2019 requested the Ministry to inform Mrs N. P. of the decision of the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal, consequently, that she should be reverted to her substantive post of First Secretary with effect from 12 February 2019 and she should take a rank in the grade of First Secretary according to her initial date of appointment.

On March 26, 2019 Mrs N. P. was informed that she has been reverted to her substantive post of First Secretary with effect from 12 February 2019.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Bhagwan.

Mr Bhagwan: Can the hon. Minister confirm whether Mrs N. P. has been posted to New York since December 2014, before the general elections? We understand that a tour of service, according to procedures of a diplomat, is three years with the possibility of extension of one more year, due to exceptional circumstance. Can the hon. Minister give us some explanation why this lady is still there, despite the regulations?

Mr Bodha: From the information which I have been given, I have been advised, she was posted in November 2014, and in March 2018, she was requested to return to Headquarters, but Ambassador Koonjal in April 2018 requested that there will be no movement of staff until the International Court of Justice (ICJ) process regarding the Chagos Archipelago was over.

So, that was in April 2018, until the end of the ICJ process, and later, it was agreed with the Prime Minister's Office that all the staff should stay until the new resolution which was presented at the UNGA be over, for her to be able as the other staff to come back to Mauritius.

Mr Bhagwan: I have been made to understand that the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal stated that the markings given to Mrs N. P. were wrong and unjustly gave her some favour.

Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether his Ministry, he has received representations that fresh application, that the post be re-advertised following this judgement,

whether he has received or his officers, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs has received representation from staff of the Ministry for the post to be re-advertised in view of the findings of the PBAT?

Mr Bodha: I will not go on the merits of the case as analysed by the appeal, but what I can inform the House, Madam Speaker, that the PSC has, in fact, on 27 May, requested the Ministry to initiate action to re-advertise the post of Minister Counsellor for the filling of the two remaining vacancies, and on 04 June 2019, the Ministry has, in fact, submitted a draft advertisement for clearance by the PSC and clearance is being awaited for the advertisement of the two posts.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The hon. Minister just mentioned that the PSC is advertising for one post, but according to my information, apart from this post there are two vacant posts. Why are we not advertising for all three posts?

Mr Bodha: The information I gave is that the advertisement is for two posts. Number one is being nominated.

Madam Speaker: I suspend the sitting for one and a half hour.

At 12.59 p.m., the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.34 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY - MPs - COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON DRUG TRAFFICKING - INQUIRY

(No. B/457) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues whether, in regard to the Honourable Members of the National Assembly and lawyers against whom the Commission of Inquiry on drug trafficking recommended that in-depth inquiries be carried out, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if such inquiries have been initiated, indicating if any arrest has been effected and any case lodged in relation thereto.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that subsequent to the publication of the Report on the Commission of Inquiry on drug

trafficking on 27 July 2018, the Commission, *inter alia*, recommended in-depth inquiries on ten lawyers among whom there are two Honourable Members of the National Assembly.

I am further informed that since the lawyers have moved for a judicial review, no arrest has been effected. However, investigation in the cases is still ongoing.

Mr Uteem: Madam Speaker, one year later, we hear from the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor that investigation is ongoing. May I know from the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor whether any of these two MPs have been called for questioning since last year?

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: Not yet, because of the judicial review.

Mr Uteem: The judicial review is neither here nor there, Madam Speaker. May I know from the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor whether he has had time to discuss with the Commissioner of Police the remark in the report which stated that Barristers may have been using drug money to finance political campaign? Whether he had the chance to discuss this aspect of the observation of the report with the Commissioner of Police, whether MPs have used drug traffickers' money to finance political campaigns?

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: Well, the two MPs, they are contesting the finding and they have gone for judicial review. I think we lose nothing by waiting to see what happens. If they win there, then what in-depth inquiry will we make?

Mr Uteem: Madam Speaker, the report of the Commissioner of Inquiry is very clear, they are not accusing anyone. They are not accusing the lawyers; they are not accusing any MP. They are requesting the Police to carry out investigation. So, I fail to understand how applying to judicial review would be a bar to the Police making inquiries. So, has the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor discussed this aspect with the Police and did the Police get a legal advice that they cannot conduct inquiry as long as there is a case pending before the Court for judicial review?

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: The in-depth inquiry will be started when this judicial review is over.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor how many Barristers have been queried by the Police, except for the two that you have mentioned, but the other Barristers whose names have been mentioned, who, according to the report, have been using drug money during their recent campaign? How many have been questioned by the Police?

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: Well, I cannot say how many have been questioned. All that I know is about the two Barristers who are Members of this House.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Uteem, next question!

NATIONAL PROPERTY FUND LTD - ASSETS & LIABILITIES

(No. B/458) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance whether, in regard to the National Property Fund Ltd., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to –

- (a) the value of the assets and liabilities thereof, and
- (b) how it proposes to repay the debts thereof, when same will fall due.

Mr Sesungkur: Madam Speaker, everybody knows that in the aftermath of the BAI Group debacle, Government took a series of actions to protect the investors, policyholders, employees and other stakeholders of the Group. In the same wake, various structures were created, including the National Property Fund Ltd (NPFL), which was incorporated on 05 May 2015 with a view to repaying the Super Cash Back Gold (SCBG) policyholders and the Bramer Asset Management Ltd (BAML) investors.

Madam Speaker, pursuant to Section 110A(2) of the Insurance Act 2005, the Financial Services Commission appointed Messrs Oosman and Basgeet as Special Administrators of the BAI Co. (Mtius) Ltd and any of its related entities. The Special Administrators had, amongst other things, to recover the assets of the ex-BAI group and transfer, in whole or in part, the undertakings thereof to such insurer and any of its related companies for the purpose of repaying the Super Cash Back Gold Policyholders and the Bramer Asset Management Ltd investors.

In this respect, following a carve-out exercise carried out by the Special Administrators, some of the immovable properties of the ex-BAI group valued at around Rs1.6 billion were transferred to the National Property Fund Ltd as from June 2016. Moreover, funds to the tune of Rs6.8 billion were transferred to the National Property Fund Ltd by the Special Administrators.

I am further informed by the National Property Fund Ltd that the Special Administrator is pursuing its exercise of transferring other assets of the ex-BAI group to the

company, as part of its mandate. I am advised that at this stage the NPFL is unable to ascertain the exact value of the assets which will be transferred to the company.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the National Property Fund Ltd that as at date the value of its total assets stands at Rs12,091,177,607 and the total liabilities amount to Rs12,260,201,207.

Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that the National Property Fund Ltd holds directly or indirectly 100% of the shareholding of the following 3 entities –

- (i) the NIC General Insurance Co. Ltd;
- (ii) the National Insurance Co. Ltd, and
- (iii) the NIC Healthcare Ltd, also known as the Apollo Hospital.

I am informed by the National Property Fund Ltd that the NIC General Insurance Co. Ltd and the NIC Insurance Co. Ltd have already started generating value and going forward, the National Property Fund Ltd is confident that these entities will constitute profitable investments in the medium to long term.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (b) of the question, I am informed that the National Property Fund Ltd proposes to repay its debts when same fall due through the realisation of its assets, namely the sale of its immovable properties and investments. I am further advised that the National Property Fund Ltd has completed a valuation of all the immovable properties transferred to the company and it has initiated action for their disposal. Moreover, the National Property Fund Ltd intends to engage with some of its creditors to find suitable alternative reimbursement plans.

Madam Speaker, I wish to highlight that Government has shown its commitment in addressing the systemic risk to the national financial system. It has further protected the interests of 135,000 recurring policyholders as well as has repaid more than Rs17 billion to some 20,000 Super Cash Back Gold policyholders and Bramer Asset Management Investors. In addition, the employment of around 1,000 employees has been safeguarded.

There is no doubt, Madam Speaker, that this Government has through these bold measures protected our society from a potential disaster.

Thank you.

Mr Uteem: Madam Speaker, the National Property Fund Ltd was incorporated on 05 May 2015, four years ago. May I know from the hon. Minister why is it that after four years, the company has not filed a single account, a single financial statement as required by law?

Mr Sesungkur: I am aware of this situation, Madam Speaker, and since I took office in 2017, I have put this as a matter of priority but as you are aware that there were a backlog which needed to be caught and due to problem with staffing, all these, NPFL has been unable to meet the deadlines but I am told that recently the accounts are in the process of being audited and I met with the auditors yesterday itself. So, they tell me that this is progressing well so far.

Mr Uteem: The hon. Minister mentioned that the liability is Rs12,260,000, 000. So, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister how much out of these Rs12...

Madam Speaker: The Minister or Prime Minister?

Mr Uteem: Sorry, the Minister of Financial Services, how much out of these Rs12.26 billion is guaranteed by the Government?

Mr Sesungkur: I think from what I recall, most of the Bank facilities mainly from Bank of Mauritius, Rs3.7 billion, the other banks Rs6.4 billion and preference shares from the State Bank and SICOM, they are all guaranteed by the Government.

Mr Uteem: Answering to a PQ on 28 March 2017, this is what the hon. Minister said, and I quote –

“However, as a responsible Government and as clearly stated by my predecessor to the PNQ dated 03 May 2016, and I quote -

‘We will not take public funds.’”

So, four years later, can we know from the hon. Minister how much public funds have been injected in National Property Fund for the repayment of Super Cash Back Gold and Bramer Asset Management Ltd?

Mr Sesungkur: Madam Speaker, as far as I can understand, NPFL has made use of short term facilities because we had pressing needs to alleviate the plight of so many investors and policyholders. So, we couldn’t have waited for the assets to be disposed but what I understand from NPFL that all these facilities are appropriately backed by assets of NPFL and also from the assets expected to be received from Special Administrators. So, I

think, at this stage, we cannot say that we have used public money inasmuch as these are facilities that we have received from banks.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Yes, Madam Speaker, in his reply the hon. Minister stated to the House that NPFL has approximately Rs12 billion in terms of assets among which are the NIC. Can I ask the hon. Minister what is the value of NIC in the books of NPFL?

Mr Sesungkur: Madam Speaker, the valuation of a company is not just press a button and you get a value. There is a process. So, right now, to ask me what is the value of NIC, what is the value of X, Y, Z company, it is impossible to say that. This is a very technical exercise based on very pertinent figures and it takes months to actually value a business.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: On the same question, the hon. Minister just stated that a valuation has been carried out and the assets of NPFL amounts to approximately Rs12 billion. So, is he in a position to give a breakdown of the different assets of the company?

Mr Sesungkur: Let me refresh the mind of the hon. Member. I will go back to my answer because I never said that the asset has been re-valued and it is Rs12 billion, I said in the last part of my answer that I am further advised that the National Property Fund has completed evaluation of all the immovable properties and NIC is not an immovable property.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Lepoigneur!

INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES 2019 – ATHLETES/DELEGATIONS – HOTELS - BOOKING

(No. B/459) Mr G. Lepoigneur (Fifth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the booking of hotels for the athletes and the delegations for the forthcoming Indian Ocean Island Games, 2019, he will state the –

- (a) amount of money deposited per hotel, and
- (b) outstanding amount payable.

Mr Toussaint: Madam Speaker, I am tabling the information requested by the hon. Member.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Lepoigneur!

Mr Lepoigneur: According to the Audit Report, Madam Speaker, there is an amount of Rs3.5 m. which was not supported by any payment vouchers. Can the hon. Minister give a breakdown of the amount which had been paid at Rs3.5 m., it was not supported by any vouchers?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, je crois que c'est un peu difficile pour moi là de donner ces éclaircissements. Premièrement, c'est par rapport à quel item que l'honorable membre est en train de citer...

(Interruptions)

payments for hotels. All the receipts - tous les livres sont tenus au niveau du COJI. Alors quand les auditeurs du ministère sont venus pour auditer les comptes du ministère, c'est tout à fait normal qu'ils n'ont pas eu les reçus parce que le COJI a ses comptes à lui et tous les comptes du COJI à la fin, chaque année, nous avons les comptes audités du COJI et cette information sera disponible.

Mr Lepoigneur: Madam Speaker, the audit report has been published since two months and it is mentioned in the audit comment that although COJI is responsible for the judicious use of fund made available for organisation for the COJI, the Ministry has the primary responsibility to ensure the prescribed financial instruction relating to payments and duly comply with the disbursement of fund. So, the Minister is aware about the comments of the audit report. I think he has got enough time to go and query about this critical matter.

Mr Toussaint: Je peux assurer les honorables membres que les documents sont bien au COJI et pas au niveau du ministère. Il faut bien démarquer les comptes du ministère et les comptes du COJI. Les comptes du COJI seront audités en temps et lieu et les reçus se trouvent au COJI.

Maintenant pour répondre à ça, aujourd'hui là, c'est impossible parce que la question me demande les sommes qu'on a déposées par rapport aux réservations des hôtels et les sommes restantes. On ne m'a pas demandé d'emmener des reçus du COJI etc., Madame la présidente. Comment je vais faire ça là.

Mr Lepoigneur: Madame la présidente, le montant est un montant qui a été payé aux hôtels. La question demande très bien qu'est-ce qui a été payé aux hôtels et par rapport à quoi. Donc, le ministre a dû prendre connaissance du rapport de l'audit disant que le ministère est supposé de savoir comment ça a été payé et il a eu suffisamment de temps pour

aller voir ça. Je suppose que le ministre n'a pas lu le rapport de l'audit pour pouvoir faire ses recherches à lui. Est-ce que le ministre a pris le temps de lire ce rapport-là?

Mr Toussaint: Tout à fait Madame la présidente, et je le redis dans les documents que j'ai circulés il y a tous les montants déjà payés aux différents hôtels. Il y a les montants restants et d'ailleurs, il y a aussi les montants payés pour les hôtels qu'on a réservés à Rodrigues et je le redis encore une fois, si j'ai besoin de donner les reçus du COJI là, aujourd'hui, c'est impossible. Parce que la question c'était par rapport à ce qu'on a payé et les montants restants. Bien sûr que j'ai lu le rapport de l'audit mais aujourd'hui là, je n'ai pas ce renseignement là avec moi. Je suis vraiment désolé.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Quirin.

Mr Quirin: Merci Madame la présidente. Le *Chief Executive* du COJI, monsieur Sauzier, a dans un passé récent, dans une déclaration de presse, reconnu qu'il n'a pas eu d'appel d'offres du COJI avant qu'on ne finalise la liste des hôtels qui vont héberger les différentes délégations. Peut-on, de ce fait, savoir comment a procédé le COJI dans le choix des hôtels principalement en ce qui concerne les coûts, Madame la présidente?

Mr Toussaint: Alors, Madame la présidente, permettez-moi de rafraîchir la mémoire de l'honorable membre qui lui-même avait posé une question l'année dernière, je sais c'est loin, que peut-être la mémoire fait un peu défaut.

(Interruptions)

Bien oui. *It's your question, my dear friend.* Donc dans une question B/541 –*Whether in regard etc* de dire comment on a fait le choix des hôtels. Donc j'ai répondu que COJI *not being a public body with the definition of Public Procurement Act, the tendering procedures provided for under, do not apply.* Et deuxièmement, la région du nord, la région de Balaclava était la seule région avec un cluster d'hôtels où on peut *accommodate* plus de 2000 délégués. C'était la seule région et avec la disponibilité des routes, les accès vers les différents sites des compétitions. C'était le seul endroit et je dois dire aussi que nous avons eu des prix vraiment raisonnables de la part de ces hôtels. Bon, je n'ai pas ces chiffres en détail avec moi. Voilà comment nous avons procédé au choix des hôtels dans le nord du pays.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Lepoigneur.

YOUTH CENTRES & SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURES - SECURITY SERVICES

(No. B/460) Mr G. Lepoigneur (Fifth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the 46 sports complexes and Youth Centres, he will state the names of the contractors to whom security services contracts therefor have been awarded, indicating the corresponding contract values thereof.

Mr Toussaint: Madam Speaker, a new contract for the provision of security services at 50 youth and sports infrastructures of my Ministry was awarded to Rapid Security Services Ltd on 30 April 2019 for a contract sum of Rs30,484,000 exclusive of VAT. The contract is for an initial period of 12 months with effect from 17 June 2019 and renewable thereafter for another 24 months, subject to my Ministry being satisfied with the company's performance. The contract of the former service provider, awarded in September 2017, was not renewed after one year of service due to unsatisfactory performance.

Several short comings have been reported on part of the service provider and my Ministry has initiated corrective measures, where appropriate. In some cases, my Ministry had to cater for watchmanship on some of our sites where the security guards of the private firm were absent. My Ministry has, therefore, launched tenders for a security service provider in September 2018. All procedures for the recruitment of the new service provider are according to the prevailing procurement law of the country.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Lepoigneur.

MAURITIUS MARITIME TRAINING ACADEMY - ALLEGED MALPRACTICES

(No B/461) Mr G. Lepoigneur (Fifth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping whether, in regard to the allegations of malpractices at the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy in relation to the recruitment of three trainees, namely, Mr D. C., Ms R. S. V. and Mr A. H., he will state if inquiries have been carried out thereinto and, if so, indicate the outcome thereof.

Mr Koonjoo: I am informed that on 15 October 2018, the Internal Control Unit was requested by my Ministry to carry out a full inquiry on the alleged malpractices at the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy following a press article that appeared on the newspaper *Le Mauricien* of Monday 08 October 2018.

On the 02 October 2018, the Internal Control Unit submitted its report according to which the allegation was reported to be true. On 24 October 2018, my Ministry referred the

case to the Independent Commission against Corruption for a thorough investigation. On 11 December 2018, my Ministry was informed that the ICAC had initiated an inquiry into the case.

Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that the outcome of the investigation by ICAC is still being awaited.

Mr Lepoigneur: So, the Minister is aware that this was something that was not in conformity with the Ministry of Ocean Economic, the Marine Training Academy. So, I think there are other exams being carried out for crowd management. Is the Minister aware that there were three people who are supposed to have been sitting for that exam?

Madam Speaker: Hon. Lepoigneur, I have a problem in understanding what you are saying.

Mr Lepoigneur: Yes, Madam Speaker. According to my information, only one of them sat for that exam. What is strange in that, Madam Speaker, the three results are the same for the same exams, they had the same mark point, the same average of pass. Is the hon. Minister aware about that?

Madam Speaker: He has already replied.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I have already replied that the case is in the hands of the ICAC. I have to wait.

Mr Lepoigneur: The case is at the ICAC for the interim report concerning requirement for trainees, but this one is for Crown Management.

Mr Koonjoo: This is another question. If the hon. Member puts a substantive question, I will reply to it.

Madam Speaker: Please! Hon. Lepoigneur, the supplementary question that you have asked does not come from the main question, right. It is something else which you are requesting, so the hon. Minister will not be able to reply. Next question, hon. Bhagwan!

METRO EXPRESS PROJECT – FLORÉAL

(No. B/462) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade whether, in regard to the implementation of the Metro Express Project, along the Sivananda Avenue, in Floréal, he will state the number of –

- (a) land and properties compulsorily acquired thereat;
- (b) residential buildings earmarked for demolition thereat, indicating if the owners thereof have been informed accordingly and, if so, when and,
- (c) lanes and direct access roads earmarked for closure, indicating if alternative options are being proposed to the inhabitants.

Mr Bodha: Madam Speaker, as I have already informed the House on multiple occasions, the Metro Express Project is being implemented in phases. Phase 1, from Port Louis to Rose-Hill will be completed and operational by September 2019. Thereafter, ahead of the initial planning, phase 2a of the project for the segment from Rose-Hill to Quatre Bornes will be completed by end of September 2020. Phase 2b from Quatre Bornes to Curepipe is scheduled to be operational by the year 2021.

I am also informed that for phase 1 of the Metro Express Project, the project is on track and on time and as at end of May 2019, progress works stood at 77%.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (a) of the question, I am informed that the Metro Express Project along Sivananda Avenue in Floreal falls under phase 2b of the project which is to be implemented from Quatre Bornes to Curepipe. I am also informed that land and properties compulsorily acquired along this stretch amounts to six.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am informed that five residential buildings will have to be acquired together with the land for the provision of access. An optimisation exercise is currently underway and the owners will be informed accordingly once the optimisation exercise is finalised.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (c) of the question, I am informed that the detailed design is being worked out for this last stretch. The Light Rail tracks will be in the middle with one lane on both sides, thereby allowing access from the existing lateral roads to the Sivananda Avenue.

I am further informed that an exercise is underway to ensure that local access is provided to inhabitants following implementation of the project.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Armance!

LES SALINES - SWIMMING POOL

(No. B/463) Mr P. Armance (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, in regard to the swimming pool at Les Salines, in Constituency No. 1, Grand River North West and Port Louis West, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to if the –

- (a) renovation thereof was earmarked in the last budget, indicating if any plan was worked out therefor, and
- (b) renovation and maintenance works thereof were carried out in 2016, 2017 and 2018, indicating the name of the contractors and corresponding contract values thereof.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare (Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo): Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Municipal City Council of Port Louis that funds to the tune of Rs5 m. were earmarked for the project covering of the Les Salines swimming pool in the financial year 2017/2018. Bids were invited on 22 January 2018 through request for sealed quotation and the contract was awarded to Star Manufacturing & Contracting Ltd on 10 April 2018, which was the lowest evaluated substantially responsive bidder.

However, due to financial constraints and details in shipment, the contractor was unable to undertake the project within the prescribed time frame, that is, 03 September 2018. The contractor had made a request to the Municipal City Council of Port Louis for an extension of time till November 2018. In view of the fact that the funding was to lapse by 30 September 2018, the project, unfortunately, had to be dropped. The Municipal City Council of Port Louis would consider the possibility of implementing this project in the financial year 2019/2020.

However, to answer to part (b) of the question, I am informed by the Municipal City Council of Port Louis that maintenance works were carried out from February to May 2019, with a view to reopen the swimming pool in or about July 2019 without having been able to cover it. So, the works that have already been taken are as follows –

- pool was emptied for deep cleaning;
- rewinding of pump;
- filling of pool and treatment of water;
- painting of infrastructure and plumbing, and
- electrical works.

Mr Armance: So, now, I understand that the project will be for this current financial year. Has the hon. Vice-Prime Minister earmarked any budget for that in this current year? Can she, please, indicate a time frame for this project, tender stage and then is she going to use the same contractor, is she going to retender and how long this is going to take?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Madam Speaker, hon. Member...

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member should ask one question at a time, please!

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Never mind, I will answer. Madam Speaker, the closure of the swimming pool was warranted. Let me explain why. In as much as it became a danger to the users of the swimming pool as acts of vandalism were committed therein. The public was throwing glass bottles in the swimming pool. So, I must say that the Municipal City Council of Port Louis has done its level best to see to it that we succeed in covering the said swimming pool. It has not been able to be done during the past month.

However, I can reassure the hon. Member that needful is being done. I do know that there is no funding in the estimates, but I have been informed by the Municipal Council of Port Louis that they are going to carry the project. So, they will send letters to the Minister of Finance to ask for funds.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Mrs Perraud!

CEDAW – STATE PARTY REPORT

(No. B/464) Mrs A. Perraud (First Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, in regard to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, she will state the steps taken by her Ministry to prepare for the next country report meeting thereof.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare (Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo): Madam Speaker, the eighth State Party Report for Mauritius was submitted

to the committee on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) on 22 June 2018 and the report was examined on 30 October 2018.

The concluding observations and recommendations for Mauritius were published on 14 November 2018. At each 47th meeting held on 23 November 2018, Cabinet was apprised of the concluding observations and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee in respect of our State Party Report.

I wish to inform the House that the next State Party Report for Mauritius is due for submission to the CEDAW Committee in November 2022.

The following actions have already been initiated for the preparation of the next report. The concluding observations and recommendations have been circulated to all Ministries in January 2019 to request them to look into areas falling under their purview to take corrective measures to adjust same and to report accordingly.

Concurrently, at the level of my Ministry, a National Steering Committee on gender mainstreaming provides a platform for gender focal points of all Ministries to discuss the gender implication in their respective sectors. The gender focal points have been apprised of the concluding observations and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee on 22 April 2019 to ensure that sectorial interventions are aligned to address same. The gender focal points will thereafter regularly report on progress achieved in respect of the concluding observations and recommendations in follow-up meetings on this particular issue.

Lastly, a Monitoring Committee, chaired by the Permanent Secretary, has been set up at the level of my Ministry. Its first meeting was already held on 02 May 2019, with representatives of Ministries, departments to monitor progress made following the concluding observation of the CEDAW Committee.

A second Monitoring Committee will be held in August 2019.

Mrs Perrraud: Can I ask the Minister what she did to disseminate the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee widely, because this is what they asked for? I am not referring to gender focal points neither to gender cells, to public officials, but at large to the public, to NGOs and to women Associations?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Madam Speaker, the concluding observations and recommendations are online. So, anyone can have access to the recommendations. I must say that at the level of the Ministry, we have received some requests from NGOs, so, they are

fully aware of the report and they are free to discuss with the officers of the Ministry. We will take on board all their views.

Mrs Perraud: Madam Speaker, I must say that I am shocked by this answer because this is the responsibility of the Minister. It is said clearly in the report that it is the responsibility of the Minister to disseminate the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee.

If I may, everybody knows that there were Press articles...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Ask your question, please! Do not make a statement!

Mrs Perraud: Yes, Madam, I am coming with the question. Everybody knows that there were Press articles which show that the Minister was not well-prepared...

Madam Speaker: No! No further statement! Hon. Mrs Perraud, no further statement, please! Ask your question!

Mrs Perraud: My question is: why did the Head of Gender Unit not forming part of the delegation when you went in front of the CEDAW Committee?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Well, Madam Speaker, it's very strange. Each and every time, the hon. Member puts questions to me, so, with regard to my answer, she always said that she is shocked. So, it is very strange. Let me just remind the hon. Member ...

(Interruptions)

You asked for it and I will give you your answer.

Madam Speaker, I hope that the hon. Member has gone through the report of 2011 and not only the report of 2018, but both the reports of 2011 and 2018. Why? It is because she has been at the Ministry for two years, December 2014 to December 2016. I think you realise...

Madam Speaker: Do you have to tell her?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Madam Speaker, I think the hon. Member realised that many of the issues that have been raised in the concluding observations and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee in 2018 were asked in the report of 2011 when Mrs Martin...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No, excuse me! Please! Can you please resume your seat! I see there are discussions between two honourable Members. I would kindly request them not to discuss in this Chamber, but, please, to go outside and have your discussions in the corridor there.

Yes, hon. Vice-Prime Minister!

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Madam Speaker, it is very annoying. I am very disappointed, do you know why, because the hon. Member has been at the Ministry for two years. She knows very well that it is not that easy here, we are talking of recommendations, of observations to be carried out and we have up to 2022. That's why the CEDAW Committee has given us a certain time frame so that we can be able to fulfil the recommendations. Now, what I was saying, I hope that the hon. Member has gone through the report of 2011, not only the report of 2018, inasmuch as in the report of 2011, many issues were raised and were raised again in the report of 2018. Hon. Mrs Martin went in the CEDAW Committee in 2011. So, issues like we have to come up with the collection of sex aggregation data, definition of discrimination, setting up a National Gender Policy Framework were raised in 2011. You have been at the Ministry for two years, you have not been able to implement, we...

Madam Speaker: No, don't address ...

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, Madam Speaker, it is very unfair. Very unfair! You know, they just come to this House, put questions as if we are doing nothing. I must tell the hon. Member that a lot have been done with regard to this particular issue. I am happy, and I am not in a position to do more than what I have done so far. Whether the hon. Member is agreeable to that or not! So, there is no need to be shocked. Madam Speaker, I have already said that following my intervention in the CEDAW Committee, I have taken the pain to have meetings with my officers, we have identified all the issues. A plan of action has been set up. We have brought the conclusions and observations to Cabinet; we have circulated the documents to all Ministries and Departments for them to take corrective measures...

(Interruptions)

Let me finish, Madam, because this is very important.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No!

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Now, at the level...

Madam Speaker: Hon. Minister, please resume your seat! I think you can come to this House with a full statement of what has been done from 2011, if you want up to now, from the previous report to this report. You can come with a statement to the House. I think that puts an end to the question.

You have another supplementary? Okay!

Mrs Perraud: I maintain, Rt. hon. Minister Mentor, that it is the responsibility...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Please!

Mrs Perraud: I maintain that it is the responsibility ...

Madam Speaker: You address the Chair, please!

Mrs Perraud: ... of the Minister of Gender Equality to disseminate the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee. It is written in the recommendations. I have another question. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give to the House a time frame for the implementation of the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee as regard to her Ministry?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Madam Speaker, did the hon. Member disseminate the concluding observations and recommendations when she was at the Ministry from 2014 to 2016?

(Interruptions)

So! When you come to this Parliament, you must be serious, you must be fair also. You can't come and give lessons when you have done nothing! It is easy to come and criticise. We are doing our work and I will not accept unwarranted criticism.

Madam Speaker: Next question! Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: B/465, Madam Speaker!

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Thierry Henry! You are obstructing the work of this Assembly! Right! Both you and the hon. Minister! I have said several times, from a sitting position, if you continue to have conversations, you better go outside.

(Interruptions)

You continue, hon. Thierry Henry!

(Interruptions)

No! I just said that if you have any conversation from a sitting position, you better go outside. This is the second time I have said this, and next time, I will take sanctions.

IMPORT SUBSTITUTION INDUSTRY

(No. B/465) Mr D. Ramful (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection whether, in regard to the import substitution industry, he will give a list of the sectors where such policy will be developed, as announced in the Budget Speech 2018-2019, in order to address the trade and current account deficits.

Mr Gungah: Madam Speaker, in the Budget Speech 2018-2019, it was announced that we would be ushering a new era of import substitution and at paragraph 61 mention was made that our focus will be on food crop production. It was also mentioned that the potential is there since we import 77 per cent of our foodstuffs, annually. Further, to put this import substitution endeavour on a strong footing, Government will give the necessary support to set up 100 farms over the next two years under a Sheltered Farming Scheme.

Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security that in the first instance, 50 farms comprising 20 net houses of 4,000 m² each and 30 hydroponic greenhouses of 500 m² each will be made available on a Ready-To-Operate basis on 5 sites. The farms will be leased to new entrepreneurs. Following a Press communiqué, 288 applications have been received and are currently being evaluated.

I am also informed that the Ministry of Agro industry and Food Security has introduced and is implementing the new scheme of Mini Sheltered Farming. 151 requests have been approved and, so far, 34 mini sheltered farms have already been constructed.

Moreover, as the House is aware, it has also been announced in the Budget Speech 2019-2020 that, to give a further spur to that new sector, 100 more sheltered farms will be

constructed across the island over the next two years, starting at Melrose, Plaine Magnien, Solitude, Beau Climat and Caroline.

These measures, Madam Speaker, will certainly contribute in addressing the trade and account deficits.

Mr Ramful: Madam Speaker, according to the latest report of Statistics (Mauritius), the trade deficit which has been forecast for the year 2019 is about Rs129 billion compared to Rs112 billion for 2018. So, there has been an increase in the trade deficit of approximately Rs27 billion. Apart from the food sector, since the Minister is responsible for trade, what other remedy is he proposing to remedy the situation?

Mr Gungah: Madam Speaker, I would request the hon. Member to come with a substantive question.

Madam Speaker: Exactly! The question is about import substitution.

Mr Gungah: Because this question is specific to sectors where such policy will be developed as announced in the Budget Speech 2018-2019. So, of course, I won't have the reply with me, but if the Member comes with a substantive question, I would, of course, reply.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Madam Speaker, the question is very specific. Can we know what are the measures taken to address trade and current account deficit? As my good friend has said, the deficit has widened. So, no measure has been put in place to address this issue.

Mr Gungah: Madam Speaker, I think the question is clear. I will read the question – “whether, in regard to the import substitution industry, he will give a list of the sectors where such policy will be developed, as announced in the Budget Speech 2018-2019, in order to address the trade and current account deficits.”

Mr Ramful: Let's take it to the food sector. You have announced some measures that have been taken in the food sector. Are you in a position to tell the House how much have these measures contributed to reducing the trade deficit?

Mr Gungah: I have said it in my reply, Madam Speaker, that these projects are being set up and I even said that the 50 farms are ready that comprise of 20 net houses of 4,000

square metres and 30 hydroponic greenhouses of 500 square metres and 288 applications have been received and they are currently being evaluated. So, it is difficult for me to ...

Dr. Boolell: ...there has been any early harvest. There is neither early harvest nor will there be a bumper crop.

Mr Gungah: If the project has not yet started, how can we harvest?

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Ramful!

GOODS – RETAIL PRICES

(No. B/466) Mr D. Ramful (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection whether, in regard to the Consumer Price Index, he will state if consideration will be given for the advisability of –

- (a) reviewing the Consumer Protection Act to provide for more effective supervision on the retail prices affixed and margin of profit made by importers and retail traders, and
- (b) appointing an Ombudsperson for Consumer Protection to receive and investigate complaints from the consumers.

Mr Gungah: Madam Speaker, the present Consumer Protection Act provides for authorised officers of the Consumer Affairs Unit of my Ministry to carry out regular checks on the local market and to ensure that traders affix the retail prices of goods offered for sale. Thus, officers of the Consumer Affairs Unit carry out inspections to trade premises to that effect. For the period July 2018 to 31 May 2019, 6,814 inspections have been carried out and 315 contraventions established including 108 for non-affixing of prices.

Regarding the margin of profit made by importers and retail traders, I wish to point out that price control is currently exerted only on essential/basic commodities and a list of controlled items/goods. The Price Fixing Unit of my Ministry carries out such tasks. This allows consumers to access these basic and essential commodities and goods at reasonable prices and prevents traders from profiteering. There are different price control regimes, namely Maximum Retail Price, Maximum Mark Up and Maximum Recommended Retail Price.

The Consumer Affairs Unit receives, investigates and clears complaints from consumers. The tasks of this Unit have been completed enhanced and facilitated with the

putting up of the Citizen Support Portal in April 2017. Indeed, complaints are no longer dealt with manually but electronically.

For the period April 2017 to 13 June 2019, 5,015 out of 5,380 complaints have been addressed and resolved, that is, 93.2%. The remaining 6.8% are being looked into and relate to cases which take a relatively longer time to be completed.

However, despite the above, I wish to point out that my Ministry is effecting a complete review of the Consumer Protection Act which dates back to 1991 so as to provide an improved framework for the protection of consumers altogether.

The question of appointing an Ombudsperson for Consumer Protection, therefore, does not arise.

Mr Ramful: In fact, in a reply to a PQ which dates back to April 2016, the hon. Minister said that there was a Technical Committee comprising of officials of his Ministry and the State Law Office and they were working on a new draft Bill. Now, the hon. Minister is saying that there is no question of coming with a new Bill. Can the Minister explain his position?

Mr Gungah: I said, Madam Speaker, my Ministry is effecting a complete review of the Consumer Protection Act which dates back to 1991 so as to provide an improved framework for the protection of consumers altogether.

Mr Ramful: There was previously the Price Observatory Unit which has now been scrapped and replaced by the National Price Consultative Council. Now, that previous unit, there was a practice of providing to the public details about the prices of goods. Doesn't the Minister think that this is a good practice for the benefit of the consumers and this should be started again?

Mr Gungah: Madam Speaker, we all know nowadays that we have supermarkets, hypermarkets and traders market their products even on pamphlets, even on the net and people can easily know the prices of articles. I must say that regarding the Price Observatory that existed, there had been complaints by many consumers that sometimes they have to travel long distances to go to the place where the price is supposed to be lowest but when they reach there, they find out that the promotion existed for only a while and they had to pay more for that.

Mr Uteem: Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister just mentioned there is a committee to review the Consumer Protection Bill. Is the hon. Minister aware – and he should be – that as far back as 2014 a Consumer Protection Bill was circulated in this House. So, can I take it from the hon. Minister that there is going to be a complete relooking of what was circulated in 2014 and if this is the case, is he proposing to come with a new Bill in this session of Parliament?

Mr Gungah: Madam Speaker, in fact it is going to be a new Bill. As I said, there is a Ministerial Committee that is examining the proposals and since the actual one is here for the last 28/30 years, so we have to look for the next 25/30 years, especially as the habits of consumers have changed. Even the traders, as I explained, the way they are marketing their products, especially now that we have hypermarkets, supermarkets instead of small shops that we used to have. And once the Ministerial Committee has finalised the proposals, of course, we will follow all the procedures like going to the SLO, Cabinet and we will even publish it on the website of the Ministry so that the public at large can go through the Bill and we will welcome, of course, proposals from the public.

Mr Ramful: The Ministerial committee has been set up since September 2015. Now, it has been more than 4 years. Does not the Minister think that four years is long enough to come with a Bill before the House?

Mr Gungah: Madam Speaker, to come up with a new Bill completely is different from what we have, almost completely different from what we had. It is not an easy task. I think this sector is very dynamic and today, we are not only having products that are bought locally, but internationally as well. Many factors are taken into consideration in this new Bill.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Ramful!

ACADEMIES - GRADE 10 STUDENTS

(No. B/467) Mr D. Ramful (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research whether, in regard to the admission of Grade 10 students to the academies in 2021, she will state the criteria laid down therefor.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Speaker, the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education Policy Document provides, *inter alia*, for the setting up of Academies which will offer upper secondary education as from Grade 10 and for admission therein of meritorious students having sat for the National Certificate of Education (NCE) Assessment.

The criteria for admission to Academies are provided under Regulation 18B of the Education (Amendment) Regulations 2018 which, *inter alia*, states that “priority of admission to Grade 10 in an Academy shall be determined on the basis of the grade aggregate and the relative performance of the eligible pupil in the best 8 core subjects, including English, French and Mathematics, at the NCE assessment and the choice of the responsible party”.

It is to be pointed out that -

- a) the “Grade” refers to such numerical grade obtained in a core subject as may be specified in the annual programme for the NCE Assessment, and
- b) the “Grade Aggregate” refers to the sum total of the grades obtained by a pupil in the best 8 core subjects.

I wish to add that the Education (Amendment) Regulations 2018, promulgated in 2018 through Government Notice No. 179 of 2018, spells out the criteria for admission to Academies.

The allocation of seats to meritorious candidates having sat for the NCE Assessment in 2020 in the Academies will be carried out by the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate on the basis of the criteria mentioned earlier. My Ministry has already designated 12 secondary schools to operate as Academies as from 2021. The list of these Academies had been gazetted through the General Notice No. 14 of 2017.

Madam Speaker, I wish to also add that the Annual Programme for the NCE Assessment which spells out the subjects offered, the syllabi, the rules and conditions as well as the grading structure for the conduct of the NCE assessment has been gazetted in 2018, through the General Notice No. 1874 of 2018.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ramful.

Mr Ramful: Yes. The hon. Minister said that the examinations will be conducted by the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate. Now, do I understand, therefore, that the exam papers as well as the supervision and the correction will be performed by external examiners not the educators at the colleges?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The examinations, the assessment will be evaluated and corrected by educators at the level of the MES as it has been done in the past.

Mr Ramful: With regard to mixed schooling, is the hon. Minister still maintaining

her stand?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The academies will be run as co-educational institutions.

Mr Ramful: Have all infrastructures already been set up because there will be girls and boys in those mixed schools? Have the infrastructures already been catered for?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The infrastructural works are being carried out in the different academies and will be ready by 2021.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Uteem.

HAJJ PILGRIMS - AIR TICKET & ACCOMMODATION

(No. B/468) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Minister of Arts and Culture whether, in regard to the Hajj Pilgrimage 2019, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Islamic Cultural Centre, information as to where matters stand as to the award of the contracts for –

- (a) air transport, and
- (b) hotel accommodation of the pilgrims.

Mr Roopun: Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Islamic Cultural Trust Fund that –

- (i) an Expression of Interest for the transportation of Mauritian pilgrims to Saudi Arabia, was sent to airline companies and local General Sales Agents on 18 January 2019;
- (ii) the Expression of Interest was also published in newspapers as from 19 January 2019.
- (iii) two proposals were received and out of the proposals received, the only responsive offer was from Saudi. The price offered is Rs40,109 inclusive of taxes. However, the price of air ticket, inclusive of the cost of fuel surcharge is still being finalised.

I am informed by the ICC that no formal contract is signed regarding air transportation. Once the price of air ticket including the cost of fuel surcharge and the flight schedules are finalised, same will be communicated to the pilgrims.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am further informed by the ICC that –

- (i) the responsibility to secure accommodation of appropriate standard rests with the licensed Hadj Operators;
- (ii) the buildings proposed by the different Hadj Operators were inspected during the pre-Hadj mission to Saudi Arabia from 25 December 2018 to 02 January 2019;
- (iii) the different accommodation facilities were validated based on a set of criteria established by the ICC, and
- (iv) contracts to secure accommodation as validated by the ICC, are signed by the licensed Hadj Operators with the respective hotel owners.

Mr Uteem: Madam Speaker, in the report of the internal control on the ICC dated 30 of March 2018, the report was extremely critical of the bidding process for transport of pilgrims and the report recommended, and I quote – ‘the ICC should imperatively follow the Public Procurement Act.’ How is it, Madam Speaker, that today, the hon. Minister is telling the House that again, for this year, in breach of the Public Procurement Act, the ICC is going via expression of interests instead of a full-fledged tender procedure?

Mr Roopun: Madam Speaker, I wish to highlight that, insofar as the transportation, the facilities for Hajj pilgrims are concerned through an advice given by Sir Hamid Moollan QC, we embarked on tender of quotation and there is, in fact, no allocation of contract as such. We received expressions of interests and once those expressions of interests are received, pilgrims are informed about the price. They pay the price and as a matter of fact, pilgrims are not compelled to purchase those tickets from those companies. These are mere arrangements that are made by the ICC and which designate who will receive bids and offers with companies and try to facilitate. Eventually, the contract for transportation is between the airline and each and every pilgrim.

Mr Uteem: The report is very clear – financial instructions, number one – guidelines issued by the Finance Secretary on how you should proceed the bidding process. It is stated a formal tender exercise should be lodged prior to the expiry of an existing contract. So, you need to have a tender process. The hon. Minister has mentioned a legal opinion. So, can the hon. Minister table the opinion which the ICC received to tell it that it does not have to go through tender procedure; it does not have to go through Public Procurement Act?

Mr Roopun: In any event, I have to check when the legal advice was given, but I must say that whatever we receive from the report of the internal control, they are working

together with the ICC to see how we can improve the situation there. Of course, I take good note of what the hon. Member is stating. We have the report and if there is any way where we can increase transparency and good governance, we are going to do it. But just to explain clearly, it is neither the ICC which enters into a contract, it acts as a facilitator, it tries to secure places from different airlines, discusses the price and eventually the contract is between the pilgrims and the airline. As I stated also, they are not compelled as such to go strictly through those airlines.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Mahomed.

Mr Osman Mahomed: The question I wanted to ask has already been asked. You may give the floor to hon. Uteem.

Mr Uteem: The hon. Minister is not being given the proper information from the ICC. For years now, all pilgrims are compelled to travel, not only on the flight selected by the ICC, but on the dates which ICC fixes for them. So, may I know from the hon. Minister, being given that the pilgrim does not have a choice, he has to go through this process, why is it - and I repeat again - why is it that the proper tender process has not been followed and is not being followed by the ICC?

Mr Roopun: Madam Speaker, I just explained the special circumstances, under which the Hajj Pilgrimage is organised and what are the arrangements that are being made. And, of course, I stated that whatever remark is made here, whatever remark is made in the Internal Control Report, we are going to see how we can improve the situation.

Madam Speaker: Last question, hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Madam Speaker, last year, the air ticket for Hajj Pilgrimage was around Rs30,000 and this year it is being proposed at Rs40,000. So, my question to the hon. Minister: is it because Saudia is changing its representation from Rogers Aviation to a private company in the construction; is it because of this reason that the air ticket prices are being increased?

Mr Roopun: Madam Speaker, I cannot answer for Saudia. We received offers from them. How can I say what is the reason why it has been increased?

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Ganoo!

FSL REPORT - CASES - PROSECUTION

(No. B/469) Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of cases wherein decisions to prosecute are pending due to non-availability of Forensic Science Laboratory Reports, indicating –

- (a) the number of suspects presently held in Police custody as a result thereof;
- (b) the remedial measures Government proposes to take in relation thereto, and
- (c) if consideration will be given for the FSL to be made to operate as an independent body.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: Madam Speaker, there are a total of 1,674 cases which are awaiting prosecution due to non-availability of Forensic Science Laboratory Report.

As regards part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that there are six suspects in Police custody. However, I would like to mention that there are 480 on remand to jail.

With regard to part (b) of the question, the forensic science laboratory has initiated improvements in its system with constant monitoring of the procurement process and evaluation of supplies conducted at regular intervals to ensure timely procurement of supplies and consumables. Moreover, in order to reduce the gap between casework capacity and demand, ten additional analysts have been recruited in 2018 and the recruitment of six more technical staff is ongoing.

The FSL is also procuring additional high tech equipment to test drugs which varies widely in size, drug mix and complexity.

Concerning part (c) of the question, the proposal is under consideration.

Mr Ganoo: Madam Speaker, in fact, this question was prompted by the remarks which were made in the Lam Shang Leen Report to the effect that the increasing backlog of cases result in inordinate delays in handling and analysing drug samples, which in turn leads to adverse repercussions on the celerity of Police enquiry into a prosecution of drug trafficking cases. May I ask the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor if he can use his good offices to impress upon the FSL to make available to our Courts of law within the least delay the FSL reports because this is causing adverse repercussions on cases as mentioned?

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: Well, as I said, steps are being taken. Already certain measures have been taken to help the FSL to do their work quicker than usual. And naturally, we will continue to do more in order to meet what the hon. Member is asking for.

Mr Ganoo: I have another question, Madam Speaker, with regard to the independence of the FSL. I am again inspiring myself from what was recommended in the Lam Shang Leen Report, wherein it was mentioned that the Commission recommends that the FSL be made to operate as an independent body set up by an Act of Parliament, the Forensic Science Laboratory Agency Act, running in total independence from the law enforcement agency and the prosecutorial bodies. So may I again appeal to the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor to see to it that this recommendation be implemented so that Parliament enacts the FSLA Act in order to revamp this institution and to make it independent from the other enforcement agencies?

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: I have been given to understand that this should be done.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: The Rt. hon. Minister Mentor just mentioned that more staff will be recruited. In fact, he mentioned eight more analysts will be recruited. But there is no provision in the Budget. We have 67 staff and it remains 67 for the next financial year. May I know which is which?

Sir Anerood Jugnauth: Well, this is the information that I have been given. Well, whether there is money or no money, they will have to find out somehow and get the money to do the needful.

Madam Speaker: I would request the hon. Member to come with this question at Committee of Supply.

Hon. Ganoo, next question!

ROSE BELLE - IRON FOUNDRY PROJECT - EIA

(No. B/470) Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development whether, in regard to the setting up of an Iron Foundry Project in Bananes, Rose Belle, he will state –

- (a) the date of application for the issue of the Environment Impact Assessment License, indicating the date same was issued;

- (b) if a scenic view near the site has been removed from the list of scenic views in this region;
- (c) if any condition of the EIA license has been flouted;
- (d) if objections/representations have been received from inhabitants of Bananes, Rose Belle, and
- (e) if the promoter has obtained a lease therefor from the Rose Belle Sugar Estate and, if so, when.

Mr Sinatambou: Madam Speaker, Environment Impact Assessments compel proponents to take into consideration environmental issues at the stage of conception and planning of a project. They also enable proponents to anticipate and address potential impacts during the conception phase of a project and accordingly adopt pollution, prevention and control strategies.

With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that an application for an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Licence was submitted by Euro Castings Ltd on 12 September 2018 for the setting up of a scrap metal foundry and rolling mill. The proposed project is situated on a plot of land leased by Rose Belle Sugar Estate at L'Abatie, Banane. The EIA Licence was granted on 31 January 2019 with 36 conditions. These conditions were imposed upon the proponent to ensure that the likely impacts of the undertaking on the environment are mitigated.

Regarding part (b) of the question, I am informed by the District Council of Grand Port that there is no such thing as a list of scenic views under the Grand Port-Savanne District Council Outline Planning Scheme. However, in the Development Management Map of the Outline Planning Scheme, scenic landscape areas have been identified in some locations; namely in the vicinity of Banane, Cluny and Beemanique.

The Ministry of Housing and Lands has informed my Ministry that from a planning perspective, the proposed development is acceptable as it clusters with a number of existing bad neighbourhood developments and is also in line with policy ID 4 which relates to bad neighbourhood development of the Outline Planning Scheme.

I am informed that the subject site is a bare land with invasive shrubs and vegetation and that there are various bad neighbourhood polluting activities in the vicinity of the subject site of the proposed foundry plant, namely –

- 3 stone crushing plants;
- A premix asphalt-making plant;
- A concrete batching plant;
- A precast yard;
- A rock quarry, and
- A poultry pen.

The local authority informed my Ministry during the processing of the EIA application that the subject site falls outside settlement boundary as per the Outline Planning Scheme for Grand Port-Savanne area at approximately 900m from the closest residential built up areas. The latter also confirmed its no objection for the proposed foundry.

I am informed that the Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board has, on 11 January 2019, confirmed that highly polluting activities have been operating near the proposed site for a very long time. The Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board has also pointed out that it has always been its policy to develop this area for such type of activities due to its remoteness from residential development.

With regard to part (c) of the question, I wish to inform the House that implementation of the project has not yet started. The last site inspection carried out on Thursday 30 June 2019 by officers of my Ministry has confirmed that neither infrastructural works nor land cleaning activities have been carried out on the subject site and that no condition of the EIA licence has been flouted. Moreover, the proponent has submitted an Environmental Monitoring Plan for approval to my Ministry on 29 March 2019 in line with Condition No. 3 of the EIA licence. Same is still under process.

Concerning part (d) of the question, I am informed that my Ministry received two letters from inhabitants of the region. The first one dated 10 October 2018 was from one Mr D. R. on behalf of 250 households of Bananes Village which has 1000 inhabitants. The same complainant subsequently wrote a letter on 17 November 2018 withdrawing his complaint. The second complaint originates from one Bananes Society, but it was an anonymous letter on behalf of that society for whom we have no particulars.

I am informed that the EIA Committee has taken into consideration the concerns mentioned above and, after assessing all the mitigating measures, it has actually recommended the proposed project for approval with no less than 36 conditions.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ganoo!

Mr Ganoo: May I ask the hon. Minister - I cannot say whether he was Minister of Environment at the material time – whether he is aware that there are a few fishy features in this project, in the sense that firstly, can he confirm whether the promoter in this case is a non-citizen and, according to the regulations, the scrap metal regulations, a scrap dealer licence cannot be granted to somebody who is not a Mauritian citizen?

Mr Sinatambou: Well, I am not aware of this information, and I will welcome any such information from the Member so that I can look into it.

Mr Ganoo: Can I ask the hon. Minister also whether, in this case a Fast Track Committee was set up to expedite matters in terms of granting of the different licences?

Mr Sinatambou: No, that could not be the case because, as I said in my reply, with regard to part (a) of the question, the application is dated 12 September 2018 and the EIA licence was granted on 31 January 2019. Normally, the statutory time given for the grant of a licence is about 99 days, and in this particular case, I think when we add up the dates, we come to 120 days. In fact, one could speak of rather a slow tracking than a fast tracking.

Mr Ganoo: Is the hon. Minister aware also whether there were 15 objections which were made in that case and it has been alleged that these objections have disappeared from the file and this resulted in the transfer of a high ranking officer from a District Council concerned?

Mr Sinatambou: Well, I cannot answer for the local authority, but what I know is that at my Ministry, where documents do not disappear from files, there have been only two complaints received, both of them dated 10 October 2018, and the matters raised in those letters have been taken into account duly by the EIA Committee before making the recommendations to me.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Quirin!

SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BILL (NEW) - INTRODUCTION

(No. B/471) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the Status of Athletes, Part II section 3 of the Sports Act 2016, he will state if consideration will be given for the advisability of proposing amendments thereto with the objective of strengthening the rights of the athletes, independently from the respective federations.

Mr Toussaint: Madam Speaker, as announced by the hon. Prime Minister in his Budget Speech 2019/2020, a new Sports and Physical Activity Bill will be introduced in this House. Part II, section 3 of the Sports Act 2016 is quite elaborate and covers a spectrum of rights in respect of athletes.

However, consideration will be given to strengthen the rights of the athletes on an individual basis, independently from their mother federations while drafting the new legislation. The new Bill will also include a Code of Sports Governance, a Coaches Code of Ethics, a Safeguarding and Safe Sport Policy in favour of athletes and the rules of the Mauritian Anti-Doping Agency.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Madame la présidente, l'honorable ministre est sans doute au courant qu'un handisportif, nommément, M. Rosario Marianne, en de nombreuses occasions, a subi les caprices de sa fédération, la *Visually Handicapped Persons Sports Federation*, concernant sa participation dans des compétitions à l'étranger. Donc, l'honorable ministre peut-il nous dire qu'elles ont été les dispositions qui ont été prises par son ministère, justement afin de préserver les droits de cet athlète, et justement l'encadrer de façon à ce qu'il puisse participer à ses compétitions?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, je suis tout à fait au courant de ce cas, et je dois dire que Rosario, d'abord et avant tout, est un ami et quelqu'un qui habite ma circonscription, et qui à plusieurs reprises, nous avons eu des conversations téléphoniques...

(Interruptions)

... notre circonscription - *to pe zalou*, *alle* notre circonscription, à Eau Coulée.

Alors, qui après plusieurs reprises, nous avons eu donc des conversations téléphoniques, et j'ai même aussi organisé des réunions à mon ministère, avec Rosario, avec son entraîneur, avec les membres de la fédération, pour essayer de régler les différents problèmes qu'il a pu avoir. Et aussi, il faut dire, il ne faut pas l'oublier que les athlètes ont la possibilité - c'est valable pour tout le monde - d'aller vers le *Ombudsperson* for Sports à chaque qu'ils ont des soucis quelconque pour essayer de trouver des solutions.

Mr Quirin: Madame la présidente, l'honorable ministre vient de mentionner qu'une nouvelle loi sera présentée très bientôt dans cette assemblée, afin de remplacer justement l'actuelle loi qui, je dois le rappeler date de décembre 2016. Donc, n'est-ce pas là un aveu

d'échec, moins de trois ans après, être contraint de venir avec une nouvelle loi pour remplacer celle qui date de 2016?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, ce n'est certainement pas le cas puisque le Sports Act de 2016 est venu – et là je dois rendre hommage à mon ami et collègue, l'honorable ministre Sawmynaden –corriger beaucoup de choses par rapport au dernier Sports Act qu'il y avait en 2012. Dans le Sports Act de 2016, la partie que l'honorable membre est en train de faire allusion *Part II Status of athletes*, il n'y a pas moins de six parties qui nous parlent de l'athlète et de tout ce qu'il a besoin comme encadrement. Mais certainement que le monde du sport ne reste pas statique, il y a des choses qui changent tous les jours. Et comme un gouvernement responsable, nous avons besoin de prendre tout cela en considération et de venir avec de nouvelle législation, c'est automatique.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Quirin!

INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES 2019 - MOBILISATION MORIS 19 -EVENTS

(No. B/472) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the forthcoming Indian Ocean Island Games 2019 and the organization of *Mobilisation Moris 19*, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the *Comité Organisation des Jeux des Iles*, the list of events organized as at to date, indicating in each case the –

- (a) venue and date thereof;
- (b) cost thereof;
- (c) name of the organizer thereof, and
- (d) procedures followed for the selection of the performing artists in the course thereof.

Mr Toussaint: Madam Speaker, in the context of the forthcoming Indian Ocean Island Games – *il nous reste que 31 jours* – five events have been organized, so far, under *Mobilisation Moris 19* by the *Comité d'Organisation (COJI)*, in collaboration with my Ministry and Club Maurice.

In regard to parts (a) and (b) of the question, the information requested by the hon. Member is being compiled and will be laid in the Library of the National Assembly accordingly.

Madam Speaker, for part (d) of the question, the performing artists for each other events were selected on the basis of their popularity, availability and reasonableness of fees, claim and also, according to the demand of the different regions.

Mr Quirin: Madame la présidente, je trouve vraiment regrettable que l'honorable ministre, je veux dire son ministère n'a pas pu compiler cinq évènements uniquement et venir déposer, ici, sur la Table de l'Assemblée, en fonction de la question qui lui a été posée. Vraiment regrettable !

De ce fait, pourrai-je savoir, quel est le budget total que le COJI a consacré à l'organisation de ces manifestations dans le cadre de *Mobilisation Moris 19* ?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, je trouve tout à fait regrettable, moi aussi, que le *leader* de cet honorable membre, qui jusqu'à aujourd'hui n'a toujours pas déposé une réponse à l'Assemblée quand il était ministre ou Premier ministre. Il faut le rappeler...

(Interruptions)

non parce que vous trouvez tout regrettable, moi aussi j'ai le droit de trouver les choses regrettables...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Quirin.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Quirin.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Quirin, I think if he has the floor, he has a fair hearing, just as you have when you are asking questions. Yes?

Mr Toussaint: Et comme je l'ai dit dans ma réponse, donc nous allons compiler tous les chiffres et nous allons les remettre à l'Assemblée, je n'ai pas ce total avec moi.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Bhagwan.

Mr Bhagwan: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Est-ce que je peux savoir de l'honorable ministre si la firme Grey, je crois Grey Mauritius Ltd., qui a eu des problèmes récemment concernant un *clip*. Est-ce que Grey a été

impliqué dans toute cette organisation de *Mobilisation Moris 19*, et en quelle capacité, quelles genres des travaux?

Mr Toussaint: Non, Madame la présidente, la firme Grey n'était pas impliqué dans l'organisation de *Mobilisation Moris 19*.

Mr Quirin: Madame la présidente, il y a un nom qui revient constamment quand on parle de ces activités de *Mobilisation Moris 19*, c'est le nom d'un réunionnais, Judikaël Mistrin. Peut-on savoir quel est le rôle de ce monsieur et en quoi justement il est concerné par ces activités de *Mobilisation Moris 19* ?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, je peux assurer l'honorable membre que malheureusement que tout ce qu'il lit dans les journaux n'est pas nécessairement vrai.

M. Mistrin, dont il a cité le nom, nous a proposé Mickaël Pouvin gratuitement quand nous avons lancé la *Mobilisation Moris 19* à Port Louis. Donc, c'était une prestation gratuite du grand chanteur réunionnais, Mickaël Pouvin, et à aucun moment, M. Mistrin n'est dans l'organisation de *Mobilisation Moris 19*.

Mr Quirin: Peut-on savoir comment le COJI, qui travaille en collaboration avec le ministère, avec Club Maurice, a choisi les organisateurs, justement les personnes responsables d'organiser ces manifestations de *Mobilisation Moris 19*? L'honorable ministre dit que son ministère est en train de compiler les informations pour cinq événements uniquement, mais j'espère que là, il sera en mesure de nous dire comment a procédé le COJI.

Mr Toussaint: En ce qu'il s'agit de l'organisation, Madame la présidente, les coûts sont divisés en plusieurs parties, parce que je l'ai dit dans ma réponse initiale, l'organisation de ces activités sont faites par le COJI, le ministère et Club Maurice. Donc, en ce qu'il s'agit des *suppliers*, des RFPs sont lancés par le COJI pour avoir justement les personnes concernées par rapport aux différentes choses à nous donner.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Quirin!

MAURITIUS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION – RULES OF 2012

(No. B/473) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the Mauritius Football Association, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to if it has registered the Rules of 2012 thereof with the Registrar of Association and, if so, indicate

where matters stand as to the organization of the election of the Managing Committee thereof.

Mr Toussaint: Madam Speaker, I wish to refer the hon. Member to my reply to PQ B/1094 at the session of the National Assembly on 27 November 2018, wherein the House was informed that the Mauritius Football Association (MFA) had been requested to submit its rules of 2012 to the Registrar of Associations for them to be effective.

I am informed that the MFA Rules of 2012 have still not been registered. A meeting on this issue was held on 27 March 2019 at my Ministry with the representatives of the Mauritius Football Association, the Registrar of Associations and also the Attorney General's Office.

During the meeting, it was agreed that the federation would look anew into its rules so as to ensure that they are in conformity with the Sports Act 2016 and subsequently submit same to the Registrar of Associations. This has now been done.

The issue regarding the election of the Managing Committee will be addressed once the rules are registered.

Mr Quirin: Madame la présidente, tous les dossiers concernant cette affaire avaient été soumis au *State Law Office*. Peut-on savoir, parce qu'il était question d'interprétation justement de cette partie de la loi et la non-conformité de la MFA. Donc, peut-on savoir si à ce jour la *State Law Office* a donné son *ruling*, ses impressions par rapport à cette partie de la loi qui mettait jusqu'à présent la MFA en non-conformité.

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, je suis en train de le chercher là, parce que j'ai plusieurs documents avec moi. Ce qui est clair c'est que la MFA a déjà soumis justement ces *rules of 2012* au niveau du *Registrar* et ils attendent que le *Registrar* fasse le nécessaire.

Mr Quirin: Madame la présidente, je parle de *State Law Office*, que l'honorable ministre nous donne une réponse claire et nette, est-ce que le dossier est toujours au *State Law Office* ou bien le dossier est revenu du *State Law Office*, au bureau du ministre ou à son ministère, et qu'il ne veut pas dévoiler ce qui a été dit dans le jugement?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, c'est clair et net que le *State Law Office* a donné un *ruling*, mais je le redis, j'ai plusieurs documents avec moi, et je vais le chercher, éventuellement si besoin je vais déposer. Il n'y a pas de souci.

Mr Quirin: Donc, on peut comprendre, Madame la présidente, qu'au moment où on est ici, débâtant de cette question, la MFA est dans l'illégalité?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, je ne sais pas quelle langue que je dois utiliser pour que je puisse me faire comprendre...

(Interruptions)

Laisse moi kozé...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No, hon. Quirin.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Quirin, *non*. But, be moderate in what you say. From a sitting position I don't think you can make comments.

Yes, Minister?

Mr Toussaint: La MFA, Madame la présidente, je l'ai dit dans ma réponse, je vais prendre tout mon temps, la MFA a déjà soumis ses lois au *Registrar of Associations and they are waiting for the reply of the Registrar of Associations*.

Madam Speaker: Next question!

Dr. Boolell: Madam Speaker, this is a very grave matter. There is connivance between the Registrar of Associations, and I maintain what I am saying. There is connivance between the Registrar of Associations and the MFA, and it would be to the advantage of the Minister...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No, hon. Dr. Boolell...

(Interruptions)

Hon. Dr. Boolell, please...

(Interruptions)

Please!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Dr. Boolell, you are at this point in time...

(Interruptions)

You have made a very serious statement, I am asking you to take the entire responsibility for the statement that you've made.

Dr. Boolell: I assume my responsibility fully.

Can the hon. Minister lay on the Table of the Assembly a copy of the advice tendered by the SLO?

Mr Toussaint: Madame la présidente, je viens dire je n'ai pas ce document avec moi.

Madam Speaker: Next question!

(Interruptions)

Non, hon. Quirin, I have already passed on next question. I think this has been sufficient canvassed.

(Interruptions)

Anyway the question has been sufficiently canvassed. You can't insist, I have passed on to the next question.

NATIONAL SPORTS & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY - IMPLEMENTATION

(No. B/474) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the National Sports and Physical Activity Policy, he will –

- (a) table copy of the full report thereof, and
- (b) state the total sum disbursed for the elaboration thereof by Portas Consulting, indicating the recommendations thereof implemented as at to date.

Mr Toussaint: Madam Speaker, as requested by the hon. Member I am tabling a copy of the National Sports and Physical Activity Policy. It is a 600 page document...

(Interruptions)

Mo esperé enn bon language.

...which comprises an inception report, an interim report and a final report with 20 transformative recommendations to reshape the sports and physical activity landscape in the Republic of Mauritius. The National Sport and Physical Activity Policy was officially launched on 14 October 2018 by the hon. Prime Minister himself.

As regards part (b) of the question, Portas Consulting has delivered its assignments against a total payment of Rs6.7 m.

Madam Speaker, I have set up a special committee to help the implementation phase of the National and Physical Activity Policy. Consultations are ongoing with each and every stakeholder of the sports and physical activity sector so as to ease the process.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Peut-on savoir, Madame la présidente, comment le ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports a procédé avant d'allouer le contrat à Portas Consulting pour justement élaborer cette nouvelle politique de sports ?

Mr Toussaint: We launched an international tender, Madam Speaker.

Mr Quirin: Madame la présidente, il est question au sein du mouvement sportif de la dissolution du *Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports*. Peut-on savoir si cette dissolution est faite ou sera faite dans les semaines à venir et la conséquence directe de cette nouvelle politique sportive ?

Mr Toussaint: Le *Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports*, Madam Speaker, has not been dissolved and it will only be *renforcé*.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Abbas Mamode!

FIRE STATIONS - VEHICLES

(No. B/475) Mr S. Abbas Mamode (Fourth Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, in regard to the vehicles attached to each of the Fire Stations, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service, information as to the –

- (a) type thereof;
- (b) number of years they have been and have not been in operation, and
- (c) number thereof left in abandoned state, indicating the actions that will be taken in relation thereto.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare (Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo): I am informed by the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service that there is a total of

76 vehicles in the 10 fire stations, of which 64 are in operation and 12 are under repairs at the mechanical workshop of the Mauritius Rescue and Fire Services.

I am tabling a list of the number, type and age of all vehicles in each fire station and the number of years they have been or not been in operation.

With regard to part (c) of the question, I am informed that there are 12 water tenders and 13 double cabs which are beyond economical repairs, as certified by the mechanical engineering section of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Development. The age of these vehicles ranges from 11 to 27 years. Again, Madam Speaker, I am tabling a list of these vehicles.

I am informed by the Mauritius Fire and Services that the vehicles beyond economical repairs will be disposed of by auction.

Let me, Madam Speaker, table all the documents.

Mr Abbas Mamode: Is the Minister aware of several old damaged vehicles in Coromandel Fire Station are lying over there, and it is an eyesore? So, what are the measures taken from the Ministry to dispose or to transfer these vehicles?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, a very good question. Madam Speaker, I have just said that necessary actions are being taken with regard to vehicles which cannot be repaired. So, they will be disposed of by auction.

Madam Speaker: Next question!

FIRE STATIONS - RELOCATION

(No. B/476) Mr S. Abbas Mamode (Fourth Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, in regard to the proposed relocation of the Fire Stations, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service, information as to where matters stand.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare (Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo): I am informed that the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service is in the process of relocating three fire stations, namely -

- Port Louis Fire Station;

- Mahebourg Fire Station, and
- Quatre Bornes Fire Station.

Regarding Port Louis Fire Station, a bidding exercise was carried out in December 2018 for its relocation at Les Salines on part of the premises occupied by the Bulk Sugar Terminal. However, no bids were received. It was, therefore, decided to renovate the existing Port Louis Fire Station pending the construction of a full-fledged new fire station at Immigration Square within the Immigration Square Urban Terminal project due to start soon.

The Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport has already conducted a survey and prepared the scope of works to be implemented soon, subject to all clearances being obtained.

Madam Speaker, with regard to Mahebourg Fire Station, action has been initiated since 2017 for its relocation. A plot of land of one acre has been identified at Beau Vallon, Mahebourg and the Ministry of Housing and Lands has initiated procedures for acquisition of the plot of land. Negotiations are being carried out by the Valuation Department with Compagnie de Beau Vallon Ltée.

Lastly, concerning Quatre Bornes Fire Station, a plot of land of an extent of 7,362 m² has been identified at Avenue Tulip, Quatre Bornes. Procedures have been completed and the title deed is being finalised.

Mr Abbas Mamode: I am made to understand by the reply of the hon. Vice-Prime Minister that the Port Louis Fire Brigade will remain at the same place where it is actually. Is the Minister aware of the difficulty of the fire brigade moving from any region to Port Louis from the fire brigade of Port Louis, next to the City Council? And what are the measures taken ease *la sortie de camions d'incendie vers les sites* where fire has been declared?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Madam Speaker, the fire station at Port Louis has existed at this particular place for years now. So, I fully understand the concern of the hon. Member. That is why I am saying that needful has been done to transfer the Port Louis Fire Station to the Urban Terminal, but you would realise that it is a lengthy procedure. We also we are concerned. Questions were raised in Parliament by hon. Ameer Meea too. So, I did answer that we were doing the needful for the temporary relocation of Port Louis Fire Station at Bulk Sugar Terminal. Unfortunately, no bids were received.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Ramano!

Mr Ramano: Merci, Madame la présidente. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir une copie du *site plan* du terrain qui a été identifié pour le *Fire Station* à Quatre Bornes ?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, Madam Speaker, but I do not have the document with me. So, I will table it in the next session tomorrow or give it to the hon. Member.

Madam Speaker: Time is over!

MOTION

SUSPENSION OF S.O. 10(2)

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I beg to move that all the business on today's Order Paper be exempted from the provisions of paragraph (2) of Standing Order 10

Mr Hurreeram rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BILL

Second Reading

THE APPROPRIATION (2019-2020) BILL 2019

(No. X of 2019)

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on the Appropriation (2019-2020) Bill 2019 (No. X of 2019).

Question again proposed

Madam Speaker: Hon. Aliphon!

(4.17 p.m.)

Mr A. Aliphon (Third Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière): Merci Madame la présidente. Merci de me permettre de parler sur ce nouveau budget. Oui, le dernier, certes, de ce gouvernement, mais lequel gouvernement qui aura, avant tout, présenté cinq budgets à la régulière malgré les « *élections pe vini* » de l'opposition.

Madame la président, sans vouloir copier ou plagier bon nombre d'entre nous, laissez-moi féliciter le Premier ministre et aussi le ministre des Finances pour son budget de continuité, budget du peuple, budget responsable, *Putting people first*, en ramenant comme le dit notre slogan : '*Développement divan ou la porte ou même dan ou lakaz*'. Car, baisser le

gaz, l'essence, le diesel, prévoir des vans neufs pour les écoliers et des autres budgets, c'est ce que dit notre slogan.

J'ai eu un peu peur à prendre la parole car cette opposition aurait pu me taxer de plagier mes collègues. Toutefois, j'aurai pu rester tranquille car mes amis du gouvernement qui ont parlé avant moi ont fini de mettre l'emphasis sur les déceptions du peuple mauricien concernant l'opposition, car on ne spécule pas sur l'avenir, on le construit, nous dit de Rothschild. Cependant, je vais répéter quelques mesures de ce budget 2019, où l'opposition semble ne pas vouloir entendre ou simplement refuse d'entendre.

Cependant, je vais répéter quelques mesures de ce budget 2019 où l'opposition semble ne pas vouloir entendre ou simplement refuse d'entendre comme baisser le gaz de quelques R 30, baisser le pétrole et l'essence encore quelques roupies dans les poches de la population supprimant le *custom duty* et réduction de la *road tax* sur l'achat des vans scolaires, mesure pour les planteurs de cannes, mesure concernant les Chagos et son retour pour Maurice, mesure pour les petites entreprises, mesure pour les agriculteurs et l'achat des 4x4, *duty free* pour les taxis chaque quatre ans, mesure pour booster le secteur des PME et des coopératives et déduction en plus pour les contribuables ; augmentation de la pension de vieillesse de R 500, R 1000 aux fonctionnaires dans l'attente du PRB.

Après toutes ces bonnes mesures, c'est vrai, l'opposition ne pouvait *tape la table* comme je les comprends, ils étaient en état de choc. Et vous savez, Madame la présidente, nous sommes dans l'ambiance des jeux des îles. Eh bien, comment nous, les sportifs, nous appelons cela dans le giron du sport, nous décrivons cette situation comme étant un chaos débout ou tout simplement un chaos technique et ils le sont. Enfin, avec le temps, quand ils seront repris par la population sur leur manque de participation, ils sauront apprécier ce budget, je leur souhaite cette épreuve en tout cas.

Madame la présidente lors des interventions certains de mes amis du gouvernement ont parlé d'absence de développement de leur circonscription à l'exemple du No. 12, No. 8 ou du No.6. J'avais cru que cela était réservé qu'au No. 20 peut-être encore pour le No. 17 ou le No. 14 ou le No.19. Mais je constate simplement c'est un mal généralisé laissé par le gouvernement sortant du parti travailliste et du PMSD depuis 2014. Et je dirais quel gâchis d'être député d'un endroit pendant 10, 15, 20 ou 30 ans et abuser de vos mandants comme cela. Voyons voir, le Premier ministre m'a confié quatre circonscriptions comme PPS depuis deux ans seulement, je lui suis reconnaissant. C'était le No. 19, 17, 14 et 20.

Ma grande surprise a été, tout comme mes collègues du gouvernement, en découvrant que rien n'avait été fait pour aider ces résidents, ces mandants, ces votants et ces députés élus depuis longtemps devront rendre compte quand ils iront sur le terrain très prochainement.

Mais voyons voir, dans l'ancien budget, le chômage plus bas depuis 2001 6,9 en baisse ; le *Negative Income Tax*, 70,000 personnes bénéficient de cette mesure, le salaire minimal, près de 120,000 personnes retrouvent leur dignité. L'Opposition devrait demander aux dames qui font le ramassage d'ordures elles vous diront quel gouvernement qui leur donne un peu de dignité.

Madame la présidente, sur l'électricité, le CEB, 70,000 clients avec une consommation de moins de 85 kW bénéficient d'un tarif spécial. CWA quelques 85,000 compteurs défectueux ont été remplacés et près de 65,000 abonnés ne paient pas. La NDU 47,3 milliards pour 1500 projets de janvier à novembre. Je reviens dessus dans quelques instants. On parlerait du métro express de Port-Louis passant à Barkly qui devient un endroit moderne idem pour Richelieu, la compensation salariale de R 400 déjà faite et donnée. La pension de vieillesse en quatre ans 71% d'augmentation qui sort de R 3000 en 2014 et passe à, tenez-vous bien, de R 6210 pour encore une augmentation de Rs500 et passera à R 6710. Le sport, mon ami l'honorable Sewocksingh disait hier c'était quoi encore refaire les salles des fêtes de Curepipe ou la piscine de Curepipe. Elle a toujours entendu ça mais ne voit rien venir. Hélas, elle a attrapé le même mal que l'honorable Uteem avec le '*nu ti pou fer sa*'. Eh bien, qu'il sache que nous le ferons. Que ce soit la piscine ou l'hôtel de ville de Curepipe et une fois encore, merci au Premier ministre et au ministre des Sports qui suivent ces dossiers comme il faut. Comme nous avons refait le stade George V pour presque R 100 millions, là qui se termine tout comme les anciens champions depuis le 03 octobre 2017 touchent une allocation pour avoir fait honneur à leur pays, tous les ex-champions qui dit mieux.

L'opposition parle de reconnaissance, on parle de reconnaissance, parlons-en. Ceux qui ne reconnaissent pas ces développements spectaculaires des Mauriciens sont ceux qui fréquentent très certainement l'opposition, donc, ont un raisonnement défaitiste de déçu pour ne pas avoir à répondre à leurs mandants ou à leurs enfants qui leur ont fait confiance pendant les 30, 20 ou 15 dernières années.

Madame la présidente, je vais donner à l'opposition quelques autres projets et vous verrez qu'ils font rougir. Du moins, si moi j'étais dans l'opposition, j'aurai eu cette attitude à leur place. Hier, l'honorable Bhagwan avait à un moment donné, dit qu'il faut avoir une

vision, un *drive* pour développer un pays. Eh bien, je suis d'accord avec lui. Vraiment d'accord car c'est pour cela que lui il est dans l'opposition et que nous formons le gouvernement pour diriger et on le fait très bien.

Je vous avais dit que je reviendrais et c'est le moment. Préparez pour taper ! Allons-y ! Pour le No. 19 pour Rose Hill, le VPM a cité la longue liste hier mais je voudrais revenir dessus, à Camp Levieux dans le No. 19 Route Berthaud sera fini dans encore un mois, 30 ans d'attente, où était l'opposition ? Je ne vous parlerai plus de la salle des fêtes du théâtre de Plaza, attendre de 15 à 20 ans encore, a été réalisée en quatre ans seulement. J'espère que l'honorable Uteem ne vienne pas nous dire que c'était prévue avant. Nous allons au No. 17, la liste est tellement longue que j'ai peur de commencer à dire, dans No. 17 quelle région vous voudrez poser la question, ça a été fait.

Nicolas de Serret à Curepipe, fait ; l'accès au cimetière de Bigara, c'est un plaisir de mourir, fait.

(Interruptions)

A Sir Célicourt Antelme à Curepipe, fait ; les Flamboyants à impasse que Cossigny, Flamboyants, Pope Hennessy, Pagoda Lane et De Senneville morcellement, fait. Les aménités Jerningham Street déjà fait, playground à Wooton déjà fait, jardin d'enfant à Cité Joachim, fait. Cour de pétanque à Cité Saint Luc, fait et là ce n'est qu'à Curepipe. Maintenant je prends mon petit bout de papier que je cherche Midlands, la cour du centre communautaire fait, le parcours de santé fait, les drains n'en parlons plus, à 16^{ème} Mille. Certains honorables ont oublié, ils étaient venus à l'inauguration pourtant. Terrain de football fait, il y a trop, la liste est trop longue, je ne vais quand même pas perdre mon temps à tout répéter, venez on vérifie ensemble.

Au No. 14, apparemment un lieu très cher, le leader de l'opposition malheureusement n'est pas là, pour le manque de développement qu'est-ce que les élus de l'opposition ont fait pour cette région, Madame la présidente ? Niet, et c'est honteux. Durant les quatre ans de ce gouvernement, allez voir, La Gaulette un terrain de foot bien barré maintenant, développement à Contours Prune sa berge, son arrêt d'autobus, son centre communautaire tout neuf. A bambous un nouveau centre de rencontre ; à La Valette allez voir, allez à Souillac le chemin de sept cascades fait, à mis coin ces drains faits ; à Riambel terrain de pétanque, fait. A Baie-du-Cap, allez voir, 30 ans d'attente Cité Longtill, à Beryl Blanc, aujourd'hui fait - 30 ans d'attente et deux régions suivantes, je demande aux habitants de

Couteau Raffin, et à Dilo Pourri - et là, je voudrais dire un grand merci à mes amis les honorables Sinatambou et Lesjongard. Je leur demande d'attendre encore quelques semaines, allons dire un mois, ils vont voir arriver leur développement tant attendu depuis 30 ans. C'est sous ce gouvernement, lors de ces cinq dernières années de Pravind Jugnauth aux commandes que nous avons tout fait mais où était passé l' élu pendant 30 ans.

Madame la présidente, maintenant laissez-moi revenir à mon Beau Bassin- Petite Rivière, le numéro 20. Assez avec le jardin de Balfour ou Villemain mais parlons de ce qui n'a pas été fait par les élus depuis 30, 20 ou 10 dernières années. A Pavé d'Amour à Coromandel - *zot baz sa!* Ce n'est que maintenant que le complexe est fait là-bas, attend d'être inauguré. Parlons des habitants de Hermitage, à Coromandel, eux qui, durant 20-30 ans, ont voté un député, qu'a-t-il fait pour cette région de Hermitage, qui égale chute de terre et des pierres. Il faut qu'il le sache, a commencé en deux ans seulement le travail et va être complété à long terme. Voilà pourquoi, il faut un *drive* pour diriger un pays ça nous l'avons avec notre Premier ministre, avec notre vice-Premier ministre, avec notre député Premier ministre que cela plaise ou non aux députés de l'opposition, le travail est en train d'être fait. A Belle Etoile, toutefois une correction - il faudra dire maintenant le nouveau pont reliant Sorèze à Belle Etoile, pas à Coromandel et il ira jusqu'à Gros Cailloux.

Mais parlons de Belle Etoile, même les routes qui attendaient asphalter depuis 15 ans, qui n'avaient pas été faites, aujourd'hui faites. Ré-asphaltées. Dans la même région, Châteauneuf au centre de Beau Bassin, les drains et même une salle municipale ont vu le jour et il aura fallu attendre 30 ans. *Kot zot ti été do?* Mais il faut remercier et ré-remercier le maire, les conseillers de la ville de Beau Bassin-Rose Hill pour les travaux et Madame la présidente, ce n'est pas fini, nous approchons de la cerise sur le gâteau. A Petite Rivière, le dispensaire de Petite Rivière, le parcours de santé La Joliette, on a eu le plaisir mon collègue, Anil et moi-même d'avoir inauguré. Les gens de cette région ont beaucoup payé en 20 ans d'attente et si pas plus, maintenant est une réalité. Vont commencer aussi, il faudrait le dire, d'autres travaux où on a eu, allons dire, quelques pépins. Il faut le reconnaître mais à Gros Cailloux et à Canot, entre routes asphaltés et drains et terrain synthétique de foot et jardin d'enfants, la réponse est 'faits'.

Et, Madame la présidente, ce n'est pas la cerise ce qui va suivre, parlons de la région Chebel, 15 ans d'attente pour voir comment arrêter le déversement d'eau chez eux. La population m'ont posé une question. Mais qu'ont fait ces députés depuis 30 ans, 15 ans ou 10

ans. Soyez rassurés, Madame, le travail commence incessamment là-bas, en deux ans seulement.

Aussi pour Bellevue, je voudrais citer mon ami l'honorable Sawmynaden, qui l'autre jour, avait parlé des militants *coltars* qui sont restés *lor coltar*. Bien, je vais améliorer cette remarque car dans Albion, il y a Bellevue. Les militants *coltars* de Bellevue, eux, ils sont restés dans la boue jusqu'aux aujourd'hui, 30 ans d'attente et c'est ainsi que dans les mois à venir dans Bellevue, ces militants dans la boue vont voir leur route en la boue être *coltarée* dans un mois. C'est un bien que je leur souhaite car ils le méritent. Ils ont su attendre, ils vont attendre et ce sera ce gouvernement *Lepep* qui va leur donner ce bonheur.

Madame la présidente, pour finir, permettez-moi de nous présenter la cerise sur le gâteau. Quelques députés de l'opposition de l'actuel gouvernement devraient rougir pour ce projet. Tous les habitants ont entendu quelque 30 ans pour voir arriver ce projet en chantant Anne, ma sœur Anne. Ils n'ont jamais rien vu venir pas de projet maintenant il est là, là, là - déjà en place grâce à ce gouvernement mené par le Premier ministre et son équipe. Merci une fois encore à mon ami Anil pour son coup de main et je suis fier de ce projet, de mon projet le pont d'Aliphon. Erreur ! Excusez-moi, le pont d'Avignon. Excusez-moi ! Erreur ! C'est le pont d'Albion. Malgré tous les bâtons, après une attente de 30 ans, fait en trois mois seulement. C'est cela que j'appelle le travail sérieux d'une équipe gouvernementale sérieuse que les résidents d'Albion et de Maurice sauront appréciés pour les prochaines élections.

Madame la présidente, après les moqueries de l'opposition, budget la bouche doux, budget à-peu-près, demandez à l'opposition d'aller poser la question à la population dehors, ils auront bien vite leur réponse car la population pense simplement que c'est ce gouvernement qui se soucie pour eux. Un gouvernement qui pense à partager la richesse du pays avec eux - *pas mett dan coffre*, qu'ils peuvent compter sur nous car augmenter la pension de vieillesse, baisser le gaz, baisser l'essence, le diesel ; augmentation pour les pêcheurs, pour l'*income tax* est une participation au bien-être du pays. Ils seront faire leur choix et la différence avec l'Opposition, le moment venu. Sans crainte, je voudrais dire au Premier ministre, avant de terminer – 'continuez votre bon travail'.

Félicitations pour vos victoires, dans votre cas pour les Chagos, pour votre travail concernant la drogue et que vous pouvez compter sur moi et sur nous pour vous soutenir encore et encore.

Je voudrais aussi remercier le DPM, monsieur Ivan Collendavelloo, le vice-Premier ministre, mes collègues honorables et nous pouvons dire que sans crainte, nous affronterons les prochaines élections au moment venu.

Madame la présidente, merci.

(4.37 p.m.)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Abbas Mamode!

Mr S. Abbas Mamode (Fourth Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East): Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Before I address the Assembly about the 2019-2020 Budget, I would like to point out that I will not criticize for the sake of criticizing or merely as a Member of the Opposition. I shall, as part of my duty, as a Member of the Parliament and a representative of the population, highlight the shortcoming of this Budget bearing in mind the ply of the people of Mauritius.

My dear colleagues present in the House, what does a Budget mean to the Mauritians? Madam Speaker, a budget for our population is most importantly about improving people's life, delivering the best for our nation, a budget is what occupies the mind of almost everyone months before it is delivered and weeks after. It is the hope of many. The hope that after the Budget, maybe finally it is the time that one will be able to invest in a house; maybe they will see changes in their neighbourhood and above all, maybe *caddie pou plis rempli la fin du mois*. Unfortunately, once more, one more time, fourth time in a row, none of these will actually be materialised. Throughout my speech, Madam Speaker, I will elaborate on how this budget failed to meet up to expectation and is a repetition of unaccomplished, previous budgetary measures together with unrealised electoral promises.

Before proceeding further, Madam Speaker, in his reply to the Leader of the Opposition's PNQ of 17 June, that is yesterday, the hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Finance wrongly asserted that in 2011, when the Leader of the Opposition was Finance Minister, he had drawn down Rs1 billion from the Special Reserve Fund of the Bank of Mauritius. Madam Speaker, I would like to correct the hon. Prime Minister's misconception and state that the hon. Leader of the Opposition, in actual fact, transferred Rs1 billion from the Special Reserve Fund to the stated and paid up capital of the Bank of Mauritius, thus strengthening the Bank of Mauritius share capital and its balance sheet.

Madam Speaker, the proposal of the hon. Prime Minister to draw Rs18 billion from the Bank of Mauritius special reserve to pay down public debt with, if acted upon, will severely weaken the Bank of Mauritius balance sheet and for the hon. Prime Minister to pretend otherwise is both reckless and imprudent.

Madam Speaker, I am tabling the communiqué issued by the hon. Leader of the Opposition clarifying the hon. Minister's misconception, together with a copy of the balance sheet. Innocently, yet rightfully, it is everyone's aspiration to have access to the basic needs, one of which is having a place they can call home. From the very beginning, during the electoral campaign, it was promised that 10,000 houses would be built and priority would be given to the poor in the 2015 and 2016 Budget Speech. The poor and middle-class people heard the plans of building houses for them, yet many of them, as we are talking today, are still on the waiting list. Where are we with the construction of those decent dwelling which the Prime Minister very beautifully and rightly termed? In his 2018 Budget Speech, the Prime Minister himself referred to the waiting list and I will quote –

“Today, I am making a pledge to accelerate our programme to construct decent houses and apartments for low income families. Too many of them have been on the waiting list for too long.

I am pleased to announce that the NHDC will start a vast programme of construction in 2018-19. Our aim is to build 6,800 new social housing units over the next two years.”

Before moving on, I will highlight that it was not in the first or second budget that the Prime Minister was talking about the waiting list, it was in the third budget, under his Government, which means that he has hereby admitted the weaknesses in the social housing development under his Government.

Madam Speaker, the population would like to know whether the list he made reference to is still there, has shortened or names have only been added to it. How many of the 6,800 new social houses have been constructed and attributed actually? Questions are many but as an answer, we get to know in the 2019 Budget that 6,000 houses will be built. At the end of the day, the population is only confused with different numbers 10,000, 6,000, 6,800, 6,000, merely stating figures in the budget will not help the poor people, Madam Speaker. We cannot and will not applaud such speeches - hon. Sinatambou is not here - where plans are made, intentions are announced but nothing is being done, Madam Speaker.

In addition, it is stated that 11,000 people will receive Internet freely, but it is more important to ask how many people were devoid of electricity during the four and a half years of this Government's mandate. Madam Speaker, it is highly heart breaking to realise the reality that poverty still prevails in Mauritius. There is still a shortage of electricity in many Mauritian houses. Hence, I firmly believe that electricity is more essential than free Internet. I cannot refrain myself, Madam Speaker, from referring to the past budgets to show how the present is, to a large extent, a replica of the past four speeches. How same measures are being presented to the population as new, like we say, *met enn tigit maquillage par ici par la*. The repetitions are clear indications, Madam Speaker, that year after year, the Government is tricking the population into believing that they are coming up with new projects which, in fact, are projects they already presented in the past and were not materialised.

Madam Speaker, I will talk briefly about Agalega which falls under my constituency. In 2015 Budget, chapter 151, it was mentioned that with the assistance of the Indian Government, Rs750 m. will be invested in the construction of a new airstrip and new jetty facilities. Budget 2017, chapter 311, again, it was mentioned that thanks to the financial assistance from India, a new runway, as well as a jetty will be constructed. And when I read the 2019 budgetary measures concerning Agalega, it reads:

“Our compatriots in Agalega will benefit from a new runway and a new jetty that will substantially improve air and sea connectivity. Works are progressing smoothly and are expected to be completed by February 2021.”

I understand that big projects take time to be completed, but same thing is being repeated again and again just to make the population believe that the Government is working very hard, making a runway, making a new jetty, to facilitate the life of people of Agalega.

According to the hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, works are expected to be completed in February 2021. I hope and believe that by that time, the new Government will have new measures to present to the House to improve the daily life of the people of Agalega. *Développement à l'envers*, Madam Speaker. I am not against *développement*, but we are made to believe that progress is occurring regarding Agalega, but the situation is stating the contrary, Madam Speaker. It is now that houses are to be built. It seems that the people of Agalega come afterwards. Madam Speaker, we are still in the dark. Members of Constituency No. 3 are still in the dark, and we need more clarification concerning the issue of Agalega.

Moving on, Madam Speaker, I will address the unemployment issue. I wish that I could sincerely congratulate the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, and all the hon. Members at the other side of the House over the lowest rate of unemployment. Lowest rate of unemployment! It is, at least, what they are saying. The hon. Leader of the Opposition already explained in his speech on Thursday how it is, in fact, a farce. He also supported his arguments with figures. Therefore, I will briefly make my point on this. I think people in my constituency will testify that I am indeed a *politicien* of proximity. I stay a lot in contact with the youth *sur le terrain*. Those young people, the younger generation, Madam Speaker, do not share the same opinion as my fellow friend of the majority concerning unemployment. As for them, whether the HSC holders or young graduates, they are still struggling. During the electoral campaign and previous Budgets, the youngsters had promises about job creation. Where are the jobs? We are at the door of the new elections, new promises will be made, some of which we have already started to hear the echos: *les mesures qui vont être concrétisées en janvier*.

Madam Speaker, how can we expect our younger generation to have faith in our institutions in such case. On the other hand, in the 2019-2020 Budget, we have measures like introducing a Post-Study Work Visa to allow international students to work for three years in Mauritius after completion of undergraduate studies. I am aware that it is further mentioned that this Post-Study Work Visa concerns sectors where there is scarcity of skills. But, as a patriot, as a responsible representative of the people, I would applaud the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance if I read measures on tackling the issue of brain drain instead. In my endeavour to show how unaccomplished measures from previous Budgets are served to us in the 2019-2020 Budget, how this Budget is not a Budget that has done justice to us all, as mentioned by hon. Minister Sinatambou.

I will now talk about the Health Sector. I will ask the House to bear with me, as I will be reading chapters from past Budgets on health care. I assure you, Madam Speaker, that it breaks my heart to undertake such an exercise, but it is important to lay emphasis on how the past Budgets failed, and in the same line, providing that the ‘Embracing a brighter future together as a Nation ‘ Budget is no exception.

2015-2016 Budget, paragraph 158 reads as follows –

“A number of new projects will be implemented ranging from the setting up of a New Cancer Centre, to the implementation of the e-health project, and to the construction of a new state-of-the-art ENT hospital.”

2016-2017 Budget, paragraph 230 –

“Second, a new ENT hospital will be constructed at Vacoas.

Also at paragraph 232

“...technical studies will be carried out on the construction of a new modern eye hospital at Moka (...).”

2017-2018 Budget, paragraph 234 –

- two linear accelerators for the treatment of cancer patients at Victoria Hospital and the New Cancer Hospital and other high-tech equipment;
- Three new Mediclinics at Quartier Militaire, Bel Air and Stanley;
- Two new Community Health Centres at St. Francois Xavier and L’Espérance;
- Construction of a modern Warehouse Facility for pharmaceutical drugs and medical consumables;

2018-2019 Budget, paragraph 166 –

“A warehouse for medical project. A New Cancer Centre will be set up.”

2019-2020 Budget, paragraph 203 -

“The e-health project will soon be implemented as a major reform in the public health.”

Also at paragraph 215, where it is said –

Our plan is to:

- construct a modern warehouse for pharmaceutical products;
- complete the new Cancer Hospital and the ENT Hospital;
- a new Mediclinic at Floréal which will start operations this year;
- the construction of four other Mediclinics at Quartier Militaire, Stanley, Coromandel and Bel Air; and
- seven Health Centres at Petite Rivière, Baie du Tombeau, Phoenix, Roche Bois, Pointe aux Sables, Grand’Baie and St François Xavier.

Madam Speaker, personally, I have nothing against the hon. Minister of Health. I have nothing personal. However, we are talking about a serious aspect of the society here and I can't remain insensible. The health care, Madam Speaker, should have been one of the top priorities of this Government. Fourth Budget! All we have, unfortunately, and helplessly witnessed, is unaccomplished measures. E-health, zero! *Dossier encor p perdi dan lopital!* Just a little reminder, we are 2019 and talking about artificial intelligence. New Cancer Centre, zero! It is a pity to see how cancer patients have to wait for chemotherapy. The list is long, Madam Speaker. I can continue talking about the problems in the Health Care Sector for hours, Madam Speaker.

Concerning the community health centres, to mention one, despite being announced ample of time, Madam Speaker, in the Budget that a health care centre will be set up at St François Xavier, there is no sign over there of such centre. Same for Pointe aux Sables!

(Interruptions)

Pou fer! The next Government will have to remediate to the delays and all types of problems ranging

Madam Speaker: Order!

Mr Abbas Mamode: *Gagn dimal sa!* Madam Speaker, the next Government will have to remediate to the delays...

Madam Speaker: Order, please!

Mr Abbas Mamode: ...and all types of problems ranging from administrative issues to waiting time before actually getting a treatment.

Regretfully, Madam Speaker, the new Minister of Health will have a lot to do in order to upgrade the Health Care Sector. Despite announcement made in the past concerning a modern warehouse for pharmaceutical products, we still have problems. I can only hope for the best in the next year's Budget with a new Government.

(Interruptions)

Furthermore, I expected that in this Budget, effort would be made...

Madam Speaker: Hon Jhugroo! Don't interrupt the hon. Member!

Mr Abbas Mamode: Mo compren li gagn dimal. Furthermore, Madam Speaker, I expected that in this Budget, effort will be made to better analyse, understand and treat the

problem of climate change. In an era where the impact of climate change is getting more severe day by day, the nation expected more seriousness on the part of the Government.

I will start with the simplest effect of climate change, creating miseries to the nation, Madam Speaker, with floods. In 2017, budget intentions were announced for providing drain project at Pereybere, Fond du Sac, Flacq, St Pierre, Clementia, Camp Carol, Grand Bois, Bel Ombre and a number of other high-risk areas across the island. People were very happy. They were hoping that in the near future, they would no longer have to fear for their lives, run to community centres, in short, not to live the trauma of floods. What happened, Madam Speaker? In 2019 Budget, in the short paragraph dedicated to climate change, we got to know that to date works at Fond du Sac have already started. The intention was made in 2017 and two years later, all we get is works have already started. In a nutshell, this is what has been done in this budget. They took measures announced in the past. In some case, the latter has work in progress while in others simply like I said earlier *mette ene tigit maquillage* presented as new. It is a very good thing to consider using renewable energy. It is commendable that the Government is making attempts to contribute on national level in decelerating global warming.

On the other side, Madam Speaker, we must not forget that we are more concerned with the effect of climate change rather than causing climate change. Therefore, priority should be given to educating our population of how to prepare themselves. Climate change is real. It is a fact that our island has and will be impacted. So, the Government should consider instructing the islanders about how to live with it. We cannot continue to build houses like we did before. People should know about flooding problems, areas at risk and so on. One will not acquire this knowledge on his or her own. We must initiate campaigns, groups to instruct the nation about climate change and I maintain not only about how we can help to slow down but also how we need to adapt our lifestyle with the effect so as not to be in further distress.

(Interruptions)

Bien chagrin, mauvais manière.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Abbas Mamode, please proceed with your speech! It is up to me to draw the attention of any hon. Member if they are misbehaving.

Mr Abbas Mamode: Moreover, Madam Speaker, the Government made enormous claims, expressed their plan and intention but fell short on delivering when it came to the

24/7 water supply, water round the clock. What happened to that? The presentation of the last Budget is behind us. Election is at the threshold, but no 24/7 water. *Pani naiba*, Madam Speaker. The country and the population can feel the effects of flood and drought at the same time.

It is indeed the effect of climate change, but we cannot remain idle, Madam Speaker. New water collection system should have been on the agenda of the Government. I know they will say there are projects, things are being done. Nonetheless, Madam Speaker, results are not here at the end of the day. What the nation expects from the Government is result, *pas travaye la pou faire, gouvernement pou faire*. At the end of the day, what a nation expects, Madam Speaker, from a Government is results. They were not elected by the population to year in year out express their intention which on paper might seem admirable and in reality nothing is being done. *Réziltat la pas la*.

I would also like to point some points on the tourism sector, Madam Speaker, The figures are quite alarming, especially when we look at what is happening in the sugar cane and manufacturing sectors. Tourism sector is an informal language. We can say it is our lifeline. Being one of the pillars of the Mauritian economy, the most important pillar, this sector deserves more careful analysis from the Government. When we consider the ratio of our importation and exportation, the debt of the Government, the situation in the manufacturing sector, it becomes even more frightening to see the direction the tourism has taken recently. The downfall in the tourism industry is indeed to be treated as quickly and efficiently as possible. If Mauritius, as a product, is no more appealing, visitors are starting to surf Mauritius. The immediate action to be taken should be rebranding of the product. Why not consider eco-tourism? More time and more energy should be put in this direction. Many African countries like South Africa, Kenya are already benefiting from eco-tourism and here in Mauritius what are we doing? *Nous en colère, nous pe rode sikann ek requin!* Irresponsible statement of our leaders on the fauna will no way encourage eco-friendly tourists to come to our island. Across the globe, younger and older generations are becoming more and more environmentally friendly. Of course, in relation to what is happening, global warming, climate change and all.

We have to care for our image, Madam Speaker. National campaign of cleanliness will, in a way or the other, benefit the tourist industry. The hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, in Chapter 112, states that cleanliness campaign has been on the agenda for a long time. I am not discrediting such initiative but it is time we also lay more emphasis on

sensitisation campaigns and penalties. We pollute; we are the polluters; we clean. We need to educate and warn the population to keep the island cleaner and should not delay any further on this like we say 'prevention is better than cure'.

The Leader of the PMSD, hon. Xavier Duval, did such a beautiful work in the tourism sector. I hope that in the next mandate the next Government will be able to refuel this sector and be more innovative than the present one.

Furthermore, I will briefly express my disappointment to the measures taken in the education sector. First, from what we can see in the different medias of what is happening in our schools, I believe that 34 Disciplinary Masters are not enough, Madam Speaker, Second, every now and then, programmes are introduced. This time it is the leader in me. But all these are not efficient. It demonstrates a decreasing number of students actually getting credit in School Certificate. Like I said at the beginning of my speech, I will not criticise just for the sake of criticising. Hence, I will congratulate the Government on the intention of equipping 20 State Secondary schools with ramps and rails and adapted toilets for disabled students hoping they will make an exception this time and will materialize their intention. I cannot and will not end without some examples of several failures to keep promises in my own Constituency. If the elected Member from my constituency who is on the other side of the House, would walk on the street, exchange with the people and listen to their ply, maybe the situation would have been better.

As a Member of the Parliament even though in the Opposition, I am trying my best to improve things, but some from the majority would be more than welcome. Youngsters are still jobless. The young people of Roche Bois still feel marginalized, yet the Government claims it is working towards integration, meritocracy. *Cela laisse à désirer*. Idriss Goomany, the only social hall, the only place, where sport indoors, is closed for more than two years. Jardin de la Plaine Verte – *état déplorable*, insecurity still...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: There is too much noise in the House, please.

Mr Abbas Mamode: *Menjago pe gayne du mal*. In this Budget, it is announced that Rs1.2 billion will be invested in infrastructural projects such as gymnasium at Stanley Rose Hill, football field at Pointe aux Sables, Tranquebar, Vallée Pitot and several other projects across the island. I will not get into detail Madam Speaker, about where they will get money to fund for these. They are very good at making announcements, very good, but what about

maintaining the existing football pitch, children corner. Yesterday night, I raised a matter to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, what was her reply? *Tous jardins dans Maurice casser*. I suppose the Minister of Local Administration is aware of the state in which the Jardin de la Plaine Verte is; how the different playgrounds need to be renovated, yet nothing. I think it is better to make *petites annonces* - *fer bokou la population croire ki bokou projets pe mett en place pour zott...*

Madam Speaker: Please, I have allowed the Creole language to a certain extent, but let me remind the House that as yet, the Creole language is not accepted in this House.

(Interruptions)

Mr Abbas Mamode: Bear with me. Before ending my speech, hon. Showkutally Soodhun, who is not here, yesterday, I suppose he said that he went to meet people in Phoenix or New York. They were all very happy. I would like to invite him to have a round in la foire Cité Martial and in the shops in Plaine Verte – Hassen Sakir Street and the surroundings in order to take notice if the merchants are happy or not whether they are working or they are actually undergoing a highly, Madam Speaker, recession period.

On an ending note, Madam Speaker, as this is the last Budget before the elections and, therefore, the last budgetary debate, I will seize the opportunity to salute all my friends on the Opposition side and especially from the PMSD, the former Deputy Prime Minister and present Leader of the Opposition; former Ministers, hon. Dan Baboo, hon. Aurore Perraud, Thierry Henry who was PPS just like me, we did not hesitate...

(Interruptions)

We did not hesitate...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Order please!

Mr Abbas Mamode: We did not hesitate to leave the Government as for us, the nation comes first.

(Interruptions)

Prosecution Bill. We could not be part of certain decisions which were unfair to the population. For this, I am proud. I am proud to be a Member of the PMSD. I am proud to be on this side of the House, Madam Speaker. Summing up on my analysis which I believe is

the same for most of the population. I would say that it was a Budget that does not really give us an indication or a vision for a brighter tomorrow. It rather provokes, Madam Speaker, a sense of fear for the future. Luckily, the elections are not far. It is a Budget of repetition, of past unaccomplished measures, intentions and plans. God knows if, at least, some of these will see the day or not. I cannot be too optimistic on that.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I suspend the sitting for half an hour.

At 5.16 p.m., the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 5.53 p.m. with Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mrs Boygah!

Mrs D. Boygah (Second Member for Vieux Grand Port & Rose Belle): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, for us to judge a budget, we have to get a taste, a feel what people outside this House think, feel and react about us. For me, being an analyst *de profession*, I usually do random sampling to know what is the feedback and, as I said, you can make a judgment of it. And the feedback, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it does not mean, being a politician, it should be for my Constituency itself. It can be anywhere, *en bas la boutique* or anywhere in this country. My observation, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is that, when you meet people, elderly people, I quote what they tell you: *Beti, hei budgetwah to baria bah! Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, okar bap se master ha.* Veut dire que l'honorable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth a été à la hauteur de ce budget, et avec tous les respects de Sir Anerood Jugnauth, il était beaucoup mieux, beaucoup plus.

Dans ma circonscription, il y a beaucoup de pêcheurs. When you meet these fishermen, they tell you: *Madame, dire missié Pravind, budget la mari top.* When you move ahead, you go somewhere, not especially in my constituency, you go to a beauty parlour, as everyone goes to a beauty parlour, you meet women, not only women, you meet even men also in a unisex beauty parlour, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and you hear women who never ever have voted in their life, and they come and tell you: *Madame Boygah, passez le message à votre Premier ministre, ministre des Finances, dites lui que cette éléction qui va venir très bientôt, moi et ma famille seront les premières d'aller voter. Pourquoi?* Why, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir? The why is very simple, because these ladies were worried about their kids, their sons and their daughters. When we have drugs all around Mauritius, nobody dared, except Sir Anerood Jugnauth, to stop, to put a halt and to arrest drug traffickers in Mauritius,

but the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance is doing more of it and his mission is not over. And when you move ahead also, after the Budget day, on 10 June, when I reached home, I made it a must to listen to all the comments of the TV presenters, knowing the feel of the budget and analyzing the budget. I have two sons at home, one is 14 and one will be 17 very soon. My two sons are not interested with the budget, but still I put on the TV quite loud for them to hear when they were having dinner for them to know what is going on in the Budget. What the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has offered to the population. It clicks because my son, 17 years old, who was having his dinner, he just stopped when he heard Liverpool ...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please! Hon. Abbas Mamode, you just made your speech. Do you have something else to say? Then keep quiet, please!

Mrs Boygah: Liverpool Football Academy very soon in Mauritius, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir! It means that for all the youngsters - not only my son – in this country, it is a dream which comes true. *Ils sont aspirés, ils sont motivés, ils ont plus d'énergie* just by the name of Liverpool Football Academy, Mr Speaker, Sir. Even though, they are Manchester fans, it does not mean anything. In fact, it helps. And also without forgetting the taxi drivers, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, who for long never reacted, but with this budget, they are all happy, smiling when they are going to get their duty free, not five years, but four years. It is a goal, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this budget does not depart from what has characterised our mandate. Every budget of ours brings along a series of measures met to bridge the gap between those who have not or not enough and those who have in abundance. In fact, all of our actions are guided by this philosophy. I will come to the measures later, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it requires more than guts to resiliate Betamax contract. The clauses being drafted not with ink, but with 'max.', short for 'maximum' and *béton armé*, Mr Deputy Speaker Sir. That's why I refer this scam as a '*béton max millennium scandal*'. We are talking here of billions, I repeat billions of rupees which were taking the direction of private coffers, not only in one go, but for continuous 15 years, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. *Mais c'était sans compter, avec Sir Anerood Jugnauth qui a initié la résiliation de ce honteux contrat.* Rambo demeure toujours Rambo!

(Interruptions)

Comme le bon vin, il se bonifie avec l'âge. Les anglais l'ont appris à leurs dépens, *Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir*. Il n'a connu que le succès à plusieurs paires, alors que la défaite est orpheline.

Permettez-moi, M. le président d'ouvrir une parenthèse pour parler de Chagos. Beaucoup de ceux qui ont critiqué notre action revendiquent aujourd'hui le succès de notre lutte hippique pour le retour de Chagos à notre république, soit ils ont fait ce qu'ils ont pu, ils ont, paraît-il, fait trembler les anglais par leur intervention, ça et là.

Mais l'histoire, M. Le président, retiendra que c'est Sir Anerood Jugnauth qui, contre vents et marais, a tout initié, de la Cour internationale de Justice jusqu'à l'Assemblée des Nations Unies avec les résultats qu'on sait tous. La continuation de cette lutte est maintenant assurée à notre Premier ministre. Sir Anerood Jugnauth a passé le relais à Pravind Kumar Jugnauth. Le puissant Paul Raymond Bérenger du MMM avait proposé comme solution de s'embarquer dans une pirogue et aller défier les américains à Diego Garcia, aussi de continuer de soulever des questions lors des conférences internationales comme les derniers 50 ans, 50 ans, 50 ans.

Ramgoolam, fils, M. le président, n'en parlons pas! Lui, le Londoneer – je vois l'honorable Rutnah me fixer là – confirmait plus British dans son âme, imposait son veto, son non catégorique à notre demande. Nous n'allions pas recueillir plus que dix votes, pensait-il. Ce n'est pas la bonne voie à s'aventurer. Il clamait à ceux qui voulaient entendre que nous n'avons aucune chance de vaincre les anglais sur le terrain. Il nous décourageait d'aller frapper à la porte de la Cour internationale de Justice. Il disait : 'Les conséquences seront néfastes pour le pays.' Aujourd'hui, M. le président, le Parti travailliste revendique sa part dans notre succès et se veut être le plus ardent défenseur de Chagos. Quel toupet! Well, let them be in their world of illusion!

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Budget consolidates the feel good factor across the country. It was so important for us to take on-board the population in compiling our mission to success.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Finance for his Budget which is a heavenly gift for the downtrodden and those who have not and the middle-income earners. Of course, the numerous experts so-called 'independent press' and in Opposition some *dinosaures* coming out from their retirement, would find shortcomings and from their lounge would criticise. Even the infamous '*minis trou*' has dared to criticise our

Minister of Finance, the hon. Minister who is now with his 7 to 8 Budget Speech. Who cares? Not us from this side of the House! The Opposition in collaboration with some so-called 'independent press' play a safe game.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, ever heard of this saying: *'pile je perds, face tu gagnes'*. They are winners both sides. If the Government takes measures for the population like the one in favour of pension earners, then we are accused of increasing national debt. If we give Rs30 increase daily to fishermen for bad weather, then it is not enough, it is discriminatory. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, yet, if we closely look at the different increases, we will find that the pensioners...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order please! Hon. Adrien Duval, please!

Mrs Boygah: We will find that for the pensioners, it will be Rs500 for 30 days, that is, around Rs16.50 daily. For the civil servants, Rs1000 divided by 30 days comes to around Rs33 refundable daily. Where is the core injustice towards *enn section de la population*, as maliciously claimed by some, and one, particularly, hon. Ganoo, not to name him.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, have you ever seen a bulb before it goes off for good. It shines more than it usually does before it goes off and is dispatched in the waste carrier to Mare Chicose, in my constituency. This is the fate of those *pyromanes* who would stoop to any level, even to put at stake our nation *arc-en-ciel* for a few votes. Some qualify this Budget as an *électorale* one. True it is, it should be.

I further add that not this only alone Budget, but all the four Budgets, the previous ones, were *électorale*. All contain measures met to alleviate the poor. All the no-tax budgets were oriented towards improving the life of the most unfortunate. All did contain increase in pension and *prestation sociale*. So, why only this Budget is called *électorale*'. Say it for all of them, the four of them.

Cylinder gas has witnessed more than one drop in price. Why do you only qualify only the latest one as *mesure électorale*. It is not the first time that fuel and diesel have gone down. Certainly not! But still people continue to tell us that it is just before the election.

The fact remains, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that we don't even give an ear to those people that have been bitten by the mosquito, mosquito infected by various sayings, as always said by my good friend: *'narien pas bon mem'*. Nearly five years now, some in

particular have been predicting anticipated election each week. Each week, they say: ‘*Election derier la porte. Nou la liste 60 candidats fine pret, nou pe alle tou sel, nou pli fort que jamais*’. Bluff, bluff, bluff! During his Saturday press conference, the master speaks alone and like zombies, the other passive *dinosaures*, I can say, historic, and does not even give a nod of approval, so much they are even used to the *disque rayé*, Mr Deputy Speaker.

I heard hon. Reza Uteem who was jubilating that elections are due soon. I asked myself how many seats this party aspires to, with around 10% of electorate to now represents...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Quirin, at least show some respect to the...

(Interruptions)

Mrs Boygah: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I can assure you that at No. 11...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: I am not talking to you...

Mrs Boygah: At No. 11, the whole of the region has joined our rank. Many prominent main activists of the Labour Party also has *viré mam*. Why so much jubilation? I don't know.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is a historic avenue that our Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has adopted and gifted to the nation the Minimum Salary and the Negative Income Tax. However, I cannot understand why the Opposition has found not even one word of appreciation for the Minimum Salary and the Negative Income Tax which concern directly 120,000 *dimoune*, employees and touches about half of the population, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

While we have metamorphosed for the good of the daily life of the population in a constructive manner during our *tenure*, one, in particular, is planning to change the fate of this country in 10 days. This reminds me of the Hindi film of Anil Kapoor's Nayak, where he became the Prime Minister for one day and wanted to change the life of the whole country. This happened only in Hindi film, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, not in reality. Only *vender rev* and *marsan sirop* that can promise to change the life of people in 10 days. Change for what?

With this guy, we must fear when he calls for a change. He has already voiced his opposition to the much acclaimed minimum salary. Will he deny these employees of their acquired right to a minimum wage under the pretext that many companies will close down? Nothing is impossible for someone who during his Prime Ministership has allowed his Minister of Finance to *ras di pain depi la bous zenfan ZEP* to finance his budget, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir?

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to voice my appreciation for the following measures which will benefit the woman folk. *R 50,000 pour la perte d'emploi homme et femme, baisse du prix ménager, la présence obligatoire d'un moins d'une femme sur le Board de la direction de chaque entreprise.*

And no wonder this Government confers a prestigious position to woman community. Our Prime Minister has brought forward a striking scheme whereby women entrepreneurs are being granted Rs500,000 at a low interests, and most important, without the requirement of a guarantor. Such a relief to the women folk.

M. le président, c'est avec un sentiment de devoir accompli que m'adresse à cette auguste Assemblée. J'ai conscience de l'opportunité que j'ai eue d'être élue du peuple et de servir la circonscription No. 11, Rose Belle- Vieux Grand Port, et mon pays en tant que PPS des circonscriptions 11, 12 et 13.

Je tiens à remercier mon leader, l'honorable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, pour la confiance qu'il a placée en moi et de m'avoir accordée une attention particulière suite à mes demandes financières et logicielles pour ma circonscription, sachant que l'honorable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth tient toujours la circonscription No. 11 en haute estime.

Je profite de cette occasion pour saluer notre ministre Mentor, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, qui nous gratifie de sa présence et de ses conseils. Merci beaucoup, Sir, sans oublier mes deux colistiers, les personnels du bureau CAB, les personnels de la NDU et surtout, mes supers ingénieurs, une équipe de plus en plus nombreux de *mam* volontaires. J'espère sincèrement d'avoir été à la hauteur de leurs attentes et celles de mes mandants.

Et en tant que PPS, M. le président, j'étais plus actif sur le terrain, au Parlement. Nous, les PPS, nous ne répondons pas à des questions parlementaires, ni sommes-nous en mesure de poser des questions supplémentaires, ce qui donne l'impression erronée d'une relative absence de participation au Parlement. Nous, les PPS, notre action se situe sur le terrain. Un PPS ou une PPS est la vitrine du gouvernement dont l'image en dépend. Je

m'abstiendrai à comparer notre bilan de presque cinq ans dans notre circonscription, la 11, à celle de notre prédécesseur en 27 ans - *linn sauvé, li pas là!* - car, on ne peut comparer que ce qui est comparable, M. le président.

Je ne fais pas de la politique politicaille en avançant que la circonscription No. 11 était complètement délaissé, car c'est lui qui faisait passer pour le roi du sud. Tous les villages étaient dans un état piteux. Piteux état M. le président! C'était vraiment un spectacle de désolation qui se présentait à nous, les élus de la circonscription, moi, en particulier, en ma capacité de *PPS*. Tout était à refaire. J'avais la tâche première de remettre tous les infrastructures publiques en état et d'apporter les développements dans chaque coin et recoin de chaque village.

Le défi à relever était immense. En cette année, où nous entamons la dernière ligne droite de ce premier mandat, je peux avec fierté annoncer à la Chambre que j'ai pu mener à terme avec l'aide de mes colistiers, l'honorable Mahen Kumar Seeruttun et l'honorable Premdut Koonjoo, plus de 600 projets. Oui, j'ai bien dit 600 projets, M. le président, dans la circonscription, No. 11. La circonscription est maintenant transformée de fond en comble. Oui, il fait bon véhiculer à travers tous les villages. Plus de routes défoncées, plus de drains défaillis, de nouvelles espaces aménagées ou refaites.

J'ai tenu à prendre les habitants *on board*, donc, tout est en concertation avec les habitants. Je prends l'exemple de la rénovation du Jardin de Mont Fertile qui était devenu un vrai *eyesore*. C'était resté le même avec une dégradation avec le temps depuis son inauguration par Sir Anerood Jugnauth, une trentaine année de cela.

Je fais appel aux Forces Vives de l'endroit pour connaître leur avis et c'est ainsi que ce jardin est maintenant doté d'un terrain de basketball, des équipements de *outdoor gym* de dernier cri, d'une espace de jeux sécurisés pour les enfants, un *Mini Health Track*, un *court* de pétanque, un *smart kiosk*, un mini amphithéâtre, et tant d'autres. Une clôture complètement refaite, toutes les demandes des habitants ont été incluses, c'est un bijou maintenant. C'est un bijou qu'on lègue aux habitants des endroits. M. le président, les parents y déposent leurs enfants en toute quiétude, même plus que le village avoisinant.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Constituency of Rose Belle-Vieux Grand Port extends from Nouvelle France to Quatre Sœurs, comprises of 13 Village Councils area and englobes 29 localities. A judicious use of the last four budget provisions were made to bring development to each and every corner of the constituency.

Projects included: construction of drains, roads and amenities to reduce the gap between the big and small villages to maximum. Just to mention a few, flooding problem in the Constituency No. 11, flooding due to climatic change and unplanned construction is a serious concern in the Constituency.

Three regions which are highly affected by flood in the Constituency are –

- Nouvelle France, from the Police Station to Aubeeluck Store;
- New Grove, and
- Rose Belle, more precisely Gebert region.

Given that the flooding problem in these areas covered a large region, the NDU appointed a consultant, Gibbs Ltd, for proposal. After various surveys and meeting with the inhabitants, *un premier rapport* has been submitted after an in-depth study with latest technology, Imerys. Presentations were made to the victims of the flooding in each flooded area in presence of the NDU engineers, and myself as PPS. We are trying our best to start these implementations in the coming Budget.

Other areas where inhabitants suffered severe flooding are Grand Sable at Paille en Queue Street. After much effort, a cut-off drain has been completed above and the retention area on highly land to divert rainwater from houses. Furthermore, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, 123 drains have been constructed across the constituency to solve the flooding problem. Just to mention a few - I cannot mention all –

- along Sookdeo Bissoondoyal Street at Rivière des Créoles;
- again, along Sookdeo Bissoondoyal Street at Nouvelle France;
- at the end Marie Jeanne Road, Quatre Soeurs;
- at Nouvelle France, behind ex Ramdin Tea Factory, and
- at Old Grand Port along Aristide Lane.

During this financial year, it is proposed to construct about 22 drains across the constituency, just to name few –

- at débarcadère, Old Grand Port;
- at Cité EDC, Rose Belle - long-awaited for years;
- at Morcellement Orchidée, behind Le Vieux Moulin, Rose Belle, and
- at Koylash Street, Quatre Soeurs.

I wish to highlight that Cité EDC at Rose Belle, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, now known as Résidence Bethlehem is clarified as a *poche de pauvreté*. This area has been completely

neglected for more 20 years. Today, I can proudly announce that the contract has been awarded to X Company Limited for the construction of drains and resurfacing of old roads network.

Furthermore, provisions are also being made for dredging work along natural drains, namely –

- cremation ground at Bois des Amourettes, and
- ex-Railway Road, Cluny.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, concerning social development, the social aspect has been neglected as well for years. Children playgrounds and family parks have been constructed. A children playground with modern equipment has been constructed. The list is long; I will go very fast –

- Mont Fertile garden;
- Bananes, near football ground;
- La Rosa, in the compound of the Social Welfare Centre;
- Rivière des Créoles, near Ferney Community Centre;
- Bois des Amourettes, near the jetty, and
- Bambous Verieux.

This is only six! And three more are under construction at –

- Morcellement Orchidée, Rose Belle;
- Pont Kovil at sub-hall, and
- Union Park at the Greenspace, opposite cemetery.

It is also proposed to construct five more additional children playgrounds during the financial year, as follows –

- Gro Billot, near the football ground;
- Anse Jonchée;
- NHDC Le Bosquet at New Grove;
- NHDC La Roserie at Balisson, and
- Quatre Soeurs, Greenspace.

If I total it, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it comes to 14. A family park has been set up at Mont Fertile with all the facilities to allow family to spend a relaxation time with their children - a real gem. We already mentioned about it. In fact, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are

coming up with a very nice family park at Quatre Soeurs. The Quatre Soeurs site, commonly known as *jardin soular* is being given a new look, with facilities such a kiosk, a jogging track, a petangue court and lighting facilities. And it is in our future project to set up an open gym and a children playground on the site. And no more will be called *jardin soular*, maybe a wellness park now. In fact, we are making it a must to provide jogging tracks wherever possible. Please note, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that an access has been integrated in the project for fishermen in the garden to have access to the sea for collecting bait. Another family park is under construction at Union Park opposite the cemetery on a plot of land previously used as a dumping ground. An open gym, jogging track, a petangue court, a children playground with lighting and parking facilities are under construction at Union Park.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, regarding sports, our Prime Minister gives the best example of being a sportsman and he encourages the whole population to practice at least one sport daily. The new trend, as you know, in the labour market often requires workers to work till late, for example in call centres and offshore sectors, thus allowing little time for sports during the day. Consequently, with a view to promote sports and reduce the incidence of non-communicable disease, seven lighting football ground at seven different locations are being completed in the five months to come, namely at –

- Saint Hubert football ground;
- Quatre Soeurs football ground;
- La Rosa football ground;
- Bananes football ground;
- Old Grand Port football ground;
- Gros Billot football ground, and
- Cluny Football ground.

And four more to come on the list in the Budget 2019-2020, it will be at –

- Union Park football ground,
- Rivière des Creoles football ground;
- Bois des Amourettes football ground, and
- New Grove football ground.

Similarly lighting facilities are also being provided to football and basketball pitches. We have already provided lighting facilities at Beemanick, Cluny, at Rivière des Créoles

football ground and basketball pitches. Lighting facilities will soon be provided at Grand Sable volleyball pitch and basketball pitch. *Circonscription numéro 11 bien éclairé!*

Please note Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that, the volleyball and basketball pitch at Beemanick and Grand Sable has been reconstructed as the previous one was already in a very, very bad state. And the good news is that - I should thank the Minister of Youth and Sports - of the lighting of the Rose Belle Stadium which will a first phase and the second phase will be the gradin that will be coming up. Thank you, hon. Minister.

Again to reduce non-communicable diseases and for a healthy population, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, two open gyms of international quality and world class standards have been constructed in the constituency, namely at Mont Fertile and Union Park. This is an innovation in the constituency. At first, one has been placed and it is operational full fledge at Mont Fertile garden. Another is coming; it is under construction at Union Park and will shortly be in operation. Both sides are provided with lighting facilities to allow use till late at night.

During the coming financial year, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is proposed to construct two additional open gyms at Quatre Soeurs Family Corner and Nouvelle France at Morcellement SIT. Mini soccer pitch, *qui fait ravage un petit peu partout, tout le monde veut avoir un mini soccer pitch chez lui*. You will agree, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the mini soccer pitches are becoming the trend nowadays and there is a high demand for such amenities in the constituency. I am glad to announce to the House that the construction of such a pitch has started at Anse Jonchée and tenders will soon be launched for the two mini soccer pitches at Nouvelle, more precisely at Lamusse Street and Morcellement Orchidée, Rose Belle, behind le *Vieux Moulin*. The mini soccer pitch, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, will be provided with lighting facilities as well. It has been also designed to accommodate jogging tracks all around. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the mini soccer pitch at Lamusse Street is being constructed on the land obtained from the Ministry of Housing and Lands. I have to thank the Minister of Housing and Land and while that of Morcellement Orchidée will be constructed on the plot obtained from the Rose Belle Sugar Estate after tough negotiation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is important to inform the House, there were protests from a group of people against the construction of mini soccer pitch at Anse Jonchée. Protests motivated by personal and political motive. However, I used my good office for meditation and today I can proudly say that the project is on-going to the satisfaction of the majority of the inhabitants. It has been earmarked, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that two additional mini

soccer pitches during this financial year will be at Gébert along the ex-railway road and at Bois des Amourettes on the existing football ground.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, water supply and renewal of water pipes, the House is aware of the fact that through lack of vision the previous Government did not invest in the renewal of water pipes which dates back for years. Some of the pipes are of asbestos, which is very harmful to the health. These water pipes have known severe leakages with heavy loss of water resulting in poor water supply to households. I am glad to announce the House that the renewal of water pipes have been effected at the under-mentioned location in the Constituency No. 11 and the water supply is now regular.

Premièrement, Marie Jeanne Road, Quatre Soeurs; Rivière des Creoles partly; Madame Lolo at Rose Belle; main road of Balisson; from Balisson Reservoir to Mont Fertile Reservoir, and Morcellement Gokhool at Union Park. And special thanks go to the Deputy Prime Minister, hon. Ivan Collendavelloo. Apart from the above, a new reservoir has been built at Balisson.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will go very much in brief to say that multi-purpose complex facilities have been built up at New Grove, Bananes and Nouvelle France which is nearly completed. We have two bridges, the bridges, as you know, following the abolition of railway in Mauritius, the Railway Bridge has always been used by workers and by inhabitants as a shortcut. The bridges, you will agree has outlived their existence and need to be repaired and two bridges in the Constituency, namely the one at Madame Lolo and Cluny, we will shortly get a report from the Consultant and prepare the scope of work. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the list is very long; I better just give an overview of the number of projects that have been completed village-wise in my Constituency.

The list of completed projects village-wise for Constituency No. 11 Rose Belle/Vieux Grand Port, it includes resurfacing, construction of new roads, drains, amenities and on-going projects,

- Rivière des Creoles : 31 ;
- Old Grand Port : 19 ;
- Bois des Amourettes : 17;
- Bambous Virieux : 10;
- Grand Sables : 30;
- Quatre Sœurs : 31 ;

- Nouvelle France : 47 ;
- Cluny: 28;
- Bananes: 16;
- St Hubert: 30;
- New Grove: 94;
- Rose Belle: 68, and
- Union Park: 42

And if we add apart from the NDU other Government agencies namely the –

- RDA;
- the Ministry of Environment;
- le Grand Port District Council;
- the Beach Authority;
- the TRMSU;
- the Central Water Authority, and
- the CEB.

These are all the main agencies investing in the betterment of the Constituency. So, if we add the NDU projects and those of the other authorities, it's totalised to 600 *projets dans la circonscription* Rose Belle/Vieux Grand Port.

And a special thanks goes to all my staffs from the NDU, from the CAB and especially the District Council of Grand Port and Savanne also which have been doing a great work for us to complete 600 *projets dans la circonscription et sans faire mention* apart from the 17 projects announced by the hon. Minister of Finance in the Budget 2019/2020. So, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, 600 *projets* in one Constituency and accomplishment that will go *dans les annales* worth of three super human beings and a godly feat. We did the first economic miracle. I am proud to say that me and my two colleagues, we have done many miracles in the Constituency No. 11 under the chairmanship, under the leadership of the Prime Minister and with the help of the wonderful team of NDU, CAB and District Council.

M. le président nous continuons sur notre lancée pour faire encore et encore plus. M. le président ce budget a créé un *feel good factor* jamais ressenti auparavant. C'est un sentiment de devoir accompli qui nous envahit pour une île Maurice version 2.0, la circonscription No. 11 version 2.0, une victoire de *l'Alliance Lepep* 2.0, M. le président.

To conclude, *M. le président*, I would like to quote Mahatma Gandhi, I quote –

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of the nation.”

But as far as I am concerned, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am inspired by the words of Nelson Mandela which says, I quote –

“I never lose. I either win or learn.”

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Ramano!

(6.36 p.m.)

Mr K. Ramano (Third Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes): M. le président, l'exercice budgétaire a toujours été un savant dosage de priorité avec l'introduction des pôles de développement, la création du capital humain à travers l'éducation et la santé et aussi bien des mesures sociales vers les plus vulnérables. Le taux de croissance depuis 2015 a oscillé de 3,5% à 3,9% avec un contexte international présentant ses propres défis.

Sur une note positive, il convient de souligner que l'inflation est sous contrôle à 2,3% en 2018 avec une prévision de 1,5% pour 2019. Le *unemployment rate* est à un niveau bas malgré le fait que certains analystes économiques considèrent qu'à moins de 4% honorés avoisinait le plein emploi. Un point à considérer c'est le *female labour participation rate* qui est relativement bas à 45% de son potentiel. La création d'emplois a été vivante dans le secteur public alors que le secteur privé qui est censé être le grand pourvoyeur d'emplois, a été plutôt timide.

Le marché du travail fait aujourd'hui face à un défi bien mauricien qui est le vieillissement de la population. Une note positive pour la gestion de l'économie du pays, c'est d'avoir assuré l'équilibre entre une inflation contenue et un taux d'*unemployment* en déclin. Il y a un secteur, M. le président, qui mérite toute notre attention, c'est le secteur du tourisme, malgré les propos rassurants du ministre de tutelle.

Ce qui se passe dans le secteur du tourisme n'est pas un phénomène transitoire. La contraction pendant les cinq derniers mois est des plus préoccupantes et aussi alarmantes, ce qui est contraire à la tendance mondiale. Dans notre région, les Seychelles jouissent de 10% de progression, les Maldives avec un *peak* de 170,000 arrivées de touristes en février et même certaines régions de l'Afrique de l'Est connaissent une progression significative. De janvier à mars, le Sri Lanka a connu des *peaks* à 250,000 arrivées par mois jusqu'à l'attaque terroriste du mois d'avril. Nous n'avons pas su nous positionner comme destination alternative

contrairement aux années précédentes où nous avons bénéficié des conditions d'instabilité prévalant en Thaïlande. L'absence d'un *Proper Monitoring and Scientific Research Unit* au ministère du tourisme se fait sentir pour un *proper diagnosis*. Le secteur est arrivé à la croisée des chemins, il convient de considérer une politique globale, des facteurs aussi variés que sont le prix du billet d'avion, le prix des hôtels, le coût des événements, le facteur de distance et bien sûr une étude comparative des marchés. Il en est de même concernant le coût des opérations que sont les salaires dans le secteur de l'hôtellerie, le prix du fuel, le taux d'échange. Est-ce que les prix pratiqués reflètent la destination mauricienne. Autre point qui m'a été rapporté par bon nombre d'opérateurs, c'est l'attente toujours lassante au niveau du Tourism Authority pour *process* une application. Des fois l'application date de plus de six mois.

M. le président, nous sommes tous d'accord à dire que l'éducation tertiaire demeure un axe de priorité du développement du capital humain. Dans cette même optique, le gouvernement est venu de l'avant avec l'éducation tertiaire gratuite, le nombre de demandes a explosé. La spécialisation, le *postgraduate* est une niche qui contribue à coup sûr à nous mettre sur un nouveau palier de développement. Les parents Mauriciens n'épargnent aucun effort à se sacrifier et à encourager leur enfant à atteindre ce niveau qui le permettra d'avoir une place de choix dans la société.

À l'état actuel de l'*Income Tax Act*, on prévoit un *additional exemption where one of the dependents is a child, pursuing a non-sponsored full time undergraduate course at a recognised tertiary educational institution*. Ma requête au ministre, aujourd'hui, c'est de permettre à ces parents dont les enfants – après maints sacrifices, poursuivent des *postgraduate courses* de pouvoir, eux aussi, réclamer ces *additional exemptions*. Cette mesure, M. le président, va dans le droit fil à donner une éducation de pointe à cette génération de gradués.

M. le président, je souhaite ici aborder un aspect du budget qui est l'accès à la terre et à une maison. Il faut reconnaître que la taxation a souvent été une barrière pour permettre au mauricien de devenir propriétaire de son terrain ou de sa maison. En 2006, le ministre des Finances d'alors avait éliminé purement et simplement le concept de *first time buyer*. Le taux était toutefois sorti de 11% à 5%. Il convient de s'assurer que le prix de l'immobilier est un élément important à considérer pour s'assurer que le *first time buyer* puisse bénéficier de l'exemption des frais d'enregistrement. Après avoir rétabli le concept de *first time buyer* en 2010, le présent budget préconise d'augmenter le *threshold* de R 2 m. à R 2,5 m. pour

l'acquisition des terrains vagues et de R 4 m. à R 5 m. pour l'acquisition des maisons et des appartements. Je dois reconnaître que le prix fixé reflète bel et bien le prix du marché pour permettre à la classe moyenne de devenir propriétaire de son terrain ou de sa maison. Un élément à considérer ici, M. le président, est que pour les terrains vagues, ne dépassant pas 20 perches, le *first time buyer* est exempté jusqu'au prix de R 2 m. et paye 5% sur la différence de prix. Mon appel au Ministre des Finances, c'est de corriger cette anomalie au niveau de la loi existante lors de l'adoption du *Finance Act*. Je m'explique. Pour les *first time buyers* des maisons et des appartements, l'exemption est prévue, mais à condition que le prix de vente ne dépasse pas R 5 m. maintenant. Tenez-vous bien : si le prix de vente est de R 5,000,001, le *first time buyer* devra payer les frais d'enregistrement sur la totalité du prix. Il serait plus juste, tout comme lors de l'acquisition des terrains vagues, que le *first time buyer* des maisons puisse bénéficier de l'exemption des frais d'enregistrement jusqu'à une somme R 5 m. et qu'il puisse payer la différence à un taux d'enregistrement de 5% tout comme l'acquisition des terrains vagues. C'est une anomalie de la loi qui mérite d'être corrigée, M. le président.

M. le président, autre point que je souhaite souligner pour les *first time buyers*, c'est qu'à l'état actuel de la loi, bon nombre de promoteurs de l'immobilier adoptent le concept de société civile immobilier d'attribution, toujours pour permettre aux acquéreurs de payer les frais d'enregistrement uniquement sur la valeur du terrain vague faisant l'objet d'un projet immobilier. Cela constitue un avantage certain à toutes les parties concernées. Toutefois, M. le président, une fois que la société est constituée, la cession de parts sociales du promoteur à l'acquéreur, même pour les *first time buyers* est taxée à 5%. Tenez-vous bien, 5% sur la valeur de l'appartement, même si le projet immobilier est en voie de construction. Mon appel, aujourd'hui, c'est, dans les projets qui ont choisi le concept de société civile immobilière d'attribution, de permettre aux *first time buyers* qui acquièrent des parts sociales, après la constitution de la société civile, de toujours bénéficier de l'exemption de *first time buyer* jusqu'à une somme de R 5 m.

M. le président, je fais partie de ceux qui pensent que si on veut atteindre un nouveau palier de développement, il faut reconnaître qu'un marché de 1,300,000 habitants est très limité. Le gouvernement a récemment amendé le *Non-Citizen Restriction Property Act* pour permettre aux *foreigners* d'acquérir dans des cas spécifiques, des biens immobiliers résidentiels et commerciaux avec comme condition que le prix des appartements résidentiels ne doive pas être moins de R 6 m. alors que pour les biens commerciaux aucune limite n'est

fixée. Il serait bien qu'on puisse fixer un prix minimum aussi bien pour les biens commerciaux pour protéger la spécificité de la société mauricienne, M. le président.

M. le président, les Mauriciens, avec raison, sont soucieux de leur quotidien, sont soucieux de l'administration de leur ville et de leur village. C'est un fait aujourd'hui que les collectivités locales ont été et sont toujours dans un état financier précaire. Nous avons eu la situation d'insolvabilité du conseil de district du nord. Une des sources financières des villes aujourd'hui, c'est l'imposition des *local rates*/de la taxe immobilière or, il existe dans toutes les villes aujourd'hui, un nombre important d'immeubles, maisons, emplacements commerciaux et terrains qui ne payent toujours pas de taxe immobilière pour la bonne et simple raison qu'ils n'ont pas été évalués pour la détermination de *net annual values* pour l'imposition de la taxe immobilière. Il est important que chaque mairie vienne de l'avant avec des ressources humaines supplémentaires, des *valuers*, des *planning officers*, quitte à payer des heures supplémentaires pour s'assurer que ces immeubles soient une fois pour toutes taxés.

M. le président, qu'en est-il dans les *District Councils*? Il est, aujourd'hui, un sujet tabou pour tous les partis politiques, pour tous les gouvernements de ne pas parler de la taxe immobilière dans les régions rurales, dans les villages. Je ne préconise pas une décision radicale, mais il convient de se rendre à l'évidence que ces emplacements commerciaux, ces centres commerciaux, ces hôtels, ces villages, ces manoirs, ces *IRS*, ces *RIS*, ces *PDS*, ces *gated residential complexes*, ces futurs *smart cities* bénéficient gratuitement des services d'éclairage des routes, de ramassage d'ordures, de la construction des drains sans payer le moindre sou aux *District Councils*.

Le comble, M. le président, ces propriétaires de bungalows, ces heureux propriétaires d'appartements de luxe, ces propriétaires d'emplacements commerciaux, les propriétaires des maisons peuvent se permettre aujourd'hui de payer R 5,000, R 10,000, R 15,000 comme frais de syndic, mais n'ont pas le sous à payer au *District Council*.

M. le président, cette aberration doit cesser, j'espère que cette aberration cesse, que cet état des choses constitue un *alarm bell* à toute la classe politique. Procédons à une évaluation de ces propriétés immobilières avec un *net annual value* colossal. Cela prendra le temps qu'il faudra, mais cela donnera une gestion financière plus saine aux *District Councils*.

M. le président, permettez-moi d'aborder ici un aspect du budget concernant le droit des travailleurs. Il va sans dire que j'accueille favorablement l'introduction du *Workers'*

Rights Bill, qui vise premièrement l'introduction du *Portable Gratuity Fund* et du *Wage Guarantee Fund* qui vise à garantir une rémunération jusqu'à un plafond de R 50,000 en cas de perte d'emploi, souvent des cas d'insolvabilité. Nous savons tous les cas dramatiques de perte d'emploi pour ces pères et mères de famille qui ont consacré toute leur vie à la prospérité de l'entreprise et qui se trouvent du jour au lendemain sur le pavé et sans un sou. Dans la même lignée, il convient de souligner que l'amendement de *l'Insolvency Act* était *long overdue*. Il était inconcevable que lors de la mise en liquidation et de *receivership*, le rang des travailleurs passait bien après tous les créanciers, très souvent, bien qu'étant des créanciers à part entière, les travailleurs ne percevaient rien lors de la liquidation des *assets* des entreprises. Il était grand temps de revoir cet état de choses, l'institution d'un comité à cet effet est la bienvenue.

M. le président, permettez-moi de revenir en quelques lignes au *Portable Retirement Gratuity Fund*, qui vise *to ensure that a worker who retires benefits from the payment of a retirement gratuity for his length of service with a current employer at the date of coming into operation of the fund as well as for his length of service with any future employer*, alors que le présent système préconise que *the Retirement Gratuity is computed on his length of service with his last employer only*. Il est vrai de souligner que 350,000 employés du privé seront concernés par ce fonds. Il convient de souligner qu'il existe déjà bon nombre d'entreprises qui ont déjà souscrit à des plans de pension pour leurs employés. Le comité doit préciser comment cohabiter les plans de pension avec ce fonds qui sera constitué sous le *Workers' Rights Bill*. Il est important aussi de souligner quelle sera la part de contribution du gouvernement, quand il faut bien le souligner que les contributions au *Portable Retirement Gratuity Fund* n'entreront en vigueur qu'après l'instauration du *Portable Retirement Gratuity Fund* lui-même. Pour ne pas créer deux catégories d'employés, surtout pour ceux ayant déjà de longues années de service, il convient que le gouvernement prévoit un quantum de contribution pour cette catégorie d'employés. Il va sans dire, M. le président, qu'avec cette mesure, nous entrons de plain-pied dans cette vision de faire de Maurice un *high income country*.

- M. le président, je souhaite ici faire mention des recommandations du *Truth and Justice Commission*. M. le président, il y a un aspect de ce rapport du *Truth and Justice Committee* qui mérite considération. C'est la réalité sociologique de notre société. Il faut le reconnaître, nombreux cas de dépossession de la terre ont été dus au fait que les plaignants sont des illettrés, n'ont pas de ressources financières adéquates

et font face à des obstacles énormes pour collecter les documents légaux. La commission déplore aussi la lourdeur et les frais excessifs, les frais légaux et judiciaires. Autres facteurs sociologiques notés, c'est la dépossession des terres par le fait de l'occupation par des propriétés sucrières des terres appartenant à des descendants d'esclaves ou de coulisses. Ces mêmes descendants d'esclaves sont des employés de ces mêmes propriétés sucrières et rendent leurs actions de revendication extrêmement difficile. Afin de contrer ces cas de prescription abusive, la commission recommande la création d'un *Land Research and Monitoring Unit to receive legitimate complaints and to carry out in-depth investigations into any complaint and establish genealogical tree of the claimants, to advise the applicants after investigation and to offer mediation to all parties. If an agreement is reached, it should be bidding upon all parties, wherever appropriate, to sign the agreement. In case of disagreement, the case will be referred to the Supreme Court.*

- M. le président, il convient de reconnaître que la situation est complexe, bien qu'il y ait la volonté de trouver une solution pour ceux qui se sentent dépossédés de leurs biens, car il existe aujourd'hui des cas de prescription de bonne foi ou encore des cas de prescription instinctive. C'est-à-dire, après l'écoulement d'une période de 30 ans, toute action réelle, toute action de réclamation de propriété n'est plus permise. Toutefois, en cas de fraude, de faux, les actions en contestation sont toujours possibles et devront être référées à une cour de justice. Il convient quand même, M. le président, que le ministre des Finances ou encore *the Minister of Housing and Lands* de venir de l'avant pour expliquer le fonctionnement du *Land Research and Monitoring Unit* qui tombera éventuellement, comme mentionné, dans le budget, sous la tutelle du *Ministry of Housing and Lands*. Est-ce que ce *Unit* aura la même fonction que celle préconisée par le *Truth and Justice Committee* ? Le budget parle aussi d'un *Special Fund* de R 50 m. pour le fonctionnement de cet organisme. Il est à souligner aussi la création d'un *separate Land Division of the Supreme Court* qui est la bienvenue.
- M. le président, je souhaite ici aborder quelques points relatifs à la ville de Quatre-Bornes en tant qu'habitant et député de la ville de Quatre-Bornes. Mon premier point concerne le projet de Métro Express. Le projet est en cours, les travaux préliminaires sont actuellement effectués, ce serait un non-sens de venir à ce stade de questionner le bien-fondé du projet. Toutefois, il est essentiel que la communication soit favorisée,

que les questions qui se posent aux habitants ne restent pas sans réponse. Quelques-unes de ces questions, M. le président : quelle sera la durée des travaux du Métro Express sur tous les trajets qui concernent la ville de Quatre-Bornes ? Quelles mesures sont préconisées pour compenser ce manque à gagner des commerces du centre-ville tout le long de la route St-Jean qui seront obligés de fermer boutique pendant la durée des travaux ? Une fois la construction des deux voies du métro sera complétée, tout le long de la route de Saint-Jean, quel sera le moyen d'accès aux commerces ? Pour les habitations qui se trouvent tout le long du tracé, des fois à un à trois mètres, quelles sont les mesures qui sont préconisées pour soulager les risques de pollution et assurer une qualité de vie saine aux habitants ? Où est-ce que les marchands du marché de Belle Rose seront relogés ? Combien d'espaces sont prévus à cet effet et combien d'espaces de parking seront pourvus ? La grande question demeure toujours le *traffic management* de la ville de Quatre Bornes. Déjà, à l'état actuel des choses, de Candos à Saint-Jean, la congestion routière est permanente. Avec le projet du Métro Express, il est clair que la route de Saint-Jean et ses périphéries seront bouleversées. Il est important que les autorités viennent de l'avant pour expliquer comment les routes latérales, je cite –

- Surath
- Capucines
- Poivre
- Telfair
- et autres vont fonctionner avec l'avènement du Métro Express. Il a été dit à un moment donné que l'entrée de Quatre Bornes sera transférée au rond-point de Hillcrest. Devons-nous comprendre que vu l'espace, la largeur qui sera occupée par les deux voies du Métro Express à la route St-Jean, du rond-point St-Jean à la gare Victoria, est-ce que la route de St-Jean, pour ce tronçon-là, sera tout simplement piétonnier ? Les habitants de Quatre Bornes ont besoin des réponses des autorités concernées, M. le président.
- Autre point que je souhaite aborder ici et que j'ai eu l'occasion d'en parler avec le ministre du Local Government, c'est la région qui concerne le tronçon du Racing Club jusqu'au Tennis Club de Petit Camp. Cette région constitue la *boundary* entre la ville de Quatre Bornes et Phoenix. Bien que le service de la voirie soit assuré par la mairie de Quatre Bornes, toutefois, les travaux d'infrastructures sont négligés. Cette route est aujourd'hui desservie par des centaines d'automobilistes pour relier la région de Trianon, Racing Club, Petit Camp et Valentina. Depuis les travaux d'envergure au rondpoint de Phoenix, le nombre de véhicules a doublé sur ce tronçon-là, M. le président. Toute cette région est complètement dans le noir le soir, malgré la grande fréquentation. Ma requête au gouvernement et aux ministres concernés, c'est de considérer l'urgence de la situation, de placer des lampadaires le long de ce tronçon de la route sur une distance de 400 à 500 mètres, et cela, afin

d'assurer la sécurité des habitants et des automobilistes. Toujours en matière de sécurité, il convient que les autorités s'assurent que les propriétaires des terrains procèdent au nettoyage de leurs terrains qui sont un repère pour les drogués et aussi un dépôt sauvage d'ordures.

- Sur ce, M. le président, je vous remercie.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Fowdar!

Mr S. Fowdar (Third Member for Grand'Baie & Poudre d'Or): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will join all my friends on this side of the House to congratulate the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, for bringing this popular Budget. As we can see, this Budget is very popular out in the public and the Budget makes a lot of provision for people *au bas de l'échelle*.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let us be honest; this Budget is not different from the previous ones. It is not a budget *électoraliste*. If we look at the Budget last year, if you compare it with this Budget, it is more or less the same. And one of the arguments of the Opposition is that, this Budget is *la bouche doux, électoraliste*, but I don't think this is true, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

I have listened carefully to the orators on the other side of the House. I made it a must to listen to all of them, and I am not surprised at all, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that they did not criticise the Budget. They talked about everything, except the Budget. The measures announced in the Budget cannot be refuted. They cannot go against these measures. Well, possibly, they can talk against the Budget in the House, here, but I am sure not outside in the public, because the public are happy, and they would see that they are lying.

What is happening, Mr Deputy Speaker, last year also, the Budget also was very popular. And the opposition at that time had one issue – I don't know if you remember it. It was regarding measures meant to attract highly skilled migrants in the country. And the opposition were saying that the Government is going to open a passport shop to sell Mauritian Passport. And that was the main issue last year, that we were going to sell Mauritian Passport. Let's go and see now. One year has already elapsed, how many passports have we sold to foreigners? This is totally untrue, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. I do understand when they have got no argument that they have to find a few to make their day. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the other things that some of the Members on the other side have raised, is the bad weather allowance to fishermen. Well, I don't understand; it's the first time that the fishermen are having an allowance increase of Rs30, the highest in history, and they are complaining. When they were in Government they paid Rs7.50, Rs8, Rs9, and today, the

Minister of Finance has made a provision for Rs30, this is not enough. And what not, you know, they are trying to use this on communal ground, that this is being paid to a certain community. Very, very untrue, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir! I understand they are very embarrassed. In their place, I would be the same, very embarrassed to face a Budget of this magnitude. It is like *un tremblement de terre* and the elections are very near, how to go against a Budget of this magnitude. It is making their work really difficult, inside and outside this House, Mr Deputy Speaker. Yesterday, I was listening to one of the orators. They even forget that they are in the Parliament, where we are debating the Budget. One of them ended his speech by saying: ‘*Vive le Parti travailliste!*’ I thought I was at a *caisse camion*, they were doing meeting, *congrès*. We are having an intelligent debate; but they forget about it, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and they are thinking that they are already on the *caisse camion*.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please!

Mr Fowdar: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in all the arguments they have raised, I did not hear anyone saying they are against an increase in pension for old age, Rs500. Nobody stood up to say they are against the fall in the price of *gaz ménager* to Rs210; nobody stood up to say they are against medical insurance, that they are against the advance to be given to civil servants for PRB, Rs1,000 as from January, or whether they against the decrease in the price of fuel and diesel, and what not, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. There is one thing we have the tendency to forget. Last year and this year, there has been no tax on cigarettes and drinks. And every year, it has been the custom that we have to pinch the smokers and the drinkers – many of them here. But for two consecutive years, the Minister of Finance did not tax the smokers and those who have a small drink. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, ...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Barbier! No comment on a sitting position!

Mr Fowdar: I do still remember...

(Interruptions)

Let them enjoy, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. I don't mind.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I still remember, and I want to refresh the memories of some people here, during the campaign of 2014, when we promised that we were going to increase the old age pension to Rs5,000, the then leader of the Labour Party, who is still the leader of

the Labour Party, and the leader of *l'alliance de modernité* or whatever they call it, I don't remember, they had a Press conference, and he announced: ' *Très difficile à payer R 5,000. Ils vont faire un effort extraordinaire, et ils vont payer R 4,000.* They were going to increase the old age pension by Rs377, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. And do you know what they were saying, it is going to be a *catastrophe économique* if we are going to pay a pension of Rs5,000 a month. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, they were proposing an increase of 10%.

Today, we have topped it up by 85%. Not 10%, 85%! And they were saying it was irresponsible. What happened to the economy? Où est le déluge qu'ils disaient, catastrophe économique? Où est la catastrophe économique? Our pensioners deserve what they worked for. They deserve a share of *le fruit de l'économie*, what we have earned, what we have built up, they deserve a part of it, they deserve to live without worries, to have some good food, they deserve to live in good health and to be well surrounded and this is why, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Government and, in particular, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance has not hesitated to give increase over the four years that we were in Government.

Now, we talk of this *bonbonne gaz*, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We have got the tendency to forget that we were buying. We all have *bonbonne gaz* at home, one or two, it is a basic commodity, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We get the tendency to forget that it has decreased by Rs120. It is a lot, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Some are comparing this to pair of *dhol puris*. Believe me, for poor people, it is a lot of money. Rs120 may be peanuts for some people. But it is a lot of money. Today, *bonbonne gaz* has gone to Rs210 and if we look at what it costs per day, if one cylinder is used during a month, then it is Rs7 per day. I don't know how do you compare that, one *mine Apollo* or less than one *mine Apollo*. So, some people are taking increases and decreases for a joke, and they are comparing it with *mine Apollo* and cigarettes and what not.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I can't go on enumerating. There are lots of things that this Budget contains. But I would ask the population, through you, to look at the five budgets, not only this one, look at the work of the Government over the 4 to 5 years; look what the country has achieved during that period. I understand the role of the Opposition is to criticise. I have got no problem with it. They are an alternative Government, if I may say so. Opposition, you are positioning yourself to be in our place tomorrow. Wish you good luck. I understand that your role is to criticise, but beware my friends, don't say things which people won't agree with and which people will never accept. I remember, as you said last year, it was the same for the Mauritian passport.

There is what we call undue influence going on in this country. Intelligent people are trying to fool those who are less intelligent. Let's see this issue of Bank of Mauritius, the transfer of reserves authorised and not authorised. I am an accountant; I went through all these studies. And those who have studied similar to me, they know, it is not easy to understand what is realised profit, what is unrealised profit, what is distributable reserve, what is international financial reporting standard. These are very complex issues, and we are trying here to fool people, to confuse the mind of the public with these terms. The Prime Minister is not an accountant, and I was amazed by his explanation. He understood what is realised profit and what is unrealised profit, and the Leader of the Opposition, who is an accountant tried to fool everybody with this unrealised profit and realised profit. The simple question the public must ask themselves: how did it happen in 2011 when hon. Xavier Luc Duval was Minister of Finance? How did we accept this, and why can't we accept it today?

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, they have got no arguments and this is one of the arguments they are raising up. What is happening today, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in short of arguments, the Opposition is trying to confuse the mind of people with public debts. Believe me, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, a *marchand dhol puri* was telling me the other day, this country is heavily indebted, there are lots of public debts. I asked him: 'what is public debt? Do you know what is public debt?' They were trying to tell everybody that there are lots of public debts without knowing what is public debt, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. What is public debt? Public debt is just like household debts. If I don't take a loan, I cannot construct a house, I cannot buy land, I cannot buy a car; everything is financed by loan. Similarly, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the country needs loans to develop its infrastructure, to develop communication, road networks. We can't do it on our own, we have to take money from abroad; we have to borrow money and, of course, all these have to be paid just like if we take housing loan from Mauritius Housing Company, we have to pay. We have got a schedule of payment. It is not the end of the world, how do we progress? Why are we doing all these things? Why do you think this Government is having railway network, road infrastructure, improving the communication network. All this is meant to modernise the country, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and there is one thing we have got the tendency to forget, that there is no foreign investment to come in this country if you don't modernise the country. If you don't have good road network, good communication network, nobody will come to invest in this country. So, the Foreign Direct Investment will never come, and the Foreign Direct Investment is a *sine qua non* condition to increase our GDP, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We need foreign money to

increase our GDP and they were talking, the hon. Leader of the Opposition and even hon. Mrs Sewocksingh was talking about middle-income trap, do they understand what middle-income trap is? We are in the middle income trap. How do we get out of the middle-income trap? If you don't invest in infrastructure, if you don't build up, if you don't modernise the country, who will come to invest in your country, how would you get foreign money, how do we create jobs, how do we create wealth, and how do we increase the GDP?

We need to have a high GDP growth for 2 or 5 years, and then we can step into the high income economy. There is a long term objective and the fruits will definitely come sooner or later, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. So, public debt is not meant for *manze bwar*. All this money can be traced, where they have been put in, how we have used this money, for example, the loan for India for *Metro Léger* can be verified, can be audited. It is meant to develop the country.

We have forgotten. In 2014, our Foreign Direct Investment was Rs10 billion and over the last 4 years, our FDI is 70.5 billion, and we even recorded a maximum of 21.2 billion in 2018 or 17. The country is moving, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and there is no space for critics. The increase in FDI is definitely linked to the economic growth of the country. There is no space for critics. The increase in FDI is definitely linked to the economic growth of the country.

Now, when we took over in 2014, the economic growth rate was around 3.2%- 3.4% and today, despite the unfavourable world economic climate, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, economic growth is crossing the 4% mark by next year. It is already 3.9% this year. One of the key sectors – *bann ki ena memwar courte* they need to listen – of the economy, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the engine of growth in any economy is the construction sector. We have the tendency to forget that in 2014, the construction sector was in the negative. Today, in 2018, the construction sector witnesses a growth of 8.3%, positive, and they are saying we are doing nothing. I know this is their problem because the country is advancing, you know. We are moving ahead, this is a problem if we were in the Opposition without being in the same position.

So, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is imperative that we invest in our infrastructure in order to attract foreign investors and the figures speak for themselves that we are not leaving any stone unturned to do so. Now, there are three main microeconomic factors/indicators

which are used widely not only Mauritius, but the whole world. They use the three indicators to assess the economic health of a country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, number one is the GDP growth; number two is the unemployment rate and number three is the inflation rate. Let me give you some figures, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. The GDP growth is crossing the 4% mark this end of this year. We are already 3.9%, and we were 3.2% to 3.4% in 2014.

The unemployment rate, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, was 8.3% when we took over in 2014. Today, it stands at 6.9% and finally, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is shocking the inflation rate which was 3.6% in 2014 has gone down to 1.5%. All these three economic indicators are positive. How can we say that we are not moving? How can we say that the economy is ill, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir? All the economic indicators are positive. I am not talking about the reserves – 11 months. I am talking about only three economic indicators. All the others are also positive.

Now, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, of course, I am not going to repeat what my colleagues have already done before. I am not going to take much of the time of the Assembly. There is one issue which is very dear to me and which has been given due consideration of the Government this year. I am extremely happy for this, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. It is research and innovation. I sincerely and firmly believe, the economic health of tomorrow's Mauritius will depend on how much we innovate. Innovation, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, has got a direct link with the economic development, with the GDP growth and with competitiveness. Financing research and development is a problem, and I am making an appeal through Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, to the private sector. The private sector has always hesitated in financing innovation, and it is our survivor. We need to put a lot of efforts on research and innovation. The Minister of Finance is providing a seed amount of Rs100 m. in this Budget and I hope this is used fully and more is put in so that we move positively with regard to research and development.

Last time, during the debate, I suggested that we can also think of putting a levy payable by the employers to increase the fund for innovation and research. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, competition is around us in almost all the spheres of our economic activities, and it is important that we stay in the front line. We are in the front line. In Africa, we are in the front line, and it is extremely important that we stay in the front line. We keep the hedge

that we have, or we create the hedge where we don't have a hedge. So, it is really important that we put a lot of emphasis on research and innovation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is another aspect which is being neglected. People are not talking about it, I don't understand why. It is a big achievement because I was in MMM for long. I know what a fight is when I was there. We fought a lot to bring minimum wage, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We fought a lot to have it, and I am happy that we have achieved. Now, whoever brought it, we know this Government has brought it whoever brings it, but it is for the benefit of the workers. 73,800 workers are benefiting from the introduction of the minimum wage. I'll be honest to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. I, myself, never believed that this would happen. I was sceptical, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. I knew there were going to be a lot of economic problems: closure of factories, inflationary effects due to increase in salary. I knew there were going to be problems, but surprisingly, it went on smoothly. This is one of the biggest achievements of this Government with regard to workers of this country, the minimum wage.

There is this second issue, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I practised as an accountant in London for long and during my career there, I came across a term – negative income tax. I had to work on negative income tax. I never thought that this would come to Mauritius sometime. We were a small economy, how could we afford negative income tax. How could we afford the minimum wage? Today, it is a reality and believe me, the workers, themselves, never thought of negative income tax. They are surprised. They are getting money from nowhere and this is the Minister of Finance. He is not *électoraliste, c'est un humaniste*.

All these things, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, have not been made at the eve of elections. They were made before - last year and the year before. Also, there is the issue raised by my good friend, hon. Ramano. The law that we are bringing *incessamment* with regard to worker's right, it is important. We cannot leave the workers suffer from more. It is important that we bring this law, and we pass this law as soon as possible.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, *tant de services* for workers have been neglected all the time when you change employers. It happens, we know, we change employers during our career. And it is good for a worker to change and to have more experience in other places. Now, all these were neglected in the past. Today, this new law that is going to come, is going to take into account and is going to accumulate *les temps de service* of a worker which never

happened before, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. So, I am really happy for the workers of this country, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. There would be this pension fund, a gratuity fund, these workers' right, minimum wage and also negative income tax.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, there was a time when a cyclone was approaching Mauritius, people would say: don't worry; the cyclone won't come because the Prime Minister is Sir Anerood Jugnauth. Even my father used to tell me this. *Pas gagne tracas, cyclone pas pou vini, bolomme la*. Something amazing happened this year, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. The Prime Minister won four cases. It is not a coincidence, it is not luck, he is a winner. He won this UN case, his own case Medpoint, CT Power and Betamax, and he won another case here, is the budget. This is the fifth one, and mind you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, he is going to win one more case, the election. The election, he is going to win it this year, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Thank you.

(7.31 p.m.)

Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière): M. le président, un budget faussement social, voilà en substance comment je qualifierais l'exercice comptable du Premier ministre et ministre des Finances pour l'année financière 2019-2020. Dans un souci de vouloir plaire et complaire à l'approche des prochaines élections générales, le ministre des Finances a annoncé une série de mesures, qui, dans le concret ne changent pas grand-chose au quotidien de la population, plus particulièrement de la classe sociale qui se trouve au bas de l'échelle. En exemptant de la TVA des produits tels que sagoo, vermicelle, toukmaria, entre autres, le ministre des Finances n'améliore en rien la qualité de vie des Mauriciens, et il le sait pertinemment bien. Alors que la mesure visant à augmenter le *bad weather allowance* des pêcheurs de R 30 seulement n'est ni plus ni moins, à mon avis, qu'une insulte. N'en déplaise, M. le président, à l'honorable Fowdar, qui, dois-je le rappeler, a passé le plus clair de son temps ces dernières années à critiquer son propre gouvernement. Mais, retournement de veste, c'est son choix.

Les pêcheurs, M. le président, n'ont pas besoin de la charité de l'État, mais d'encouragement pour exercer leur métier dans les meilleures conditions et d'une aide beaucoup plus adéquate que ces R 30.

Autre secteur de l'économie qui a été peu considéré dans ce présent budget, les éleveurs de porcs. Face aux difficultés auxquelles font face cette industrie, les éleveurs

s'attendaient à ce que le ministre des Finances apporte le coup de pouce réclamé par le biais des subsides sur la nourriture de qualité, qui coûtent beaucoup trop chers, et des mesures pour développer le secteur et favoriser la production locale, entre autres. Rien à signaler dans le budget à ce niveau. À bien voir, ce budget accorde peu d'importance au social, alors que la population espérait des mesures pouvant soulager sa misère. À ce propos, nos aînés ont été déçus, car ils s'attendaient à une augmentation beaucoup plus conséquente, parce que le coût de la vie ne cesse d'accroître d'année en année, tout comme les prix des médicaments qui ne cessent de grimper. *Adding insult to injury*, ce gouvernement demande à nos vieux de prendre leur mal en patience et d'attendre janvier 2020 pour recevoir cette somme, alors que nos parents et grands-parents ont besoin d'un soulagement immédiat. Le ministre des Finances qui est également chef du gouvernement, vit coupé de la réalité. Il devrait savoir quels sont les besoins immédiats de la population et la soulager en conséquence. On peut se dire que le responsable de l'économie du pays a voulu justement présenter un budget responsable sans trop exagérer avec les dépenses. Mais, M. le président, force est de constater que ce gouvernement jongle dangereusement avec les chiffres, et préconise des opérations financières qui donnent de l'urticaire aux experts en économie. Et je me permets de citer l'économiste Pierre Dinan, dont la présentation n'est plus à faire. Et je le cite –

« Il semblerait que l'on puisera dans ces ressources pour repayer la dette publique. Là, vraiment, je me demande ce qui va se passer. »

La proposition d'éponger la dette publique en utilisant R 18 milliards de la Banque de Maurice est intrigante. Je me permets de mentionner, encore une fois, l'économiste Pierre Dinan, et je cite –

« On est en train de faire l'amalgame entre la politique fiscale et monétaire. Ce qui est inacceptable dans le monde moderne de l'économie, ce n'est pas du *international best practice*. »

M. le président, ce quatrième budget du ministre des Finances est, à mon avis, une déception. Oui, il me déçoit, car un des problèmes majeurs auquel le pays fait face actuellement est une absence totale de *law and order*. Il n'y a pas dans ce budget suffisamment de mesures pour améliorer le service de notre police, pour la rendre plus efficiente et pour rassurer une population mauricienne qui vit dans l'angoisse face à des bandits sans scrupules et des bandes organisées.

M. le président, je voudrais aussi m'appesantir sur le secteur de la culture, véritable parent pauvre de ce budget, où pas une seule mesure significative en faveur des artistes n'a été annoncée par le ministre des Finances. Les artistes sont largement déconsidérés à Maurice. Trop souvent, on les considère comme étant des bénévoles, à qui on fait des faveurs quand on leur permet de s'exprimer à travers leur art, ce qui, à mon sens, est une insulte envers cette catégorie de travailleurs. Et nous constatons, budget après budget, que le ministère de la Culture ne se résume qu'à organiser des festivals, délaissant les autres pans de la culture mauricienne. Après les promesses électorales de décembre 2014, le bilan à ce niveau ressemble à une peau de chagrin. Il existe au niveau des arts et de la culture une absence totale de politique et d'orientation qui aujourd'hui a abouti en manque de soutien institutionnel à des musées et théâtres délabrés, à un manque d'aide financière et logistique aux artistes de toutes les disciplines, à l'absence de formation artistique et de visibilité dans les écoles, entre autres. La liste des manquements est longue. Et pour ne citer que la dernière cacophonie au sein de ce secteur, c'est-à-dire la démission de quasiment tous les membres du *National Art Gallery*, en raison justement de l'immobilisme au sein du ministère des Arts et de la Culture. M. le président, il est inconcevable qu'à Maurice, en 2019, les artistes mauriciens font encore face à d'énormes difficultés pour trouver un lieu convenable pour organiser des spectacles. Ce qui est encore plus inconcevable, M. le président, c'est que cette situation perdure depuis l'indépendance du pays. Nous avons été témoins d'un triste spectacle au début du mois de mai, autour de l'organisation du festival 'Noulesa' - un festival de musique qui a dû être renvoyé à la toute dernière minute en raison des plaintes des habitants autour de Val-de-Vie, le lieu où devait s'organiser ce rendez-vous. M. le président, il y a un dicton qui dit : 'Un peuple sans culture est un peuple sans âme'. Est-ce à ce niveau que ce gouvernement veut réduire notre République ? Il est grand temps, je pense, de mettre en place un fonds pour subventionner des artistes dans la création de leurs œuvres, tout comme je pense qu'il est aussi important de revoir les conditions attachées au fonds CSR, afin de permettre aux mécènes et aux autres entreprises privées de financer la création artistique. Concernant le musée de l'esclavage, il est important de souligner que ce n'est qu'après que le Comité Diocésain 1^{er} février ait tiré la sonnette d'alarme sur le retard accumulé dans la réalisation de ce projet, que ce dossier a été réactualisé, à tel point que, désormais, c'est le bureau du Premier ministre qui s'en occupe, paraît-il, et non le ministère des Arts et de la Culture. Preuve que le laxisme existe bel et bien au sein de ce ministère, qui a fait perdre un temps fou à tous ceux concernés par ce dossier.

M. le président, au chapitre de l'éducation, je ne peux cacher ma grosse déception, mais aussi ma stupéfaction. En réponse à une de mes questions parlementaires, le 30 octobre 2018, sur la violence dans les écoles, la ministre de l'Éducation avait indiqué, et je cite –

“17 cases of violence involving students and teachers of some 178 State and Private Secondary Schools across the four educational zones have been reported since January 2016 to date.”

M. le président, ne dit-on pas que l'école est un espace où les enfants doivent vivre en liberté ? Mais que voyons-nous quotidiennement ? Des cas de violence et de harcèlement entre étudiants, qui sont partagés sans retenue sur les réseaux sociaux et que certaines personnes prennent plaisir à poster des commentaires encore plus violents que les images qui sont diffusées.

M. le président, un cas de violence est déjà un cas de trop. Maintenant que la ministre vient nous dire qu'il y a eu 17 cas de violence en deux ans, je considère que c'est une situation à la fois insoutenable et inacceptable. N'oublions pas que la diffusion de ces images sur les réseaux sociaux fait plus mal que les coups échangés entre les élèves. Les conséquences sont nombreuses et ce type de harcèlement se termine souvent par un suicide. C'est une tendance malheureusement mondiale. Je suis déçu que ce problème n'ait pas été pris en compte dans ce budget.

Ce gouvernement, M. le président, donne la perception que ce problème est banalisé quand on constate la léthargie avec laquelle cette question est prise en compte. Certes, la mesure annoncée pour le recrutement de 34 *discipline masters* est un pas dans la bonne direction. Mais des questions subsistent : est-ce suffisant pour régler ce problème de violence récurrent au sein des établissements scolaires ? Est-ce que cet encadrement va donner des résultats recherchés quand on sait que même des jeunes filles sont capables de brutaliser, non seulement leurs amies, mais aussi des adultes. Que se passera-t-il quand cette violence inouïe se déroulera dans la rue après les heures de classe, comme c'est souvent le cas.

Dans sa réponse donnée à la question parlementaire du 30 octobre 2018, la ministre a étonnamment bien précisé, et je cite -

“The security of our students and school personnel within the school premises have been at the heart of our concern.”

La violence, M. le président, la violence estudiantine, elle l'est aussi dans la rue. La réforme de l'éducation n'est pas juste une question de changer les noms des différentes classes. Une

vraie réforme, c'est quand l'école devient l'école du bonheur ou l'école de la république pour former des Mauriciens responsables et disciplinés.

M. le président, le MMM au pouvoir, brassera large sur ce dossier et invitera autour d'une table tous ceux concernés afin de trouver une solution durable à ce problème. Et ne dit-on pas que c'est dans l'écoute et les discussions que jaillissent les meilleures idées !

M. le président, je ne veux pas croire que la jeunesse de ce pays soit en perdition, mais si on ne se bouge pas, cela pourrait bien être le cas. Et à chaque occasion qui m'a été donnée dans cette Chambre, j'ai toujours plaidé pour que le budget fasse plus de place à la jeunesse. Le gouvernement se bombe le torse avec le nombre de saisis de drogue dure, mais force est de constater que notre jeunesse se tue à petit feu avec les drogues de synthèse, une drogue facile à fabriquer et disponible dans tous les coins et recoins de rue.

Dans les villes et les villages, à l'école, au collège et même dans les universités, les drogues synthétiques représentent un vrai danger aussi grand que les drogues dures. Si rien n'est fait pour stopper sa propagation, notre jeunesse fonce droit dans le mûr et le pays avec. Les jeunes de ce pays sont tristes et malheureux. Il n'existe pas de politique qui leur est destinée. Les programmes destinés à la jeunesse ne sont pas suffisants. L'échec d'une politique pour le développement de la jeunesse est manifestement visible dans la société : délinquance juvénile, montée de la criminalité, destruction de la fibre morale par la dépendance aux stupéfiants, troubles à l'école et même dans les lieux publics.

M. le président, c'est des mots qui veulent dire que l'ensemble du système doit être revu. Depuis très longtemps, nous sommes en présence des programmes stéréotypés pour la jeunesse. Les vrais problèmes d'aujourd'hui sont occultés et ils ne peuvent être résolus avec une solution obsolète d'hier. Nous devons aider nos enfants à grandir, ils devraient avoir la meilleure occasion pour se mettre debout afin de développer leur potentiel.

Les programmes tels que le *Youth Employment Programme* sous le ministère de l'emploi et le *Youth Service Programme* sous le ministère de la Jeunesse et des sports n'ont jusqu'ici pas donné les résultats escomptés. On a récemment vu comment des hommes d'affaires sans scrupules ont pillé les fonds censés venir en aide aux jeunes dans leur quête d'un emploi. Le YSP est devenu par la suite le *National Youth Civic Service* est, à mon avis, un *non-event*.

Sur les 3,000 jeunes qui devaient être formés pour avoir un certificat de compétence, le ministre de la Jeunesse et des sports est venu confirmer, et en réponse à une question

parlementaire, le 23 avril dernier, que seulement 318 jeunes sur les 3,000 annoncés dans le budget 2018-2019, ont reçu une formation. Dans sa réponse, M. le président, l'honorable ministre n'a pas été clair sur la qualité de la formation qui est dispensée, non plus sur le niveau des *resource persons* qui sont utilisées. Cette fois, le Premier ministre et ministre des Finances est venu avec une nouvelle trouvaille, la *National Skills Matching Platform* pour évaluer les besoins de la formation. M. le président, je ne dis pas que la formation n'est pas importante, bien au contraire, mais il y a toutefois la question suivante : quand est-ce que ces jeunes auront du travail ?

M. le président, ce quatrième budget du Premier ministre et ministre des Finances est une tromperie vis-à-vis de la population. Si ce présent budget ne vient qu'avec de petites mesures avec pour seul objectif d'embobiner la population en cette année électorale, par contre, le Premier ministre a trouvé les moyens de consolider pour la cinquième année consécutive les affaires d'un membre de la cuisine avec les nouveaux amendements apportés à la *GRA Act*. Oui, M. le président, les amendements proposés dans ce présent budget ont deux objectifs précis.

Primo, l'étatisation des courses mauriciennes, et secondo, favoriser à outrance les opérateurs de paris associés à une compagnie en particulier. La mesure la plus révélatrice, c'est qu'il y a des conséquences immédiates sur l'industrie des courses et la suppression pure et simple de la licence des *bookmakers off course*, c'est-à-dire, les *bookmakers* qui opèrent hors du Champ de Mars. Une décision, M. le président, qui favorisera nul autre que cette compagnie proche du gouvernement qui a le droit d'opérer dans chaque coin de rue des villes et villages de ce pays. Dans certaines régions, M. le président, la présence d'un comptoir de cette compagnie et ses satellites sont de véritables fléaux et qui cause préjudice à bons nombres de familles mauriciennes. Et l'autre conséquence de ces amendements est le risque de courir vers une augmentation importante des paris illégaux alors que de l'autre côté, c'est une certitude que les chiffres d'affaires de la compagnie en question seront en nette augmentation.

M. le président, il faut savoir que les *bookmakers off course*, enregistrent environ 900 millions de paris annuellement. Ces 900 millions seront désormais redirigés vers nul autre que ce proche de la cuisine et ses compagnies satellites. L'autre mesure qui favorise nettement cet opérateur est l'exemption d'une *police clearance* pour ces *outlets*. Cette mesure est carrément dangereuse et ouvre une porte pour faire du n'importe quoi.

M. le président, il est clair que ces amendements à la *GRA Act* vise uniquement à faciliter l'implémentation à travers l'île de *betting outlets* proposant quotidiennement des paris sur les courses étrangères au détriment des courses locales. C'est inacceptable, M. le président, qu'un gouvernement utilise un budget pour favoriser un de ses financiers alors qu'on sait pertinemment bien que le jeu est source de beaucoup de conflits au sein des familles. *Kot zot promesses pou qui Maurice pas vine enn pays zougadere ?* La situation, M. le président, aujourd'hui, est pire qu'avant.

M. le président, l'heure est au bilan et au niveau de la santé, ces quatre dernières années, a été un vrai parcours de combattants pour les mauriciens qui utilisent le service public. Et je ferai abstraction du passage catastrophique de l'honorable Gayan ce ministère. Par contre, je ne peux rester silencieux face à la misère d'une majorité de la population qui subit un service de santé défaillante.

Des enfants ont laissé leur vie, des familles ont été anéanties par certaines pratiques au sein de nos hôpitaux, alors que durant ces quatre dernières années, le gouvernement a passé le plus clair de son temps à faire des promesses. Comme l'hôpital pour le traitement du cancer qui n'a toujours pas vu le jour, l'achat de *linear accelerators*, toujours pour le traitement des cancéreux se fait toujours attendre. Et dans ce présent budget, le Premier ministre a annoncé que le ministère de la Santé mettra sur pied une unité de transplantation rénale. Je souhaite, M. le président, que cela ne reste pas qu'un effet d'annonce.

Dans cette longue liste de promesses faites au niveau de la santé, j'ose espérer que celle faite par le Premier ministre pour l'achat d'une nouvelle caravane pour effectuer les tests de VIH/SIDA ne sera pas qu'une vaine promesse, car même à ce niveau, il y a urgence.

En 2018, sur la base des statistiques du VIH, 155 décès ont été enregistrés. L'un de plus élevé depuis que les statistiques sont disponibles. Le budget ne fait aucune mention, M. le président, cependant, sur l'amélioration des soins de santé essentielle aux personnes vivant avec le VIH/SIDA.

Selon les ONG, il existe un énorme problème de stigmatisation et de discrimination à l'égard des personnes vivant avec le VIH dans le système de santé. Une situation qui éloigne, malheureusement, Maurice de l'objectif fixé par l'ONU SIDA dans la lutte contre cette maladie. Et toujours selon les ONG, les médicaments antirétroviraux ne peuvent être obtenus que par l'État et non dans le privé, ce qui constitue, à mon avis, un véritable vide dans le système de santé. Les personnes souhaitant se faire soigner en privé devraient avoir la

possibilité de le faire. Il faudra, je pense, un autre regard sur cette question, et que le ministère de la Santé se montre plus indulgent. Et je dois aussi souligner que l'environnement à l'hôpital Candos où les personnes vivant avec le VIH sont traitées n'est pas approprié. Comme pour le traitement du cancer, l'espace est petit et les gens peuvent difficilement se déplacer d'un endroit à un autre. La salle de consultation utilisée par le médecin généraliste est étroite et inadéquate pour les examens des patients. Il n'y a pas d'espace pour que les travailleurs sociaux et les psychologues fournissent des informations supplémentaires aux patients. C'est sans doute une situation à revoir au plus vite.

M. le président, pour aborder le chapitre de la drogue, je vais citer le ministre Mentor, et il avait dit l'océan Indien est devenue une plaque tournante du trafic de drogue, affirmation faite lors du *Ministerial Maritime Security in Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean*, le 11 juin dernier au bureau du Premier ministre.

En fait, M. le président, ce n'est pas uniquement l'océan Indien qui est une plaque tournante pour le trafic de drogue, mais l'île Maurice avec. La prolifération des drogues qu'elle soit dure ou synthétique n'a jamais été aussi importante ces dernières années. Le rapport de la Commission d'enquête Lam Sham Leen a démontré noir sur blanc l'ampleur de ce trafic, qui sont ceux qui en tirent profit et qui en sont les complices. La situation est telle que les prisons mauriciennes se sont transformées en véritable plaque tournante pour l'organisation du trafic de la drogue.

En fait, le rapport de la Commission Lam Shang Leen n'a pas eu de conséquence sur le trafic et les marchands de drogue redoublent d'imagination, de stratégie, pour faire entrer ces produits illicites à Maurice. Ils sont allés jusqu'à utiliser des enfants comme passeurs et ce gouvernement veut nous faire croire que la situation est sous contrôle, et j'invite, d'ailleurs, le Premier ministre d'aller faire un tour sur le terrain pour constater de visu l'ampleur du dégât, surtout chez les jeunes.

Ici même, dans cette Chambre, j'ai attiré l'attention en multiples occasions du rajeunissement inquiétant tant chez les consommateurs que sur les revendeurs de drogue, et après le rapport Lam Shang Leen, je m'attendais à ce que le Premier ministre prenne les taureaux par les cornes et vienne avec des décisions importantes. Rien, M. le président ! Même la proposition du rapport du Lam Shang Leen pour l'ouverture d'un centre de traitement pour les jeunes n'a pas été considérée. Alors, la crédibilité du *Task Force* mise sur pied par le gouvernement, justement dans le sillage du même rapport, est sérieusement remise

en question. Et depuis la fermeture de la NATReSA, il y a plus de deux ans, beaucoup pensaient que le gouvernement allait venir avec une nouvelle structure, et pourtant, dans son Budget Speech, le Premier ministre a indiqué –

“(...) we have no mercy for those who are dealing in illicit drugs, but we must show compassion for the innocent victims.”

Le Premier ministre parle des victimes innocentes, mais aucune mention n’est faite dans le budget pour la réhabilitation, le traitement et les réductions de risques qui sont essentielles pour venir en aide aux usagers des drogues. Nous connaissons tous l’ampleur de la consommation de drogue et les ONG qui militent pour la réhabilitation des consommateurs des drogues, mènent une lutte sans fin pour obtenir des fonds adéquats pour réussir dans leur mission, car nous ne pouvons pas mesurer le succès de la lutte contre la drogue uniquement par les saisies, les arrestations et l’augmentation du budget allouée à l’ADSU. Les mesures sanitaires et sociales sont tout aussi importantes, malheureusement, rien n’est mentionné dans ce budget.

M. le président, le continent africain s’est montré solidaire à notre égard, encore une fois, lors du vote concernant notre territoire, l’Archipel des Chagos. Je saisis cette occasion pour apporter notre voix au remerciement fait à l’ensemble des États membres de l’Union africaine pour ce soutien constant à notre lutte. Malheureusement, nous ne faisons rien ou presque rien en termes de participation assidue et conséquente dans les délibérations en vue de dégager des politiques communes du continent africain, et ceci que ce soit au niveau de l’Union africaine elle-même ou les communautés économiques régionales auxquelles nous appartenons. Bien souvent, nous sommes absents au niveau requis, ce qui m’amène, M. le président, à dire de nouveau que nous pêchons par un manque total de vision et de planification dans le domaine de notre politique étrangère et économique sur le continent africain. Nous avons jusqu’ici failli à définir une politique cohérente vis-à-vis de cette région, à laquelle nous appartenons et qui nous est chère. Nous avons, certes, eu droit à certaines annonces, mais sans plus. On a l’impression que ces annonces ont été faites pour acquis de conscience et notre stratégie dit africaine s’arrête là.

Que font nos représentations diplomatiques qui se trouvent sur le continent, elles sont quasiment inexistantes. Un instrument majeur est en train de se mettre sur place sur le continent, ayant justement, entre autres, le commerce intra-africain et la consolidation de la coopération régionale et l’intégration continentale. Je me réfère, ici, à la zone de libre-

échange continental. Nous avons été parmi ceux qui ont signé l'instrument à Kigali. Mais d'après mes informations, Maurice n'a pas encore ratifié cet accord. Est-ce qu'il y a une raison valable pour ce retard, alors que le nombre de ratifications requises pour l'entrée en vigueur de cet accord a été atteint. Les annonces faites ne concernent que le bilatéral, que ce soit Madagascar ou encore au Kenya. La question que l'on doit se poser est la suivante – quelle suite a été réservée à ces grandes annonces faites dans les budgets précédents et accords signés avec certains pays tels que le Sénégal, la Côte d'Ivoire ou le Ghana. Rien n'a été dit à ce sujet et on n'entend rien de concret.

Il fut un temps, M. le président, où Maurice était à l'avant-garde dans les instances africaines et sa voix se faisait entendre et respecter. Aujourd'hui, le constat que nous faisons est que notre participation au niveau des prises de décisions dans le dégagement des politiques communes africaines laisse à désirer.

M. le président, le sport est un secteur qui fait souvent honneur au pays. Il n'y a pas de meilleur ambassadeur de la république que ces sportifs qui brillent et font flotter notre quadricolore à l'étranger. Je profite de l'occasion pour féliciter les kick boxeurs : Fabrice Bauluck et Warren Roberson qui ont décroché l'or à la Coupe du monde, en Italie durant le week-end, et aussi Katherine Rabot qui a terminé sur la plus haute marche du podium au championnat du monde amateur de bodybuilding.

Comme j'ai indiqué plus haut dans mon intervention, l'heure du bilan a sonné pour ce gouvernement, dans presque tous les secteurs le constat n'est guère reluisant. Le monde sportif n'y échappe pas à ce tintamarre face à laquelle la colère gronde de plus en plus.

M. le président, le bilan de ce gouvernement dans ce secteur est deux ministres des Sports, une nouvelle loi, une autre en préparation pour corriger les erreurs de l'actuelle et une liste exhaustive de promesses non respectées.

En cette année où les 10^e Jeux des Îles se tiendront chez nous, dans une trentaine de jours, je ne voudrais pas être de mauvaise foi et venir acculer le mouvement sportif mauricien. Il y a des choses, cependant, M. le président, sur lesquelles je ne peux me taire.

Je ne peux effectivement ne pas m'offusquer quand un sportif qui a défendu le quadricolore meurt par manque de soins adéquats après s'être blessé pendant une compétition.

Avant de continuer, M. le président, permettez-moi de rendre hommage à Xavier Koenig, Jacques Raphaël, tout comme Alougen Canjamalay qui sont partis trop tôt.

À tous ceux et celles que ces deuils affligent, je voudrais présenter, en mon nom personnel et celui du MMM, nos plus vives sympathies.

M. le président, permettez-moi de prendre le temps de la Chambre pour évoquer le cas du judoka, Alougen Canjamalay, afin de démontrer les travers qui existent dans le *Sports Act*, voté en 2016 par ce même gouvernement. Ce jeune homme est mort après une blessure lors de la pratique de son sport de prédilection, c'était en 2015. À travers ce décès, je veux dénoncer, d'une part, le non-respect de la loi, notamment la section 6(1) (d) du *Sports Act*, par l'ensemble des fédérations sportives à Maurice et, d'autre part, l'immobilisme du ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports sur ce dossier. Absolument rien pour forcer les fédérations sportives à contracter des polices d'assurance en bonne et due forme pour les sportifs, qu'ils soient de niveau amateur ou de haut niveau.

Le cas Alougen Canjamaly n'est pas une exception. Le cas de ce jeune judoka est le dernier d'une longue liste de sportifs qui ont grandement souffert de cette situation et pour certains leurs carrières ont été brisés à jamais. La faute à certaines fédérations et c'est ici que repose toute l'hypocrisie dans cette triste affaire. Et qui, pour être en règle avec la loi, contracte une police d'assurance de façade avec un ministère des Sports complice de cette situation. Alors que selon la loi, la responsabilité d'une fédération, c'est de s'arranger pour avoir une assurance appropriée et adéquate pour leurs licenciés contre les accidents durant les compétitions et lors des entraînements avec leur équipe nationale uniquement. Certaines fédérations achètent des polices d'assurance globale, qui, en vérité, n'assurent aucune couverture financière à un athlète en cas de blessure. Je dois faire ressortir que dans la loi de 2013, les fédérations avaient aussi l'obligation d'avoir une assurance pour leurs athlètes, même pour une simple séance d'entraînement et non uniquement pour les entraînements avec leur sélection nationale, comme c'est le cas depuis 2016.

Dans le monde des assurances, on appelle cela une *blanket cover*. C'est-à-dire, ce n'est qu'au lendemain d'une blessure qu'un athlète fait face à la dure réalité. Et le MMM, au pouvoir, M. le président, demain, s'assurera dans les plus brefs délais que les droits des athlètes soient respectés. Je me répète, le bilan de ce gouvernement en matière de sport est pitoyable. En cette année, l'organisation des Jeux des Iles, l'heure était sans doute à l'apaisement dans un esprit d'unité et de solidarité, surtout par respect pour ces athlètes qui ont mouillé le maillot pour gagner leur place afin de défendre les couleurs de Maurice.

Cependant, comment puis-je garder le silence face à l'amateurisme inquiétant du Comité d'Organisation des Jeux (Le COJI Maurice) dont le Président n'est autre que le ministre de la Jeunesse et des Sports. La dernière bêtise en date est le contrat de R 18 millions, que nous savons tous, alloué à Grey Mauritius pour la production, entre autres, de clips promotionnels. Comme nous le savons tous, cela s'est terminé par un cas de plagiat de la vidéo officielle des Jeux Olympiques de Rio 2016, et ce qui nous couvre de honte.

M. le président, dès le départ, les décisions du COJI ont été les unes après les autres une source d'incompréhension. À commencer par le choix des disciplines ou visiblement des amis ont été privilégiés par rapport à d'autres sports qui méritaient leur place aussi bien au programme des jeux. Je me pose encore la question, pourquoi le handball et le tennis n'ont pas été choisis pour les jeux.

M. le président, la construction du complexe sportif de Côte-d'Or devrait avoisiner les cinq milliards. Nous sommes à moins de 30 jours des Jeux, la piscine et le gymnase ne sont pas toujours pas livrés. Est-ce que nos nageurs et judokas auront l'occasion de tester ces sites de compétitions avant que ne débutent les compétitions elles-mêmes ? Nous ne le savons pas.

Autre aberration, M. le président, est l'absence d'un vrai village des jeux pour les 10^e Jeux des Iles. À la place, le COJI a opté pour des hôtels pour héberger les athlètes, et l'avons vu aujourd'hui, pour un budget global de R150 millions, et cela, comme on le devine, sans passer par des appels d'offres. Un projet de logement social aurait dû être mis en chantier dans le cas de ces jeux. Et une fois les athlètes partis, le gouvernement aurait pu revendre ces appartements à des prix raisonnables ou récupérer ne serait-ce une partie de l'argent investi. Et vous savez quoi, les prix des tickets pour les compétitions vont varier de R100 à R300 pour les Jeux des Iles. Croyez-vous que ce soit abordable, surtout pour les jeunes étudiants ? À vouloir placer la barre haut et organiser des jeux cinq étoiles, on fait payer l'addition au peuple, ce qui est à mon avis révoltant.

Le Budget 2019/2020 vient démontrer malheureusement que le gouvernement ne voit pas plus loin que le bout de son nez ; rien pour les sportifs après les jeux. Pire, le budget opérationnel du ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports connaît une baisse, alors que les fédérations s'attendaient à une hausse de leur *grant*. Et encore une fois, ce gouvernement commet la bêtise de croire que le sport ne se résume qu'au football.

L'intention de mettre sur pied une école de foot de niveau international avec le concours du club anglais de Liverpool est fort louable. Mais tant que rien ne sera signé ou présenté concrètement, je ne ferai pas de plus amples commentaires sur ce projet, car l'académie de football avec West Ham United et le projet avec Montpellier-Herault sont encore frais dans les mémoires. Ce gouvernement est expert dans les promesses non tenues.

À ce chapitre, j'avoue mon incompréhension devant l'annonce du Premier ministre dans son discours, à l'effet que la *Mauritius Multi-Sports Infrastructure Limited will sign an agreement with the Liverpool Football and Athletics Grounds Limited from the UK to set up an International Football Academy Soccer School at Côte D'Or*. En quelle capacité, M. le président, cette compagnie signera ce contrat avec l'académie de football de Liverpool ? J'espère que le Premier ministre et le ministre des Sports viendront avec des explications claires, nettes et précises sur cette annonce, car des doutes subsistent sur la véracité d'un tel projet. Pourquoi ne pas rendre publiques les correspondances échangées à cet effet ? Lorsqu'on analyse les mesures squelettiques pour le sport dans le budget 2019/2020, on a l'impression qu'après les Jeux des Iles, ce sera le déluge. Une fois la grande fête de l'océan Indien terminée, le sport mauricien sera à nouveau confronté à la triste réalité, à sa misère noire.

Le ministère, avec un budget réduit, donc, pas de grande marge de manœuvre pour les fédérations indistinctement, et rien en termes de politique pour le sport de haut niveau, qui est la vitrine du pays dans les manifestations sportives à l'étranger.

Pour la partie sport, M. le président, je résumerai le budget en ces mots : « *Ena millions, pena vision* ». Avant de clore ce chapitre, je voudrais dire bonne chance au Club Maurice qui défendra les couleurs du pays au 10^e Jeux des Iles dans un mois. Et pour clore, M. le président, sur le chapitre des Jeux des Iles, je lance un appel au Premier ministre, au gouvernement pour que les parlementaires soient accrédités pour assister aux compétitions et soutenir nos athlètes. Tous les parlementaires, et je parle sous la correction de mon ami, le *Chief Whip*, qui lui aussi, je sais, est un grand amateur de sport.

M. le président, au niveau de circonscription, je ne peux passer ce silence, le triste spectacle que nous assistons quotidiennement dans le centre-ville de Beau Bassin. Avec les travaux du Métro Express, toute la circulation a été chamboulée et les usagers de la route vivent un véritable cauchemar. Les embouteillages monstres, principalement aux heures de pointe, sont un spectacle de désolation. La même cacophonie est notée au niveau de la région

Barkly ; les habitants vivent un immense stress, notamment en raison d'une pollution constante ou poussière et odeurs indésirables pénètrent à l'intérieur de leurs maisons. La région de Canot attend toujours son terrain de football ; un sujet sur lequel je m'exprime depuis plusieurs années déjà et les décideurs sont restés insensibles à la requête des jeunes de ce lieu. Il est clair, M. le président, qu'ils paieront le prix fort lors des prochaines élections. Je n'ai aucun doute à ce sujet.

M. le président, pour conclure, je dirai que le Budget 2019-2020 représente un exercice de fin de règne avec des mesures insignifiantes rien que pour embobiner la population. Un budget pour tenter de sauver les meubles dans un espoir de gagner les prochaines élections générales. Pire, le Premier ministre et ministre des Finances se permet de jouer un jeu dangereux avec le ciblage d'une catégorie de la population par des mesures spécifiques. Une énième tentative pour diviser la population à quelques mois des élections générales.

M. le président, je me permets de reprendre une déclaration de Ramesh Basant Roi, ancien gouverneur de la Banque de Maurice dans 'L'Express' du lundi 17 juin 2019, et qui résume parfaitement la situation financière de Maurice –

“If the Government had been a private enterprise, it would have been on receivership already.”

Merci.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Toussaint!

(8.08 p.m.)

The Minister of Youth and Sports (Mr S. Toussaint): Merci, M. le président, de me donner l'occasion de m'exprimer à l'occasion de ce Budget, présenté par notre Premier ministre.

Je me joins, moi aussi, M. le président, à l'honorable membre pour rendre hommage à trois athlètes, malheureusement partis trop tôt. Donc, je cite ici le jeune judoka, Alougen Canjamalay ; le jeune, aussi, Champion de Maurice de Squash, notre ami Xavier Koenig ; le jeune boxeur qui a fait partie de l'équipe nationale et qui a été notre champion en 2015 lors des jeux des îles, c'est-à-dire Jacques Rafael.

M. le président, on nous dit que ce budget est un budget décevant. Allons voir maintenant qui a raison, qui a tort. Permettez-moi, M. le président, même si je sais que le

temps qui m'est accordé est assez limité, d'aller faire un saut dans le passé, plus précisément en 2004. En 2004, notre Premier ministre avait présenté son premier budget, sous un gouvernement MSM/MMM avec comme Premier ministre, l'honorable Paul Bérenger, un premier budget qualifié de coup d'essai, coup de maître par son Premier ministre d'alors qui n'était autre que l'honorable Paul Raymond Bérenger. Aujourd'hui, c'est un budget décevant. 2005, ensuite, il récidive avec un super budget, qu'est-ce qui s'était passé après, M. le président, c'est, bien sûr, la venue au pouvoir en 2005 du Parti Travailliste et du PMSD et pendant, allons dire, dix ans, nous avons vu comment ce gouvernement avait appauvri la population. Dans quel but, M. le président ? Dans quel but ?

À l'époque, durant les élections 2005, c'était justement *dans 100 jours li ti pu sanz la vie tous dimoune dan moris*. C'est joli, je dois dire, ça nous parle, le petit peuple ça lui parle quand il entend qu'un futur Premier ministre va changer sa vie dans 100 jours. Quelle ne fut pas la déception de la population justement après les 100 jours, c'est tout à fait normal, on a donné 100 jours à ce nouveau gouvernement pour qu'il puisse s'installer, mais juste après 100 jours, M. le président, ce gouvernement *ine fer lepep rann gaz*, c'est ça ce qui s'est passé à l'époque, M. le président. Tout un chapelet de mesures visant à appauvrir les pauvres. Il y a plusieurs orateurs avant moi qui en ont parlé, le pain pour les enfants, les *fees* d'examen de SC, de HSC. Il y avait tout plein de mesures comme ça qui n'avaient fait qu'enfoncer le clou et que le pauvre devenait encore et encore et encore plus pauvre tandis qu'une poignée de riches, une poignée de riches devenaient de plus en plus riches. C'était ça le gouvernement 2005 PMSD/Travailliste avec le tandem, bien sûr, Ramgoolam/Sithanen.

M. le président, en 2010, il est vrai, le MSM, nous étions en alliance avec le Parti Travailliste et le PMSD et le Premier ministre actuel encore une fois ministre des Finances, qu'est-ce qu'il a fait ? Il est venu encore une fois corriger les crimes atroces commis par les anciens ministres des Finances et c'est là qu'il a réintroduit, M. le président, des mesures visant à aider les plus pauvres et ceux qui étaient au bas de l'échelle et, bien sûr, nous arrivons à 2014 puisque entre-temps donc, nous avons laissé le Parti travailliste et 2014, nous avons fait campagne pour encore une fois dire à la population que l'ancien Premier ministre, Navin Ramgoolam n'avait rien fait et que c'était nous qui allons corriger toutes ces erreurs et si je ne me trompe pas, M. le président, dès que nous étions arrivés au pouvoir en 2014, la toute première mesure que nous avons promise à la population, à nos aînés, c'était l'augmentation de leur pension, à R 5,000 et je viens d'écouter plusieurs membres de

l'opposition qui critiquent actuellement aujourd'hui l'augmentation à R 6,210 pour la pension de vieillesse.

Mon ami, l'honorable Fowdar, l'a dit avant moi. Écoutez, il y a une limite à la démagogie, parce que la population aujourd'hui, elle est intelligente. En 2014, l'alliance Travailliste/MMM nous critiquait sur la proposition d'augmenter la pension à R 5,000, *pa pou kapav donner, pa pou kapav, kot pou ale tire sa kas la, 4,000 mem pu doner* et nous, on a pu donner nos R 5,000, M. le président. *5,000 pane kapav doner*, aujourd'hui ils viennent nous dire que R 6,700 ce n'est pas assez et eux R 4,000, ils allaient donner. Seulement R 4,000 et là, je préviens la population, je préviens nos aînés et pendant la campagne, qu'est-ce qu'ils vont dire, ils vont promettre la lune, les étoiles, le ciel, la mer et tout ça.

Mais il faut faire attention. Ils avaient dit, je le répète encore une fois, ils avaient dit en 2014 que nous n'allions pas pouvoir donner R 5,000, aujourd'hui ils nous disent que R 6,700 c'est peu, ce n'est pas assez. Il faut arrêter de prendre les gens pour des imbéciles.

M. le président, nous arrivons à 2019 parce que je ne vais pas trop m'attarder sur tout ce qui s'est passé pendant quatre ans et demi. L'année 2019 débute de manière extraordinaire, le Premier ministre annonce l'éducation tertiaire gratuite au début de cette année, M. le président.

Vous savez à Maurice malheureusement arrivé à un certain moment, on a tendance à oublier certaines choses et c'est bon qu'aujourd'hui, là en juin, après six mois, je le rappelle et dites-vous bien, M. le président, j'ai été enseignant pendant 22 ans, il m'est arrivé à plusieurs reprises de rencontrer d'anciennes élèves et qui, avec de très jolis résultats, mais qui, malheureusement, n'ont jamais pu aller à l'université, M. le président. Quand je leur demandais, *ki position ?* Qu'est-ce que tu es en train de faire ? Elle était en train de travailler quelque part. L'université, non, malheureusement, monsieur, on ne peut pas, je n'ai pas les sous, mes parents n'ont pas les moyens et combien de milliers et de milliers d'élèves j'ai vu passer comme ça, M. le président. Or, le jour que le Premier ministre a annoncé cette mesure, j'ai sauté de joie à la maison, M. le président et ça oui, ça mérite qu'on tape la table, ça mérite de taper la table comme on dit, *gouvernement tape la table, nou taper la table* et de toute façon, *nou tape la table kantiter nou envi*, M. le président, parce que cette mesure soulage ceux qui sont au bas de l'échelle, ceux qui sont les plus pauvres de ce pays et voilà donc, M. le président, comment tout doucement depuis 2004 passant par plusieurs étapes, arrivé jusqu'au début de 2019, comment notre Premier ministre - l'honorable Fowdar l'a dit,

dessus je vais vous copier cher ami, l'honorable Fowdar l'a dit, c'est un humaniste, comment il l'a montré à plusieurs reprises, M. le président, et cette année encore il l'a démontré.

2019, M. le président, commence avec l'éducation gratuite pour ensuite venir avec l'affaire MedPoint, le jugement. Encore une fois, le Premier ministre a eu son jugement du *Privy Council*. Donc un jugement qui dit que tout est okay, un jugement des plus grands. Moi, je ne suis pas dans ce domaine, M. le président, j'étais enseignant tout simplement de langue, je ne connais pas trop la sphère légale.

Je crois que pour la majorité de la population, quand on parle du *Privy Council*, M. le président, ce n'est pas n'importe quoi ! Ce n'est pas n'importe quoi ! Et quand un *Privy Council* vient dire que le Premier ministre est innocent, qu'il n'y a absolument pas de conflits d'intérêts, qu'il n'y a aucun problème avec cette affaire de Medpoint là, qui sommes-nous, M. le président, pour venir rejurer le *Privy Council* ? Qui sommes-nous pour faire cela ? Et vous savez, M. le président, ce qui est encore plus dramatique, ce qui est encore plus navrant, décevant, c'est que pendant des années, des années et des années, les membres de l'Opposition n'ont cessé de harceler notre Premier ministre avec cette affaire de Medpoint là. Et pas plus loin que quelques mois de cela, malheureusement, un honorable membre, *honorable* s'il vous plaît, membre de cette Assemblée ; depuis plus - je ne sais combien d'années, de plus de 30 ans, l'honorable Bhagwan qui disait au Premier ministre *menotte pu dan to lamain, menotte!* M. le président, quand même ! Il y a un minimum qu'il faut qu'on arrive tout de même à respecter. L'affaire était en cour, débattu, on attend, on respecte, on ne peut pas faire de la politique sur n'importe quoi, M. le président, et venir encore critiquer le jugement du *Privy Council* ; M. le président, je laisse cela à la population.

Viens ensuite, le jugement par rapport aux Chagos en faveur de l'île Maurice et aussi ce que nous n'avons pas entendu. Aujourd'hui, on félicite. Aujourd'hui, certains membres de l'opposition *dire nou ki ti fer sa*. Oui *bateur bis*. Aujourd'hui, certains membres de l'opposition félicitent, remercient l'Union africaine, remercient les Africains pour leur aide, pour leur soutien. Encore une fois, M. le président, qu'est-ce qui n'a pas été dit sur le *case* de Chagos ? Quelques votes ! Mal géré ! Mal ficelé ! On dirait que certaines personnes détiennent le monopole de l'intelligence dans ce pays, M. le président. Mais *sori, nun ale lekol ene tigite nou osi do*. Et là, M. le président, je profite encore moi aussi de cette occasion pour saluer le travail de Sir Anerood Jugnauth dans ce *case*. Pour moi, personnellement, c'est un très grand honneur - et je pense que pour beaucoup d'entre nous - de vivre ce moment de Chagos et surtout avec un grand homme comme Sir Anerood Jugnauth, M. le président.

M. le président, sont venus ensuite les différents *cases* de Betamax et de CT Power. Toujours, *ene derrier lott* pendant cette année-là et bien sûr plusieurs collègues en ont parlé, mais je le dis encore une fois pour rappeler à la population qu'en 2014 et depuis bien avant, on avait fait campagne contre ces contrats qui ont été mal donnés et la population nous a fait confiance dessus. La population en 2014 nous a dit oui, vous avez raison parce qu'il y a anguille sous roche dans ces affaires-là et que, encore une fois, arrivé au pouvoir, Sir Anerood a fait ce qu'il fallait par rapport à Betamax et CT Power. Et aujourd'hui, la Cour nous donne raison. La Cour vient nous dire que Betamax est illégal ; que CT Power; illégal, M. le président. Et il faut le redire, il faut le répéter, attention que certaines personnes viennent noyer le poisson d'une façon ou d'une autre. Ils sont parfaits dans ce rôle-là. Ils sont excellents dans ce rôle-là. Donc, c'est pour cela que je dis à la population, ne l'oubliez pas cela. Betamax, CT Power, l'affaire de l'ancien régime et nous, on a réglé ce problème, M. le président.

Le budget, M. le président, est un budget de continuité ; est un budget qui vient corriger tout ce qui a été mal fait depuis le régime travailliste-PMSD jusqu'aujourd'hui. C'est un budget qu'il ne faut pas prendre en isolation. C'est un budget qui forme un tout et c'est un budget qui vient dire dans quelle direction ce pays va aller. C'est un budget de vision, c'est un budget d'avenir, M. le président. Et bien sûr, il y a pas mal de mesures contrairement au régime PMSD-travailliste et contrairement au tandem Ramgoolam-Sithanen. C'est un budget qui vient soulager les *ti-dimounn*, M. le président. C'est un budget qui donne encore plus de pouvoir d'achat aux *ti-dimounn*. Et on va le redire, tout le monde, nous allons continuer à le dire, le gaz, l'essence et toutes les autres mesures prises dans ce budget, M. le président. S'il y a certaines personnes qui ne sont pas d'accord, il n'y a pas de souci. La prochaine fois, quand ils vont aller changer de bonbonnes, ils peuvent dire là-bas sur le *filling station*, il n'y a pas de souci, *nou pu paye ancien prix nou* ce n'est pas bon cette mesure-là. Quand ils vont partir aux stations d'essence pour faire le plein : « Non, non, non, *nou pas pu paye nouvo prix nou, nou nou l'opposition nou*. On ne va pas payer le nouveau prix. On va payer l'ancien prix. On conteste ! On n'est pas d'accord. *Nanier pas bon dan sa gouvernement la.*'

Et, toujours, M. le président, visant à soulager les *ti-dimounn*, on ne doit pas oublier les mesures historiques. L'honorable Fowdar en a parlé *negative income tax*, M. le président. Combien de *ti-dimounn* sont en train de bénéficier de ce *negative income tax*. Le salaire minimum, M. le président, et bravo à mon collègue, bravo à mon ami, le Ministre du Travail, pour cette mesure historique. Le salaire minimum, M. le président. Il ne faut pas oublier que,

dans cette Chambre, nous avons de grands syndicalistes ; nous avons de grands syndicalistes. Nous avons un Premier ministre qui était le plus grand combattant des travailleurs dans ce pays. *Ine fer la grève* et il était Premier ministre, mais qui a apporté cette mesure du salaire minimum, M. le président ? C'est nous ! C'est nous !

M. le président, il y a plusieurs orateurs qui ont parlé avant moi et qui vont parler ensuite après, permettez-moi de venir directement sur mon ministère, le ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports.

La jeunesse, M. le président, nous avons une belle jeunesse dans ce pays. Et moi, j'ai foi dans la jeunesse mauricienne. J'ai moi-même à la maison trois. J'ai côtoyé plusieurs jeunes durant ma carrière de professeur et je continue de côtoyer des jeunes, M. le président. Venir dire que dans nos budgets précédents ou actuel, il n'y a rien pour la jeunesse ; il n'y a rien, il n'y a rien. Mais, M. le président, permettez-moi rapidement de dire quelques mesures qui sont en train d'aider nos jeunes. Certes, il faudra en faire plus, je suis d'accord et je sais que le Premier ministre me donnera l'occasion et tout le soutien qu'il faut pour continuer à aider nos jeunes. Nous avons le *National Youth Volunteer Scheme* dont le but est de promouvoir le volontariat parmi les jeunes.

Laissez-moi vous dire, M. le président, que ces jeunes volontaires je les rencontre souvent. Ce sont des personnes discrètes, tranquilles, qui ne font pas de publicité, qui ne font pas de *marketing*, derrière les rideaux. Humilité ! Rapidement, ils sont partis, durant les dernières inondations, tranquillement, par eux-mêmes à Fond du Sac, pour donner un coup de main aux habitants de Fond du Sac, sans faire de tapage sur Facebook, sans tambour ni trompette, M. le président.

(Interruptions)

Ils sont extraordinaires, ces jeunes. Je leur dis, ce soir, merci pour ce que vous faites pour notre pays ! Ils ont entamé plusieurs campagnes de nettoyage, toujours sans grand *tam tam*, rendre visite dans les hospices, aller dans les hôpitaux, et là récemment, à l'occasion de la fête des Mères, je les ai accompagnés tranquillement, encore une fois, dans un couvent à Rose Belle pour s'occuper de nos aînés, M. le président.

(Interruptions)

Kot zot sa ! Exactement ! Et comme je dis, ils sont discrets dans ce qu'ils font et ils font un travail extraordinaire.

M. le président, le programme *Duke of Edinburgh's Award*. Aujourd'hui, je m'adresse à tous ces milliers de jeunes qui suivent le programme *Duke of Edinburgh's Award* à différents niveaux, le bronze, l'argent et l'or à travers toute l'île et même à Rodrigues, M. le président. Et on a tendance à dire rien pour les jeunes, mais c'est vrai, comme me le rappelle l'honorable Sawmynaden, de 2005 à 2014, ce programme, M. le président, *ti dan tirroir, inn pren moisi*, M. le président. Et on ose venir dire que notre gouvernement ne fait rien pour les jeunes ! Et plus de 10, 000 jeunes, M. le président, participent à ce programme. Là, nous rendons l'accès à ce programme facile à travers tous les centres de jeunesse et je salue tous mes officiers qui font la tournée dans tous les collèges de l'île pour aller encourager nos jeunes à faire le *Duke of Edinburgh's Award* et s'il y a certains collèges qui ne l'ont pas encore fait, qui ne l'ont pas encore démarré, prenez contact avec nous, on viendra chez vous très vite pour commencer le programme, M. le président.

Il y a un programme qui me tient vraiment à cœur et que j'ai lancé depuis 2017, qui s'appelle le Carrefour des jeunes, M. le président. Et aussi, pour ne pas stigmatiser ces jeunes qui viennent, nous ne faisons pas de *marketing* dessus, pas de photos Facebook, pas de rapport dans la presse parce que c'est un programme qui vise à prendre des jeunes venant de quartiers difficiles et on les emmène à Pointe Jerome en week-end résidentiel. Là-bas, ils ont des formations dans le théâtre avec des professionnels, ils ont des formations de danse, ils ont les formations à la musique, ils rencontrent les policiers qui viennent leur parler, les brigades de mineures qui viennent leur parler et c'est toute une activité pendant un week-end qui vise à *empower* ces jeunes M. le président. La première fois qu'on avait lancé le Carrefour des jeunes pendant les différentes discussions en groupe, il y a un jeune d'une région du sud qui a dit à un officier de mon ministère : *ou koner madame, moi je n'ai pas le choix moi, kan mo pu gagne 18 ans mo pou bizin vine ene dealer meme moi* parce qu'il habitait dans une région entourée avec des personnes qui étaient dans le trafic de drogue.

Aujourd'hui, M. le président, ce jeune homme aujourd'hui, il a 18 ans et vous savez, M. le président, il était venu avec nous l'année dernière à Djibouti, il a participé dans le volet jeunesse dans le cadre de la CJSOI. Aujourd'hui, M. le président, ce jeune homme, il est animateur lui-même et il témoigne avec d'autres jeunes. Quand je pense à ce jeune homme, je pense toujours à dire *from dealer to leader*, M. le président.

Nous avons aussi lancé, l'année dernière, l'activité *zeness montrer to talan*, qui a eu un succès énorme et qui a donné l'occasion à nos jeunes de venir montrer leur potentiel et nous allons reprendre, M. le président, parce que plusieurs personnes m'ont demandé, nous

repreons *zeness montrer to talan*, après les jeux des îles. Le *street dance battle* a été une réalité l'année dernière parce que tout va dans le bon sens pour dire que le *street dance* fera partie des jeux olympiques de Paris 2024. Donc, depuis l'année dernière, M. le président, depuis 2018, six ans en avance, On ose dire qu'il n'y a pas de vision. Six ans en avance, on a commencé à introduire *le street dance battle* et on a fait une compétition l'année dernière dans le but d'encourager ces jeunes et de les envoyer ensuite à Paris en 2024, M. le président.

Il y a d'innombrables programmes qui visent à *empower* les jeunes. C'est ça le but. Je vais sauter certains programmes et je vais aller directement sur le *National Youth Civic Service* dont a fait mention l'honorable membre qui a parlé juste avant moi. Le *National Youth Civic Service*, M. le président, est un programme qui vise à former les jeunes de sorte qu'ils deviennent employables. Aujourd'hui, nous avons des jeunes qui possèdent d'innombrables certificats, mais qui malheureusement pour 'x' raison ne sont pas employables et c'est un programme basé sur un syllabus. Je suis fier de le dire, nous terminons la première phase aujourd'hui et je l'avais répondu dans ma question, M. le président. Malheureusement, l'honorable membre a choisi de dire ce qu'il veut dire. Je l'avais dit dans ma réponse. Nous avons visé 3,000 jeunes, nous procédons phase par phase, M. le président. À quoi bon de courir derrière la quantité, nous passons phase par phase et la première phase est terminée. Pas plus loin que la semaine prochaine, 330 jeunes vont recevoir leur certificat de *National Youth Civic Service*. Et la deuxième phase démarre juste après les jeux des îles, c'est-à-dire au mois d'août, M. le président.

Ceci n'est qu'un petit bout de tout ce qui est fait pour la jeunesse mauricienne et je redis, j'ai foi dans notre jeunesse, j'ai foi dans la jeunesse mauricienne, je sais que vous êtes capables de grandes choses. N'écoutez pas les oiseaux de mauvais augure, n'écoutez pas les prophètes de malheur qui ont tendance à peindre un tableau noir par rapport à nos jeunes, M. le président. Ils sont merveilleux et je suis tenté de leur dire *nou contan zot*, M. le président.

M. le président, permettez-moi de parler un peu d'infrastructures rapidement. Nous avons, dans le cadre des jeux des îles bien sûr, entamé une série de rénovations et à part les rénovations, nous avons aussi plusieurs complexes sportifs qui vont voir le jour très vite, très bientôt cette année, M. le président. Permettez-moi de venir directement sur la liste des infrastructures. Si je ne me trompe pas - et si je me trompe, je m'excuserai, sans problème - hier, l'honorable Osman Mahomed a parlé des infrastructures, M. le président. Et je le redis, si je me trompe aujourd'hui, je présenterai mes excuses, il n'y a pas de souci dessus. Mais j'ai cru entendre que l'honorable Osman Mahomed a parlé de ces rénovations comme un

gaspillage d'argent. Je ne sais pas quel mot qu'il a utilisé exactement, mais qu'il n'était pas très favorable à cela. On va dépenser des millions et des millions.

D'abord, M. le président, permettez-moi de dire à la Chambre, et à toute la population mauricienne que, depuis les derniers Jeux des Iles, en 2003, et toujours, le gouvernement MSM, avec l'allié de l'époque, le MMM, nous avons organisé les Jeux des Iles. Et là, je rends hommage, à mon ami, à mon frère, enfin, à l'époque, Yerrigadoo, qui était le ministre de la Jeunesse et des Sports. Depuis ces derniers Jeux, rien, zéro, nada, n'ait, rien n'avait été fait par rapport à la rénovation, par rapport à la maintenance de nos infrastructures sportives.

(Interruptions)

Nada, zéro, n'ait! Et juste pour vous donner un petit exemple, au Stade Anjalay, M. le président, sous les gradins, où nous avons les *cloakrooms* où les joueurs viennent et se changent. Les vestiaires ! Vous savez que quand il pleuvait là-bas, à Anjalay, les joueurs de foot, parfois, on faisait des matchs internationaux là-bas, eh bien, les joueurs de foot devaient se servir de parapluies, M. le président. Et les joueurs qui venaient, pensaient que c'était une piscine. M. le président. Dix bananés, zéro ! Rien n'avait été fait par l'ancien régime, le gouvernement PMSD/Travailliste, M. le président. Est-ce qu'ils avaient une culture, est-ce qu'ils ont une culture de sport pour venir dire, aujourd'hui, nous sommes en train de gaspiller des millions ? Est-ce gaspiller des millions que de rénover plusieurs de nos infrastructures sportives, M. le président ? Oui, le chiffre arrive à R 695,790,000, mais nos sportifs ne méritent pas cela ? Nos sportifs doivent être toujours dans les stades en ruine ? Alors, M. le président, je laisse la population, et surtout nos sportifs juger ces personnes-là. Nous avons entamé une série de rénovations, et donc, plusieurs sont déjà terminés. Et je dois dire que je suis aussi particulièrement content de voir que le gymnase Malabar à Rodrigues a été complété, et c'est un réel bijou. La piscine est opérationnelle à Rodrigues ; le Stade Camp du Roi, la rénovation a été faite, M. le président, sans compter plusieurs de nos infrastructures, ici, à l'île Maurice : Le Stade Anjalay, le Stade George V, le Gymnase de Phoenix, le *National Boxing Centre*, et j'en passe. C'est toute une longue liste.

(Interruptions)

Et je redis, Auguste Volaire, à Flacq. Et je redis, R 695 millions pour ces rénovations. Est-ce que nos sportifs ne méritent pas cela, M. le président ?

Dans ce budget, M. le président, il a été prévu que nous allions construire un anneau cyclable dans le nord. Nous avons eu un budget pour commencer à préparer le *design* par

rapport à un anneau cyclable. C'est un projet qui vise à aider nos amis cyclistes, et qui va aider aussi la fédération par rapport à ces entraînements. Alors, ce sera sur un terrain de trois arpents. Un terrain qui est déjà sous le ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports. Donc, *provision for a 110- meter cycle track*, 80 metres de large, *30° slope*, avec les toilettes, les gradins et toutes les facilités, dont le *lighting facilities* pour l'entraînement le soir. Un anneau cyclable, M. le président. Quand le Premier ministre avait annoncé cela, certaines personnes, je ne dirai pas qui, à l'extérieur, étaient un peu perdues, parce qu'elles ne savaient pas ce que c'était et n'avaient jamais entendu parler de cela. Ce sera la première qu'on va faire à Maurice. Nous pensons aussi à mettre sur pied un circuit de rallye. Nous allons travailler sur ce projet. C'est dans le budget. Nous allons travailler sur ce projet et toujours pour aider par rapport à la sécurité routière.

M. le président, pour ne pas trop m'attarder sur les infrastructures, nous allons avoir un budget pour commencer à préparer la construction d'une piscine à Roche Bois. Il y a un terrain qui se trouve juste à côté du *Youth Centre* de Roche Bois et, donc, il est prévu de construire une piscine de 25 mètres dans la région. Bien sûr, tout le travail va démarrer, tout ce qui est technicité va démarrer et j'espère que très bientôt ce projet va pouvoir se réaliser. Alors, je passe rapidement, M. le président. Au niveau des infrastructures il y a tellement de choses, mais je ne voudrais pas trop tarder et prendre le temps de la Chambre. Rapidement, au niveau du sport, donc, oui, je me joins moi aussi à l'honorable membre qui a parlé juste avant moi, pour féliciter nos différents champions dans différents domaines, qui ont réussi pendant ce weekend, Fabrice Bauluck, Warren Robertson, Fabrice Naina, Etienne Fleuri, et aussi nos deux médaillés d'argent l'*African Beach Game* qui se tiennent au Cap Verde.

Rapidement, M. le président, quelques réalisations ! Nous avons neuf nouveaux centres techniques régionaux en athlétisme et badminton. Nous avons 20 nouvelles écoles de sport en basketball, handball et volleyball. Nous avons 27 ateliers de football pour les débutants. Nous avons fait des *physical fitness tests* avec les étudiants de 12 à 13 ans, et cela a touché 3,810 élèves. Et j'en passe, M. le président. En ce qu'il s'agit du *sports for all*, nous connaissons tous le combat, et nous connaissons tous la vision du Premier ministre par rapport à encourager un maximum de personnes à pratiquer une activité physique et sportive. Et dans ce cadre, nous avons organisé plusieurs activités à travers l'île pour encourager les sportifs à venir participer dans ces activités. Le Premier ministre a lui-même donné l'exemple, en faisant 26 tours de pistes au Stade du Réduit, M. le président.

Quand on parle de sport, et inévitablement cette année, M. le président, c'est bien sûr, les jeux des îles. Donc, j'accélère. Il y avait tellement de choses à dire. Nous sommes à 31 jours des jeux et bientôt, 30 jours à partir de demain. Je dois dire que je ne suis pas d'accord du tout avec les arguments posés par l'honorable qui a parlé juste avant moi. Nous avons une équipe formidable au sein du COJI, M. le président. Et je dois leur dire merci pour ce beau travail qu'ils sont en train de faire. Organiser des Jeux des Îles n'est pas une mince affaire.

Ce n'est pas comme certains le croient, *bat bater coume sa*. Ce n'est pas cela, M. le président. C'est tout un travail scientifique qui est fait. Et je puis vous dire que ce soit les membres du COJI, le CEO, le commissaire général, ou les officiers du ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports sont en train de faire un maximum d'effort pour faire à ce que ces jeux soient une réussite, M. le président.

Permettez-moi de répondre à ce que l'honorable Quirin a dit par rapport aux hôtels. En tout cas, moi, ce que j'ai eu avec les athlètes, c'est qu'ils sont emballés de savoir que, pour la première fois, dans le cadre des Jeux, ils vont être logés dans des hôtels 5-étoiles, M. le président. Ils sont emballés ! Ils le méritent. Et au-delà des frontières, dans les autres îles, c'est la même chose. Ils se disent, wow, c'est du jamais vu. Les Réunionnais, ils vont venir, ils se disent, eh bien, on va être à l'hôtel. Les Seychellois, etc. Nous allons être logés à l'hôtel. En 2003, c'est vrai, il y avait le village, les appartements à Ébène. Mais, il faut apprendre, il faut avancer avec son temps. Cela nous a aidé, mais malheureusement, après, on sait très bien ce qui s'est passé avec tous les problèmes qu'il y a eus pour revendre ces appartements. Les appartements étaient délabrés. Il fallait acheter les lits, remplir les appartements. Il fallait avoir un coin nourriture. Il fallait que quelqu'un vienne pour cuire à manger tous les jours et cela coûtait plus de R 20 milliards, M. le président. Aujourd'hui, pour R 150 millions, on a tout clef en main et les hôtels de Maurice ont le niveau, ont la capacité de faire ce travail. Nos athlètes seront bien logés, bien nourris et même bien blanchis, M. le président, et je ne comprends pas ce qu'il y a à trouver de négatif dans cette démarche, mais plus en sécurité. Mais encore une fois, je laisse le soin à nos athlètes de juger ce genre de comportement, M. le président.

Pour aider nos athlètes, plusieurs fonds ont été alloués et cela nous a aidé à donner un soutien à tous nos athlètes depuis deux ans, M. le président, soutien médical, paramédical, masseur, physio, nutritionniste, psychologue, test de condition physique, camp d'entraînement et de compétition locale à l'étranger. Rien que pour cette année, pour ces six mois, les équipes nationales de *basket ball*, filles et garçons, ont eu un stage de trois semaines

en Serbie. L'équipe de boxe était à Cuba et en Inde, et je parle de janvier 2019 à juin 2019. Je ne parle pas de 2017/2018. Je ne parle que pour ces six mois, M. le président. Les haltérophiles, pendant ces six mois, ont eu deux mois en Roumanie et là, actuellement, ils se trouvent en Chine pour un stage de six semaines, M. le président. Les volleyeurs, hommes et dames, ont eu leur stage en Thaïland. Plusieurs de nos cyclistes se trouvent actuellement là en France. Nos amis de la voile ont eu un stage de formation à Grand Baie par des experts venant de France et du Denmark. Les athlètes, plusieurs de l'athlétisme, ont eu des stages et des compétitions en France. Le badminton et le tennis de table, là, actuellement, il y a des *sparing partners* qui sont à Maurice pour les aider dans leur entraînement. Ceux qui pratiquent le handisport ont eu plusieurs compétitions en Europe, M. le président. Le judoka, on sait dans quelle situation difficile étaient les judokas avant. Nos judokas quittent le pays pour le Maroc, M. le président, pour un stage à partir d'après-demain, M. le président.

Permettez-moi dans le cadre des Jeux des Iles d'annoncer à nos athlètes que pour chaque médaille d'or qu'ils vont rapporter, il y aura un *cash prize* de R 50,000. Et je dois dire que normalement dans le cadre des jeux des îles, le *cash prize* était de R 30,000. Donc, le *cash prize* passe de R 30,000 à R 50,000 pour l'or ; passe de R 20,000 à R 30,000 pour l'argent ; passe de R 10,000 à R 20,000 pour le bronze.

(Interruptions)

Ça aussi pas assez. Il n'y a pas de vision. Ce gouvernement ne fait rien pour les sports. Je laisse nos athlètes juger encore une fois.

Et pour clore ce volet Jeux des Iles, M. le président, je suis fier et content d'annoncer que nous avons lancé quelques jours de cela, la chanson des jeux qui fait fureur en ce moment 'Tamtam Dan Zil' par le groupe Kokofaya et dont je vais déposer à l'Assemblée. *Gagne ene ti letan capav écouter*. Et aussi bien très belle chanson et je félicite ces jeunes et aussi le magazine du COJI qui est sorti récemment et pas plus loin qu'hier, M. le président, nous avons dévoilé le parcours de la flamme qui va sillonner la République de Maurice, à partir du 06 à Rodrigues, pour ensuite à partir du 07 à Maurice, M. le président. Nous avons dévoilé le parcours de la flamme.

Hier, nous avons écouté l'hymne des jeux et je profite de cette occasion pour faire la différence entre les deux. Parce que malheureusement, il y a certains journalistes qui sont en train encore de confondre. Je me permets de corriger cela. La chanson des Jeux, 'Tamtam Dan Zil' c'est la chanson gaie, joyeuse, populaire qui va mettre l'ambiance. L'hymne des

jeux qui a été composé par le Sergent Parfait de la *Police Band* et qui sera joué par la *Police Band*. C'est l'hymne que nous allons jouer le jour de l'ouverture quand on va faire monter le drapeau des jeux. Et l'hymne des jeux sera accompagné d'un jingle pour annoncer les médailles et d'une marche très symbolique quand les athlètes vont aller prendre leurs médailles et c'est la *Police Band* et je remercie cette belle équipe de la *Police Band* qui a fait un travail formidable par rapport à ces trois musiques, M. le président.

Je vais passer rapidement à la circonscription N° 17. Beaucoup a déjà été dit par l'honorable Alain Aliphon qui est maintenant le PPS de la circonscription. La Circonscription N° 17 est une très belle circonscription, M. le président. C'est la ville de Curepipe. C'est le village de Midlands, le village de 16^e Mille et le village de Dubreuil. C'est une circonscription parfaite, excellente et moi, j'adore ma circonscription, M. le président. J'y suis né. Je passe toute ma vie dans cette circonscription et je continue de passer toute ma vie dans cette belle circonscription et cela me ramène rapidement en arrière. Pendant la campagne électorale de 2014, donc mes colistiers et moi-même, l'honorable Adrien Duval et l'honorable Sewocksingh où on a fait campagne ensemble dans cette belle circonscription. On a passé des bons moments, on doit le dire et ce qui me vient à l'esprit, c'est qu'à un certain moment pendant la campagne, les candidats du Parti travailliste et du MMM, à un certain moment, M. le président, m'ont traité de *piti cité*. Oui, M. le président, ils m'ont traité de *piti cité* et je me rappelle oui, Travailliste/MMM, leur candidat, M. le président, et je me rappelle que lors de mon premier discours ici dans cette même Assemblée, j'ai dit *mo fier mo ene pitit cité*, M. le président.

(Interruptions)

Et cela n'a pas cessé. Pendant ces quatre ans et demi, M. le président, qu'est-ce que nous n'avons pas entendu ? Imbécile, clown, et j'en passe, M. le président. Qu'est-ce que nous n'avons pas entendu ! Et j'en passe ! Il y a tellement. Il y a certaines personnes de l'autre côté de la Chambre, ils possèdent un dictionnaire de ce genre de mots. Et là, je relance l'appel à la population pour leur dire : voilà comment on traite les élus de ce pays et moi ça me fait mal parce que je suis un exemple et que grâce à mon Premier ministre, grâce à mon leader, les *ti-dimounes*, les *pitit cité dans ça pays la ena l'avenir*, M. le président.

Sur ce, M. le président, par rapport aux différents projets, il y a une longue liste. Je ne vais pas m'attarder dessus. Mes mandants savent ce qu'on est en train de faire, ce qu'on a fait. Ce n'est pas nécessaire de venir essayer de faire une liste de commission comme ça

puisqu'ils savent et ils savent qui sont sérieux dans ce pays. Ils savent qui sont ceux qui sont sérieux dans cette circonscription, M. le président.

Je vais juste rebondir rapidement parce que je dois remercier énormément l'honorable Mahen Seeruttun. Je remercie l'honorable Seeruttun parce qu'il a entendu les cris du cœur des habitants de Dubreuil et de Midlands. Depuis plusieurs années, avant même d'être candidat, depuis plusieurs années ces habitants n'ont cessé de pleurer la fermeture de l'usine de thé de Dubreuil. Ce village était prospère grâce à cette usine et du jour au lendemain après la fermeture, ils se sont trouvés dans un monde perdu et n'ayant pas de boulot pendant plusieurs années, M. le président. Aujourd'hui, certaines personnes dans leur discours, dans leur réplique, dans leur question osent venir nous montrer du doigt, M. le président. Elles osent venir nous dire : *sa pa bon, sa pa bon*.

Honorable Boolell, fermer l'usine de thé de Dubreuil, percer le cœur de ces habitants, de ce village, de Dubreuil, de Midlands, ça fait mal, M. le président. Cela fait mal.

Au lieu de cela, au lieu de s'occuper de son ministère à l'époque, qu'est-ce qu'il faisait en 2012, M. le président ? *Li partage macaronis*, M. le président. Mais cela, la population ne va pas l'oublier et c'est pour cela que je remercie l'honorable Mahen Seeruttun. Il nous a écoutés, il est venu. Il est venu - *vini vinci vinqui*. Il est venu à Dubreuil. Il a entendu les pleurs et les cris de ces habitants et aujourd'hui l'usine de thé est prospère. L'usine de thé est prospère, M. le président. Les planteurs de thé de la région Midlands, Dubreuil, 16^e Mille m'ont dit de remercier l'honorable Mahen Seeruttun M. le président.

Je termine ici, M. le président, en remerciant énormément l'honorable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Premier ministre de ce pays. Je le remercie par rapport à tout ce qu'il fait pour la population. Je le remercie pour les *ti-dimounn*. Je le remercie pour les pauvres. Je le remercie pour ceux qui ont espoir maintenant. Je le redis – je le remercie parce qu'il a fait de ce *piti cité* un ministre de la République, M. le président.

Merci pour votre attention.

(9.01 p.m.)

Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Je pense que le ministre Toussaint a confondu que le début de la campagne électorale pour les élections partielles le 13 novembre et pas aujourd'hui.

M. le président, je dois quand même rafraîchir la mémoire au ministre Toussaint quand il est venu prétendre dans cette Chambre que le Parti travailliste a appauvri les pauvres – le terme qu’il a lui-même utilisé. Je voudrais juste le rappeler que c’est sous le gouvernement travailliste que le ministère de l’Intégration sociale a vu le jour, ministère, lui-même, qui est en charge de l’injustice et de corriger ces injustices sociales. *Mo crwar li finn blier.*

M. le président, le rôle de l’opposition est d’émettre, de donner son opinion, de formuler ses critiques, n’en déplaise à certains. Cela peut faire mal aux oreilles, mais la critique peut être désagréable, M. le président, mais elle est comme la douleur pour le corps humain, elle est nécessaire. Elle attire l’attention sur ce qui ne va pas. Lors de mon premier discours en 2015...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Take your seat. You know what are the rules here. When somebody is having the floor, you should not cross in front of that person who is speaking, please. You can resume your speech now.

Mr Jhuboo: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Lors de mon premier discours, M. le président, comme je vous le disais en 2015, je disais la chose suivante : critiquer dans le vide n’a pas de sens. Critiquer sans pouvoir comparer avec ce qui a été promis et réalisé n’est pas productif. Nous le ferons en temps et en lieu et je conclurai en 2015 en vous souhaitant à toutes et à tous bonne chance. Malheureusement pour notre pays, M. le président, la chance n’a pas suffi. Nous n’avons eu cesse pendant ces cinq dernières années d’essayer de recadrer ce gouvernement en tentant de lui faire comprendre qu’il faisait fausse route. Les qualificatifs attribués aux différents budgets parlent d’eux-mêmes – des budgets qualifiés de *menti-menti* ; des budgets qualifiés d’insuffisants, d’au ras du sol, de réchauffés et j’en passe, mais cela n’a pas suffi. Ce gouvernement était constant dans l’erreur de sa stratégie budgétaire et dans son incapacité à transformer ce pays en profondeur.

Après deux Premiers ministres ou un et demi, deux ministres des Finances, deux présidents de la République, peut-être même trois qui sait ; après dix démissions, après une série de scandales sans précédent qui ont terni notre image tant au niveau national qu’international, le démembrement ou la nationalisation de la BAI qui aura coûté la bagatelle de 19 milliards de roupies aux contribuables tout simplement parce que vous avez appliqué un remède plus grave que la maladie elle-même. Un jour d’ailleurs, nous devons faire la

lumière sur toute cette histoire et identifier les vrais responsables. Cette fameuse Heritage City – cité érigée à la gloire du ministre Mentor par celui qui voulait être calife à la place du calife. Après cette négociation catastrophique de l'accord du DTAA avec l'Inde par encore une fois celui qui voulait être calife à la place du calife. On en rit beaucoup aujourd'hui. Mais il fut un temps où celui qu'on nommait KGB en faisait trembler plus d'un. Alors que nous sommes à quelques semaines des jeux des îles, nous avons déjà gagné une médaille d'or avec le cout du stade de Côte-d'Or – un milliard, non, 2.3 milliards, non, 3.4 milliards, non, finalement 4.6 milliards, M. le président. Et après, on nous arrose à la sauce : *we mean business*. Le pire, M. le président, est que rien n'est prévu pour ce stade après les jeux. Il va couter une fortune à maintenir et aucune, je le dis, aucune analyse, aucun *business plan* n'a été fait pour savoir comment rentabiliser cette structure après les jeux des îles. Après des moments où ce pays a vécu les pires instants de son histoire politique, après une série d'arrestations arbitraires qui ont touché les dirigeants de ma formation politique, le chef du Parti travailliste, le leader du Parti travailliste en particulier ainsi que le chef de file du Parti travailliste à l'Assemblée nationale sur des *provisional charges* farfelues. Cela me rappelle une citation de John Locke : 'Là où le droit finit, la tyrannie commence.' Après tout cela, que restera-t-il ? Que va se rappeler le gouvernement ? que va se rappeler le peuple dans dix ans de ce gouvernement Lepep à la tête de ce pays ? Juste un arrière-gout de promesses électorales non accomplies, un arrière-gout de promesses électorales non réalisées et une traque de ses adversaires politiques acharnés.

M. le président, nous ne sommes plus à l'heure du bilan, car les carottes sont cuites pour ce gouvernement. Nous sommes à l'heure du constat. Alors quel est ce constat ? Essayons de voir ce qui a été promis par ce gouvernement et ce qui a été vraiment réalisé. La promesse d'une croissance soutenue, forte de 5.5%, a été un mirage à défaut d'être un miracle. Le constat est le suivant - trois et quelques poussières de pourcentage sur les cinq dernières années.

M. le président, qu'est-ce que la croissance ? La croissance est ce socle de richesses de demain. La croissance est ce formidable élan, ce mouvement de toutes les forces d'un pays dans un désir d'avancer ensemble, de progresser, d'innover, de réformer, de transformer. Alors, est-ce que cet élan a vraiment eu lieu ? M. le président, il n'y a pas eu d'élan. Au contraire, nous avons stagné. On ne se mesure plus au meilleur de la classe. On se mesure, on se compare au plus mauvais. On se gargarise sur une performance de moins de 4% de croissance, mais ce qui est intéressant, c'est de voir comment font les autres et pas besoin

d'aller très loin. Allons juste à côté. Allons en Afrique. Jetons un petit coup d'œil à l'Afrique, à nos voisins africains pour lesquels nous étions un modèle de prospérité, un modèle sur lequel tout le monde regardait.

M. le président, voici la liste produite par la Banque mondiale. Un récapitulatif sur les dix dernières années de cet indicatif qu'est la croissance et qu'est-ce qu'il nous indique ? Quel est le pays qui a réalisé une croissance soutenue pendant les dix dernières années ? Premier en Afrique – l'Ethiopie 9.5%, est-ce que Maurice est deuxième ? Non, Rwanda 7.4%. Est-ce que Maurice est troisième ? Non, Ghana 7.3%. Est-ce que Maurice est quatrième ? Non, Côte d'Ivoire 6.6%. Est-ce qu'on est cinquième ? Non, Tanzanie avant, Maldives avant, Niger avant, Djibouti, Zimbabwe, *Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Burkina Faso, Guinée, Kenya, mais où est-ce que nous sommes, M. le président ?

Derrière le Mozambique, non, le Mozambique est avant nous. Le Togo est avant nous. Le Sénégal est avant nous. L'Ouganda est avant nous. La Sierra Leone, la Zambie, le Botswana, le Benin, les Seychelles, le Cameroun. M. le président, nous sommes aujourd'hui le 32^{ème} pays en Afrique en termes de croissance et on se gargarise de grands résultats.

M. le président, le constat parle de lui-même. Autres promesses non tenues, aux chiffres mirobolants de la création de 20,000 emplois, qu'en est-il ? La réalité est tout autre. L'honorable Uteem a tenté de vous le démontrer, mais les chiffres qu'il a produits sont en fait les chiffres réels. Nous avons produit moins de 2000 emplois parce que nous devons tenir en compte le nombre de personnes qui sont parties à la retraite. C'est mathématique, c'est simple. Donc, là aussi, vous avez failli. A la dette publique, je voulais répondre à l'honorable Fowdar qui disait la chose suivante : *we need loans for a country. Of course, we need loans, Mr Fowdar, inasmuch as we can service the debt.*

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Address the Chair, hon. Jhuboo, please!

Mr Jhuboo: *Sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.* La dette publique, M. le président, le challenge était de descendre sous la barre de 60% du produit intérieur brut, mais nous sommes encore très loin, sans compter sur le projet du métro léger, du stade de Côte-d'Or, ainsi que le projet de logement. Si nous incluons ces dotations budgétaires dans le budget, nous dépassons les 70%. Et qu'a fait ce gouvernement pour tenter d'équilibrer le budget ces dernières années ? A-t-il généré plus de richesses ? A-t-il moins dépensé ? A-t-il mieux géré comme on aurait fait comme tout bon père de famille ? Non, M. le président. Nous

avons demandé de l'aide à nos pays amis pour payer notre mauvaise gestion et désormais, nous voulons utiliser les réserves de la banque centrale, quitte à mettre le pays à genou.

M. le président, il est important de dénoncer la tentative d'utiliser les fonds de la banque centrale afin de réduire ces déficits, car ce serait fragiliser la capacité d'interventions de cette institution dans le cadre d'une crise majeure. Le peuple attend de ce gouvernement une gestion saine de l'économie, une réforme en profondeur, une gestion en bon père de famille, rigoureuse, pas l'utilisation des fonds de notre banque centrale qui pourrait mettre ce pays à genou. Essayons de dresser un parallèle. Tentons de simplifier cet exercice qui est celui d'utiliser les fonds de la banque centrale pour éponger une dette.

M. le président, c'est l'histoire d'un foyer, de famille, comme il en existe des milliers qui travaillent, qui consomment, qui font des emprunts pour leur logement, pour l'éducation de leur enfant. Ils épargnent pour les jours difficiles et placent un petit peu d'argent sur un compte sur lequel on ne doit pas compter, sur lequel on ne doit pas toucher, que l'on conserve pour les jours difficiles, pour sa retraite en cas de difficulté majeure. Mais le foyer est toujours dans le rouge. Qu'est-ce qu'il fait ? Il ne peut plus emprunter aux institutions financières. Il emprunte à la famille, comme nous avons emprunté à nos pays amis. Mais voilà qu'ils n'arrivent pas à s'en sortir. Comme nous, plus aucune institution internationale nous prête de l'argent, nous sommes obligés d'avoir recours à nos pays amis. Que fait-on ? On pique dans la réserve. Cet argent, M. le président, c'est la réserve pour les temps durs et c'est cet argent que vous utilisez aujourd'hui, et au lieu pour cette famille de réduire son train de vie, de travailler plus pour gagner plus, que faites-vous ? Vous puisez dans cet argent pour éponger le train de vie. M. le président, l'utilisation de ce fonds est compromettante pour les générations futures. Une autre promesse, M. le président, concerne l'investissement direct, une autre promesse non tenue. Sur un investissement direct de R 28 milliards qui avait été annoncé, seulement R 16.5 milliards ont été réalisés sur la période 2015-2018. Et ce qui est plus inquiétant, c'est que 70% de cet investissement va vers la construction simplement. C'est de l'investissement qui percole très peu dans l'économie, de l'investissement qui est très peu productif. L'investissement ne peut pas aller que vers ce secteur, ce n'est pas souhaitable à long terme, M. le président.

M. le président, ce gouvernement avait fait d'une de leurs priorités les petites et moyennes entreprises. L'annonce avait même été faite que ce secteur serait l'épine dorsale de notre économie, mais la réalité est que ce secteur est aux abois et qu'il est de plus en plus difficile d'entreprendre dans ce pays, surtout pour les petits entrepreneurs.

Le secteur textile, quant à lui, vit des heures bien sombres, 5000 emplois perdus, les derniers fleurons de ce secteur sont dans le rouge et on délocalise et jamais n'avons-nous connu tant de fermeture d'usines. Jamais ! Le secteur est aussi en détresse. Quant à l'agro-industrie, M. le président, le néant est total, R 25,000 pour une année pour ceux qui plantent encore. Rien pour ceux qui veulent relancer leur plantation ou se diversifier.

M. le président, l'usine de Médine a fermé, il se murmure qu'un autre opérateur ait plus que dans le rouge. On pourrait même se retrouver avec seulement deux usines dans un avenir proche.

Quant aux touristes, M. le président, c'est là aussi une grosse source d'inquiétude et je voudrais axer mon intervention sur ce sujet, car le tourisme représente aujourd'hui une part importante du PIB, une source d'emploi forte et le constat est effrayant. Pour une fois, tous sont unanimes, tous ont pris position, tous les opérateurs, le président de l'AHRIM, l'actuel secrétaire de l'AHRIM et l'ancien secrétaire de l'AHRIM, M. Sen Ramsamy. Et que dit, M. Ramsamy, M. le président ? Il dit la chose suivante, et je cite à la question qui lui est posée. Doit-on jeter le blâme sur le Brexit où les gilets jaunes, ou y a-t-il d'autres facteurs qui ont provoqué cette baisse ? Et sa réponse est : on a trouvé de beaux prétextes. Il y a certainement plusieurs facteurs qui expliquent cette baisse. Sachez d'abord que les problèmes liés au Brexit et aux gilets jaunes ne s'appliquent pas qu'à Maurice. Toutes les destinations du monde sont concernées par l'incertitude en Grande-Bretagne, l'instabilité et la crise sociale en France. Si ces deux facteurs avaient un impact négatif sur Maurice, les autres destinations similaires n'auraient pas fait de belles récoltes touristiques.

M. le président, notre île paradisiaque est à la traine, avec moins 4.6% sur l'Angleterre, moins 11% sur la Suisse, moins 7% sur la Turquie, moins 6% sur la Réunion, moins 3% sur l'Afrique, moins 9% sur l'Inde, moins 12% sur l'Australie et les Seychelles, plus 25% sur la Grande-Bretagne, 12% de plus sur la France, 36% sur la Suisse. Les Maldives, 11% sur la Grande-Bretagne, 28% sur la France, 56% sur l'Afrique du Sud.

À la question que le journaliste reposa à M. Ramsamy : le ministre du Tourisme, Anil Gayan, ne semble pas s'inquiéter de cette baisse et parle d'une croissance de 3.6%, êtes-vous optimiste ? M. Ramsamy répond : je ne peux être positif pour l'avenir dans le secteur que j'ai aidé à bâtir nuit et jour pendant 34 ans. Il suffit de voir le nombre d'hôtels en vente sur le marché et de comprendre l'ampleur de la situation. Ceci dit, au-delà des problèmes internes

et externes, notre industrie du tourisme souffre surtout d'un manque aiguë de leadership éclairé et de vision. C'est le propos de M. Ramsamy.

M. le président, tout a été dit dans l'interview de M. Ramsamy. Et dans ce budget, *bis repetita*. On augmente le budget de la MTPA, on le passe à R 530 m., on favorise le *statu quo* et l'incompétence à la MTPA. M. le président, il aurait failli donner ces millions à Air Mauritius. Donnez R 500 m. à Air Mauritius, laissez-les baisser le coût du billet et les résultats auraient été beaucoup intéressants.

M. le président, *Statistics Mauritius* a effectué un sondage en 2005 et 2017 sur l'état de l'environnement. Ce sondage est révélateur. En 2015, 41% des touristes attribuaient une excellente note à Maurice sur l'environnement. En 2017, ce pourcentage a chuté à 19%. Notre île est devenue une île poubelle. Il n'y a plus un seul endroit qui est épargné par le dumping sauvage. Le dossier de l'environnement est notre seul atout. Malheureusement, l'honorable ministre Sinatambou a été tout simplement une catastrophe. Il y a pire que cela, M. le président. À l'item de la sécurité, la baisse de confiance est de 50% et de plus en plus alarmante. 10% des touristes qui viennent chez nous ne veulent pas recommander notre île.

M. le président, il y a aussi une arithmétique qui est infaillible. Si le prix du billet est fort, le nombre de touristes qui visiteront le pays va chuter.

Et je vais vous démontrer, ce soir, quelque chose –

- Le prix du billet départ Paris, aujourd'hui, départ Paris rendu Maurice 1,385 euros;
- départ Paris rendu Réunion, 703 euros, et
- départ Maldives, 1,000 euros.

Un delta de presque 400 € par billet. C'est mathématique, M. le président. Si le prix du billet est aussi cher, les touristes ne viendront pas. Quant à la formation hôtelière, M. le président, tous les grands groupes ont leur propre académie, le groupe Constance, le groupe Beachcomber. Savez-vous que tous les étudiants qui sortent de l'école hôtelière Sir Gaëtan Duval doivent être réformés par ces académies parce que le niveau n'est pas à la hauteur. M. le président, tous les ingrédients sont là –

- personnes incompetentes à la tête de nos institutions ;
- environnement dégradé, pollué, souillé ;
- formation et services en berne ;
- sérieux problèmes de sécurité dans le pays ;

- prix d'un billet d'avion totalement déconnecté avec nos compétiteurs, et
- un ministre du Tourisme qui n'a pas son mot à dire sur l'accès aérien, sur l'environnement, sur la sécurité, sur la formation, puisque qu'il est du ressort du ministre de l'Éducation de décider de la formation touristique.

M. le président, tous les ingrédients sont là pour un *crash*. Je l'ai dit au début de mon mandat, M. le président, la croissance va venir de l'informel, des gîtes, des tables d'hôtes, des appartements. Il y a actuellement 5,000 chambres qui sont mises sur le marché et c'est là que viendra la croissance, et dans ce budget, il n'y a absolument rien dessus.

M. le président, quant à ma circonscription, notre circonscription, cette belle conscription de la Savanne/Rivière Noire, quel désert en matière de réalisation par ce gouvernement ! Quel désert ! Pas un seul projet significatif ! Pas un seul hôtel n'a vu le jour ! Face à la souffrance des habitants de Chemin Grenier pour une connexion routière qui aurait permis le développement de ce village, rien.

(Interruptions)

Deputy Speaker: Order please !

Mr Jhuboo: Face à la souffrance des habitants de Chemin Grenier pour un nouveau bazar, après plus de 4/5 interpellations, M. le président, toujours rien. À l'angoisse des habitants de Rivière des Galets, face à la montée des eaux et à la dégradation du littoral et le projet de relocalisation des habitants derrière, rien ! Bel Ombre, face aux problèmes de *flooding*, rien. Face au stress que représente le trafic routier dans l'ouest, rien. Face à ma demande pour un *bypass* à Matala pour soulager ceux qui se rendent dans le sud, rien. À Bambous, face à des centaines de gens qui attendent leur permis de construction, car ces derniers sont bloqués à cause d'une concasseuse, rien. À mes demandes pour une *police station* à Bassin, Palma, rien. À ma demande pour un *Community Centre* à Rivière-Noire, rien. À ma demande pour que la baie de Tamarin soit déclarée un sanctuaire de dauphins, rien. Pour que l'île aux Bénitiers ait un management, rien ! Pour désenclaver Chamarel avec un accès routier correct, rien. M. le président...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order please!

Mr Jhuboo: M. le président, c'est avec une grande tristesse que nous constatons que ce qui avait été promis il y a cinq ans n'a pas été réalisé. Une grande tristesse pour notre pays.

Je l'ai dit à maintes reprises, au début de mon mandat, je souhaitais la réussite de ce gouvernement, car je souhaite le meilleur pour mon pays. Malheureusement, nous avons eu le pire.

- La politique du zéro plastique est un échec cuisant, c'est même une farce. Tous les détaillants utilisent encore le plastique.
- Le constat de tous les Mauriciens est unanime : notre île est une poubelle.
- La lutte contre les drogues synthétiques est un échec flagrant. La population est devenue l'otage de gang, de trafiquants de toutes sortes.
- La situation du *Law and Order*, de la drogue, de la déliquescence de notre société est terrible et, malheureusement, le ministre Mentor n'a rien fait.
- J'ai beaucoup d'amitié pour le ministre Gayan, mais force est de constater que le touriste ne s'est jamais porté aussi mal avec lui à la tête de ce ministère.
- J'ai le plus grand respect pour nos aînés, l'honorable Koonjoo, mais force est de constater qu'il a fait le mandat de trop.
- Rien, absolument rien n'a été fait dans le secteur de l'Océanie économique. Rien, aucune réalisation en cinq ans. Aucune perspective pour ce secteur.

Je pourrais continuer sur ce constat, sur l'ensemble de l'équipe gouvernementale. M. le président, nous sommes à l'aube de nouvelles élections générales, c'est la dernière fois que j'interviens en marge des débats budgétaires.

Pour finir, M. le président, le pays mérite un nouveau départ, un nouveau souffle, un nouveau dynamisme, une nouvelle vision et surtout une nouvelle équipe. La compétence de ce gouvernement *Lepep* est désormais indiscutable. Malheureusement, cette incompétence va être payée par l'ensemble des Mauriciens et les générations futures. Heureusement que cette incompétence se paie aussi dans les urnes. Vivement les prochaines élections générales !

Merci, M. le président.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Benydin!

Mr Benydin: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr Hurreeram rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare (Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Wednesday 19 June 2019 at 11.30 a.m.

Mr Hurreeram rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

At 9.25 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Wednesday 19 June 2019 at 11.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SBM BANK (MAURITIUS) LTD - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

(No. B/442) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Chief Executive Officers and Directors of the SBM Bank (Mauritius) Ltd. appointed since 2015 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Bank of Mauritius, information as to if it has conducted investigations into whether they are fit and proper persons to occupy the said posts and, if so, indicate the outcome thereof.

Reply: The Bank of Mauritius has informed that all senior officers, including Chief Executive Officers, and Board of Directors of financial institutions must be ‘fit and proper’ persons in accordance with section 46 of the Banking Act; and the following guidelines have been issued to financial institutions by the Bank of Mauritius under section 100 of the Banking Act –

- (i) the Guideline on Fit and Proper Person Criteria, and
- (ii) the Guidelines on section 46(2) of the Banking Act – Appointment or reappointment of senior officers.

The Bank of Mauritius has also informed that it is required, under section 26 of the Bank of Mauritius Act, to maintain the confidentiality of information gathered in the performance of its duties.

Hence, any information pertaining to fitness and probity of the Chief Executive Officer and Board Directors of the SBM is confidential in nature and the Bank of Mauritius is prevented by the Bank of Mauritius Act from disclosing any information which relates specifically to these persons.

However, with a view to dispelling any doubt, the House can be assured that with regard to the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors of SBM Bank (Mauritius) Ltd, proper procedures as laid down in the Banking Act and the Guidelines have been followed. On the basis of the information submitted to the Bank of Mauritius, they were found to be ‘fit and proper’.

SMART CITY PROJECTS

(No. B/443) Mr A. Duval (First Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the six smart city projects, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Economic Development Board, information as to the forecast total investment thereof, indicating in each case the –

- (a) quantum of funds invested as at to date, and
- (b) expected completion date thereof.

Reply: The following eight projects have been issued with a Smart City Certificate by the Economic Development Board –

- (i) Mon Tresor Smart City in September 2016;
- (ii) Cap Tamarin in October 2016;
- (iii) Mauritius Jinfei in December 2016;
- (iv) Uniciti in October 2017;
- (v) Moka City in November 2017;
- (vi) Beau Plan Smart City in November 2018;
- (vii) Royal Saint Louis in January 2019, and

(viii) Mont Choisy Smart City in April 2019.

A total amount of Rs9 billion has been invested to date and the promoters are planning to invest an additional amount of Rs40 billion over the next five years.

Works are in progress in respect of four projects, and specifics are as follows –

- (a) Omnicane, promoter of Mon Tresor Smart City, has invested an amount of Rs815 m. on infrastructure and a business gateway. Future projects will include a freeport zone and logistics park, a data centre, residential and commercial development and office buildings;
- (b) Rs3.9 billion have been injected in the Mauritius Jinfei Smart City at Riche Terre. The Iconic Wedding Square and the Conference Centre have been completed. Construction of the hotel and a number of projects in the Business Park are scheduled to start before the end of this year. The smart city is expected to be completed in year 2025 involving a total investment of Rs15 billion;
- (c) An amount of Rs2.1 billion has already been invested in Unicity. The university campus, the student residence complex, the sports centre, the primary and secondary school and part of the Business Park have been completed. A second university campus and school, a residential project and a commercial centre, requiring a total investment of over Rs10 billion, are under way to complete the first phase of the project by year 2022. An area of 180 *arpents*, out of a total of 800 *arpents* of land, will be utilised for the first phase of the project, and
- (d) The promoters of Moka City have invested some Rs1.5 billion in infrastructure that includes roads, cycle tracks, a park, office buildings and residential units. In the coming years, a start-up and business incubator, a residential and commercial project, offices and a bus terminus will be developed.

Rs560 m. have been invested in infrastructural works in the Cap Tamarin smart city. Construction works for a total value of Rs2 billion in a commercial centre, office building and residential units are planned to start shortly.

As regards the three other projects, the Economic Development Board has also informed that –

- an amount of Rs200 m. has been invested on infrastructure in the Royal Saint Louis Development;
- a university campus of Rs95 m. has been constructed in the Beau Plan Smart City, and
- Rs71.5 m. have been spent for master planning and infrastructure of the Mont Choisy Smart City.

DBM - WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR SCHEME

(No. B/444) Mr A. Duval (First Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Women Entrepreneur Scheme, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd., information as to the –

- (a) eligibility criteria to benefit thereunder;
- (b) number of beneficiaries thereof as at to date, and
- (c) quantum of funds disbursed as at to date.

Reply: In line with Government policy for women empowerment, the Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd introduced, in July 2018, the Women Entrepreneur Scheme to enable women entrepreneurs to have easy access to finance in order to start or expand their business.

Under this scheme, women entrepreneurs can avail themselves of loan facilities up to Rs500,000 from the DBM at an interest rate of 3% per annum, repayable over a period of seven years, inclusive of a moratorium of one year. The DBM takes only a general floating charge on the assets of the beneficiary.

In regard to part (a) of the question, women entrepreneurs engaged in all sectors of activities, except trade and construction, are eligible to apply for finance under this Scheme.

Regarding parts (b) and (c) of the question, out of 59 applications received for a total project value of Rs15.8 m., 24 have already been approved for an amount of Rs5.8 m., of

which Rs3 m. have already been disbursed. The remaining 35 applications received are under process.

CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT - RESTRUCTURATION

(No. B/445) Ms M. Sewocksingh (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Civil Aviation Department, he will state if consideration will be given for the transformation thereof into a Civil Aviation Authority.

Reply: The Department of Civil Aviation is mainly responsible for regulating the safety and security of the aviation sector in Mauritius and providing air navigation services in the Mauritius Flight Information Region.

In line with our vision to become a regional aviation hub and with the increase in air traffic, the Department of Civil Aviation is called upon to play a more important role to timely respond to the increasing exigencies of the aviation sector. The efforts made to improve and modernise the airport infrastructure to cater for more airlines and passengers would not be complete without a parallel improvement in air traffic control and the role of Department of Civil Aviation as a strong regulatory body. This could be achieved through a restructuring of the Department of Civil Aviation within a modern legal framework, which is a complex exercise.

To this effect, following an international open advertised bidding exercise, a contract was awarded to Bureau Veritas, France to, *inter alia*, undertake a study, make appropriate recommendations as well as propose an action plan and a proper model for the setting up of an autonomous Civil Aviation Authority. The Consultant has completed consultations with all stakeholders and the Final Report is expected by end of July 2019, following which a decision will be taken by the Government.

CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO - DECOLONIZATION

(No. B/446) Mr J. C. Leopold (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the complete decolonization process of the Republic of Mauritius, he will state the last response obtained from the United Kingdom and the United States of America in relation to the Chagos Archipelago.

Reply: As pointed out by the International Court of Justice in its Advisory Opinion of 25 February 2019, the decolonization of the Republic of Mauritius remains incomplete, in view of the unlawful excision of the Chagos Archipelago by the United Kingdom from Mauritius in 1965. In the statement which I made to the House on 13 June 2019, I referred to the adoption by the UN General Assembly on 22 May 2019 of Resolution 73/295, which aims at completing the decolonization process of Mauritius as rapidly as possible by, *inter alia*, demanding the United Kingdom to withdraw its unlawful administration from the Chagos Archipelago within six months.

In my statement of 03 May 2019, I had informed the House that the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had conveyed in a letter, which she addressed to me on 26 April 2019, that the United Kingdom cannot change its position on the Chagos Archipelago as long as it is required for defence purposes. She also stressed the importance of the military base in Diego Garcia for keeping people in Britain safe and for maintaining global and regional security.

When the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom spoke to me over the phone on 27 April 2019, he stressed that the United Kingdom's sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago was essential for the continued operation of the military base in Diego Garcia.

Subsequently, in a statement made to the UK Parliament on 30 April 2019 as well as in the statement made by its Permanent Representative in New York on 22 May 2019 at the UN General Assembly, the United Kingdom made it clear that it rejects the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice which, it contends, is not legally binding and reiterated that it had no doubt about its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago. The United Kingdom also put forward defence and security considerations as the overriding reason for holding on to the Chagos Archipelago.

Hardly a few days after the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution, the Government of the United Kingdom purported, in flagrant violation of that resolution, to organise a significantly expanded programme of visits to the Chagos Archipelago as part of a supposed £40 m. package said to be aimed at improving the livelihoods of Mauritian citizens of Chagossian origin, and called for expressions of interest for visits purported to take place later this year and early next year.

For his part, President Donald Trump indicated in a letter that he has addressed to me on 29 May 2019 that the United States of America views the Chagos Archipelago issue as a bilateral matter between Mauritius and the United Kingdom. The United States also

considers that the status of the Chagos Archipelago as a United Kingdom territory is essential to the ability of the military base in Diego Garcia to contribute to peace and security in the Indian Ocean region. The United States is, therefore, not in a position to accept the proposal of Mauritius to enter into an agreement in respect of Diego Garcia.

It is a matter of great sadness that the United Kingdom, which is a country with which we have excellent relations and which promotes adherence to the rule of law in international relations, has yet to make a commitment to the immediate implementation of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice and to the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly.

Mauritius will continue to take appropriate steps to encourage the United Kingdom to change its stance, and to do so expeditiously, in order to bring to an early end to its continuing colonial foothold in Africa.

I would like to reaffirm the position of Mauritius, which has been made clear to the United Kingdom and the United States, that Mauritius has no objection to the military base at Diego Garcia continuing to be in operation in accordance with international law. In this regard, Mauritius stands ready to enter into a long-term arrangement with the United States, or with the United States and the United Kingdom.

INSOLVENCY ACT - AMENDMENTS - TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

(No. B/447) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Technical Committee set up to consider proposals for amendments to be brought to the Insolvency Act in relation to the ranking of employees in case of liquidation of companies, he will state if a timeframe has been set for the conclusion of the work thereof and for the submission of a report.

Reply: The Technical Committee to consider proposals for amendments to be brought to the Insolvency Act in relation to the ranking of employees in case of liquidation of companies has already been set up. The Committee has met on two occasions, on 27 May and 06 June 2019.

The Committee, which is chaired by the Registrar of Companies, comprises representatives of the Attorney General's Office, the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training, the Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the Mauritius Revenue Authority. The Committee may, whenever so required, co-opt or consult other stakeholders, including

Insolvency Practitioners, representatives of the Law Society, Chamber of Notaries and Mauritius Bankers Association.

The Registrar of Companies is holding discussions with the World Bank with a view to seeking assistance on the matter. As at now, the Committee is expected to submit its report shortly.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE - MR J. M. D. B. - TEMPORARY MAURITIAN PASSPORT - INQUIRY

(No. B/448) Mrs D. Selvon (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether he will state if, pending the conclusion of the inquiries into the issue of a temporary Mauritian passport to one Mr J. M. D. B. on the alleged instructions of the Commissioner of Police, he has requested the latter to step down.

Reply: The words “step down” do not appear in the Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius which, amongst others, contains the legal provisions relating to the appointment and removal of the Commissioner of Police.

The Commissioner of Police is appointed under section 91(1) of the Constitution. The Constitution also provides for the removal of the holder of the post at section 93 thereof.

Any disciplinary procedure against the Commissioner of Police should, therefore, imperatively comply with section 93 of the Constitution, more precisely sections 93(3) and (4) thereof.

It must be highlighted that under section 93(4) of the Constitution, it is the President, acting in his own deliberate judgment, who is empowered to appoint a tribunal to enquire, report on facts and recommend to him whether or not the Commissioner of Police ought to be removed under section 93. Furthermore, once the question of removing the Commissioner of Police is referred to a Tribunal, the President, acting in his own deliberate judgment, may suspend the Commissioner of Police, pursuant to section 93(5) of the Constitution.

It is also worth highlighting that section 118(4), which applies to Commissions established under the Constitution, and which, therefore, include the Disciplined Forces Service Commission, provides that “no such Commission shall be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority”, thus establishing the independence of the Disciplined Forces Service Commission.

In view of the security of tenure enjoyed by the Commissioner of Police and the provisions under sections 93 and 118(4) of the Constitution, it is the sole prerogative of the Disciplined Forces Service Commission to inform the President of the facts, if any, which would warrant the application of section 93 of the Constitution to the Commissioner of Police. Furthermore, it is also the sole prerogative of the President to suspend the Commissioner of Police once a Tribunal is appointed.

In the circumstances, it would not be appropriate to opine on the exercise of the constitutional powers vested solely in the Disciplined Forces Service Commission and the President.

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS REPORT 2019

(No. B/449) Mrs D. Selvon (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether he will state if he has taken cognizance of the negative comments of Reporters without Borders on the persecution, including imprisonment, in 2017, of Mauritian journalists, as published in its Report of 2019 and, if so, indicate the stand of Government in relation thereto.

Reply (The Attorney General): According to the Reporters without Borders Report 2019, which covers 180 countries, Mauritius ranked 58th in the World Press Freedom Index with a score of 28.46 in a scale where a score of 0 is considered as the best and 100 is the worst. Countries scoring between 0 to 30 are regarded as having a “free” media, countries which scored between 31 and 60 are said to be “partly free” media, while country with a score of 61 to 100 is classified as a “not free” media. It is noted that Mauritius has lost two places in the Index compared to last year. However, the House will appreciate that in 2010, Mauritius ranked 65th and, this year, Mauritius ranked 58th, ahead of countries like Poland, Greece and Seychelles.

Allow me to reiterate that Chapter II of our Constitution guarantees the enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms, which include the right to life, the right to personal liberty, protection from slavery and forced labour, protection from inhuman treatment, protection from deprivation of property, protection for privacy of home and other property, protection of the law, freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of movement and prevention from discrimination. Section 12 of the Constitution provides for the protection of freedom of expression and the right includes the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference and

freedom from interference with correspondence. It is important to highlight that section 12(2) of the Constitution provides for the permissible legal derogations to the protection of freedom of expression enshrined in section 12(1) of the Constitution.

The local media has always enjoyed a tradition of freedom and pluralism. There is at present more than 35 dailies/weeklies/fortnightlies/monthlies, whilst the audiovisual landscape consists of the national radio and television (the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation) as well as private radio stations and Web TV run by media houses. It is also important to point out that the Press operates in an environment free from violence or coercion, with journalists free to exercise their profession within the constitutional and legal framework in Mauritius.

As announced in the Government Programme 2015-2019, this Government is determined to protect the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, including freedom of expression. The Government Programme, which is being implemented also pledges that journalists and media reporters in the exercise of their functions will no longer be arrested or jailed unless there is strong *prima facie* evidence of the commission of a criminal offence.

It is important to highlight that citizens have very wide exposure to different viewpoints and indeed very wide access to high-speed internet. In addition, there is no censorship of the Press in Mauritius. Moreover, a new cable now connects Rodrigues to the rest of the world and this will enable people of Rodrigues to enjoy the same level of internet connectivity as inhabitants of mainland Mauritius.

Government has had recently to strengthen legislations to offer more protection to the citizens from the dangers of new means of communications through the internet, electronic devices and on social media. Such strengthening of legislations is not happening in Mauritius only. I wish here to highlight the legislative reforms ongoing in countries like Germany, France and Singapore, just to name a few.

AGALEGA - AIRSTRIP & TERMINAL AIRPORT

(No. B/450) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fourth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the construction of an airstrip and Terminal Airport in Agalega, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from Airports of Mauritius Ltd., information as to if work has started for the setting up, control and management thereof and, if not, why not.

Reply: I will reply to both PQ B/450 and PQ B/451 at the same time because they relate to a single comprehensive project.

I would like the hon. Member to refer to my reply made on 16 April 2019 to PQ B/167 in relation with the projects in Agalega.

According to information obtained, the works have started in May 2019 and will be completed in 2 years' time. The mobilisation of manpower and materials is an ongoing process for the whole duration of the projects.

The construction works are being undertaken in a phased manner. The construction of an Air Traffic Control building and a Maritime Operations building, which are part of the contract, will be undertaken once the works for the airstrip and jetty are completed. All the necessary equipment required for the air traffic and maritime control will be installed and commissioned by the contractor, under the supervision of RITES Ltd, the Global Consultant.

All the equipment will be procured and installed in accordance with international norms and standards as required under the Mauritian laws.

At the appropriate time, the regulatory clearances will be sought from the Civil Aviation Department and the Shipping Division of the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping. The question of control and management will also be looked into accordingly.

AGALEGA - NEW JETTY

(No. B/451) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fourth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the construction of a new jetty in Agalega, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Ports Authority, information as to the expected completion date thereof, indicating if necessary steps have been taken for the setting up, control and management thereof and, if not, why not.

(Vide Reply to PQ No. B/450)

CONSTITUENCY NO. 18 – NDU PROJECTS

(No. B/452) Mr K. Ramano (Third Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to Constituency No. 18, Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes, he will give the list of projects

undertaken by the National Development Unit thereat since January 2015 to date, indicating the cost thereof in each case.

Reply: The information sought is being compiled and will be placed in the Library subsequently.

POLICE - DRIVING LICENCES - ISSUE

(No. B/477) Mr S. Abbas Mamode (Fourth Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues whether, in regard to the driving licence, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if consideration will be given for a review of the services available at the Line Barracks for the processing of applications therefor and the formalities required of members of the public attending thereto, including if some of the processes could be activated online.

Reply: Pursuant to Section 49 of the Road Traffic Regulations 1954, the Traffic Branch is responsible for the issue and control of driving licences in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the review of procedures, processes and formalities with respect to the application and obtention of a driving licence is an ongoing exercise at the Traffic Branch. Remedial actions are taken to address shortcomings identified with a view to improving the quality of service provided to the public.

Since 2005, applications for driving licences can be made electronically through the Government Online Centre (GOC). However, for those who are not able to make use of the online service, they can still make their applications manually at any Police Station.

Since the introduction of the online system, several improvements have been done to make the system more user-friendly, effective and efficient.

Moreover in 2014, the online application has been extended to cover learner's licence for goods vehicles, bus and taxi. This service is also available for applicants wishing to apply for an International Driving permit.

Payment for driving tests and scheduling of appointment can be effected online.

To cope with the increasing number of requests for driving tests, another Driving Test Centre was set up at Les Casernes, Curepipe in 2015. A third Driving Centre will shortly be operational at Argy, Flacq. It is expected that with the coming into operation of the third Driving Test Centre, the waiting time for driving tests will be significantly reduced.

As announced in the Budget speech 2019/2020, the existing driving licence will be replaced by a new smart driving licence with security control mechanisms to counter the production of fake driving licences. This will, of course, necessitate the review of the existing processes.

NATIONAL EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION - DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

(No. B/478) Mr A. Duval (First Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment whether, in regard to the National Empowerment Foundation, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the number of officers thereof suspended as at to date, indicating since when and the reasons therefor.

Reply: I am informed by the National Empowerment Foundation that at the moment, there is only one officer who has been suspended since 19 April 2019 for gross misconduct and poor performance.

I am also informed that a Disciplinary Committee has been set up and is presently conducting an inquiry on the matter.

MTPA – BUDGET ALLOCATION

(No. B/479) Ms M. Sewocksingh (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Tourism whether, in regard to the promotion of Mauritius as a tourist destination, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, information as to the percentage of the budget allocated thereto for the current financial year which has been spent therefor as at to date.

(Reply not available)

SHELTERS – CHILDREN - REINTEGRATION

(No. B/480) Ms M. Sewocksingh (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, in regard to the shelters, she will state the number of children currently placed thereat, indicating the actions, if any, taken for the reintegration thereof in family cells.

Reply: There are currently 513 children victims of violence who have been removed under court orders as a measure of last resort and placed in 3 Government-owned shelters and 14 Residential Care Institutions, run by NGOs.

In July 2018, following Cabinet decision, the Child Development Unit (CDU) was split into two. A new unit namely the Alternative Care Unit (ACU) was set up. The Unit's main objective is to design and implement policies and programmes geared towards rehabilitating children placed in shelters/RCIs through inter alia Back-To-Home Programme and Foster Care Programme.

Since July 2018 till date, 77 residents have been reintegrated within their families, and 13 placed within foster families.

NCSR FOUNDATION - ELDERLY - PROJECTS

(No. B/481) Ms M. Sewocksingh (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment whether, in regard to the National Corporate Social Responsibility Foundation, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the number of projects approved in favour of the elderly, in 2017, 2018 and since January 2019 to date indicating the –

- (a) amount of funds disbursed therefor, and
- (b) name of the implementing agencies/organisations.

(Withdrawn)

BELLE MARE WATERPARK & LEISURE VILLAGE - RENOVATION

(No. B/482) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security whether, in regard to the Belle Mare Waterpark and Leisure Village, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Sugar Investment Trust, information as to the –

- (a) total renovation cost thereof;
- (b) expected re-opening date thereof to the public, and
- (c) expected yearly operational and maintenance costs thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Sugar Investment Trust (SIT) that the overall cost for renovating the Belle Mare Waterpark and Leisure Village is approximately Rs350 m.

As regards part (b) of the question, according to SIT, the re-opening of the Belle Mare Waterpark and Leisure Village is tentatively scheduled in about 2 months' time, after testing and commissioning of all equipment and certification of all the rides installed.

As regards part (c) of the question, I am informed that the yearly operational and maintenance cost is estimated to be around Rs67 m.

ST FELIX – CLEAR OCEAN HOTEL AND RESORTS LTD PROJECT - FUNDS

(No. B/483) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Housing and Lands whether, in regard to the Clear Ocean Hotel and Resorts Ltd. Project at St Félix, he will state if it has been ascertained whether Mrs M. M., promoter thereof, possesses the required financial capabilities/sustainable funds for the implementation thereof.

Reply: The project at St Félix will be implemented by Clear Ocean Hotel and Resorts Ltd which is the lessee. The financial capacity to implement the project, therefore, rests upon the latter.

MAURITIUS – CLEANING & WASTE DISPOSAL ACTIVITIES

(No. B/484) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development whether, in regard to cleanliness and wastes removal island-wide, he will state the actions being taken by his Ministry in relation thereto?

Reply (The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare): There are several institutions operating under the aegis of different Ministries that are presently involved island-wide in cleaning, removal of waste and waste disposal activities.

As far as my Ministry is concerned, the Local Authorities and Field Services Unit carry out regular cleaning and embellishment activities.

The Local Authorities provide, subject to their financial capabilities, regular scavenging services for the whole island, undertake the sweeping of roads and cleaning of drains, rivers and canals.

The Local Authorities also carry out bulky waste collection and e-waste (electric and electronic waste) collection campaigns throughout the island. Proper communication and sensitisation is ensured prior to the campaign being undertaken.

However, despite all these efforts put in by the authorities, there are cases of illegal dumping; unmaintained bare land; littering on beaches, roads, in public places, drains and rivers; and abandonment of vehicles wrecks.

As announced in the Budget Speech, there is need for a national collective effort and a change in mind set of our fellow citizens to address the issue of cleanliness urgently.

In line with the *Moris Nou Zoli Pei* vision, all the beaches, streets and public areas will be cleaned and maintained in line with the expected standards. To that end, a Centralised Cleaning Coordination (3C) Committee has been set up at the level of my Ministry to coordinate all cleaning activities across the island and an island-wide cleaning campaign is being organised.

Sensitisation campaigns are regularly carried out by the various institutions. The public is also made aware of the contraventions and consequences of the irresponsible acts of dumping and littering.

INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES 2019 – SELECTION OF ATHLETES

(No. B/485) Mr J. Léopold (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the finalization of the selection of athletes in the respective disciplines and federations for the forthcoming Indian Ocean Island Games 2019, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: All the 14 National Sports Federations (NSFs) had submitted the final list of selected athletes to this Ministry for onward transmission to the Organising Committee of the Indian Ocean Islands Games 2019 (COJI 2019) on 30 April 2019 as per the provision of the General Rules of the Games.

The list also included a list of reserved athletes for each sports discipline.

As per the General Rules, a NSF can choose from the reserved list to replace an athlete in case of injury or withdrawal.

HAROLD ALFRED WHELDON STREET, ROCHE BOIS - STORM WATER DRAIN

(No. B/486) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development whether, in regard to the storm drain found along the Harold Alfred Wheldon Street, in Cité Roche Bois, in the vicinity of the football playground, he will state if he has been made aware of foul smells emanating therefrom and, if so, indicate if consideration will be given for the taking of urgent remedial measures in relation thereto.

Reply: Neither the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development (Environment and Sustainable Development Division) nor the *Police de l'Environnement* has received any complaint regarding alleged foul smells emanating from the storm water drain found along the Harold Alfred Wheldon Street mentioned by the hon. Second Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East at Roche Bois.

However, on Thursday 13 June 2019, officers of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development were instructed to effect an urgent site visit, together with representatives of the City Council of Port Louis, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life and the *Police de l'Environnement*, to take stock of the situation. It was reported that, at the time of visit, there was no foul smell emanating from the area. This has been confirmed by the Ministry of Health and Quality of life and the City Council of Port Louis.

Another joint site visit was effected the next day, that is, on Friday 14 June 2019 by officers of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development (Environment and Sustainable Development Division) together

with representatives of the Wastewater Management Authority and the National Parks and Conservation Services. At the time of visit, no odour nuisance was perceived. A third site visit was effected on Monday 17 June 2019, that is, yesterday, by officers of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development (Environment and Sustainable Development Division), during which again no odour nuisance was discerned.

As per information obtained from the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities, 1,181 households are connected to the sewerage network in the region of Roche Bois and maintenance of the sewer network is effected by the Wastewater Management Authority.

At the request of the hon. Minister of Health and Quality of Life, a number of measures have been adopted –

- Firstly, the City Council of Port Louis has been requested to carry out more frequent sweeping, cleaning and carting away of wastes inside the canal so as not to leave room for complaints.
- Secondly, the Council has been requested to perform a general cleaning inside all concrete cover drains found within Cité Roche Bois.
- Thirdly, the Land Drainage Authority has been requested to carry out a survey of the storm water drain and the surrounding cross drains, investigate the problems, if any, associated with these drains and propose recommendations for implementation by the relevant authorities.

The Land Drainage Authority will take up the matter at its level during its next Coordination and Maintenance Committee.

- Fourthly, the Wastewater Management Authority has been requested to carry out a survey to identify the households which are not connected to the sewerage network as well as those which may be discharging domestic effluents into the storm water network to eventually initiate appropriate actions there.

PORT – DRUG SEIZURE – INQUIRY

(No. B/487) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues whether, in regard to the seizure of around 135 kilograms of drugs in the Port, in March 2017, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to where matters stand as to the inquiry carried out thereinto, indicating the number of persons arrested in connection therewith.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that on 09 March 2017, following information received that dangerous drugs were being imported in a container on board vessel MSC IVANA, ADSU jointly with Customs Department carried out an operation onboard the vessel on its arrival.

Subsequently, in virtue of a Search Warrant, a container with sand blasting equipment suspected to contain drugs was brought to the Mauritius Freeport Development Warehouse for verification purposes.

After the container was thoroughly searched, drugs weighing around 135 kgs worth Rs2,025,000,000 were secured.

I am also informed that during the course of enquiry, eight persons have been arrested and provisional charges lodged against them for the offence of “Drug Dealing with aggravating circumstances” and “Money Laundering”.

Out of the eight persons arrested, one has been sentenced for “Money Laundering”, two have been remanded to jail, one is in Police cell and four have been bailed out.

As at date enquiry into the case is still ongoing.

IMMIGRATION SQUARE URBAN TERMINAL PROJECT - IMPLEMENTATION

(No. B/488) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade whether, in regard to the Immigration Square Terminal Project, he will state where matters stand as to the implementation thereof, indicating if the space presently occupied by the Trou Fanfaron Police Station and the Port Louis Fire Station form part thereof.

Reply: I would like to refer the hon. Member to the reply I made to Parliamentary Questions B/367 and B/1091 on 15 May and 27 November 2018 respectively. I informed the House that the project for the redevelopment, modernisation and operation of the Immigration Square urban terminal has been awarded to Yihai International Investment Management Ltd after a request for proposal exercise. The project comprises, *inter alia*, office space for both the Trou Fanfaron Police Station and the Fire Station.

Given that part of the development site falls within the buffer zone of the Aapravasi Ghaat, clearance from UNESCO has been sought. The latter has requested Mauritius to carry out an Area Action Plan for the region as well as a Visual Impact Assessment, a Heritage

Impact Assessment and thereafter, a Cultural Impact Assessment taking into consideration not only the Immigration Square Project but also other major infrastructure developments in the vicinity. A Heritage Expert to that end is being recruited by the Ministry of Arts and Culture.

In the meantime, the promoter, that is, Yihai International Investment Management Ltd, is finalising the Traffic Impact Assessment and seeking required permits and clearances.

After obtaining the necessary clearance from UNESCO, the relevant agreement will be signed and the promoter will be granted two years to complete the project.

CRIME OCCURRENCE TRACKING SYSTEM

(No. B/489) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues whether, in regard to the Crime Occurrence Tracking System, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to –

- (a) the implementation cost and yearly recurrent cost thereof, indicating the date of coming into operation thereof;
- (b) the reasons for the poor and under utilisation thereof as pointed out in the last Report of the Director of Audit, and
- (c) if a study has been carried out to assess the effectiveness thereof in reducing the crime rate.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the implementation cost of the Crime Occurrence Tracking System (COTs) was Rs243.8 m. and the yearly recurrent cost is Rs14 m.

COTs cater for the end to end automation of all processes from the electronic logging of a complaint at a Police Station to its determination in a Court of Law with the possibility of electronic tracking at different phases.

The system also provides for close monitoring of all reported cases including crime.

The main objectives of the COTs system are to provide the following -

- i) Computerisation of Books and Master Registers;
- ii) Constant information on movement of file cases;

- iii) Management of warrants, persons on bail, persons under Police supervision and habitual criminals;
- iv) Data Management System, and
- v) Statistical data for crime management.

Phase I of COTs was launched on a pilot basis in two Police Divisions on 16 December 2009. Following the successful implementation of phase I, the system was extended as phase II throughout the island and Rodrigues in October 2015.

As regards part (b) of the question, the shortcomings highlighted in the report of the Director of Audit have now been addressed and the system is working to the satisfaction of the Police Department. These shortcomings were mainly caused as a result of slowness of the system and hardware and connectivity problems.

As regards part (c) of the question, COTs was not meant to reduce the crime rate but to gather statistics, which will eventually be used in the fight against crime by devising the right ways and means.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS - PC TABLETS - THEFT

(No. B/490) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research whether, in regard to the PC tablets, she will state the number of reported cases of theft thereof in each school, if any, indicating the measures taken -

- (a) to ensure the safe custody thereof, and
- (b) against the officers responsible thereof for negligence in securing the safe custody thereof.

Reply: In my Statement of 23 April 2019, I had informed the House that the implementation of the Early Digital Learning Programme started in 2017 in Grade 1, and was extended to Grade 2 and Grade 3 in 2018 and 2019 respectively. It has involved the distribution of a total of 39,680 tablets in 258 schools in Mauritius, 17 in Rodrigues and 2 in Agalega.

I am informed that there have been reported cases of theft of tablets in eight primary schools across the island. All these cases have been duly reported to the Police and action has been taken to make good such losses.

Information relating to the number of cases reported in each school is being placed in the Library of the National Assembly.

With regard to part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that, in May 2018, the Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry had a high-level meeting with the Police Crime Prevention Unit to discuss ways and means to enhance safety and security in schools and upgrade the level of risk management thereat. The assistance of the Police was also sought for the conduct of a Risk Analysis and Security survey in a selected 108 schools with a view to identifying existing security features in place and make recommendations for the strengthening of the level of security.

The Report of the Police Crime Prevention Unit has been duly received in June 2018 and issued to the Zonal Directorates through a circular letter. The recommendations are being currently implemented at the level of the schools concerned. I wish to highlight that the security measures advocated pertain mainly to reinforcing of perimeter fencing, maintenance of bushy areas around schools, ensuring proper lighting, better control of access, enhanced supervision and monitoring of night security services in schools, installation of alarm/CCTV cameras and burglar proofing among others. A protocol has been established at school level for the safekeeping of the tablets in the rack chargers, which are locked. Moreover, following the occurrence of the thefts, tablets for Grade 3 issued last year have been equipped with a non-scratchable logo in order to identify them.

As part of contract management, Security Companies have been required to make good the losses in cases of thefts.

I wish to add that the outcome of the Police enquiries in the cases of theft is also being awaited.

Arrangements have been made for the tablets to be replaced.

My Ministry is pursuing efforts to upgrade security in schools where required and is following up with the Police and Security Companies with regard to recovery of the items stolen. The situation is being closely monitored.

PRISONS OFFICERS - ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

(No. B/491) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)

asked the Rt. hon. Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues whether, in regard to the Prisons Officers, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Prisons, information as to the number thereof suspected of involvement in illegal activities, both within the Prisons compounds and outside, since January 2017 to date, indicating the measures taken against them pending the conclusion of the inquiries initiated in relation thereto.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Prisons that since January 2017 to date, six Prisons Officers have been interdicted for involvement in illegal activities. One of the Prisons Officers has been dismissed. Out of the remaining five Prisons Officers, one has been recalled for duty and the inquiries in their cases are still ongoing.

I wish to inform the House that 18 Prisons Officers were convened before the Commission of Inquiry on Drug Trafficking. Four of them have been dismissed and one Prisons Officer has been recalled for duty, as I mentioned earlier. The 14 Prisons Officers have been transferred to other penal institutions and are closely supervised by their respective Officers-in-Charge. They are not, as far as possible, posted inside the institutions.

POLICE OFFICERS - DRUG OFFENCES

(No. B/492) Mrs D. Selvon (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)

asked the Rt. Hon. Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues whether, in regard to drug offences, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of Police Officers –

- (a) suspected;
- (b) arrested, and
- (c) charged therewith, since January 2015 to date, indicating the number of cases in which convictions have been secured and when.

Reply: As regards part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that units such as ADSU and CID work on a number of potential targets who are suspected to be connected with drugs related offences. These may include Police Officers who are under close monitoring. In all cases, whenever there is credible information, ADSU conducts the appropriate operation by using search warrant or otherwise depending on

circumstances. In order not to compromise future operations and in view of the sensitive nature of the information, it would be inappropriate to divulge any figures.

Concerning parts (b) and (c) of the question, I am further informed by the Commissioner of Police that since January 2015 to date, 40 Police Officers have been arrested and charged for drug offences and convictions have been secured in three cases as follows –

- (i) one Police Constable on 24 August 2017;
- (ii) one Woman Police Constable on 06 April 2018, and
- (iii) one Trainee Police Constable on 17 May 2019.

FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE - CASES

(No. B/493) Mr J. Leopold (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security whether, in regard to the Foot and Mouth Disease, he will state the number of recent suspected cases thereof, if any, and, if so, indicate if the sources of the infection have been identified.

Reply: Following the outbreak of FMD in 2016 and the ensuing havoc it caused in the livestock sector in Mauritius and Rodrigues, my Ministry has put up a rigorous surveillance protocol whereby any doubtful case must be scrutinised in depth.

On 08 May 2019, two doubtful cases were reported in the region of St. Martin. Accordingly, as per established protocol, 263 blood samples were taken and analysed. The results were negative. The samples of the doubtful cases were also sent to ANSES for validation and the results were also negative.

DEAD SHELLS - IMPORTATION PERMIT - COST

(No. B/494) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fourth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping whether, in regard to the importation of dead shells for craft businesses, he will state if consideration will be given for a review downwards of the cost of the importation permit therefor.

Reply: The regulations governing the import of seashells are Government Notice No. 34 of 2016 made under the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 2007. Any importer of dead seashell should be registered with the Ministry responsible for the subject of fisheries and pay

a fee amounting to Rs25,000 per calendar year to the Director-General, Mauritius Revenue Authority before importing any consignment of fish and fish products, which includes seashell.

I wish to inform the House that the removal of coral and seashells in Mauritius are prohibited under the Regulation Government Notice No. 95 of 2006 made under the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act.

A downward review of the importation fee may result in an increased number of importers of seashells which may compromise the control over poaching on local seashells.

Moreover, we are signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which has as primary objective to preserve and conserve Biodiversity regarding marine species including seashells and ecosystems. Thus, an increase in imports of dead seashells in Mauritius may be viewed as opposing the basic objective of CBD.

MONT CHOISY BEACH - WORKS - SOTRAVIC LTD

(No. B/495) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fourth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development whether, in regard to the works presently being carried out at the Mont Choisy Beach by Sotravac Ltd. he will state the –

- (a) scope of work thereof;
- (b) contract value thereof;
- (c) number of filao trees to be cut down, and
- (d) progress of work thereof.

Reply: With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the scope of works comprise the following -

- (i) installation of submerged artificial reefs in the lagoon where the water depth is around 2 metres. The artificial reefs will act as a wave dissipating structure and will promote marine life in the lagoon;
- (ii) beach re-profiling and landscaping works over a stretch of 450 metres by replacing 203 units of the existing “filao” trees which have been directly affected by the beach erosion problem over the years. This will comprise using some 5,000 tons of sand similar to the existing sand profile at Mont Choisy

beach and the planting of endemic trees in replacement of the filao trees which will be removed;

- (iii) plantation of sand binding species, including grasses and sedges, vines and lianas and shrubs, and
- (iv) removal of an existing groyne, which consists of loose boulders stacked at the southern end of the beach in order to improve the flow of water in the lagoon.

The contractor is also providing four beach accesses to allow the public to access the beach even during implementation of works.

With regard to part (b) of the question, the contract value of works amounts to Rs91.7 m. and is being funded by the Adaptation Fund Project 'Climate Change Adaptation Programme in the Coastal Zone of Mauritius'.

With regard to part (c) of the question, the Forestry Service has approved the felling of 215 trees, which includes 203 filao trees and 12 other species. As at date, 42 trees have been felled.

With regard to part (d) of the question, I am informed that the progress of works as at date is 60% of the scope of works.

PETIT CAMP BRANCH ROAD - STREET LIGHTING

(No. B/496) Mr K. Ramano (Third Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, in regard to the main road running at the level of the Racing Club at Trianon to the Tennis Club at Petit Camp, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes, information as to if consideration will be given for the installation of street lighting along same to enhance security.

Reply: The Petit Camp Branch Road starts near the Centre Commercial Emerald Park Ltée at Trianon and ends at Petit Camp, Phoenix.

I am informed by the Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes that, currently, the Petit Camp Branch Road from the intersection near Centre Commercial Emerald Park up to ABC Foods, after Racing Club de Maurice, already has street lighting facilities.

I am further informed that after ABC Foods up to the Tennis Club at Petit Camp, no street lighting network is available over a distance of approximately 700 metres. There are no houses or any development along this stretch of the road.

The extension of the street lighting network along this stretch of the road is estimated to cost Rs3 m. For now, no funds have been earmarked by the Council for this part, as priority is being given to the provision of street lighting facilities in residential areas.

PALMA – CREMATORIUM GROUND

(No. B/497) Mr K. Ramano (Third Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, in regard to the crematorium situated at Palma, in Quatre Bornes, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes, information as to if it is in presence of representations as to the serious pollution hazards represented by same and, if so, indicate if consideration will be given for the relocation thereof on an alternative site.

Reply: I am informed that in August 2018, representations were received by the Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes from the residents of Palma, to the effect that the Palma Crematorium represented a health hazard in terms of air pollution. The inhabitants, therefore, requested that operation of the crematorium be stopped.

Subsequently, following a joint site visit conducted by officers of the Council and the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development at the Palma Crematorium Ground, the following measures were recommended

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- the burning of tyres on traditional pyres should be discouraged;
- stacking of tyres should be prohibited in the crematorium ground;
- two sign boards should be placed on site for the prohibition of burning of tyres, and
- incineration by using the gas incinerator should be encouraged.

I wish to inform the House that an incinerator will be set up at Avenue Berthaud, Quatre Bornes very soon and this will help to reduce use of traditional pyres.