



EIGHTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

(UNREVISED)

FIRST SESSION

FRIDAY 26 JUNE 2026

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Dr. the Hon. Arvin Boolell, GOSK	Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries
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MAURITIUS

Eighth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 19 of 2026

Sitting of Friday 26 June 2026

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis, at 3.00 p.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

PAPERS LAID

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, the Papers have been laid on the Table –

Prime Minister's Office

Ministry of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications

Ministry of Finance

Ministry for Rodrigues and Outer Islands

The Report of the Board of Inquiry on the death of detainee Andy Selmour at Melrose Prison and recommendations for a modern Prison management.

MOTION**SUSPENSION OF S.O. 10(2)**

The 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.

The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BILL

Second Reading

THE APPROPRIATION (2026-2027) BILL

(No. IX of 2026)

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation (2026-2027) Bill (No. IX of 2026).

Question again proposed.

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Speaker?

Madam Speaker: Yes.

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Speaker, with your permission, can I take a point of order?

Madam Speaker: Of course.

Mr Lesjongard: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I propose to take the following point of order.

Madam Speaker, my point of order concerns the Appropriation Bill, which is before the House, namely the Appropriation Bill (2026-2027), Bill (No. IX of 2026). My point of order is to the effect that the debates on the said Appropriation Bill cannot proceed and should be adjourned until revised Estimates are tabled before the House.

Madam Speaker, an Appropriation Bill contains Estimates of the revenues and expenditure of Mauritius in accordance with Section 105 of the Constitution of Mauritius.

The debates on an Appropriation Bill are governed by Standing Order 73 of the Standing Orders of this House.

Standing Order 73(2) provides that –

“ (2) (...) the debate (...) shall be confined to the general principles of Government policy and administration as indicated by the Bill and Estimates.”

The present Appropriation Bill, which is before the House, contains Estimates which are in sharp contradiction with policy of Government. The Estimates on pensions are based on means test and State Age Pension, while the policy on pensions has changed following the announcement made by the Minister of Finance yesterday, in this House, in reply to a supplementary question to my PNQ, that: “The means test is out”.

Therefore, until revised Estimates are tabled in this House, Madam Speaker, I reiterate that the debate should be confined to the policy of Government, as indicated by the Bill and the Estimates. The Estimates in the present version of the Bill do not indicate the policy of the Government for the reason that the policy of Government has changed since yesterday with the reply given by the hon. Prime Minister to this House.

I, therefore, Madam Speaker, move that debates be adjourned until such time as revised Estimates are tabled before the House.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Yes, thank you, hon. Leader of the Opposition. I allowed you to make that point of order, of course. But you will give me time to study the point and give my ruling later.

In the meantime, we will proceed with the programme as provided.

Mr Lesjongard: So, ...

Madam Speaker: Yes, I will let those who were to speak speak today. And then, when I have...

You have just...

Mr Lesjongard: There's no point I have raised the...

Madam Speaker: You have raised a point of order. You have to give me time to study the point of order. I am looking.

Mr Lesjongard: You can suspend. Madam Speaker, ...

Madam Speaker: I cannot give it to you immediately. I cannot give it to you immediately. So, I want to allow Members to speak. Maybe at tea time. I can come back after tea time.

Mr Lesjongard: That is not the point.

Madam Speaker: Do not talk to me from a sitting position!

Mr Lesjongard: No, Madam Speaker!

Madam Speaker: This is what I am...

Mr Lesjongard: Excuse me, Madam Speaker, this is not the point I wanted to make. My request is that the debates be adjourned until, like I said, Government comes forward with the revised Estimates, Madam Speaker.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: But I am asking for time to give my ruling. So, there is nothing we can do now, except...

Ms J. Bérenger: Suspend!

Madam Speaker: No, I will not suspend. I will allow hon. Bhagwan to make his speech, and then we will break at one point, at tea time. In the meantime, I will have those who can have the time, including the Attorney General, the Clerk and everybody, to have a look at what you have raised. Because from what I can see here, it does not say that – from what I can see here. So, I do not want to give a ruling *immédiatement*.

I want to take time to give my ruling, which the Standing Orders allow me to do. So, for the moment, I rule that we will carry on. And at tea time, I will try and give my ruling. Okay?

Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

(3.10 p.m.)

The Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (Mr R. Bhagwan): Merci, Madame la présidente. Je demande votre indulgence, car j'ai un problème de voix, avec l'arrivée de l'hiver et les matchs de football.

Madame la présidente, nous sommes arrivés presque à la fin des débats sur le Budget. Beaucoup a été dit par mes collègues...

Madam Speaker: But do not play with the mic, please.

Mr Bhagwan: No, I will not play, do not worry.

Madam Speaker: Do not! Speak as much as you can.

Mr Bhagwan: Madame la présidente, beaucoup a été dit par mes collègues de la majorité sur le Budget, pas seulement, mais aussi par les membres de l'opposition. Je comprends cette frustration du leader de l'opposition. Vous allez donner votre *ruling* tout à l'heure.

Madame la présidente, je dois, moi aussi, m'associer avec mes collègues pour féliciter le Premier ministre pour la présentation de son deuxième budget. Non seulement, je suis très heureux au niveau du ministère dont je m'occupe, le ministère de l'Environnement, avec l'augmentation que nous avons reçue, mais je voudrais que les membres disent leur appréciations au Premier ministre parce qu'il est resté ici tout le long des débats, dans cette Chambre, prenant des notes sur tout ce qui a été dit par les membres individuellement. Nous lui disons merci.

Madame la présidente, la présentation du budget, ce Budget 2026-2027, par le Premier ministre et ministre des Finances, a permis à certains rapaces de sortir de leur repère, à part les apparitions devant une cour de justice et les locaux de la *Financial Crimes Commission*, pour venir proposer la pension à 60 ans en cas de victoire. Quel geste noble en faveur de nos aînés, y compris certains d'entre nous. Mais, commencez, donc, à nous dire comment le faire maintenant ! Pourquoi attendre si le sort de nos aînés vous préoccupe autant ? Pourquoi attendre 3 ans et demi ? *Dir li aster* ! Ensuite, ce qu'il faut que je leur dise : Pensez à

retourner aux caisses de l'État les milliards de roupies à travers des contrats juteux que vous avez donné lors de votre mandat.

(Interruptions)

Mr Bhagwan: *Pa boufonn mwa ! To pe boufonn mwa, ki to kroir to tro konn koz franse plis ki mwa !*

Madam Speaker: Oh, oh, oh!

Mr Bhagwan: *Fer tantion!*

Madam Speaker: Minister! Minister!

Mr Bhagwan: *Wi, fer tantion...*

Madam Speaker: We are not going to start all this!

Mr Bhagwan: *...mo pa 'nn manz dan kouyer lor mwa!*

Madam Speaker: Minister!

Ms J. Bérenger: *Pa 'nn manz dan quoi ?*

Mr Bhagwan: *Mo pa 'nn manz dan kouyer lor mwa!*

An hon. Member: *Kouyer lor!*

Madam Speaker: Minister, please, withdraw this! I do not see the point of all this.

Mr Bhagwan: Elle a fait des remarques qu'il ne fallait pas faire, Madame la présidente.

Madam Speaker: Là, là, là, maintenant ?

Hon. Members: Oui !

Ms J. Bérenger: *Mo 'nn dir mo pa pe tande ki li pe dir...*

Mr Bhagwan: Je suis resté tranquille lorsqu'elle a parlé.

Madam Speaker: Je n'ai pas entendu et ça arrive que je n'entende pas.

(Interruptions)

Est-ce qu'on peut faire le débat sur le Budget, s'il vous plaît ?

Mr Bhagwan: Y compris, Madame la présidente, pendant la période du Covid, des milliards et des milliards qui ont été empochés par les proches du MSM.

Madame la présidente, on dit ça au MSM : *Li pou fer dimal pou zot sa !* La vente des avions d'Air Mauritius, c'est sous leur mandat. Des centaines de millions volatilisés à la State Bank of Mauritius sous leur mandat. Et comment oublier, Madame la présidente – nous étions, ici, dans cette Chambre –, les plus de 3 milliards du BAI. Nous étions tous, ici, dans cette Chambre, lorsque quelqu'un disait au Premier ministre d'alors : *'Pa enn sou de l'argent public pou met dans le BAI.'* C'est *on record*, Madame la présidente. Ça c'est sous leur mandat. De nombreuses familles ont souffert à cause du projet *Super Cash Back Gold* – des familles ruinées. Ça, c'est le MSM, Madame la présidente. *Me koumans par rann kas, apre fer gran gran koze dan Sun Trust !*

Madame la présidente, des voleurs crient au voleur. Le drame, Madame la présidente, c'est que ces imprimeurs de billets en catimini, ces véritables fossoyeurs de notre économie et de notre démocratie, se présentent, aujourd'hui, comme des grands sauveurs du peuple.

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. The Minister cannot use the word '*voleur*' in this House. This is not acceptable.

(Interruptions)

Mr Bhagwan: *Voler – sa pou reste ar zot sa! Voler !*

Mr Mohamed: Does the hat fit?

Madam Speaker: Minister!

An hon. Member: Ali baba!

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Minister!

Mr Bhagwan: *Pa blese, Joe!*

Madam Speaker: Minister!

Mr Bhagwan: Yes?

Madam Speaker: I have asked you to speak about the Budget and the policy of Government. Try, as much as possible, please, to come to the subject.

Mr Bhagwan: Je parle sur le budget parce qu'ils ont fait des conférences de presse, je dois leur répondre sur les pensions.

Madame...

(Interruptions)

Mr P. Bérenger: *Ki to p kozer la....*

Ms J. Bérenger: Shakeel, là, c'est ok, là ?

Mr Mohamed: Quoi!

Mr Bhagwan: Madame la présidente...

(Interruptions)

Mr Mohamed: *Repet enn cout, mo pa 'nn tande!*

Madam Speaker: Do not...

(Interruptions)

Do not speak to each other.

Mr Bhagwan: Madame la présidente, le drame c'est que ces imprimeurs de billets en catimini, ces véritables fossoyeurs de notre économie, aujourd'hui, se présentent en champion. Ils se présentent, aujourd'hui, comme des grands sauveurs du peuple, alors qu'ils portent la lourde responsabilité de l'état actuel des finances publiques. Quand on parle du budget, on parle des finances publiques. C'est l'héritage que nous avons reçu, Madame la présidente.

Des pyromanes d'hier jouent, aujourd'hui, aux sapeurs-pompiers sans certificat. Ce n'est pas étonnant, Madame la présidente. Parce qu'en matière d'illusion, d'effets optiques, le MSM est devenu maître, au cours de ses deux derniers mandats, d'illusion monétaire. Prospérité illusoire, illusion des chiffres, y compris les valises de 114 millions sans propriétaire. Côte d'Or, Madame la présidente, est restée une cocotte dorée. C'est ça l'héritage du MSM.

Mais, en voyant les réactions du public sur les réseaux sociaux, ces rapaces auraient dû réfléchir à deux fois avant de sortir de leur repère pour se manifester. Certains, dans leur boule de cristal, voyaient déjà la chute de ce gouvernement et la tenue des élections générales anticipées. Mais, aujourd'hui, Madame la présidente, la population réalise que ceux qui ont choisi de rester au gouvernement pour poursuivre leurs engagements et honorer leurs promesses électorales, ont fait un choix judicieux pour la stabilité et le progrès du pays.

Alors que nous assistons à l'hystérie chaque fois qu'il y a un incident environnemental, à croire que certains prient chaque jour qu'un incident se produise quelque part pour faire des *likes* sur Facebook. *Ziska* conférence de presse leader MSM *pe like*, Madame la présidente. Peut-être une future alliance en gestation.

Le recentrage suggéré et accepté de ce Budget est une preuve concrète que la présence du MMM au sein de ce gouvernement est palpable. Les critiques, Madame la présidente, sont normales dans une démocratie où chacun est libre de ses opinions et de ses convictions. Mais, le respect des faits avérés, et de probité intellectuelle, doit accompagner ces opinions. Un exercice budgétaire n'est jamais un *stand-alone operation*. Un exercice comptable sans lien apparent avec les années financières du passé et celle de l'avenir.

Ce que nous sommes appelés à faire, aujourd'hui, dépend en grande mesure de ce que nous avons déjà comme acquis, comme réserve et des opportunités que l'avenir nous offrira. Il n'y a pas de logique plus impeccable que celle-ci. Dans le cas présent, on ne le dira jamais assez, ce sont, malheureusement, les erreurs délibérées ou inconscientes, commises durant les mandats précédents, depuis 2014, qui continuent à plomber les ailes de notre économie et qui font peser des nuages sombres sur notre avenir commun. Et que si le courage nous fait défaut maintenant pour changer, transformer et reconstruire, ce sont les prochaines générations de Mauriciennes et Mauriciens qui devront porter le fardeau.

Madame la présidente, avant même de nous retrouver de ce côté de la Chambre, dans les rangs l'opposition d'alors, nous étions conscients que la gouvernance économique, la gouvernance tout court, était tout simplement bafouée et que la remise sur les rails des finances publiques ne serait pas du gâteau. Alors, qu'on le dise, clairement, ce qui est possible ou ce qui n'est pas possible, aujourd'hui, dépend de ce qui a été fait dans le passé et ce que nous ferons dans les années suivantes. En un mot, il y a forcément l'héritage de l'ancien gouvernement MSM dans ce présent Budget.

Il nous faut encore des années pour nous débarrasser de ce qu'on avait qualifié ici même, dans cette Chambre, d'héritage criminel du MSM. *Pa kapav efase ar gom* l'héritage du MSM, Madame la présidente !

Mon ami, le leader de l'opposition, lors de son intervention lundi dernier, comme il fallait s'y attendre, a vivement critiqué les mesures budgétaires et s'est même permis de faire un pronostic sur les résultats des prochaines élections générales. Allant même jusqu'à affirmer que même le *bulldozer* que je suis censé être et qui, après avoir remporté 10 élections au numéro 20, ne sera pas élu en 2029. Je voulais tout de suite dire à mon ami : *pa gagn mo traka*.

Ce n'est ni le *Sun Trust*, ni *lakwizinn*, ni les groupuscules politiques qui décident qui va représenter une circonscription pour une éventuelle élection générale. Madame la présidente, le *fitness certificate* pour être député n'est livré que par les électrices et les électeurs. Je peux assurer mon ami – parce qu'il est mon ami, l'honorable Lesjongard – *I will still be around if God so wish!*

En tout cas, laissez-moi lui dire haut et fort, à qui veut l'entendre, que ce soit dans cette Chambre ou que ce soit à Angus Road, ou que ce soit ailleurs, je me jeterai de tout mon poids dans la prochaine joute électorale pour que jamais plus Pravind Jugnauth soit à la tête du pays et le MSM.

Les élections, Madame la présidente, j'en ai surmonté les plus difficiles de 1983, 2005 et 2014. Je n'ai jamais changé de circonscription. Ce qui est sûr, c'est que lors de la prochaine campagne électorale, je serai aux premières loges pour défendre le bilan de ce gouvernement dirigé par l'honorable Dr. Navin Ramgoolam.

Madame la présidente, ce ne sont pas les défis auxquels nous devons faire face qui nous font tiquer. Encore moins les critiques des adversaires aigris. Madame la présidente, on le sait, un budget ne fait pas que de la dotation. Il comprend également des prélèvements afin d'équilibrer l'exercice. Toute proposition visant à augmenter ou à induire, introduire une dotation, si elle est sérieuse, doit aussi comporter l'élément du financement.

Il est évident, trop facile de dire qu'il faut donner plus ici et là, sans préciser la source du financement de la dotation. Après un premier exercice l'année dernière et l'introduction des mesures de redressement, la philosophie du gouvernement était de maintenir le cap sur les réformes essentielles pouvant porter ses fruits au cours des prochaines années.

Madame la présidente, malgré nos efforts, des contre-performances ici et là, des retards accumulés, une situation internationale volatile n'ont pas permis d'atteindre nos objectifs totalement. Cette année, c'est donc avec la même rigueur et le même esprit de solidarité nationale que l'honorable Premier ministre et ministre des Finances a présenté ses propositions. Du courage, il lui en a fallu pour présenter le nouveau plan de pension pour les retraités et du courage encore plus pour réaliser que l'écart considérable entre les attentes de la population et le plan du gouvernement n'était pas franchissable d'un seul saut.

Le budget ne contient peut-être pas toutes les meilleures propositions, mais il a le mérite de porter l'attention sur les secteurs de l'économie qui requièrent des réformes.

La présentation d'un budget est aussi l'occasion de tester la solidité de la responsabilité collective et de la cohésion d'un gouvernement et moi qui assume pour la troisième fois des responsabilités ministérielles, je peux vous affirmer que la force d'un gouvernement ne se mesure pas par des discours et des actions individuelles, mais par sa cohésion, sa responsabilité collective et sa solidarité à toute épreuve.

En politique, on ne peut rester dans sa zone de confort. En temps de cyclone, tirer capital politique est cela. À l'heure que nous vivons la Coupe du Monde, nous voyons l'avantage d'un jeu collectif, de l'entente harmonieuse entre les joueurs et la solidarité à toute épreuve. La solidarité gouvernementale, selon moi, n'est pas comme une contrainte. C'est une exigence morale envers ceux qui nous ont fait confiance.

C'est la base de la réussite pour la mise en œuvre du programme gouvernemental. Comme l'a si bien dit l'honorable Ameer Meea et d'autres amis, au MMM, nous avons su dans les instances qu'il faut faire entendre nos voix et nous sommes satisfaits de l'écoute que nous avons obtenue. Pensez-vous, Madame la présidente, que l'honorable Premier ministre, qui est un homme de terrain, soit indifférent aux attentes, angoisses, espoirs de notre population ?

Pensez-vous que c'est par pure méchanceté que le chef du gouvernement vient imposer des sacrifices sur la population alors qu'ils ne sont nullement nécessaires ? Non, Madame la présidente. Ce que nous faisons ici, chaque arbitrage difficile, chaque choix douloureux, nous le faisons pour l'avenir de nos enfants et de nos petits-enfants. Les comités vont continuer leur travail. Les consultations vont également se poursuivre, mais une chose est sûre, le système de pension doit être revu pour être en capacité de subvenir à l'avenir aux besoins de nos enfants et des enfants de notre République.

Tôt ou tard, cette réforme viendra. Le plus tôt, le mieux pour le pays. Madame la présidente, répondant à la PNQ de l'honorable leader de l'opposition de hier, l'honorable Premier Ministre a donné des éléments de réponse qui constituent un *indictment beyond reasonable doubt*, que ce soit politique ou criminel, de la gestion des affaires du pays par le leader du MSM et surtout par rapport à la soutenabilité du système de pension.

Madame la présidente, sans transition, si un être humain, après avoir travaillé toute sa vie, s'attend à une retraite sereine, sans maladie, sans contrainte financière, est-ce qu'on s'est déjà demandé ce qu'il adviendra de la race humaine si la terre réclamait sa pension à sa mise à retraite ? La race humaine, Madame la présidente, ne dispose pas de planète 2.0. Nous sommes condamnés à vivre ici. C'est pour cette raison que nous devons *care* pour notre planète et *nurture our nature*.

Les problèmes environnementaux comme la pollution de l'air et de l'eau et les conséquences du changement climatique nous font réaliser à quel point notre qualité de vie dépend de la qualité de notre environnement. En effet, Madame la présidente, notre qualité de vie, notre espérance de vie sont intimement liées à l'état de notre environnement et c'est un peu pour cette raison d'ailleurs que, pour n'importe quel problème ayant un impact sur notre bien-être, que ce soit tapage nocturne, véhicule fumigène et tapageur, on pense tout de suite à la Police de l'Environnement.

C'est pour cela que le ministère de l'Environnement est constamment sollicité pour les interventions à travers le pays, alors que nous sommes plus d'une dizaine d'autorités concernées. Je parlais de la salubrité, Madame la présidente., Un environnement de qualité n'est pas un privilège, mais un droit auquel tout citoyen mauricien doit pouvoir en profiter.

Cependant, Madame la présidente, bien que la majorité de la population réalise l'importance de l'environnement de qualité, une poignée de nos concitoyens continuent à défigurer, enlaidir, polluer et à nuire à leurs voisins. Quelle est la première préoccupation des Mauriciennes et des Mauriciens, Madame la présidente ? D'abord, et avant tout, et surtout, la première préoccupation des Mauriciens reste évidemment la salubrité et l'entretien des lieux publics, parcs, promenades et jardins.

Du nord au sud, de l'est à l'ouest, sept jours sur sept, certains de nos compatriotes continuent à décharger des déchets n'importe où y compris sur les berges des rivières. Les nombreux cas de leptospirose et de chikungunya ont été un *wake-up call*, un sursaut national en faveur de la salubrité publique.

Déjà l'État dépense des millions chaque jour et des milliards par an, des centaines de millions chaque année à travers les municipalités, les conseils de district, à travers la *Road Development Authority* et *Mauri Facilities*, entre autres, pour nettoyer. Qui d'entre mes collègues parlementaires de cette Chambre ne connaît pas aujourd'hui *Mauri Facilities*, un département, une section du ministère de l'Environnement ?

C'est 2 500 hommes et femmes, avec une proportion remarquable de dames, que je salue devant cette Assemblée, qui se lèvent chaque matin pour s'assurer que les rues, les bordures de l'autoroute entre autres, 500 sites publics et les toilettes de 282 écoles publiques soient propres. Tous ces travailleurs qui nettoient méritent notre respect et notre soutien, et ils l'auront. Maurice ne sera plus propre si les gens continuent à salir, salir et à salir. Non, Madame la présidente, l'absence de poubelles sur les voies publiques ou les plages n'est pas une raison de jeter ses ordures n'importe où. Avec la recrudescence des rongeurs et des moustiques, les poubelles qui ne sont pas hermétiques, contribuent quelque part à corser le problème. Combien de millions nous faudra-t-il s'il nous faut remplacer toutes les poubelles à travers l'île ?

Madame la présidente, je parlerai du *Waste to Wealth*. La gestion des déchets à Maurice doit être complètement repensée afin que nous puissions engager un programme de *Waste to Wealth*. Valeur du jour ; seulement 7 % des déchets produits annuellement sont recyclés. L'objectif est de dévier d'ici 2029, 40 % de nos déchets de Mare Chicose et d'accélérer la mise en place des structures d'une économie circulaire. Une provision de R 150 millions est faite pour le programme *Waste to Wealth* que je salue. Par exemple, du compost peut être produit à partir de nos déchets organiques qui représentent 40 % de nos déchets pour nos agriculteurs, pour notre sol, pour réduire les engrais chimiques importés. Des métaux, du papier, du verre, tout cela a une valeur économique réelle.

Je parlerai de la taxe de R 2 sur le plastique, Madame la présidente. L'introduction de la taxe de R 2 étendue à toutes les bouteilles plastiques a suscité de nombreuses appréhensions des consommateurs, écologistes et recycleurs. Sur 168 millions de bouteilles PET mises sur le marché en 2025, 75 % ont terminé en décharge ou dans la nature. On les voit partout, bloquant nos drains, provoquant des inondations et polluant nos mers. Maurice génère plus de 75,000 tonnes de déchets plastique par an, dont seulement 3 % sont recyclés, que ce soit localement ou par exportation. Malheureusement, une grande partie de nos déchets plastiques se retrouvent dans l'environnement, notamment dans les cours d'eau et finalement dans la mer. Basé sur le principe de pollueur-payeur, cette mesure vise un effet triple ; inciter les importateurs et fabricants à basculer vers des alternatives écologiques, désormais plus compétitives, responsabiliser les producteurs via le principe de responsabilité élargie du producteur et encourager les consommateurs à adopter des contenants réutilisables, durables. À titre d'exemple, des bouteilles à base de plantes considérées comme des bouteilles compostables, et un tel système contribuera à financer la collecte et le recyclage des contenants PET.

Cette mesure, Madame la présidente, s'accompagnera d'un système de consigne pour les bouteilles PET. La seule façon efficace de faire disparaître le plastique de la nature, c'est de donner une valeur à ce contenant et encourager le recyclage. Dans le cadre de l'une des recommandations du plan stratégique national, la feuille de route pour la création d'une base de données d'inventaire des plastiques et des déchets plastiques, ce droit d'acquise permettra au gouvernement de constituer une base de données sur la quantité de bouteilles en plastique générée sur notre marché local et en vue d'orienter les politiques futures. Si nous sommes en train de peaufiner, notre stratégie est toujours basée sur le principe de pollueur-payeur.

Je parlerai sur les amendes sur *illegal dumping*, Madame la présidente. Comme nous avons multiplié l'amende pour émission de fumée noire par 5 de R 2,000 à R 10,000. Dans la même veine, l'amende pour *illegal dumping* de déchets sera doublée de R 25,000 à R 50,000. Savez-vous, Madame la présidente, qu'une seule personne a été épinglée trois fois pour le même délit de déversement illégal d'ordures et a écopé trois fois d'une amende de R 25,000 ? Il est grand temps que tous les pollueurs assument la responsabilité de leurs actes irréfléchis.

L'autre préoccupation de nos citoyens ce sont les nuisances sonores et 34 % de nos plaintes reçues à notre ministère concerne le bruit excessif qui stresse, irrite, provoque des problèmes de concentration, des troubles de l'apprentissage, perturbe le sommeil, entre autres, répercussion sur tout l'organisme. Comme je l'avais annoncé face à la presse le 30 janvier, après l'incident tragique de La Caverne en décembre 2025 où une vie a été arrachée à cause d'un différend lié à la musique trop forte et ce qui s'était passé à la plage de Palmar, se concrétise. L'amende pour nuisance sonore double, passant de R 10,000 à R 20,000. La pollution sonore n'affecte pas que les personnes dans les villes et villages, mais c'est aussi un problème récurrent sur nos plages. Et la *Beach Authority* responsable de 145 plages publiques à Maurice et 12 à Rodrigues, a obtenu un budget plus important pour l'entretien des plages et travaille également sur la création des zones de baignade sous la surveillance des *lifeguards*, ainsi que sur un comportement plus responsable des pique-niqueurs à travers une vulgarisation de l'étiquette à être observée sur les plages.

Madame la présidente, l'érosion côtière, ces plages, comme vous le savez, sont aussi aujourd'hui menacées par le changement climatique. La mer monte à 4.7 millimètres par an à Maurice, ce qui est au-dessus de la moyenne mondiale de 3.7 millimètres. Certaines plages ont déjà reculé de 30 mètres à l'heure où je vous parle, ces plages qui appartiennent à tous les Mauriciens, que nos grands-parents connaissent, que nos parents ont fréquenté et que nos petits-enfants ne connaîtront peut-être plus. La réponse de ce gouvernement, R 4 milliards pour réhabiliter plus de 11.5 kilomètres de côte sur 17 sites autour de l'île, parce que nos plages sont notre identité, notre patrimoine, l'héritage que nous devons laisser à nos enfants et petits-enfants.

Madame la présidente, que ce soit Mont Choisy, que ce soit Palmar, que ce soit Pointe aux Sables ou ailleurs, je veux être parfaitement transparent ; je n'ai aucun *vested interest*, et j'agis strictement dans le cadre des pouvoirs qui me sont conférés par l'*Environment Act* qui est actuellement en phase de révision et qui a déjà reçu 700 propositions citoyennes.

Parallèlement, des projets de loi sont en chantier pour protéger davantage nos zones écologiquement sensibles, ainsi que pour les *wetlands* et Maurice sera parmi les rares pays à introduire la protection des droits de la nature dans la Constitution. Un cadre légal, oui, mais le plus important, Madame la présidente, est un véritable changement de comportement face à l'environnement.

Madame la présidente, au niveau de l'éducation, le changement durable commence dans les écoles. L'éducation environnementale, c'est le meilleur investissement à long terme que nous puissions faire. En une année, mon ministère a fait 120 sessions de sensibilisation touchant plus de 15,000 participants à travers l'île dans des écoles primaires, secondaires, centres professionnels, incluant des expositions, des émissions radio, télévision, et des ateliers. Ce n'est pas tout, 268 écoles participent aujourd'hui au programme de recyclage du papier et du carton. 1,476 bacs de collecte distribués ; 18.8 tonnes de papier qui seraient allés dans notre décharge ont été collectés durant le projet pilote dans 22 établissements scolaires. J'en profite pour dire merci à mon collègue le ministre de l'Education pour son soutien et un grand bravo aux élèves de ces écoles.

L'autre exemple, Madame la présidente, de l'implication de la jeune génération ; l'émission *Ble Ver* sur laquelle nous travaillons avec la MBC implique dans sa conception et réalisation également des étudiants de l'Université de Maurice. Par ailleurs, ce que nous avons constaté : comme l'environnement est un sujet préoccupant, il y a beaucoup de désinformation, de *fake news*, de mauvaises interprétations. Il y a des personnes qui se réveillent chaque matin en attendant que pleuvent les problèmes pour pouvoir exister sur les réseaux sociaux.

Alors, Madame la présidente, plus sérieusement, l'environnement est un secteur passionnant. C'est avec un réel plaisir que j'ai retrouvé ce ministère. Depuis novembre 2024, je pratique une politique de porte ouverte, de transparence et de dialogue. La société civile, les ONGs se reconnaissent, elles participent activement et siègent au sein de la *Beach Authority*, de Maurifacilities et plusieurs comités, dont celui sur la gestion intégrée de nos côtes.

Toute la population est appelée à faire des efforts pour transformer notre environnement et notre cadre de vie. Aucune loi, aussi bonne soit-elle, aucune institution, aussi solide soit-elle, ne peut protéger l'environnement seule. Ce que nous faisons, aujourd'hui, ce sont les générations de demain qui récolteront le fruit. On se pose souvent la

question : quel environnement, quel pays, quelle planète on lèguera à nos enfants ? Mais moi, la question que je pose, et je termine là-dessus, Madame la présidente : *Ki kalite dimounn nou pe kit pou nou bann zanfàn et ti zanfàn lor sa later Moris-la ?*

Je vous remercie.

Madam Speaker: Merci.

Yes, hon. First Member...

Mr Glover: Madam Speaker, I have a point of order.

Madam Speaker: Yes. One moment.

Mr Glover: If I may?

Madam Speaker: Is it a point of order?

Mr Glover: Yes, it is.

Madam Speaker: Yes, alright.

Mr Glover: Madam Speaker, I refer to the point of order of the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Under Standing Order 41 (2), as you well know, when it has been stated, the Member who raises it shall resume his or her seat, and no other Member, except with the leave of the Speaker may address the Chair. And I am asking for leave to address the Chair at this stage.

Madam Speaker: Alright, I grant you leave.

Mr Glover: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has referred to Standing Order 73 on the Appropriation Bill, which must be read, of course, in conjunction with Section 105 of the Constitution, more especially, subsections (2) and (3) of the Constitution, which I will not, of course, bore everyone to read it out here.

What is important is the difference between Standing Orders 73(2) and 73(3), which, basically, make a marked difference between the Second Reading and the Committee of Supply.

We are at the Second Reading. Under Standing Order 73(2), Madam Speaker, when the motion for the Second Reading of the Bill has been made and seconded, which is the case here, the debate thereon shall be adjourned until the next sitting and, when resumed, shall imperative be confined to the general principles of Government policy and administration as indicated by the Bill and the Estimates. The highlight being that we are talking of general principles and Estimates.

That must not be read in contradistinction with subsection (3) of Standing Order 73, which places us in the next stage of the proceedings in the House. So, when the Bill has been read a second time, it shall stand committed to the Committee of the whole Assembly, to be called the Committee of Supply to which the Estimates shall then also stand referred.

Discussions at the Committee shall be confined to the details of the expenditure contained in the programme, sub-programme or item of expenditure and shall not refer to the general principles.

Therefore, there is a marked difference between the second stage and the third stage. I think that the point of order of the Leader of the Opposition, at this stage, is misconceived.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. You want to say a word?

Mr Lesjongard: No.

Madam Speaker: I wanted to take time to read it. I have read also, myself, Standing Orders 73(2) and (3), and I think that the Attorney General is right.

So, for the moment, let us carry on with this part of our work, which what I wanted to do in the first place.

So, now I shall call on the First Member of Stanley and Rose Hill to make his speech.

(3.44 p.m.)

Mr P. Bérenger (First Member for Stanley & Rose Hill): *Madam Speaker*, la marge de manœuvre budgétaire du gouvernement est plus grande cette année que l'année dernière. Moody's l'avait souligné, le 4 mai 2026, dans un rapport d'étape qui notait, et je cite –

“Mauritius is making its first tangible progress on fiscal consolidation, with budget execution pointing to a material deficit reduction this financial year.”

Dans le budget présenté vendredi dernier, et dans les discours des ministres depuis, le gouvernement a, lui aussi, souligné que la marge de manœuvre budgétaire du gouvernement est plus grande cette année que l'année dernière. C'est pourquoi la présentation du budget 2026-2027, vendredi dernier, était l'occasion de faire deux choses à la fois –

- lancer une offensive contre l'inflation, premièrement, et
- deuxièmement présenter un budget de relance économique.

Malheureusement, le budget a été une double occasion ratée. L'inflation continuera d'augmenter et la relance économique ne sera pas au rendez-vous, avec pour résultat que le pays risque fort d'aller vers la stagflation. C'est-à-dire, d'une part, l'inflation et, de l'autre, une croissance économique défailante.

Concernant l'inflation, *Madam Speaker*, selon la Banque de Maurice et autres, elle va s'accélérer pour passer à 5.5% en 2026 et pourrait dépasser 6% dépendant de la guerre au Golfe. Il faut rappeler que l'inflation est la taxe la plus injuste qui frappe toute la population et surtout les plus pauvres et démunis. Les mesures annoncées dans le budget 2026-2027 pour combattre l'inflation sont très décevantes. La marge de manœuvre budgétaire améliorée du gouvernement lui permettait d'éliminer ou au moins de diminuer les nombreuses taxes imposées sur l'essence et le diesel qui se répercutent sur tout.

La loi sur les monopoles, les cartels et les abus de certains importateurs et commerçants aurait dû être amendée pour donner plus de pouvoir à la *Competition Commission* afin de permettre une meilleure utilisation du *Price Stabilisation Fund*.

La roupie, qui s'était stabilisée en 2025, s'est dépréciée de 3% depuis le début de 2026, ce qui nourrit l'inflation. Concernant la croissance économique, le *GDP growth*, *Madam Speaker*, la Banque de Maurice et le FMI prévoient qu'elle sera de seulement 2.8% en 2026 et très probablement moins après le budget de vendredi dernier.

Le capital budget du gouvernement, dans ce budget, reste très bas, moins de 5% des dépenses totales du budget. Les investissements du secteur privé, qui représentent 80% des investissements du pays, ont baissé de 2.8% en 2025, et il est prévu qu'il baisse de 1.7% en 2026.

Il faut, bien sûr, *Madam Speaker*, utiliser l'intelligence artificielle au maximum, mais ne pas oublier que c'est l'emploi dans plusieurs secteurs qui sera menacé.

Le budget parle de *unleashing the potential of the blue economy*, mais les mesures proposées dans le budget ne vont pas loin.

À part un *SME Bill*, rien de nouveau pour les PME, et pas un mot sur le potentiel de la biotechnologie.

Madam Speaker, deux secteurs sur lesquels dépend toute l'économie du pays méritent une attention prioritaire et soutenue : la fourniture d'électricité et le port. Dans le cas de l'électricité, le danger d'une rupture continue d'augmenter malgré les efforts concernant l'énergie renouvelable. Et dans le port, des erreurs de stratégie risquent de nous coûter très cher.

Dans le cas du tourisme et des services financiers, le budget ne propose rien de sérieux. Concernant la sécurité alimentaire, ce que le budget propose après avoir souligné que, je cite –

« Food insecurity is an existential risk. »

C'est vrai mais ce que le budget propose après avoir souligné cela, n'est pas non plus sérieux.

Madam Speaker, je terminerai par ce qui a dominé les débats budgétaires cette année – la réforme de la pension. Le gouvernement a été au-dessous de tout. Une confusion totale règne maintenant. C'est pourquoi, il ne fallait pas prendre de décision avant de rendre public le rapport final de la commission d'experts et il faut maintenant tout revoir dans le dialogue avec tous ceux et celles concernés, à commencer par les retraités et leurs associations, mais aussi les syndicats.

Cela est autant nécessaire qu'il semblerait que la commission d'experts qui a soumis un rapport intérimaire a été profondément divisée. Au lieu de la confusion totale qui règne actuellement, les pensionnés ont le droit de savoir ce qui est maintenant proposé pour eux et

celles entre 60 et 65 ans, en remplacement du *income support* temporaire introduit l'année dernière, et ce qui les attend à 65 ans et après.

Il faut bien expliquer comment fonctionnera le nouveau *National Pension Fund*. *Madam Speaker*, il y a toutes les raisons d'être très inquiet et triste aussi, devant ce qui est en train d'arriver à notre pays, à son économie, son système de pension, sa gouvernance. Ce sera la lourde responsabilité d'un prochain et *full-time* ministre des Finances de relancer notre économie dans la justice sociale et ce sera la très lourde responsabilité d'un prochain Premier ministre de redresser et de vraiment changer notre pays.

Je vous remercie, *Madam Speaker*.

Madam Speaker: Merci. Hon. Minister of Housing!

(3.54 p.m.)

The Minister of Housing and Lands (Mr S. Mohamed): Thank you very much, *Madam Speaker*. I have listened with a lot of interest to all the hon. Members who have spoken on the budget and as others on this side of the House have done, I myself would like to share my views on this particular budget, also with regard to my Ministry but on general issues as well.

Madam Speaker, it is quite interesting how many of our friends sitting on the other side, and even our friends sitting outside this Parliament, strangely enough, forget about the context every time. Every time you hear them when they have to criticise the budget, they adjust their observations in such a way as they carve out completely the last 10 years.

Let me at least try to remind for the next few minutes our friends here, *Madam Speaker*, and outside, that the context and the background is of utmost importance. We cannot, in any way, cast it aside. So, let us remember the situation as it was during the past 10 years. A government that the hon. Leader of the Opposition formed part of, that had no respect for democracy, that is fact.

Le gouvernement dirigé par feu Sir Anerood Jugnauth et aussi le gouvernement dirigé par Pravind Jugnauth n'était jamais à l'écoute de la population. N'oublions pas, Madame la présidente, les grandes manifestations de Wakashio. N'oublions pas la manifestation du peuple et le dégoût de la population quand il s'agissait de l'affaire *papa-piti*.

Il n'est pas normal alors, Madame la présidente, que ceux, qui, à un certain moment critiquaient la position du gouvernement MSM sur *papa-piti* ou sur Wakashio ou la déroute

totale en ce qui concerne le respect des droits démocratiques and the destruction of *human rights*, il n'est pas possible, Madame la présidente, qu'aujourd'hui, ces mêmes personnes frottent leurs épaules à ces mêmes dictateurs. Il n'est pas normal et je ne comprends pas comment je vois des alliances se former avec des fossoyeurs du passé. Ce n'est pas quelque chose que je comprends. À l'époque, quand le peuple est descendu et a crié haut et fort leur désapprobation pour l'affaire Wakashio, qu'est-ce que le gouvernement Jugnauth a fait ? Cela – *Go to hell, he said. Walk, walk. We are not going to be interested; we will not budge. We are firm. We are going to continue. They did not listen to the people. What happened when people said: bring back democracy, bring back human rights? Let us at least have the aspects of our constitution not flouted, not violated. What did they do? Go to hell. This is what was happening.*

We had promised that we would listen to the people. Whenever they had something to say, we would listen up. We would hear and we would take action whenever we found that what they were saying was relevant because they are the ones who brought us here. That was the change we promised. They are the ones who brought us here, elected us on a promise of change.

Now, the first opportunity that we have to show that we are different from the past, we have just had it. The hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Finance heard, listened, paid attention, consulted on the proposals and he heard the people, he heard his hon. Ministers, he heard his partners. Then he took time to consider and he decided to say: okay, I will go along with what the people have said but there are consequences, there are risks.

The difference in that approach, Madam Speaker, is that he did not decide to dictate even though he reminded us of the consequences. He did not decide to impose and go against what the people had said. He heard, he showed he has a heart and decided to act as the former Prime Minister did not have even the ability to act. The former Prime Minister never listened; this Prime Minister listens.

So, when he acts in that way, still, the Opposition find it problematic. If this is not political hypocrisy, what is it? So, I would therefore like to say congratulations to the hon. Prime Minister. Not only for the courage he has shown, because we are in living difficult times. We are living in difficult times and I will show it in a few minutes. I say congratulations to the hon. Prime Minister because he has had the courage to do what many would have run away from. He has had the courage.

Let me talk about the last decade of the MSM. Many of my friends have, but let me talk about it. You see, I have tried to carry out a simple calculation, Madam Speaker. A calculation to understand what has the management of the MSM in the past 10 years done to this country and whether it has impacted in any way our ability to continue with the BRP as we knew it. I wanted to make a correlation between the two. Has the MSM acted in such a negligent, criminally negligent manner that has created a situation where it has reduced our *marge de manoeuvre* with regard to the BRP and though, the facts and the figures are there?

Madam Speaker, we are not here to face a system; it is a system in fact which we are facing, a system that the MSM has put in place; not a series of scandals but a very well-thought-out system and the pattern of losses that are documented, Madam Speaker, constitutes systemic State capture; not isolated mismanagement.

Discrete affairs across procurement, banking, sovereign investment, parastatal management, share recurring intermediaries, recurring law firms, recurring beneficiaries, recurring methods of evasion.

Madam Speaker, how can we forget – maybe *commençons par le commencement*. My good friend, the Minister of Environment, referred to the BAI bailout. But we have not forgotten those who were in the MSM government, led by Sir Anerood Jugnauth. Do we forget those who were standing there and telling the people: ‘It will not cost a penny *de l'argent de la population*?’ Do we not remember who those Ministers were? Did they not come and say it in the eyes of the people? ‘It would not cost a penny. *L'argent du peuple ne va pas être utilisé dans ce qu'on décide*. It was a political vendetta!

An hon. Member: *Bizin dimann Bhadain!*

Mr Mohamed: Who?

An hon. Member: *Bizin dimann Bhadain!*

An hon. Member: *Sirtou pa li!* Who?

An hon. Member: Roshi!

(Interruptions)

Mr Mohamed: Rs17.9 billion confirmed injected in the BAI-NPF matter. The Bank of Mauritius-Bramer matter, was this not an engineered crash by the former government? Who were the Ministers then who stood up and looked at the people in their eyes and said ‘this will not cost the people a penny’? But then, how much did it cost? Rs3.5 billion, confirmed. BAI-

Maubank injection, as at date – I may be wrong. I speak under the correction of the Minister of Finance, the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Junior Minister – Rs5.2 billion has been injected in Maubank. What about the matter that is pending for the BAI before Mauritian courts? Rs100 billion still pending contingent liability.

What about Britam Kenya shares? The Britam Kenya shares sold and the investigation in Kenya, Madam Speaker, and together with the investigation in Mauritius, what did it show? There is some common denominator there that it was sold for a minimum of Rs1.5 billion less to Rs2 billion less. Where did that money go? Who were the Ministers responsible? Who were the ones who were in charge of the country then? If I am not mistaken, was the Leader of the Opposition among them?

An hon. Member: Yes!

Mr Mohamed: Was he not among that team?

An hon. Member: He was! He was!

Mr Mohamed: Was he not the one who stood there, shoulder to shoulder, in one rank and stood there and said: we stand collectively behind this massacre? Was it not them? Can I rub shoulders with people like that?

Hon. Members: No!

Mr Mohamed: In the name of what? Can I even contemplate an alliance with such people who have destroyed this country? And they take the moral horse, the high horse and say; ‘oh well, we are the better people.’ I will come to the leader of the MSM in a minute. Betamax-Privy Council: Rs5.68 billion.

What about the resignation or literally kicked out, the former Deputy Prime Minister, Collendavelloo on the St. Louis Gate matter, Rs4.3 billion? What about Air Mauritius bailout, as you have rightly said, Rs12 billion? What about the Airport Holdings goodwill overvaluation of Rs17 billion? What about the MIC impairment? Rs5.4 billion! What about the MIC convertible loss, Rs3.7 billion? What about Pack & Blister? What about Molnupiravir? What about Wakashio damage of around Rs2.8 billion? What about the hidden debt reclassification of Rs30 billion? What about the CT Power matter that is still pending before courts? Rs30 billion!

What about the Rawat arbitration matter, as I have said, a court case still pending? What about the STC white oil contract being investigated by the FCC? What about the

Heritage City? We have forgotten about the Bollywood dancers that were supposed to come here and dance us away into the horizon? We have forgotten? Oh, what about the COVID emergency procurement irregularities? What about MauBank recurring recapitalisation? What about BAI special administrators and conservators? What about the SBM toxic loans of around Rs14 billion?

Madam Speaker, please, and that is the background: the background that the Leader of the Opposition and his future allies were contemplating to rub their shoulders against. Just simply, they put a mark on it and say it did not happen. You know what? Selective memory. We know that the people of Mauritius are hurting. We know that the people of Mauritius are impatient. We know that the people of this country want change. We know. But we cannot forget, can we? How can we forget?

Madam Speaker, I have calculated and we have reached, the losses expressed over the last decade of this criminal management of the MSM, Rs185 billion. Here again, Rs185 billion thrown away. They tell us to forget about it. They tell us it did not even happen and the people today are angry because they are not being arrested as fast as they took the money away. But we cannot go against what law says. We have to follow the law because otherwise, they are going to escape through the cracks.

Do you know what it represents Rs185 billion, Madam Speaker? It represents 40 months of BRP. I did the correlation. *40 mois de pension que la gestion criminelle du MSM a fait qu'on a perdus. 40 mois, 3 ans, 3 mois ! Volatilisés ! Le leader du MSM, le leader de l'opposition et ses acolytes viennent et nous disent : « Mais vous faites quoi de cela ? » Je vous dis ce que je fais de cela. 40, it is not a coincidence, is it? Alibaba and the 40 thieves! Is it a coincidence?*

I wonder what Amjad Khan would say in Sholay!

(Interruptions)

Would he? Should I?

Madam Speaker: Enough of Sholay!

(Interruptions)

Mr Mohamed: You know what really hurts, Madam Speaker, is that those people, they talk as though they have done nothing wrong. They have done everything right. In fact, for

them, it is totally normal to have *dévalué ce pays*. Totally normal! They are going to come forward here and they are so desperate to get back to power to give them another...

An hon. Member: Over our dead body!

Mr Mohamed: No, no! You know what? They are so desperate that you know, *allons au moins rigoler un peu*. You see, the Leader of the Opposition is so desperate to try to mark political points. Do you know how many people suffer from diabetes here? The hon. Minister of Health will tell us.

An hon. Member: 200,000.

Mr Mohamed: Over 200,000. Approximately more than 20% of the adult population suffer from diabetes. The global average is 10%. *Plus de 200,000 personnes qui souffrent du diabète, le double de la moyenne mondiale. Et depuis 2022, l'OMC dit qu'on doit introduire ce qu'on appelle 'sin taxes'*. I do not mean the sins of the Opposition. I mean other sin taxes. True it is, they have to be taxed for their sins, at least we could recoup the Rs186 billion! But let us do that another day. You know, the fiscal responsibility legislation will come.

But that Opposition laughs about sugar content of coconut. They laughed about my coconuts. Well, not my coconuts. At least it is a question of science! They laughed about my sugary coconuts and they laughed about your *goyaves de chine*. How desperate are they? Do you realise, Madam Speaker, it shows that they are totally disconnected? They are disconnected with reality and they sell lies to the people. Do you see how they kept it quiet?

Do you know that in our supermarkets, on the shelves, there are coconut juices, coconut water? Do you know that each of those coconut waters on the shelves contain 27 grams of sugar per can?

Mr Lesjongard: *Tonn al fer komission?*

Mr Mohamed: *Mo fer komision, mwa! Mo pa fer Jugnauth, ress lakaz, twa to al servi li!*

(Interruptions)

Mwa kan mo al fer komision, mo pa bizin bodyguard kuma twa!

An hon. Member: *Li pran komision li!*

Mr Mohamed: *Mwa, mo al aste. Twa to pran twa!*

Madam Speaker: Come back to your speech...

Mr Mohamed: Yes, I should not say, *li pran!*

Madam Speaker: ...it was interesting.

So, what I am saying, 27 grams per can! So, what does the Leader of the Opposition say? What does the Leader of the MSM say? Does he forget that, as from 2022-2023, his Government imposed sin tax, not on themselves, but on the sugar content? Does he forget about that? Then he did not laugh. He imposed a tax on alcohol; he did not find anything to say about it. He imposed taxes on plastic; he did not have anything to say about it. How hypocritical can you be? How can you sell such *bobards*, such lies, such inexactitude? How can you do this in the name of morality? This country is going where with people like that at the helm? Where are we going? 27 grams! I challenge that Leader of the Opposition to tell people of this country that, at least, you did not tell them the total truth when you were laughing about my sweet coconuts.

An hon. Member: *Donn li coco! Donn li so coco!*

Mr Mohamed: Because I care about those who lose their toes, who lose their limbs, who lose their eye sights, and who have cardiac problems because of diabetes. I do not do politics about it. I do not do what you do with your former partner, Mr Bhadain. I want this country to at least survive, and a sin tax is important.

Madam Speaker...

Madam Speaker: Yes, please come to your...

Mr Mohamed: This is all about the Budget.

Madam Speaker: It is alright.

Mr Mohamed: It is there.

Madam Speaker: Do not worry, I am diabetic. So, I understand, but come back to your Ministry, perhaps.

Mr Mohamed: I can assure you, I was there, in my mind. I will share it with you in a minute.

Let me say something else, Madam Speaker. You see, when you face people *avec autant de démagogie* – you are totally right, Madam Speaker –, we have to come to the real world. The real world that you meet people, who do not sell lies in order to profit from same, but who are to take courageous decisions. I would like to tell you, once again, before I embark upon the elements of my Ministry, that this Prime Minister has the courage, as a leader, as a statesman, to take these courageous decisions, and I congratulate him for that. This is the one who's leading the country.

Now, Madam Speaker, to come back to housing.

Madam Speaker: Please!

Mr Mohamed: In this current Financial Year, 2026-2027, we will be delivering over 5,200 houses. But I am not happy with the model that we have adopted because this model, in fact, is *dépassé*, in my view. I have had opportunities of discussing with the hon. Prime Minister and my Cabinet colleagues, the Ministry of Finance, the Financial Secretary, and I thank that team for all their help, together with the Social Security and the Deputy Prime Minister as well, because we are working as one team to find solutions.

There is the need, therefore, to have, not only social housing, because another category of citizens are the forgotten ones – *ceux qui sont les oubliés dans l'équation*. Those who earn more than Rs 48,000. Those who earn and are youngsters, who do not have homes, and who cannot take a loan because of the high prices of property – the affordable homes.

So, I have discussed with the Ministry of Finance, as I have said, and yes, we are embarking upon a new way of looking at things. For social housing, we are going to ensure that there are sites and services that also come back on the equation. The discussions are ongoing. We have not finalised it. Discussions are ongoing with the Ministry of Finance, where we can identify sites and services, try our best to see how we could give them a seed money. For example, if I am to say, a million that could help them to build their homes, but would also allow them to take a loan, let us say, two or three million, so there would be *la participation de la personne qui doit construire la maison*. This is the difference in the approach that we want to bring.

Secondly, for affordable housing – public-private partnership. Government is going to encourage those who are in the private sector to bring in the capital that is required. We are

going to give them the land for affordable housing, but *à la condition* that they will sell this to people at a better price, at a more competitive price, at an accessible price, and will allow those youngsters, in the middle income, affordable homes, that they will become owners of proper homes as well, because they have been forgotten for too long. I have discussed as well with the Ministry of Finance – but the discussions are ongoing – on how we could ensure those youngsters, and for promoters to bring in their capital, that there is some sort of fiscal advantage that is given in order to make it beneficial for them as well, otherwise, they would not bring their capital. If the former government, for Smart Cities, has managed to give tax incentives, we have to be able to give tax incentives for those who do not have a home. This is the important element.

Now, with regard to Smart Cities, Madam Speaker, it is important to remember that there was a commitment in the Smart City Certificate that they had to build affordable homes but there has been no proper monitoring by the former government. There has been no proper monitoring by those who form part of Cabinet then. But we are going to sit down with all those Smart City Certificate holders to ensure that the commitment to build affordable homes as well is there. This is our promise and this is what we are going to do.

We are having ongoing discussions with regard to asbestos in homes. For the first time ever, we are not here to find half-baked solutions. We are here to find solutions that will really make things change. So, this is what will happen. We have the statistics from Statistics Mauritius, that is completed. We have the laboratory reports from London that have come in, and we will be calling another meeting, an inter-ministerial meeting with the Ministry of Finance, in order to see how we could go for new policies such as exchange of land or give them social housing that we are building or how we will compensate them. So, this is ongoing.

With regard to pig breeders, this is not within the mandate of my Ministry, but I am chairing the inter-ministerial committee, and I would like to thank the hon. Junior Minister David as well, who forms part of that committee and all other Ministers. I will not forget all the inputs and suggestions. I thank both my colleagues Ministers, who are here next to me, because without them, I do not think we would have managed to really find the direction that we found. I will be making a statement on that, soon, in the National Assembly.

Madam Speaker, there is something that has come up in recent past, and I must talk about it. As Minister responsible for Housing and Lands, all *pas géométriques*, all *domaines publics maritimes* are under the guardianship of my Ministry. We are guardians of this land. For many, many years, a lot of those who own leases, *ceux qui ont des baux sur les campement sites* or industrial lease, have been under the wrong impression, and I would like to set record straight. They have been under the wrong impression that because they lease the land that is *sur le littoral*, on *pas géométriques*, *domaine public*, they have exclusive use of the land, that is, the strip between the high-water mark and the building line.

I have, myself, walked on the beaches of this country. Madam Speaker, the white sand around our island is an asset for this country. Our forefathers have come from many continents. Our forefathers have crossed those white beaches when entering firm ground. It is in our DNA; it is a *domaine public* that belongs to Mauritians. This is something that has to be underlined, and it has to remain for Mauritians. For many years, there has been this wrong interpretation of the law, believing that because they are lessees, they have exclusive use over that strip of land, between the building line and the high-water mark. That is not true.

I have issued a communiqué only yesterday. I have had representations pouring in because hotel owners, *campement* site owners, and members of the public would like things to be put in a structured manner. I have sent also a note to the Attorney General, whereby I have requested advice on the advisability of coming up with two regulations in order to clarify matters. But let me, here, take advantage of this opportunity because it is important at this time to clarify matters. There needs to be the public that live side by side, the co-existing rights of the public and the *campement* site owners and hotel site owners. There is a necessity to make a distinction between usage *commun* and usage *privatif*. The members of the public, *campement* site owners and hotel owners have to know that.

It cannot include the use by ordinary public. It cannot include camping because this would be *privatif*. It cannot include coming up and setting up camp to carry out a barbecue. That would be usage *privatif*. It cannot mean erection of tents or loud music. By the way, on loud music – I have been speaking to my friends in Government – even on public beaches, we have to show responsibility because we cannot go to public beaches and have 20 people playing 20 different music. This is unacceptable! The lack of respect that they show to the Police as well, unacceptable!

So, I totally agree with my friend who is responsible for the public beaches and through the Beach Authority that there needs to be some order there. You cannot accept that. So, just like you cannot have loud music and barbecue wherever you want on a public beach, there needs to be discipline, even more so when it concerns leases that exist on *pas géométriques* and *domaine public* where there are *campement* site owners and hotel operators as well.

Let us not forget, yes, they pay us rent for it. They pay the State rent, but on that part of the land, they do not have the exclusive use and have no right to exclude Mauritians. But I call upon the citizens of this country, if I have taken it upon myself for the first time in a long time to take and underline the right legal position to ensure that no one can exclude Mauritians from that strip because I myself have been excluded from that strip. Oh yes!

I went to visit in the north of the island and a lady sitting down having a nice *bronzage*, she said to me: « *Qu'est-ce que vous faites chez moi?* » I introduced myself as the Minister of Housing and Lands. And she said: « *Je répète: qu'est-ce que vous faites chez moi?* » I was beyond the high watermark and before the building line and I said: « *Madame, s'il vous plaît, votre chien.* » She said: « *Mon chien* it is at its home, *chez lui. Vous êtes pas là, chez vous.* »

So, I said: «*Madame, je vous promets, je vais m'occuper de vous.* » I think it would be wrong for me to leave people who are unaware of the law in ignorance. *Nemo Censetur Ignorar Relegem. Nul n'est censé ignorer la loi.* But then, again, it is important, at least for me to remind them. That is my duty to all citizens of this country. But with that right comes responsibility as well. Just like it is not okay for *campement* site owners to put barrage in terms of ropes, in terms of signs, but it is not also right for Mauritians or non-Mauritians, non-citizens to go there and make a mess and create disorder. *Il faut savoir vivre ensemble.*

This is what I am asking the people to do. The great majority of Mauritians today feel liberated because of having underlined what their rights are. But I am asking them: make things easy for everyone. Do not make things difficult. Make it easy. Let us live together in one peaceful country.

Madam Speaker, I think it is very important for me to underline an issue which has been going on. Just like hon. Ameer Meea spoke about it on the issue of Waqf. Today is Friday and I have seen certain sermons that have been going on about supposedly the hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Finance is trying to interfere into the operation of Waqf.

Let me clearly say what it is: I would not stand by and allow any interfering in Waqf. Neither would any of my hon. colleagues here. None of my colleagues. Not even the hon. Prime Minister would stand for it.

The Budget of 2026-2027, through Section 75 of the Annex, does propose seven amendments to the Waqf Act. It does. The amendments establish comprehensive AML/CFT oversight framework, including beneficial ownership transparency, information sharing with the Financial Crimes Commission, mandatory record keeping and disciplinary powers over Waqf managers. The amendments do not transfer ownership of Waqf property to the State. Do not authorise expropriation. Do not dissolve Waqfs. Do not direct the religious purposes of any Waqf.

They do, however, significantly expand the State's regulatory oversight of Waqf – regulatory oversight. That is different. It is important in line with FATF recommendation number eight. We have to be in line with those international standards. Malaysia has done it and it has gone even further in terms of government oversight. Stringent oversight. Singapore has gone even further. Malaysia is an example. But here, there is a degree of flexibility, a total independence of the Waqf board, the Waqf members and the Waqf property. It is not controlling. So, therefore, I would like to reassure hon. Members on this.

Let me also finish on something else. When the former Deputy Prime Minister was here, there were certain committees that were going on with regard to the Waqf legislation. We have given the responsibility to a very well versed in this, who is hon. Uteem, who has legal expertise in the matter, which we bow to, and he is working on the possibility – he is well advanced in there – on revamping the Waqf legislation in terms of internationalisation of the Waqf laws and making it *un outil*, which would become a *pilier économique* as well in certain manner speaking.

We will be meeting together for that. But another legislation that we are also working on is the Islamic Cultural Centre, the ICC Act. Why? Because recently through the efforts of our Government, the hon. Prime Minister and our Ambassador in Saudi Arabia have ensured with our hon. Foreign Affairs Minister – well, I am very grateful to you – that we get the 6 million US dollars which had been promised.

But we made it happen. It did not stay there as an idea. We made it happen. I am very thankful to all my colleagues for it, but more specifically the hon. Prime Minister. But in order for it to come, we will need also to ensure that the law is amended in order for it to be

managed properly. So, that is why I can say that there are going to be changes with regard to that.

On a concluding note, let me say the following. Yesterday, I had a meeting – two points – yesterday with 32 operators of the Mauritius port area. I had a meeting with the 32 operators, companies, energy companies, oil companies, and I have proposed to them a regeneration of the land belonging to the Mauritius Port Authority with the consent of the Mauritius Port Authority next to *terrain Football Kaya* in Roche Bois.

I have also proposed to them next to *Gymnase 1^{er} Février*, revamping of that area. But I have knocked at their door in order to help us financially to revamp those two areas. I am happy to say that they have responded very positively. I will be knocking at the door of the hon. Prime Minister, obviously, in order to see whether we could allow them to direct their money to help that area of Roche Bois to revamp the place where they make millions and billions and at least to share it with the inhabitants of Roche Bois in terms of facilities, any fiscal alleviation and incentives in order to help them.

Lastly, let me say, I am very happy to note as well that the Kadafi Square in our constituency, the Ministry of Finance has given us the funds in order to appoint a Transaction Adviser because this will be a public private partnership project to revamp the whole market, to revamp this building, to have floors. It will be a mixed-use project with floors as well for affordable housing for citizens of this country. So, this whole area is going to be modernised. I thank the hon. Prime Minister for having made funds available to appoint this Transaction Adviser.

So, Madam Speaker, let me conclude by saying that I have listened very carefully to the former Deputy Prime Minister, just like I have listened to all others. We should not lose hope, depending of where we sit, on this side or the other. It cannot depend on that. If we believe in the difficulty that existed last year, as the Deputy Prime Minister had expatiated on in his address last year in Parliament, that is the truth. It does not change depending where you are.

Let us also say that we are making the efforts with regard to inflation and the prices of commodities. We are bringing changes. I was the first, as Leader of the Opposition, at one point to have raised the issue of parallel import. I raised it in this House as Leader of the Opposition. I am happy that not only have I raised it when we were in the Opposition, not only did we face the Opposition of the MSM who found it to be wrong.

The Minister then, I remember Dorine Chukowry did not even understand what parallel meant, let alone import. But then, again, we are bringing it. This parallel import changes in the legislation is going to touch medication, is going to touch spare parts, is going to go everywhere to ensure that there is competition. But fair competition. And in fact, what the hon. former Deputy Prime Minister said, I can reassure him that all those are taken into consideration and we will ensure that it is taken to conclusion and we will implement it. So let me finish therefore – this time really finish by saying congratulations hon. Prime Minister, it takes a lot of guts and that you have managed to keep your calm in spite of all these difficulties. I must say that even though I am in my fifth mandate, I keep learning and I keep learning a lot from you, Sir.

So, thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Hon. Members, I will ask the Deputy Speaker to take the Chair for a while. Thank you.

At this stage, the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

The Deputy Speaker: Please be seated! Hon. Deputy Prime Minister!

(4.31 p.m.)

The Deputy Prime Minister: Merci, M. le président. Je voudrais féliciter mon collègue le ministre des Terres et du Logement qui a intervenu avant moi, pour son intervention.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, at this defining moment for our Republic, when the choices we make will shape both the strength of our economy and the resilience of our society, I wish at the very outset, to express my support for the Budget Speech 2026-2027 delivered by the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, whom I sincerely congratulate. Much has already been said about this budget. Yet, amidst the debates, there have also been misunderstandings and moments of confusion. It is therefore essential to reaffirm with clarity and conviction what this budget truly represents. This budget is not a mere ledger of figures; it is a vision for renewal. It is a pledge of responsibility and solidarity, of economic rationality and social justice. Above all, it is the assurance that the Government stands ready to reconstruct, to rehabilitate and to safeguard the destiny of our Republic for generations to come.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the economy has started the year on a positive note. Real GDP grew by 3.2% in 2025. Inflation is to 3.7%, unemployment fell to 5.7% and gross official foreign reserves stand at USD 10.3 billion. With over 1.4 million tourist arrivals, generating Rs103.4 billion in receipts, these gains have strengthened our resilience. Yet, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we must be honest about our fiscal reality. The Financial Year 2025-26 deficit is estimated at 6.0% of GDP. Public sector debt is 87.8% of GDP and interest payments total Rs26.9 billion, approximately 10.7% of Government expenditure and roughly equal to what we spend on health and education. This budget therefore seeks to restore balance, targeting a 3.7% deficit in 2026-27 and reducing public debt to 85.5% by June 2027 to bring it below 80% by June 2029 while sustaining growth and ensuring social cohesion.

M. le président, dans un esprit profondément humain, nous avons entendu les commentaires des Mauriciens. Nous avons entendu l'inquiétude, l'émotion et parfois l'incompréhension. Les membres de cette Assemblée se sont exprimés. Le MMM a fait valoir son point. L'honorable Premier ministre a écouté. Il a annoncé l'abandon du *means test*. Il importe désormais que nous réfléchissions à la manière d'atténuer l'impact de cette décision. Il est clair qu'il faudra sans doute réduire les dépenses d'investissement, *capital expenditure*. Car sans cela, où trouver cet argent ? Le Premier ministre l'a dit lui-même, il est soucieux des préoccupations de la population, mais il ne fait aucun doute que cette décision aura des conséquences sur le déficit budgétaire et sur la dette du secteur public. Une réforme des pensions est depuis longtemps nécessaire et tous le savent. Les actuaires le répètent depuis des années. Des politiciens aussi l'ont dit, mais aujourd'hui, il y a comme une hypocrisie politico-électorale. Oui, une hypocrisie politico-électorale, parce que cette réforme, tout le monde l'a réclamé jusqu'au jour où il fallait la faire. Là, curieusement, les voix divergent.

M. le président, les pensions resteront pour de longues années encore une composante majeure des dépenses publiques. C'est pourquoi, il est essentiel de trouver la meilleure formule, celle qui fera le moins mal tout en tenant compte de notre réalité économique.

M. le président, ce budget place l'intelligence artificielle au cœur de notre stratégie pour bâtir une économie plus forte et plus résiliente ; investissement dans la connectivité et les infrastructures numériques, formation à grande échelle et équiper notre main d'œuvre en compétences pratiques. Autant de leviers qui créeront des emplois à haute valeur ajoutée, renforceront la productivité des entreprises et du secteur public et développeront nos exportations de services numériques. *“The AI revolution must not be something that happens*

to Mauritius. It must be something that Mauritius prepares for, participates in and benefits from”, a indiqué le Premier ministre au paragraphe 17 du Budget 2026-2027.

Dans cette direction, le gouvernement formera 25,000 Mauriciens aux compétences pratiques en intelligence artificielle au cours de la prochaine année ; enseignants, étudiants, fonctionnaires, développeurs et entrepreneurs. Combiné à des incitations ciblées, à une nouvelle zone économique spéciale pour l'investissement de haute technologie et à des mesures claires de gouvernance et de cybersécurité, ces actions généreront de l'emploi dans tous les secteurs et renforceront notre potentiel de croissance.

M. le président, l'accent mis par le Premier ministre sur l'intelligence artificielle (l'IA) et la transformation numérique est à la fois courageux et visionnaire. Il dit clairement une chose, la technologie doit servir les gens. La question de l'égalité des genres est plus simple. Qu'est-ce que cela signifie concrètement pour une femme qui ne sait pas où aller pour trouver protection, conseil juridique, soutien psychologique ou tout autre service que mon ministère offre ?

Pour une femme entrepreneure qui ignore les dispositifs qu'elle peut solliciter. Pour une jeune fille issue d'un milieu modeste à qui personne n'a jamais dit que l'économie numérique a une place pour elle. C'est à travers ce prisme que mon ministère aborde l'IA et la transformation numérique, non pas comme une mise à niveau technologique, mais comme une question d'accessibilité.

Aujourd'hui, nos *women empowerment centers*, nos *gender cells*, nos *Family Support Services*, le *National Women Council* et le *National Women Entrepreneur Council* opèrent à travers toute l'île, mais la connexion entre eux reste inégale. Les données sont fragmentées. Les actions de sensibilisation sont souvent générales là où elles devraient être ciblées. Un agent qui souhaite orienter le public n'a pas toujours le tableau complet. L'IA et les outils numériques peuvent combler ces lacunes, non pas en remplaçant l'interaction humaine qui est au cœur de notre travail, mais en la rendant mieux informée, mieux coordonnée et mieux calibrée dans le temps.

Pour les femmes entrepreneurs en particulier, l'opportunité est concrète. Un meilleur accès au numérique et des outils d'information assistés par l'IA signifient qu'une femme qui crée une entreprise, qui formalise son activité ou qui cherche à se développer, n'a plus à se perdre seule dans un labyrinthe de dispositifs et de procédures. Elle peut être guidée vers la

formation, vers le crédit, vers le programme *She-Invents*, vers l'incubateur dédié aux femmes dans le cadre du schéma PME, vers les opportunités d'innovation que ce budget a ouvertes.

L'IA peut également renforcer notre travail de prévention. Avec les garde-fous appropriés, une meilleure utilisation des données ventilées par sexe peut nous permettre de voir où se situent les lacunes avant qu'elles ne deviennent des crises. Cela permettra à mon ministère de passer de la réaction à l'anticipation, surtout dans les cas de violence basée sur le genre.

Mais je voudrais être clair sur un point, M. le président. Une femme qui cherche protection n'a pas besoin d'un algorithme. Elle a besoin d'une personne qui l'écoute. Le jugement humain, l'empathie, la confidentialité et la dignité ne sont pas des fonctionnalités que la technologie peut reproduire, et nous ne prétendons pas le contraire. La valeur de l'IA dans ce ministère est d'aider nos agents à mieux servir, à toucher plus loin et à agir plus rapidement, à soutenir le visage humain du service public, pas à le remplacer.

M. le président, les femmes de ce pays doivent sentir que le gouvernement est plus proche d'elles, plus facile d'accès, mieux informé de leurs besoins et plus capable d'accompagner leur parcours vers la sécurité, la dignité, les compétences, l'entrepreneuriat et l'indépendance. C'est ainsi que l'IA et la transformation numérique contribueront au travail de mon ministère, non pas comme une ambition technologique abstraite, mais comme un outil concret pour rendre l'égalité de genre et l'autonomisation des femmes plus réelles dans la vie quotidienne de nos citoyennes.

M. le président, je voudrais m'arrêter sur trois mesures qui me tiennent particulièrement à cœur et qui, je crois, méritent toute notre attention. La première, c'est le congé de maternité porté à un an. Permettez-moi de commencer par un fait que la science établit sans ambiguïté. Les mille premiers jours de vie d'un enfant, de la conception jusqu'à ses deux ans, sont la période la plus déterminante de son existence. Ce n'est pas une métaphore. C'est de la neurologie. Durant ces mois, le cerveau de l'enfant se construit à une vitesse qui ne se reproduira jamais. Le contact physique, la voix de la mère, sa présence constante, tout cela structure littéralement l'architecture cérébrale de cet enfant. Un enfant séparé trop tôt de sa mère n'est pas seulement privé de confort. Il est privé d'un cadre de développement que rien ensuite ne remplace entièrement.

M. le président, quand ce budget propose un congé de maternité d'un an, il ne fait pas de cadeau aux femmes. Il fait un investissement dans le capital humain de demain. Ce sont nos enfants, c'est notre avenir collectif. De nos jours, nous ne vivons plus, à Maurice, dans des familles élargies. La grand-mère dans la cour, la tante à la maison, le réseau naturel qui entourait une jeune mère et son nouveau-né, cette île-là, cette Maurice-là n'existent plus. Cette Maurice-là recule.

Aujourd'hui, des milliers de couples élèvent leurs enfants seuls, sans filet familial et quand le congé se termine trop vite, l'option qui reste, c'est la garderie. Et il m'est impossible de ne pas établir ce lien entre cette cassure émotionnelle précoce, cette séparation imposée dès les premiers mois, et certains comportements que nous observons chez nos enfants et nos adolescents aujourd'hui. Je ne dis pas que c'est la seule cause, mais je dis que ce n'est pas sans lien et que nous avons avec cette mesure l'occasion de commencer à y répondre.

Concrètement, 6 mois à plein salaire, suivis de 6 mois optionnels partiellement rémunérés. Et pour les mères dont la nature du travail le permet, je rejoins mon jeune collègue, le ministre du Travail, le travail à domicile comme option réelle durant cette période pour que la mère qui le souhaite puisse rester connectée à son employeur sans se séparer complètement de son enfant. C'est la logique du lien préservé avec l'enfant, avec le travail, avec la vie professionnelle qu'elle a construite.

M. le président, le congé de paternité porté à 6 semaines, c'est la reconnaissance d'une réalité que les jeunes pères de ce pays vivent et que la loi n'avait pas encore pleinement reconnue. Un père présent dans les premières semaines, ce n'est pas un luxe. C'est un pilier pour l'enfant, pour la mère, pour l'équilibre du foyer. Et c'est aussi un signal envoyé aux entreprises : la responsabilité parentale n'est pas une affaire de femmes, elle est partagée. Ce rééquilibrage a une valeur qui dépasse le congé lui-même. Un pas a été franchi, mais nous pourrions aller plus loin à l'avenir vers un congé de parentalité partagée.

M. le président, certains ont argué que des employeurs pourraient être tentés de voir dans ces mesures une raison de moins de recruter des femmes. Or, le *Employment Rights Act*, le *Employment Relations Act* encadrent et protègent les droits des travailleurs, y compris contre toutes formes de discrimination à l'embauche. Ce cadre légal existe, il s'applique. L'*Equal Opportunities Commission* est là. Un employeur ne peut légalement pas écarter une femme de l'embauche au motif qu'elle pourrait prendre un congé de maternité.

La Commission peut ouvrir une enquête de sa propre initiative et la charge de la preuve dans ce type de plainte incombe à l'employeur. Toute entreprise qui penserait pouvoir contourner ces protections devra y réfléchir à deux fois. Une femme qualifiée, motivée, qui revient de congé de maternité, avec son enfant stabilisé et son équilibre retrouvé, c'est un atout pour une entreprise, pas un fardeau. Les pays qui ont compris cela ont des taux de productivité et de rétention des talents féminins qui le prouvent.

M. le président, il y a le congé menstruel, un jour par mois. J'ai vu les commentaires et les sourires en coin. J'ai vu - et c'est ce qui m'a le plus frappé - des femmes se moquer d'autres femmes à ce sujet. Et je vais être directe : Mesdames, vous n'avez jamais connu ce jour-là, ce jour où la douleur est si intense qu'elle vous cloue au lit, où se lever relève de l'exploit, où aucun antalgique ne suffit ; alors vous avez de la chance. Sincèrement, réjouissez-vous-en mais ne confondez pas votre chance avec une norme et ne vous moquez pas de celles pour qui, ce jour est une réalité mensuelle, parfois invalidante, souvent vécue dans le silence et la honte, parce que précisément on leur a appris à ne pas en parler.

M. le président, il y a des femmes dans ce pays qui élèvent seules leurs enfants, qui n'ont personne pour les remplacer à la maison, qui vont au travail ce jour-là parce qu'elles n'ont pas le choix et qui souffrent en silence pendant 8 heures. Ce jour de congé, c'est la reconnaissance que cette souffrance existe, qu'elle est légitime, qu'elle n'a pas à être cachée. Les modalités seront définies, il est clair qu'un certificat médical sera nécessaire et que la discrétion des responsables des ressources humaines sera indispensable pour garantir la confidentialité. Ce n'est pas un privilège, c'est du respect. M. le président, ces trois mesures forment un tout cohérent. Elles disent aux femmes de ce pays, votre corps, votre maternité, votre rôle de mère ne sont pas des obstacles à votre vie professionnelle. Ils font partie de qui vous êtes et ce gouvernement les reconnaît pleinement.

M. le président, ce budget est construit sur quatre principes directeurs : responsabilité, solidarité, efficacité économique et justice sociale. Ce sont les mots de l'honorable Premier ministre lui-même et c'est précisément à travers ce prisme de justice sociale que mon ministère aborde la question de la protection des femmes contre la violence et l'abus domestique. Car une économie qui se reconstruit, une société qui avance, tout cela ne tient pas si derrière les portes fermées de milliers de foyers, des femmes continuent de vivre dans la peur. La croissance du PIB ne dit rien à une femme qui ne peut pas quitter sa chambre.

Les chiffres du chômage en baisse ne signifient rien pour une femme dont le conjoint empêche de travailler. La solidarité nationale que prône ce budget doit commencer là, dans l'espace le plus intime, le plus privé et pourtant le plus dangereux pour trop de nos concitoyennes. C'est pourquoi le *Domestic Abuse Bill 2026* qui a été présenté en première lecture devant cette Assemblée s'inscrit pleinement dans l'esprit de ce budget.

C'est la traduction législative de la justice sociale. Il est la réponse concrète à une réalité que les chiffres seuls ne peuvent pas saisir, mais que mon ministère connaît cas par cas, femme par femme, famille par famille. M. le président, dans un foyer où une femme est victime d'abus, un enfant grandit dans la peur. Dans une famille déstructurée par la violence, c'est l'enfant qui porte les cicatrices les plus durables.

La protection de la femme et la protection de l'enfant ne sont pas deux politiques parallèles, elles forment un seul et même engagement. La législation sur l'abus domestique qui sera introduite prochainement remplacera le *Protection from Domestic Violence Act*. J'aurai l'occasion d'en parler plus tard. M. le président, on ne peut pas bâtir un pont vers l'avenir si les enfants de ce pays ne sont pas protégés contre la violence – l'abus, la négligence et l'exploitation. La protection de l'enfant ne se limite pas à la réponse aux crises. Elle commence bien avant par la prévention, l'intervention précoce, le soutien à la famille, la sensibilisation et la participation des enfants eux-mêmes.

M. le président, l'honorable deuxième députée de Belle Rose et Quatre Bornes a parlé sur la question des *Residential Care Institutions*, les RCI et je veux lui dire ceci. Je suis d'accord avec elle. Nous ne pouvons pas accepter que des enfants placés dans les structures peinent à y trouver protection et sécurité. Oui, nous avons trop longtemps financé des structures sans toujours mesurer leur impact réel sur la vie de ces mineurs et oui, une réforme n'est plus une option. C'est un impératif moral. Mais une chose est claire, cet écosystème est d'une complexité que l'on ne peut appréhender de l'extérieur. Nos structures ne sont pas toujours adaptées. Certains *carers* n'ont pas dans tous les cas les compétences spécialisées qu'il faudrait et ces enfants, certains d'entre eux, ont été traités pendant des années avec mépris, avec indifférence, parfois pire, et nous portons cet héritage. Nous ne l'avons pas créé, mais c'est nous qui devons le corriger.

Depuis notre arrivée au gouvernement, nous faisons tout pour redresser la barre. Mais je ne vais pas prétendre que c'est simple, parce que ce n'est pas simple et ceux qui disent le contraire n'ont jamais mis les pieds dans ces réalités. Il n'existe pas à ce jour des structures

appropriées pour accueillir des enfants présentant ce que nous appelons des *serious behavioral concern*.

Ces enfants-là, et je veux dire que cette Assemblée-là comprenne ce que cela signifie vraiment. Ce sont parfois des adolescents qui mènent la vie dure à leurs propres parents. Des parents eux-mêmes dépassés, épuisés, qui ne savent plus quoi faire et au moment où ces parents à bout les mettent à la porte, parfois pour protéger le reste de la famille, cet enfant devient immédiatement un enfant abandonné, un enfant qui a besoin de protection et qui arrive dans un *shelter* du ministère, au côté d'enfants victimes de sévices, de violence et d'abus sexuels. Ce mélange, M. le président, est une réalité que nous n'avons pas créée, mais que nous devons résoudre. Ce n'est pas une question de volonté politique, c'est une question de structure qui n'existe tout simplement pas encore.

M. le président, l'honorable Attorney General a compris la complexité de la chose, l'ancien *Deputy Prime Minister* également. Mes officiers et moi, nous avons déjà exposé ce problème et il s'est rendu compte de la difficulté réelle de ce dossier. La deuxième députée de Belle Rose et Quatre Bornes qui a assisté aux réunions du comité que je coprésidais, connaît aussi cette réalité de l'intérieur. En effet, sur la question de la gouvernance indépendante de ces structures, l'honorable membre à raison. Il faut éviter tout conflit d'intérêt institutionnel. Je partage cette conviction mais la question n'est pas de savoir s'il faut une agence indépendante. La question est – laquelle, sous quelle autorité, avec quel mandat précis. C'est une réflexion que nous avons engagé depuis un moment sérieusement avec toutes les parties concernées. Sur la question de la fusion des entités, je veux rappeler qu'avec le *Family Support Services*, c'est précisément cette fusion que nous avons déjà réalisée. Sous un seul toit, les dossiers des enfants, des femmes, des familles sont traités par les officiers du ministère. C'est une consolidation concrète, opérationnelle qui produit des résultats sur le terrain.

Quant à la NCC, le *National Children's Council*, c'est un corps paraétatique doté d'un conseil d'administration et d'un mandat plus précis et puis, M. le président, il y a cette vérité du dossier que j'ai déjà dit publiquement. Nous, nous heurtons à des obstacles qui ne viennent pas toujours de là où on les attend. Il y a des *care givers* eux-mêmes qui résistent. Il y a des gens qui préfèrent voir le *shelter* Cap l'Espoir fermé plutôt que d'être réformé.

Il y a des intérêts – je choisis bien mes mots avec soin – des intérêts qui n'ont rien à voir avec le bien-être des enfants et qui compliquent chaque tentative d'amélioration des

conditions, des infrastructures, du fonctionnement quotidien. Les dysfonctionnements évoqués, nous les avons hérités. Ce n'est pas une excuse. C'est un contexte et la différence entre les hériter et les corriger, c'est ce que notre action depuis novembre 2024.

M. le président, on peut croire parfois que rien n'est fait. Je comprends cette impression, mais celles qui travaillent avec moi sur ce dossier, mes officiers, et les partenaires engagés, ceux qui sont autour de la table sans chercher à en tirer un avantage personnel, savent que ce n'est pas vrai. Nous avançons, pas assez vite peut-être, mais nous avançons et nous ne nous arrêterons pas.

M. le président, ce budget annonce un nouveau *Child Adoption Bill*. C'est une réforme majeure attendue depuis longtemps par les gouvernements successifs et par les associations de défense de l'enfance. La nouvelle loi établira un cadre légal moderne pour l'adoption nationale et internationale. Elle va créer une *Adoption Authority* dédiée et mettra fin aux délais procéduraux et à la fragmentation administrative qui a trop longtemps laissé des enfants dans des situations de placement temporaire prolongé. L'intérêt supérieur de l'enfant sera, comme il doit toujours être, la considération première.

Ce budget prévoit également le renforcement de la *Foster Care Division*. Les règlements sur le placement en famille d'accueil seront révisés pour simplifier l'évaluation des familles candidates et construire un réseau plus solide de familles d'accueil qualifiées à travers l'île. Les chiffres montrent la direction à prendre –

- en 2022, 12 enfants ont été placés en famille d'accueil ;
- en 2023, 14 ;
- en 2024, 20 ;
- en mai 2026, 122 mineurs sont placés dans 92 familles d'accueil.

C'est un progrès, mais c'est encore insuffisant face à l'ampleur du besoin. Depuis ma prise en fonction, j'ai constamment insisté sur l'importance d'un environnement familial qui nourrit le développement, la stabilité et le bien-être émotionnel de l'enfant. À ce jour, 372 enfants se trouvent dans des structures institutionnelles (*shelters*), ces chiffres nous rappellent que la capacité résidentielle doit être maintenue et renforcée. Je salue donc la provision de R 10 millions prévue pour de nouveaux abris.

M. le président, les officiers qui travaillent avec ces enfants portent une responsabilité immense. Ils doivent être formés, équipés, soutenus. La formation standardisée permet aux travailleurs sociaux de naviguer dans des traumatismes complexes, d'éviter la re-

traumatisation et de construire des plans de réinsertion adaptés aux besoins individuels de chaque enfant.

M. le président, le budget annonce une mesure que j'accueille avec une satisfaction particulière. *We will also legislate for a minimum of 25% female representation on boards of parastatal bodies.* 25%, c'est un plancher, pas un plafond et c'est un signal fort envoyé à toutes les institutions publiques de ce pays. Ce signal, M. le président, avait été donné par nul autre que le Premier ministre en nommant une femme Première ministre adjoint cette année. On ne le dira jamais assez, c'est une première dans les annales politiques de notre République. L'histoire retiendra et les femmes de ce pays retiendront que le Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Premier ministre de ce pays, a eu l'audace et le courage de briser ce plafond de verre alors que d'autres en doutaient. D'autres soi-disant féministes, conseillaient à travers la presse interposée : *'pa zoue ar dife'*. Des propos blessants qui nous rappellent la campagne contre l'accession de Maurice à l'indépendance et qui disait ceci : *'lindepandans ? Koumadir pe met razwar dan lame zako'*. Traduction : les Mauriciens seront incapables de gérer l'indépendance.

C'est pour vous dire, M. le président, que certaines mentalités ont la peau dure. Je suis fier d'informer que sur les cinq corps paraétatiques tombant sous mon ministère, trois sont dirigés par des femmes. Trois sur cinq. Ce n'est pas un accident. C'est le résultat d'une conviction, celle que la compétence n'a pas de genre et que la représentation des femmes au plus haut niveau de décision n'est pas une faveur qu'on leur accorde. C'est une nécessité pour toute institution qui veut fonctionner avec toute l'intelligence dont elle dispose. Cette mesure législative viendra désormais ancrer la réalité dans le droit et je m'en réjouis.

M. le président, à ce jour, 55 *gender cells* ont été établies à travers les institutions publiques de ce pays. 55 cellules qui travaillent au quotidien à intégrer la perspective de genre dans les politiques, les programmes et les pratiques de leurs institutions respectives. Ce n'est pas un chiffre symbolique. C'est une infrastructure humaine, institutionnelle que nous avons construite et que nous continuerons de construire.

M. le président, il y a une autre avancée annoncée dans ce budget qui me touche tout autant. *Women applying for loans will no longer need spousal consent. The appropriate law will be amended.* La femme indépendante, la femme debout, la femme dynamique que ce budget veut autonomiser et élever, cette femme-là ne peut pas accepter d'avoir besoin de la signature de son mari pour emprunter de l'argent. Ce n'est pas de l'autonomie. C'est de la

tutelle. Nous avons reçu des représentations de nombreuses femmes entrepreneures qui nous ont signalé cet obstacle comme l'un des plus humiliants et des plus paralysants qu'elles rencontrent.

Parmi elles, il y a une situation particulièrement injuste que je veux nommer ici. Des femmes séparées, pas encore divorcées parce que les procédures sont longues, parce que la vie est complexe, qui veulent créer leur propre entreprise, démarrer quelque chose, se reconstruire économiquement et qui se heurtent à un conjoint qui, par pure malveillance, refuse de signer, non pas parce qu'il a un intérêt légitime dans l'affaire, mais pour les priver de moyens, pour les maintenir dans la dépendance, pour continuer par un autre biais à exercer un contrôle.

M. le président, je voudrais maintenant aborder la question de la lutte contre la drogue. Ce budget a raison de poser le problème de la prolifération de la drogue comme une question qui touche les familles. La drogue n'est pas seulement une affaire de sécurité publique. C'est une affaire de bien-être familial. C'est une affaire de protection de l'enfant. C'est une affaire de développement communautaire et de cohésion sociale.

La drogue déstabilise les foyers. Elle expose les enfants à la négligence, à la violence, à l'insécurité. Elle épuise les parents. Elle aggrave les risques de violence basée sur le genre. Elle ronge la vie communautaire et contribue à une détresse sociale que nous voyons tous les jours dans le travail de terrain de mon ministère. Le gouvernement a annoncé une approche en trois volets : prévention, démantèlement des réseaux installés par les barons de la drogue et guérison, et c'est la bonne approche.

R 80 millions sont alloués à la NADC. La mesure qui me parle le plus, M. le président, c'est R 50 millions mis à la disposition de l'ensemble des ministères pour intégrer la lutte contre le trafic de drogue et l'abus de substance dans leurs politiques et leurs opérations. Pour mon ministère, cette mesure est directement pertinente. Nous recevons dans nos *family support services* des parents déboussolés par leurs enfants, des mineurs pris dans cet engrenage mortel.

À part les interner pour quelques jours au *BSH* ou au traitement au centre Nénuphar de l'hôpital de Montagne Longue, qui dispose d'une capacité d'accueil résidentielle restreinte, conçue pour moins de 10 adolescents simultanément, que faire de ces adolescents ? Comment les aider ?

Cette première dotation budgétaire ouvre une piste sérieuse. Nous alignerons le travail de sensibilisation, de prévention, d'identification précoce et d'orientation sur l'approche nationale antidrogue. Je salue également le renforcement du *community policing* avec des *neighbourhood officers*.

M. le président, je ne peux pas conclure mon intervention sans évoquer la situation dans ma circonscription, la Circonscription No. 1, Grande Rivière Nord-Ouest, Port-Louis Ouest, qui a été, pendant ces 10 dernières années, l'oublié du développement. Il n'est un secret pour personne que les différents PPS et ministres dans le passé se sont limités à *des site visits* tandis que des projets urgents ont été renvoyés au calendrier grec. Je ne parle même pas du Conseil municipal de l'époque. Ces conseillers se contentaient du rôle de figurant et étaient quasiment absents du terrain.

Toutefois, depuis un peu plus d'un an, les habitants constatent un regain d'activités sportives, culturelles et familiales dans toutes les régions, notamment au niveau des cinq centres communautaires et des salles municipales de la circonscription. La reprise de ces activités est déterminante face au fléau qui ronge notre société, auquel ma circonscription n'échappe pas. Outre la reprise des activités et la remise en état de certaines infrastructures sportives à Résidence Mauvilac, Richelieu, Grande Rivière Nord-Ouest, Pointe aux Sables et Camp Chapelon, pour le plus grand bonheur des jeunes, nous avons, avec mes deux colistiers, relancé des chantiers qui étaient laissés à l'abandon.

À ce titre, M. le président, je tiens à remercier le ministre des Infrastructures publiques pour avoir été à l'écoute de nos besoins. Des routes dans un état déplorable depuis des années et causant d'importants désagréments aux habitants ont été réhabilitées. Je pense notamment à Montebello, Verger Mangue et à Polinaire, à Pointe aux Sables, ainsi qu'à Résidence Mauvilac et Borstal à Grande Rivière. Je remercie également la RDA pour avoir réasphalté la route côtière de Bain des Dames et la route Ménagerie à Cassis. Lentement, mais sûrement, nous avançons dans la bonne direction. D'autres projets ambitieux figurent sur la liste pour le présent exercice financier pour la Circonscription No. 1. Nous viendrons, bien évidemment, avec plus de détails une fois ces différents projets lancés. Tous ces projets toucheront chaque région de la circonscription pour le bien-être de ces habitants.

M. le président, ce Budget pour mon ministère, c'est une direction donnée –

- La direction d'un pays qui décide que l'égalité des genres n'est plus un idéal à poursuivre, mais une politique à mettre en œuvre concrètement avec des ressources, des structures et une volonté politique assumée.
- La direction d'un pays qui reconnaît que l'autonomie économique des femmes, l'accès au crédit, à l'entrepreneuriat, à l'innovation, au leadership n'est pas un privilège accordé, mais un droit à garantir.
- La direction d'un pays qui dit aux victimes de violence domestique, la loi est de votre côté et qui le prouve avec un cadre législatif renforcé, des mécanismes de coordination, des ordonnances de protection plus accessible et plus rapide.
- La direction d'un pays qui place l'enfant, chaque enfant, qu'il soit dans une famille d'accueil, dans un *shelter* ou dans un foyer fragilisé par la drogue ou la précarité au centre de ses priorités.

Ce Budget reconnaît aussi ce que l'on nomme rarement, ici, que la vie de famille a une valeur, que la maternité mérite du temps, la paternité aussi, que la douleur d'une femme un jour par mois est réelle et légitime, que ces reconnaissances ne sont pas des cadeaux. Elles sont des rattrapages. L'IA et la transformation numérique viendront appuyer tout cela, non pas pour remplacer l'humain, mais pour que mes officiers soient mieux équipés, mieux informés, plus proches des femmes, des enfants et des familles qui ont besoin d'eux.

M. le président, ce Budget protège. Il autonomise. Il reconnaît. Il investit dans les personnes que trop de budgets ont longtemps considéré comme des bénéficiaires passives et qui sont en réalité les architectes silencieuses de la cohésion de cette nation. C'est dans cet esprit que je soutiens le Budget 2026-2027.

Je vous remercie.

The Deputy Speaker: I suspend the Sitting for 45 minutes.

At 5.15 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 6.04 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.

Madam Speaker: Please be seated, Members!

ANNOUNCEMENT**RULING – POINT OF ORDER – BUDGET DEBATES ADJOURNMENT**

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Members, I will now give my ruling.

Hon. Members, I have considered the point of order raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition this morning, who submits that following the Government's announcement that the pension reform measure, contained in the Budget, has been suspended or frozen, further debate on the Appropriation Bill should be adjourned until such time as revised Estimates are tabled before the House.

The point of order is founded, principally, on Standing Order 73(2), which provides that the debate on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill shall be confined to the general principles of Government policy and administration as indicated by the Bill and the Estimates.

The question before the Chair, however, is not whether the Government has altered one of its announced policies, but whether such alteration empowers the Speaker to suspend or defer the legislative proceedings on the Appropriation Bill.

Standing order 73(2) regulates the scope of the debate. It does not confer upon the Speaker a discretion to adjourn or defer consideration of the Appropriation Bill because of a subsequent change in Government policy, nor does it require that every policy announced in the Budget Speech remain unchanged throughout the legislative process.

Whether Government should amend its proposals, revise the Estimates, introduce supplementary measures, or explain its change of policy is a matter for the Executive, subject to the scrutiny and control of this House through the parliamentary procedures available to Members.

The Chair cannot compel the Government to amend its budget proposals unless the Standing Orders or another law expressly so provides, which is not the case. If the suspension of the pension policy has legal or financial consequences affecting the Appropriation Bill or the Estimates, it is open to the Government, if it deems necessary, to introduce the appropriate amendments.

In that regard, I thank the hon. Attorney General because his interpretation of the relevant provisions of the Standing Orders and the Constitution is quite correct.

Accordingly, the Chair finds no procedural basis under Standing Order 73(2) or any other Standing Order for directing that the debate on the Appropriation Bill be deferred.

I thank you.

Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

(6.08 p.m.)

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, as we conclude this debate, let me, first of all, thank all the hon. Members who have contributed to this important national exercise. I have listened to what they said, and I will try to respond to some of the main points raised.

This budget was never intended to be an exercise in political convenience. It was designed as an exercise of national responsibility, Madam Speaker.

Ce budget repose sur une conviction simple : un gouvernement responsable ne peut pas bâtir l'avenir sur du sable mouvant et des illusions. Il doit d'abord regarder la réalité en face.

Madam Speaker, when this Government assumed office, we were confronted with an economy, I could say, in intensive care. As hon. Minister Shakeel Mohamed said at the very beginning of his speech, very often, people do not do that. You must always look at things in its context, even historical things. It is in the context of the time that you must look at it. As I said, we were in a terrible mess –

- growing fiscal pressures;
- rising debt obligations;
- broken down engines of growth, and
- galloping inflation.

Inflation reached even 11.37% when they were in office.

When we talk about debt, as you said, in the context, who remembers what are the interests we are paying on debt 2025-2026? What was the interest? Do you know how much it was? Rs26.9 billion, just on interest! Nearly Rs27 billion just on interest, because of the

mess they did. We have to pay the interest on that debt, which we are trying to correct gradually.

Faced with these challenges, we had no choice.

We could also continue to postpone difficult decisions, risk a downgrade and leave the burden to the future generations, or we could, as we did, act with courage and honesty. And this is what we did!

Malheureusement, Madame la présidente, nous avons subi les affres d'une stratégie de déni chez certains qui ne veulent pas voir la vérité en face et de démagogies chez d'autres. Ils ne veulent pas voir les données objectives, les finances, la situation du fonds de pension et le risque de faillite à court, moyen et long terme.

C'est pourquoi nous avons placé ce budget sous le signe du devoir de la vérité. Le devoir de vérité sur –

- l'état de nos finances publiques ;
- sur les défis auxquels notre économie est confrontée, et
- sur les décisions qu'il nous appartient de prendre aujourd'hui pour protéger les générations de demain.

Car gouverner, c'est avant tout avoir le courage de dire ce qui est avant de promettre ce qui sera.

Gouverner, Madame la présidente, c'est renforcer les institutions ; c'est promouvoir la confiance et la transparence, assurer la crédibilité du pays, et créer les conditions pour plus d'investissement et de développement économique.

La vérité aujourd'hui est le prix de la prospérité de demain.

We refuse to mortgage the future of our children and grandchildren.

Nous aurions pu, Madame la présidente, choisir la facilité. Très facile ! J'aurais pu aussi imprimer des billets par milliards. Mais ce n'est pas notre conception de la responsabilité publique ni même de la responsabilité tout court.

Madam Speaker, last year's budget marked the beginning of a necessary reconstructive drive – a first step to stabilise the economy, strengthen the social fabric and rebuild our public finances. Budget 2026-2027 sets out the next chapter. A chapter defined by reconstruction, by reform and social justice.

But let me be candid about the inheritance we faced. When this Government assumed office, as the House is aware, the Ministry of Finance, under the leadership of the then Acting Finance Secretary – now he is the Financial Secretary – undertook a comprehensive assessment of the economic and fiscal situation, the findings of which were published in the State of the Economy Report.

With regard to the state of the economy in November 2024, I need to remind the House that no one described the unprecedented state of precariousness left by the previous Government better than the former Deputy Prime Minister.

And I quote –

« Il y a un désordre budgétaire total ! En vérité, il n'y a plus de budget. Il y a des fonds spéciaux partout, une banque centrale qui n'était plus une banque centrale, mais une planche à billets (...) »

Crimes commis par Pravind Jugnauth et son complice Padayachy (...)

Le ‘mess’ qu'ils ont laissé ne va pas prendre un mois pour redresser. Cela demande un an, deux ans, trois ans, quatre ans, cinq ans ! *It is going to be difficult.* »

And he was right. Totally right! That is why I said once that it will take more than a mandate to bring this country back. This is what I said.

The official report was clear: fiscal space was severely constrained. The budget deficit was higher than published and it was rising, jeopardising the long-term sustainability of our economy. And public debt was even much higher.

The public investment pipeline had become fragmented and inefficient. There were gaps in social protection that left some of our citizens exposed, precisely at the moment when they most needed support.

That diagnosis is not partisan politics. These are hard economic facts.

In the face of these multiple challenges, last year's Budget set the direction –

- (1) Keep the economy and businesses afloat;
- (2) Protect the most vulnerable, and
- (3) Stabilise public finances and macroeconomic economic fundamentals.

I heard, earlier, the former Deputy Prime Minister say: « *La marge de manœuvre du gouvernement est plus grande.* » *Oui, c'était vrai. C'est parce que nous avons pris les*

mesures qu'il fallait dans le premier budget. We have improved the situation. *Mais* the trend, the trajectory of the debt, the public deficit was going down. They were on a downward trend.

However, two factors came into play afterwards. The Chagos deal – we did not get; we have not got it yet – the Rs10 billion that we were expecting and that we budgeted for. That is a gap of Rs10 billion. Plus, the war in the Middle East. When the former Deputy Prime Minister said about the fuel, that we could have brought down; we did bring down the fuel at the beginning. Not by as much as we said, but we did, as much as we could. Because nobody knew exactly what was the position.

Madam Speaker, the debt for the STC, when we came in November 2024, was Rs3.4 billion. We tried to bring it down. Even though we brought the price of fuel down, the debt came down to Rs2.4 billion – from 3.4 to 2.4! In February 2026, Madam Speaker, we brought that deficit to Rs1.5 billion. However, with the war in the Middle East, prices went up again. And again, the debt increased here because we had already brought the fuel down a little bit. The debt now is Rs3.32 billion.

So, how can we responsibly say we will bring down the cost of fuel and Mogas and Gas Oil and all that? Even for gas, there is a disruption in the market. When they bombed Qatar, they bombed actually the factory that was producing gas. There is a lack of supply for gas. So, inevitably, Madam Speaker...

And I must say – perhaps many people do not realise – even though I am saying all this, the price of Mogas and Gas Oil in Mauritius is lower, comparing in terms of rupees, than the UK, France, Comoros, South Africa, Seychelles, and La Réunion. It is not comparable. In spite of the difficulties, we have been able to do that.

In spite of the geopolitical headwind, the economic indicators are moving, are still moving in the right direction. Employment has begun to recover in critical sectors. Inflationary pressures have been brought down and are under better control. But as the former Deputy Prime Minister indicated, it is bound to go up again because we import everything in dollars – not everything, but nearly everything.

Economic diplomacy is now an important component of our development strategy. As I said last Friday, Madam Speaker, we have returned our country to its rightful place on the international arena. From New Delhi to Paris, from Tokyo to Addis, from Nairobi to Mahé.

And I heard the Opposition Whip say that we could have done otherwise. He said you do not need to travel; you can do it by e-mails and video conferences. You missed the point completely. If people like you are at the helm of this country, we will go down again in economic diplomacy. Mauritius is backed with meaningful relationships and economic benefits for the nation. For economic diplomacy, it is the personal contact that is important. You meet these leaders, you talk to them, you see what can be done between us. That is what is important; that is what makes us punch above our weight, Madam Speaker, and not by e-mail or by video conferences. This will never work, never.

And let me tell the Opposition Whip, we are a small country. Compared to other countries, we are small. International volatility persists, daunting challenges remain, and this is what we are trying to respond to, Madam Speaker.

The 2026-2027 Budget is not a break from the strategy that was established last year, but we have to take corrective measures automatically because of the two reasons I have just given you. It is, in fact, a logical continuation and an unflinching commitment to further progress. At the heart of this, lies three interrelated priorities –

- (1) diversify and shape a future ready economy;
- (2) a strengthened commitment to social justice, and
- (3) fiscal consolidation to create space for priority investment.

And let me speak – I want to tackle this problem as well and to come to that – directly to our elderly citizens.

I know that the pension is not just a line in the Budget. We all know. It is not just a monthly payment. It is security. It is dignity. It is recognition. It is the result of a lifetime of work, sacrifice and contribution to our country.

I understand the anxiety that was expressed, that many elderly citizens were worried. There were a lot of misinformation as well – lots of misinformation. Families were asking questions. People wanted clarity, fairness and reassurance.

And in a democracy, Madam Speaker, when people speak, they are worried, they want clarifications; a responsible Government must listen. Again, as hon. Shakeel Mohamed said, the previous Government, the MSM, never responded. They could not care; they could not give a damn – could I say that word? I do not know. They did not respond to public outcry. But we listened, we heard the concerns. We took the concerns seriously and we decided to discard the means test because of that.

But listening does not mean abandoning the truth. Listening does not mean pretending that the problem has actually disappeared. It has not; the problem remains. The demographic pressure remains. The fiscal pressure remains. The need for reform remains. What has to change is the method. This is our responsibility.

The real choice before the country is not between reform and comfort. That choice does not exist. The real choice is between a controlled reform today or a brutal crisis tomorrow. The choice is between reform today or a collapse tomorrow.

Ce qui m'amène à aborder, Madame la présidente, cette mesure qui a suscité plus de débats depuis vendredi c'est à dire la réforme de la pension dont je parle.

Let me remind the House that in its bid to win the 2019 General Elections, the former Government announced on 01 October – look at the dates, just prior to the elections, October 2019 – that they would increase the monthly Basic Retirement Pension from Rs9,000 to Rs13,500 without any consideration whatsoever on the sustainability of such a decision. They knew, they had reports upon reports. I will quote Pravind Jugnauth in a minute. They knew that the pension system was already unsustainable. 'Unsustainable' for many people who do not understand English, means '*insoutenable*' because some people do not understand what 'unsustainable' means. They knew this but to win the elections, they put the country at risk, they put the elderly at risk, they could not give a damn, they needed to win the elections. As hon. Bhagwan said, they were desperate to keep on to stay in power, so that they can continue with their state capture as they did before all the time.

And in its 2020 Budget, they discontinued the contributory pension under the National Pension Fund and introduced the CSG, which is a tax, hon. Dr. Boolell has said that many times. It is a tax just to finance their electoral promise. This is how they fooled the people. Sometimes people do not realise, they get money, they think that is it, whether the money is devalued, as long as they got the money.

In so doing, the MSM-led Government simply destroyed the pension system by abolishing contributions to the National Pension Fund, established, I remind the House, since 1976 by the Father of the Nation, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam. They destroyed it because this was the cornerstone for our retirement system at the time.

And worst, Madam Speaker, most of the funds raised under the CSG have, in fact, been syphoned off and diverted to finance expenditure but not pensions. This is what they did with

the money; the money of workers, of people who have worked all their lives. These people are giving us lessons now. They destroyed the system.

In a Parliamentary Question on 24 October 2023, look at what the then Minister of Finance, Dr. Padayachy conceded. I quote –

“Il ne reste donc rien par rapport aux contributions de la CSG.”

I think hon. Aadil Ameer Meea also mentioned it. Finished! All the money is gone. Whose money, is it? Pensions for the elderly, pensions for the workers – gone overnight.

Je comprends donc, Madame la présidente, les préoccupations exprimées par nos concitoyens. La pension de vieillesse n'est pas un simple transfert financier. Elle représente un contrat social et c'est précisément parce que nous souhaitons préserver ce contrat social que nous avons été contraints d'agir.

Les projections démographiques sont sans équivoque. Notre population vieillit rapidement, *it is a fact*. Le nombre de bénéficiaires de la pension augmente chaque année alors que la population active, qui finance ce système – *it is the taxpayer who is financing the system, that means everybody* – mais, les actifs progressent beaucoup plus lentement.

Maintenir indéfiniment le modèle actuel nous aurait conduit, à terme, à une situation où l'État ne serait plus en mesure d'assumer durablement ses engagements sans compromettre le financement de la santé, de l'éducation, des infrastructures, *housing projects*.

We said the other day, I said it, the cost for the pension system as it is, because of their irresponsibility, is costing more than the budget for health, the budget for education and the budget for social housing. More! Can you imagine what that means? For health itself, it is nearly Rs18 billion and it is costing more, this pension.

Let me remind the House that the concern about the sustainability of the Old Age Pension is not something new. This has been talked on for decades. More than two decades! But no one had the courage to bell the cat. No one! As far back as in the Budget Speech, presented in 2003, by our friend, hon. Paul Bérenger, this is what he stated – and he is right. That is why I am quoting –

“The BRP in its present form exerts severe pressure on the budget.

The fast ageing of the population will render the BRP unsustainable in the longer term.

According to projections, the proportion of those over 60 will double in 20 years' time and triple in the next 50 years.

Reform of the BRP has thus become urgent.”

And he goes on to say –

“Equally urgent...”

Because sometimes people do not look at this –

“Equally urgent is the need to reform the other pillars of the Mauritian pension system, namely the national pension scheme, civil service pensions and private pensions.”

Permettez-moi, Madame la présidente, aussi de citer ce qu'a dit l'ancien Premier ministre, Pravind Jugnauth, lors d'une cérémonie manquant les 40 ans de la *Old Age Pensioners Association*, en juin 2016. C'est en créole, mais je pense que je peux citer. Je cite

–

« Par rapport ek Basic Retirement Pension, ena ti pe gagne Rs 100,000, Rs 200,000 par mois, zot aussi pe touche sa Rs 5,000 pension vieillesse la. »

Including his dad !

« Est-ce qui li ene système bon, est-ce qui li ene système juste ? »

He is asking the question so, he knows. This is what they did. Totally irresponsible what they did! And we are paying the price today!

Notre responsabilité n'est pas seulement envers les retraités d'aujourd'hui. Elle l'est également envers les retraités de demain et envers les générations qui auront à financer ce système.

Gouverner, Madame la présidente, c'est avoir le courage de prendre des décisions difficiles afin d'éviter des conséquences encore plus douloureuses dans l'avenir.

Gouverner, c'est aussi savoir entendre et comprendre les préoccupations de nos concitoyens. *Not everybody is an economist. Even economists do not understand!*

Comme l'a si bien dit un éditorialiste –

« Dans une démocratie, il est sain qu'un exécutif entende les inquiétudes de ceux qu'il gouverne ».

Depuis la semaine dernière, de nombreuses voix se sont exprimées sur la question de la pension. Nous avons pris pleinement en considération les attentes et les inquiétudes de la population. C'est dans cet esprit d'écoute que le gouvernement a décidé d'abandonner la mise en œuvre du *Means Testing*.

Comme je l'ai dit dans ma réponse au *Private Notice Question* du leader de l'opposition, *the Means Testing is out*. Il n'y aura pas de *Means Testing* ! Pourquoi ? Des gens nous ont dit – 'Changez la somme, mettez à R 500 000 ou R 200 000.' Bonne suggestion, mais impraticable ! Parce que qu'est-ce qui se passe ?

If we do this, it touches a very small percentage of people. The difference is zero. That is why the IMF, the World Bank and all these people are saying our pension system is unsustainable. It would have been better if we could have done this, but with what results? It means, in fact, that you do not reform. It is touching very few people.

And you know, Madam Speaker, without disparaging to others, people who have a lot of money, they know how to duck the system. They have ways and means. Look at what our friend Kugan said, the other day, about dividends. I am the one who introduced dividends against advice. Everybody was against, but I said we will have to tax dividends. The argument was: 'Dividends are already taxed. So, why are you taxing again?' But I said no, they can afford less tax. I must tell you, I am practical. You have to be pragmatic. When we look at the results, they found ways and means of evading the system. We got very little. So, the offshore is complaining, and we are getting very little. That is why we removed it, not because we are not socialists, but because we saw that we are annoying a lot of people with little result.

Madam Speaker, following the elimination of the means testing for the State Age Pension, Government has immediately, since day one, initiated a number of measures to cover for the now higher expected expenditure so that we can bring down the budget deficit and public sector debt. These include –

- (i) A Committee has already been established, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary to Cabinet. We must reprioritise the implementation of the capital projects. We must find the money one way or the other, while also ensuring that economic growth is not adversely affected.
- (ii) A Committee at the level of the Ministry of Finance will examine the expenditure of each Ministry. Every year, we see the Director of Audit saying the same things: overspending there, wastage there, etc. Then, the year after, we hear the same thing. Now, we have put a Deputy Financial Secretary to chair that Committee. He will look at every detail of spending and ask questions before it comes to the end when the Director of Audit will make his report.
- (iii) Madam Speaker, as already mentioned, a High-Level Committee has been set up for a fundamental review of our tax system because we want to enhance its fairness, its efficiency and also, international competitiveness. Today, people move money out. You press a button on the internet, and you move money out. This Committee, including tax experts, will be supported by the IMF and other international experts. I believe, they will start work in the coming days.
- (iv) The Ministry of Finance is exploring the disposal of selected non-strategic assets as well as the potential listing of certain State-owned enterprises on the stock exchange, again, with a view to unlocking value and monetising its shareholdings.
- (v) With regard to CSG contributions, I must say, Madam Speaker – we have to be absolutely candid – it was envisaged, in this Budget, that, as from 01 July 2027, these contributions would be transferred to individual accounts of all workers in the new National Pensions and Provident Fund (NPPF) that we are proposing. Now, with what we have done, we will have to reconsider, and it will have to be done in a phased way, not directly on 01 July. It will have to be phased out.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, I will myself chair a Steering Committee on Public Sector Efficiency to identify areas of duplication, inefficiency and wastage. Every Ministry and Department will now have to submit to that Committee a concrete plan on how they intend to improve efficiency without, naturally, compromising service delivery. That will also include all parastatal bodies under the aegis of different Ministries.

Madam Speaker, this budget is not only about balancing accounts. It is about balancing responsibility with ambition – prudence with opportunity – reform with compassion.

It is a budget that asks us to look beyond immediate political considerations and to focus, instead, on the long-term interests of our nation.

Despite the headwinds, Madam Speaker, we have put our economy firmly on the path of recovery. We have embarked on a journey of growth anchored on the six pillars that I mentioned in my speech last week. I do not want to repeat them.

One Member of the Opposition has claimed – I think it was, again, the Opposition Whip – that AI is just a tool. I think the former DPM also mentioned it.

(Interruptions)

Oh, it was Leader of the Opposition. I am sorry. I am sorry. The Leader of the Opposition! There are so many Leaders of the Opposition now! Everybody! Even my friend Baboolall wants to become Leader of the Opposition.

He claimed that AI is just a tool and he does not understand why we have put so much emphasis on it in this Budget.

Laissez-moi, Madame la présidente, citer l'ancien Premier ministre français, Gabriel Attal. Récemment, sur sa page internet, il a écrit, je cite –

« Si on rate la révolution de l'IA, nos enfants auront le choix entre servir du café aux Américains ou du thé aux Chinois. »

This is what they will have to do because there will be nothing else.

Madam Speaker: Il est candidat aux élections.

The Prime Minister: Il est candidat aussi.

Madam Speaker: Présidentielle.

The Prime Minister: Je ne sais pas si ça va l'aider ou non. Je ne sais pas.

For Mauritius integrating AI, there is legitimacy in people asking questions. Very legitimate because there are dangers with AI. That is why we put the safeguards and we are learning from other countries as well, I must say. But integrating AI decisively into our reconstruction agenda is not optional for us, it is strategic.

Our purpose is to use AI to amplify on our human capital, accelerate productivity and it will accelerate productivity and attract quality investment. And at the same time to make our governance and social provisions smarter, more efficient and more inclusive. By next year, Madam Speaker, I mentioned it in my speech, we will have enabled 50,000 Mauritians in practical AI use.

This budget, Madam Speaker, unleashes the potential of the blue economy through ocean research, fisheries, aquaculture and seaweed farming. Oceanic research is a growing sector in its own right and will drive marine innovation and jobs. Local fish production should increase. We are expecting it from 5,000 tons to 15,000 tons over the next three years.

Madam Speaker, we firmly believe that the SMEs are the backbone of our economy; it is the backbone of all economies in fact. That is why we have provided direct specific support to strengthen their capacity through new legislation schemes and a more conducive environment for all businesses by addressing investment constraints, streamlining licensing, and permits delivery. We have put this silent agreement back. It was there when we were in Government. These people from the MSM, I do not know why, I cannot tell you why they have removed it. We have put it back. There are too many people who complain that they have to queue here, to queue there, to get one permit. Even the artists have been saying this to me. It should be a one-stop shop and it should be clear. Now we are putting this silent agreement. If you do not get it in time, assume you have got it. That is what we are doing.

At the same time, we have created the conditions to attract foreign talents, skills and capital. This includes a start-up revolution, supported by access to affordable finance, digital tools and targeted schemes which will give a boost to that sector.

We have already started work at the Special Economic Zone at Cote d'Or. It will be a major game changer in our economic architecture. This will open vast opportunities for our entrepreneurs and other businesses to embrace technology. At the same time, importantly, it will attract billions of rupees of new FDI, create thousands of highly paid jobs, raise productivity and reboot the manufacturing and export sectors, and improve, therefore, our external balance.

When I went to the AI summit, I mentioned it last time, I had seen just before that Google is doing a submarine cable, connecting America to India and then to the Far East. I spoke to Prime Minister Modi. I said since they are doing it together we have all the infrastructure here; make it pass through Mauritius. He spoke to the CEO of Google in India

straight away and they are working on it, I think it will be done, but I do not want to say more because they need to see whether we have all the infrastructure here or not.

We have set ourselves the objective to double export of goods to the United States, USD 3 billion over the next three years. Ambitious, I agree, but achievable if we work hand in hand together.

At the same time, we are modernising our banking and financial services sector as well as adapting our tourism sector to new trends. I mentioned this and the tourism sector is doing very well with the war. The Seychelles had a dip in the tourist arrivals. The Maldives had a dip. We know Dubai had a dip but Mauritius was very slightly affected.

Beside the Special Economic Zone, this Budget paves the way to a game-changing economic infrastructure programme with a total value of more than Rs70 billion so that the country improves its connectivity and develop the high-quality physical infrastructure required to support its economic ambitions at the port, at the airport, on the road.

You know, we get some very high-placed tourists, CEOs and all this. One of the complaints when using the internet, there is no connection. You say you are a modern country, but you do not get connection. Worse, the previous government cut the connections.

At the same time, Madam Speaker, we have embarked on four flagship projects that I set up last week, already set up. This budget advances renewable energy and the energy transition in line with our target of 60% energy mix by 2035. And I said I am restarting the *Maurice Île Durable* project, which was under hon. Minister Osman Mahomed at the time with Professor Joël de Rosnay and they did a fantastic job. We got a lot of praise for that. Madam Speaker, believe it or not, we had achieved 23.4% in renewable energy under *Maurice Île Durable*.

What did the MSM government do? I do not know, maybe because we set it up, because they have this obsession with me, especially. Even when I was not in Parliament, they were talking about me – keeping me alive. They had cancelled *Maurice Île Durable* Okay, you do not want hon. Osman Mahomed, you throw him out. You do not want professor Joël de Rosnay, you throw him out. But continue with the project. They just cancelled the project. With the result, from 23.4% that we had achieved in renewable energy, it came down to 17% only. So, 10 wasted years. 10 wasted years! Now, we have to restart. It also strengthens food production capacity so that more value is created locally and more opportunities are open for Mauritians. We have earmarked, Rs6.4 billion over the next three

years to improve water access and the work has already started. It costs a lot of money. We are getting help from India. We have to change these leaking pipes.

Madam Speaker, development policies centred around macroeconomic indicators are meaningless if they do not focus on families, which is the bedrock of a prosperous society.

It is therefore, first and foremost, about families who must eat, who must live healthy lives, parents who must educate their children, and a population that must feel secure. This is why we have placed the strengthening of the social compact at the centre of our reconstruction efforts. *Mettre l'humain au centre du développement* – that is what we are doing.

That is why we have increased the combined budget of the two Ministries looking after education by Rs2.6 billion. We want to ensure that each child lives up to his or her full potential through literacy and numeracy programme foundation courses, provision of textbooks. We have heard before, exams are starting and children do not have the textbooks yet, and exams are starting. And then they cut the internet, they cannot even look at the programmes on internet. This is the criminal negligence that the previous Government did. We are also upgrading learning environment by providing Rs824 million for improvement and expansion of infrastructure and amenities.

At the same time, we are reintroducing the NICE (National Initiative for Civic Education) project so that our youth... I had started it. Again, I suppose because I started it, they cancelled it. I had brought – not anyone – a military man from Singapore. Why did I bring a stranger? Because you know how it is here, this one will go and say this: 'Mr, you know, my child is not well. He cannot follow that course.' No, everybody has to follow that course, unless you are really not well, you cannot. To instil discipline in our youth, show them how living in a multicultural society is supposed to be, respect for each other, respect for other religions, about the need to know how to save water and energy, in fact, about the needs of the true values of life. This is what we want our youth to know. It is very important. Otherwise, the mentality has to change.

Madam Speaker, a prosperous nation is a healthy nation. This is why we will continue to prioritise the provision of free, but high quality and accessible healthcare through recruitment, training and investment in our healthcare infrastructure. That is why hon. Bachoo, the Minister for healthcare, we have agreed... One of the complaints, the other day, I was telling him that I met a consultant from India – first time in Mauritius. He gave a lecture

the other day and he tells me that he cannot understand why you are spending so many millions to send people to India for treatment when these consultants can come here and do these very operations for a much lesser cost. Hon. Bachoo knows, in that also, there is a mafia operating. This is the mentality that we have to change. We are talking about health of people, very ill people. That is why they have to go abroad. Now, these consultants will be able to come here. We are signing an MoU; I will mention it to Prime Minister Modi when I meet him in the weekend so that this can be moved forward.

And for a more efficient health service, the administration of hospitals will be carried out by Managers who are trained in Human Resource Management. I always say that to my friend, Anil Bachoo. I think you have a son who is a doctor as well who works in America. In America, doctors do not run hospitals. Doctors are supposed to look after patients. Why are they running hospitals? This is not their job. You have to run hospitals by modern management and this is what we are going to do here. You have seen the wastage – ordering medicine by huge stocks, then they become outdated, throw them away and order new medicine. We have seen what has happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ventilators that were ordered, they paid millions to Pack & Blister. They paid the money and the equipment does not work? So, somebody has taken some money somewhere. That is why this was done. We are not born yesterday! And we are going to find out. It is taking time because we need evidence, but we are getting evidence.

We also want to reverse the downward trend we saw in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, which is even more important. It is no point somebody lives up to 90, but the quality of life is poor. This is what our citizens endured up to 2024, Madam Speaker.

This is why gender remains the focus of our endeavours because women's entrepreneurship, empowerment, protection and improved childcare services and protection, ensures that growth reaches the wider society. Increasing maternity leave – we know there have been some criticisms on that – and paternity leave to 12 months and 6 weeks, respectively. But it is an undertaking we took in our manifesto. It is in our manifesto. I know there have been some criticisms, but we are looking at it. This is what it should be.

This is why, Madam Speaker, the Budget provides for infrastructure for 8,000 social housing projects to start with, mixed-income housing projects on privately owned land, and 1,000 housing units for middle-income families. And hon. Shakeel Mohamed spoke to me about this problem that you see; I have also seen it during the elections – houses that are

built, again, *anguille sous roche*! And see who got the contracts? People who are close to them. That, nobody talked about, I mean, on the side of the Opposition. Not, behind this Opposition.

An hon. Member: There are many Oppositions!

The Prime Minister: Only two of them!

Because a decent home is the foundation of dignity, we have to make it a reality for every low and middle-income household.

Our commitment to address the law and order situation, Madam Speaker, is unwavering. We know when we came – I was saying it myself – there was no law and order. There were areas where the Police could not go. Drugs were being sold everywhere. I do not say it has stopped. It has not stopped yet. It is not worse, but I am the first to admit there are certain sanctions, but we have a limited Police Force. They are doing what they can.

Another thing I want to stress: the Police Force must be respected. They deserve respect. We will not tolerate people attacking the policemen or policewomen. This cannot be tolerated! They represent the State, the security for our citizens. They need to be protected. This Budget provides for tightening border controls as well. It equips our enforcement agencies with the tools, the technology and the training they need.

The setting up of a new National Crime Agency, in the very near future, will allow an integrated, intelligence-led, and multi-agency response to serious and organised crime, including financial crimes, cybercrime, money-laundering, drug trafficking and corruption.

Madam Speaker, I know there will be criticisms. I know! But we need to have people who know how to tackle the problem. Today, you know what is happening? Before you arrest somebody, somebody knows. Already knows! We know what happened under the previous regime. Planting occurred, not once, not twice. You speak against the government; they plant something in your house. Even if there is nothing in your house, they will plant it.

Madam Speaker, this National Crime Agency will revolutionise policing in Mauritius. At the end of the day, you have seen what has happened with the Kistnen case, the cover up. Look at the judgement of the magistrate! Very courageous! And we now have evidence that there was cover up. It was murder! We have that much. They have destroyed lot of evidence. That is why it is taking a longer time. Much of evidence is destroyed, but I hope we will come to the bottom of this.

This Budget supports a whole-of-society response to the drug problem, bringing together the police, customs, coast guards, social workers, educators, health professionals, and civil society. We want everybody to be on-board. It cannot just be a problem for Government or for the Opposition. It should not be partisan. Everybody should be on-board.

Government, Madam Speaker, is also investing to improve early detection in schools, we know what is happening, in workplaces, expand awareness campaigns, and ensure that rehabilitation is an integral part of national security. We need to combat the scourge of drugs. It has to be relentless.

Madam Speaker, climate risk is costly. We need to mitigate climate risk and protect the assets that sustain livelihood. That is why we have scaled up investments in renewable energy, in coastal protection, and climate-resilient infrastructure. My good friend, Minister Bhagwan, mentioned – we know this, I have seen it with my eyes – the erosion of the coastline. This is why we put money in that. We have to fight this. We have to prevent it.

This Budget also gives a place of high prominence to adapting to climate change and mitigating its impact. We scaled up, as I said, investments in renewable energy, coastal protection, but also climate-resilient infrastructure. We are also investing with an aim to reducing future disaster costs and protecting the assets that sustain livelihoods.

Madam Speaker, as regards our policies on fiscal consolidation and good governance on the revenue side, as I have stated in the Budget Speech and I have just stated it, a High-Level Committee will be set up under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance to review our tax system to improve its fairness and efficiency.

On the expenditure side, Government continues to prioritise public investment in projects that catalyse private-sector activity, create jobs, and build resilience. At the same time, we will introduce stronger performance frameworks to ensure that every rupee spent delivers value for the citizens.

As I said, Madam Speaker, when the market fails, Government has to intervene and lead. That is precisely why we have established the Purchasing Power Shield to bring about a reduction in the prices of major basic consumer products.

The Budget has provided for the State Trading Corporation to bulk-purchase and sell essential consumer goods with capped profit margins.

Now, I must say, Madam Speaker, I am always a bit worried about price control. It does not really work very often, but we are talking about big economies. This is a small economy. Many times, you see collaborations between different sectors to keep the prices up. You have seen it with the... He was involved in that. This is why we are providing a budget for the State Trading Corporation.

We have also provided a further Rs2 billion, this year, for the Price Stabilisation Fund, and a series of subsidies on strategic consumer products.

The intention is to lower living costs of consumers, especially, again for the low-and middle-income families. They are the ones who get squeezed.

It is not enough for a nation to grow. The question is whether everyone, in the middle class, the lower income group, the women, the young, and the vulnerable can share in that growth. It is no point growing and you leave behind half of the population.

This Budget answers that question with a commitment to compassion, equity, and practical support.

Madam Speaker, allow me, now, to say a few words about implementation. I think a couple of people mentioned it, and rightly so. The best policy is only as good as its implementation. I am, therefore, making three commitments that will guide our actions in the coming year –

(1) Transparency and accountability

We will publish quarterly performance reports on the Budget's key indicators – it is not easy for us, but we will do it – and open major programme evaluations to independent review.

(2) Participation and inclusion

We will expand consultations with stakeholders to fine-tune implementation and to ensure that programmes reflect local realities.

(3) Adaptability and prudence

We will adhere to a disciplined fiscal path while preserving its flexibility to protect the vulnerable and to ensure public sector investments are with high economic returns.

Madam Speaker, this Budget speaks to the future generations. The choices we make today become the conditions our children and grandchildren will inherit. This is why fiscal policy must be responsible, forward-looking, and sustainable.

A people-centred budget cannot be short-sighted. It must invest in resilience, human capital, infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and strong institutions. It must ensure that today's progress does not become tomorrow's burden. It must protect the future from waste, neglect, and unsustainable choices.

We will be judged by future generations, Madam Speaker, not only by what we have built but also with what we have preserved –

- Did we leave them a stronger economy, a fairer society, a cleaner environment, and better opportunities?
- Did we act with foresight and discipline?
- Did we choose long-term national interest over short-term convenience?

This Budget, Madam Speaker, answers those questions by seeking to balance immediate needs, but with a long-term vision with lasting responsibility. It is a reminder that public finance is not only about the present. It is about the inheritance we leave behind.

We must also give hope. We must ensure that we give hope.

Allow me now to highlight how we have put people first in that Budget.

For students, this Budget is a message of confidence. It says that their education is not an expense to be managed, but an investment to be protected. It says that the country believes in their potential and is willing to support their journey from learning to leadership.

For women, the Budget is about fairness and empowerment. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister mentioned in detail what we are doing. Too often, women carry a heavier burden than their fair share, balancing work and care, ambition and responsibility, opportunity and constraint.

For families and consumers, the central question is simple: does this Budget actually make your life more manageable?

For every measure of adjustment, there is a measure of investment. For every reform, Madam Speaker, there is a vision. For every challenge, there is an opportunity.

History will not judge us by the ease of our decisions. It will judge us by whether we had the courage to make the right decisions when the circumstances demanded it.

The Mauritius we seek to build is one that is more innovative, more productive, more inclusive and more resilient. A Mauritius where –

- young people can find opportunities at home. They will not want to stay abroad. I am happy to say that, for the first time, people of the diaspora are coming here to work. That is a very good sign;
- where businesses – big, medium, small, even micro businesses – must be able to thrive and create jobs;
- where public institutions are stronger, independent and more efficient. Without public institutions, there can be no State. It is chaos, and this is what has happened;
- where economic progress goes hand in hand with social justice. It must go hand in hand with social justice, and
- A Mauritius which is open to the world and which attracts further investment.

What I have just mentioned is the best way that we can create conditions to be able to support those at the lower rung of the ladder.

Madame la présidente, permettez-moi, à ce stade, de répondre à quelques points soulevés par quelques membres, enfin, j'ai déjà répondu sur la pension. Mais malheureusement, l'Opposition a choisi de se focaliser sur le thème de la pension pour des buts purement politiques.

Le Leader de l'Opposition reconnaît lui-même que le Budget comprend des mesures positives, mais *you know of the saying* –

« Chasser le naturel, il revient au galop ! »

Il s'est cantonné, comme tant d'autres, d'ailleurs, au sein de l'Opposition, dans une litanie de propos démagogiques et dépourvue de bon sens et de sérieux.

It would seem that he is a great fan of Gabbar Singh. He chose to quote what Gabbar Singh said in *Sholay*. Gabbar Singh is back with him!

Well, Madam Speaker, I do not believe in “Gabbar Singh”, I prefer Lord Krishna, and I quote from the Mahabharata –

“*Karm kiye ja*” (Do your duty).

Is it a coincidence that the first comment the Leader of the Opposition made relates to the renovation of Clarisse House? He said, ‘You do not have money, and you are renovating it.’

(Interruptions)

Clarisse House is a national heritage, a building built in the 19th century, if I am not mistaken. The MSM Government allowed it to go down and decay. Go and see the work, actually the MBC showed it. Probably you did not see, it was happy hour.

Mr A. Duval: He has...

(Interruptions)

The Prime Minister: It is him. I agree with you there. I agree with you, it is him, his government.

We cannot allow a national heritage to just crumble. It is already going to cost us money. By the way, what is put in the Budget, for the first year, it is not going to be 400 million now. If we do not renovate it now, it will be extensive work. It will cost more.

Madam Speaker, certains ont parlé d'incertitude et d'anxiété des ménages dans ce budget. Mais ils ne se rendent pas compte que la vraie incertitude, la vraie anxiété, c'est la viabilité du système de pension, d'une faillite annoncée du fonds de pension par leur irresponsabilité. Si rien n'est fait aujourd'hui, on se dirige directement vers la disparition de toute forme de pension.

In 10 years' time, in 15 years' time, nobody will get a pension if we do not do what we are doing now.

An hon. Member: Avant même !

The Prime Minister: Avant même. Tu as raison.

C'est éloquent, *Madam Speaker*, qu'en réponse aux vœux du chef du MSM, parce qu'il a un vœu de retourner, le peuple lui a posé des questions. Allez voir sur Facebook. Je vais citer –

« *Koumen pou fer li kompren? Li pa kompren ki lepep pa le li retourne!* »

It is there!

Some people said –

« *Kot ou pe ale, bhai? Met ou enkor?* »

Madam Speaker: Do not quote, please.

The Prime Minister: Do not quote, okay.

Madam Speaker: Because there are so many of them.

The Prime Minister: Yes, yes. I just want...

Madam Speaker: Negative, positive. Yes.

The Prime Minister: You are right. You are right.

An hon. Member: It will be too long.

The Prime Minister: Yes.

Madam Speaker: No, do not!

The Prime Minister: *Madam Speaker*, ce budget ne réduit pas notre ambition nationale. Il lui donne des fondations solides.

Il protège les plus vulnérables. Il soutient les travailleurs. Il accompagne les entrepreneurs. Il le fait avec discipline, avec responsabilité, avec une vision de long terme.

Certains ont parlé de reculade alors qu'ils sont eux-mêmes coupables d'avoir acté la démagogie pour entraîner une reculade. Ils ont voulu instaurer un climat de doute et de confiance, de nous faire perdre le sens de notre responsabilité financière sans considération aucune pour ce que peut devenir l'avenir du pays.

Nous avons fait preuve d'écoute, comme dans tous les pays démocratiques.

Comme un gouvernement responsable, nous avons un devoir de responsabilité financière. Nous avons l'obligation de protéger ce pays, car c'est en fin de compte, protéger le peuple d'une faillite morale et de protéger l'avenir.

Madam Speaker, nous refusons, nous condamnons la légèreté d'analyse et de réflexion de ces individus qui connaissent bien la situation mais par démagogie... Ils sont bien au courant des dangers. Ils connaissent les indicateurs et surtout ils connaissent les conséquences d'une politique économique débridée basée sur un populisme mensonger.

Nous refusons ce repli sur le clientélisme électoral alors que l'avenir du pays est en jeu. Le risque est grand. Il peut nous faire subir des conséquences désastreuses aux générations à venir si rien n'est fait au niveau des finances de l'État.

Je le répète : Une croissance durable ne peut exister sans stabilité économique.

Une justice sociale durable ne peut pas exister sans des finances publiques saines.

Un État fort est d'abord un État crédible.

Notre pays, Madame la présidente, a toujours su se relever lorsque les circonstances l'exigeaient. À plusieurs reprises dans notre histoire, les Mauriciens ont démontré leur capacité à faire preuve de résilience, d'unité et de courage.

Depuis l'indépendance, notre histoire démontre que la population de Maurice a toujours été à la hauteur de ses responsabilités durant des moments les plus difficiles.

Aujourd'hui, encore, nous devons faire ce choix –

- Le choix de la responsabilité plutôt que celui du déni ;
- Le choix des réformes plutôt que celui de l'immobilisme, et
- Le choix de l'avenir plutôt que celui de la facilité.

Je suis convaincu, Madame la présidente, que Maurice possède tous les atouts nécessaires pour réussir cette nouvelle étape de son développement.

Nous avons, aujourd'hui, des institutions solides. Notre diaspora, comme je l'ai mentionné, a des talents remarquables.

Ce budget, Madame la présidente, ce n'est pas un ensemble de mesures financières. C'est un engagement vers le futur, vers l'avenir. Un engagement vers notre jeunesse, envers

les travailleurs, envers les familles mauriciennes et surtout envers les générations qui nous succéderont.

Nous leur devons des finances publiques assainies, une économie plus compétitive, un peu plus forte, plus juste et plus prospère.

C'est dans cet esprit que le gouvernement sollicite, aujourd'hui, l'approbation de cette honorable Assemblée avec confiance dans notre pays, avec confiance dans notre peuple, et avec la certitude que les choix responsables que nous faisons aujourd'hui permettront à Maurice de bâtir un avenir plus solide demain.

This Budget, Madam Speaker, is not about doing nothing and allowing our country to continue to drift into the abyss.

This Budget is about reversing the downhill spiral that we have been in.

It is about securing the future.

It is about building the Bridge to the Future.

With these words, I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed.

Madam Speaker: I will make an announcement first. Before going down, I will make an announcement.

ANNOUNCEMENT

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY – PROGRAMME CODE – TIME ALLOCATION

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, before we proceed with the Committee of Supply, I wish to inform the House that consistent with established practice, the Whips have agreed on an indicative allocation of time for the examination of the various estimates of expenditure under their respective programme codes.

I will exercise some flexibility when the need arises. This is what we did last year. For the orderly and smooth conduct of proceedings, we shall consider the Estimates page by page.

I also wish to draw the attention of hon. Members to Standing Order 73(3), which provides that –

“(…) Discussions at the Committee shall be confined to the details of the programme, sub-programme or item of expenditure and shall not refer to the general principles of Government policy and administration (…).”

Which we have just done.

I appeal to hon. Members and hon. Ministers to be concise in their interventions and replies.

Moreover, hon. Members are further informed that the votes pertaining to the Centralised Services of Government will be taken out of turn immediately after the Committee will have considered the votes of expenditure for the Ministry of Finance.

I thank you for your attention, and I rely on your cooperation for the smooth conduct of the exercise.

PUBLIC BILL

THE APPROPRIATION (2026-2027) BILL

(NO. IX OF 2026)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

The Chairperson: Are we ready?

(7.20 p.m.)

Office of the President – Programme Code 0101: Presidency Affairs (Rs129,100,000) was called and agreed to.

(7.20 p.m.)

Office Of the Vice-President – Programme Code 0102: Vice-Presidency Affairs was called.

The Chairperson: If anybody wants to speak, I cannot see you very well because I have removed my glasses, but you just raise your hands. Somebody will tell me. Or you can say: Madam Speaker. I will hear.

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Member. We are on Office of the Vice-President?

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr A. Duval: Clarification at page 5 – *Item 22900.011 – Personal Secretariat of Retired Vice-President*. May we know the modalities of the Secretariat of retired Vice-Presidents? How does it work? The modalities?

The Prime Minister: You are asking me about policy for retirement?

Mr A. Duval: No, I asked the modalities.

The Chairperson: The modalities?

Mr A. Duval: What are the conditions? What are the modalities? It is not a matter of policy: how it works.

The Chairperson: I hear you!

Mr A. Duval: So, what is the allowance for? Can we know what we are paying? What are the modalities?

The Chairperson: *On vient de commencer. Allons prendre cela bien, s'il vous plait. On vient de commencer !* Hon. Prime Minister, can you find it? It is *Item 22900.011 – Personal Secretariat of Retired Vice-President*, the modalities.

The Prime Minister: The provision is for payment of monthly allowances, for telephone bills, local calls, air tickets, medical check-ups, expenses, surgical interventions, if required, of three retired Vice-Presidents. Provision is also made for a retired Vice-President to employ a clerk and a typist and an office attendant at Government's cost.

The Chairperson: Okay, *c'est bon*? Alright, let us carry on.

Office Of the Vice-President – Programme Code 0102: Vice-Presidency Affairs (Rs23,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.23 p.m.)

National Assembly – Programme Code 0103: Parliamentary Affairs was called.

The Chairperson: National Assembly! That is us!

Yes, tell us the page and the item!

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I wanted to know at page 9, Madam...

The Chairperson: One moment, once we go to page 9, we are not coming back on the other pages. Okay? Page 9, yes? *Il faut qu'on prenne notre rythme, allez-y !*

Mr A. Duval: Yes, *Item 31122.824 – Acquisition of Equipment for Live Broadcasting - Studio for Parliament TV*, may we know what this is about?

The Chairperson: Of course. Yes, hon. Prime Minister, can you reply?

The Prime Minister: It is for acquisition of equipment for live broadcasting for studio for Parliament TV. The provision is made for phase 2 of the Parliament TV channel which will expand its content.

The Chairperson: Yes, for the moment. If I may, I will help. May I? Am I allowed to do that?

(Interruptions)

No, no, *c'est important!* For the moment, we are only seeing you like this but there is a second phase coming when we will be doing a little bit more than that like in France and in England. Okay? Next!

National Assembly – Programme Code 0103: Parliamentary Affairs (Rs366,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.25 p.m.)

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

0104: Electoral Supervisory Commission and Electoral Boundaries Commission – Supervision of Electoral Activities and Review of Electoral Boundaries (Rs3,400,000).

0105: Office of the Electoral Commissioner – Electoral Services (Rs448,500,000).

0106: Judicial and Legal Service Commission – Recruitment and Promotion of Judicial and Legal Officers (Rs3,000,000).

(7.26 p.m.)

The Judiciary – Programme Code 0107: Administration and Delivery of Justice was called.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr A. Duval: With regard to page 20, the indicators: Disposal of cases, the KPIs for the programme heading: *Percentage of cases disposed*, may I know the breakdown, total number of ongoing cases: civil and criminal as at now, the end of the financial year?

The Prime Minister: I will have to table, *Madame la présidente*. I will table it.

Mr A. Duval: Can I ask another question since the hon. Prime Minister will provide? May I also know the number of cases ongoing with provisional charges having been lodged?

The Chairperson: Do we have that one?

Mr A. Duval: You will have it in your breakdown.

The Prime Minister: I will not be able to give you. I will have to ask.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I will put a PQ on that.

An hon. Member: That's it!

The Chairperson: Est-ce qu'on a cela dedans?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have...

The Chairperson: Yes, yes but hold your horses a bit. Let us get the answers. Can we get the answers? The hon. Prime Minister will table! Okay? Ask me.

Mr A. Duval: I have another question.

The Chairperson: Okay, another question then.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker. With regard to page 21, Capital Expenditure, *Item 31132.801 – Acquisition Software - Transcription Software*. May we have the modalities of the transcription software from the hon. Prime Minister, the details to put it in another word?

The Prime Minister: I can give the details later. I will answer but I know it is for procuring a transcription software to transcribe audio recordings of case proceedings in English, French and Mauritian Kreol language.

The Chairperson: Very good! Interesting, you got it.

The Judiciary – Programme Code 0107: Administration and Delivery of Justice (Rs928,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.29 p.m.)

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

0108: Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions –Criminal Advisory and Litigation (Rs223,000,000).

0109: Public Service Commission and Disciplined Forces Service Commission –Public Service and Disciplined Forces Service Affairs (Rs160,000,000).

0110: Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal – Determination of Appeals (Rs24,100,000).

0111: Office Of Ombudsman – Protection against Maladministration in the Public Sector (Rs22,100,000)

(7.31 p.m.)

National Audit Office – Programme Code 0112: External Audit Services was called.

The Chairperson: Yes? Question? I thought so.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, page 39, Madam Chairperson, Sub-Programme 011201 – *Regularity...*

The Chairperson: One moment. Where is it on the page?

Mr A. Duval: It is Sub-Programme 011201 – *Regularity Audit.*

The Chairperson: What would be your question?

Mr A. Duval: It is a question of KPI.

The Chairperson: KPI, yes?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, May I ask the hon. Prime Minister, with regard to the 83% KPI target that has been met for financial statements of statutory bodies and local authorities submitted and audited within the prescribed statutory deadlines, may we know from the hon. Prime Minister, with regard to the 17% that have not respected the deadline, the enforcement actions taken for those 17?

The Chairperson: No, I cannot allow this. You have to speak on the budget, not on the actions taken, etc.

Mr A. Duval: But it is the KPI. Out of the 17% that have not complied, I want to know. It is part of the KPI for them to comply. So, I want to know what has been done?

The Chairperson: It seems to me...

The Prime Minister: Normally, I cannot give that. This is the National Audit Office which does all this.

The Chairperson: Yes, you will find out in due course.

National Audit Office – Programme Code 0112: External Audit Services (Rs218,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.32 p.m.)

Employment Relations Tribunal – Programme Code 0113: Industrial and Employment Dispute Resolution (Rs33,000,000) was called and agreed to.

(7.33 p.m.)

Local Government Service Commission – Programme Code 0114: Local Government Service Affairs was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Leader of the Opposition?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister, on page 47, who is the new Chairperson of the LGSC? Can he also give the names of the members of the LGSC?

The Chairperson: Yes, human resources; Chairperson and members. Do you have the names?

The Prime Minister: Yes, the Chairperson is being finalised with the President. So, I am not at a liberty unless the President confirms it. He probably will be writing to you, I think. For the names, I can give you the names.

An hon. Member: On n'entend pas!

The Chairperson: On n'entend pas très bien. Il y a un micro qui ne marche pas ?

The Prime Minister: Ça travaille.

The Chairperson: Okay, that is better. So, you...

The Prime Minister: You are talking about the LGSC?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, who is the Chairperson at the LGSC?

The Prime Minister: The Chairperson is Ms Cootthen-Iyempermal and the members are –

- Mr Sewnath;
- Mr Haulder, and
- Mr Basant Rai.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr Quirin: The same issue. Can we know the allowances paid to the Chairperson and also to the other members, please?

The Prime Minister: The Chairperson's salary is Rs157,000 monthly. As for the Commissioners, it is Rs73,800 monthly.

The Chairperson: Okay.

Local Government Service Commission – Programme Code 0114: Local Government Service Affairs (Rs62,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.35 p.m.)

National Human Rights Commission – Programme Code 0115: Protection and Promotion of Human Rights was called.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr A. Duval: Thank you, Madam Chairperson, with regard to page 49. The KPI for Programme 0115: Protection and Promotion of Human Rights – *Percentage of cases resolved within 1 year*, may the hon. Prime Minister provide to the House a breakdown of the cases –

- (i) the nature of cases and complaints that have been resolved;
- (ii) the number of successful convictions secured?

You will eventually come back with the...

(Interruptions)

But...

The Chairperson: Yes, alright.

Mr Assirvaden: Excusez-moi, *Madam Chairperson*, permettez-moi d'avoir une clarification, parce qu'éventuellement cela reviendra à nous. Est-ce que nous allons devoir répondre pour les items, les dotations qu'on vote ou pour les *policy decisions* que l'honorable membre veut savoir ? Il faudra...

(Interruptions)

Je n'ai pas encore terminé. Excusez-moi !

The Chairperson: Il n'a pas fini !

Mr Assirvaden: C'est important d'avoir cette clarification. Est-ce permis dans le *Committee of Supply* d'expliquer des *policy decisions* ?

The Chairperson: J'ai déjà dit au début pourquoi on est là !

Mr Assirvaden: *Madam Chairperson*, moi aussi j'ai bien compris, mais je suis étonné que l'honorable membre n'arrive pas à comprendre cela !

Mr A. Duval: Moi aussi je suis étonné. *Madam Chairperson*, puis-je ?

The Chairperson: Oui.

Mr A. Duval: *Madam Chairperson*, ce sont des décisions administratives.

The Chairperson: Oui.

Mr A. Duval: The KPIs deal with cases that have been resolved. It is the right of this House to know the breakdown and the category of cases. It has got nothing to do with policy. I am surprised that this seasoned Member is trying to raise this issue now.

Mr Assirvaden: It is policy.

The Chairperson: Non. Ce n'est ni l'un, ni l'autre, en fait.

(Interruptions)

Mr A. Duval: Let the Chairperson decide!

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Ce n'est pas tout à fait *policy*. Mais est-ce que le Premier ministre peut dire cela lui ? Vous avez...

(Interruptions)

Oui ! Oui !

(Interruptions)

Mr Damry: On a point of order!

The Chairperson: Non, non, le Premier ministre veut répondre.

(Interruptions)

Le Premier ministre veut répondre. Allez-y.

(Interruptions)

Allez-y !

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: I cannot!

Si tout le monde parle, moi qu'est-ce que je fais ?

An hon. Member : Vous partez !

The Chairperson Je ne vais pas partir pour l'instant, mais si vous me poussez à bout, vous savez comment je fais ! Vous préférez *order you out* ? Non ! Allez-y!

Mr Damry: On a point of order! I refer the House to section 73(3) of the Standing Orders, I will quote.

The Chairperson: I already spoke!

Mr Damry: But it also says, let me quote –

“(...) Discussions at the Committee shall be confined to the details of the expenditure contained in the programme, sub-programme or item of expenditure and shall not refer to the general principles of Government policy and administration (...)”

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, this Parliament voted for the Performance-based Budgeting. We are being given KPIs to vote on. How can we not know the breakdown of those KPIs? There is nothing to hide.

The Chairperson: Si vous avez...

Mr A. Duval: The hon. Prime Minister will easily get that information. There is nothing to hide!

The Chairperson: Okay. First of all, hon. Damry, you are just repeating what I said earlier, okay? First of all. So, we are losing time. The hon. Prime Minister is happy to give that information. It is about human rights. Let us have the information.

Yes, please, hon. Prime Minister!

The Prime Minister: The number of complaints which have been received from 01 July to 18 June of this year is 546. 437 of those have been resolved. So, about 80% of the cases have been resolved.

The Chairperson: *Oui, on ne peut pas savoir exactement.* You can put a question on that.

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, at least, we have an answer.

The Chairperson: Yes, that is a good answer. *Mais on ne peut aller dans chaque détails. Vous vous rendez compte si on fait cela ?* Mais, vous avez le droit de venir avec des questions parlementaires.

(Interruptions)

Bon, allez, on garde notre calme. *Next one !*

National Human Rights Commission – Programme Code 0115: Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (Rs48,300,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.40 p.m.)

Office of the Ombudsperson for Children – Programme Code 0116: Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children (Rs22,700,000) was called and agreed to.

(7.40 p.m.)

Independent Police Complaints Commission – Programme Code 0117: Investigation into Complaints against Police Officers was called.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, on page 53, with regard to *0117: Investigation into Complaints against Police Officers*, may we know for the last financial year the number of charges laid – following investigation – against accused parties?

The Chairperson: Charges laid? No, not charges! Number of cases!

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, when an investigation is completed, it obviously translates in a charge. So, this is how we measure it!

The Chairperson: No, you do not.

Mr A. Duval: How else? The hon. Attorney General can perhaps help?

The Prime Minister: I can tell you about the number of cases received, number of cases disposed and number of cases still under investigation.

The Chairperson: Yes, that you can give.

Mr A. Duval: The number of cases that have resulted in prosecution because it is an investigative authority.

The Chairperson: Do you have that one?

The Prime Minister: That, I will have to table because the investigations are still ongoing. I will have to table this.

The Chairperson: No, he wants the ones that are over.

Mr A. Duval: How many have been over?

The Prime Minister: Well, 5,646 are the number of cases that have been received. Of those, 3,320 have been disposed and the rest, that is, 2,426 are still under investigation.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, for the sake of this exercise, could the hon. Prime Minister seek the information and provide that to the House with regard to the 3,000 cases that have been completed, how many have resulted in actual prosecutions?

The Prime Minister: I will have to ask the Police.

The Chairperson: Later! Later!

Independent Police Complaints Commission – Programme Code 0117: Investigation into Complaints against Police Officers (Rs17,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.43 p.m.)

Office of the Ombudsperson for Financial Services – Programme Code 0118: Protection of Consumers of Financial Services (Rs16,500,000) was called and agreed to.

(7.43 p.m.)

Financial Crimes Commission – Programme Code 0119: Combatting Financial Crimes was called.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. Can the House be provided with the salary of the newly appointed Director?

The Chairperson: Page?

(Interruptions)

One moment! One moment! You should tell us. It is human resources, right?

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Chairperson, it is on page 59, *item 26 – Grants* and my question relates to staff cost, that is *Item 26313.164 - Financial Crimes Commission*. Can we know the salary of the newly appointed Director?

The Prime Minister: Yes, I can tell you. His monthly salary is Rs261,165.

The Chairperson: C'est cela que vous avez demandé?

The Prime Minister: You asked for the Chairperson?

The Chairperson: The Director.

The Prime Minister: For the Director, I do not have the figure here. I know for the Chairperson but I will get it, I suppose.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. A. Duval? Wait for a while!

The Prime Minister: In fact, he is the Director.

The Chairperson: Oh, he is the Director.

Mr A. Duval: Can I ask with regard to page 59, *Programme 0119: Combatting Financial Crimes*? I would like to ask the hon. Prime Minister with regard to Asset Recovery unit, the number of applications for Attachment Orders. May we know from the hon. Prime Minister, we see that there are 25 assets for which an Attachment Order was obtained. May we know if any of these have been realised and if so, the revenue generated through realisation of assets seized?

The Prime Minister: For that, I will have to ask for the information, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: You do not have it right now, okay. So, we take note. Okay!

Financial Crimes Commission – Programme Code 0119: Combatting Financial Crimes (Rs475,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.46 p.m.)

Prime Minister's Office – Programme Code 0201: Prime Minister's Office was called.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 64, à l'item 22120.017 – *Legal fees*, il y a une augmentation considérable de R 20 million. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails sur les raisons de cette augmentation ? En quoi consistent ces *legal fees* et à qui sont-ils payés, s'il vous plaît ?

The Prime Minister: For legal fees, provision has been made to cater for payment to external lawyers for advice to provide in respect of Chagos Archipelago and also reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses by these external lawyers, including travel and hotel accommodations when the meetings were held in Mauritius.

The Chairperson: Yes, did you want to say something, hon. A. Duval? Yes?

Mr A. Duval: Page 64, item 22900.985 – *Expenses i.c.w. Chagos Archipelago of which Management and Surveillance of Chagos Archipelago Marine Protected Area*, may we know how the Rs30 million is planned to be disbursed?

The Prime Minister: It depends on whether the treaty is ratified first.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger?

Ms J. Bérenger: A la page 65, l'item 31122.814 – *Acquisition of Air-Conditioning Equipment*, on passe de R 4 million à R 20 million. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails sur cette augmentation ?

The Prime Minister: Acquisition of air-conditioning equipment and also heating ventilation of the air-conditioning system. When it says Prime Minister's Office, it is the whole area – the building.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. A. Duval?

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, with regard to page 66, item 22900.014 – *Hospitality and Ceremonies*, may we have the details of the disbursements for the last financial years, the number of events held and specific disbursements?

The Prime Minister: First of all, these are for medals, Rs20,044,581. For State banquet, the State visit of the President of the Republic of Seychelles on the national day. The State visit of President Macron. For the banquet, it was Rs5,131,907. For President Macron, it was Rs3,829,570 and the use of the State Lounge, the accommodation and other expenses, that is, cultural shows and the floral decorations and so on.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Leader of the Opposition!

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will refer the hon. Prime Minister to page 66, *Item 21110.005 - Extra Assistance*. There is an increase this year. Can we be provided with the names of Advisers at the level of the hon. Prime Minister's Office and their salaries? If ever there are Advisers on a pro bono basis, can we have their names also, Madam Chairperson?

The Chairperson: Would that concern Advisers? Extra assistance?

The Prime Minister: In the past, Madam Chairperson, everybody was an Adviser. So, we changed this. You cannot have someone who is doing extra assistance to specific services, but he is put under the column of Special Advisers. So, people think the Prime Minister has so many Advisers. In fact, it is not the case. So, that is why it is been separated.

The Chairperson: It is split now. So, what was your question?

Mr Lesjongard: My request is can we be provided with the list of those persons?

The Chairperson: Have not we got that before in the House? I think you put a question before and you got the list.

You want to know the increase, not the names. The increase. Because we have already got the names.

The Prime Minister: I can circulate the names.

The Chairperson: Yes, circulate it because we are running out of time.

Hon. Ms J. Bérenger, please!

Ms J. Bérenger : Sur le même item soulevé par l'honorable A. Duval, à la page 66, l'item 229.014, *Hospitality and Ceremonies*. En fait, dans les *Estimates* qui nous avaient été données l'année dernière, c'était une somme de R 25 millions qui avait été allouée pour l'année à venir et les trois prochaines années.

Cette somme a été augmentée pour devenir R 40 millions dans les *Estimates* que nous avons cette année. Peut-on savoir ce qui est prévu et pourquoi il y a cette augmentation ? Qui sont les chefs d'État qui viendront nous visiter ?

C'était une somme allouée de R 25 millions. Elle est passée de R 25 millions à R 40 millions. Dans les *Estimates* de l'année dernière, c'était une somme allouée de R 25 millions. C'est passé à R 40 millions. J'essaie d'être claire.

The Prime Minister: Sorry, what item number?

The Chairperson: We are still on hospitality and ceremony.

Ms J. Bérenger: Yes, on hospitality and ceremonies.

The Prime Minister: As I said, Madam Chairperson, there were there were state banquets and state visits. The State Visit of President Macron, State Banquet for the President of...

Ms J. Bérenger: Non, pour l'année à venir. Dans les *Estimates* de l'année dernière, c'était une somme de R 25 millions qui avait été allouée pour l'année à venir. Mais cette somme a été révisée à R 40 millions. Peut-on savoir pourquoi ?

The Prime Minister: Parce que l'année dernière, on a dépensé plus. Alors, on a fait la provision pour ça.

The Chairperson: You have understood? Yes, I think we got it.

Are we all right now? We have five minutes under this same item?

Page 68? Yes, carry on!

Mr A. Duval : Yes. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister, on page 68, *Item 22900.910, Running Costs of Security Unit.*

The Prime Minister: Which item?

Mr A. Duval : *22900.910.*

So, the question is there is a considerable increase for this coming financial year. May we may we know the reasons for that increase?

The Prime Minister: It is about security matters because we are really looking at the whole security, including at the airport. This is what we are doing.

Mr A. Duval : May I ask? Can the hon. Prime Minister enlighten the House what is the Security Unit exactly? Is it his security? Are we talking about officials' personal security? What is the Security Unit?

The Prime Minister: That is State security, of course.

The Chairperson: Very generally, because I am not sure you can do that!

The Prime Minister: They are expenses related to the Counter-Terrorism Unit. We are setting up a Counter-Terrorism Unit. When we set up, we have to purchase equipment and you have to meet operational costs of the unit. That is part of it. There is the running cost of the security unit as well. Then, there are conferences and seminars as well. That is basically that.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, I want to understand what is that Security Unit? Is it the VIPSU? What is it?

The Chairperson: It exists already.

(Interruptions)

Mr A. Duval: No, no, no. Counter-terrorism is another item. Do not try...

The Chairperson: I am not trying anything.

Mr A. Duval: Not you, Madam Chairperson. From behind! They are answering for the Prime Minister.

It is not counter-terrorism. It is the Security Unit. My question is: can he elaborate on the Security Unit? It is too general.

The Chairperson: Is it possible or is it secret?

The Prime Minister: No, it includes the Counter-Terrorism Unit. That is part of security. That is why I mentioned the Counter-Terrorism Unit.

Mr A. Duval: It is a different item.

The Prime Minister: Which item are we talking about?

Mr A. Duval: 22900.910, Rs37 millions.

The Prime Minister: Yes, there is a National Security Adviser here who is also in the Security Unit. First of all, there is him. He is responsible for that security division. He is responsible to enhancing national security and protecting the territorial integrity of Mauritius.

They have to formulate the guidelines on security matters. They coordinate national security matters with other government agencies to provide views, and then they follow the recommendations. They also provide security to VVIPs.

The Chairperson: Okay. Hon. Quirin, please!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My question, this time, is with regard to expenses related to the Counter-Terrorism Unit from Rs50 million to Rs90 million. It is on the same page. Page 68.

The Chairperson: No, which item?

Mr Quirin: *Item 22900.909.* From Rs50 million to Rs90 million, can we know the reason for such a huge increase?

The Prime Minister: I have just said for the Counter-Terrorism Unit which we are setting up. We are setting up the Counter-Terrorism Unit. They have to purchase the equipment and they have operational costs.

The Chairperson: Okay. Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: À la page 69, *Item 31121.801, Acquisition of Vehicles.* Pareillement, dans les *Estimates* qui nous avaient été données l'année dernière, c'était un autre chiffre. Il y a une augmentation de Rs23 millions dans l'allocation budgétaire pour l'année à venir. Peut-on savoir combien de véhicules vont être achetés et à qui ils sont destinés ?

The Prime Minister: First of all, the vehicles have not been changed since the previous government was there. So, we need to replace the vehicles. But also, we were planning for the business conference that we will have with the United States. We have to acquire vehicles.

I think it is about 44, but I cannot remember the exact number.

The Chairperson: Yes, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer the hon. Prime Minister to page 68.

The Prime Minister: I cannot go back.

The Chairperson: On est déjà à la page 69. If you have no objection, *on va dire les deux sont ensemble.* I will allow you. But try and remember! Once we finish the page, we are done. So, come back! Come back!

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Chairperson, you need to tell us that that page is over.

The Chairperson: Okay, I will do that.

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Chairperson, I refer the hon. Prime Minister to page 68, *Item no. 22900.842 and .843*, two new items.

The Chairperson: Diaspora.

Mr Lesjongard: Yes. And the other one with migrants.

The Chairperson: Irregular Migrants.

Mr Lesjongard: Can we be provided with more information? Thank you.

The Chairperson: Migrants from Chagos. Yes.

An hon. Member: No, irregular migrants!

The Chairperson: Irregular Migrants? 22900.842 is *Expenses i.c.w. Diaspora Global Advisory Council. C'est cela que je vois, moi.*

The Prime Minister: First of all, it is not about Chagos you are asking? It is not about Chagos? You are asking about the *Diaspora Global Advisory Council*, I take it.

This is to serve as a platform to encourage greater participation from our diaspora and friends of Mauritius from overseas for our development under the Migration Unit in collaboration with the concerned stakeholders. It is working on the setting-up – they are setting it up – of a Diaspora Global Advisory Council.

The Chairperson: There were two items. The other item is *Reception of Irregular Migrants from Chagos and Repatriation to their Country of Origin.*

The Prime Minister: Are you speaking about the illegal migrants that we have already deported?

The Chairperson: It is for 22900.843 - *Reception of Irregular Migrants from Chagos and Repatriation to their Country of Origin*, hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: Yes, that is about the Chagos, in fact. There is a draft agreement between Mauritius and the UK providing for a migration protocol for the reception of irregular migrants. There are not many. There have been four, if I remember properly, from Diego Garcia. The illegal migrants brought to Mauritius will be the responsibility of the Mauritian State now that we have...

(Interruptions)

Yes, depending on the protocol, of course.

The Chairperson: These are not Mauritians, of course. *Vous avez compris ? Parce qu'on connaît l'histoire.*

(Interruptions)

Oui, il y a un protocole.

Prime Minister's Office – Programme Code 0201: Prime Minister's Office (Rs2,015,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.03 p.m.)

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

0202: Pay Research Bureau – Programme Code 0202: Pay and Conditions of Service (Rs46,600,000).

0203: Civil Status Division – Programme Code 0203: Civil Status Affairs (Rs148,000,000).

(8.03 p.m.)

Government Printing – Programme Code 0204: Government Printing Services was called.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr A. Duval: KPIs on page 70. It takes patience to answer calmly like this!

The Chairperson: Page 70?

Mr A. Duval: Page 70. It is the fourth time I am saying this. Page 70! It takes patience. All the time, you are saying page, page, page! It is actually irritating! It is 70.

The Chairperson: We are already on Government Printing.

Mr A. Duval: No, but I asked for Equal Opportunities Commission.

(Interruptions)

Non, mais, Madam...

The Chairperson: *Est-ce que je peux?*

(Interruptions)

Members! *Je vais perdre ma voix! Alors*, we have already voted and we are now on Government Printing.

I am sorry, we missed you!

Mr A. Duval: *Madam Chairperson*, j'ai mis mon nom pour la page 70. Demandez, je n'ai pas envie d'embarrasser...

The Chairperson: Non, non, je n'ai pas. Tout ce temps-là, je vous ai donné la parole. Ne me rendez pas la vie difficile. We will skip that one and try and follow what we are doing. Everybody tries and follow, please!

Government Printing, I was saying.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, it is going to be difficult unless we call the page now. Please!

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, you have to call the page.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Vous savez ce qu'on va faire? *I will call the page*. Je suis gentille, moi. Je suis gentille. Allez !

Government Printing, pages 84-85.

Government Printing – Programme Code 0204: Government Printing Services (Rs233,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.06 p.m.)

Rodrigues and Outer Islands – Programme 0205: Rodrigues and Outer Islands (Rs 6,982,000,000) was called and agreed to.

(8.07 p.m.)

Reform Institutions and Rehabilitation – Programme Code 0206: Rehabilitation of Offenders and Children in Probation Institutions was called.

The Chairperson: Page 91, yes!

Mr A. Duval: Page 91, KPIs for the successful rehabilitation of offenders and children in probation institutions, may we know in regards to the former and the latter, that is,

offenders and children in probation institutions, the rate of reoffending for the last financial year that has been registered?

The Prime Minister: I will have to table, Madam Chairperson. I will have to table it.

The Chairperson: Okay, the information is coming.

The Prime Minister: I could table it as well. But anyway!

From July last year to May of this year, 23 probation orders and 275 community services have been issued. 87% of the probationers and community service workers have completed their community orders. The success rate of probation orders is assessed by evaluating two – I am giving you the details – key factors, the offender's compliance with the conditions, and then, the extent to which the offender's criminogenic needs have been addressed.

The success rate of the community service holders, again, is determined by the offender's regularity in attending the worksite, the quality of work, the offender's behaviour and all this. You asked about the percentage of offenders?

Mr A. Duval: Reoffending.

The Prime Minister: In fact, it is about 70% from what I see.

Mr A. Duval: Reoffending?

The Prime Minister: No, not reoffending. Those who have successfully completed their rehabilitation. So, its 30%.

Mr A. Duval: If the hon. Prime Minister can get the precise information at a later stage? If he can?

The Chairperson: I doubt, whoever it concerns reoffending.

The Prime Minister: If it is 70%, ...

Mr A. Duval: *Non, je sais, mais c'est dans le même KPI.*

The Chairperson: *Dans l'esprit. Mais ce n'est pas reoffending.*

The Prime Minister: If it is 70%, it means 30% have been reoffending, I think. I will get the information.

The Chairperson: Yes, the percentage is very high, in fact. *On est à la page 92. Pages 92-94?*

Reform Institutions and Rehabilitation – Programme Code 0206: Rehabilitation of Offenders and Children in Probation Institutions (Rs143,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.10 p.m.)

Forensic Science Laboratory – Programme Code 0207: Forensic Science Services was called.

The Chairperson: Page 94, yes?

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. Page 94.

An hon. Member: KPI!

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister for the last Financial Year, out of the 69% of cases received and analysed, may we know the breakdown of the type of dangerous drug that was successfully analysed within that year and for those that were unsuccessfully analysed, the breakdown again of the drugs so we can do a comparison?

The Prime Minister: I believe we do not have that information at the moment, Madam Chairperson but maybe if I get it, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Not surprised! Yes, but in due course, we will provide. Keep all these issues. Page 95.

Mr Lesjongard: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer the hon. Prime Minister to page 95 *Item 21110.001 – Basic Salary and Item 21110.004 – Allowances*, can the House be provided with the monthly salary of the Director of the Forensic Science Laboratory and any allowances drawn also?

The Prime Minister: Just making sure I am giving the right figure –Rs419,500 monthly salary. There is a special all-inclusive allowance as well of Rs305,500 per month.

The Chairperson: Yes, okay.

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 96 *Item 31112.019 – Construction of the Forensic Science Laboratory*, can we have the cumulative expenditure up to June 2026 and can we know the reason of a change in the project value? De R 850 million, il est devenu R 875 million. Dans les *estimates* qu'on avait eus l'année dernière, le *project value* était R 850 million et si possible d'avoir le *cumulative expenditure*.

The Prime Minister: Oui. I can give you the details but I know by memory that they have been acquiring new equipment specially for the new drug that they want to analyse and also, they have been asking for expertise advice but I can give you the details.

The Chairperson: Okay. Good.

Forensic Science Laboratory - Programme Code 0207: Forensic Science Services (Rs585,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.14 p.m.)

National Disaster Risk Reduction - Programme Code 0208: National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management was called.

The Chairperson: Page 97, 98, okay?

Mr A. Duval: On page 98, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister with regard to *Item 31122 – Other Machinery and Equipment*, can we be provided with the list of equipment – the breakdown of other equipment, machinery etc that is presently allocated at the NDRRMC?

The Prime Minister: I want to make sure we are talking about the same. You are asking about the other machinery and equipment?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, but I am looking for the whole inventory.

The Prime Minister: IT equipment, there is a decrease due to equipment donated. Equipment has been donated by the Indian Ocean Commission under the EU funded project.

And also, there is the enhancement of the video conferencing system in the main conference room which has cost Rs600,000. It is for video conferences. There is also an implementation of Microsoft 365 Business premium cloud services which has cost Rs400,000.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, if I may clarify, for the benefit of the House, the inventory of the item – *Other Machinery and Equipment*, the inventory which is allocated at the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre? If the hon. Prime Minister may provide us with at least in due time.

The Chairperson: No but hon. A. Duval if I may?

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

The Chairperson: I may be wrong but the estimates concern only acquisition of IT equipment.

Mr A. Duval: There is provision for the last Financial Year and equipment have been purchased. I now require the updated list.

The Prime Minister: I will have to circulate.

The Chairperson: You will provide, okay. Can we carry on? The hon. Leader of the Opposition is going to put a question.

Mr Lesjongard: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer the hon. Prime Minister to page 98 *Item 22900.903 – Awareness Campaign*. Can we know how many campaigns were carried out in the last Financial Year?

The Prime Minister: Campaigns are difficult for me to say but I know there has been an increase for an inclusive multiplatform. There is a provision to cater for an inclusive multiplatform platform – strategy for awareness campaign.

Ms J. Bérenger: Toujours à la page 98, *Item 22120.008 – Fees to Consultant*, peut-on savoir en quoi consiste ces *fees* ? Pourquoi il y a eu besoin d'un consultant et qui est le consultant ?

The Prime Minister: Provision has been made for consultancy fees to develop a GIS based National Logistics database that will integrate the logistics resources data across public and private sectors. Also, there is a fee for the National Emergency Operations Command but that is not what the hon. Member asked.

The Chairperson: Okay.

Ms J. Bérenger: Qui est le consultant ?

The Prime Minister: No, they have not appointed a consultant yet but they will appoint.

National Disaster Risk Reduction - Programme Code 0208: National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (Rs33,000,000) was on question put, agreed to.

(8.18 p.m.)

Mauritius Meteorological Services - Programme Code 0209: Meteorological Services was called.

The Chairperson: Page 100. Yes, hon. A. Duval!

Mr A. Duval: Page 100 under the general programme heading – *Programme 0209: Meteorological Services*, may we have from the hon. Prime Minister, the percentage accuracy for the last Financial Year of weather forecast by the meteorological services? You will know that it used to be a KPI if I am not mistaken.

The Prime Minister: I can tell the hon. Opposition Whip; in no country, can you get it 100% right. Look at what has happened in Europe, So, it is never 100%.

Mr A. Duval: But we measure it by percentage, hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: Yes, I will have to give it to you.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you.

The Chairperson: Au moins vous avez fait rire tout le monde, c'est bien.

Mr François: Thank you. Page 102 , *Item 31122.999 – Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment – (b) Hydromet Project (Grant Funded – Green Climate Fund)*, Madam Chairperson, being given Rodrigues has a higher sea level rise per year as per some information around 6.4mm per year, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether this project takes onboard Rodrigues specially to take records of data from Port Mathurin?

The Prime Minister: The answer is yes.

The Chairperson: Good. You have a question?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, on the same item, Madam Chairperson, can the hon. Prime Minister provide the House with more information on the Hydromet Project?

The Prime Minister: It is an automatic rain gauge at the weather station with its database, and that includes HF radio, tide gauge station, wave rider, humidity chamber, hydrogen leakage detector and a power meter for the radar station.

The Chairperson: Thank you, everybody.

Mauritius Meteorological Services - Programme Code 0209: Meteorological Services (Rs347,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.21 p.m.)

External Communications - Programme Code 0220: Policy and Strategy for Port and Airport Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 104?

Mr A. Duval: With regard to page 104, programmes outcomes, *0220: Policy and Strategy for Port and Airport Development*, indicators – *Average service time spent at berth (Hours per ship)*, we see that the target has not been reached for the last financial year that was budgeted. May we know if there are any reports that have been communicated to him and that can be made available to the House, which have established the regression in meeting the targets, but also, in past performance as well?

The Prime Minister: I cannot remember there was a report sent to me but I know that some of this offloading equipment have failed and we have to replace them. It does not say more than that. It says digitalisation and automation of port operations and modernising of container facilities, some of which are not working.

Mr A. Duval: Same question but for the airport. There is the same issue of regression on target and performance.

The Prime Minister: Again, because even with the connections to the airplanes, we are having problems. They are all going to have to be changed but they are repairing them because the idea is that if we have some agreements – Air Mauritius is looking for agreements – that might be part of the package and I see here an amount of Rs2.7 billion would then be invested to expand, modernise, and enhance the efficiency of the airport.

The Chairperson: Okay, yes?

Mr A. Duval: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Still on that page 104, *0220: Policy and Strategy for Port and Airport Development*, we are being asked to vote an additional sum of Rs1.2 billion. May we know from the hon. Prime Minister what is behind the policy and strategy which involves this increase? How the Rs2.3 billion and especially the increase of Rs1 billion is going to go into that policy?

The Chairperson: *C'est un summary ça. Je crois que la réponse, on l'a déjà. On a déjà la réponse, c'est un summary. Yes? Page 106!*

Mr Lesjongard: Page 106, Madam Chairperson, with regard to Modern, safe and efficient aviation and port services, I refer the hon. Prime Minister to the last item – *Provision of passenger facilitation services at Plaine Corail Airport, Airport of Rodrigues Ltd.* For 2025-2026, the target was 350,000 passengers, whereas what is recorded here as provisional number of passengers facilitated is only 299,531. Can we have an answer why?

The Prime Minister: There was one airplane which had problems and had to be removed. So, there were fewer airplanes.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 107-111?

External Communications – Programme Code 0220: Policy and Strategy for Port and Airport development (Rs2,333,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.27 p.m.)

External Communications – Programme Code 0221: Civil Aviation Services (Rs490,000,000) was called and agreed to.

(8.27 p.m.)

Police Service – Programme Code 0230: Police Services was called.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr A. Duval: Page 112, 0230: *Law and order – Crime rate (per 1,000 population)*, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister, with regard to the crime rate, may we know the enquiries completed in investigation of crimes? So, the rate of enquiries completed for investigation of crimes for last year, the number of crimes reporters, the number of crimes which have been investigated?

Madam Chairperson, the rate is 4.2, therefore, it has been reported. We agree it has been reported?

The Prime Minister: I will have to circulate this because it is quite a long list you are asking. I will have to circulate it.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 115, s'il-vous-plaît, *item 22900.973 - Expenses i.c.w. Safe City Project*, peut-on savoir combien de caméras sont opérationnelles?

The Prime Minister: It does not say how many cameras are actually working. It says provision has been made for rental to Mauritius Telecom for installation of 4,000 surveillance cameras, about 2,000 intelligent video surveillance sites, traffic cameras: 375 intelligent surveillance sites but that is not the question.

The Chairperson: There is more coming.

The Prime Minister: The question is how many are actually operational. I am told all cameras are operational.

The Chairperson: Are now operational.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, I have a few questions on that page if you will allow. The first being: Can the hon. Prime Minister tell us how many cameras have not yet been installed under the Safe City Project as at date?

The Chairperson: Not yet installed.

The Prime Minister: I can give you the list. 157 actually have not yet been installed. 157.

Mr A. Duval: May I?

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, thank you. Still with regard to the Safe City Project, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: One moment! May I know what is the problem, hon. Jhummun?

Mr Jhummun: With whom?

The Chairperson: You were saying something?

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhummun: His KPI is good!

The Chairperson: Yes. Vous croyez que je suis née de la dernière pluie ? Allez-y !

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, thank you. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister, on Safe City project still, can the hon. Prime Minister state the number of components that have been activated under the project for the sum it was bought, and the components that have still not been activated?

An hon. Member: *Met enn PNQ matlo!*

Mr A. Duval: I have a question coming next week! But it is part of this exercise.

The Chairperson: I think you had a question on that.

Mr A. Duval: I have a question coming. So, this why.

The Chairperson: You have a question coming on that.

Mr A. Duval: In fact, they have prepared the answer. The components of the Safe City Project, as you know, there is face recognition and other plate recognition, etc.

The Chairperson: Let us wait for Tuesday.

Mr A. Duval: May we know which components have already been paid, but not yet implemented?

The Chairperson: If you have it, you tell him.

The Prime Minister: I do not have the details of which components. You are asking about components.

Mr A. Duval: If you can circulate.

The Prime Minister: I will circulate it, okay.

The Chairperson: Okay. Yes, hon. Leader of the Opposition. Do not dwell too long on that. Yes, carry on.

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson, page 115. I will refer the hon. Prime Minister to *item 31112.049 – Construction of Mauritius Disciplined Forces Academy*. Can the hon. Prime Minister report on progress, please?

The Prime Minister: What I know is that, I remember, there has been an unsuccessful tendering exercise. Therefore, the tender documents are being revised because it was unsuccessful. Provision is being made for a 10% advance payment to the selected bidder once you get the selected bidder.

The Chairperson: Yes, one last question on that.

Mr Lesjongard: A bidder has already been selected for the project?

The Prime Minister: Not yet.

The Chairperson: Okay, last question on this one.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister with regard to the Safe City Project again, can the hon. Prime Minister state the storage capacity in terms of days or weeks or months of safe city footage?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: One moment! May I advise everybody to allow the hon. Prime Minister to decide. If he cannot, he will tell us. Then, if he goes too far, I will stop him.

The Prime Minister: I remember, myself, I have been asking this. Normally, it is 30 days.

The Chairperson: Good.

Police Services – Programme Code 0230: Police Services (Rs 14,225,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.35 p.m.)

Prison Service – Programme Code 0240: Prison Services was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 133-134?

Prison Service – Programme Code 0240: Prison Services (Rs1,350,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.35 p.m.)

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0250: Policy and Strategy for Public Finance and Economic Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 142.

Mr A. Duval: Non, non, non.

(Interruptions)

S'il fait comme ça, je m'en vais. On ne peut. On a une soirée pour partir, vous nous excitez bonheur. Sur les 14 milliards qu'on se vante d'avoir augmenté, qu'on fasse une *examination*. Comment peut-on sauter de la page 118 et passer à autre chose ?

The Chairperson: Mais non.

Mr A. Duval: On est arrivé à la page 140.

The Chairperson: Mais je n'ai pas sauté. Excusez-moi. Je suis en train de faire page par page. C'est ce que j'ai fait.

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Chairperson, you said you will take page by page.

The Chairperson: This is exactly...

Mr Lesjongard: But at least you should let us know on which page you are.

The Chairperson: This is exactly what I have done.

Mr Lesjongard: No.

(Interruptions)

Vous avez appelé *Ministry of Finance, Madam Chairperson.*

Mr A. Duval: *Madam Chairperson, vous avez appelé le Ministry of Finance.*

(Interruptions)

To kone kot li ete sa ? Inn sot 30 paz!

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Je crois que je vais lever la séance et aller manger. Qu'est ce qui s'est passé? *Hon. Member, please, I am being guided. I am following page by page as far as I remember. Let us find out.*

C'était quoi ? On était sur ?

Mr A. Duval: On était sur page 117.

Mr Lesjongard: When I put my question, I was on page 115.

The Chairperson: Non.

(Interruptions)

Mr Assirvaden: Permettez-moi, *Madam Chairperson*, sur un point de clarification. Si on a fini de sauter la page – je peux comprendre qu'il est vendredi soir et qu'il y a le *happy hour* – mais ce n'est pas une question de bouger autant.

Mr A. Duval: Combien de temps on va répéter ça? *To pa le travay?*

Mr Assirvaden: *Mwa mo pa le travay ?*

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: One moment! Everybody, let us try and keep our heads.

(Interruptions)

Mr A. Duval: *Pa fer mwa komens koz pou twa!*

The Chairperson: Let us keep our heads!

Mr A. Duval: *Pa fer mwa koz pou twa!*

Mr Assirvaden: *To pou al kasiet la!*

Mr A. Duval: *Pa koumense ar mwa!*

The Chairperson: Non, non, *hon. Member*. Non, *come on* !

Mr A. Duval: Non, franchement !

Mr Assirvaden: Franchement oui.

The Chairperson: Arrêtez ! Sinon, vous savez, je vais partir.

Hon. Member, please help me.

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

The Chairperson: I have already...

Mr A. Duval: Page 118.

The Chairperson: No, listen to me. The Police have already walked out.

Mr A. Duval: But, Madam Chairperson, if it is like this, I am going.

(Interruptions)

If it is like this, I am going!

(Interruptions)

Mr Lesjongard: You told them to go.

Mr A. Duval: *Non, mo pe ale.*

The Chairperson: Prime Minister, what would you like?

Mr Lesjongard: This is becoming a joke, Madam Chairperson!

The Chairperson: Vous n'arrivez pas à suivre.

Mr Lesjongard: Pourquoi ils peuvent partir ?

The Chairperson: Mais parce que vous n'avez pas suivi.

Mr A. Duval: On n'a pas suivi ? Vous avez appelé 30 pages en avance, *Madam Chairperson* !

The Chairperson: Mais non ! Mais non !

(Interruptions)

On va couper la poire en deux. Non, on va couper la poire...

Mr Lesjongard: Il n'y a pas de poire. *Kot ena pwar?*

The Chairperson: Il n'y a pas de poire ?

Mr Lesjongard: Il y a ça.

The Chairperson: Allez, dites-moi. On va essayer de faire le maximum qu'on peut pour que tout le monde soit *happy*. Sinon, on reste là à discuter et à discutaitter.

Mr A. Duval: Page par page.

The Chairperson: C'est discutaitter.

Ms J. Bérenger: Page par page, s'il vous plaît !

The Chairperson: Mais j'ai fait page par page !

(Interruptions)

I am guided. *Et j'ai fait page par page.*

Mr A. Duval: But you are being misguided then!

The Chairperson: Okay, Leader of the Opposition, tell me where you wanted to come back?

Mr Lesjongard: No. When I intervened...

The Chairperson: It does not matter.

Mr Lesjongard: When I intervened, I was on page 115.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Let me give a chance...

(Interruptions)

One moment ! *J'ai dit de couper la poire en deux.* I will let you comeback. But the hon. Prime Minister may not get the information. At least, you would have said, and he will take note and reply? Allez-y. Allez-y pour ne pas perdre du temps.

On est sur la page 118.

Mr A. Duval: Yes. This is one of the many items for the Police Service. If the police service has gone and we have done only one item, then this role is pointless.

An hon. Member: *To ti p dormi!*

(Interruptions)

Mr A. Duval: This is going to be pointless. I called out last time that we should not be calling ahead like these pages. You called 30 pages in advance.

The Chairperson: Not 30.

Mr A. Duval: Now, should the police service be alerted, they would come back if they are really....

The Chairperson: Non, non ça je ne peux pas faire.

Mr A. Duval: A ce moment-là...

The Chairperson: Ça je ne peux pas faire. Je vous ai dit, je vais faire un geste – vous posez la question, l'honorable Premier ministre va faire ce qu'il peut et nous avançons sinon on reste là ou alors, moi aussi je rentre chez moi.

Mr A. Duval: Madame la présidente, point de clarification parce que j'ai beaucoup de questions à poser sur la police.

The Chairperson: Posez vos questions.

Mr A. Duval: Madame la présidente, j'ai beaucoup de questions à poser en détails. Si la police ne retourne pas, qu'on nous le dise maintenant pour que je prenne ma décision. Est-ce que la police va retourner ou pas ?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Okay we break. Let us break.

Mr Lesjongard: Let us break then.

The Chairperson: Let us break then we will see. *Oui, c'est mieux !* Let us break for one hour.

At 8.42 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 10.02 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.

The Chairperson: You may be seated, hon. Members. Okay, I am told that we can go back to page 116 – Police Service. What the hon. Prime Minister and myself have now agreed, with the Opposition, we will not come back on the votes because we have already

voted. We will just give a couple of possibilities of questions for the sake of democracy. I am so sorry, I do not know exactly what happened.

Mr A. Duval: Let us turn the page.

The Chairperson: Yes, let us turn the page. Thank you.

On avait fait je crois. Page 116, voilà. Allons essayer de chacun se rappeler où on en est.

Mr Lesjongard: Madam Chairperson, with regard to Human Resources, on page 116, with regard to two items Police Constables and Women Police Constables, number 29 and 30, can we get the number of vacancies for funded positions, Madam Chairperson, for both?

The Prime Minister: As part of the ongoing reform, the recruitment policy has been reviewed with view to broadening the pool of eligible candidates while ensuring recruitment remains aligned with contemporary police requirement. In the last recruitment exercise that is, in November last year, only 368 women police constables and PCs were enlisted.

Today, there are 548 funded vacancies in the police. There are 2619 unfunded vacancies but according to the revised scheme of service for the grade of police constable which was proved in May of this year, there will be key changes. Do you want me to tell you what changes?

Mr Lesjongard: Circulate it.

The Prime Minister: I can circulate it, okay.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Yes. Okay, page 118.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Prime Minister, Madam Chairperson with regard to page 118, the sub-programme 23002 – Crime Control and Investigation. First the KPI, number of reported cases of larceny with aggravating circumstances in respect of the Financial Year which is coming to an end. There were 207 reported cases of aggravated larceny. May I know in respect of the 207 cases, how many persons have been arrested and charged?

The Prime Minister: I am told that the number of reported cases for larceny and aggravating circumstances was 197. Number of cases concluded 98, actual detention rate is 50% that is the figures they have.

Mr A. Duval: It differs slightly from the actual figures of 207 but let that be. With regard to the detection rate in reported cases of crime, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister – I imagine it is Safe City detection – the rate of crimes detected unreported but detected by the system?

The Chairperson: Detected by themselves?

Mr A. Duval: Yes. If it is a surveillance system, it has to detect.

The Prime Minister: I will not have the figures in my head. Actually, they do not have the figures.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. With regard to *Item 21110.004 – Allowances*, we see that we are budgeting an amount of Rs1,010,000,000 for allowances. May we know the amount budgeted in respect of Sunday allowance and risk allowance of that sum? If we can have the breakdown?

The Prime Minister: That allowance includes night duty and Sunday allowances plus also there is an allowance for responsibility and disturbance. I will table the breakdown.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, please, thank you.

The Chairperson: Okay. Can we move on?

Mr A. Duval: Page 119. With regard to the *Item 31122.999 – Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, we see that there is a sum of Rs3.4 million being budgeted, may we know the breakdown and if you can also specify the breakdown for personal protective equipment in respect of that?

The Prime Minister: This does not include personal protection equipment, it includes acquisition of water pump and air conditioning for various police stations and it includes Rodrigues in that, divisional headquarters.

Mr A. Duval: Page 120?

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Prime Minister with regard to *Capital Expenditure item 31122.999 – Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, again, we see an increase of Rs2 million, may we know if it comprises personal protective equipment, if not what are these equipment?

The Prime Minister: The answer is no. It is not personal, it is for machines like fax machines, shredders, photocopying machines, office chairs, office desk and filing cabinets.

The Chairperson: Yes. Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. On the same page under Capital Expenditure item 31113.043 – *Driving License and Test Centre*. Can we be provided with information as to why there is an increase up to Rs3 million under that item?

The Prime Minister: There is a provision for – I think they call it audio-visual test system software, this is an upgrading. I have to give additional information. This is in fact for acquisition of air conditioning again for the audio-visual centre. Also, the road block equipment.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 121? Page 122? Okay.

Mr Lesjongard: Page 122 under *Sub-Programme 023005: Combatting Drug Trafficking*.

Ms Anquetil: Ton micro, Joe.

An hon. Member: *Sak fwa bizin dir twa met micro la.*

The Chairperson: Chut ! Vaux mieux laisser le micro debout.

Mr Lesjongard: Merci. I heard a similar remark years ago, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Yes, *c'est rassis!*

Mr Lesjongard: Can I come to KPI under Drug control operations. The percentage of drug related operations resulting in arrest and seizures, the target was 71% but we achieved only 60%. May we know why, Madam Chairperson?

The Chairperson: Yes. ADSU.

The Prime Minister: You are talking about the percentage of related operations resulting in arrest.

The Chairperson: Under target.

The Prime Minister: It is under target; the target was 71%, it is 60%. I will ...

The Chairperson: Here is the answer.

The Prime Minister: You want to know why it is under target? There is need for more intelligence-led crackdown operations across the island. That is why they feel it was under target and they are increasing that number.

Mr A. Duval: May I?

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. On the same page 122, same item: *Sub-Programme 023005: Combatting Drug Trafficking*. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister to provide the breakdown of the types of drugs seized and the value of assets seized. If you can provide later.

The Chairperson: Yes, later.

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 123.

Mr A. Duval: Yes. I have one. Thank you. Capital Expenditure, *Item 31122.805 – Acquisition of Security Equipment*; we see that there is the sum of Rs4 million. Does that comprise Personal Protective Equipment, if so, can he give the list?

An hon. Member: C'est une fixation!

The Prime Minister: Are you on page 122?

The Chairperson: Page 123.

The Prime Minister: Page 123, can you tell me which?

The Chairperson: Capital expenditure, hon. Prime Minister. Acquisition of Security Equipment - .805.

The Prime Minister: It is security equipment for ADSU including combat boots, bulletproof jackets and protective crash helmets.

Mr A. Duval: Would you be able to give us the quantity?

The Prime Minister: Quantity I do not have but I can circulate.

The Chairperson : Là, il ne faut pas exagérer.

(Interruptions)

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister... Madam Chairperson?

The Chairperson: I am listening.

Mr A. Duval: How is it an exaggeration to ask for a figure of what is being budgeted for the acquisition. How is that an exaggeration? How? Did you not budget for an actual figure? You just put a number like this?

The Prime Minister: No, but maybe you should know, it is not just this kind of equipment it also includes other machinery and equipment like for example, drones, action camera also electronic scales and air conditioning.

The Chairperson: That is the next one, yes.

Mr A. Duval: Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister if he can provide us with the details. It is a matter of interest, that is why I am asking. In fact, it is a good thing that you doing. So, that we get enlightened as to the quantity, the measure.

The Prime Minister: You want to know how many of the items?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, if you can provide us, eventually, the list.

The Prime Minister: I can, eventually, provide it.

The Chairperson: Yes, on the same page?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, on the same page, Madam Chairperson, I will refer the hon. Prime Minister to *Item 31121.801 – Acquisition of Vehicles*. There is an increase of Rs15 million. Can we be briefed on the type of vehicles and whether those vehicles will be used for drug control operations? I am putting that question because the targeted KPI will only increase by 2%, Madam Chairperson.

The Prime Minister: They have found that some vehicles are not fit for purpose, they are unserviceable so, they are acquiring 10 pickup vans and two motorcycles and one specialised vehicle.

The Chairperson: Okay. Yes.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister on page 125, on the Capital Expenditure, on the main heading *Item 31122 – Other Machinery and Equipment*. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister if he will kindly circulate the list, the details of the acquisitions to be made under that *Item 31122 – Other Machinery and Equipment* to give the particulars.

The Prime Minister: I will circulate.

The Chairperson: Okay, page 126, 127.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, I have one on page 127. The same Capital Expenditure, *Item 31122 – Other Machinery and Equipment* seeking details to be circulated, the list of equipment that are to be acquired, details thereof.

The Chairperson: Yes, okay.

The Prime Minister: It is in fact, acquisition for security equipment for generators and again air conditioning, digital engraving machine and tools for workshops.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, but may I ask, I understand this is for the SSU, right? If the hon. Prime Minister can give the details actually of the unit and the equipment. My understanding is that this falls under the SSU.

The Prime Minister: Yes. For anti-riot police as well, they have protective shields, body armoured plates and they need new road blocks that also they need.

Mr A. Duval: If you can provide us with the details, circulate it, please.

The Chairperson: Can we agree that is going to be the practice?

The Prime Minister: Except that I am wondering whether you should get the details because people will know how many of this we have, how many of that we have, I am not sure you can get the details.

(Interruptions)

An hon. Member: C'est sensible...

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, I fail to see how the number of boots is a matter of security, rather of equipment.

(Interruptions)

The Prime Minister: No, but that will ...

Mr A. Duval: There is nothing secret...

The Chairperson: Maybe we can provide just to the hon. Member.

Mr Mohamed: Precisely, it is not ...

The Chairperson: It will not become public, okay. I knew somewhere that we would have some matters that would be like that.

Mr A. Duval: ...seek of the information.

The Chairperson: Sometimes it may be, you do not know. Okay, I am on page 128, 129?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have one page 128.

The Chairperson: Yes, follow please. Page 128.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have one page 129.

The Chairperson: Page 129, okay.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *Item 31121.803 – Acquisition of Patrol Vessels (a) Offshore Patrol Vessel*. Rs390 million is being requested, may we have the details of acquisition?

The Prime Minister: It is an overhaul of one offshore patrol vessel. It is going to be taken under the Indian line of credit and then there are heavy duty boats. Provision is made for acquisition of two heavy duty boats to replace old ones. There is also acquisition of tugs for the purchase of one tug boat for Agalega and that is it.

The Chairperson: Page 130 – Immigration ? Page 131.

Mr A. Duval: I have one 130, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to Sub-Programme 023009: Immigration and Border Management. May we know from the hon. Prime Minister in respect of the last Financial Year, the number of persons that have been deported and made *persona non grata* by his Ministry?

The Prime Minister: I do not have the actual numbers. I answered a PQ on this but I can give you additional details.

The Chairperson: Okay. Yes.

Mr Lesjongard: Thank you, Madam Chairperson, on the same page. Under Recurrent Expenditure – *Item 21110.005 – Extra assistance*, can we be provided with more information, hon. Prime Minister?

The Prime Minister: This was in fact salaries and allowances to 30 retired police officers; they were employed on a one-year contract to reinforce the human resource capacity. Their monthly salary was Rs32,808.

The Chairperson: Yes. Page 131.

Mr A. Duval: Page 131, with regard to *item 31132.401 – e-Government Projects (a) E-Border Management System – Consultancy*, may we know if a consultant has already been appointed?

The Prime Minister: No, the consultant has not been appointed. There is a provision for consultancy services for the implementation of the new border management, e-gates and all those things but not named yet.

Mr A. Duval: Do you have the time for implementation?

The Prime Minister: I cannot say, the consultant will be able to look at it and tell us. I cannot say now.

The Chairperson: Can we move on please? We have now finished with police service. We can let them go for good now. We are not going to call them again. Thank you for coming. Now we are doing prison.

Merci Commissaire.

Page 132?

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Prime Minister with regard to *Programme 0240 – Percentage of detainees imprisoned more than once*, may I have the rate of persons going back, reincarceration rate in Mauritius?

The Prime Minister: I am sure they have the figures but I do not have it with me here. The rate is 76% and that is it really. The rate of recidivism is actually high as I say, 76%.

The Chairperson: Yes, okay. Page 134.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *item 31132.401 – E-Government Projects – Prison Management System*, we see that this project is being financed for this year. May we have details of this project?

The Prime Minister: Yes, they have completed as far as I remember phase one and two. In fact, it is for phase three of the project because they want to extend the e- Prison system to the probation and aftercare services.

The Chairperson: Yes. Interesting. Alright, page 135-136.

Mr A. Duval: Page 136, Madam Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister with regard to the *Programme 024002 – Custody and Rehabilitation of Detainees – KPI*. Out of the 414 persons that have been rehabilitated, may we know first, number of rehabilitations in respect of drug addicts and second, the successful rehabilitation rate in respect of those drug addicts?

The Prime Minister: As far as I know, these figures are not available but I can look for them.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 137?

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *item 31122 – Other Machinery and Equipment*, we see the anti-pelting netting system. May we know in which prisons the anti-pelting netting system will be installed?

The Prime Minister: I know one is at Melrose and the other one is at Grand River North West Remand Prison.

Mr A. Duval: I have a second question on this subject, Madam Chairperson. If I may ask the hon. Prime Minister on *(b) Mobile Phone Jammers* – hon. Prime Minister, we see that Rs30 million is being budgeted in respect of the capability of the mobile jammers that would be acquired. Can we know number of prisons that it will cover?

The Prime Minister: It is only for the Melrose Prison.

The Chairperson: Okay.

(10.28 p.m.)

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0250: Policy and Strategy for Public Finance and Economic Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 139. Yes.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, Madam Chairperson, with regard to *Programme 0250: Policy and Strategy for Public Finance and Economic Development*, the provisional growth GDP rate is 3.1% for the spent Financial Year. Does the hon. Prime Minister have the final figures?

The Prime Minister: The final figures, I have it in percentage again. It is projected to reach 85.5% of GDP by the end of June of next year. End of June 2027.

Mr A. Duval: 2026?

The Prime Minister: No but it is projected to end by June 2027.

Mr A. Duval: If I may clarify, Madam Chairperson, I am speaking of this year that is spent now so ending 30 June 2026. The figures are provisional; I wanted to know if he has the final figures.

The Prime Minister: For 2025-2026, yes, it is 87.8%.

Mr A. Duval: No, I am talking of GDP Growth percentage.

The Prime Minister: It is not yet finalised.

Mr A. Duval: Can you circulate when it is finalised?

The Prime Minister: When it is finalised.

The Chairperson: Next page, 140.

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

(Interruptions)

Excuse-moi hon. Ms Anquetil.

The Chairperson: Arrêter vos petites jérémiades.

The Chairperson: Pages 141-142? Okay, page 143?

I am giving you time. One moment, hon. Ms Joanna Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 21110.005 – Extra Assistance.* Oui, à la page 143. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir la liste des bénéficiaires et les noms ?

The Prime Minister: Yes, there are three beneficiaries: Dr. Pillay Narrainen, Mr Eric Ng Ping Cheun, and Mr Takesh Luckhoo. The Commissioner for the Protection of Borrowers, I do not have his name.

The Chairperson: Yes. Is that okay? Page 143?

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

The Chairperson: Carry on.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask in relation to *Item No. 26, Item 26313.020 – Gambling Regulatory Authority*, can the hon. Prime Minister give the details of, the persons appointed

in the management of the GRA, and the salaries, remunerations drawn and, of course, inclusive of allowances, etc.?

The Chairperson: Do you have that one?

The Prime Minister: I cannot give the details, but I know it is for increase in the PRB. It is one of the elements. Also, they want to fill vacancies.

Mr A. Duval: I am saying there is Rs134 million that were asked to vote for the GRA. I wanted to know in respect of the composition of the management of the GRA that has been appointed, their terms of service and remuneration drawn and, of course, the name of the incumbents for the management of the GRA, including the director of the various divisions falling under the GRA.

The Prime Minister: It is a long list. I can circulate it for you.

The Chairperson: Yes, you will give us later. Thank you.

Page 144? Yes.

Mr Lesjongard: On page 144, Madam Chairperson, *Capital Expenditure, Item 26323.020, Extra Budgetary Units, Gambling Regulatory Authority*, there is an amount of Rs19.2 million for financial year 2026-2027. Can we be provided with more information, hon. Prime Minister?

The Prime Minister: It is for catering of IT equipment that they need to buy and also office furniture for the relocation of the GRA to Ebène.

The Chairperson: Okay! Thank you.

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0250: Policy and Strategy for Public Finance and Economic Development (Rs 481,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.33 p.m.)

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0251: Public Finance and Budget Management was called.

The Chairperson: Page 145.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *Programme Code 0251: Public Finance and Budget Management*, improve the public financial management in the public sector, PFM Unit, percentage of ministries departments submitting annual report on performance.

Madam Speaker, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister, in respect of the 18% that have not submitted their annual report on performance, will those be tabled to the National Assembly?

The Prime Minister: That is those which have been have not been tabled? Okay.

Mr A. Duval: To clarify, when they are available to table them.

The Chairperson: Yes!

We move on . Next page, 146. Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: Je m'habitue.

Page 146, s'il vous plaît, *Item:22120 – Fees*. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails sur ces *fees* et pourquoi est-ce qu'il y a une augmentation dans l'allocation budgétaire ?

The Prime Minister: It is the provision for payment of fees to the University of Technology of Mauritius in respect to the Internal Audit Cadre following the diploma, BSC courses, and also to meet for local training fees for the Analyst Cadre and made for the refund for fees of eligible staff subscribing to professional bodies like ACCA and all this.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 147.

Mr A. Duval : Sub-Programme *025102: Revenue Mobilisation*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister for the collection of tax revenue with regard to arrears collected as a total of collectible arrears at the start of the year, may we know from the amnesty programme that he announced respect to arrears of tax, the total amount of tax collected, unpaid arrears, through the amnesty program, announced in last year's budget? The total sum collected?

The Prime Minister: The total sum collected as at May 2026 is Rs 3.99 billion.

Mr A. Duval: Through the amnesty program? I am asking.

The Prime Minister: There is, in fact, no amnesty, but it is an agreement that they cannot pay.

The Chairperson: Pages 148-152 ?

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0251: Public Finance and Budget Management (Rs4,013,800) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.38 p.m.)

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0252: Economic Development and Resource Mobilisation was called.

The Chairperson: Maintenant, page 153!

Mr A. Duval: Yes. Sub-Programme: *025201- Economic Development and Investment Promotion*, in respect of the KPI, percentage of foreign direct investment inflows directed to sectors other than real estate, can the Prime Minister provide a breakdown of the sectors other than real estate in terms of percentage of FDI inflows?

The Prime Minister: Other than?

Mr A. Duval: Other than real estates. So, can you list them?

The Prime Minister: I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: You will circulate it. Second question!

Mr A. Duval: I have a second question. I had asked the list of sectors. There are people who are answering now for the hon. Prime Minister.

The Chairperson: You mean people from your bench?

Mr A. Duval: No, on other benches.

The second question, Madam Chairperson, for the EDB, may we know the number of occupations permits delivered for the last financial year?

Well, one by one. Let me ask that first.

The Prime Minister: I think there was a question on occupational permits, but I do not have the figures with me. Maybe they have it. I do not know. They do not have it.

Mr A. Duval: The categories?

The Prime Minister: If it is categories, it is even more complicated. But I will circulate it.

Mr A. Duval: You can circulate, but I have another question.

The Chairperson: Okay!

Mr A. Duval: The FDI with regard to the real estate sector, may we know the total number of permits delivered by the EDB for promotion of real estate development in respect of the last financial year? As well as the number of applications received, but not yet delivered in respect of the last financial year. So, applications delivered and not delivered.

The Chairperson: You will provide?

The Prime Minister: I do not have these details but I can ask.

The Chairperson: But they are very interesting figures, I am sure. Let us carry on.

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0252: Economic Development and Human Resource Mobilisation (Rs657,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.42 p.m.)

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0253: Procurement Policy and Services was called.

The Chairperson: Okay, pages 157, 158. I am moving on. Page 159, 160. Do not tell me I went too fast.

Yes? You have one? 160.

An hon. Member: You have to vote on 159.

The Chairperson: I have to vote on 159.

Yes. C'est bon là. Si quatre personnes me parlent en même temps, c'est difficile. Merci, hon. Lobine!

So, this is the one. Okay, so I go.

Ministry of Finance – Programme Code 0253: Procurement Policy and Services. (Rs171,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.43 p.m.)

Treasury – Programme Code 0254: Government Accounting and Payment System was called.

The Chairperson: Page 161?

Mr A. Duval: Page 160.

In respect to the KPI itself, Sub Programme 025303 – Review of procurement proceedings – IRP procurement proceedings. Can we have the number of challenges that have been lodged at the IRP in respect of the last two financial years? So, I am asking for the number of challenges lodged in respect of the last two financial years?

The Chairperson: You know what happened? We have already finished 160.

Mr A. Duval: Really?

The Chairperson: Yes. I know it is difficult for everyone. We have already done 160. We just voted. We just voted once. Non. C'est après 160 qu'on a posé la question.

Mr A. Duval: 159.

The Chairperson: C'est bon là. Non, mais c'est normal. Il n'y a pas de souci. On va faire ça bien là. On continue avec 161.

Mr A. Duval: Did we do 160 or did we not do 160? On a voté pour 159, Madame Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Mais non. Est-ce que tout le monde est d'accord qu'on a voté après 160 ? Ce qu'on me dit. Moi, je ne suis pas une spécialiste de la question. Ce qu'on me dit.

Mr A. Duval: Madame Chairperson, il ne faut pas dire que je ne suis pas...

The Chairperson: Mais non, je ne suis pas. Ce qu'on me dit, c'est qu'on a fini le Ministère des Finances et qu'on est passé maintenant au Trésor.

Le Trésor, c'est 161. So, I will not listen to any of you. I will listen to the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk.

Mr A. Duval: Madam, si cela a été voté, ce n'est pas grave. Ils ont un 60 de toute façon. Moi, ce que je demande, c'est des informations. Donc, il peut toujours me donner.

The Chairperson: C'était quoi au juste ?

Mr A. Duval: La question c'était de savoir for the last two financial years, *le nombre de challenges qu'il y a eus* au IRP logé. C'est le public procurement. C'est ça ma question.

The Prime Minister: I can circulate it right now if you want.

The Chairperson: You got it?

The Prime Minister: I have it.

The Chairperson: Pour une fois, il y avait la réponse. Ne me poussez pas.

(Interruptions)

Mais non, mais quoi ? Le Premier Ministre, il a la réponse. Mais les autres fois, il a dit qu'il va donner après.

On va se bagarrer, allez. Il va répondre, il va répondre.

Très bien. Merci beaucoup, l'honorable Premier Ministre.

Okay, Treasury maintenant.

Allez, ça suffit. Treasury. Maintenant, on est *at 161. Okay?*

161. Une fois, deux fois, trois fois. Allez, 162. 163. Okay, let us follow. I am putting the question.

Treasury – Programme Code 0254: Government Accounting and Payment System (Rs265,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.47 p.m.)

Statistics Mauritius – Programme Code 0255: Provision of Statistics (Rs 239, 000,000) was called and agreed to.

(10.47 p.m.)

Corporate and Business Registration Department – Programme Code 0256: Corporate and Business Registration was called.

The Chairperson: Page 166?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, KPI exactly. 0256. Corporate and Business Registration. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister in regard to the registration of companies and businesses, will he be able to provide the House with figures of number of companies and business registration cards handed out, so companies open and BRN applied and obtained for the last financial year and the financial year prior to that?

The Prime Minister: I can circulate the details if you agree.

The Chairperson: Page 167, 168? Okay! I put the question.

Corporate and Business Registration Department – Programme Code 0256: Corporate and Business Registration (Rs219,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.49 p.m.)

Registration-General's Department – Programme Code 0257: Registration of and Deeds/ Documents and Conservation of Mortgages (Rs 202,500,000) was called and agreed to.

(10.50 p.m.)

Centralised Services of Government – Programme Code 2701: Centrally Managed Expenses of Government was called.

The Chairperson: This the one that we were to take later. We take it now? Good.

Page 529, 530?

Mr Lesjongard: Page 530?

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr Lesjongard: Page 530. Item under recurrent expenditure, that is, 22180 – *Mission expenses*. Can the hon. Prime Minister provide us with the list of Ministers, delegates, officials and Junior Ministers also, under that item number? You can table it, hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: I do not have these details. I will table it.

Centralised Services of Government – Programme Code 2701: Centrally Managed Expenses of Government (Rs4,396,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.52 p.m.)

Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government – Programme Code 2702: Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government was called.

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr Lesjongard: I refer the hon. Prime Minister, under recurrent expenditure, *Item 25550.001* to the *Price Stabilisation fund*. Can we know what amount has been spent for this financial year?

The Prime Minister: As I remember, Rs1.4 billion was spent.

Mr Lesjongard: Rs1.4 billion?

The Prime Minister: Yes.

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr A. Duval: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to *Item 21110.010*, Service to Mauritius Programme, may we know out of the budgeted sum of Rs79,600,000, how many persons are to be enrolled on the programme?

The Prime Minister: There are actually 66 interns. Although provision has been made for 300. I understand that they will be enlisted, that is, the rest, 234 interns would be enlisted in this financial year.

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr A. Duval: On the same page. *Item No. 22900 – Other goods and services*, expenses in connection with the Mutual Evaluation (AML/CFT/CPF), may we have details of the programme to be financed by the Rs35 million for the next three-four financial years? Details of the programme.

The Prime Minister: I think it is mainly for the disaster recovery system, the renewal of IBM licenses and the digital experience licenses, and for the cost and maintenance of these.

Mr A. Duval: AML or e-licensing? Did you answer for the AML or e-licensing?

The Prime Minister: Well, I thought you were asking for the e-licensing?

Mr A. Duval: Mutual evaluation?

The Prime Minister: So, let me give him the details he wants. A provision of Rs35 million has been made in preparation for the forthcoming mutual evaluation exercise by the Eastern and Southern African Anti-Money Laundering Group, which is coming up.

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr A. Duval: The breakdown?

The Prime Minister: I can give you the breakdown. Rs12 million for the engagement of the mutual evaluation experts and the interpretation of a communication to support Mauritius preparation for the evaluation exercise. Rs7 million for mock evaluation exercises, capacity building programs and attendance to the Task Force. Rs6.5 million for consultant services. It is funded through the African Development Bank by a grant to strengthen the capacity of government. Rs4 million for the appointment of an AML/CFT/CPF Consultant to provide technical assistance and support to the core group and the competent authorities.

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr Lesjongard: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Under the same budget item, that is, recurrent expenditure. I will refer the hon. Prime Minister to *Item 22900.045 - expenses in connection with Research and Innovation Programme*. Can we have an idea of how much money has been spent for the financial year 2025-2026?

The Prime Minister: What has been spent is Rs22.6 million.

Mr A. Duval: Madam Chairperson, same heading, but different *Item, 0.46, Public Sector AI Program*.

Madam Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister, out of Rs25 million budgeted last year, how much was spent? If he can give us the details of the programme? The investment plan.

The Prime Minister: I know the programme is for different ministries and departments. It is to develop a comprehensive understanding of Artificial Intelligence and its role in public administration. It is the hon. Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation who will spearhead this project in consultation with the Ministry of Public Service and Administration Reforms. But the actual expenditure is nil at the moment. Nil.

The Chairperson: Page 532-533?

Page 533!

Mr A. Duval: I have a question on page 533.

Madam Chairperson, we are voting billions for these pages. It takes time to see all these zeros.

So, 32155.078 – *Island Container Terminal Project*. Madam Chairperson, may we know the name of the strategic partner for the Island Container Project, out of which, Rs1 billion will be spent on? If he can give us the name of the strategic partner and, of course, give us the details of the project?

The Prime Minister: It is a government-to-government agreement. They have not decided which company it will be.

The Chairperson: Allez!

Mr Lesjongard: Can I refer hon. Prime Minister to the same item, that is, the Island Container Terminal Project. You said that it' is a G2G agreement. Can you inform the House whether the agreement has been signed?

The Prime Minister: Not yet. We have been discussing but not yet signed.

The Chairperson: Yes.

Ms J. Bérenger: Je reconnais avoir raté la page 532, mais j'aimerais demander si possible de donner plus d'informations pourquoi *l'income support*...

The Chairperson: C'est quelle item?

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 27210.020 – Income Support i.c.w. Basic Retirement Pension.* Il n'y a pas d'allocation budgétaire pour...

The Chairperson: Income Support i.c.w. Basic Retirement Pension. Les Rs500 million.

Ms J. Bérenger: Oui, mais pour les années suivantes, il n'y a pas d'allocation budgétaire.

The Prime Minister: Because that will change, actually. That is the reason, because they are not qualified for Basic Retirement Pension, because the support will now be integrated in the State Age Pension.

Centralised Services of Government – Programme Code 2702: Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government (Rs 26,223,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.02 p.m.)

Centralised Services of Government – Programme Code 2703: Contingencies and Reserves (Rs 2,500,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: Now, I am going to leave you in the able hands of the hon. Deputy Speaker.

Thank you.

At this stage, the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0302: Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and Family Welfare was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 172, 173, 174.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have for page 174.

The Chairperson: You have to follow me. I will not follow you. 174.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Okay. For this one I will allow you but then, you will have to follow.

Mr A. Duval: Then, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will ask you to go a bit slowly. With regard to page 173, *Programme Code 0305 – Reported Domestic Violence cases on declining trend. Domestic violence cases.*

May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister with regard to domestic violence cases, how many protective orders have been issued and how many, *le mot m'échappe mais* –

The Chairperson: Occupation order.

Mr A. Duval: Occupation order, thank you. Occupation order as well for the...

The Chairperson: Do you have that information hon. Deputy Prime Minister?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes, in which year, please?

The Chairperson: Which year?

Mr A. Duval: Last financial year.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes, 2025. So, the total number of cases is 463.

Mr A. Duval: No, total number of cases reported, occupation orders that have been issued.

The Deputy Prime Minister: For 2025: number of family related and other issues – non domestic violence cases: 1,094 for male, female 2,323, total 3,417.

Number of domestic violence cases: total 7,562. Total cases reported at Family Support Services: non-domestic violence, 10,979.

Number of applications for protection order: 986.

Applications for protection order withdrawn: 221.

Protection order issued: 463.

Mr A. Duval: And for occupation orders?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I will circulate.

The Chairperson: Page 174?

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0302: (161,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.08 p.m.)

Deputy Prime Minister's Office – Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0303: Women's Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming was called.

Mr A. Duval: *Ki, 175 la ?*

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Mais on a dit 175. We are on page 178.

Ms J. Bérenger: ... vous avez sauté une page là...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: On a fait ! You did not follow!

Ms J. Bérenger: ...

The Chairperson: Page 178?

Mr A. Duval: On était d'accord qu'on allait passer page par page.

The Chairperson: Allez, 175 ? You have to follow.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. Hon. Deputy Speaker. We have to go page by page.

The Chairperson: I am going page by page but you have to follow.

Mr A. Duval: *Item 21110.005 – Extra Assistance.* Can we have, for the sum budgeted of Rs4.1 million, may we know the advisers that have been appointed under that item and, of course, have their names and qualifications and remuneration drawn including allowances, gratuity, etc.?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Pierre Jean-Luc Emile, Senior Adviser. Mr Patrick Edouard Jean-Louis, Adviser, and Mrs Marie Joëlle Rosy Maryam Fidèle, Adviser on Communication and Public Relation Matters. I will circulate the details on qualifications and salaries.

The Chairperson: Page 175 ,176.

Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 176, l'item 22130 – *Studies and Surveys.* Est-ce qu'on peut savoir de quelles études et de quels *surveys* il s'agit ? Et quels sont les consultants ?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes. Studies and Surveys comprise initial report to ninth report of the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child. Second, the midterm review of the National Gender Policy 2022-2030.

The first report, initial report of the ninth report of the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child, Rs130,000. Mauritius ratified African Charter on the rights, etc. Following a bidding exercise, the services of University of Mauritius was retained for the preparation of the combined initial to ninth periodic reports and the midterm review of the national gender policy. So, it was undertaken at the level of the Ministry. The findings are being examined.

The Chairperson: Do you have a question?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, with regard to the same page 176, 22900.837 – *Expenses i.c.w. the National Initiative to Combat Drugs*, may I know from the hon. Minister, the Rs2 million that has been budgeted for this financial year, how are they going to be spent?

The Deputy Prime Minister: This is a new provision which will be used to implement programmes on child sensitive drug use prevention, parental empowerment, counselling and mental health support, and community awareness across family, social welfare and community structures. These initiatives are in line with the National Drug Control Master Plan 2026-2030.

The Chairperson: Page 177. We have already put the question. We move to the next item.

(11.14 p.m.)

The Chairperson: Page 179. Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 26313.066 - (c) *Women Entrepreneurship Programmes*, peut-on savoir combien de femmes ont bénéficié de ces programmes?

The Chairperson: You can circulate if you do not have it.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Another question? Yes!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22900.014 - (a) *Home Economics Unit*, est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails sur cet item? En quoi est-ce qu'il consiste et pourquoi est-ce qu'il y a une augmentation dans l'allocation budgétaire ?

The Deputy Prime Minister: So, what is the question, please?

Ms J. Bérenger: En quoi consiste le *Home Economics Unit* et pourquoi est-ce qu'il y a une augmentation dans l'allocation budgétaire?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The Home Economics Unit aims at promoting the social and economic empowerment of women and the community at large through capacity building projects, sensitisation programmes, talks and other activities pertaining to the field of home economics.

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare: Programme Code 0303: Women's Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming (Rs224,100,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.16 p.m.)

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare: Programme Code 0304: Child Protection, Welfare and Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 180. Now, your question!

Mr A. Duval: Yes, thank you. May I ask the hon. Minister on Programme 0304 - *Care and support services to children victims of violence*, at page 180, the KPI. May we know the successful number of adoptions of children for the last financial year? Would you have that? The Adoption Council falls within this item. That is why I am asking.

The Deputy Prime Minister: I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Est-ce que la ministre pourra circuler le nombre d'adoptions traités par le National Adoption Council ? C'est cela la question.

Okay. Donc, je viens sur l'item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. Est-ce qu'on peut avoir la liste des bénéficiaires et leurs salaires ?

The Deputy Prime Minister: What is the question, please?

The Chairperson: On page 181, item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, if you can clarify.

Ms J. Bérenger: On passe d'une allocation de 500,000 à....

The Deputy Prime Minister: Funds of Rs2 million will be used for the enlistment of five psychologists on sessional basis to be posted in the family support services to provide

psychological support to victims and families. Increase in provision is to cater for enlistment of psychologists to bridge the gap in service delivery due to lack of personnel to provide timely psychological support, counselling and intervention services.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. On the same item, psychological services offered to children, may I know from the hon. Minister – she might not have the answer, but she can provide it later – the number of psychological assessments and therapies that have been offered to the children who have been victim of abuse, which is reported in the KPI? So, number of those children that have followed a psychological treatment by the Ministry.

The Deputy Prime Minister: This will be tabled, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22900.912 - *(a) Long Term Care Institutions*, l'allocation budgétaire a doublé. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir pourquoi ? La même page 181.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Long Term Care Institutions. So, provision for the running expenses of shelters under management services contracts –

- (i) Shelter La Cigogne;
- (ii) Shelter La Marguerite;
- (iii) Shelter l'Oasis;
- (iv) Notre Dame Relay Centre.

Provision is also made for the day to day running of Shelter Cap l'Espoir.

The Chairperson: Page 182?

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0304: Child Protection, Welfare and Development (Rs334,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.21 p.m.)

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0305: Family Well-Being and Protection from Gender-Based Violence was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 184, *Item 22900.908 – (g) Mobile Application LESPWAR*, est-ce qu'on pourrait savoir combien de demandes ont été reçues, combien d'appels?

The Deputy Prime Minister:

- Number of people registered – 8,140;
- Total panic alerts – 5,930;
- Total call free – 2,631.

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0305: Family Well-Being and Protection from Gender-Based Violence (Rs80,400,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.23 p.m.)

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0306: Social Welfare and Community-Based Activities was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 185 and 186? Yes.

Mr A. Duval: On page 186, may I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister with regard to *Item 28211.022 – Social Welfare Centres – (b) Expenses i.c.w. Evacuee Centres?* Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister provide this House with the list of equipment held by social welfare centres, with regard to evacuees, in respect to each social welfare centre? She can provide the list of equipment including the number of beds, etc. at a later stage.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes, it will be circulated.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: *Under the same Item 28211.022 – Social Welfare Centres – (a) Operational Costs for Social Welfare Centres*, est-ce qu'il y aurait une allocation budgétaire prévue pour un nouveau *social welfare centre* à Glen Park, à Vacoas, s'il vous plaît?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The answer is no.

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare – Programme Code 0306: Social Welfare and Community-Based Activities (Rs593,100,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.25 p.m.)

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 0401: Policy and Strategy for Housing and Lands (Rs143,700,000) was called and agreed to.

(11.26 p.m.)

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 0402: Social Housing Development was called.

The Chairperson: Yes. On which page?

Mr A. Duval: It is the general KPI. Page 192 – *Programme Code 0402: Social Housing Development*. In regard to the 8,437 completed houses, can the hon. Minister provide us with the details of the constructor's guarantees in respect of those houses?

Mr Mohamed: So, for 2025-2026 it is 64%. You want what guarantee?

Mr A. Duval: With regard to the constructor's guarantees. *Les garanties décennales, etc.*

Mr Mohamed: We will get the document and table it. Obviously, this is not in our possession today. This would not be a financial document, as you would agree, budgetary-wise but I will give it to you as we go along.

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 0402: Social Housing Development (Rs1,128,400,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.28 p.m.)

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 0403: Land Management and Physical Planning (Rs1,266,400,000) was called and agreed to.

(11.29 p.m.)

Valuation Department – Programme Code 0404: Valuation of Immovable Properties was called.

The Chairperson: Page 198? Yes.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to the main item heading, *Programme Code 0404*, with respect to the 9,000 provisional valuation requests that were attended to, may I know from the hon. Minister, the number of valuation reports that have been produced and the number of such reports that have been challenged?

Mr Mohamed: I will circulate it. Thank you.

The Chairperson: You can circulate it! Yes. Page 199?

Valuation Department – Programme Code 0404: Valuation of Immovable Properties (Rs176,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.31 p.m.)

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme Code 0501: Policy and Strategy for Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (Rs129,100,000) was called and agreed to.

(11.32 p.m.)

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme Code 0502: Protection and Conservation of Environment was called.

The Chairperson: Page 205?

Mr A. Duval: Yes. I have a question on page 205. In respect of the main heading *0502 – Protection and Conservation of Environment - Coordinate actions for plastic management and enforcement of regulation*, may we know from the hon. Minister in respect to the enforcement of plastic management, the number in terms of tons or cubic meters of plastic that has been finally disposed of by the Ministry?

Mr Bhagwan: For the current year 2025-2026, 10 crack downs have been affected. Cases in court: we have 74 contraventions. In terms of volume, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Pages 205-207?

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme Code 0502: Protection and Conservation of Environment (Rs205,400,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.34 p.m.)

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme Code 0503: Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation was called.

The Chairperson: Page 208?

Mr A. Duval: Page 209.

The Chairperson: Page 209?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, may I?

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *Item 22120.008 – National Adaptation Plan*. May I ask the hon. Minister for this financial year, a sum of Rs2 million is being budgeted for the plan. May we know the expected date of finalisation of the plan?

Mr Bhagwan: The plan is there. We will circulate the timetable of the adaptation plan.

The Chairperson: You will circulate it.

Mr A. Duval: I have a question.

The Chairperson: Yes, okay.

Mr A. Duval: In respect of the plan, will he then table the plan?

Mr Bhagwan: I will circulate the plan and give you the timetable of its implementation.

Mr A. Duval: Alright. Thank you.

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme Code 0503: Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (Rs52,200,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.36 p.m.)

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme 0504: Cleaning, Greening and Embellishment was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 210-212, do you have a question?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have a question for *Sub-Programme 050402: Management of Public Beaches*. May I know from the hon. Minister in respect to stray dogs on public beaches – although it does not fall under his Ministry. It falls under his management. And he will answer if he has information or not – for the last two financial years, the number of stray dogs that have been removed from public beaches by his Ministry?

Mr Bhagwan: This is a real problem. Now, I will not hide from this problem. So, we are working together with my colleague. I will not tell you the exact numbers, but this is a problem.

Mr A. Duval: *Kot mwa ena 30!*

Mr Bhagwan: 30?

The Chairperson: Pages 212-213?

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme 0504: Cleaning, Greening and Embellishment (Rs1,899,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.39 p.m.)

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme Code 0505: Waste Management and Resource Recovery was called.

The Chairperson: Page 214?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, page 215. I have a question for the hon. Minister with respect to *Item 22070.003 – Operation of Landfill Sites*. I would like to know in respect to the sums being budgeted, how much of those sums are going specifically for fire fighting and fire management capabilities on landfill sites?

Mr Bhagwan: I do not have the exact amount now, but this is a lump sum for the whole operation. I can circulate exactly for the different components of the operation of the landfill.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you.

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – Programme Code 0505: Waste Management and Resource Recovery (Rs1,023,600,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.39 p.m.)

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries – Programme Code 0601: Policy and Strategy for Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries was called.

The Chairperson: Page 218.

Mr A. Duval: Yes.

The Chairperson: Yes, go on! Stand up!

Mr A. Duval: Yes, thank you. In respect to the to the programme, the KPI for the Ministry, with regard to the protection of from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, may I know from the hon. Minister, the number of contraventions and persecutions initiated for the last two financial years both inside Mauritian waters and in the EEZ?

Dr. Boolell: It is asked to me like a parliamentary question! I certainly can circulate the information because these are specific questions. I will circulate the information.

The Chairperson: Pages 219-222?

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries – Programme Code 0601: Policy and Strategy for Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries (Rs242,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.41 p.m.)

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries - Programme Code 0602: Cane Industry (Rs1,378,000,000), was called and agreed to.

(11.42 p.m.)

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries – Programme Code 0603: Food Crop and Livestock Sectors was called.

The Chairperson: Page 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have one on page 234.

Item 31113.047 – Construction of Dog Shelter. May I ask the hon. Minister, the number of dog shelters, because we see Rs 4.6 million being budgeted for the next three financial

years. The amount of Rs 4.6 million has been budgeted for the next three financial years in total. So, how many dog shelters is he going to build with that sum of Rs4.6 million?

Dr. Boolell: As far as I know, there has been one site identified for construction of dog shelter but as to the exact number, I do not it. They have told me what I have already said, there is only one dog shelter identified that will be constructed at Pamplemousses.

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries – Programme Code 0603: Food Crop and Livestock Sectors (Rs2,173,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.44 p.m.)

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries, Programme Code 0604: Forestry and Biodiversity, was called.

The Chairperson: Page 236.

Mr A. Duval: May I will ask the hon. Minister, in respect of the forestry and biodiversity of his Ministry, the number of leases that has been given in the last two financial years in respect of the *terrains de chasse* that fall within his Ministry. If he would give the details of these leases, please.

Dr. Boolell: I will circulate, but I can tell you that the committee is chaired by the Senior Chief Executive, and she, together with the committee, are the ones who assess all the applications. I have been told that as at present, 54 leases have been given.

Mr A. Duval: For the last two financial years?

Dr. Boolell: Yes, that is the information I have been given.

Mr A. Duval: Will you circulate the details thereof?

Dr. Boolell: I have no problem to circulate.

The Chairperson: Page 237, 238, 239, 240?

On page 240? Okay.

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 31410.401 – Rehabilitation of Nature Reserves & Parks.* Est-ce qu'il peut nous donner plus de détails sur cet item ?

Dr. Boolell: Well, from information given to me, it is quite long. Would you like me to circulate it?

The Chairperson: Circulate it, if it is long.

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries, Programme Code 0604: Forestry and Biodiversity (Rs402,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.47 p.m.)

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries, Programme Code 0605: Blue Economy was called.

The Chairperson: Page 242, hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 21110.005 – Extra assistance*, est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails ?

Dr. Boolell: Provision made for payment of salaries of advisor on contract. Again, quite lengthy. I better circulate it or would you like me to highlight? All right, okay, we will do that.

The Chairperson: Circulate it.

Page 243?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have one with respect to *Item 22120.024 – Fees i.c.w. Capacity Building Programme – Aquaculture (EU funded)*. May we know from the hon. Minister, in respect of the aquaculture capacity building programme, if we could have the details of, first of all, the number of persons that have been through the programme, and the details of the aquaculture programme that is being laid down?

Dr. Boolell: Again, you see, we work very hard. You see how lengthy the reply is. So, to your satisfaction, I will circulate it. Unless you want me to highlight.

Mr A. Duval: May we know where the aquaculture farms are going to be built?

Dr. Boolell: In relation to aquaculture farm, we have said that we will have a one pilot project in lagoon and most of the other projects will be off lagoon. Prior to starting any of the projects, there will be wide discussion with all stakeholders to ensure that there is a wide consensus. In the meantime, I can circulate.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: À la même page 243, *Item 22120.008 – Fees to Consultants*. Les R 5.7 million, c'était pour quel projet ? Quels sont les consultants, s'il vous plaît ?

Dr. Boolell: I have it here. In relation to the milestone and schedule of payment which is quite long. Would you like me to...? I better circulate it.

The Chairperson: Page 244.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *Sub-Programme 060502: Shipping – Enforce compliance of vessels with maritime standards*, may I know the number of inspections on vessels carried out? 575 for the spent financial year. How many contraventions have been served? And if you could give the details in respect of the vessels that have been contravened, whether same relate to those fishing in the EEZ or transiting through the port. Thirdly, if there are any of those that have been seized during the last financial year?

Dr. Boolell: In respect to enforcement compliance of vessels with maritime standard shipping, I have a figure here. I do not tend to subscribe to it myself. I will need to crosscheck with our officers.

There is a provisional of 475 and we have a target of 500. The number of inspections on vessels will increase.

I have it here. I am not too happy with the reply given to me. I will get the specific reply, and then I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: When you feel happy, you circulate it.

Dr. Boolell: No, because we need to supply information which is also reliable. It is not because my officers are giving me certain information that the answers are...

The Chairperson: Okay, you will circulate the proper.

Dr. Boolell: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: *Omwin enn bon minis!*

The Chairperson: Page 245? Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 21110.005 – Extra Assistance*, est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails, s'il vous plait ?

Dr. Boolell: Provision is made for the payment of salary to fill the posts in scarcity areas such as –

- one Deputy Director of Shipping;
- one Nautical Surveyor;
- Principal Nautical Surveyor;
- Marine Engineering Surveyor;
- two Nautical Inspectors;
- one Marine Engineering Inspector, and
- one Naval Architect.

There is a decrease in the provision based on trend of expenditure.

The Chairperson: Page 245?

Mr François: Page 245, last item, *Item 28213.010 – Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd – Rebate of 20% on Sea Freight to Rodrigues*. Can the hon. Minister provide details on how this money has been used? You can circulate it, please?

Dr. Boolell: I will circulate it. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson: Page 246, 247?

Mr A. Duval: In respect of the *Sub-Programme 060503: Mauritius Maritime Training Academy*, can I ask the hon. Minister two questions, in fact, Mr Chairperson? First, the reason for being under target by half. Second, may we know, from the 150 persons trained, which category has been trained? Skipper, etc.

Dr. Boolell: In relation to the number of skippers trained, I know there has been quite a few who have undergone training, but I do not have the specific number. For engineers, I do not have a specific answer. In relation of seafarers trained, the target is 350. As of now, it is 150.

Mr A. Duval: Why is that? (...)

Dr. Boolell: We have to sensitize our young, to impress upon them the relevance and importance of being a seafarer. We have started slowly, but surely. Now, the circle is being widened and many youngsters are showing interest.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask a follow-up question? With regard to the seafarers, may I know, out of these 150, have they been trained for commercial fishing or for hospitality? What are the training programmes?

Dr. Boolell: As far as I know – because we attended a commercial venture, encouraged by the Mauritius Shipping Group, and that was on the Trochetia –, mainly, hospitality. I have been told also that there are some who have been trained to venture into the fishing industry, but on the other hand, a few have expressed interest in relation to commercial activities.

The Chairperson: Page 248?

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries –Programme Code 0605: Blue economy (Rs379,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.56 p.m.)

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries – Programme Code 0606: Fisheries Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 249?

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister with regard to the *Sub-Programme 060601: Fisheries?* In respect of local fishermen vessels, may I know the number of which have been seized, and the quantity of equipment, nets, etc., for illegal fishing that have been seized by the Fisheries Protection Service for the last financial year?

Dr. Boolell: There is no information but we will get the information, and then we will circulate it. I am rather surprised that the information is not available, but as far as I know, there have been a few which have been arrested for illegal fishing activities.

The Chairperson: Page 250? Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 22120.024 – Fees (a) Training of existing/new fishers*, peut-on savoir combien de pêcheurs ont bénéficié de ce training?

Dr. Boolell: Provision is made for general course for artisanal fishermen to fish outside the lagoon and around the fish aggregating devices; training for fishers and fishmongers, fish handling, preservation and marketing etc. to preserve the quality and increase shelf life of fish. I have been told the cost will cover trainer fees and stipend to fishers. Last time, Fisherman Cards were issued in December 2024.

Now, in relation to the number of training of existing fishers, I see there is 1,000.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Member.

Ms J. Bérenger: Au bas de la page 250, *Item 22900.042 – Reward for Sighting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing Vessels*, peut-on savoir quel est le montant qui a été dépensé et à combien de personnes ces *rewards* ont été octroyés ?

Dr. Boolell: Reward in relation to unreported, unregulated and illegal fishing activities, is that what you asked? *C'est ça*.

Provision is made for a reward for fishing operators and crew who alert the Ministry on what we call the IUU. The number that I have is 500, am I right? Again, no. None? I would have thought but as far as I know there has been a few ships that have been arrested for IUU fishing.

The Chairperson: Page 251.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have a question.

The Chairperson: Page 251. I will come to you.

Mr A. Duval: He can have it.

The Chairperson: You can have it.

Mr François: Thank you very much. Yes, I refer to page 251 – *Item 28212.031 – Financial Assistance to Fishers for Purchase of Fishing Materials*. May I know the number of fishers who benefitted from same from Rodrigues in the amount disbursed?

Dr. Boolell: I will get the information and will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Okay, hon. A. Duval!

Mr A. Duval: Yes. May I ask in respect of *Item 28212.002 – Compensation to Net Fishermen*. We see that the programme has been rolled back quite substantially. May I know the number of beneficiaries for the last Financial Year and the number of beneficiaries that we are budgeting for this Financial Year?

Dr. Boolell: I do not have the exact number of fishers who obtained the financial assistance although I have the amount of money disbursed but for compensation to net fishermen, the amount that was disbursed is Rs23 million. Now, compensation to net fishermen, I will circulate it.

Mr A. Duval: Can I ask the same for the Artisanal Fishermen? The number of beneficiaries?

Dr. Boolell: Yes, I will circulate.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, Page 251? If you allow me, *Item 28225.008 – Off Lagoon Fishing Scheme of which (a) Purchase of Canotte*. May I know the number approved for Rodrigues?

Dr. Boolell: As far as canottes are concerned, we have encouraged fishermen to move off lagoon. Unfortunately, there is none for Rodrigues but as far as Mauritius is concerned, it is over here but again if we have to make provision for Rodrigues, we will do it without any problem.

The Chairperson: Page 252?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have a question. With regard to the aqua drone's *item 31122.999 – Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment - Aqua Drones*. We see the project of Rs21 million for the acquisition of Aqua drones. Rs1 million to be disbursed in this Financial Year. Can we know, from the hon. Minister, what is this Aqua drone acquisition programme?

Dr. Boolell: Well, provision made for procurement of two Aqua drones on a pilot basis for coastal surveillance due to inadequate manpower from the Fisheries Protection Service and that was advice tendered by the Director of Audit.

The Chairperson: Okay, I will put the question now.

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries – Programme Code 0606: Fisheries Development (Rs590,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: So, we will break for tea or coffee probably and we will come back in half an hour.

At 00.05 a.m. the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 00.39 a.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

The Chairperson: Please be seated!

(00.39 a.m.)

Ministry of National Infrastructure – Programme Code 0701: Policy and Strategy for National Infrastructure Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 257?

Mr A. Duval: I have a question on page 257, Mr Chairperson. With regard to 0702 - *Percentage of existing public buildings retrofitted to comply with safety, accessibility, sustainability and quality standards*, may we know for the public buildings, the number of which are still not issued with a fire certificate and the appropriate safety standards?

Mr Guinness: If you need the number of buildings, I will check it and I will circulate the information.

The Chairperson: Page 258, 259? Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 259, *item 21110.005 - Extra Assistance*, can we have the list of the beneficiaries and their salary?

Mr Guinness: Yes, Extra assistance, it is for one Advisor on Information Matters, one Advisor on Public Relation Matters, and one Advisor –

- the Advisor on Information Matters: Mr Didier Rose;
- the PRO who I answered last financial year, same person: Jaweed Mahmood Ahmad Taujoo, and
- the Advisor, Mr Dinesh Boodoo, and one I sacked.

Mr Thierry Didier Rose, salary Rs76,925, like all Information Advisors. The PRO, like all PROs, Rs60,000, and the Advisor like all Advisors, Rs68,000.

The Chairperson: Page 260!

Mr A. Duval: On page 260 – *Item 22900.837 – Expenses i.c.w. the National Initiative to Combat Drugs*, can the hon. Minister lay down the initiatives for us in respect of the Rs2 million budgeted for this year for his Ministry?

Mr Guinness: For my Ministry, in fact, what we are doing, the National Drug Control Master Plan 2026-2030, sets out a comprehensive evidence-based strategy to address evolving drug challenges. The plan adopts a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach, targeting key risks such as synthetic drug proliferation, youth drug use, trafficking and public health concern. Provision has been made to cater for sensitisation campaign activities and awareness campaigns targeting schools and communities in connection with drug supply reduction, drug demand reduction, health and well-being and coordination to educate. My Ministry plans to carry out sensitisation campaigns through the Citizen Advice Bureau.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 260, *item 22030.005 - Rental of Facilities for Events*, est-ce qu'on peut savoir le montant dépensé pour l'année financière passée et la liste des événements et les prestataires?

Mr Guinness: Mr Chairperson, this is for the tents for different socio-cultural activities. The list is very long throughout the whole year. Rs17.5 million was earmarked, but we spent much more because there is demand everywhere and we try to satisfy everywhere. So, I will circulate the list, and it is a big list.

Ministry of National Infrastructure – Programme Code 0701: Policy and Strategy for National Infrastructure Development (Rs188,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(00.44 a.m.)

Ministry of National Infrastructure – Programme Code 0702: Technical Services for Construction and Maintenance of Government Assets, was called.

The Chairperson: Page 262, yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Toujours le même *item 21110.005, Extra Assistance* – est-ce qu'on peut avoir plus de détails ?

Mr Guinness: I will give you. So, Extra assistance, is provision for the payment of allowance as follows –

- pre-registration trainee engineers;
- architects, and
- one geotechnical expert on contract from Japan.

So, this is for payment of allowances for training of professionals.

The Chairperson: Page 263. Yes?

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 22130.001 – Studies and Surveys*, il y a une allocation budgétaire de R 10 millions pour l'année financière à venir. Est-ce que les consultants ont déjà été recrutés ? Si oui, est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir la liste ?

Mr Guinness: So, for the studies and surveys, it is for improving accessibility to public infrastructure. So, provision is for assessment on how to enhance access to public services through a comprehensive upgrade of vital facilities and equipment across the country. So, I do not think that my Ministry needs consultants to do that. We have engineers, we have all professionals in the Ministry.

The Chairperson: On which page?

Mr A. Duval: On page 267, with regard to item 31112.401 - *Upgrading of Office Buildings - Renovation of Ex-Tobacco Board Building - Claudette - 1st Floor*, there is a project value of Rs12,500,000. Would you be able to give us the details, even if you circulate it, of the renovation works carried out on the first floor?

Mr Guinness: Okay, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Ms J. Bérenger?

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 267 – *Item 22900 - Other Goods and Services*, est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails?

Mr Guinness: Other Goods and Services is an expenditure consisting of items – Uniform and Miscellaneous Expenses. So, it consists of provision made for the purchase of minor and non-recurring items not catered for under any specific expenditure; items such as replenishment of imprest amongst others.

Ministry of National Infrastructure – Programme Code 0702: Technical Services for Construction and Maintenance of Government Assets (Rs725,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(00.48 a.m.)

Ministry of National Infrastructure – Programme Code 0703: Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges was called.

The Chairperson: Page 270?

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *item 31113.003 - (o) Motorway M4 from Forbach to Bel Air*, will the hon. Minister be able to table the feasibility report for the M4 and the EIA report in respect thereof?

Mr Guinness: I will circulate what we have.

Ministry of National Infrastructure – Programme Code 0703: Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges (Rs3,484,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(00.49 a.m.)

National Development Unit – Programme Code 0704: Land Drainage and Community Infrastructure Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 271?

(Interruptions)

Mr Baboolall: Maintenance of drainage infrastructure, watercourses and rivers, can the hon. Minister table the details of the 197 inspections conducted during the Financial Year 2025-2026?

Mr Guinness: You mean to say to give you the list of all the inspections that they have done? Okay, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Sur la même page, *Item 21110.005 – Extra Assistance*, en quoi consiste l'*Extra Assistance* pour cette section ?

Mr Guinness: Provision is maintained for the recruitment of an officer on contract to advise on the National Development Matters.

Ms J. Bérenger: À qui est alloué le contrat ?

Mr Gunness: I just said provision has been made for the recruitment of an officer. He has not yet been recruited.

The Chairperson: Pages 272-274?

Ministry of National Infrastructure – Programme Code 0704: Land Drainage and Community Infrastructure Development (Rs598,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(12.52 a.m.)

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0801: Policy and Strategy for Health Sector was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 275-276?

Mr A. Duval: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. In respect of the programme's KPI, 0803: Public Hospital and Specialised Medical Care, Percentage of patients reporting satisfaction with public healthcare services, may I know from the hon. Minister the actual percentage of satisfaction rate? The provisional one is 60%, down 7% from the target rate. So, first, the actual rate now, if he has it. The final rate? Second, the reason, if any, for the lower satisfaction identified?

Mr Bachoo: The project was launched on 24 March 2026, which means recently. Around 150 responses have been received at the time of reporting, which is very small compared to the total number of attendances. Out of the 150, 60% is satisfied with the service. That is the information that I have.

Mr A. Duval: Just to clarify. I understand that the survey has been done on 150 patients island-wide.

Mr Bachoo: This is what I am made to understand, but it was launched recently. That explains why there has been a low percentage of people participating.

The Chairperson: Pages 277-278? Put your question!

Mr A. Duval: Page 278, with regard to digitalise health services, connection to the e-Health system, will the hon. Minister provide us with the details of the e-health programme,

including the institutions that have been connected and the percentage connection in those institutions?

Mr Bachoo: This is a project which has recently started. As far as I know, the work has been completed in one of them, that is, the Flacq region, the eastern region. We have started it already. It will take a little bit of time.

With regard to the e-health project, continuous progress is being made concerning its implementation. The transition to a digital health ecosystem is a complex undertaking, but our latest operational statistics demonstrate strong system adoption for the period extending from August 2025 up to the most recent data captured in June 2026. The core modules of e-health system reflect the following activity levels – it is very long. I would like to circulate it.

Mr A. Duval: I have a more specific question. What is the amount of patients' records that has been digitalised to date through the e-health system?

Mr Bachoo: The total is 150,638 registrations. This the information that I have with me.

Mr A. Duval: Can the Minister clarify what he means by registration? Are those patients' files?

Mr Bachoo: These are patients who have registered.

- The appointments also have been registered: 42,030.
- Doctors' consultations: 268,452.

All these have already been recorded.

The Chairperson: Page 279?

Mr A. Duval: I do not think we are on the same page. For the e-health system, if you can seek the information and circulate it.

Mr Bachoo: I am going to circulate the information which is made available to me.

Mr A. Duval: I repeat the question so that you understand it. The digitalisation rate of patients' files, complete patients' records.

The Chairperson: You will look at the number of patients whose files have been digitalised, and you circulate it.

Mr Bachoo: This is exactly what I am telling.

The Chairperson: Pages 279- 281? Page 280, come on!

Mr A. Duval: *Item 27210.008 – Assistance to Patients Inoperable in Mauritius - Overseas Treatment Scheme*, may we know, out of the 200 million budgeted last year, the number of patients that have been sent overseas? If he will also tell us for the categories of operations made?

Mr Bachoo: This concerns overseas treatment. So, for July 2025 to April 2026, for adults –

- cardiac treatment: 15;
- neurosurgical: 77;
- others (leukemia, orthopaedic, ENT, cancer, electron, renal transplant): 176;
- eye treatment: 6.

In all, the total is 274.

As far as the children are concerned, it is 176. The total is 450.

The Chairperson: Which page? 280, come on!

Mr Baboolall: *Item 26313.173 – Digital Health Co. Ltd*, can the hon. Minister state or table the composition of this company and the fees payable to them?

Mr Bachoo: One second, I will give you the information.

The Chairperson: You will circulate the information?

Mr Bachoo: I do have it.

Digital Health Company Limited was established under the aegis of my Ministry, incorporated on 19 September 2024, under the Companies Act. Its main objective is to act as a central institutional mechanism for long-term implementation, governance and sustainability of national e-health system and all digital health initiative. It provides dedicated

oversight, strategic direction, operational support to drive the digital transformation of the public health sector, ensuring that modern interoperable and resilient systems underpin the delivery of health services across Mauritius.

As I told you, it was constituted in 2025. I can circulate it to you.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister, under *Item 31122.442 – Upgrading of Building - Warehouse for Medical Supplies*, I am glad to see 200 million being budgeted. If he can give the details of this project?

Mr Bachoo: Upgrading of buildings. So, in view of the high number of expired drugs, provision has been made to meet cost for renting or acquiring a large fit-for-purpose warehouse for the storage of pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical items as well as for refurbishment. Currently, drugs are being stored at Central Supplies Division (CSD), La Rosa, New Grove and Castel, that is it.

Mr A. Duval: Could we have details of the refurbishment works being contemplated?

Mr Bachoo: Well, I do not have it because, money has just been voted. Now we are going to look after that.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Baboolall!

Mr Baboolall: Still on page 280, Capital Expenditure *Item 31132.118 – Digitalisation of Hospital Services – (a) e-health*. Can the hon. Minister give detail about the Rs103 million? How much has been spent?

Mr Bachoo: Yes. Digitalisation of hospital services. Provision remains in relation to digital health projects, namely the national e-health project, hardware and software and managed services for national laboratory information management. Provision made for the implementation of phase one of the project.

Well, the amount of cumulative expenditure as at 31 May 2026 is Rs74.8 million.

The Chairperson: Okay, on the same page.

Ms J. Bérenger: Toujours sur l'*Item 27210.008 – Assistance to Patients Inoperable in Mauritius – Overseas Treatment Scheme*. Est-ce que l'honorable ministre pourrait donner la liste des cliniques étrangères qui bénéficient de ces fonds ?

Mr Bachoo: I have just circulated. I have just mentioned it.

Ms J. Bérenger: But is it not the same question.

Mr Bachoo: The number of patients the number of patients who are undergoing treatment I have mentioned this about more than 400.

Ms J. Bérenger: It is not the same question. My question is about the private clinics that benefit from ...

Mr Bachoo: Yes. Well, I have got a long list of about 24.

Ms J. Bérenger: Est-ce qu'il pourrait aussi indiquer le montant des dettes que l'on doit aux cliniques ?

Mr Bachoo: I beg your pardon? How much do we owe?

Ms J. Bérenger: Yes.

Mr Bachoo: We have already nearly paid because there was a huge debt of the previous government of over Rs700 million and we have been able to pay up till now. There must be some sort of (...) but I do not have the exact figure. We are still paying.

Ms J. Bérenger: On pourrait avoir la liste ?

Mr Bachoo: Yes, I can circulate.

The Chairperson: Pages 281,282?

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0801: Policy and Strategy for Health Sector (Rs 1,378,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.04 a.m.)

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0802: Community and Preventive Healthcare was called.

The Chairperson: Page 283, 284.

Mr A. Duval: In respect of the KPIs, *Prevention, treatment and management of NCDs*. May I ask the hon. Minister, the first issue is mortality amongst 30 to 70 years old per 100,000 population. The rate has increased and the reasons identified in respect thereof? The second KPI, as well. We are well above the target for the percentage of secondary school students who are obese/overweight. Could you give us the reasons that have been identified?

Mr Bachoo: Yes. Most countries in the world with an aging population are witnessing an increasing mortality due to NCD, that is, non-communicable diseases. In Mauritius, we are also witnessing this trend.

However, over the past 10 years, we have neglected prevention, early detection and management of non-communicable diseases and we are paying the price today. We have now the NCD National Integrated Action Plan, the National Service Framework for NCDs and we are implementing the recommendation of International Advisory Committee. We expect, at least, to reverse the trend in the coming years. So, all that is happening is a result of negligence of the past years.

Mr A. Duval: What about for the overweight and obese school children?

Mr Bachoo: The same thing. They have not cared for our children. Now we are having extra sessions in the schools also. We are sending all our officers and they are training our children. We are we are trying to campaign.

The Chairperson: No, we are going on policy now.

Mr A. Duval: Would you be able to table the report for the benefit of the House?

Mr Bachoo: Well, if the reports are available, I am going to table but this is an ongoing process.

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0802: Community and Preventive Healthcare (Rs1,808,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.06 a.m.)

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0803: Public Hospital and Specialised Medical Care was called.

The Chairperson: Page 287.

Mr A. Duval: Yes. May I ask the hon. Minister, we have got to the Programme 0803: *Public Hospitals and Specialised Medical Care*. More specifically with regards to the *Specialised medical treatment and long-term patient management*. May I ask the hon. Minister, in respect of drug addicts that undergo the programme, if any, will he be able to state the number thereof, and of course, the percentage of patients of whom was successfully rehabilitated?

Mr Bachoo: Well, we have got a few centres in our country that falls under my Ministry and we are trying to give treatment to those patients but I do not have the figures with me. If you can come with a substantive question in Parliament, I am going to answer you. But in fact, we are doing a good job in that.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister. This is a performance-based budget. There are KPIs. You should under this heading provide the information. So, if you can.

The Chairperson: He has asked the question.

Mr A. Duval: He can circulate it after but I do not have to come with a PQ.

The Chairperson: If you do not have the answer now, you will circulate it.

Mr Bachoo: I do not have the information now but I have already mentioned that effort is being made from our side and at the same time, now, we have got a new institution NADC which has come into the field.

Mr A. Duval: Mr Chairperson, I do not want to argue. All I am saying is.

Mr Bachoo: I have told you, I am going to circulate the answer.

The Chairperson: Yes, he will circulate.

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0803: Public Hospital and Specialised Medical Care (Rs16,017,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.09 a.m.)

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0804: Public Health and Disease Control was called.

The Chairperson: Page 297.

Mr A. Duval: In respect to Programme 0804, KPI – *Detection response to infectious/vector borne diseases*. May I know from the hon. Minister the amount of modified mosquitoes that have been released to curb the population of mosquitoes?

Mr Bachoo: Over 2 million.

Mr A. Duval: Last time I asked you, you said you could not count.

Mr Bachoo: I beg your pardon? That is why, I could not count, I said average, approximately. I did not say exactly how much.

The Chairperson: Page 298. Yes.

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 221120 - Drug Users Administrative Panel*. Si je ne me trompe pas, c'est ce panel qui décide de l'utilisation ou non de l'huile de cannabis pour les patients. Est-ce qu'on pourrait savoir combien de requêtes ont été reçues dans ce sens et combien ont été approuvées ?

Mr Bachoo: I did not get you. Please repeat the question.

Ms J. Bérenger : Si je ne me trompe pas, c'est ce panel qui décide de l'utilisation ou non de l'huile de cannabis pour les patients qui en ont besoin. Est-ce qu'on pourrait savoir combien de requêtes ont été reçues et combien ont été approuvées ?

Mr Bachoo: Okay, I am going to answer you. Provision is made for the operationalisation of the Drug Users Administrative Panel and paying of the fees of the Chairperson and members of the of the panel. The composition of the panel is at Annex 5.

The Drug Users Panel is fully operational since 15 April 2024 to assist drug users referred to it by the Police. As at 31 March 2026, the Police had intercepted 2,363 drug users and 690 have agreed to be referred to the DUAP for treatment.

The Chairperson: Answer the question. If it is long, you circulate it.

Mr Bachoo: Okay.

The Chairperson: You do not have to wait to give a history of that. Straight to the question!

Mr A. Duval: Yes. Remember we are here to get answers as well, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Chairperson: Yes, but you will get your answer either today or it will be circulated.

Mr A. Duval: Yes. On page 298, *Item 22900.982-Synthetic Drug Prevention Programme*, can you give us the details of the programme, including actions taken so far?

Mr Bachoo: Yes. I will give you.

So, provision has been made for sensitisation and awareness campaigns, pamphlets, medias and video course on synthetic and other drugs targeting mainly the use in and out of schools as well as the community. The contract has been awarded to Digital Kites Ltd for an amount of Rs3.8 million for a national mass media, social media campaign against synthetic drugs and other drugs.

The Chairperson: Pages 299-300?

Ministry of Health and Wellness – Programme Code 0804: Public Health and Disease Control (Rs597,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(01.14 a.m.)

Ministry of Tourism – Programme Code 0901: Policy and Strategy for Tourism Development, was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 301-303?

Mr A. Duval: Can I ask the hon. Minister with regard to the *Program Code 0901 – Develop Policies and Strategies for the development of the Tourism Sector*. So, the program is: Mauritius maintained as an attractive and desirable tourist destination. May I know from the hon. Minister, the customer satisfaction surveys done at departure from the airport in respect of the last financial year? If you can give us the percentage of tourists having given a positive survey? Do you have this figure? This is something that that is taken for statistics.

Mr R. Duval: I know, but I do not have it. I can circulate it if you want.

The Chairperson: Circulate it. Pages 303-305?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have on page 304.

In respect of *Capital Expenditure, Item 31113 – The Upgrading of Touristic and Leisure Infrastructure*, can we have the details of that project? Can you give the details for this financial year? The sums and the projects to be financed.

Mr R. Duval: Can I circulate it?

The Chairperson: Page 305?

Ministry of Tourism – Programme Code: 0901, Policy and Strategy for Tourism Development, (Rs137,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to

(1.17 a.m.)

Ministry of Tourism – Programme Code 0902: Regulation and Control of Tourism Related Activities was called.

The Chairperson: Page 306.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have a question. With regard to *Item 26313.09 (b) – Tourism Sites Cleaning and Embellishment Programme*, may we know for the last financial year, how this sum has been disbursed and the sites that have been embellished? You can circulate it if you do not have it.

Mr R. Duval: Yes, I can circulate it.

Ministry of Tourism – Programme Code 0902: Regulation and Control of Tourism Related Activities (Rs172,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.19 a.m.)

Ministry of Tourism – Programme Code 0903: Destination Promotion was called.

The Chairperson: Page 306?

Mr A. Duval: I have a question. With regard to *Item 26313.047 – MTPA*, may we know for *Item (b) Promotion and Destination Support, (i) Destination Promotion*, the list of overseas tourism fairs participated by the MTPA? The details of the fairs participated at, and of course, the costs and who participated?

Mr R. Duval: Yes, I can circulate it. The list is very long.

Ministry of Tourism – Programme Code 0903: Destination Promotion (Rs587,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.19 a.m.)

Ministry of Tourism - Programme Code 0904: Capacity Building in the Hospitality Sector was called.

The Chairperson: Page 308.

Mr A. Duval: I have a last question on Ecole Hôtelière Sir Gaëtan Duval, *capacity building*. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of students, for the last financial year, that have undergone training in respect of *des formations*? Second, in respect of refresher courses that have been taken at Ecole Hôtelière Sir Gaëtan Duval?

Mr R. Duval: Yes. 1,368 students were enrolled in 2025.

Ministry of Tourism – Programme Code 0904: Capacity Building in the Hospitality Sector (Rs 102,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.21 a.m.)

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity – Programme Code 1001: Policy and Strategy for Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity was called.

The Chairperson: Page 309.

Mr A. Duval: I have one. In respect of the KPI for *Social Protection*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of households under the SRM that have successfully been connected with free internet by his Ministry?

Mr Subron: I can give the answer for the performance indicator if you want or otherwise, I can give the details. You want me to table it? I can table it. It is lengthy. I have already reported on it in the National Assembly.

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: On page 311, in respect of the Policy and Strategy for Social Integration, Action plan for disability, may we know in respect thereof, the actual number of registered disabled persons who have joined the workforce?

Mr Subron: I do not have the information now. I will table it.

The Chairperson: Page 312. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms. J. Berenger: Page 312, *Item 22900.856, expenses i.c.w Just Transition Commission*, est-ce qu'on pourra avoir plus de détails comment cette allocation budgétaire sera dépensée?

Mr Subron: This is a new item which has been incorporated in this budget and it is meant for the Ministry developing programs for social justice and environmental justice in the context of climate change.

Ms. J. Berenger: Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails sur comment cette allocation budgétaire sera dépensée?

Mr Subron: Yes, I can give you the general details. Since this government has taken over, my Ministry is now responsible for climate related victims. This will be one of the dimensions that we will address.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mr A. Duval.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, on page 312, *Item 22900.837 – Expenses i.c.w the National Initiative to Combat Drugs*, can you please outline the plan for your Ministry?

Mr Subron: Yes, this money and fund will be dedicated to programmes which will involve vulnerable people that we cater for under the social integration programme. And we cater mainly for poor people in many regions. The program will be developed together with NADC.

Mr A. Duval: Just as a matter clarification, is it that the programme will be developed, out of which, the Rs2 million will be spent or there is a programme?

Mr Subron: No, this is a new program.

Mr A. Duval: Okay, but we have heard for the other Ministries, some of them have been developed already.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 312, *Item 22120 – Fees*. Il y a une augmentation considérable dans l'allocation budgétaire. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir en quoi consistent ces *fees* ?

Mr Subron: Yes. Provision is being made for payment of fees to Chairperson and members of committees, departmental bid committees and Bid Evaluation Committee and this includes the fees for Chairperson, members of board and committee members.

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity –Programme Code 1001: Policy and Strategy for Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity (Rs 160,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.27 a.m.)

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity –Programme Code 1002: Poverty Alleviation and Empowerment was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, on which page?

Mr A. Duval: On page 315, in relation to *Item 27210. 014 – Poverty and Empowerment (b)Educational Support – (i)the Creche Scheme*, may I know from the hon. Minister, the number of *crèches* that fall under that scheme and the number of children that are cared after in the respective *crèches*?

Mr Subron: Yes, there has been an increase. The increase in provision is to cater for payment of child allowance for a greater number of eligible SRM household in respect of children attending a registered educational institution following revision of poverty threshold from Rs14,500 to Rs 16,400. I do not have the number of *creches*. I can table it.

Mr A. Duval: Can I have another question? On same page, in respect of *Item 26323.135 – National Empowerment Foundation*, in respect of the upgrading of living environments in the deprived regions, may we have the list of projects that have been upgraded in the last two financial years?

Mr Subron: Yes, this is for social housing for vulnerable groups. Provisions have been made for upgrading houses for some 24 SRM households and fire natural disasters victims. Upgrading works include minor electrical plumbing work, roof repairs and CIS housing units.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. The question was for upgrading of living environment. That is *Item 26313.135 – National Empowerment Foundation – (b) Upgrading of living environment in deprived regions*. If we could get the list of the environments that have been upgraded.

Mr Subron: Yes. I will circulate the list.

Mr A. Duval: I have a last question, Mr Chairperson. With regards to *Item 26323.135 – National Empowerment Foundation – Social Housing for Vulnerable Groups – (i) Construction of Social Housing Unit*. May we have for the last Financial Year the list of

projects that have been financed with last year's budget, and for this Financial Year, the list of projects that are intended to be financed?

Mr Subron: I will table the list.

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity – Programme Code 1002: Poverty Alleviation and Empowerment (Rs 1,195,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.31 a.m.)

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity – Programme Code 1003: Social Protection was called.

The Chairperson: Page 317, 318.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have a question!

The Chairperson: Page 318?

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 22900.098 – Expenses i.c.w. Demolition of Building.* Il y a une allocation budgétaire pour l'année à venir, mais il n'y a pas pour les années suivantes. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir en quoi consiste cet item ?

Mr Subron: Provision is made for the proposed demolition of the derelict buildings, former social security offices at Bambous and Bel Air.

The Chairperson: Page 318.

Mr A. Duval: Page 318. *Item 27210.002 – Social Aid of which Assistance to Professional Fishermen.* May we know from the Rs360 million budgeted last year, the number of beneficiaries who have been recorded and the expected number of beneficiaries for this Financial Year?

Mr Subron: I will circulate this information.

The Chairperson: Page 319.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have one. With regard to the *Programme 100302 – Integration and Protection of Persons with Disabilities.* Number of persons with disabilities trained. There was a targeted 30 persons to be trained for which we voted last year. But there are no provisional figures which have been provided. May we have now the final figures?

Mr Subron: Page 319. I do not have this information but I can circulate it.

The Chairperson: Page 320.

Mr A. Duval: Wait, ...

The Chairperson: It will be circulated. Page 320.

Mr A. Duval: If he has it, say it.

Mr Subron: Okay. Yes, I can give you this information. For provision of disability-oriented services, the Key Performance Indicator was the time taken to process applications for assistive devices in terms of the number of weeks. So, the targeted indicator was three weeks and the second indicator.

Mr A. Duval: Hon. Minister, it is about the second indicator that I am asking.

Mr Subron: The second indicator.

Mr A. Duval: Number of persons with disabilities trained.

Mr Subron: I will circulate this information.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 320. Yes.

Ms J. Bérenger: Donc, page 320, *Item 22120.007 – Fees for Training –Mauritian Sign Language*. J'ai l'impression que c'est un nouvel item. Il y a une allocation budgétaire de R 1,300,000 pour l'année financière à venir. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir combien de personnes vont être formées en langage des signes et éventuellement est-ce qu'on bénéficiera enfin de traducteur en langage des signes pour la retransmission des travaux parlementaires ?

Mr Subron: Yes. This is a provision made for training of public officers and non-public officers to become MSL interpreters in schools, hospitals, police station, court and other instances where interpretation in Mauritian sign language is required. The training will be conducted in collaboration with the Society for the Welfare of Deaf and Indian Sign Languages Interpreters Association. I am advised that the number you are requiring is 20.

Mr A. Duval: I have a question.

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: Yes. Page 320. *Item 26313.093 – Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board.* Two questions. First, composition of the board. Second, the number of contraventions issued in the last financial years to companies not complying with the minimum threshold of disability employment.

Mr Subron: We are in a transition situation. I do not have the figures. When we have the figures, we will communicate it to you.

Mr A. Duval: And the composition of the Board?

Mr Subron: We will circulate the information.

The Chairperson: Page 321? Page 322? Page 323? Which page?

Mr A. Duval: Page 322. Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22120.001 – Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits.* Mr Chairperson, first, may we know out of the Medical Boards the number of applications that have been received and turned down, and appealed, and successful?

Mr Subron: These are information that I have already provided to this House. I will be happily providing it again under this item. But let me say that this provision is fees for domiciliary visits to some 27,017 beneficiaries. Payment for 324 doctors, 24 nurses, 9 psychotherapists and 5 occupational therapists visiting charitable institutions, Foyer Trochetia and recreational centres.

With this budget, we are programming 2,854 new beneficiaries aged 85 to 89 years. These are some of the information that I can provide.

Mr A. Duval: Just a further question, Mr Chairperson. May we know from the last financial year to this financial year which is being spent, the number of beneficiaries that have benefited from the Medical Boards in respect of the last financial year and this financial year.

Mr Subron: I will circulate. I have circulated this several times.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Oui, toujours à la même page, *Item 28212.013 – Gifts to Centenarians*. Combien de centenaires ont bénéficié de la dernière allocation budgétaire et pourquoi est-ce que l'allocation budgétaire pour la...

Mr Subron: Please give me a minute so I can get the page. What is the page, please?

Yes, please.

Ms J. Bérenger: Quelle est la somme dépensée pour la dernière année financière et combien de centenaires ont bénéficiés de ce montant et pourquoi l'allocation budgétaire a presque doublé pour la prochaine année budgétaire ? Est-ce que c'est le nombre de centenaires qui a augmenté ou les cadeaux qui ont grossi ?

Mr Subron: Yes, you are right. The increase in provision is due to an expected increase in the number of centenarians. And for more information, I can say we have 237 centenarians right now; females: 191 in Mauritius, and 9 in Rodrigues. So, the increase is for the increase in the number. We can say our elders are in good health.

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity – Programme Code 1003: Social Protection (Rs2,184,000,000), was, on question put, agreed to.

(01.42 a.m.)

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity – Programme Code 1004: National Pensions was called.

The Chairperson: Page 323?

Mr A. Duval: On page 323, *Programme Code 1004 – Management of basic pensions*, the sums of basic pensions overpaid, including the 25% recouped for the last two financial years?

Mr Subron: Yes, we are more or less within the target. 24% of overpayment in pensions has been recouped as at May 2026. Out of Rs236.3 million, Rs56.8 million have been recouped and it is expected to reach the 25% at the end of June 2026.

Mr A. Duval: May we have the figures for the last financial year?

Mr Subron: No, I do not have this.

An hon. Member: It is in the Audit Report.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 324?

Mr A. Duval: With regard to *Item 27210.107 – State Age Pension*, may we know out of the Rs20,500,000 that is being budgeted in this financial year, the number now of beneficiaries that you expect to pay out of this sum, indicating if same is going to be done at the age of 65 or at the age prior to 65?

Mr Subron: Yes. Modalities for the implementation of the State Age Pension are being finalised at the level of the Ministry of Finance. Once we get the details, we will communicate to the House.

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity – Programme Code 1004: National Pensions (Rs66,071,000,000), was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.45 a.m.)

Attorney General's Office – Programme Code 1101: Policy and Strategy for Legal and Drafting Services was called.

The Chairperson: Page 328?

Mr A. Duval: I have a question. *Item 22900.847 – Expenses i.c.w. Law Practitioners Complaints Commission*, may we know from the hon. Attorney General whether the Complaints Commission has been set up, if we can have the composition and walk us through the budget?

Mr Glover: The Commission has been set up since 01 June 2026, having for –

- Chairman Mr Eddy Balancy, former Chief Justice;
- Vice-Chair, Benjamin Joseph, former Justice, and
- Mr Reddy, former Assistant Solicitor General as the next Vice Chairman.

Then you got three barristers appointed by the Bar Council, three attorneys appointed by the Law Society and three notaries by the Chamber of Notaries. The emoluments of the members are still at the level of the High-Powered Committee.

Mr A. Duval: Can I ask the hon. Attorney General in relation to the National Initiative to Combat Drugs for his Ministry? If you could outline the general details, please?

Mr Glover: We are still working on it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 22120.011 – Fees i.c.w Privy Council Cases*, peut-on savoir combien de cas sont devant le Privy Council et à qui seront payés les *legal fees* ?

Mr Glover: There are 10 cases pending before the Privy Council. I can circulate the list for you.

Attorney General's Office – Programme Code 1101: Policy and Strategy for Legal and Drafting Services (Rs408,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.48 a.m.)

Ministry of Financial Services and Economic Planning – Programme Code 1201: Policy and Strategy for the Financial Services Sector and Economic Planning was called.

The Chairperson: Page 333?

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 21110.005 – Extra Assistance*, est-ce qu'on peut avoir la liste des bénéficiaires, les noms et leur salaire, s'il vous plaît?

Dr. Ms Jeetun: The Extra Assistance is a provision, Mr Chairperson, for advisor who has not been recruited. So, it is just a provision at the moment.

Ministry of Financial Services and Economic Planning – Programme Code 1201: Policy and Strategy for the Financial Services Sector and Economic Planning (Rs57,600,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.50 a.m.)

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

1202: Ministry of Financial Services and Economic Planning – Financial Services Sector Development (Rs180,600,000)

1203: Ministry of Financial Services and Economic Planning – Promotion of Good Governance (Rs83,300,000)

1204: Ministry of Financial Services and Economic Planning – Economic Planning (Rs30,500,000)

1301: Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities –Policy and Strategy for Energy and Public Utilities (Rs113,000,000)

1302: Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities – Energy Services (Rs81,000,000).

(1.54 a.m.)

Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities – Programme Code 1303: Water Services was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 350-351? Yes.

Mr A. Duval: Page 351. *Item 22030 – Rent*, can the Minister specify how many of the sum has been disbursed for the last financial year in rental of high value cars by the CWA? Luxury cars, actually.

Mr Assirvaden: This provision is for WRC.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister – we are talking of the CWA – in respect of fees for payment of luxury cars by the CWA, under which item was it spent, and the amount?

The Chairperson: You have to go to the item. You ask questions on the code of each item. Do not ask for an item under a code. This is the other way round. *La nou pe al anba lao!*

Mr Assirvaden: *Mr Chairperson*, il doit venir avec une *PQ* carrément pour pouvoir avoir ces renseignements.

Mr A. Duval: Actually, Mr Chairperson, I have the item. *Item 21111.002 – Travelling and Transport*, surely it has to be under that. Otherwise, it is making an act of disappearance in this Estimates.

Mr Assirvaden: Yes, it is for WRC, not for the CWA.

The Chairperson: Pages 352-354?

Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities – Programme Code 1303: Water Services (Rs3,582,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.58 a.m.)

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

1304: Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities – Wastewater Services (Rs1,162,000)

1305: Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities – Radiation Safety and Nuclear Security Services (Rs22,000,000).

1401: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Policy and Strategy for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (Rs140,000,000).

(2.01 a.m.)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Programme Code 1402: Foreign Relations was called.

The Chairperson: Page 364.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have. May I ask the hon. Minister, *Programme 140201: Bilateral, Multilateral and International Relations*. Number of high-level diplomatic visits, meetings and summits attended or hosted. His Ministry has far exceeded the target. He has achieved three times the targeted outcome. Could we have the list of events, visits and summit attended or hosted by his Ministry in respect of the 31 provisional? Actually, could we have the final figure as well?

Mr Ramful: We have increased the target; therefore, we are doing a good job.

Mr A. Duval: That is what I said.

Mr Ramful: Yes, so we will circulate it. Thank you.

The Chairperson: It will be circulated. Page 365.

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 22900.014 – Hospitality and Ceremonies – (c) Expenses i.c.w. Sustainable Development Unit.* Peut-on savoir comment ont été dépensés les R 700,000 par rapport au développement durable ?

Mr Ramful: Well, I do not have the information in my file, but I can circulate it. Okay, it is coming. It has not been spent.

The Chairperson: Page 366.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have one. *Sub-Programme 140202: Overseas Missions. KPI – Number of agreements and MOUs under negotiations or concluded.* May I ask the hon. Minister, since in the last two financial years, the number of Double Taxation Agreements (DTAs) that have been concluded or that are negotiated and to be concluded in the last two financial years.

Mr Ramful: DTAs falls under the Ministry of Finance. We signed FTAs. If you would like, we can circulate the list of FTAs and EPAs.

The Chairperson: Page 367.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have. With regard to rent, *Item 22030 – Rent* Rs251 million. Can the hon. Minister, in respect of the last financial year, table the list of expenses, mission by mission, with regard to rent? And secondly, can he also explain the additional Rs20 million or so increase for this Financial Year?

The Chairperson: If it is a long list, you circulate it.

Mr Ramful: It is a long list. I am circulating the list.

The Chairperson: Very good. Next question.

Mr A. Duval: But he did not explain.

Mr Ramful: It is in the list.

The Chairperson: It will be circulated. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger : Yes. À la page 367, *Item 22190.005 – Other Expenses.* Est-ce qu'on pourrait savoir en quoi consistent ces *Other Expenses* et combien ont été dépensés sur les R 19 millions ?

Mr Ramful: These are provisions made for payment of refund of medical expenses for ambassadors, home-based staff and their families as per the provisions of the PRB report. Subscription of TV channels, contribution to African and Chinese groups, Swift and bank charges, celebration of Africa Day in some missions. The increase is based on current trend of expenditure and fluctuation in exchange rates.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade –Programme Code 1402: Foreign Relations (Rs 1,530,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

1403: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – International Trade (Rs44,000,000)

1404: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Industrial Property Rights (Rs22,500,000)

(2.07 a.m.)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Programme Code 1405: Human Rights was called.

The Chairperson: Page 374.

Ms J. Bérenger: KPI – je fais remplacement. Le target était de six *awareness campaigns* et on en a que deux. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir une explication ?

Mr Ramful: Well, the target is six and I am just waiting for the reason why. So, there were in fact four awareness campaigns. There was one in trafficking in person.

The other one is convention against torture. There is one on privacy and the other one national reporting tracking database. There were four in all. Well, the target was six, we managed four.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Programme Code 1405: Human Rights (Rs30,500,000) was, on question put and agreed to.

(2.09 a.m.)

Ministry of Youth and Sports – Programme 1501: Policy and Strategy for Youth and Sports was called.

The Chairperson: Page 376, 377, 378, 379. Which page?

Ms J. Bérenger: Je suis allée trop vite ; désolée.

The Chairperson: Page?

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 21110.005 – Extra Assistance.* Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir la liste, s'il vous plaît ?

The Chairperson: Page 378, Extra Assistance.

Mr Nagalingum: It is a long list. I can table it. It is a very long list.

Ministry of Youth and Sports – Programme Code 1501: Policy and Strategy for Youth and Sports (Rs93,200,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.11 a.m.)

Ministry of Youth and Sports – Programme Code 1502: Promotion and Development of Sports was called.

The Chairperson: Page 380?

Ms J. Bérenger: Peut-on savoir pourquoi est-ce qu'il y a eu moins d'athlètes qui ont bénéficié d'un support que prévu? À la page 380, *KPI*.

Mr Nagalingum: Can I get the question?

Ms J. Bérenger: Peut-on savoir pourquoi est-ce qu'il y a eu moins d'athlètes qui ont bénéficié d'un soutien du ministère que ce qui était prévu?

Mr Nagalingum: The number of athletes and para-athletes supported: 290. 190 athletes supported by the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sport, and other athletes supported by the High-Level Sports Unit.

Ms J. Bérenger: Excusez-moi, cela ne répond pas à la question. Pourquoi est-ce qu'il y en a eu moins ? Il y a eu moins d'athlètes qui ont bénéficié d'un soutien que ce qui était *targeted*.

Mr Nagalingum: It depends on performance.

Ministry of Youth and Sports – Programme Code 1502: Promotion and Development of Sports (Rs928,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.13 a.m.)

Ministry of Youth and Sports – Programme Code 1503: Youth Development Programme was called.

The Chairperson: Yes! Pages 386-387?

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 387, item 22900.951 - *Smart Youth Programmes*, peut-on savoir combien de jeunes ont bénéficié de ces programmes?

Mr Nagalingum: 525 youth benefited under this programme.

The Chairperson: Another question, yes!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22130, toujours à la même page - *Studies and Surveys*, peut-on savoir en quoi consistent ces études et *surveys* et qui les ont faites?

Mr Nagalingum: Funds under this item were meant for the conduct of a national youth survey to identify the needs and aspirations of the youth, and consequently to support our objective in youth empowerment. I have the list. I can table the list.

Ministry of Youth and Sports – Programme Code 1503: Youth Development Programme (Rs188,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.15 a.m.)

Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations – Programme Code 1601: Policy and Strategy for Labour and Industrial Relations (Rs142,600,000) was called and agreed to.

(2.16 a.m.)

Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations – Programme Code 1602: Labour and Industrial Relations Management was called.

The Chairperson: Page 394?

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. May I ask the hon. Minister, 160201: *Industrial Relations - Redundancy Board*, the number of cases heard within the last financial year? If he has the total sum awarded by the board and the total orders for reinstatement, total number of workers reinstated, if any?

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, from 01 July 2025 till 30 April 2026, 14 cases of reduction of workforce, closure of enterprise cases were received, and 12 cases have been settled. I, unfortunately, do not have the figures for the number of workers concerned. I will find the number and table it.

Mr A. Duval: If he can also find the total awards ordered by the board in respect of those cases?

Mr Uteem: I will also find out the amount awarded.

Mr A. Duval: I have a second question. With regard to the enforcement of labour legislations, may I ask the hon. Minister on the contraventions issued by his Ministry for failure to comply with health and safety regulations falling under the relevant provisions of the Workers' Rights Act and other relevant legislations? If he has the number of such contraventions issued by his Ministry?

Mr Uteem: Yes, actually, it is under Programme 1602. So, breakdown of the cases of prosecution lodged for the period of July 2025 to May 2026 is as follows –

- Enforcement section: 43;
- Construction section: 47;
- Employees Lodging Accommodation section: 10;
- Accident Unit: 25.

Mr A. Duval: Can I have a last question? If the hon. Minister has the answer, the success rate of conviction of the prosecutions being done under his Ministry? The enforcement action, if he has it for the last few years?

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, there is a lot of enforcement that is done by my Ministry. You have at the Labour Division and at the Occupation Health and Safety Division. I will give you a breakdown of the number of convictions secured for both divisions.

The Chairperson: Pages 395-397?

Mr A. Duval: Page 397, with regard to lodging permits and lodging accommodations, may we know from the hon. Minister, the lodging accommodation permits that have been revoked following OSHA enforcement?

Mr Uteem: I do not have the number revoked. I can tell you that as at 31 May, there are 3,261 employees lodging accommodations with valid period. The number of new applications renewed and issued is 435. I do not have the number of applications that has been turned down. I will ascertain and then let you know.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the number of contraventions served on for lodging accommodation non-compliant with the provisions of the other legislation?

Mr Uteem: Again, unfortunately, I do not have this information, Mr Chairperson, but I will ascertain it and I will table it.

Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations – Programme Code 1602: Labour and Industrial Relations Management (Rs271,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.22 a.m.)

Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations – Programme Code 1603: Regulation of Associations and Trade Unions, (Rs28,600,000) was called and agreed to.

(2.23 a.m.)

Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations – Programme Code 1604: Employment Facilitation, was called.

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr A. Duval: On page 402, with regard to the *Item: 28212.028, Employability Enhancement Programmes*, can the hon. Minister circulate the list of persons enrolled on the EAT programme for the last financial year? If you can circulate it?

Mr Uteem: I can circulate the number, but obviously I will not be able to give you the list.

The Chairperson: Page 403?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, on this page, with regard to the *Sub-Programme 160402 – Issuance of work permits to foreign workers – Percentage of work permits issued within the statutory timeframe*, the actual figures have been lower than the targeted rate that was budgeted for. May we know first of all, the reason why this is the case and secondly, if the speed up process that was announced has already been implemented, the process to speed up the issuance?

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, there is a number of reasons why we have not been able to achieve the target of determining the application within 21 days. First of all is the sheer increase in the volume of application that we have received, having changed the criteria for the issuance of work permit and at the same time, we have not received a corresponding number of staff to review those documents.

And then there is a number of applicants, when they file, they make the application, there is a lot of discrepancies between the documents, for example, especially when we are

dealing with foreign workers. You know, these people, the original is in a language. It can be in Hindi or in Bangla. So, when they translate it, very often, they get the name wrong and this is also a reason for delay. And then there are inspections.

There is an increased number of applications for domestic workers and my officers need to physically go and inspect the houses to ensure that there is proper room and accommodation to meet these people. That is the reason for the delay but I am glad to announce that in this budget we are receiving some more funding in order to increase the staffing and we hope that this is going to improve.

Now, in terms of implementation of the recommendation, the main recommendations relating to the process have been implemented. As I answered in the PNQ on Tuesday, the rule-based procedure that was supposed to be implemented at the level of the Economic Development Board has not yet been implemented because they have not even awarded the contract yet.

Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations – Programme Code 1604: Employment Facilitation, (Rs285,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, the Deputy Chairperson of Committees will now take the Chair.

At this stage, the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.

The Chairperson: Please be seated.

(2.27 a.m.)

Ministry of Land Transport – Programme Code 1701: Policy and Strategy for Land Transport was called.

The Chairperson: Page 405-406?

Mr A. Duval: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. May I ask the hon. Minister with regard to the KPIs on page 405 for *programme 1701, Public transport ridership* – we note a substantial decrease from the planned target as well as from the previous year. May I ask the hon. Minister whether can first of all break it down in terms of bus ridership and metro ridership and secondly, the reasons why this is the case?

Mr Osman Mahomed: Yes. From memory, I can recall that if you take this average, it is about 452 commuters per day, travelling both by the metro and buses combined. Now, if you

minus about 40,000 for the metro, it gives you about 412 to 425 depending on the day for buses.

Mr A. Duval: Also the reason why is it below the target?

Mr Osman Mahomed: Of course, we put high target for ourselves but then you know, with...

Mr A. Duval: But it is performance-based.

The Chairperson: No, no supplementary.

Ministry of Land Transport – Programme Code 1701: Policy and Strategy for Land Transport (Rs 1,760,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.30 a.m.)

Ministry of Land Transport – Programme Code 1702: Road Safety and Traffic Engineering (Rs500,000,000), was called and agreed to.

(2.31 a.m.)

Ministry of Land Transport – Programme Code 1703: Regulating Land Transport and Light Rail Operations was called.

The Chairperson: Page 413.

Mr A. Duval: Page 414.

The Chairperson: Page 414, yes.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister, with regard to *Item 25500.003 – Support to Bus Industry*. There is Rs400 million increase for this Financial Year, may we know what this increase is being budgeted for?

Mr Osman Mahomed: This is in regard to higher cost to be accrued this year. Escalating cost – labour, fuel, etc.

The Chairperson: Page 415, do you have?

Mr A. Duval: No, actually still page 414. Bus Modernisation Scheme.

The Chairperson: Okay.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. *Item 25500.002 – Bus Modernisation Scheme of which Promoting Low-carbon Electric Bus Transport in Mauritius – GEF Funded.* Can I know from the hon. Minister the number of charging stations around the island for the bus modernisation fleet?

Mr Osman Mahomed: I can tell the hon. Member that the Government is leading by example with the NTC on this one. We have right now 105 electric buses, generously donated by India and China, which constitute about one quarter of the bus fleet of the NTC and it is fully charged by their own stations. You cannot charge buses on the street, right? It is charged in the depots. Three of the depots out of five of the NTC are fitted with chargers.

The Chairperson: Good. Page 415?

Mr A. Duval: Yes. The *Item 31122.837 – Fleet Management System for Public Buses.* The project Rs78 million was announced last year and I see that the amount is yet to be disbursed. So, may we know why?

Mr Osman Mahomed: Yes, this is a very pertinent question. We have worked very hard on this. We have floated an international tender. We have identified a bidder, which is the State Informatics Limited for lower than the cost announced here. Right now, there is one challenge at the IRP. I hope we can surpass the step. If all goes on well, we will be having our Fleet Management System by the beginning of next year.

Ministry of Land Transport – Programme Code 1703: Regulating Land Transport and Light Rail Operations (Rs3,675,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.35 a.m.)

Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection – Programme Code 1901: Policy and Strategy for Commerce and Consumer Protection was called.

The Chairperson: Page 417.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister, with regard to *Programme 1902 – Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance – Enhanced consumer protection.* The number

of premises inspected is well below the budgeted target. May we know the reasons for the underperformance?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Mr Chairperson, we have in fact reached the target. The exact number is 10,681 – for the number of inspections carried out from 01 July 2025 to 24 June 2026.

Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection – Programme Code 1901: Policy and Strategy for Commerce and Consumer Protection (Rs138,200,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were, called and agreed to –

1902: Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection – Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance (Rs105,000,000)

1903: Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection – Compliance to Import and Export Obligations (Rs20,800,000)

2001: Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research – Policy and Strategy for Tertiary Education, Science and Research (Rs83,000,000)

2002: Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research – Higher Education (Rs 2,114,000,000)

2003: Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research – Science and Research (Rs 182,000,000)

2004: Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research –Pathways to Higher Education (Rs66,000,000)

2101: Ministry of Industry, SME and Cooperatives –Industrial Development (Rs527,000,000)

(2.43 a.m.)

Ministry of Industry, SME and Cooperatives – Programme Code 2102: SME Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 448?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, thank you. May I ask the hon. Minister with regard to the *Programme 2102 - Provide support to SMEs*, the number of SMEs that have been provided support under the SME Support Scheme, training with regard to VAT registration for those that have reached the Rs3 million threshold? How many SMEs have been provided support and training under the scheme in relation to the VAT threshold registration?

Mr Ameer Meea: Well, there is no specific VAT support programme for those under Rs3 million but I can give you the figures where we have assisted the SMEs and also the numbers –

- for Market Readiness Scheme, we have assisted 105 SMEs;
- business transformation: 7;
- technology and innovation: 831;
- agribusiness: 48;
- greening: 10.

So, there has been 1,001 SMEs that have been assisted for an amount of Rs58,486,000 spent and the amount that was committed was Rs84 million.

Mr A. Duval: The question, if I may clarify, is with regard to accounting and VAT registration and compliance.

An hon. Member: It is policy!

Mr A. Duval: No, it is not!

The Chairperson: He has replied to you, he said there is no specific...

Mr A. Duval: No, let me ask again, are we to understand that there has been none?

Mr Ameer Meea: The hon. Member should understand that whatever help that has been given for SMEs, assisting them in relation to their VAT threshold is being done by the MRA, not by my Ministry.

Ministry of Industry, SME and Cooperatives – Programme Code 2102: SME Development (Rs230,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.46 a.m.)

Ministry of Industry, SME and Cooperatives – Programme Code 2103: Registration, Development and Supervision of Cooperative Societies (Rs205,000,000) was called and agreed to.

(2.47 a.m.)

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2201: Policy and Strategy for Education and Human Resource Development was called.

The Chairperson: Ceux qui nous regardent, voilà comment on travaille dur. Page 455?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, I have one. May I ask the hon. Minister with regard to a very important KPI, the pass rate for the Primary School Achievement Certificate? We know that it has been under target. In fact, can the hon. Minister also confirm that this has regressed from the previous financial year, the pass rate and the reasons that have been identified?

Dr. Gungapersad: Yes, there has been a decrease in the pass rate from 83% to 79.5% in the past year. This is why we are trying to address this issue with the resit that we are allowing to our students at the end of their PSAC. We are giving students the possibility of taking up to three subjects in their PSAC exam in December, and we have also initiated an Academic Monitoring Committee in primary school to address that issue.

The Chairperson: Yes?

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister when the issue is addressed, will he report back to Parliament, table whichever report is communicated with in respect of that lapse in performance?

The Chairperson: Maybe if you can circulate?

Dr. Gungapersad: Yes, it will be circulated.

Mr A. Duval: Second question, hon. Chairperson, page 456.

The Chairperson: Yes, okay.

Mr A. Duval: With regard to TVET, again, there is an underperformance in terms of the target which was budgeted for last year, for the percentage of trainees employed within six months of completion. Has the Ministry identified the reasons for this underperformance?

Dr. Gungapersad: Yes, because of extended stream in the past, many students were not being directed towards our TVET sector. Now with the Foundation Programme, we are directing our kids towards the TVET sector, an increasing number, henceforth.

The Chairperson: Pages 457-459?

Mr A. Duval: Page 458. Thank you. Yes, another very serious matter, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22900.801 (a) – The Drug Use Prevention (Rebound) Programme*, may we know from the hon. Minister, first of all, under the programme health and wellness activities, whether he has, at hand, a report on the extent and the risks of drugs in primary and secondary schools? Also, whether he has an action plan at hand that he can table to the House?

The Chairperson: This is a PQ. Anyway, it is good.

Dr. Gungapersad: The report will be handed over in due time. But what I can tell you, the Rebound and Get-Connected *Programmes* are being revamped with the help of NADC.

The Chairperson: Yes. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 459, *Item 31112.402 – Upgrading of Schools, Capital Expenditure*, est-ce qu'on pourrait savoir si l'école de Floréal SSS fait partie des écoles qui vont être rénovées, étant donné qu'elle a toujours un problème d'électricité ? Cela dure depuis plusieurs années. L'école est dans un état très délabré. Est-ce que cette école fait partie de l'allocation budgétaire ?

Dr. Gungapersad: I am going to check it and inform you afterwards.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask again for page 458?

The Chairperson: Again, back to page 458?

Mr A. Duval: Yes, on the same health and wellness programme.

The Chairperson: We are already on page 459 now.

Mr A. Duval: But she said page 458.

The Chairperson: No, she said page 459. Okay, we will catch up.

Page 460?

Mr A. Duval: No, page 459. I am not that tired.

With regard to the upgrading of schools, *Item 31112.402*, will he table the list of the schools upgraded in the last financial year as well as the schools to be upgraded this coming financial year?

Dr. Gungapersad: This is a long list. I will circulate the list.

The Chairperson: You will circulate it. Pages 460-461?

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2201: Policy and Strategy for Education and Human Resource Development (Rs429,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.53 a.m.)

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2202: Pre-Primary Education was called.

The Chairperson: Page 462?

Mr A. Duval: Yes. I have a question on the KPI 2202. With regard to the Regulation and Promotion of Pre-Primary Education by the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority, I see that there have been 2,000 inspections in the last financial year. Will the hon. Minister table to the House the various statistics of the inspections carried out in regards to the number of facilities that are found to be not compliant with the standards? Will you be able to provide those figures to the House?

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, do you have this?

Mr A. Duval: Also, the actions taken?

Dr. Gungapersad: I will circulate it because this is a very technical thing that you are asking.

The Chairperson: He will circulate it.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2202: Pre-Primary Education (Rs 1,207,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.55 a.m.)

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2203: Primary Education was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 463-465?

Mr A. Duval: I wanted to know from the hon. Minister, *Item 22900.996 – Natation Scolaire*, can the hon. Minister tell us how many students from primary schools have undergone the *Natation Scolaire* Programme for the last financial year?

Dr. Gungapersad: What I can tell you is that two out of the four are functional. Concerning the number, I will need to check it and I will table it, and I will inform you.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 22900.006 – School Requisites - (a) Textbooks – Grade 1 to Grade 6*, est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir une explication sur pourquoi l'allocation budgétaire a augmenté ? Est-ce que ça veut dire qu'il n'y aura plus de problème de distribution de manuels ?

Dr. Gungapersad: Le problème n'est pas le montant alloué, mais il y a un problème avec la presse. On va voir comment gérer ça dorénavant.

The Chairperson: Pages 465-467 ?

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2203: Primary Education (Rs 5,955,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.57 a.m.)

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2204: Secondary Education was called.

The Chairperson: Page 468?

Mr A. Duval: Yes. Programme Code 2204, with regard to the KPI for the Supervision and Delivery of Secondary Education, Mr Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Minister why the SC pass rate is substantially lower for public schools as opposed to private schools which has increased for the SC?

Dr. Gungapersad: You will find that in the public schools, normally, we allow maximum number of students to be promoted. Whereas in private schools, the students move to vocational schools midway.

Mr A. Duval: No, the question is: why is the pass rate substantially lower than targeted for the public school while for the private school it has increased?

Dr. Gungapersad: No, it is not. You are talking about SC? Yes, it is 78 to 79 for public schools, and 68 to 69.

Mr A. Duval: Yes, that is not the question. The question is: there was a budgeted amount to reach a certain target. The target was 82 and the target reached, according to the

statistics provided in this Budget, is 78.4. While for the private school, it was 66, but it has reached 68.8. So, it has increased for the private school?

The Chairperson: You have it, hon. Minister?

Dr. Gungapersad: Yes. There has been a general decline in SC rate and measures are being put into practice with the help of quality assurance and the academic monitoring committee to review that.

The Chairperson: Pages 469-472?

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 2204: Secondary Education (Rs 13,161,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.01 a.m.)

Ministry of Education and Human Resource – Programme Code 2205: Technical and Vocational Education and Training was called.

The Chairperson: Page 473.

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 28212.047 – Refund of Examination fees i.c.w. Technical Education.* L'allocation budgétaire est passée de R 1 million à R 20 millions. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir plus de détails ?

Dr. Gungapersad: The increase in provision is related to technical education centres, MITD for examination fees in connection with technical education. We are refunding these kids their fees.

Ministry of Education and Human Resource – Programme Code 2205: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Rs666,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.02 a.m.)

Ministry of Education and Human Resource – Programme Code 2206: Special Education Needs was called.

The Chairperson: Page 474. Okay, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Sur le KPI, le nombre d'inspections est largement en dessous de ce qui était *targeted*. Est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir une explication?

Dr. Gungapersad: I will circulate the reasons to you in details. Yes, because there has been a significant drop from 1,370 to 400.

The Chairperson: Page 475.

Ms J. Bérenger: Et les *reasons*...

The Chairperson: Il va circuler.

Ministry of Education and Human Resource – Programme Code 2206: Special Education Needs (Rs619,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.03 a.m.)

Ministry of Education and Human Resource – Programme Code 2207: Human Resource Development was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 477, 478, 479.

Mr A. Duval: May I ask the hon. Minister, with regard to the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), KPI: *Number of unemployed persons trained and upskilled for employability*. The target was 1,500, the provisional figure is 49. Does he have the confirmed figures and can he explain why the programme has not achieved its aim? Its target, actually.

Dr. Gungapersad: The decline in participation is due to fewer application for from employers and unemployed persons.

Mr A. Duval: May I know...

The Chairperson: One more?

Mr A. Duval: Still on that issue, may I know from the hon. Minister with regard to those persons that have been trained, whether he has the figures of employability thereof, since training? Whether they have gained an employment since? Would you have those figures?

Dr. Gungapersad: For the time being I do not have the figures. I may check same.

Ministry of Education and Human Resource – Programme Code 2207: Human Resource Development (Rs913,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.05 a.m.)

Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation – Programme Code 2301: Policy and Strategy for ICT (Rs568,200,000) was, called and agreed to.

(3.07 a.m.)

Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation – Programme Code 2302: Citizen-Centric Digital Services was called.

The Chairperson: Page 486. You have?

Mr A. Duval: Under *Programme 2302*, Digitalisation of Government Services. May I ask the hon. Minister, for the spent Financial Year, what is the rate of digitalisation of government services? What is the percentage that has been achieved up to now?

Dr. Ramtohum: The percentage is always a function of two measures. I think you need to be more explicit about what the measures you have in mind.

The Chairperson: Okay, I allow you.

Mr A. Duval: Thank you. The e-Government project has outlined a strategy for digitalisation. I want to know where we have reached with regard to the e-Government project to date.

Dr. Ramtohum: Because you are being qualitative, I will give you a qualitative answer. So, we have actually covered more than 50% and it is actually a fair level of digitalisation, so far. I am being qualitative.

The Chairperson: Very good, hon. Minister. Thank you. He replied to your question.

Mr A. Duval: No. It is not a fishing expedition. I am giving an opportunity to the hon. Minister, in fact, to say what he has done.

(Interruptions)

What I may ask the hon. Minister...

The Chairperson: Let me...

Mr A. Duval: No, under this item, Mr Chairperson...

The Chairperson: Let me tell you one thing. It is not a PQ. You are not allowed for supplementary. Still, we are very lenient. In the past do you remember? You are allowed, I am asking you whether you have questions. But in the past, we had to fight to ask questions – only one!

Mr A. Duval: Ça fait la grandeur d'homme que vous êtes.

The Chairperson: Okay. I will allow you one.

Mr A. Duval: I will ask the hon. Minister, with regard to that project – because you will have the figures –, whether you will report back to the House with regard to the services that are now digitalised and available to the citizen under the e-Government programme?

Dr. Ramtohul: Let me let me make it easier for you. So, we have around 200 services that are deployed to citizens. Out of those services, around 120 are already digitalised. We are looking at digitalising the rest of it. But to me, digitalisation, the way it was done was not good enough. We have to make it right and we are doing that through KOREK. KOREK already has six or seven services. We will be adding on 20 more.

The Chairperson: Perfect. Page 487, 488, 489, 490, 491?

Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation – Programme Code 2302: Citizen-Centric Digital Services (Rs749,100,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.11 a.m.)

Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation – Programme Code 2303: Cybersecurity was called.

The Chairperson: Page 492?

Mr A. Duval: 2303: Cybersecurity - CERT-MU, Number of assessments of threats, vulnerabilities, risks of a cyber-attack conducted, etc., may I ask the hon. Minister with regard to fraudulent scams that have been detected by CERT-MU in the last financial year, the number which has successfully been investigated and for which actions have been initiated with prosecutions at the end?

Dr. Ramtohul: CERT-MU does not have investigatory powers. Investigations are carried out by the Police. The moment we receive these reports, the data are sent to the Police. It is the Police which carries out the investigations.

Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation – Programme Code 2303: Cybersecurity (Rs120,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.13 a.m.)

Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms – Programme Code 2401: Policy and Strategy for Public Service (Rs120,600,000) was, called and agreed to.

(3.14 a.m.)

Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms – Programme Code 2402: Administrative Reforms and Innovation was called.

The Chairperson: Page 495? KPI?

Mr A. Duval: No. On page 496, can I ask the hon. Minister with regard to 21110.001 - *Basic Salary*, the amount disbursed for the last financial year for interdicted officers of the public service? The amount spent on them?

Mr Pentiah: I shall circulate the information. But having said that, the exercise to make a complete assessment as to all the departments concerned with the suspended or interdicted wages is being carried out actually so that you have a complete figure of it. Thank you.

Mr A. Duval: Would he come back to Parliament once that exercise has been completed?

Mr Pentiah: I shall circulate the information with pleasure.

The Chairperson: He said they are compiling. He will table it later on.

Mr Pentiah: Yes, of course.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The figures are being compiled and he will circulate.

Mr A. Duval: No, I am talking of the review exercise that his...

The Chairperson: For that, you come with a PQ. Page 499?

Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms – Programme Code 2402: Administrative Reforms and Innovation (Rs29,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.16 a.m.)

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

2403: Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms – Strategic Human Resource Management and Development (Rs176,100,000)

2404: Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms – Occupational Safety and Health for Public Officers (Rs24,300,000)

2501: Ministry of Local Government – Policy and Strategy for Local Government and Fire Services (Rs194,900,000)

2502: Ministry of Local Government – Facilitation to Local Authorities (Rs6,894,300,000)

2504: Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service – Fire and Rescue Service (Rs1,085,800,000) was called and agreed to.

The Chairperson: The Deputy Speaker will resume the Chair to continue. Thank you.

At this stage, the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

The Deputy Speaker: Please be seated!

(3.22 a.m.)

Ministry of Arts and Culture – Programme Code 2601: Policy and Strategy for Arts and Culture (Rs54,000,000) was, called and agreed to.

(3.23 a.m.)

Ministry of Arts and Culture – Programme Code 2602: Promotion of Arts and Culture was called.

The Chairperson: Page 521, 522? Page 521, hon. Ms J. Bérenger? No. Page 522, 523?

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 523, *Item 28212.014 – Financial Assistance to Artists*, peut-on savoir pourquoi l'allocation budgétaire diminue drastiquement d'année en année ?

Mr Gondeea: The decrease in provision is based on expenditure, and under the schemes which were previously financed from the National Arts Fund, only contractual payments have been provided.

Ms J. Bérenger: Under Capital Expenditure, *Item 31112.420 – Upgrading of Theatres*, peut-on savoir où en est avec la rénovation du théâtre de Port Louis ?

Mr Gondeea: Le théâtre de Port Louis ne tombe pas sous le ministère des Arts et de la culture. C'est sous la municipalité de Port Louis.

Ministry of Arts and Culture – Programme Code 2602: Promotion of Arts and Culture (Rs342,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.26 a.m.)

Ministry of Arts and Culture – Programme Code 2603: Cultural Heritage Conservation and Development (Rs543,500,000) was, called and agreed to.

The Performance-Based Budget Estimates 2026-2027 & Indicative Estimates 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 were considered and agreed to.

The Appropriation (2026-2027) Bill (No. IX of 2026) was considered and agreed to.

The Chairperson: Madam Speaker will now resume the Chair.

At this stage, Madam Speaker took the Chair.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Members, please be seated!

On the Assembly resuming with Madam Speaker in the Chair, Madam Speaker reported accordingly.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I have to report to the House that the Performance-Based Budget Estimates 2026-2027 & Indicative Estimates 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 and the Appropriation (2026-2027) Bill (No. IX of 2026) have passed the Committee of Supply without amendment.

Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

ADJOURNMENT

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 30 June 2026 at 11.30 a.m.

The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Speaker: The House stands adjourned! I was watching you, of course!

At 3.30 a.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 30 June 2026 at 11.30 a.m.