

No. 16 of 2017



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

**SIXTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY  
DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**FIRST SESSION**

**WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2017**

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**MAURITIUS**

**Sixth National Assembly**

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**FIRST SESSION**

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**Debate No. 16 of 2017**

**Sitting of 21 June 2017**

**The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis at 10.00 a.m.**

**The National Anthem was played**

*(Madam Speaker in the Chair)*

## PAPER LAID

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

**Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms**

The Annual Report 2015 of the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council.

## MOTION

### SUSPENSION OF S.O. 10 (2)

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I 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.*

(10.07 a.m.)

## PUBLIC BILL

### THE APPROPRIATION (2017-2018) BILL 2017

**(No. VII of 2017)**

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

*(Madam Speaker in the Chair)*

*Consideration of the Appropriation (2017-2018) Bill 2017 (No. VII of 2017) was resumed.*

*Vote 3-1 Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 82, page 83, page 84, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 22030 – *Rent*, page 84 - there is a considerable increase which we have been asked to vote from Rs4,825 billion to Rs12,761 billion. Can we have some details of this excessive increase? Are there new buildings planned to be rented; what is the exact location and which services have been planned to use these buildings?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Does the hon. Member mean the rent which is Rs12,761 billion? I am sorry I was looking for it. Can the hon. Member repeat the question?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Why this considerable increase from Rs4,825 billion to Rs12,761 billion?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** First of all, we used to be housed in MEDCOR, Air Mauritius Building, and then we moved to SICOM Tower to greater space area. There, we have been accommodating the Ministry plus the EEMO which used to be in C&R Court at Labourdonnais Street. They have moved away from there, they have come here.

But let me say that, for comparison sake, I have asked my learned friend Rutnah, who is also the treasurer of my Party, to calculate it. In Air Mauritius, we were paying Rs480 per square foot, now we are paying Rs408 per square foot, we are paying less with a more modern office.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister if he is going to take three times more space? Is that what hon. Rutnah has told him? Moving from Rs4 m. to Rs12 m. and he is paying less per square foot. Is he taking more than three times the area? Is that his calculation?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The space area now is 31,275 sq feet. We used to have 10,000 sq feet at Air Mauritius. So, we are taking, well not three times, but roughly three times.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Can I also ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what is he going to do with three times more? People were sitting on top of each other previously! What is he going to do with three times more?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Actually yes, people were sitting on top of each other. First of all, we had very cramped conditions. When I got into that Ministry, I was shocked, and attendants were more or less in a parlour state. They just had to walk down the corridors, and now we are comfortable. There is extra space, and we have been able to accommodate the Energy Efficiency Management Office. We hope to centralise our services in one space. That is the whole idea. But if you come, you will see that it is quite **flash**.

*(Interruptions)*

Or more!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you. My question pertains to 26313.098 - *Utility Regulatory Authority* for which the budget is being tripled, that is, from Rs5 m. last year to Rs15 m. Now, my questions are as follows: is the URA fully operational, and secondly, since the budget is being tripled, is it going to look into the other aspects of utilities besides electricity, meaning wastewater and water sectors as from now onwards?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I will give the short answer first and then I shall go on the expatiation. No, the URA is not fully operational yet. No, it will not be looking into wastewater and water in the immediate short-term. After I have said that, the budget is increasing because, first of all, offices are being set up and staff are being recruited. There have been difficulties in recruiting a proper CEO to the satisfaction of the board of MARENA. I must say, very frankly, that I am not extremely satisfied of the speed at which MARENA works. I would appeal to the four MPs, the two MPs from Rodrigues, hon. Hurreeram and yourself, to speed up the process, to put pressure on the Chair. The hon. Member can do it.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Sorry, Madam Chairperson. This has nothing to do with MARENA. This is the URA, Utility Regulatory Authority.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Sure, I am sorry. I got mixed up just for a moment. It is too early in the day!

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, the URA is a different matter. We have got problems in recruiting the CEO of the URA. We are going to obtain assistance from India, as I said in my speech on the Budget. We have one office which we are paying Rs192,050 monthly for 330 sq metres owned by Myrtle Investments Ltd. We will be seeking collaboration of France and India to draw up the regulations to the licensing procedures. They are working hard. Prof. Goolamhussen Mohamedbhai is a top worker and we have got other people like Mr Luchmun-Roy, Mr Ah-Chuen and somebody else - I forget - who are doing some very good work. And, I am sorry, Mr Narain used to be the GM of CEB. We have top people in this field. We hope they are going to do very well.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, if I may, on a matter of public interest, can I go back to page 82, please?

**The Chairperson:** No, sorry, we are not going back on any page. We have reached page 84 now.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Rutnah:** Because the position where I am, Madam Chairperson...

**The Chairperson:** Do not argue, hon. Rutnah! Please, do not argue! We have agreed on principles. I have already gone through page 83. Now we are on page 84.

**Mr Rutnah:** In any event, Madam Chairperson, I have got a question in relation to page 84. I am concerned with item 21111.001 in relation to wages. May I know to whom these wages are going to be attributed?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Yes. Thank you for that question. Payment of wages is supposedly for my driver, but I do not have any driver. So, there is a sum which is voted, I do not think it is going to be used for any moment now. I do not have and I do not need any driver.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 84, there is an item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, where an amount of Rs2.2 m. has been budgeted and last year as well. May we know the details of this amount?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** This is for the three advisers: Mr Anacootee on information matters, Mr Tirvengadum on public relations, and Mr Sungkur on complaints relating to specific water issues. He is there to advise only on complaints on water because we have great a problem on water.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services*, I would like to ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, apart from gender mainstreaming, which other item falls under other goods and services.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Uniform allowance, minor unforeseen expenses, purchase of purging items, official ceremonies. Does the hon. Member want me to go to gender mainstreaming as we are here? This is to recruit a consultant.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Item 26313.098 - *Utility Regulatory Authority*, there is an increase of Rs10 m. for the new financial year. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister where is the location of that URA and whether an amount has been identified for payment of rent?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The offices are at 1 Cybercity, Rs192,050 monthly for 330 sq meters owned by Myrtle Investments Ltd.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you. I would go back to this Utility Regulatory Authority, item 26. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister made us vote a Bill last year because we had to change the criteria. In his intervention on the Budget, again he mentioned that now he is speeding up matters. At least, can we have a deadline as to when he intends for this CEO to be appointed?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** No, I cannot give a deadline, unfortunately. We advertised. We had a fantastic candidate who came up, who was agreeable to everything. At the last minute, his request was to a sum which I would have had to face too many PQs if I had accepted that contract. So, we had to give it up and we are going to try and find a CEO. There is a very good one with a potential candidate, but he is a son of a MP. So, I do not want to have the host of PQs again, and he is prepared to work for a small fee. I will see how we will do that.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem! Page 85!

**Mr Uteem:** Page 85, item 22130...

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I am sorry, can I just add something. Apparently, an interview is scheduled next week for the URA, for the CEO.

**Mr Uteem:** Page 85, item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys, (e) Consultancy for the adoption of Liquified Natural Gas (LNG)*, again, this is something that we discussed last year. So, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister who has been awarded this contract for the study and when is he going to complete and submit his conclusions?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Let me make sure that we are talking of item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys, (e) Consultancy for the adoption of Liquified Natural Gas (LNG)*. Alright! The bid was launched on 05 July 2016, the deadline for the submission of the bids was 01 September 2016, the bid had to be cancelled and the bid has been re-launched and is being now evaluated. The award is expected in July 2017, start of study in August 2017, report in December 2018. As a matter of interest, we have now received 12 bids. STC and CEB will each contribute about one third of the cost of the study.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Can I ask the Deputy Prime Minister, are we talking about Rs70 m. of the two together or just Rs45 m. for the study? And was there no other organisation willing to do that for Mauritius at a much lower cost or even free of charge, perhaps like the World Bank?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** No, we wanted to have it STC and CEB.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** I am sorry?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** No, we wanted to have it STC and CEB, local. You mean to pay the consultants? Could we have looked for funding as we have done for water?

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Okay! I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he has contacted the World Bank which has programmes, sometimes free of charge, sometimes we pay a little bit, whether he asked them to do this study for LNG. Because this amounts to a very high amount for just a study and we all know that there are lots of difficulties and it is *pas du tout assuré* that we will be able to go forward with this. It is a judicious use of money.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Well, there is no World Bank financing for the study.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Did you ask?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** No, we did not ask.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** You did not ask, so you do not know if there is.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I am sorry?

**Mr X. L. Duval:** If you did not ask, you do not know, if there is.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Well, we did not ask. We were not interested in this.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rugoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Yes, item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys, (b) Energy Efficiency*. I see that there was an amount of Rs1 m. earmarked during the current financial year; for the new financial year, there is no amount earmarked. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what is the strategy in terms of energy efficiency for the new financial year?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** As I said in my speech on second reading, the project now has been completed. Since the project has been completed, then there is no necessity, no need to make further provision. That was for a particular project and, of course, the EEMO is continuing its activities and it is going to pursue its activities like street lighting, etc.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys, (e) Consultancy for the adoption of Liquified Natural Gas (LNG)*. In 2014, there was a pre-feasibility study which concluded that the use of LNG is not commercially viable, and now we are going for a consultancy services for the adoption of LNG. Now, standing from the same question of the Leader of the Opposition, are we making judicious use, how are we going to get the consultant to make us adopt something which, at pre-feasibility study stage, has concluded that it is not viable?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The previous study was the study to which the hon. Member is referring was for the use of LNG for power, for electricity. It was a pre-feasibility study, we agree. For this one, we have asked for a more comprehensive study, we all agree, we are all in agreement that we are not going to spend money on LNG unless we are sure that it is commercially viable. The whole test will be bunkering as well as road transport. So, we want consultants to come and make their study and recommendations to us. It is only then that we will be able to decide. The pre-feasibility study was, of course, of interest. Now things have evolved a lot in the field of LNG, especially prices, transport, equipment, technology. So we really want to know what are our prospects on that.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jahangeer!

**Mr Jahangeer:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 22010 - *Cost of Utilities*. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform us if, in this cost, there is proper maintenance of transmission towers and distribution poles to prevent electric shock to human beings?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** So, the hon. Member wants to know whether there is adequate maintenance for...

*(Interruptions)*

Okay! We are talking of two different things now. We talking here of cost of utilities, that is, cost of electricity, water, telephone for my office, for the Ministry's office. This is what we are talking about, not other equipment.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Item 22060 - *Maintenance*, why is there such an increase of Rs338,000?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The increase is for maintenance charges for the Energy Efficiency Information Management System payable to Agileum Ltd for online registration, application and submission of energy audit reports. What has happened is that now we are embarking on a new phase of EEMO. Mr Mungur, who is the Head of that Department, has said he wants to *informatiser* his whole administration so that all the process, energy audits, etc., are stored. I am not aware too much of the technicalities of this, but this is what he wants, it has been approved, and this is why you see suddenly an upsurge in the increase because new investment must be made.

(10.31)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22130 - *Standards for Street Lighting*...

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Item?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*. Last year, we budgeted Rs5,500,000 for study. May we know whether this study has been implemented? Because again, this year, we are budgeting another Rs5 m. for another study. May we know exactly for what study? Annually are we going to do a study?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Is it on page 85?

**The Chairperson:** We are on page 85, yes.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** It is item?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Item 22130.

**The Chairperson:** Studies and Surveys.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** 22130, okay. Is the hon. Member talking about *Standards for Street Lighting*?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Yes.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Okay, this is to set the standards to have uniform standards and design for all local authorities so that on economies of scale, first of all, we do not spend a lot of money and then we have the same lamps all over the place.

**Mr Baloomoody:** My question is we did that study last year.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Yes.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Rs5.5 m. were spent. Why do we have to do another study this year?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** It is not for the same thing.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Does the system change and every year we have to keep on studying?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Let me read what I have been given now. The Ministry has appointed Prodesign Engineering Consultants Ltd to develop a standard and designed guideline for street and public area lighting.

The consultancy services will be completed by December 2017. Bids for pilot street lighting launched with closing date 29 June 2017; award expected in August 2017.

What happened last year is the question, what did we do last year with these Rs5 m. That is the question of the hon. Member?

*(Interruptions)*

There must be a very clear answer, I suspect the money was not spent, but let me see for confirmation.

(*Interruptions*)

No, it is not that. It is that the first phase of the study has been carried out and that is the second phase.

(*Interruptions*)

That is the second phase, I do not know if it is the last phase.

**The Chairperson:** Last question on this page, hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 22130 – part (e) *Consultancy for the Adoption of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)*, I want to know why this big increment and which company is carrying out the survey and studies and when the report will be ready.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I have just replied to this question, I will repeat it again. It is a bid for consultants and the first bid had to be cancelled. A new bid has been launched and now we have received 12 bids which are being examined. So, there is no identified consultant up to now. As soon as it is identified, I shall be informing the House.

**The Chairperson:** Page 86, hon. Mrs Perraud! No? Hon. Rughoobur! Page 86.

**Mr Rughoobur:** Item 26323.139 – *MARENA*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister the share of bagasse in terms of renewable energy, that is, input in the national grid? What is the share of bagasse? If this information can be provided by the hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I am talking from memory, but I will wait for the answer. The share of bagasse is about 12 to 15 per cent. I am not sure. Perhaps somebody can give me the answer.

(*Interruptions*)

*Combien?* It is 14 per cent and what I know is that we pay the planters Rs3.50 per KW/Hour.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 31113.442 - *Upgrading of Street Lighting along Motorways*. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether this

budgetary item now has moved to another Ministry? Because I do not see anything provided for upgrading of motorways.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The particular project which was on the motorway is over. Now, we need to see what we do for the next step.

First of all, there is undergrounding work to be done, but we are doing undergrounding in the towns in certain areas and not yet on the motorway. That is one thing.

Then there are the local authorities. That is a bit more complicated because there is a process, because for the motorway it is easy. We discussed with the RDA, but for the local authorities we have got to discuss with the whole local authorities. Some have got the budget and others do not have the budget, but we want to be paid. We want to make sure that we are paid and not that we get a debt on our head. So, that is what is taking time.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The item on MARENA for which the hon. Deputy Prime Minister just now, so to speak, talked about it and inviting me to talk about, the problem of MARENA is not only that it is a bit *molo-molo* but – I am a Board Member there – the problem is the Board of MARENA is being put many at times in front of *faits accomplis*. Projects that have already been approved for implementation...

**The Chairperson:** No, hon. Osman Mahomed, do not explain all this. I had asked that you be brief, ask your question in relation to the Budget and the sum which is being voted.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** No, I have declared my interest. I have declared my interest.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** If I can help?

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Yes.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The question of the hon. Member is more on policy than otherwise. What I suggest is that the hon. Member is on the Board, we know each other, we can have a cup of coffee or more...

*(Interruptions)*

... whatever be the liking of the hon. Member, I shall be glad to discuss with him!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** It is because the hon. Deputy Prime Minister talked about it just now and that is why I...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Thank you. I go to the *Water Services* item 21110.001 - *Principal Engineer (Planning/Maintenance)*. We know all the problems we are having with water supply. Are we abolishing this post? Because no provision has been made. There were two persons in post apparently.

**The Chairperson:** *Principal Engineer (Planning/Maintenance)*.

**Mr Baloomoody:** *Principal Engineer (Planning/Maintenance)*.

**The Chairperson:** Page 86.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Water Services.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The two officers will be promoted to Lead Engineer.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Regarding item 31113.442 - *Upgrading of Street lighting along Motorways*, it seems that the upgrading works have already been carried out. Can we have a breakdown of this figure, including the name of the contractor?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Well, CEB undertook the works. They subcontracted. The breakdown, I am not sure if it is available right now. I will circulate later if the hon. Member is interested. CEB undertook the works for RDA. But, of course, they had to subcontract. I am sure they did take subcontractors, but from what I saw when I was going to, not supervise but have a look, I saw that there were lorries which were manifestly not CEB workers. Yes, but I will circulate.

**The Chairperson:** Page 87, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Under item 22130.005 – *Studies and Surveys*, sub-item (b) *Dam Break Analysis*, Rs15 m. were budgeted last year, and then Rs10 m. this year, and it goes on

Rs20 m. for the other years. My question is: who is performing this dam break analysis and also whether this Dam Break Analysis is in relation to Bagatelle Dam?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** First of all, the answer is no to the last part. We are undertaking Dam Break Analysis on Mare aux Vacoas, Midlands and La Ferme Dams. It is a bit technical, but from what I understand is that formerly - the last one was in 1997 - they had what was called a Dam Safety Study. This Dam Break Analysis is not only to test whether the dam would break. It is certainly much more complex because they keep explaining it to me, I keep not understanding it. Apparently, what they do is they have all sorts of scenario like earthquakes, cyclones, etc., and they test what will happen to the water when it goes downstream, which areas will be affected. So, they work with this disaster and risk thing, management or whatever to forecast areas where it could be done.

**Mr Bhagwan:** May I take a point, Madam Speaker. We have agreed for a time limit. Can I appeal to Ministers not to go in long replies so that we do not lose our time? Short and precise answers would help.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Members, I had said right at the beginning before we started the exercise that all questions should be brief and replies also should be brief. So, I will remind you of what I said right at the beginning. Yes, please! Page 87, hon. Rugoobur!

**Mr Rugoobur:** Thank you Chair! Under item 22120.008 - *Water Sector Reforms*, an amount of Rs30m has been earmarked. May I have a brief on the project? Does it relate to the management of the water network by the CWA, Water Resources Unit?

**The Chairperson:** Which item did you refer to?

**Mr Rugoobur:** A brief on this item!

**The Chairperson:** Which item number?

**Mr Rugoobur:** Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultant - Water Sector Reforms*.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** This is for the big Water Sector Reform, that is, the fees which are going to be paid to consultants to advise us on the Water Sector Reform.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you Chair. Under item 22060 - *Maintenance*, we can see that, for the estimates 2016/17, there is a sum of Rs6.375m, and then we can see that there is an increase in 2017/18 by Rs10.05m. May we have some details, please?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Does the hon. Member still want me to be brief? Alright. The total cost of maintenance of building, plant and equipment, vehicles and dams, the amount has increased because the Ministry of Finance has included maintenance of dams under this vote item. So, the increase is due to the cost of maintenance of dams, which formerly we did not have to do...

*(Interruptions)*

...but now which is under our item.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Chair! I will go back to item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultant - Water Sector Reforms*. We were already told in this House that there were a group of Singaporean consultants who had produced a report in the past on the Water Sector Reform. So, I understand that now we have a new one. May I know who would be the consultant? Has the contract been awarded?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** No, the contract has not been awarded. We are now on the funding stage. We just had two days ago confirmation that the World Bank and the IFC were contributing to the costs. I think they are giving some USD425,000. IFC will be the transaction advisers. For the Singapore Report which you mentioned, I assume you are referring to the report which was done before, under the previous regime, but that concerned only upper Mare aux Vacoas, and that concerned a particular specific aspect of the work.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Item 22090 - *Security*, I can see a big increase. Will there be the recruitment of more security?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I will just read what I have as instructions; provision is for security services at La Ferme, Mare aux Vacoas, Midlands and hydrology sub-office. The hon. Member's question is why it has increased from Rs2.5m to Rs4.3. That is his question, why it is doubling. The current contractor is RSL Security Service, and the contract price is

Rs5.282m. Now, why have we increased? It is because we need to launch bids for Bagatelle Dam, which we did not have to secure before. Now we will need security for Bagatelle. So, that is the main reason for the increase.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I have a very short question Madam. On each page, we see there are lots of consultants. Is the hon. Ag. Prime Minister satisfied that we really need so much consultancy and we cannot rely on our very dedicated staff of either CWA or CEB?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** For CWA, Wastewater and CEB, all of the small projects are done in-house now. There is no external consultant. When we are on a big project like a treatment plant, we need to be careful and we need to have independent consultants to advise us. For the Water Sector Reform, we really need external consultants to advise us.

**Mr A. Duval:** It is well known that the World Bank - I will go back to this point - is not only a bank, it is also a consulting firm as you know. It has a big department which looks after water sector reforms and all that. The advantage is that you do not have to go for tender because it is the World Bank. So, please consider that. Many times, it is free, you can even beg for it to be free. Please look at that also, because it is costing us tens of millions of rupees in consulting.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I think there is a *quiproquo* now. We are not talking of the same thing. For this Water Sector Reform, it is the World Bank. We have turned to the World Bank without tender or whatever. And let me just give you the figures. What has agreed is that the World Bank is giving us USD875,000 to pay towards the consultancy. So, we are on the wave length. For LNG, it was different of so many other factors, but for this Water Sector Reform, World Bank.

**The Chairperson:** Page 88! Hon. Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 88, under item 28223, it is given a list here, of regions for transfers to non-financial public corporations, Central Water Authority-Pipe Replacement Programme, I would like to ask whether Creve Coeur will be in this list soon?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Madam Chairperson, I think the best thing for me to do is to circulate the list for the benefit of one and all because there are so many projects and if

each one is going to ask me whether in his area there is going to be a new pipe then we will stay here too long. Is that alright?

**Mrs Perraud:** It is okay.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Leopold!

**Mr Leopold:** Item 28222.014 - *Water Tank Grant Scheme*, I just want to know from the Deputy Prime Minister what is the capacity of the water tank his Ministry is offering to each household, if he is going to buy the tank and offer the household or he will offer money to the household.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** No, we do not choose the tank. We do not look at that. There is a list of approved suppliers. The person buys the water tank that he wishes, he gets a grant of Rs5,000, but his water tank must be between 400 and 1000 m<sup>3</sup>. He cannot buy a reservoir!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 88, in relation to *Central Water Authority – Pipe Replacement Programme*, is the hon. Deputy Prime Minister aware that since there has been the change of the meter of the CWA, there have been so many complaints that now it runs faster? I have made an experience myself and even if the water is not running in the tap, it still runs very fast.

**The Chairperson:** Do not talk about your experience; just ask your question, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Is the hon. Deputy Prime Minister aware of this issue and whether there has been any inquiry in the matter?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I am fully aware of this issue. I have asked the question because I also received lots of complaints. The answer which I have been given and which appears to be logical is that the new meters are accurate. The old meters did not record actual consumption, they were slow. So, now they are accurate and they reflect the actual consumption of the person. That is where we were losing a lot of money. I know somebody, - I will not give the name - a high official of my Ministry, who was month in and month out

paying Rs55 for water bill because the meter was running and it was an old meter. The new meter is giving us accurate consumption. Whenever there are complaints, officers of the CWA go and test the meter and if the person wants for a fee, the meter can be retested under laboratory conditions and if the person further wants he/she can appoint an independent inspector to test it. Certain consumers have done all these, but have proved that they reflect the actual consumption.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Abbas Mamode!

**Mr Abbas Mamode:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 28223.015 - (b) *Installation of Steel Reservoirs*, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform us where these steel reservoirs will be installed - the different regions?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** There will be 10 steel storage tanks and the capacity is 2,000 m<sup>3</sup>. I will go very quickly: Mon Loisir Rouillard, Etoile, Melrose, Camp Thorel, Quartier Militaire, St Aubain, Rample le Moirt, Nouvelle France, Trois Mamelles and Gros Cailloux.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. At page 88, item 28223.015 -(e) *Drilling of duplicate Boreholes*, can we get some clarifications from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what duplicate boreholes is all about?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Whenever one borehole cannot be operated, there is a parallel borehole to supply the water. It is a sort of spare, I suppose.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, under item 28223, the list of places where pipes will be replaced. Does that come from a study which said that these are the priorities areas? How do you arrive at this list of places where pipes need to be changed? Is that the worst stage? Is that from somebody's decision, the priority areas?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** There is a Technical Committee at CWA. Let us start with an assumption. All over the places, pipes need to be replaced except in certain areas where water just got in 1990s. So, there is a Technical Team which has decided to start here or there, the test being we cannot have old pipes being replaced in Rose Hill then you have too much problems of traffic. So, they have to decide. They had a study and frequent visits.

They have also given priorities to pipes where there was asbestos. You know there are all sorts of technical matters.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Can I ask the Deputy Prime Minister why we cannot see Quatre Bornes? Do I have to resign also for Quatre Bornes to be included in the list? I cannot see Quatre Bornes at all here.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Because Quatre Bornes, under the PMSD regime, was adequately served by water. So, we do not need to replace new pipes.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Why nowhere in Quatre Bornes?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Residence Kennedy ...

**Mr X. L. Duval:** No, Residence Kennedy is in Constituency No. 14. You will confirm. We are talking about Quatre Bornes.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** We have good pipes.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** At page 88, item 28223.015 - (d) *Solar Powered Pumps*, I see there is a budget for only one year, which is next year. Is that a pilot test? Why is it only a one-off item for the solar pump?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** It is a one-off. Provision is for the installation of solar powered borehole pumps to be installed at 12 borehole sites and then it is finished unless there is a future programme.

**The Chairperson:** Page 89, hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 32145.503 - (g) *La Nicolière Water Treatment Plant*, I see that there is an amount of Rs60 m. earmarked for the new financial year. May I know from the Deputy Prime Minister what is the status of this project?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** For la Nicolière Water Treatment Plant, it is for the rehabilitation. The consultant is Setec Hydratec in association with Servansingh Jadav & Partners. Provision is for payment to the consultant. The design is ongoing. The expected award for works and contracts will be March 2018.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody! Page 89!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 31122.827 - *Solar Powered LED Security Lighting around reservoir*, Rs18 m. has been earmarked. May we know which reservoir we are talking about and the name of the firm to whom the contract has been awarded?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** So, that is lighting which will be coupled with cameras and they will be installed at the Bagatelle, Mare aux Vacoas, Arnaud and Midlands. The bids are to be launched in August 2017. Award expected by September/October 2017. Duration of projects six months for completion by April 2018

**The Chairperson:** Hon Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you. Now, my question pertains to item 32145.503 - *Bagatelle Water Treatment Plant and Associated Works*. Now, that has been the impoundment of the Bagatelle Dam, so it is full of water. Can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister where is that water being treated in the meantime? Because we do not have a treatment plant there.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** So, in the meantime, the water is going to the Pailles Water Treatment Plant. I am talking from my knowledge, but I want confirmation from there. I think this is confirmed. So, it is being treated at Pailles and the water is going to Port Louis.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 31122.999 - *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, can we know what are these machinery and equipment that would be acquired?

**The Chairperson:** Which item number hon. Baboo?

**Mr Baboo:** Item 31122.999.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Hydrological equipment.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jahangeer!

**Mr Jahangeer:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 31113, *Construction of Riviere des Anguilles Dam*, will hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform us if the project includes

the construction of a small hydropower plant which will eventually reinforce the CEB Southern network?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I do not know, let me wait. The answer is no.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Concerning Bagatelle Dam, there are so many items, sub-items. I think it will be good for the public interest and ourselves if the Minister could circulate a breakdown, all the items of expenditure, what has been spent and also if the Minister is considering to ask the authorities to put some indication boards for the people of the region there. Now we see these huge things and nobody knows exactly how to go there and where are the restricted areas and so on. I think it will be good as an advice to put some signboards and some delimitation, and also give us the whole cost and what remaining works have to be done or which are being done.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** For the moment, no one goes in. I do not go in unless I have had permission because there are still securities. Now the safety boards are being prepared with international signboards. I have seen the models, they are quite according to what we see everywhere. The first question was?

*(Interruptions)*

...the details of all costs, yes, but that will be very voluminous. If the hon. Member wants to have the cost...

*(Interruptions)*

Main contract, yes, I mean I do not mind circulating except if there is a confidentiality clause, I do not know. Let me see.

*(Interruptions)*

Listen, I need to seek advice before I commit myself to communicating matters.

**Mr X. L Duval:** Madam Chairperson, on the Bagatelle Dam, there was a claim, Court case against Coyne et Bellier for damages. Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us what happened? Have they paid up? What has happened in the end?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Well, there was a dispute - I am sorry I cannot be brief because I need to give the facts - which dates back to 2013 or so between Coyne et Bellier and the Mauritian party, Government of Mauritius. Then, when I took over the dispute was still on. We appointed a mediator. We tried to settle, it was difficult. Juristconsult Chambers was appealing for Coyne et Bellier, which had also their external advisers. We were represented by the State Law Office and we also had external advisers. We discussed and finally we came to a settlement. I announced it, actually, it is public, there is no harm in doing it.

What happened is that we had a claim against Coyne et Bellier, Coyne et Bellier had a claim against us. Their claim was justified but they were contesting our claim and we came to a settlement whereby Coyne et Bellier paid the Government a sum of - I forgot the amount now, well, write it down, I don't remember the numbers, but it was in euro - Rs80 m. they paid us. *Pour la petite histoire*, that is the first time in the history of Mauritius that an arbitration results in Mauritius getting - well, it was mediation leading to arbitration, it is within the arbitration clause - and that is the first time that an arbitration processed and surely not the last time.

**The Chairperson:** Page 90, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Yes, on page 90, the last item *32155.316 Shares and Equity Participation - Wastewater Management Authority*, we see that there are substantial amounts that are being forecasted to be invested in Wastewater Management, almost 1 billion every year. May we know why such investment in Wastewater Management and its capitalisation, not for projects but in its shares and equity participation, almost Rs3 billion on three years?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** What happens is that before 2013 in order to do their projects, Wastewater Management Authority was receiving grants. Then, as from 2013 Government started giving them loans. Now, the problem is that you get a loan for a huge amount, you do the work, it takes you two years, three years, by the time you are connected, the people pay you very little money per month because of the wastewater bill. So, you never catch up with your debt. Now, what is being discussed is that instead of providing funds as grants or loans, we are discussing that Government gives us that money and we give them shares in a new structure, but the matter is still under discussion. Nothing has been formalised yet. A restructuring exercise will need to be performed first. The Ministry of Finance will have to agree as to the sort of equity participation. The form of the equity participation and

then, of course, possible corporatisation of the Authority, which I do not think we are prepared to go into this right now, but that is my view.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 32145.517 - (d) *CHA Estates & Low Cost Housing Sewerage Project*. May we have details about these projects, which CHA Estates are included in the projects and the breakup of the Rs100,600 m. for the estimates 2016/17 as the project is Rs418,220 m.?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Cité Palmerstone, Phoenix, amount Rs33 m.; Cité La Cure, Port Louis – Rs40 m.; Paul et Virginie – Rs58 m.; Cité Atlée, Cité Malherbes, Vallée des Prêtres to be awarded by December 2017.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Madam Chairperson, on Capital expenditure 32, item 32145.517 (j) *Highlands Sewerage Project*, I see that this project is nearly finished and there is a project that is going on near the mosque Highlands Road. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister where does that fall into?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Well, there is a sewer which is being constructed along Tout Court Road, Belle Terre Road and Railway Road with 200 house connections. It is going to be completed in April 2019. The contract will be awarded in August 2017.

*(Interruptions)*

If you would bear with me, Madam Chairperson. That is Phase I. The other Phase is not yet awarded.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you. Item 32155.361 - *Shares and Equity*, last item on that page. A huge sum, indeed! Can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether in that list of projects that are going to be implemented from there, the Ward 4 region of Port Louis is in there? Because many at times there were a lot of problems and I had liaised with *à qui de droit* at the Wastewater Management Authority and I was assured that it would be implemented. Can I ask from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether Ward 4, where the wastewater reticulation system is in dire situation, is included in there?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I keep getting this question from the hon. Member and from hon. Roubina Jadoo-Jaunbocus, who both seem to be in a race against time with me on Ward 4, Port Louis. Let me just check again and again for the last time, I hope. Ward 4 costs Rs16 m., date of start, January 2018. It will be included in equity. I hope both of you now finish telephoning me because I almost changed my phone numbers with you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 32145.517 *Wastewater Management Authority* regarding the project (c) *Verger Bissambar*. It seems that works have been completed.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Which number?

**Mr Quirin:** Item 32145 on page 90 under the Wastewater Management Authority.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Numéro (c)?

**Mr Quirin:** *Oui*, (c). It seems that the works have already been completed. There is an amount of Rs3.2 m. for 2017/2018 which has been budgeted. Can we know why?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The provision is for outstanding payments and release of retention money.

**The Chairperson:** Page 91, hon. Uteem!

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, but you know we have lost already 40 minutes on the agreed time. Already 40 minutes! That is why I have to rush, but I am giving you the opportunity. Page 91!

(*Interruptions*)

No, but you put your name on page 91! Would you then not ask questions on page 91?

(*Interruptions*)

No, hon. Ameer Meea! I am really sorry. We have agreed on a principle, all parties concerned. I am trying to be fair to everybody. You do not have to argue with me and you do not have to tell me what I have to do! Yes, hon. Uteem, I will grant you Page 90, but then page 91, if you are not interested, I will cross your name.

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It concerns my constituency, that is why it is very important that I am asking. It is under the item *Wastewater Management Authority (g) Tranquebar/Vallée des Prêtres Sewerage project*, and this is a question which I have been asking for the past six years in Parliament, every year. What is the amount budgeted for Tranquebar? Because every time you lump Tranquebar with Vallée des Prêtres and there is no work. Now the budgeted amount project is Rs140 m. and nothing as from this year. So, I want to know what happened with sewerage project in the Tranquebar area.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** First of all, there are consultancy services for feasibility study and design for Tranquebar and Vallée des Prêtres. The project description is 275 houses at Caro Lalo and Cipaille Brûlée and 50 houses at Tranquebar. The consultant is Servansingh Jadav, etc., appointed in 2013 for Rs5.8 m. The amount spent up to May 2017 is Rs4.20 m. The works of the three sites, the works now will be implemented under three separate work contracts as follows –

- (i) Cipaille Brûlée which is awarded to H. Padayachee for Rs76.5 m., start date of works - October 2016; completion- April 2018;
- (ii) Tranquebar, award of contract - by July 2017;
- (iii) Caro Lalo wayleave issues are being finalised.

I am informed now at this stage that the provision for this item is from amount earmarked for Equity.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud! Page 91.

**Mrs Perraud:** I would like to have some information on page 91...

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Item, please!

**Mrs Perraud:** Yes. Item 22030 - *Rent*. I would like to know to whom we paying the rent and where?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Cost of rental of office for the Radiation Protection Authority, Rs102,900 per month at N. Domah Building, Rue St Georges, Port Louis of an area of 440 sq. meters. I have to add that they are moving very soon to a new building at Helvetia which is being constructed at a cost of Rs25 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Item 22060 - *Maintenance*. Can I know why such an increase from Rs45,000 to Rs175,000?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I am sorry. I did not hear properly!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Item 22060.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Maintenance?

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Maintenance.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** What is the question?

**Mr Lepoigneur:** There is an increase from Rs45,000 to Rs175,000.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Purchase of spare parts for the maintenance of vehicles and equipment. Provision has been increased pay for the calibration of radiation detecting equipment.

**The Chairperson:** Page 92. Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Under item 31112.001- *Construction of Buildings*, we can see that the project value is Rs25 m., for the estimates 2016/17 it is Rs21 m., and then for 2017/18 it is Rs22 m. May we have some details about the construction of these buildings please?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** For the first one, Rs21 m., well nothing was done. Then we have for 2017/18, Rs22 m., the other year, 2018/19, Rs3 m.; 22 plus 3 is 25, and that is it.

(*Interruptions*)

Which building? It is the Elvesia Building. Elvesia is going to be the new building, I just said it, where they are going to house their new offices, state-of-the-art valuation protection.

*Vote 3-1 Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities (Rs4,450,000,000) was called and agreed to.*

*Vote 5-1 Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Minister of Housing and Lands (Rs2,162,000,000) was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 125 and 126. Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance* on page 126. May I know to whom this budgeted amount is going to be paid?

**Mr Soodhun:** Payments of salaries and allowances to the advisers.

*(Interruptions)*

We have a legal adviser, a technical adviser and a press attaché adviser.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan. No. Hon. Perraud, page 126. No. Hon. Ameer Meea.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Page 126, there is a big amount for rent, Rs29.6 m., compared to Rs26.6 m. last year. May we have a breakdown of what is being rented; the floor area, the price and also the names of the companies renting the space?

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes, the building is Science Institute of Technology Company Ltd at Ebene. It is from two floor to seven floor; 4893 square metre and monthly it is Rs2,201,522.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Only one building?

**Mr Soodhun:** Only one building.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Can I ask the Vice-Prime Minister whether this building belongs to Mr Sattar Hajee Abdoula?

**Mr Soodhun:** I do not know, I do not have this information.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will come back to that issue, extra assistance. Now we are paying a legal adviser - and this is public fund - when we have as legal adviser SLO that can give advice to the Ministry. May I know the name of that legal adviser, and is this legal adviser entitled to do active politics whilst being paid by public funds?

**Mr Soodhun:** I think all the legal advisers are in politics. It is very important, Madam Chairperson, due to the fact that we have to retrieve a lot of land. We have a lot of legal problems. We cannot just send only to the SLO, it will take a lot of time. So, according to me, it was a must to have our legal adviser.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Is he allowed to do active politics? He is doing active politics.

**Mr Soodhun:** Okay. Till now I have not been aware of that.

**The Chairperson:** Page 127, hon. Uteem.

**Mr Uteem:** Item 22120 - *Fees*, may I know from the Vice-Prime Minister to whom those fees are paid and for what purpose?

**Mr Soodhun:** Fees are payable to Chairman and Members of the Bid Evaluation Committee, the Departmental Bid Committee, local training and capacity building in line with PRB reports. It is internal.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Perraud.

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, I would like to have the name of the cleaning company, please.

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes, it is Amy Ltd.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Sewocksingh.

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 31132.401 - *Upgrading of ICT Infrastructure*, may I have some details about this item?

**Mr Soodhun:** Which item?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 31132.401. The project value of this item is Rs10.5 m.

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes. It is upgrading of ICT infrastructure, Madam Chairperson. The Ministry will be implementing a e-procurement and store section which will be fully computerised.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Yes, on the same issue, do we know who is going to implement that ICT project, and has a proper tender procedure been followed?

**Mr Soodhun:** Madam Chairperson, everything is done by a proper procedure.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Who is going to implement it? It is easy to say, 'yes, yes, all procedures'.

**Mr Soodhun:** Cool down! SIL.

**The Chairperson:** Page 128, hon. Bhagwan.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Page 128 under items 28222.017 - *Construction of Social Housing Units* and 28222.012 - *Casting of Roof Slab Grant*, two in one. Can the Minister inform the House - because we are not new here - this issue of casting of roof slab, when did it start? Very often, it becomes a political rally. Can the Minister inform the House what is the number of persons who are receiving this grant - he can circulate it afterwards with the rates - and also when did that scheme start? Afterwards, these houses are left there abandoned. Will the Minister take the NHDC to task not only in their responsibility to construct houses, to maintain them until the local authorities take over the responsibility of all these houses?

**Mr Soodhun:** First, it started in 1997. Secondly, concerning that political or whatever it is, I can assure the House we have a committee set up and my Permanent Secretary, who is independent, looks after it. Even me personally I do not intervene because these people deserve, they are all Mauritians, they respect the criteria and we go through the criteria. I can assure my good colleague.

Third one, hon. Leader of the Opposition, in fact, what we have done is that at the beginning we did have problem, but now we have solved the problem. As soon as we handed over the houses to the owners, we had a meeting, whether it is with the District Council or the Municipality, and immediately we handed over to the District Council and the Municipality. We have corrected this...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, I know the case very well, but we have remedied the situation. There were some misunderstanding between the NHDC and the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill and so on. So, now we have come to a conclusion, we have taken cognizance of this problem and since that we have set up the...

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, item 28222.017 - *Construction of Social Housing Units*, Rs812 m. provided for 2016/17, this financial year just ending. How much has been spent of that? Where have the houses been constructed? And what stage has the construction reached?

**Mr Soodhun:** Madam, there is a long list. If I can circulate or else...

*(Interruptions)*

I can circulate it and I will give completely full details on that.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Thank you. Still on page 128, with regard to item 28222.017 - *Construction of Social Housing Units*, could the hon. Vice-Prime Minister please give us districtwise the construction, whether they were constructed, in which district, and how many are planned also to be constructed per district? Then, also with regard to roof slabs for the district of Port Louis and also districtwise, whether we could have the breakdown for roof slabs, how much was given this year districtwise.

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes, Madam Chairperson, I am going to circulate the details on the questions asked by the hon. Member.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Page 128, item 28222.013 - *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Housing Estates*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether there has been an amount earmarked for Cap Malheureux NHDC Housing Estate and what is the amount that has been earmarked?

**Mr Soodhun:** For Cap Malheureux NHDC, renovation works have already started and we are nearly going to finish. I do not have the exact amount but I know that we are going to finish it nearly.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, item 31113.037 – *Off-Site Infrastructural Works for Social Housing*, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he has, in fact, visited Pointe aux Sables as he formerly bound himself to do? Whether he has visited Pointe aux Sables, Cité Blanche and he has seen the state of the plot and whether this is the timetable now for it to be sorted out.

**Mr Soodhun:** I thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for that question. It was a question raised in the PNQ. In fact, I called the people in my office and I informed the hon. Leader of the Opposition that I was not going to visit it on the day which has been told here.

Yesterday, at 10.00 a.m., all the departments concerned like the CWA, CEB, Housing and the NDU, I can just say that we are not going to finish by the end of this month. This is sure, but we have had two meetings and I have asked personally the CEB and the CWA to

provide the facilities urgently, before this month, and I am sure that they are going to do it. I can assure the hon. Leader of the Opposition that I am following the situation very closely.

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Can I make the same request for Beaux Songes, where you are going to put people from La Ferme and Bambous behind the District Council? The same work should be done in these two areas where the squatters are going to be given lots.

**Mr Soodhun:** In fact, we have changed it now. We are looking into it that we are going to provide them with an existing NHDC house with all the infrastructure.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** In relation to construction of social housing, last year, there was an amount of Rs812 m. that was budgeted. May I know, from this amount, how much has been spent, how many houses have been built and, more specifically, how many houses have been built in Constituency No. 3?

**Mr Soodhun:** In fact, there is a long list. I am going to circulate it, but in Constituency No. 3, there is a problem of State land. We do not have land available as the hon. Member is aware. But we are doing our best at Vallée des Prêtres.

*(Interruptions)*

80 per cent of the amount has been spent, but I am going to give the hon. Member the breakdown.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, I will give it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** On the same item 28222.017 - *Capital Expenditure, Construction of Social Housing Units*, can we know if the NHDC project in Bassin is included in those provisions and, if yes, what is the amount provided for that project?

**Mr Soodhun:** At Bassin? I am sure that we are going to build. It is about Rs325 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I will come again on this question of social housing, Madam, item 28222.017, for Rs900 m. For example, there is a housing project which is being constructed in Chebel actually, about 90 or 100 houses, but has a survey or a study been done for so many houses? What will be the social needs, whether there will be a social centre, children playground? From what we see physically, first, there is a problem of the topography of the land and there would be a problem of drainage, secondly, in view of the number of houses whether there is a social centre which will form part of the project and, thirdly, the problem of traffic, whether this also is being taken into consideration not only for Chebel but also elsewhere.

**Mr Soodhun:** In fact, my hon. Friend knows very well that all the new sites where we are going to build NHDC houses. Now we are providing them with a kindergarten, a *boulodrome* and all the social amenities according to the area.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, it depends on *les grandeurs*, it depends on the land available. It is a different thing that we are doing. We are not building the houses in a corner or dump people. We are building the new houses where all these amenities exist in every corner of the village. We are looking to that. We are really concerned with the social amenities and we are giving all our attention to that and also the *embellissement*, the infrastructure like roads, footpath and everything.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you, Madam. Item 28222.013 - *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Housing Estates*, I am eager to know whether there are NHDC in my constituency, Constituency No.4, and which will be rehabilitated.

**Mr Soodhun:** I do not have for Cité la Cure; maybe I am going to circulate.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** I will go back to the *Casting of Roof Slab Grant* - 28222.012. I have a very simple question. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how many people have applied for this casting? How many people have applied? How many people have received it? So, what is the backlog and people who have asked for it and are not getting it?

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes, I will be pleased to circulate it. I do not have it now exactly, but I can give you all the details. According to my information, we do not have any backlog.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With regard to item 28222.015 - *Transfer of Title deeds of ex-CHA Houses*, can we know how many owners are yet to receive their title deeds and indicating the area where those houses are found and the reasons they have not been transferred yet?

**Mr Soodhun:** There are 19,422 owners of ex-CHA Houses across the island. In this context, we have 313 families who, during the last financial year, purchased the land. The exact number I do not have. Yes, some 13,284 letters of intent for the purchase of land have been issued; 45 applications are under process. So, this is exactly what we have.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Page 130 - *LAVIMS*, 22060.013. Regarding *LAVIMS*, Rs90 m. provided this year - on two pages - Rs110 m. provided for next year. Page 130-131!

**The Chairperson:** You are on page 128?

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Sorry!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Item 28212.023.

**Mr Soodhun:** *Quelle page?*

**Mr Baloomoody:** *Toujours à la page 128! NHDC - Syndics for Maintenance of NHDC Housing Estate.* May we know how much is given to each Syndic, and do all the NHDC Housing Estates have an operational Syndic?

**Mr Soodhun:** I have the information. Forty-one Syndics exist and Rs200 is paid to each.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under *Capital Expenditure* - item 28222.013 - *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Housing Estates*, Rs155 m. was

budgeted for last year. Can we get from the hon. Minister a detailed list of all the estates where works have been carried out and completed, indicating the cost per project? And the same thing regarding the 2017/18 Financial Year, Rs163 m. earmarked, can we get a list of the estates which have been identified and where the works are going to be carried out?

**Mr Soodhun:** I am going circulate it

**The Chairperson:** Table it, please! Hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Yes, thank you very much. I would like to ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister the following. With regard to item 28222.017 - *Construction of Social Housing Units*, and the money that is provided therein, how many of those units are going to be constructed for people who have emergency situations, for instance, their houses have burnt down and they need a house to move into, or that they have been thrown out by their landlord and are destitute and have nowhere to go, or are sleeping on the streets, or finally, those who cannot really afford because of the low salary that they are earning to pay monthly to the NHDC for the acquisition of a home? For those people who are really in difficult financial situations and who find themselves without a home and without a roof, how many of them are being catered for?

**Mr Soodhun:** Madam Chairperson, there are criteria. We have already 10% for the NHDC new plan goes to the people who are drawing a very low salary. In fact, when we have genuine cases, on humanitarian ground we consider them. We keep some houses to cater for these types of people. The hon. Member can rest assured if he knows of anyone, he can just contact me.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Madam Chairperson, we have rehabilitation for NHDC housing. Why is there no provision for ex-CHA houses? These people are needy persons.

**Mr Soodhun:** Regarding ex-CHA, I just mentioned that we are having an exercise just to sell the houses.

**The Chairperson:** Page 129, hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 129, 21210 about *Social Contributions*, can we have some details?

**The Chairperson:** Last item, on this page!

**Mr Soodhun:** Provision to payment for the contribution of National Savings Fund.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed! Page 129!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** I have asked you a question for page 128, not page 129! You did not give at page 128!

**The Chairperson:** Page 130! Hon. Rughoobur! Leader of the Opposition you had a question on page 129? Page 130, so for you first!

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Okay, I come back again! Page 130, *LAVIMS - 22060.013*, Rs90 m. provided this year, Rs110 m. provided next year, that is, Rs200 m. I would like to know from the Vice-Prime Minister what is happening to that project. Is it ready, finalised, and can the public use it now?

**Mr Soodhun:** Madam Chairperson, this item of Rs40 m...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, this is what I am telling the hon. Leader of the Opposition. The system needs to be maintained and caters for breakdown, repairs and upgrading. We are doing it.

**Mr X.L. Duval:** Is this system fully operational?

**Mr Soodhun :** Yes

**Mr X. L. Duval:** Why then does the hon. Minister have on the next page another Rs70 m. to spend?

**Mr Soodhun:** It is a part of this, it is not completed. Let me tell that the Rs40 m. is for the maintenance of software and hardware, and the Rs112 m. will be used for the replacement of the hardware, setting up of a State land register under enhancement.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur! No! Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Item 26313 - *Town and Country Planning Board*, can I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister the composition of that Board, and how many cases have they heard last year?

**Mr Soodhun:** Madam Chairperson, I do not have it exactly. I will have to give you full details.

(*Interruptions*)

Okay, I will circulate the information.

**The Chairperson:** Please, table it!

**Mr Soodhun:** I may give you this information, the Chairperson is the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson, item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*.

**Mr Soodhun:** Which item?

**Mr Armance:** At page 130, under item 22130.003 *Land Use Planning and Management (a) Review of National Land Development Strategy*, can we know why the Estimates have reduced in 2017/2018? You are only budgeting Rs3 m. compared to last year where it was Rs10 m. Are you not going to do any more studies and surveys?

**Mr Soodhun:** What was the question?

**Mr Armance:** The Estimates for 2016/2017 was Rs10 m. and this year you are only budgeting Rs3 m. There is a reduction of Rs7 m. Can we know why?

**Mr Soodhun:** The Ministry is now going to seek assistance from the countries having expertise in the preparation of such plan, that is, Rs3 m. has now been earmarked for this budgetary provision and the creation of National Planning Commission.

**Mr Armance:** There is again an increase for the next year to Rs15 m.

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes, because all the outline scheme and major projects which have been implemented so far are based on the top guiding, planning and instrument, which is a National Land Development Strategy approved in 2005. Now, my Ministry is proposing to review LDS and it is for this reason.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Still on the same item *Studies and Surveys*, item 22130.002 *Hydrographic Surveys by Indian Navy*, there is a provision of Rs1.1 m., Rs2 m. and Rs2 m. I was under the impression that these surveys would be carried out by the Indian Navy, but would be free of charge. Now, could the hon. Vice-Prime Minister enlighten the House on that provision?

**Mr Soodhun:** In fact, this is a department which has never been taken into consideration. Now, we are giving the importance to this department because the hydrography is very important the fact that now we are having additional equipment that we are bringing. This is going to help not only for the maritime, but also for Agalega, Rodrigues, the tourism sector, the beaches and so on. So, this is for the additional equipment.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*, .008 *National Spatial Data Infrastructure*, may we have some details about this item, please?

**Mr Soodhun:** What was the question?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** The details about this item.

**Mr Soodhun:** The National Spatial Data Infrastructure is a web portal which connects Government organisations as well as other public/private stakeholders, including the business community in the acquisition, maintenance, sharing and distribution of land related to data and information to allow real time decision. Such a system is costly upfront and requires regular maintenance for the hardware and software, and continuously updates data and provides latest information.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Madam Chairperson, on the *LAVIMS project*, since its implementation in 2012 and this has been debated in the House very often ...

**The Chairperson:** Sorry, you are on page 131?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** No, on page 130.

**The Chairperson:** Which item?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** It is on LAVIMS. The initial project cost was Rs700 m., but since then every year, we inject more than an hundred million rupees in this project. So, my question is: What is the total cost up to now of this project? We are also budgeting for the next three years as well a substantial amount. What would be the total cost of this project? *Cela ressemble à un gouffre financier! Tous les ans, on investit R 100 millions dans ce projet-là.*

**Mr Soodhun:** LAVIMS is a very important issue nowadays. Once again, we have given more attention to this. Let me explain to you. Nowadays, the notaries will know it very well. For example, if there are two people buying the same plot of land and nobody knows. Today, once the notary will register, LAVIMS will get all the information. So, we have to update and we have to work out. We have to maintain and we have to come up with ...

**Mr Ameer Meea:** How much?

**Mr Soodhun:** How much what?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** What is the total cost up to now?

**Mr Soodhun:** I will give it to you. This is replacement of the hardware. For LAVIMS, the support and maintenance is ...

**Mr Ameer Meea:** What is the total cost of the project?

**Mr Soodhun:** ... USD28,750,000. LAVIMS software maintenance support and project management is USD42,144,000. LAVIMS software maintenance support and help work is USD 60,100,000.

*(Interruptions)*

You are asking me about the figures. I am giving you the exact figures.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Madam Chairperson, on the same question of LAVIMS. We do not want to be nasty with anybody, but we have been asking year in, year out of this project and over the years. I think you say it is public money. Since the project has started, your officers must have it somewhere, how much has been spent today? What is the total cost?

**Mr Soodhun:** The total cost for the seven years will be computed and we will be circulated to you. Let me tell you what happened exactly. It is an eight-year old ...

(*Interruptions*)

Listen to me!

It is an eight-year old ...

(*Interruptions*)

We have to replace it.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Allow the Minister to reply!

**Mr Soodhun:** What we are doing? It is eight years old, so we are now replacing it and it needs money.

The total payment up to date is Rs789,600,000.

**The Chairperson:** Page 131, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On page 131, *Acquisition of Land, item 31410.801*, may we know where are these land located and the purpose of which they are being acquired?

**Mr Soodhun:** The total of the private land acquired is 1,060 *Arpents*. There is a long list of the major projects and I will circulate it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Coming back again to that *LAVIMS project (c) Hardware Replacement*, the project value is Rs63,000,000, but we have estimates for the next three years of Rs103 m. not even to install, but to replace and it is a project which started six years ago, you said. Why is it that the project value is Rs63 m. and we are projecting Rs103 m.? Can you, please, explain to us this mathematics?

**Mr Soodhun:** *Pas encore dépenser.*

**Mr Baloomoody:** *Pas encore dépenser!* But we have provision for it.

**The Chairperson:** Pending the reply can we take another question, hon. Minister!

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes.

**The Chairperson:** Do not make reference to officials in the gallery please!

**Mr Soodhun:** For the Rs40 m. for 2017/18 and the Rs23 m. for 2018/19, we have only just Rs63 m. The Rs63 m. is for the State land; it is the module being added to LAVIMS.

**Mr Baloomoody:** When the hon. Minister adds Rs40m. plus Rs40m. plus Rs23 m. it does not come to Rs63 m. This is my question.

**Mr Soodhun:** Replacement is Rs60 m. as I just mentioned and we did not use the fund for the 2016/2017 because of tender problems. *Voilà le problème* – tender problems.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Let us wait for some order please.

**The Chairperson:** Hon Armance, please!

**Mr Armance:** There is too much noise, Madam Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Silence in the House please!

**Mr Armance:** Item 31132.101 (b) *Digital State Land Register*, it seems that there is a CapEx of Rs28 m. and Rs2 m. was budgeted in 2016, but yet I can see Rs28 m. over the next three years. Has this money, the Rs2 m., been spent and, if not, why not?

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes. The State Land Register (SLR) will be computerised for improvement to State land administration and all State land data need to be captured to serve as a base data network to perform efficiently. The Central Informatics Board has submitted technical specifications for a State Land Register solution. This includes the supply of the hardware, design of applications, software installations, commission testing and maintenance. Tender is currently being prepared.

**The Chairperson:** Hon Bhagwan!

**Mr Armance:** Sorry, the hon. Minister has not answered my question.

**The Chairperson:** Clarification on that question!

**Mr Armance:** Yes. Am I given to understand that the hon. Minister has not used any cent in the Rs2 m. yet and the projects have not started, that is why he is still budgeting Rs28 m. over the next three years?

**Mr Soodhun:** The Rs2 m. not spent as consultancy had been done in-house.

**The Chairperson:** Hon Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Yes, thank you Madam Chairperson. Under the last item *31410.801 - Acquisition of Land*, there is an amount of Rs500 m. which is budgeted. May I know whether, in this amount, it also includes compulsory acquisition of land in relation to Metro Express project?

**Mr Soodhun:** Of course, yes.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In respect to the same item *31410.801 - Acquisition of Land*, the last Audit Report mentions that, as at December 2016, no land bank has been set up at the level of the Ministry. This is quite worrisome and there is quite a havoc in terms of land acquisition. Mention has been made for the road decongestion programme specifically and also for the ex-Harbour Bridge project. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what has he done to address this issue? Because a lot of money is being...

**The Chairperson:** This is a policy issue. I said at the beginning that we will not address policy issues. So, I do not think I can allow this question. Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to the same item *31410.801 - Acquisition of Land*, does that also include acquisition of land for the construction of housing units, if that is so, can I know the amount?

**Mr Soodhun:** In fact, it happened in certain places because we have the 2,000 arpents of agreement with MSPA. So, in this case, it is only for the project but not further...

**The Chairperson:** Yes. You had a point of order?

**Mr Bhagwan:** On a point of order, you will recall Madam Chairperson, when, last year, we were debating at Committee stage the issues where Ministers were saying on every single item: ‘we are going to circulate’. Yesterday, I have seen that the Prime Minister was leaving his document for circulation. Can I make an appeal to you? I have gone to the Library this morning. In hundreds of the replies, there were promises by the said hon. Ministers that these will be circulated, they have not been circulated. Can I make an appeal to you and let it be on record that the Prime Minister instructs his Ministers to follow his example of circulating and tabling their replies? Because we will be chasing them as from next week.

**The Chairperson:** I thank the hon. Member for drawing attention to this and I will request all hon. Members, if they have information which is too long and they wish to circulate it let them to, like the hon. Prime Minister did yesterday, submit, to table it right now. It would be simpler if you can table the information which is too long and which has to be circulated right now. Unless, you do not have, I appeal to you to table the information as soon as possible.

Hon. Ramful, you had a question? No. Hon. Bhadain, the last question for you!

**Mr Bhadain:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under the same item 31410.801 - *Acquisition of Land*, based on the answer which has been given by the hon. Minister, can he confirm whether land is also being acquired in Quatre Bornes for the Metro Express project?

**The Chairperson:** No, no we are on page 131, which item?

**Mr Bhadain:** Yes same item.

**The Chairperson:** Acquisition of Land? Okay.

**Mr Bhadain:** So can the hon. Minister confirm that for the Metro Express project land has already been acquired in the region of Quatre Bornes and, if so, how much in terms of the quantum and in what particular region?

**Mr Soodhun:** Madam Chairperson, let me first tell you that I have always been circulating what I have said. No hon. Member can complain about it. I have all the answers, I can go through, but I promise that I am going to circulate as usual. I am going to circulate my answer to the last hon. Member as I have done for all the other Members.

**Mr Bhadain:** Yes, Madam Chairperson. The first part of the answer does not need to be circulated, it is a simple question. Is land being acquired in the region of Quatre Bornes? I am sure that the Minister would know because of the Metro Express project.

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes.

**Mr Bhadain:** Already acquired? Yes already acquired?

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes.

**Mr Bhadain:** Okay.

*Vote 5-1 Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Housing and Lands (Rs2,162,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 6-1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Page 132, Madam Chairperson. Under item 21110.001 - *Personal Emoluments - Ambassador (Roving) and Non-Resident Ambassador*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether any of these Roving and Non-Resident Ambassador had been appointed and why are we not providing for any funds for the years to come?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** In fact, when we took over, we stopped recruiting Trade Advisers. Secondly, I can tell the House now that the post of Roving Ambassador and the post of Non-Resident Ambassador will not be filled.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Page 132, item 21110.001 - *Minister*. This is the practice. I can take this on the vote of the Minister to make a few observations *sur les questions d'abus des ambassadeurs* because the hon. Minister has the overall responsibility of the Ministry. Can the hon. Minister inform the House what set-up he has put at the Ministry with regard to the control over the ambassadors, high commissioners and whether they sign attendance registers? We know that there is a lot of *trickage* and they are claimed. *Est-ce qu'il y a des registres de présence* and whether the hon. Minister has put up structures for the control over the *réceptions qui sont organisées, les fêtes, des whisky à go go, les bouteilles de vin qui*

*finalement entrent dans les maisons des ambassadeurs? Pour revenir aux voyages, il y a certains pigeons voyageurs. Est-ce que l'honorable ministre peut nous dire - j'avais posé une question parlementaire quelques jours de cela et je n'ai pas eu de réponses - qui sont ces pigeons voyageurs qui font le gouvernement payer pour un business class and then they put their ticket into economy class and they pocket the money? There is also a case of someone based in Geneva, l'OMC, etc. So, can the hon. Minister inform the House whether he or his officer, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, has met the Director of Audit and asked the Director of Audit to commission a special enquiry on the running of all our Embassies particularly to the items I have mentioned? And also, concerning letters of complaints received at the Ministry *qui sont allées dans les oreilles des sourds*, can the hon. Minister give assurance to the House - I take it under the vote globally - that money is very scarce and should be well spent and not be abused?*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan, I think the hon. Minister has understood your question.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** That was a tall question. I wish to inform the House that the Director of Audit has, in his report, made no reference to any of those items. I understand the question. The question is, I think, pertinent in the sense that we want that each rupee spent, we have value for money. I think we all agree to it. This will give me the opportunity probably of explaining what we are doing now in the Ministry. In fact, we are reviewing the mission and the vision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Firstly, to establish an e-Diplomacy platform; I have to explain why because the e-Diplomacy platform will be the interactive platform between the Ministry and all Ambassadors, all Embassies and all representatives abroad. The idea is that we have to strive for more efficiency, we have to strive for easier communications between officers and those working abroad and naturally, in the process, we have to ensure also that those people we send in those foreign countries do their job. And this explains why probably the mission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is moving now towards redefining of this mission to become one which is more oriented towards economic diplomacy. Which involves what? It involves, in fact, that each Embassy needs to produce more money for each rupee invested. So, the e-Diplomacy platform will also help us in the process of ensuring better results when it comes to Embassies and High Commissions.

Now, I come to the issue of abuse. Firstly, Ambassadors travelling a lot abroad - this is the point of the hon. Member - or within the country and secondly, organisation of

receptions which look as if they are exaggerated. I need to tell the hon. Member that as far as missions are concerned, I approve it and I ask every time that an Ambassador is moving within the country or outside the country, that he submits a progress report. And believe me, there are many missions which are not approved when I don't feel that the mission is essential for the purpose of results. So, we are very conscious of it. We are very conscious and, in fact, the new mission and vision of the Ministry will allow us, I think, to ensure that each Embassy gives the maximum results. So, the objective is here and we are working towards it. When it comes to reviewing the transformation of the structure and the organisation of the Ministry, two Australian consultants are here now. They are presently working on a report to redefine the structure and organisation of the Ministry.

Secondly, as you are aware, we have also provided for the recruitment of seven economic counsellors and those counsellors will be posted in the various Embassies where there is the potential for development. So, rest assured that I am very conscious about it and that we have given instruction also to all Embassies and all Ambassadors that we need to show results because when the work is well done abroad, we see the results here. So, the e-Diplomacy approach, I think, will make of this Ministry a Ministry that will contribute much more to economic development and this is probably the ultimate aim that we all want here.

**The Chairperson:** Page 133, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*, I note that the rent is going down which is welcome. So, may I know from the hon. Minister the reasons for the reduction in rent?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, thank you for the question. The question is that are the rents that we are paying in the various buildings we are occupying being fair and reasonable. I need to say that every time there is need for space, it goes for tender. Once we get an estimated price, we then have to go to the Valuation Division of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to ensure that it is approved. Therefore, the process is followed. The process is followed in the sense that any building whether it be in Quatre Bornes, whether it be in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whether it be for the buildings we have rented for the Indian Ocean Commission, the IRA, all of them follow the very strapple process of calling for tenders and then getting the Valuation Department to ensure that we have fair value.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhadain!

**Mr Bhadain:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 2111.100 - *Overtime*, this amount has doubled from Rs700,000 to Rs1,300,000. Can the hon. Minister explain whether people are working harder or they are being paid overtime for no reason?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** This is why I have explained from the very beginning that with the transformation of the Ministry, the workload also has increased tremendously. Therefore, this also is a reflection of the much higher work that is being done now. Secondly, in the Africa Strategy, we are now having more and more joint commissions. We are having more and more activities which are linked to Africa. All these, grouped together, the joint commissions abroad, the organisations or the foundations, the AU foundation conference this year, this new philosophy, this new approach, this new strategy implies naturally overtime. So, this is part of the process of the increase in activities of the Ministry.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Bhadain:** Can the hon. Minister confirm the names of ...

**The Chairperson:** Is it linked? Because you are allowed only one question.

**Mr Bhadain:** It is the same question. It is on the overtime. The question basically was also in terms of who is being paid overtime and who it is anticipated will be paid overtime, if we can have the names and the job designations of those people.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** That is going too far! We have to ensure that each rupee which is spent is well spent. I am again specifying one truth is that the increase in overtime is extremely linked. I followed it. The conference, for instance, organised by the African Union has implied a lot of overtime. Therefore, I do not want to go into the details. I am satisfied that the results we are having are good. Now, whether I should come down to the level officers who are drawing, I think that the Ministry of Finance is ensuring that there is no over expenditure.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. Can we have some details please? If it is a long list, can you please give us full details and circulate the list?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** The item *Extra Assistance* is the provision for payments of salaries and allowances to one senior adviser and two advisers, namely Mrs Jugmohun, for the sum of Rs110,000, Mr Akilesh Roopun for the sum of Rs95,000 plus allowances and then Mr Lochun who, in fact, is responsible for the IT project itself.

**The Chairperson:** Page 134, hon. Bhagwan.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Page 134 for Minister Counsellor, can I know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware of the situation concerning the recent appointment? Even certain persons have been ...

(*Interruptions*)

Minister Counsellor.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** It is under which item?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary - Ambassador, Minister Counsellor/Deputy High Commissioner*, at page 134.

Is the Minister aware - the whole country is aware anyway, those who want to know - that certain members of the personnel have been, I would say, affected, they had to go to hospital, and there has been a lot of *maldonnes* in the appointment of the Minister's Counsellors? The Minister will surely come and tell me that it is PSC. But can I appeal to the Minister to see the file again whether there has not been any political or other intervention where...

(*Interruptions*)

I know it is PSC, but human beings are human beings. *Kan ena dimoun pe sot mouton pe ale*, we know for political reasons. So, can the hon. Minister inform the House, whose persons have been appointed, the years of service, the previous posting, whether *la méritocratie a primé dans ce cas*, and whether he, as Minister, has received representation from officers *qui ont travaillé depuis longtemps et méritent amplement leur nomination ? Et ce qui n'a pas été le cas et il y a un cas d'injustice !*

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** The question of Minister Counsellor is probably linked also to the fact that the structure is such in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that people move up to a point where they need to become Ambassadors and they do not become ambassadors, because we all know, all Governments have done it, Ambassadors are chosen by the alliances

and the political parties. So, this has created a level of frustration, which I understand in the sense that at this level, they are professionals waiting to become Ambassador and they cannot become. That is number one, the level of frustration which you mentioned.

Number two, all nominations of Minister Counsellors are done by the PSC. Believe me, when it comes to PSC, I think, and I am convinced that procedures are followed, though there might be frustration. The last promotional exercise that was carried out two months back has created a lot of frustration, but I am used to it. The problem is human nature is like this, I am like this. Maybe I feel I can get more, I need to have more and I do not have it. So, I must agree with you that each batch where there is promotion by the PSC, there is also some grumbling. Now, the law provides that those who feel aggrieved should go to Court. This is what I have told them. I have called those who have not been nominated, I said, "Look here, the law provides for you to defend your right, do it!"

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Sewocksingh! Page 134!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 21110.005, again, we see an item *Extra Assistance*. Can we have some details about this item, hon. Minister?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Excuse me, the question please?

(*Interruptions*)

No, I have seen the item. What is the question?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** This is on page 134.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** *Extra Assistance*?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Yes.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** I have just given the...

**Ms Sewocksingh:** I can see that there is an increase in the sum. For 2016, it is Rs4,564 m. and then it increases to Rs7,556 m. May we have the details and the names?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** It is Item .005, I do not find it there. The increase must be elsewhere. Give me again the item.

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Page 134, item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Okay, excuse me! That is in regard to the recruitment of the seven Economic Counsellors. Now, we have provided Budget for six months before and in the new financial year, we are providing Budget for the full 12 months, and this explains the difference.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** With regard to page 134, item 21110.001 - *Ambassador...*

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Please, repeat again!

**Mr Mohamed:** Item 21110.001, the number of Ambassadors increasing in post March 2017 is 16, funded 2017/18 is 24. Could he give us the list of those additional posts for which that have been funded, where exactly they will be deployed and what responsibilities will they be given, and whether it also concerns the High Commission of Australia or whether any political appointee has been decided to be placed there in a very comfortable position and whether this person has been interviewed and what are her qualifications?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, you are inferring that those nominations are political, that is your point of view. It is the tradition that we nominate the best that we have, even when it comes to political nominees at the post of Ambassador. Believe me, for the three posts that you mentioned, that is Australia, Islamabad, and the third one, France, I have looked through the CV of the three persons, they are outstanding personalities. So...

(*Interruptions*)

You need to have some patience. Why? I cannot release the name because it is for one very simple reason; the nomination of a very High Commissioner or Ambassador follows the process. It goes to Cabinet, from Cabinet it goes to the President, it comes down to me, then we request the country where the Member is going to be posted the authority of posting this person. This process alone takes three months. So, it is not that I do not want to release the names. I cannot release the names until the country where they are accredited give and approve their nominations. That is how it is all the time. This is why you will find that we speak of nominations and then it is confirmed quite a few months later.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 134, there is an item 22030 - *Rent*. It is a substantial amount. Last year, it was Rs164 m. and this year it has increased to Rs178 m. May we have a breakdown of this figure in terms of each country and each building occupied?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Yes, I will circulate it because it is quite long. I give it to the officer who is working here. The increase has been due to two reasons. One, we have taken additional space because the RDI Division has moved, and number two, contracts, lease agreements have, in-between it at the end of each contract, an increase in rent. Therefore, number one is the increase in rent provided by lease agreements, and number two, we have taken some more space to lodge the RIV and to lodge also those economic advisers until there are posts abroad.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance! Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 21110.004 - *Allowance*, can we know why there is an increase on allowances comparing to last year, Rs152 m.?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** I will just read it to you because I do not know these fields. It is the provision for the payment of *ad hoc* responsibility, acting, duty, entertainment allowances and cash allowance in lieu of duty remission on cars to staff.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Thank you, Madam. On the item of *Ambassador* there is no mention about consulate.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Which item?

**Mr Baloomoody:** I will take it under the item of *Ambassador*, item 21110.001. There is no mention about Honorary Consulate. Now, the purpose of having an Honorary Consulate in a foreign country is to assist our citizens when they are in need. The one we have is in Chennai, he is a hopeless fellow! I was there on a private holiday, one of our citizens got missing for eight days and he did not intervene, and when I was there I had to intervene personally and he did not do anything. And he is the son of the ex-Honorary Consul, we should not have the deal *papa-piti* everywhere! We should put competent people! Not because he is the son of the previous one. So, can I ask the hon. Minister to make sure that we have Honorary Consuls who are competent, who can assist our citizens whenever they are in need in a foreign country? Thank you.

## (Interruptions)

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** I like this question. Do you know why? Because I am fully aware, I have suffered myself. I have suffered while travelling because we have some Consul representatives who are outstanding, always there when you need them and there are some who are sitting on their laurels thinking that they are here for life. It is true that we have quite a large number of Consul representatives nominated for some 25 years ago and when you call them and you want to see them, you do not see them. They feel that this is their privilege.

So, we are reviewing. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is reviewing. We are changing it in fact. We have changed our representative in Seychelles. We are changing quite a few to ensure that they deliver when they are nominated and we ensure that on top of this, they submit now a report from time to time on progress being done. So, I am very aware of it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem, page 135.

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 31, Capital Expenditure...

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** 31?

**Mr Uteem:** Yes, page 135, item 31 - *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets, Residential Buildings* and then *Non-Residential Buildings*, I do not see any provision for any building whether in Riyadh or Jeddah. May I know from the hon. Minister whether we are going ahead with Jeddah and where are we going to be housed?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** The question, I think, is a valid question in the sense that when it comes to our embassies abroad, we are paying at times rents which are so high that we could have amortised the building in 10 years, number one. Number two, then, there are buildings which belong to Government. I speak of the Washington Embassy, the residence for the Ambassador is a 13-room with, I think, seven toilets there! I do not know how they will use it. So, those are items where we are reviewing to see whether we should not sell those buildings and buy smaller ones so that we can lodge more officers also.

On the question of Jeddah, you know the embassy is operational since the end of 2016, number one. Number two, the Ambassador, the new one, Ambassador Latona, has submitted his *copie d'usage* there. And number three, we are now starting to work on the setting up of a general consulate in Jeddah. And, then there is naturally also a Honorary Consul for Mauritius who lives in Jeddah.

Now, the question of the construction of the embassy premises, we have been given to understand that the building will be offered by the Government of Saudi Arabia.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. May we know from the hon. Minister on Capital Expenditure, item 31112.401 regarding *Guy Forget*, whether this is a Government property and how old is the building and whether it is a concrete and wooden building and regarding the building in Saudi Arabia where matters stand.

**The Chairperson:** Regarding Saudi Arabia, he has just replied.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** No, that is no problem. I will just confirm to the hon. Member what I have just informed that the Saudi Arabian Government has promised to finance the construction of our embassy there.

As far as I understand from the question of the hon. Member if is it .011, is that we have a problem in New Delhi. It goes back to something which is very funny. This country is short of engineers! MPI is short of engineers, my colleague the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, CEB, we are short of engineers. Now, we recruited one engineer through PSC to ensure that we can move quicker with the construction of those buildings. We do not have it. The one we had left.

So, we are now in a position where we need probably to recruit a new Manager for projects and for the time being, as things are, we are following the Public Procurement Procedures and they can be very long. So, in the case of Delhi, you will not believe me, we need to increase security there and we are having a problem having the funding approved.

I have a problem now in Madagascar. Tananarive has become a very difficult city when it comes to security and there also I am afraid to say that in between the decision to increase security and the approval of the funds, there is a time lag. I must say that this is a weakness when it comes to dealing with matters of emergency.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo, next question!

**Dr. Sorefan:** My question was on Guy Forget.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** But the hon. Member should have said that the hon. Minister is not replying to his question! He has taken so much time to reply to the question!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Then, I will just read to the hon. Member what I have received. Okay? ‘Guy Forget, colonial building demolished, the concrete building will be renovated to have the Commonwealth Finance Hub installed there.’

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 22120 regarding the *Fees*...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Page 135! Which item?

**Mr Baboo:** Item 22120 – *Fees*, can we have some clarification because the fees for 2016 were Rs600,000 and it has nearly doubled to Rs1.5 m.?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Yes, in fact, this is the question I put to my own officers. I said why this major increase. This increase under this item is the fees for the Australian consultants for the e-diplomacy platform are being paid from. It is a total amount of Rs1 m. So, this explains the increase.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Chairperson. With regards to item 26210.195 - *African Peer Review Mechanism*, can I know who is the Chairperson and also can we have some explanation as to why the budget has doubled for this year?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Yes, the budget has increased because we have some backlog which we are paying as far as our membership is concerned. The African Peer Review Mechanism is something very complex. I have worked on it and it depends on the contribution of NGOs. So, at the end of the day, I said, look here, we do not know how to proceed with and we are late with this. So, we requested the Ministry of Social Security to help us into nominating a Chairman who can then look into the Peer Review Mechanism and submit the report. The report will be, in fact, ready by end of December, but there is no doubt, it is a difficult mechanism to implement, I must tell you.

**Mr Ramful:** The name of the Chairman, please?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Does the hon. Member mean the name of the Chairman in Mauritius?

**Mr Ramful:** Yes.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Because I see Kenya is the Chair.

(*Interruptions*)

Now, there is no Chairman in Mauritius.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Sorry, if I have got my answer right, the mechanism is chaired in Kenya, and I do not think there is any official organisation with the Chairman here. I am just asking; if I need to be corrected, please correct me. Now, is there any Mauritian sitting on the Board in Kenya? No, there is not.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Yes, thank you Madam Chairperson. The hon. Minister rightly mentioned the importance of Africa Strategy, item *26210.045 – African Union*, there is subscription which is being paid...

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Wait, wait, wait! 26?

**Mr Rughoobur:** No, it is at page 135, under item *26210.045*. Our subscriptions to African Union, SADC and COMESA amount to more than a Rs100m. Agenda 2063 is an important component of Africa Strategy. May I know from the hon. Minister what are the initiatives that have been taken recently to ensure that we are in line with that Agenda 2063 at the level of the Government?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur, this is a policy issue! I have said several times that we should not ask questions which concern policy. Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under *Capital Expenditure*, item *31112.047 – Construction of Chancery and Staff Residence - Addis Ababa*, from a project value of Rs145m, Rs50m was budgeted for the last financial year. Can we know, from the

Rs50m, how much has been spent? I would also like to know the list of members of the staff, the post occupied by each, and the salary earned by each please.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** You are speaking of the Chancery in Addis? Is that so? The composition of the staff?

**Mr Quirin:** Yes.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Then, I will have to circulate, I do not have it. I will just ask my officers to prepare it and have it circulated. When it comes to the building, that is one good news, it is moving very fast. I do not know whether it is going very fast because I was there in January, and we had to lay the foundation stone. So I called in a missionary from the Catholic Orthodox Church there who never turned up, we had a Catholic Clergy who came, then we had both who came there, and they spent 30 minutes blessing the whole premises. You will not believe me, we are in June, they have already completed the second floor. This building is going very fast! This is why the disbursement also is going fast.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Merci beaucoup! Ce que je voulais demander au ministre des Affaires étrangères est le suivant : est-ce qu'il est au courant que toutes les ambassades...

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Hold please! The item please!

**Mr Mohamed:** It is page 135, with regard to item 31112.408 - *Upgrading of Chanceries*, in relation to the answer he has given just now about Saudi Arabia having undertaken to build their Embassy at their cost in Jeddah. Following his answer, and I am following up from there : *est-ce qu'il peut confirmer, qu'au fait, toutes les ambassades de tous les pays étrangers, sans exception aucune, le propriétaire c'est le royaume de l'Arabie Saoudite, et que chaque ambassade de tous les pays qui sont présents en Arabie Saoudite, les ambassades sont construites par l'Arabie Saoudite, et alors ce n'est pas vraiment quelque chose d'exceptionnel qu'il vient nous annoncer aujourd'hui ? Est-ce qu'il est au courant de cela ?*

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Then, why did the same hon. Member come a little earlier to say what is happening with the Chancery? That is a funny question. I said that it is the Government of Saudi Arabia which has promised the construction. Now he comes to say that

the Government of Saudi finances embassies there. Well, your question is not relevant because the question is whether our embassy is going to be built by the Government there.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody! Hon. Baloomoody! I am sorry! Hon. Baloomoody, you cannot interrupt when the Minister is replying. He is giving the reply! We move to page 136! Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Madam Chairperson, I have a problem because the inference there is that the Government has not done anything, that the Saudi Government anyway would have built the building. That is your point? Well, I am so happy that this happens like this. We have to thank the Saudi Government for this.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Page 136! Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Yes, page 136, under Sub Head 6-103: International Trade International Trade.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Just give me the reference number.

**Mr Uteem:** Yes, International Trade, *21110.001 - Personal Emoluments*, my question relates to *Director, Industrial Property Office (New)*, *Deputy Director, Industrial Property Office (New)* which are referred to as new positions, and then there is no funding provided. So, may I have some clarification about what would these people do and whether they would fall under your Ministry or the Ministry of Industry.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** In fact, this relates to the voting by Parliament of the Industrial Property Bill. The Industrial Property Bill is now ready and will come to Parliament, and naturally the posts which are earmarked there are intended ones. Parliament has approved the bid itself.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Page 136, under item *31112.408 (d) Renovation works to High Commission and High Commissioner's Residence in Canberra*. We are being asked to vote

Rs9m. Can we have some details of the renovation works being planned at Canberra? When was it decided? This Rs9m is for what? What is the time schedule of these works?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** I would ask the Member just to give me some time to wait for the reply to come because I am not aware.

**The Chairperson:** In the meantime, can we take another question from hon. Abbas Mamode?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** It is coming Madam Chairperson! Let us finish with it! I will just read what is there! Structural issues in Canberra - I will lay down information! Good!

*(Interruptions)*

This is what I am getting. Therefore, the Ministry will lay down information. The information I have on this question is that there are structural issues in Canberra. Now, if the hon. Member wants more information, I can ask for it. What the Ministry has suggested is that they will lay down information on the whole issue. And if the hon. Member wants more information on how the structures are doing there, there are cracks in the ambassador's residence, in the walls.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Abbas Mamode!

**Mr Abbas Mamode:** Under item 31122.402 - *Upgrading of IT Equipment*. Last year, it was Rs1.5m, and this year...

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Sorry, I have to find the item first.

**Mr Abbas Mamode:** 31122.402 - *Upgrading of IT Equipment*. So, the sum this year is Rs20.5m. Why this huge discrepancy?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** In fact, this item is linked with the e-Diplomacy platform and with the investment that we are going to do to settle the structure of this platform itself.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Coming back to the renovation work at the Embassy in Canberra, is there any special amenities being arranged for the installation of the new ambassador?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, this is not a funny question and I do not need to give a funny reply to it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Concerning the new item, which is item 21110.001 and it is with regard to the *Director, Trade Policy* and the international trade, has the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Foreign Secretary, following the communiqué issued by the hon. Vice-Prime Minister concerning the relations and the diplomatic ties and international relations with Qatar, sought audience with the leaders of Qatar in order to apologise for this blunder and ensure ...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed, you have to ask questions on expenditure, relate it to expenditure.

**Mr Mohamed:** ... in order that we do not, in any way, suffer tradewise?

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Member has to relate it to expenditure.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, I could reply to this question, but I am just trying to find the item under which the question is put.

**The Chairperson:** There is no item! Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Page 137, item 22120.008, can we know why there is a big increase in the new budget, Rs21 m.? Why is there a big increase compared to the last year?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Which item?

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Fees to Consultants.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Item 22120 - *Fees*. Is that so?

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Yes.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, it is for the payment of fees to Chairman and members of the Board of IPO Tribunal Rs400,000 and training of staff Rs100,000. Now, if we want to go further down on *sub item .008 Fees to Consultants*, it is under this item that we will find technical assistance being provided and the details are as such -

- (i) a consultant for geographic indication;
- (ii) a consultant for study on exhaustion rights linked with the IP Bill;
- (iii) a consultant for operationalization of IP legislation, and
- (iv) consultant for AGOA.

I need to tell the hon. Member that all those items are financed by the EC. The EC gives subsidies to SADC, therefore, under this item of SADC, we have received €1.4 m.

Therefore, all those items of technical assistance linked with consultants are being financed by the EC through SADC and amounted to a total of €1.4 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22900.965 - *SADC Trade-Related Facility Programme*. May I request the hon. Minister to enlighten the House as to what are those trade-related facility programmes and whether it is training programme?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Sorry, if I take some more time. The SADC TRF fund is, in fact, an item for trade development financed by SADC and it is going therefore, under various Ministries. It is linked with consultants coming for the Customs Department, MRA, for the Ministry of Agro-Industry, for the Mauritius Standard Bureau, for the Ministry of Commerce and there is one Project Manager who ensured the coordination of the whole project.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Page 137, item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants*, there is an increase ...

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Minister has already replied to that question asked by hon. Lepoigneur. Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Under the same item *Fees to Consultants*, would the hon. Minister circulate the names of the consultants as well as the tasks that they are being called upon to perform?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, the first question that I have to put is whether the consultants have been nominated. I need to put the question to my Ministry as to whether

there has been any consultant selected already and who is he. Well, we have not recruited any of those consultants yet. It is provided for in the budget and we are now probably in the process of going for tender inspection.

*Vote 6-1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (Rs1,310,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

**The Chairperson:** I suspend the Committee for one hour.

*At 12.58 p.m., the sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 2.06 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.*

*Vote 7-1 Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On page 138, item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary, Chairperson ICT Appeal Tribunal*, may I know from the hon. Minister how many cases have been heard by the ICT Appeal Tribunal last year?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** I do not have the information. We go for another question and I will give you.

**The Chairperson:** We take hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Same item 21110 - *Principal Data Protection Officer*, can the hon. Minister explain why there is no financial provision for the recruitment thereof, especially with the Biometric ID Card and the protection of data?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** It is a new grade created in the PRB Report 2016, scheme of service is under process.

**The Chairperson:** Page 139, hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, I would like to know from the hon. Minister to whom we are paying the allowances.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** It is provision for the payment of responsibility *ad hoc* duty allowance to the officers of the Ministry. For the hon. Member, I will table for the number of cases at the ICT Appeal Tribunal.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Sur l'item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, peut-on avoir tous les détails, s'il vous plaît ?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, it is provision for the payment of monthly salaries and allowances to the following advisers –

1. Mr Sungelee, and
2. Mr Meetoo.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, same item *Extra Assistance*, can the hon. Minister explain why there has been an increase for the past financial year? Can he table, the assistance? There is for the past year Rs2,890 m...

*(Interruptions)*

No, there has been an overspending, yes. Can he table exactly what sort of Financial Remuneration they were given?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, what happened is that when I took office, I had only one adviser and the second one just arrived last month. So, depending on the previous Minister, the number of advisers that he had. I think he had two of them. There is a change in Minister.

**The Chairperson:** Page 140! Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I was waiting since long, Page 140, Item 26313.025, the famous *Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA)*. So, very surprisingly, there is a reduction in the vote from Rs12,600 m. to Rs10,400 m. Can the hon. Minister inform the House, the population, who is heading the IBA these days, when we all know the Choomka case and so on? Who is acting as Chief Executive? How much is being paid to him or her? What has happened to the previous one? Where matters stand? Secondly, give the composition of the IBA.

Thirdly, everybody knows that this IBA is a *bouledogue sans dents*, not acting against the MBC. So, can the hon. Minister inform the House - for so many years we have heard, especially since last year and the year before, that the law would be amended, the legislation

concerning the IBA - where matters stand concerning the new legislation of the new setup of the IBA?

**The Chairperson:** I would request hon. Members to ask questions one by one, please.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, there is CEO at the moment. There is an officer-in-charge who is looking after the day-to-day running of the IBA. But since as announced in the last budget, there will be a merger between ICTA and IBA, the merging is in process now.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 26313.054 - *National Computer Board*. Can I know why there is an increase of more than 20%, please?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** As per Budget Speech, new responsibilities have been entrusted as follows –

- Coding in schools;
- 3D Printing Service Centres;
- Open Data Initiatives;
- Capacity Building Programmes;
- Consultancy;
- developing of geospatial data infrastructure strategy to facilitate the sharing the sharing of geographic information system data, and
- to improve access to computerised mechanism.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On this page, I have got two questions. I will take one by one, of course, Madam Chairperson. *Good and Services*, item 22030 - *Rent*. May we know from the hon. Minister why is there such a huge increase in rent?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, the office was first located on the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> floors of the New Government Centre. But with Live broadcasting, we had to vacate the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> floors. Then, we moved to SICOM Tower. But, at that time, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> floors of the SICOM

Tower were rented by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. So, we did not pay any rent until 30 June of this year. So, that's why we budgeted for the coming year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 26313.054 - *National Computer Board*. I know our friend, the hon. Minister has just replied to a question from hon. Lepoigneur. But what I want to know is if these projects (a), (b), (c) and (d) are new ones. If so, can he give us some information regarding each of them as there was nothing budgeted for the last financial year?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, these are new responsibilities and I have got a long list. I will circulate it to the House.

**The Chairperson** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Concerning *Other Expense*, item 28215.007 - *Transfers to Private Enterprises*, there is a provision for *National Innovation Programme*. There is a budget of Rs150 m., which has not been re-conducted for three consecutive years. So, is it a one-off initiative? How much was spent this year and why wasn't the programme re-conducted?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** The National Innovation Programme, 13 projects for a project value of Rs51.3 m. are being implemented under National Innovation Programme. In addition, four projects will start soon of the value of Rs11.9 m. So, 51.3 plus 11.9 is Rs63.2 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22900.955 regarding *Gender Mainstreaming*. Can the hon. Minister give details, please? Gender Mainstreaming!

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, it is for organisations of events for gender empowerment.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Chairperson, under item 26313.054 - *National Computer Board*, may I know from the hon. Minister who is now the person in charge of the National Computer Board? Who is the CEO of the National Computer Board?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, it is Mr Vik Bhoyroo who is the officer-in-charge of the National Computer Board. He is Acting.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 28215.007 - *National Innovation Programme*, the heading is *Transfers to Private Enterprises*. May we know which enterprises and the cost for each one?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, it is a long list. It is better for me to circulate.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** *Merci, Madame la présidente.* Item 22120.035 - *Fees icw IT Security*. J'aimerais avoir les détails sur ce budget?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, it is fees to Chairperson and members of the Boards and Committees. Provision for fees payable to icw Bid Evaluation Committee, the Departmental Bid Committee, the Stamp Advisory Committee. Actually for Chairperson, Rs3,000, and members Rs2,000 for ICT Advisory Council, and then Rs12,350.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22900.922 - *Conferences/Seminars/Workshops*. We can see that there is an increase in the Estimates of 2016. Can the hon. Minister tell us why this increase from Rs6 m. to Rs7 m.?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** It is provision to meet expenses for organisation of conferences, seminars and workshops by the Ministry, the 12<sup>th</sup> Edition of the e-Learning Africa Conference which will be held from 27 to 29 September 2017.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have to go back to the question about the National Computer Board which I asked. May I know from the hon. Minister since when is the post of the Chief Executive Officer of the NCB vacant and if there has been any advertisement for the filling of this position?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, Mr Vik Bhoyroo has been Ag. Executive Director since 20 August 2015.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan, you have another question!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Yes. On the item of *Grants* regarding National Computer Board, regarding the 3D Printing Service Centres, may we know from the hon. Minister how many centres have we got and where are they located?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, we have two centres, one in Ebene and one in Port Louis.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Perraud, page 141.

**Mrs Perraud:** Okay, page 141, item *31112.401 - Upgrading of Office Building*. Can we know which building?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, following the relocation of the Ministry from Government Centre to SICOM Tower at Ebene, provision is made for partitioning works and purchase of furniture and equipment for the Conference Room.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci madame la présidente. Item *31132.401 - Upgrading of ICT Infrastructure*, on voit qu'il y a une augmentation dans le budget pour l'année financière 2017/18. Peut-on avoir les détails s'il vous plaît?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, this provision is made for ITSU, Rs5 m. for the purchase of security analytic tools for the collection analysis and identification of information about security, vulnerabilities and attacks.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval.

**Mr Adrien Duval:** Item *31121.801 - Acquisition of Vehicles*. May we know the make model and use.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Can I circulate it? Okay.

**The Chairperson:** Page 142. Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you madam. Item *22030 - Rent*, can I know why there is a big increase in that item please?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** One minute, I will get the information.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Item 22900.904 - *Government Online Centre (Operating Costs)*, there has been a sum of Rs88 m. earmarked, for the current financial year it is Rs79m. approximately and for the forthcoming financial year Rs88,410 m. May I have further details about this operation centre and who is the operator? How has the operator been chosen?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, a provision of Rs88,410,000 is made of - staff costs Rs26,13 m.; re current charges of Rs24,28 m. and maintenance of equipment and software of licences Rs38 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you Mr Chairperson. At page 142, item 22060.005 - *IT Equipment (d) SchoolNet II*, can we have some information pertaining to this project, is it a new one?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, a provision is made for maintenance of equipment procured under the SchoolNet II project. The project is going to start soon.

**The Chairperson:** What is the project?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** The details of the project? Actually the SchoolNet II is including routers and Wi-Fi, high speed connectivity in primary schools. It is to provide high speed connectivity to all secondary schools, PSSA approved secondary schools in Mauritius and Rodrigues, public libraries and the MIE under the SchoolNet II to the GOC to provide wireless connectivity to users of tablets, PCs in secondary school, full deployment of hotspots within the school compound, to provide server resource to host the application and contents for the e-Learning platforms at the GOC; to upgrade the infrastructure at the GOC; to support high speed internet and access the e-Learning platform located at the GOC from secondary schools. The SchoolNet II project is being implemented in three phases and will cover 162 secondary schools of Mauritius and Rodrigues.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 31132.401 - *e-Government Projects of which (b) High Speed Connectivity in Primary Schools*, we can see that the project value is Rs100 m. and for the estimated 2016/17 there is a sum of Rs10m. Can we know how much has already been spent in this Rs10m., please?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, the project consists of department of internet links and connectivity. It is to provide access to online and internet content to teachers and pupils. More than 50% have been paid already.

(*Interruptions*)

Actually the project is going to start soon.

(*Interruptions*)

No, it has been spent.

(*Interruptions*)

It is at tender stage for this one.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On the same item about the High Speed Connectivity to Primary Schools, can I know from the hon. Minister the percentage of primary schools which are now fully equipped with Wi-Fi. What is the percentage?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, the project is ongoing.

**Mr Uteem:** How many schools today are fully equipped with Wi-Fi?

**The Chairperson:** This is a question for Minister of...

**Mr Sawmynaden:** It is at tender stage now for this project; it is not yet installed.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you. Item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, I would like to know if this service has been contracted out and which contractor has got the contract.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Provision of the contract for the cleaning services of the ICT Appeal Tribunal; the contractor is Keep Clean and the second one is Mauriclean.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22060 - *Maintenace*, can the Minister provide the list of all the contractors, services retained, all of them? There is Rs47 m. for the past financial year; can the hon. Minister table the list?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** I will table the whole list.

**The Chairperson:** Page 143, Page 144. Hon. Perraud.

**Mrs Perraud:** Item 22120 - *Fees*. I would like to know why there is a drastic drop.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, provision is made for payment of fees to Chairman and members of Board and Committees. The Departmental Bid Committee Rs50,000 decrease is due to provision for fees of training which was Rs1.5 m. in 2016/17; it is now centralised under the sub-head 101 General of the Ministry.

*Vote 7-1 Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation (Rs1,157,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 8-1 Ministry of Public Infrastructure (Rs4,287,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 145, page 146, page 147, hon. Adrien Duval.

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Page 147.

**Mr A. Duval:** We see that there are 30 posts to be filled. May we know the mode of recruitment and if this will be delegated to the Ministry to fill these posts and may we know if the vacancies have been advertised?

*(Interruptions)*

Page 147, item 21110 - *Recruitment*, we see that there are 30 posts to be filled. May we know, first of all, the mode of recruitment, if these are delegated to the Ministry for recruitment and if vacancies have already been advertised especially for the post of office auxiliaries, MSOs. etc.?

**Mr Bodha:** May I ask the hon. Member whether it relates to item 21110?

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes.

**Mr Bodha:** 190 staff, including funded positions to be filled?

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes.

**Mr Bodha:** Yes? But, most of them are filled by the Public Service Commission.

**Mr A. Duval:** Are they delegated?

**Mr Bodha:** *Non.* These posts that have been mentioned here are in fact recruited by the PSC. There are delegated powers which are given to the Ministry in some cases for general workers.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Thierry Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente, item *21110.005 - Extra Assistance*, est-ce qu'on pourrait avoir les détails s'il vous plaît ?

**Mr Bodha:** It is provision for the payment of salaries to two advisers on post.

**The Chairperson:** Page 148, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Page 148, item *26313.010 - Construction Industry Development Board*, can the hon. Minister inform the House whether the Board is operational, if we can have the name of the person chairing the Board and how much is paid to him and if he could circulate, if possible, the list of the members of the Board?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the Board is currently chaired by Mr Gaëtan Siew and he has asked to be relieved of his function. So, we are going to have a new Chairperson next month. As regards the fee, it was Rs40,000 per month.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item *31121.801 - Acquisition of Vehicles*, can we know which vehicles we are talking about for Rs3 m., the make, model and use?

**Mr Bodha:** What I have been told, Madam Chairperson, is that it is the provision for the acquisition of one vehicle due to increase in workload and one in replacement of an old one which was more than nine years old because it is extensively used for site visits prior to approval of projects by the Programme Project Committee and during national festivals. The make is 1 SUV to replace the 21RM09 which has exceeded its useful economic life.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Item 27210 - *Social Assistance Benefits in Cash*, may I know which were the organisations which received the benefits in cash and why they were in receipt of these funds?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, this relates to funeral grants. It is a provision for payment of funeral grants of Rs10,000 to the heir or the nearest relative of the deceased officer who has borne the funeral expenses. We have Rs50,000.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22030 - *Rent*, Rs23.8 m. and Rs23.2 m. budgeted for last year and this financial year. Can we have a breakdown of these two figures? Also, item 26313 – *Construction Industry Development Board*, Rs13 m. earmarked for each financial year. Can we have a breakdown of this Rs13 m.?

**Mr Bodha:** The hon. Member is asking for two questions.

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Minister can circulate the breakdown!

**Mr Bodha:** One is rent. Well, I have a long list because the Ministry has rented premises in a number of buildings. So, I am going to circulate it. We have Jade House, Moorgate House, Air Mauritius Building, Max City Building.

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Minister can circulate it!

**Mr Bodha:** As regards the CIDB, the breakdown of the costs and the budget, I am going to circulate it as we have the details for the hon. Member.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam. Item 22070 – *Cleaning Services*, may I know from the hon. Minister if this service has been contracted out and, if yes, who is the contractor?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, the provision is for laundry, payment of washing towels, cleaning of office premises, for payment of cleaning of toilets and provision of sanitary services at Moorgate Finance Section. The contractor is Keep Clean Ltd. The contract period is 01 August 2016 to July 2017 at a monthly rate of Rs30,130.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Item 22120 – *Fees*, there is an amount of Rs2.1 m. May I have the breakdown of these fees?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, Madam Chairperson, it relates to fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees, fees to assessors for the Bid Evaluation Committee and the Departmental Bid Committee, fees for training to meet payments of training of staff for generic competency-based training courses run by the Civil Service Colleges. Well, the increase, Madam Chairperson, is due to fees to assessors which have now been centralised under this item and no provision is made under the former item subhead 8/102 and 8/104.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Could you, please, circulate the amount?

**Mr Bodha:** I will.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam. I can see under item 22900.955 - *Gender Mainstreaming*. May we know what this gender mainstreaming is about, please?

**Mr Bodha:** I have a budget of Rs200,000 but I have no explanation. So, I am going to ask my officers to give us any additional information. Okay, I have been told it is for women empowerment.

**The Chairperson:** Page 149, hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I see provision is being made for Geotechnical Engineer at the top of the page and Geologist, but no financial provision has been made for these two positions. May I ask the hon. Minister why because this is a very interesting position and yet no financial provision has been made for them.

**Mr Bodha:** We have one Geotechnical Engineer who is being trained currently in Japan. So, he is already on the staff list, he is coming back, and these are new posts and the scheme of service is being prescribed. So, as soon as we have the scheme of service and it is approved by the PRB, we are going to ask the PSC to recruit these people because they are badly needed.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In relation to the eighth item from the bottom of the page at page 149, Management Support Officer we see that, in post, until March 2017, there are 20 officers and then for the current financial year, there is a provision for 22 support officers. However, we note that the budget has gone down in 2017 despite the fact that two extra officers are going to be recruited. Does that reflect Government's policy on cracking down on wastage as a result of the audit?

**Mr Bodha:** Not at all! From what I have been told is that usually we have high-end officers with high salaries who go on retirement and we recruit at the lower grade. In fact, we can have more officers but a lesser salary package.

**The Chairperson:** Page 150, hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. There is one item, *Inspector of Works*. I can see that you have funded for 14 new, you have 14 in post, yet the Budget has reduced from Rs7.3m. to Rs4.8m. This is a decrease of about Rs3 m. May I know why?

**Mr Bodha:** I gave the same reason.

**The Chairperson:** Page 151, hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. *General Worker*, we see that 50 will be recruited this year and then we see that for the next two years the Budget is doubling. Therefore, hundreds of people will be recruited for the post of General Workers, Rs30 m., Madam Chairperson, doubling the budget. May we have the guarantee from the hon. Minister that he will not recruit only from his constituency? Because we all know it is delegated and we all know how these recruitments are made. Can he give that guarantee?

**Mr Bodha:** My friend, hon. Baboo, can vouch to the fact that we never see to it that everybody is recruited in that constituency. In fact, what we do is we ask for a list from the Ministry of Employment so that the whole island is taken care of.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Same page, item *.005 - Extra Assistance*, can we have details, please?

**Mr Bodha:** It is provision for the payment of fees to seven trainee engineers and the salaries of architect on contract, one geo-technical engineer, one geologist, and one Information and Education and Communication Officer.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I see at page 151, there is an item *Typewriter Mechanic*. Can I ask the hon. Minister how many typewriters are there in his Ministry? Why do we have three typewriter mechanics?

**Mr Bodha:** I have been told that it is somebody who has been redeployed when he came from DWC. It is an evanescent grade. So, it is going to disappear when he retires. In fact, that was his grade and he came when the DWC was closed.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** I am still on item *General Worker*. We see that this year there is a sum of Rs15 m.; for 2018, it is nearly Rs30 m. and for 2019 it is Rs30 m., coincidentally, that is the year of the election. Because this makes provision for only 50 additional. Yet, the Budget, if you add it all, is doubling. May we know exactly how many people would be recruited by the Election Day?

**Mr Bodha:** I do not think, Madam Chairperson, that the recruitment of General Workers can save a Government which is not doing well. I will give the number.

**The Chairperson:** Page 152! Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Yes! May I refer the hon. Minister to item 31112.401 - *Accreditation of Materials Testing Laboratory*? On page 152!

**The Chairperson:** Page 152!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** So, the construction of an *Accreditation of Materials Testing Laboratory*, item 31112.401. My question is as follows: since we are constructing this, I believe, state-of-the-art laboratory and together with massive recruitments - from the previous page, from 1 to 8 laboratory auxiliary - will, all the testing for all the construction works in Mauritius from now onwards, be it from all Governmental Departments, be conducted in this laboratory or will it still be contracted out, as the case has been before?

**Mr Bodha:** The project involves the contractor of a modern laboratory to enable the accreditation of the facilities to international standards. The working drawings are in progress and a preliminary estimate is around 32 m. The pre-tender documents will be prepared as all the bid documents are being finalised. To answer to the question, I believe that some will be

done at this laboratory, some will still be contracted out and some will have to be contracted out abroad. For example, when we did the soil test at Terre Rouge-Verdun, we had to send them to South Africa to be able to do the stress test. So, there are some equipment which are available. I think that we will make a laboratory which is going to be as modern as possible, but I cannot vouch that all the tests are going to be carried out at that laboratory.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On top of page 152, under *Other Staff Costs - 21111.001*, the item of *Wages* which was Rs9 m. last year, is Rs13 m. this year and then it drops to Rs400,000 the following year. So, may we know what the Wages relate to?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, the provision for payment of wages and end-of-year bonus to 107 casual General Workers, who are casual today, and 56 to be recruited because we could not recruit them this year. Now, in 2018, we see a fall.

(*Interruptions*)

They are casual workers. It would depend on whether posts are available.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item *31112 – Non-Residential Buildings - .401 Upgrading of Office Buildings*, may I know the list of all the contractors for the buildings (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g)?

**Mr Bodha:** There are many. So, we will circulate the list.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 152, Madam Chairperson, *Refurbishment of Emmanuel Anquetil Building - .433*, can the hon. Minister inform us, out of the Rs38,850,000, whether this problem of asbestos still exists at the Emmanuel Anquetil Building, whether the Union of Civil Servants have been consulted for the project of refurbishing this building and also whether Fire Services also have been consulted for the safety of our civil servants, who work very hard and in difficult conditions?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, what I am being told is that the provision required for the final payment of maintenance and repairs of wire bird netting at the Emmanuel

Anquetil Building as per conditions of contract, maintenance and repairs for a period of two years. The issue of asbestos has not been mentioned here.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Rs38 m. for wire?

**Mr Bodha:** *Non*, 540.

**Mr Bodha:** This is the answer which has been given to me, but I see that (a) is for wire.

If you may allow me, Madam Chairperson, item *31113.799 - Asbestos Treatment Programme*, where we have Rs1 m. and it relates to schools and Government buildings, I will have to check whether the Emmanuel Anquetil Building falls under that list.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item *22060.001 - Maintenance of which Buildings*, can I know, out of the Rs10 m. budgeted, if projects have already been contracted? Can I have the list of all the contractors involved in the maintenance?

**Mr Bodha:** Which item?

**Mr Armance:** Item *22060.001*.

**Mr Bodha:** It relates to buildings, maintenance, repairs and upgrading of MPI buildings, Government quarters, workshops and Emmanuel Anquetil building, demolition of two quarters. The contractors are -

- Aqua Cooler for the whole compound,
- for the elevator, we have Escalator Service,
- for the Engineering, we have Serenex Engineering Co. Ltd,
- for IT we have Rolem Bureautique Ltd, and
- we also have Rey & Lenferna Ltd.

*(Interruptions)*

He will keep clean! I have a list of all the other contractors, Madam Chairperson, and I am going to circulate it.

**Mr Ramful:** Under item *21111.100 - Overtime...*

**Mr Bodha:** Which page, please?

**Mr Ramful:** At page 152 - *Overtime*, I can see that Rs13 m. is being budgeted for overtime. I know the staff of this Ministry is overloaded with work, but still doesn't the Minister think that this is exaggerated? Rs13 m.!

**Mr Bodha:** This is the provision, Madam Chairperson, for payment of overtime to office auxiliary's cadre for opening, closing and general cleaning of offices. General workers are also acting as watchmen and to officers and drivers working extra hours beyond the normal working hours.

**The Chairperson:** Page 153, hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mohamed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 31410.407 - *Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management*, last year, under this item for which we have already spent Rs52,960,000, I had asked a question about whether Vallée Pitot was included in that list and the hon. Minister replied in the affirmative. Up and until now, I have not seen much going on there. Can the hon. Minister reiterate his assurance that Vallée Pitot, which is in dire situation because of that problem, action will be taken this year?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the information I have is that with the assistance of experts from the Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA), monitoring equipment has been installed on site and these equipment are providing up-to-date information as regards to rainfall and movement of soil. So, I think, they need maybe some time to be able then come with the mitigating measures. What we have done so far is monitoring of the situation as it is.

**Mr Osman Mohamed:** Madam Chairperson, can I have an additional question on this same item?

**The Chairperson:** No, please give the chance to others to ask questions. We will see if we have time, we will come back to you. Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** A la page 153, sous l'item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*, est-ce que je pourrais savoir du ministre la raison derrière une augmentation aussi substantielle de R 20 millions à R 30,700,000, et le montant reste le même pour les années suivantes ? Est-ce que je pourrais connaître les différents *studies and surveys* et cela se réfère à quoi exactement ?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, we have a number of studies. First of all, it is about the old Grand River North West Bridge. We wanted to do a stress test and see whether it can be used, in fact, as a bypass from Pailles up to the level of the junction. You have also the integrated transport impact assessment and future road. We have the leading edge road specification. We have also studies as regards to intelligence technologies and alternative transport system for roads. So, I can circulate the list.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I may take the hon. Minister back to item 31410.407 - *Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management*, we see that for years 2016/2017, there is a provision for Rs57,300,000 and then that decreases in the coming financial year. Now, can we have a breakdown of where the large chunk of money has been spent insofar as rehabilitation works for landslide are concerned?

**Mr Bodha:** It is at page 152?

**Mr Rutnah:** It is item 31410.407. It is the question of hon. Osman Mahomed asked earlier on.

**Mr Bodha:** The provision, in fact, required for the implementation of countermeasure works at Chitrakoot, Phase II. The countermeasure works consist mainly of the construction of drainworks, boundary walls, tarring works and upgrading of bridges and existing rivers. The works have been awarded to Sotravic for the sum of Rs39 m. The works are starting in a month and it will take about six months.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On page 153, under item 31112.433 (c) *Refurbishment of Electrical Equipment & System* at Anquetil Building, may we know why there is such a massive project value - Rs126 m. - for the refurbishment works of the building, and who is the contractor? Can we have all the details?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, from this item what I have is for Emmanuel Anquetil building. The amount represents the project value for two major projects –

- installation of electric equipment to the tune of Rs33 m., and
- an electrical system to the tune of Rs93 m.

Under this item, there are several projects which would span over several years for three such projects and the terms of reference have been prepared. As at date, contracts have been awarded for only one project. It is the lift. We are changing all the lift systems at South West corner. However, delivery of equipment will be effected during the next financial year. Subsequently, the amount earmarked for this financial year, Rs33 m., has not been utilised. In view of the above, the estimates for the projects falling under *subhead Refurbishment of Electrical Equipment* have been revised as follows –

- a number of transformer,
- generation set,
- fire detection,
- fire-fighting pumps, and
- then we have a replacement of specialised equipment.

That is how we come to this. It is massive.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I will come back again, Madam Chairperson. Several of my friends have asked about this landslide management. I hope the Minister is listening. It is landslide management at Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel. You have been there. Your colleagues have been there. The situation is very serious. Madam Chairperson, on page 153, under item *31410.407 – Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management*.

**The Chairperson:** Item *31410.407*.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Page 153

**The Chairperson:** Yes, I said the item no. to remind the Minister.

**Mr Bhagwan:** No, I don't need to remind him, he is like a computer I think.

**The Chairperson:** No, but you have to tell him which item no.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Item *31410.407*. The Minister must take these things seriously, I have been there, his colleagues have been there. The situation is aggravating. Can I ask the Minister, at least, to have another site visit and that action be taken? If the hon. Minister is a man of action, then he should act.

**Mr Bodha:** *Il ne faut pas aller se promener seulement.* I think we have worked on it, a number of departments were involved, and I remember there was one issue involving the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill. So, what I have been told here is that this project is being implemented by the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill under our supervision.

*(Interruptions)*

Let the MPI take the lead and find a budget to be able to implement the project together with the Municipality.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jahangeer!

**Mr Jahangeer:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item *31113.003 - Construction and Upgrading of Roads* with regard to the *(a) Third Lane at Grand Bassin*. Can the hon. Minister inform us where matters stand?

**Mr Bodha:** *Third lane at Grand Bassin* – the average width of 6.5 to 6.27 consists of several dangerous bends, so there are upgrades. The project contains upgrading of part of Grand Bassin road over a length of about 2.5 kms. The works have started in April this year and are expected to be completed by February 2018. The cost is Rs65.7 m. The works are being carried out by Gamma Construction.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you Madam Chairperson, page 153, under item *22130 - Studies and Surveys*, I noticed that there is an increase. So can we have a list of studies and surveys that will be carried on?

**Mr Bodha:** I mentioned this; I am going to circulate it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Concerning Capital Expenditure - *Acquisition of Non Financial Assets*, under item *31113.003 - Construction and Upgrading of Roads* item *(c) New Access Road SSR Airport*, it is up to the tune of Rs600 m. Can we have some details on this provision and is this new access to SSR a priority?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, it is an access to the new passenger terminal and for the creation of Cargo and Freeport Zone at the Airport. It is planned to provide a new access

that would cater for generated additional volume of traffic and also to cater for future developments in the region.

The length is 4.5 kms, the project consists also of a major grade separator. The works started last year in March. They are expected to be completed in a few weeks. The cost is Rs602 m. and from what I have seen, 95% of the works have been done and this road is going to be open most probably in July.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Thierry Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la presidente, item 26313.079 - *Extra-Budgetary Units - Road Development Authority*, je vois qu'il y a qu'un grant de R 146 millions a été donné à RDA. J'aimerais savoir si la réhabilitation du pont de Ville Noire est incluse.

**Mr Bodha:** This is a provision for the funding partly of the administrative costs of the RDA. I have been told that this bridge is not there, but I think we have had a number of PQs on this. I will see whether we can find some sort of budget to do something for Ville Noire.

**The Chairperson:** Page 154. hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Page 153.

**The Chairperson:** Page 153, yes, but we already had 15 minutes additional and we have several vote items, there is not only one vote item. No, you are not going to ask your question for page 154? You said you are forfeiting your question for page 154, okay then ask for page 153.

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It is very important hon. Minister. That relates to the rehabilitation work for the landslide in Vallée Pitôt. That was what my hon. Friend mentioned. There is a report by the Japanese Consultant. Is the hon. Minister willing to table a copy of this report? Because my information is that the report says that it is unsafe for all the houses to be there. At any time, there can be damage to the houses. There are many people living there and we have heard from the hon. Minister that they are only monitoring the situation; they are not making any work. So, is the hon. Minister prepared to table the report from the Japanese Authorities?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, I have had a working session with the engineer of JAICA regularly and they have not mentioned to me Vallée Pitot as a matter of urgency, but

rather as a matter of priority. I understand the apprehensions of my colleague. I must say that JAICA reports are very short and to the point. If there is any report, I am prepared to table it. The problem is not only the report, it is that we have to take action. From what they have told me so far is that we are doing the monitoring, we have installed the equipment. So, next time the JAICA engineer is here - I think it will be in a few months - we will come back to it. From what I have also been told here, the relocation of the inhabitants is being looked into by the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** Madam Chairperson, page 154.

**The Chairperson:** Oui, page 154.

**Mr Ramano:** Oui, merci, Madame la présidente. Dans le *Decongestion Programme* pour la ville de Quatre Bornes, le ministre a annoncé la nécessité de soulager la pression au niveau de la route royale de St Jean. J'ai parcouru toute la liste, mais aucune mention n'est faite pour la ville de Quatre Bornes. Est-ce que le ministre peut nous dire comment est-ce qu'il compte procéder pour décongestionner la ville de Quatre Bornes?

**Mr Bodha:** I said so in so many details, but there is no provision in the Budget. There is one provision at Palmerstone, it is Rs300 m. for interface with the Metro Express. We are going to use those Rs300 m.

*(Interruptions)*

We are going to use it at the entrance of St Jean and I explained that we are going to have, Madam Chairperson, a direct connection from Terre Rouge-Verdun to Sodnac so that we don't go through this tunnel of St Jean. We are going to have another connection from the motorway to Sodnac - over the motorway today.

**The Chairperson:** Explain it again!

**Mr Bodha:** Okay! No, no, this is when one goes down not when one comes from Terre Rouge-Verdun and from Port Louis because one has to fly over the motorway. A Master Plan is being implemented by the RDA to relieve traffic congestion in the region of Ebene, Quatre Bornes and Trianon as follows an alternating access to Quatre Bornes through

Sodnac by linking the M3 that is Terre Rouge/Verdun and then M1 to the flyover at Avenue Tulipes.

**Mr Ramano:** Quelle est le montant de ce projet?

**The Chairperson:** In the Budget Speech.

**Mr Bodha:** This is not being budgeted, but I said that there is an interface of Rs300 m. and the money will be used from that interface.

**Mr Ramano:** How much?

**Mr Bodha:** I cannot give the figure now.

**The Chairperson:** Now, the hon. Member cannot ask questions from a sitting position.

*(Interruptions)*

No. I will not allow questions from a sitting position.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the existing flyover at Ebène is being upgraded and internal roads in Quatres Bornes are going to be re-engineered completely and then, the St Pierre bypass to Ebène will be constructed to alleviate traffic on the Reduit interchange. Finally, we are going to have a traffic management system including the whole region, Madam Chairperson. There is one project which is also aimed at reducing the fluidity of traffic in Quatre Bornes, it is the Beau Songes-LaVigie Road and there is a budget of Rs1.3 billion which is proposed for this year, where we are going to do La Vigie and La Marie. Rs1.3 billion have been earmarked for that!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhadain and hon. Bhagwan, please do not interrupt the Minister. Allow him to explain!

*(Interruptions)*

He is explaining!

*(Interruptions)*

If you keep interrupting him, he will not be able! Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, Madam. I have got two issues on this page, Madam Chairperson. Regarding the first item, flyover at Decaen Street, Port Louis, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there has been a tender, if there has been any response, and if any, when works will start. The second issue is regarding maintenance, the last item on the same page. I do not see any maintenance for flyovers because we see plants are growing on the walls of flyovers. This is very dangerous.

**Mr Bodha:** For the flyover at Decaen Street, this project value is Rs411 m. The contract is Rs411 m. The tender documents have been floated. There is one bidder. The contract will be awarded in the weeks to come. We have some issues of land acquisition which we are going to address in the weeks to come. So, the works are supposed to start as soon as we can in the coming weeks.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Bodha:** The maintenance of flyovers is being taken care of in the general maintenance schedule of the MPI.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you. Can I refer the hon. Minister to item (t) *Enabling Works for Metro & Road Interface at Palmerstone*, for which we are being requested to vote a sum Rs300 m.? I know the hon. Minister has provided information as to how traffic is being diverted. But at the end of this, can the hon. Minister assure the House that we are not going to have problems at grade-level, that cars will have to be stopped to allow train to cross over that busy interface there? Can we have that assurance from the hon. Minister?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the traffic, when it is at grade between the Metro Express and the traffic, will be re-engineered with all the sophisticated equipment that we have usually when we have the light rail.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhadain!

**Mr Bhadain:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Same item 3111.003, (t) *Enabling Works for Metro & Road Interface at Palmerstone*, could the hon. Minister explain the amount budgeted, that is, Rs300 m. for three years; Rs50 m. for 2017/2018; Rs200 m. for

Rs2018/2019 and Rs50 m. 2019/2020? However, when we look at Annex I Capital projects in relation to the Metro Express, the amount of money we are talking about for 2017/2018 is Rs8.5 billion and 2018/2019 Rs5.8 billion. Does that mean that the only reference under the Ministry of Public Infrastructure for enabling works in relation to Metro is Rs300 m.? But there is a serious flaw in the Budget because we are talking about Rs8.5 billion for 2017/2018 and Rs5.8 billion for 2018/2019. Who is spending the money? Does the Metro Express fall under the Ministry of Public Infrastructure? Is the Minister the relevant Minister for the Metro Express project?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the MPI is going to be the lead Ministry as regards the Metro Express implementation project. The figures which have been mentioned by the hon. Member, we can do two things, Madam Chairperson. That is why I said as soon as we have the contract which has been awarded, we are going to have a scope of works and a calendar of works. What have been requested from the two bidders is to see whether we can have two options. One option is whether we start in Curepipe and Port Louis and after four years we end up in Rose Hill or the other option is that we start in Port Louis, and we do the first segment up to Rose Hill which is the 13 kms, and then from there we move on to a second stage, that is why we have this explanation as regards the budget. It is up to us to decide what is the best option for the country and as soon as the contract is awarded we are going to have a general scope of works and we are going to have a calendar of works.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

*(Interruptions)*

No, the hon. Member can ask his question later on! Hon. Ramful now!

**Mr Ramful:** At page 154.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, if you will allow me; the question was whether no money is going to be spent in year 2017-2018. Money is going to be spent...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhadain, I have said that you do not ask questions from a sitting position!

**Mr Bodha:** We are going to have a budget for the works for the years 2017 and 2018.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** If he continues, I will have to order him out!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Bodha:** That is what I am saying as soon as the contract...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No, hon. Bhadain! No! I have said that from a sitting position you do not interrupt the Minister and you do not ask him questions from a sitting position! You have asked your question, now you allow him to reply!

**Mr Bodha:** Now, you have two types of works, Madam Chairperson. You have enabling works that is to prepare the site and you have the works for the project proper. Just like we had enabling works here in Victoria, we are levelling the ground, now we are going to have enabling works and there is going to be a budget for 2017-2018 for the Metro. We are going to fix the budget. We are going to have a scope of works for the next two years or three years or four years and then we are going to have a calendar of works. So, there is going to be expenditure. Later, we will come to say how much we are spending in 2017, how much we are spending in 2018 and where we are spending it.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

*(Interruptions)*

Hon. Adrien Duval, I had given you the floor and the hon. Member had taken the floor again!

*(Interruptions)*

I have given you the floor now!

**Mr Ramful:** Okay, you are saying hon. Adrien Duval! Thank you!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I have called your name. I have given you the floor and you are arguing!

**Mr Ramful:** On page 154, there is a list of projects for construction of roads. Can I request the hon. Minister to circulate the list of all the consultants and contractors for those projects that have been allocated?

**Mr Bodha:** There are two methods, Madam Chairperson. We have a framework agreement where you had a tender and companies have been chosen on regional basis. You have a framework agreement. These are works for a certain value which is not very important and then we have each and every project. Now, for each and every project you are going to have the bid documents, you are going to have the bid exercise.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, for everyone! And there are going to be official tender exercises for each of these projects, Madam Chairperson.

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, I had a question, I was taken away! I have no objection that it was given to hon. Ritesh Ramful!

**The Chairperson:** No, I did not call you, did I?

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, you did call me!

**The Chairperson:** Okay, if I did call you, then you go ahead!

**Mr A. Duval:** For the bypass at Cap Malheureux, we see that there is project value Rs200 m. First of all, we need to know the amount given to the consultant. Who are the consultants for the design? And secondly, can the hon. Minister explain why there is only Rs70 m. to be spent in the life of this Government for this mandate and where is the rest of it? When is this going to be done and why is this taking such a long time and also if he can explain the project in details?

**Mr Bodha:** As regards the bypass of Cap Malheureux, Madam Chairperson, the sum of Rs20 m. was estimated for this year. There are about 40 landowners who are involved. We are having discussions with all the landowners to be able to have the right of entry and to be

able to implement the project. Now, we have no budget for 2017/18, but depending on how fast we address the land issue, we will be able to see to it that we can start this project. The project is being designed in-house by the RDA and the cost is Rs200 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance and then hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Armance:** *Upgrading of Pointe aux Sables Road at Petit Verger*, the project value is Rs88 m., but only Rs5 m. in 2016 and Rs20 m. in 2017. My question is: will there be a compulsory acquisition through this road, when is the project starting and what is the scope of work of the project?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, the project consists of widening the existing Pointe aux Sables Road over a length of 4 kilometres starting from the junction at Albion Road to bus terminal of Pointe aux Sables in view to improve the safety. We are working on the project. The works are supposed to start in April 2018 and the completion date will be a year. The project value is Rs88 m. We are now going to do the bidding.

(*Interruptions*)

From what I have been told here, if we are at the procurement stage, it means that the land issue has been resolved. So, we are now going to do the tender.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 31113.003 - *Construction and Upgrading of Roads - (x) Glen Park-Robinson link Road*. For the Rs20 m. being earmarked this year, I want to know for what purpose and the status of the Robinson link Road.

**Mr Bodha:** We know, Madam Chairperson, that the whole area between Glen Park, La Mairie and Grand Bassin, there is a huge congestion during the Maha Shivaratri Festival and also traffic going to the south. So, the aim of the project is to facilitate planters who have access to their agricultural lands, but also to provide a bypass for traffic between Glen Park, Robinson and Curepipe and it is proposed to widen and upgrade an existing link of 1.4 kilometres. It is a track road. Madam Chairperson, we have some land acquisition issues and as soon as these are going to be resolved, the project will be implemented. I will invite my colleague to do the cutting of the ribbon whenever this can be done.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah, I come back to you!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I may refer the hon. Minister to page 154, item 31113.003 - *Construction and Upgrading of Roads - (p) Reprofiling of L'Amaury Road.*

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to the hon. Minister for making provision for the reprofiling of Amaury Road.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Do not interrupt him! Does he not have the right to ask question?

**Mr Rutnah:** Madam Chairperson, I would like to express my gratitude to the hon. Minister for making provision for Amaury Road...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea, do not interrupt him! Allow him to ask his question!

**Mr Rutnah:** ...and today, through me, my constituents would like to know from the hon. Minister when work is likely to start and whether the contract has been awarded and when the work is likely to finish.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the work will last about nine months. We are working on the detailed engineering at the RDA and then we will close the tenders as soon as we finish.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Last line on page 154. So many years I have been asking the Minister - and he knows about it - about the quality of road marking. I raised the issue the other day. Last week, there has been a road which has been tarred by the RDA and road marking effected the next day. I will advise the Minister to go and see, so the quality of paint *laisse à désirer*. I do not know what is happening at the RDA, who is that *requin* who is working and having privilege, *liaison* with some paint operators. Very bad paint and it is very dangerous! So, we all know about this problem of accidents occurring nearly every day. So, can the hon. Minister, at least, take urgent action in the public interest and for his own stake, at least, to have this type of paint be changed?

**Mr Bodha:** The hon. Member has been mentioning this issue to me regularly and I think we have to take it as a matter of urgency. All the officers of the RDA are here. I am really going to see how markings have been made recently because we did the resurfacing works. We are doing, in fact, Rs200 m. of resurfacing works in June and July and the road markings have to be of international standards. In fact, regarding the roads in the south, we have done a number of new technologies, Madam Chairperson, including the road markings and the signage.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** As regards the flyover at Decaen Street, I am very surprised there is only one bidder, which by the way the hon. Minister did not give the name of the bidder. My question is: what will be the duration of this project? Because this will have a direct impact on the hawkers at Decaen. Has the hon. Minister identified a site for the relocation of the hawkers at Decaen?

**Mr Bodha:** The hawkers have been a very sensitive problem, Madam Chairperson. So, we have been working with them. In fact, I do not know whether we have the opportunity. The project of the urban terminal of Vacoas is going to be presented to Cabinet at the end of next week, Madam Chairperson. Then, we will have to have a calendar of works of the Decaen entry and also the Victoria Terminal. I can assure the hon. Member that we are going to work with all the hawkers and the Municipality to see to it that they have relocation.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 154, item 31113.004 - *Construction and Upgrading of Bridges - (c) Pont Bruniquel* at Baie du Tombeau, I would like to know when the works are due to start and all details, please.

**Mr Bodha:** The Pont Bruniquel is located near the entrance of Baie du Tombeau; it is quite narrow. This is the description. The expecting works are supposed to start in January 2018 and will be completed in a year.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, one year. The project value is Rs60 m. We are working on the project design, then we will go for the bidding.

**The Chairperson:** Page 155! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 31121.801 - *Acquisition of Vehicles*. Can the hon. Minister give the information of the Rs8.4 m., the make, models and the use of all the vehicles and future use as well for the estimates 2017/2018 and 2018/2019?

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Bodha:** Well, it is a double cab for the conveyance of materials and workers on site for Rs1.8 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

(*Interruptions*)

He has not finished! Hon. Minister, do you have additional information to give?

**Mr Bodha:** It is an excavator for excavating works, cleaning of drains; it is also for heavy plant and machinery for road maintenance.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. At page...

**Mr Armance:** Madam Chairperson, some point of clarification on the previous question from my hon. friend...

**The Chairperson:** No, I have given the floor to...

(*Interruptions*)

Look, if you have a point of clarification you bring it afterwards. Now, I have given the floor to hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I may take the Minister to page 155 item 31122.999 - *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, we see a provision of Rs8.6 m. for this year whereas the provision tends to decrease heavily as of next year and the year after. Can we know why this decrease in provision?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, for transport, I have replied and I said that there is provision for a double cab in replacing an old one, which is 16 years old. This is what I have here, Rs1.3 m., and then we have the excavator for Rs1.5 m. and then you have other plant and machinery for Rs3.8 m.

*(Interruptions)*

They have put it in vehicles, plant and machinery.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Thank you, on the same particular issue concerning transport equipment. So, therefore, the item would be 31121, there are no specific details provided, Madam Chairperson, but I would like to ask the hon. Minister the following: with regard to the central reservation and lay-bys on all of our highways and the way that the grass is cut and trees are destroyed without any specific idea or concept as to what gardening on botany is and how the grass is cut and rubbish is left behind, can he please tell us whether any provision has been made for proper equipment for maintenance of central reservation or proper machinery for the picking up of old plastic bottles and rubbish that is left behind and proper machinery and training given to the staff of the RDA that are not being trained and not given protective equipment, including boots, goggles and gloves while they are doing this job, in violation of employment laws and occupational health and safety laws of Mauritius?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, first of all, we need the staffing. So, the RDA is recruiting additional staff. Second, we need the training. I totally agree with the hon. Member. Third, there were responsibilities, often you have a team which has done the cutting of the grass and we ask them why the grass is left behind and they say this falls under the responsibility of the local government. So, what we are doing in fact is centralising this responsibility so that we have a team doing it and given the proper equipment and given the proper training. I totally agree that we have to give them training because this is a very dangerous issue. Often what we have is some persons raising a flag and two other people doing the cutting and two or three are waiting and then you do not know when the transport system will come. So, the RDA is re-engineering completely this department and I am going to assure that proper equipment will be given and all safety precautions will be taken.

**The Chairperson:** Page 156, hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, can we know the name of the company, please?

**Mr Bodha:** The contractor is Keep Clean Ltd for Rs35,000 monthly. This is for the general cleaning. For the sanitary services, it is Keep Clean Ltd for Rs460 monthly and...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Keep interrupting him? Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** It is okay.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Madam Chairperson, under item 22030 – *Rent*, we want to know why there is an increase and then it decreases.

**Mr Bodha:** Well, the rent is provision for rental of buildings for the Electrical Services Division in Curepipe, in Pamplemousses, in Plaine Lauzun and in Rose Hill. But what we are doing, Madam Chairperson, is that we are bringing the Electrical Services Division, we have regional offices but the main office, henceforth, is going to be at the MPI. Normally, they were based in the Upper Plaines Wilhems, but I think that they should be in-house with the MPI for better coordination of the works. We will keep the regional offices.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 21110 on page 156 - *Trademan's Assistant*, I note that you have funded for 18 more despite there is a reduction of budget in 2017, but a huge increase in 2018 pertaining to the year of the election again. So, can we know what is this escalation and descending cost?

**Mr Bodha:** The recruitment is going to be done by the Public Service Commission.

*Vote 8-1 Public Infrastructure (Rs4,287,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 8-2 Land Transport was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 157! Page 158! Hon. Abbas Mamode!

**Mr Abbas Mamode:** Concerning item 22120.002 – *Fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees*, can the hon. Minister elaborate and tell us who are the Board members and which Board we are referring to?

**Mr Bodha:** Provision has been made for the payment of Fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees as follows –

- the National Road Safety Council;

- the Motor Vehicle Insurance Arbitration Committee;
- the Traffic Impact Committee;
- the NTC Appeal Committee;
- Members of the Bid Evaluation Committees, and
- Departmental Bid Committees.

We also have provision made for the training of staff.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On the same item *Fees – 22120*, can I know from the hon. Minister, out of the Rs19m. budgeted last year, how much was actually spent?

**Mr Bodha:** I will have to ask for clarification.

**The Chairperson:** In the meantime, can we take the question of hon. Henry?

**Mr Henry :** Madame la présidente, sur l’item *21110.005 – Extra Assistance*, est-ce qu’on pourrait avoir les détails et la liste des noms s’il vous plaît ? Quel est le montant pour chaque personne ?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, it is the amount for payment to a Road Safety Coordinator, who is Daniel Raymond.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan, Please! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item *Fees – 22120*, the hon. Minister given a list of Committees. Can he give a list of all these people who sit on all these different Committees and out of these 19m., how much was paid to each and every single member of that Committee? Can he give that please?

**Mr Bodha:** Well the rates for those Committees, Madam Chairperson, are very low. It is about Rs800 per sitting. We have a number of Committees, and I am going to circulate it. I must say that I was a bit, myself, surprised and embarrassed that we can ask somebody whom we have nominated at the Cabinet to sit in a Committee for Rs800 per day.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Under the same item *Fees to Board Members*, can I know who is the Chairperson of the Motor Vehicle Arbitration Committee? Also can we have a list of the number of cases that have been dealt with for last year?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, Maître Panglose was the outgoing Chairperson and he resigned. So, you have one acting Chairperson now, Maître Rochaibar. I am proposing, in fact, to go to Cabinet to nominate him as the Chairperson. We are going to nominate somebody as Vice-Chairperson. I totally agree also that you have many cases, and there is a backlog - about 600 cases. What I have requested them is to have regular sittings and to have at the Ministry a secretariat which is dedicated to them. In fact, most insurance companies and interested parties are very willing to find a solution as soon as this is possible. I think this Committee does address a number of issues, and I am going to look into it to have a full-time Chairperson, and a Vice-Chairperson as well. I will circulate the number of cases as well, as soon as I can.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh :** Thank you, Madam Chairpesrson. Item 22030- *Rent*, we can see that there is an increase from Rs9.610 m. to Rs10 m. May we have some clarification please? What is the name of the building being rent?

**Mr Bodha:** It is charges for office space at the Air Mauritius Building, on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> floors, for MPI and the Land Transport Division. We pay Rs296,000 per month for the 10<sup>th</sup>; for the 12<sup>th</sup> floor, we pay Rs385,000. The additional provision has been made to relocate from Jade House and Emmanuel Anquetil building the financial and the store sections of the Land Transport Division under the same roof at Air Mauritius Building.

**The Chairperson:** Page 159! Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Madam, I will take one item at page 159, 31113.035- *Preparation of Metro Express*. The Minister has been giving so many contradictory answers and it is creating more confusion concerning the *trajet* itself. We have not yet received any official view of the *trajet*, even the one which goes to Ebene. The Minister has said that it is either starting from Port Louis to Rose Hill, or Curepipe to Rose Hill, and more so, it is about the problem of utilities. He has been speaking about preparation. Where would the actual utility, which would be removed, be situated? The people want to know exactly, the taxi owners. What about the roundabouts? So, we are talking about preparation of the Metro. I think he

Minister owes an answer to the population. He should give us concrete and precise information, not approximate. Yesterday, we have read something in the Press, and even heard on the radio. What we want to know is where it starts. Is it from either Port Louis or Curepipe? What is the *trajet* of Ebene and especially the utilities? Where will the utilities be placed? Has a site already been found and also whether money would be given to the local authorities? I have asked the Mayor of the town, where I pay tax, where would the market be re-situated or even the other utilities. He replied he does not know; he has not been made aware. He is completely in the dark. It is a Mayor of your own alliance.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, a lot has been said, will be said. A lot has been written by a number of people who write, or want to express their opinion, or their expertise as regards the Metro. What is fact is what I or the Prime Minister or any other Minister gives to the House. That is what I have always said. Yesterday or the other day, I mentioned the figure. I said that we would come to the House for all the details because we need this to be a national project, in all transparency, with the people! I can understand everyone has a question about the Metro.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhadain!

**Mr Bodha:** Everyone has a question about the Metro, Madam Chairperson.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhadain!

**Mr Bodha:** *Le cahier de charge...*

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Toussaint!

**Mr Bodha:** ...all the conditions, all the mitigating factors, all the mitigating measures have formed part of the tender specification that we have given to the two bidders. You have a reference for each of these criteria which have been made by the Singapore Corporation Enterprise. Now, the reference has been given to the bidders, and the bidders will have to come with the technical specifications and the financial specification. This is being done now. As soon as we are happy with the technical specifications provided by the bidder, as

soon as we are happy with the technical financial specifications as provided by the bidder and the contract is signed, then, with the bidder, we will come and say what we are doing in each and every segment. I am giving a promise of this Government that we will do it in all transparency with everyone because everyone has a question as regards the Metro Express, but they have to be given the right answer. Now, when it comes to utilities, Madam Chairperson, we are doing the mapping of the utilities. In fact, there was a meeting this morning; we need to have a mapping. We have to see what has to be moved, how they have to be moved and how to be reinstated. I have been talking to the Deputy Prime Minister to see that reinstatement also can help to make the system better, the network better. This is what we want to do, Madam Chairperson. As regards to this Budget of Rs33m., this relates only to the provision which is made for a balance which we are paying to the Singapore Corporation Enterprise for the consultancy that they have provided to this Government.

In a question I replied earlier, by the PNQ, the former Government had spent already half a billion! We have spent, with what we have been doing now, that is, consider the realignment, consider a number of cost cutting factors, consider the bidding documents, the bid evaluation. This is costing only Rs33 m. The former Government had already spent half a billion on this project.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On the Metro Express ...

**Mr Bodha:** Which page?

**Mr Uteem:** On the same item, on the Metro Express, itself. In the Budget, what was announced is that funding from India, there will be Rs9.9 billion from grant and Rs9.2 billion from additional financial assistance, giving a total of around Rs20 billion. We have shortlisted two bidders. What happen if the two bidders bid is more than this Rs20 billion?

**Mr Bodha:** Again, I said so. My hon. colleague was not in Parliament when I addressed this issue. I explained that the Rs17.7 billion is a reference baseline figure which has been given to us by our consultant. When we gave these tender specifications as regards the technical specifications and the financial specifications, we have told them that this is the baseline figure. Now, the two bidders have made their bids, and I told the House that we are working to see to it that we are around this figure.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have a question on page 160.

**The Chairperson:** No, we are on page 159! Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On the Metro Express, on the same issue, is the hon. Minister aware that in June of this year, in India, Kochi Metro Rail Ltd inaugurated a Metro of 25 stations for 13 kms, which has taken four years to be built and which has cost USD800 m., that is, Rs28 billion? So, how come that we are taking the constructors from India for the same type of Metro 13.4 kms with less stations? There, they have 25 stations, and we have volcanic soil here compared to India, which is not a volcanic soil. Our Metro will cost Rs10 billion less.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, then I will ask the hon. Member how, in the former project, it was costing Rs24 billion.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Order!

*(Interruptions)*

Order! The hon. Member has taken all his time to ask his question. Allow the hon. Minister to take his time to reply!

**Mr Bodha:** I can understand that the hon. Member is making calculations and figures. We have a baseline reference budget which has been given to us by the consultants who have been working on this project for a number of years. We have said, Madam Chairperson, that we want to have the Metro Express at an affordable...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Now, if you want to make all sorts of comments, it is better for the Minister not to reply because the hon. Member is not allowing him to reply and he is making all sorts of comments on what he is saying.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, anyway, all this will come out in a few weeks and we will come in this Assembly with the final figure.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Again, I am talking about the preparation. *Ce qui m'intéresse, c'est le trajet.* My attention has been drawn that the initial *trajet* stopping at Jumbo, where we have an ex-railway track, has been modified - this is my genuine information. I know what I am saying. It could have gone straight to Victoria, Quatre Bornes and so on - because of a few privileged persons so as not to have the Metro going through their houses. I know what I am saying.

Can the hon. Minister, at least, give assurance to the House – all these will become public afterwards, as he stated himself – that the *trajet* has not been modified to go from Jumbo through the Motorway and then going again through the St Jean Road and creating lots of *tracas* to all these inhabitants of St Jean Road instead of going from Jumbo straight forward to downstairs?

**Mr Bodha:** This is not the case at all, Madam Chairperson. We have not modified the alignment at all.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhadain, last question on this page!

**Mr Bhadain:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In relation to what the hon. Minister has just explained about the 13 km and the bids, can he explain to the House whether the bids are going to be separate bids for the 13 km and the 30 km, which is in the budget, and also, when was this decided - because the hon. Minister answered a PNQ a few weeks back and he never mentioned that there were two projects, Phase I, Phase II, 13 km, 30 km - and whether this was going from Port Louis to Rose Hill or Port Louis to Curepipe? I mean all of this is just new. It is just being said now. Were the bidders asked specifically to prepare bids for those phases I and II separately or for the whole thing? Everything which is being said now, is this something which has been decided *en catimini* in the last few days?

**Mr Bodha:** Not at all, Madam Chairperson. The two bidders have been given the technical specifications two or three months back. We have requested them to say whether they can have two options, starting in Curepipe and Port Louis at the same time and connecting in Rose Hill or to do it in two phases.

**The Chairperson:** Page 160, hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 22060 - *Maintenance (a) Traffic Lights and (b) Speed Cameras*, huge amounts of money have been budgeted for the last financial year and for the coming financial year also. Can we have a detailed breakdown for these amounts that have been budgeted?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, this is to meet payment for the maintenance and repairs and supply of spare parts for some 280 traffic lights, following a bid exercise contract which was awarded to Sobany & Sons in April 2017 and which expires in March 2018. The decrease is due to the spare parts which have been included in the maintenance contract of traffic signal equipment. This is for the traffic lights.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** At page 160, item 22900.952 - *(b) Sensitisation Campaign and (c) Education Program*, I would like to know why there is a decrease in budget since we have more and more accidents.

**Mr Bodha:** In fact, this is a question I ask myself. The issue is that, Madam Chairperson, last year, we had a number of tools for this education programme. This year, we have the equipment. So, now we have to do the training. There was a bid exercise as regards the sensitisation programme, Madam Chairperson, and there was a budget of Rs20 m., of which only Rs9 m. were used. Why? Because we were not happy at all with the tools, the videos and the films which were presented to us and we considered the programme as not being effective. In fact, together with the United Nations Road Safety Campaign, with the coming to Mauritius of Mr Jean Todt, who is the UN Ambassador, we are going to use the equipment, the films and all the videos which are available at the level of the United Nations, which I consider as being really well done, to have them broadcasted on radio and on TV instead of spending money to do our own production.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** Madame la présidente, sous l'item 22060, en ce qui concerne *Maintenance (b) Speed Camera*, ensuite un autre item qui vient juste après, *(h) Consultancy fees for speed camera*, il y a *an ongoing contract*. Il y a un contracteur qui détient déjà ce contrat-là. Est-ce que je peux connaître le nom du contracteur, le montant qui a été payé pour l'année écoulée et quelle est la durée du contrat de ce contracteur ?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the maintenance is for 56 speed cameras and back office, including renewable of software licence and calibration of the cameras. It is a one-year contract which was awarded to ProGuard sometime back by the former Government. So, we are launching a new bid at the end of this month.

**Mr Barbier:** The Minister did not answer about *Consultancy fees for speed camera*. This is not a new project; we already have speed cameras here and there. So, what is the purpose of having *Consultancy fees for speed camera* of an amount of Rs6.5 billion? There was no budget for that last year, but this year we are asked to vote Rs6.5 billion. May we know to whom and why?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, the thing is we have the present system of speed cameras, but what we see is that people usually slow in front of the camera, cross the area and then speed up again. In fact, they are speeding up just after the camera. So, we have been thinking about it and one of the other systems, what we call the point-to-point, that is, we have two cameras over a number of kilometres with the average speed. So, if you have crossed the average time that has to be allotted for somebody travelling at a certain speed, then it means that you have committed an offence. We are installing the point-to-point system in a number of areas, and the consultancy is, in fact, to work on this system so that we can implement it in a number of areas because the point-to-point cannot be implemented everywhere. It can be implemented, for example, on the highway over a number of kilometres.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Madam Chairperson, at page 160, under item 22060 regarding (a) *Traffic Lights* and (b) *Speed Camera*, can we have the name of the company who has been awarded the maintenance of the traffic lights and the speed cameras together with the name of directors and shareholders? Secondly, can we know, as at today, how many speed cameras are in good functional state? Thirdly, can we also know as to why it takes so much time for the repairs of the traffic lights?

**Mr Bodha:** As I said, the repair is to be done by Sobany & Sons. I, myself, have seen that over two days, for example, the camera was not on. I had a working session with Mr Sobany to say that the cameras have to be repaired as soon as possible. In fact, on each camera, there is a number where you can call Sobany & Sons to say that these cameras are

not working; it is a number for the public. I think that is how we can see to it that the camera works.

*(Interruptions)*

All the cameras are in a good state.

**Ms Sewocksingh:** At page 160, under item 21110.010 - *Service to Mauritius Programme*, may we have some clarification on this item?

**Mr Bodha:** It is to meet the allowance of two interns under the Service to Mauritius Programme. There are Mr Kumar Pottiram and Mrs Jenisha Rughoo. They are employed on contract for a period of one year. The interns are attached to the Communication Cell of the Ministry where they are assisting in communication campaigns on road safety.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Chairperson, at page 160, under item 22900.952 - (e) *Review Driver Training Standard*, may we know from the hon. Minister what this programme is about? Because there is quite a substantial amount of money being devoted in the next two years on that.

**Mr Bodha:** This provision is made, Madam Chairperson, for the training of additional training instructors for auto/motorcycles and new instructors for motorcars. We know how the level of driving performance in Mauritius is. So, we are opening the *moto-écoles* in July, next month. Four are going to be opened. We have trained people to be the trainers and we have also trained Police Officers to do the examination. We are going to have five others. So, we need to train instructors and Police Officers to be able to carry out the examination.

**The Chairperson:** Page 161! Hon. Bhadain!

*(Interruptions)*

Allow me to remind hon. Members of what I said before we started the Committee of Supply. We had a meeting, and all parties concerned agreed on a certain allocation of time for each vote item. Now, this vote item for the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport, they have two vote items and since it is a big chunk of the Budget, I have given already 40 minutes on top of what was allocated. So, I think we have to be fair; otherwise, we may continue to ask questions and there is no point on agreeing on a time allocation.

## (Interruptions)

Page 161 ! Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 161, under item *31113.001 - Construction of Traffic Centres*, I would like to ask the hon. Minister when the traffic centres of Crève Coeur and Vallée du Paradis at Montagne Longue will be found on this list.

**Mr Bodha:** I heard the *plaider* of the hon. Member during her speech on the Budget. It is not on this list, but what we can do, Madam Chairperson, is to see at the level of the National Development Unit, together with our Ministry and maybe together with the District Council, whether we can find some sort of a budget so that this can be done, because for Crève Coeur it is long overdue.

**Mr Quirin:** Capital Expenditure, under item *31113.311 311- Implementation of National Road Safety Strategy (a) Crash Barriers*, where it is Rs17 m. for 2016/2017 and Rs30 m. for 2017/2018, may we know from the hon. Minister where these handrails have been installed for the last financial year and if he has a list concerning those to be installed for the next financial year?

**Mr Bodha:** This is a very interesting question. In fact, the question I asked was about the resilience of the handrails, because when we see the crashes throughout the motorway, in many places they have been dented. So, I have been asking whether we can have handrails which are more resistant. I watched a video on YouTube where a car was saved from falling over a long slope because the handrails contained the car. So, we have to consider this matter. I will certainly circulate the list. In fact, I have requested the RDA to consider the specification for new handrails.

**Mr Bhadain:** Page 161, item *31122.999 (a) Traffic Lights*, where the amount has gone up from Rs7.5 m. to Rs10 m. and *(b) Traffic Signage Equipment*, it was Rs8.4 m. and now it is Rs8.2 m. Now, these two items are in relation to the Metro Express Project in Belle Rose/Quatre Bornes; Bazar Belle Rose is being taken away and, of course, there are traffic lights in all these areas on Avenue Ollier. So, when the train is coming down from *Bazar Belle Rose*, Avenue Ollier is perpendicular to that road and, of course, the train will have to go on the road and cross over Avenue Ollier. Can the hon. Minister explain how many additional traffic lights are being catered for due to the fact that the Metro Project is now going to be on the road in Belle Rose/Quatre Bornes? What will happen to the existing traffic lights which are there?

Avenue Pasteur is there, and there is a mosque there as well. There are a lot of people who go there. And also the same would apply when it comes to Boundary Avenue. You have to cross over the road because the train is coming straight down and then the road is perpendicular. You have to cross over Boundary Road to go to the other side. So, how many traffic lights are going to be catered for? And also if the hon. Minister can confirm that now that he is mentioning 13 kms for this project...

**The Chairperson:** No, you are asking questions on traffic lights! One by one, please! Because your question is already long! Allow the hon. Minister to reply to the first question, which is a very big question.

**Mr Bodha:** I understand the issue of security as raised by the hon. Member. I also want whatever system which is implemented to be safe. These traffic lights and these traffic signage equipment0 have nothing to do with the Metro. The Metro will have its own state-of-the-art system with sensors and the latest technology. This will come to this point at this point in time. This is for the traffic, the network elsewhere.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Bodha:** It is going to be budgeted in the Metro project.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Page 161, item 31122.999 - *Other Machine and Equipment (c) Speed Cameras*. May I take it from the hon. Minister whether he will confirm also that these budgeted sums will be for the average type camera and not the old that we had?

**Mr Bodha:** Right!

**Mr Ramful:** The same item, I can see that provisions are being made for the purchase of speed cameras. Now, may I make a request to the hon. Minister? In my constituency, the road from the airport leading to Beau Vallon is a straight road, and there have been a series accidents for a number of years. Can the hon. Minister consider the desirability of placing speed cameras there?

**Mr Bodha:** I will certainly consider that as a priority, Madam Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** *Construction of Traffic Centres*, again linked with the Metro Express. This Ebène longstanding project, which will relieve Place Margeot, I am sure. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether some preliminary works have been undertaken by the RDA, whether the local authority is involved in the preparation of a Master Plan for the Traffic Centre? Where exactly the proposed Traffic Centre at Ébène will be situated? Because we have lots of secondary schools like École Hôtelière Sir Gaëtan Duval. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether a survey will be carried out and what is, according to his planning, the expected commissioning date of that Traffic Centre, whether it is close to the proposed Metro Express Project in the *trajet*?

**Mr Bodha:** The Traffic Centre at the University has been opened.

*(Interruptions)*

Now, for Ébène, this will be integrated in the Metro Express project. We are already working on the Urban Terminal of Rose Hill with the Municipality, the MPI and the other stakeholders, and we will have a Master Plan which will include the Urban Terminal of Rose Hill, Place Margeot and then Ébène. We are also thinking of having a green space in between.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Barbier!

**Mr Barbier:** Regarding the same question, Madam Chairperson - *Construction of Traffic Centres*, I must thank the hon. Minister, with your permission. After 20 years continuous pressure, finally Pointe-aux-Sables is on the list. I wish good luck to my friend, hon. Mrs Aurore Perraud. So, may I ask the hon. Minister whether the preliminary works have been completed and whether we can expect it to start now, within this coming financial year?

**Mr Bodha:** Provision is made for the construction of Traffic Centres at Pointe-aux-Sables and Piton with all the amenities and safer alighting and boarding for passengers. Land available for both projects have already been obtained and the bid documents are being prepared. So, these projects are to be completed within this year. But I wanted also to tell the hon. Member that the new Traffic Centres will not be only a Traffic Centre where people just alight and take a bus. We are thinking of doing small terminals, and I think Piton is going to

be the first model where we are going to bring in a small food court, maybe some services so that it is not only a place where you jump off and take a bus.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Can I take the hon. Minister to page 161, item 31113.001 in relation to Piton. My constituents, through me today, would like to know whether, firstly, a site has been identified; secondly, whether the contract has been identified and when work is likely to start.

**Mr Bodha:** Piton! From the information that I have it is that Pointe-aux-Sables and Piton have the same schedule. The Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit, we have had a number of complaints, as you rightly mentioned. So, for the project, land is available and is being vested because it was land which fell under the responsibility of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and I have written to him to say that the land is vested in the MPI. Design is completed. The bid documents are being prepared. We are going to launch the tenders and the works will start in last eight months.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Under item 31122.999 - *Other Machinery and Equipment (c) Speed Cameras*, can the hon. Minister shed complete light on the speed cameras? First of all, the amount which is paid to the service provider on an annual basis; secondly, the maintenance of speed cameras to which provider and the amount paid to them, and thirdly, with regard to all these expenses, nearly a hundred million rupees, whether he will table the list of all the areas and roads that would be fitted with the speed cameras.

**Mr Bodha:** The hon. Member would be very happy to know that when the contract was awarded, the hon. Leader of the Opposition was the Minister of Finance and Economic Development.

(*Interruptions*)

And again, as most of those *contrats en béton abusifs...*

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

*(Interruptions)*

But you know you should not interrupt the hon. Minister and engage in a conversation with him!

*(Interruptions)*

You should not engage in a conversation with somebody to whom you have asked a question.

*(Interruptions)*

He has the right to reply just as you have the right to ask your question!

**Mr Bodha:** Why I said this, Madam Chairperson, is because there was a huge outcry in here when we were in the Opposition about this contract to Proguard. There was a huge outcry and there were many Parliamentary Questions which were raised here by ourselves.

*(Interruptions)*

What happened, you know, the software, the data was supposed to be manned by Proguard and when there were lots of criticisms, then it was handed over to the Police. Hon. Dr. Sorefan knows that. He asked a number of questions.

*(Interruptions)*

So, what I am saying is: the system as it is today is based on calibration and is based on a franchise. And we have to pay for the calibration and we have to pay for the franchise. I have done my best. I will give you the figures. I have done my best to reconsider the contract. It is impossible, and I must tell one thing, I must enlighten the House. I have asked for the hardware to be able to have these specifications for somebody else to maintain it. They have refused. So, that is where we are today. I am convinced that, with the new system, we should be able to have another maintenance programme. Let me say that an amount of Rs18 m. was used for payments to Proguard. So, we paid Rs3.5 m. in August, Rs9.5 m in November and Rs2 m. this year in April, and the total amount is Rs15 m.

*(Interruptions)*

The annual fees - this is what we paid - is about Rs18 m.

**The Chairperson:** Last question, hon. Bhadain!

**Mr Bhadain:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In relation to the answer given by the hon. Minister to hon. Bhagwan, for the sake of transparency - on the same item which was asked - can the hon. Minister mention that now that we know that Rs20.9 billion is being spent for Metro Express project and now that we know that it is 13 kilometres, is it Rs20.9 billion for the 13 kilometres by 2020 or is it for 2030 when it is going to be 30 kilometres? Can we please have clarity on this?

**Mr Bodha:** I explained this to the House, and I would like to explain it again to the nation. The base line budget is Rs17.7 billion for 24 kilometres, and then there was a figure which was presented in the Budget; it was for 13 kilometres, with a lesser budget. When we said 30 kilometres by 2030, I explained that as well. We want this to be a national network and we want the Port Louis corridor to be the backbone of it, and we want to have North-South-East-West system. Again, I said, once we have a contract, once we have the figures, we will come to the House and we will come to the nation, Madam Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants - Study on Cashless Ticketing*. May we know who is the consultant? Who has been awarded for that?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Chairperson, we are moving towards smart card. So, this is the purpose of the cash system. In line with recommendations with the PricewaterhouseCoopers report for a cashless ticketing system to be introduced in the public transport industry, this Ministry is favouring the development of integrated smart ticketing solutions to provide for multi-model integration of fare products and accurate recording of passenger trips so that we know exactly, for example, how many students have boarded the bus, how many elderly are boarding the bus because, as you know, we have a system where we just pay a monthly sum. So, this is for the consultancy. I would like also to say – I mentioned it again in my speech – that we are going to have smart card system for parking, for bus travel and for travel by the metro. In fact, I am launching, next week, the first cashless card system for the Rose Hill transport and that is going to be done in a week.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Item 22120.004 - *Fees to Mauritius Posts Ltd.* May I know what these fees relate to?

**Mr Bodha:** The hon. Member knows that he can pay motor vehicle licences at the Post Offices so we have to pay them a service fee. They recoup part of their fees.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Soreefan!

**Dr. Soreefan:** At page 163, regarding item 22120.038 - *Fees for Vehicle Examination*, are we talking such a huge sum to those private examiners?

**Mr Bodha:** It is a subsidy that we implemented last year to keep the fees as is because we wanted the public to, first of all, appreciate the new examination system, and we did not want the public to say that we have proposed a modern system and we are increasing the fees. That was a subsidy. The subsidy is also extended to this year. We will have to see what will be the policy in the years to come.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** Sous l'item 21210 - *Social Contributions*, est-ce que je peux savoir de l'honorable ministre la liste des heureux bénéficiaires et le quantum pour chaque organisation?

**Mr Bodha:** It is contribution to the National Savings Fund. It is a provision for 2.5% of the employee contribution to the National Savings Fund, 6% employee contribution to the National Fund and 1.5% employee contribution as training levy to the National Pension Fund.

*Vote 8-2 Land Transport (Rs2,315,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 9-1 Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research (Rs16,600,000,000) was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 165, 166, 167. Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente, sous l'item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, est-ce qu'on peut avoir les détails, les noms et la somme allouée à ces personnes s'il vous plaît?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** It refers to the payment made to the advisers, extra assistance. We have six advisers at the level of the Ministry, and this refers to the payment to the advisers.

*(Interruptions)*

Okay, so we have six advisers: Mr Dansinghani, Mr Munbodh, Mr Carlo de Souza, followed by the *attachés de presse* Mr Seearee, Mrs Dookhee and Mr Tulsing. The sum total comes to about Rs7.7 m., and if the hon. Member wants, I can circulate the list.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Same question.

**The Chairperson:** Page 168, hon. Abbas Mamode.

**Mr Abbas Mamode:** Under item 22120.008 – *Fees to Consultant, (a) Study on Green Jobs*, can the Minister elaborate? Who is the consultant, and how have the selections been made?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Which item number please?

**Mr Abbas Mamode:** Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultant*

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** The consultancy is for the study on green jobs. So, in line with Government initiatives, the MITD has submitted a project on consultancy for greening of the TVET sector. The project will be funded by *Agence française de développement* to the tune of Rs3 m. for the payment of consultancy fees.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 168, item 28211 - *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions, .042 Transfer Youth Club*. Can we have a list of the institutions and the youth club please?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Sorry, can I have the item number again please?

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 168, item 28211 - *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** All right! It refers to the youth clubs. A maximum of Rs3,000 is allocated to each registered UNESCO club in State schools, private schools and out-of-schools group. The provision of an amount of Rs210,000 has been provided for the

payment of grants to these clubs last year and we are expecting about the same for this year. We have 47 registered clubs.

*(Interruptions)*

School clubs and out-of-school UNESCO clubs.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys* with respect to the *Nine Year Continuous Basic Education*. May I know from the hon. Minister, now that we are going ahead with the Nine-Year Schooling, why are we still budgeting so much money for studies and surveys?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In fact, Madam Chairperson, the Nine-Year Schooling is being implemented, there are various phases, and consultancy will be required. Now, the consultancy is being provided in priority areas; for example, for the design, evaluation, assessment, school governance and accountability, and all this is being provided through the World Bank.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With respect to 22120.008 (a) *Study on Green Jobs*, there was a previous one conducted by the International Labour Organisation, which was even presented in Geneva - I was there. So, I just want to have a clarification from the hon. Minister on what is the difference between the two. I see there is another one, study on green jobs, being conducted for the sum of Rs3 m.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In fact, I have just mentioned that this particular study is being supported by *l'Agence française de développement*. On the green job, I note that it was initially expected to cost Rs3 m., but now the project has been estimated at Rs1.9 m. The objective of the project is to identify training needs for green skills and integrating them in the existing TVET programme, also to identify the green jobs in future. The project will enable MITD to review its training programmes by integrating green skills in existing courses. As the hon. Member must have noted, we are placing a lot of emphasis on the TVET sector and that is why we are going towards this particular consultancy.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 168, item 22030 – *Rent*, there has been an increase of 20% from Rs20 m. to Rs24 m. May I have a breakdown of this figure and also details of which is being rented and where, etc?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, we are referring here to rental of buildings, and the list that we have here is the MITD House itself for which we pay a rental value of Rs20 m. per year. Then, we have the NPF Building at Rose Hill for Quality Assurance Directorate and Statistics Units, again for an amount of Rs3.186 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Barbier!

**Mr Barbier:** Item 22120.008 - (c) *Energy Audit*, it is for the first time that we are asked to vote such a vote. Can we have some details on what this energy audit is all about?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** The Energy Audit, which is costing around Rs2 m., follows the Energy Efficiency Regulation 2017. It provides for mandatory energy audits of all Government buildings. An energy audit is a systematic analysis of energy use and energy consumption to identify, quantify and report on the opportunities for improved energy performance.

**The Chairperson:** Page 169, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Page 169, item 26313.071 - (c) *Private Pre-Primary Schools*, can the hon. Minister tell us why there is a decrease for the Estimates 2017/18, as it was earmarked Rs58,500,000 for 2016, and then it decreases to Rs55,500,000 for 2017?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** The decrease is explained by the demographic trend in birth rate, so fewer number of students are getting into schools.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 31112.002 - *Non-Residential Buildings, Construction and Extension of Schools*, if the hon. Minister could, please, give some details in which constituencies those schools are going to be constructed.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In fact, Madam Chairperson, we are talking here about construction and extension of schools. We have a list here –

- Dr James Burty David State Secondary School;

- Rabindranath Tagore Secondary School;
- Belle Rose State Secondary School;
- Seewa Bappoo State Secondary School;
- Nouvelle France Mahatma Gandhi Secondary School ;
- Camp de Masque State Secondary School, and
- Ebène State Secondary School

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 26323.071 under Capital Expenditure, there is a one-off grant to private pre-primary schools. May I know from the hon. Minister what is the criterion of eligibility for this grant?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** We have selected pre-primary schools offering courses at less than Rs800 per month and in deprived areas.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under Grants, item 26313.071 (c) *Private Pre-Primary Schools*, every year we vote to give grants to pre-primary schools. May I know from the hon. Minister what monitoring is done at the level of the Ministry to ensure that the funds are properly used by these pre-primary schools?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In fact, the amounts allotted to these schools are in forms of subsidies provided to the schools in terms of the number of students that they take. It is subsidy to parents.

**The Chairperson:** We pass on to page 170. Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 170, item 21110, at the bottom of the page - *Educator (Holistic Development)*, may I know from the hon. Minister what is happening for those teachers?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, the Budget has made provision for the recruitment of more holistic officers this year and the number has increased. If the hon. Member is talking about the YEP trainees, those who are willing have been provided the possibility of being on for another year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** Toujours à la page 170, je voudrais savoir de l'honorable ministre le cas en ce qui concerne les *lady cleaners*, les femmes *cleaners* qui sont attachées aux différentes écoles. Est-ce que je peux savoir le nombre de dames qui sont attachées à ce poste et quel est le salaire qui a été dédié ? Est-ce qu'il y a cette possibilité de revoir leurs conditions de travail ?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, these cleaners are, in fact, not officers of the Ministry. They are taken on an *ad hoc* basis by the PTA. The former Minister of Finance had provided funds for all the cleaners to be taken on board, but they are not officers of the Ministry. They are being paid an increased allowance of around Rs8,500.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Madam Chairperson, in relation to the last item of page 170, it appears that there will be 191 additional Support Teachers for this current financial year. Can I ask the hon. Minister if provision has already been made to recruit them and, if so, when are they likely to be recruited?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, provision has been made in this Budget. The PSC will be informed accordingly and, as soon as possible, the recruitment will be done.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem! Hon. Mrs Perraud! Page 171! No? Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For the recruitment of General Worker, I see that there will be a huge recruitment process, from 80 to 393. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether this is going to be through the PSC, or delegated powers through her Ministry, or through the PTA? And if it is through delegated powers, what mechanism has she established for the recruitment to be fair and equitable across the island?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, the list of candidates will be asked from the Ministry of Labour from across the island and will be taken by delegated powers, by interview.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Barbier! Hon. Uteem! Page 172!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson! Under item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, where there is a budgeted amount of around Rs35 m. next year, can the hon. Minister inform us to whom are the fees to be paid?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, the item is meant for payment of supply teachers oriental language, parent mediators, support teachers on contract, and project managers for the *Zone d'Education Prioritaire (ZEP)*. The budget increase is meant for the enlistment of additional supply teachers.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, there is a big variance which comes down every year. Does it mean that we are cleaning less?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** For the Cleaning Services, Madam Chairperson, in fact, there is a decrease of Rs20 m. in the provision and this is explained by the decision to recruit cleaners of school premises in the following months.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano! Hon. Osman Mahomed! Page 172!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On item 22060.001 - *Buildings of which Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education*, where we are being asked to vote quite a huge amount of money, can the hon. Minister provide us with some clarification on this project, please?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, we are talking about maintenance work in primary schools; funds have been provided for six schools, namely Serge Coutet Government School, Mohanlal Mohit Government School, Curepipe Road Government School, Bambous Geoffroy Government School, Pierre Desvaux de Marigny Government School and Mesnil Government School. There are already 27 schools where works are already on. I can circulate the list of these schools.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Under item 22030 – *Rent*, where there is an amount of Rs19 m. which is budgeted, may we have the details of this amount, please?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** We have got rental of buildings for the Zonal Directorates, the store section and one Government school, and also for accommodation of Chinese volunteers who come from China for teaching of Mandarin. Then, we have rental for parking slots in the Zone 1 Directorate in Port Louis and Rose Hill for the Quality Assurance and Statistics Units. We have rental facilities for events. We have in Zone 1 the Finance Section of the Ministry which is in the Mutual Aid Building. We have Beaujard Government School which is in an Arya Ravived Building, Stores Section in the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Building. For Zone 2, the Directorate is housed in Government buildings; so, no payment of rent. For Zone 3, in Gopal Building. For Zone 4, the Directorate is in Ebène Heights, and again, accommodation for Chinese volunteers in four places: Garden House, Quatre Bornes House, Port Louis House and Belle Rose House. I can circulate the list.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, when the reply is long, it is better for you to circulate it. Page 173! Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Under item 22900.935 - *Summer/Winter School Programme*, can the hon. Minister give a list of schools, please?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, I will circulate the list.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Under Capital Expenditure, item 31112.002 - *Construction and Extension of Schools of which Four Learning Swimming Pools (One per Zone)* where Rs20 m. have been earmarked for the coming financial year, can we know if there has been any tender exercise?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, we are not intending to make swimming pools, what we call *bassins d'apprentissage*. We will have obviously to go through the procurement procedures.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Item 31112.402 - *Upgrading of Schools*, where an amount of Rs174,550 m. was earmarked for the current financial year, now it is decreased to Rs130 m. May we know whether provision was made for reroofing works on emergency basis in the primary school in Goodlands?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Reroofing? Yes, Madam Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With regard to the construction of the four learning swimming pools, are they to be constructed within the precincts of the schools? If so, can we have the name of the schools that have been identified?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In fact, Madam Chairperson, they are not swimming pools as such, we call them *bassins d'apprentissage*. They are small pools that will have to be fixed in. We have not identified the schools yet, but we intend to have one in each of the four zones.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 173 - Upgrading of Schools, where there is an amount of Rs174 m, can I ask the hon. Minister whether the Abdool Raman Abdool School in Constituency No. 3 is included in the list and whether it will be upgraded, and also if she can circulate the list of all the schools that will be upgraded?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, the school Abdool Raman Abdool Government School is on the list and I see that Phase I is expected to be terminated. The MPI is assessing the remaining work. They had to stop the contractor. I see that following the demise of the contractor, the company went into receivership. So, works resumed by the Receiver Manager after the advice of the State Law Office was received. Now, for Phase II, it is going to be contracted out again.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Can we have the list of all the schools that will be upgraded?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Okay!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 31122.802 - *Acquisition of IT Equipment*, could the Minister please give some details about it, as there has been a considerable increase?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** For IT equipment, we have acquisition of 808 computers. Each primary school will receive three to four computers. Then you will have one printer per

school and digital projectors as well. We also have defective digital projectors which need to be replaced. 1,400 PCs have been acquired. The delivery is expected on 2017. Each school will receive an average of five to six PCs.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. May I take the hon. Minister to page 173, item 22120.007, in relation to *Fees for Training*? Can I ask the hon. Minister what these fees entail and how many personnel are beneficiaries of these fees?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, we are talking about fees for training and it involves the Inspectorate cadre, the Deputy Headmasters, Headmasters, Educators and ICT Support Officers. All these people will be trained.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, with regard to item 31112.402 - *Upgrading of Schools*, we see Rs174 m. and a few hundred million for the next years. Is there provision, for example, for the University of Technology in Mauritius to upgrade the latrine, the electricity not working, the printers not working and all of these?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, for that particular item, it is another budget, but let me inform the hon. Member that all these have already been done after my meeting with the students.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Barbier!

**Mr Barbier:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 28212.004 - *Primary School Supplementary Feeding Project*, I can see that each year we are asking to vote Rs110 m. for this item. May I know what has been spent so far; for example, for the last financial year?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, there was a provision of Rs34 m. for this year for the provision of the supplementary feeding project and for the provision of loaves of bread in all primary schools. It is Rs34 m. As far as the other supplementary feeding project is concerned, I see that we have Rs76 m. provided. It is for 6,675 pupils. It will be according to the number of days they have been supplied with food. It has started at the beginning of the second term. So, it is about Rs75 per student per day.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On the same item, 28212.004, I take it that this is the item where we are also budgeting for the food supplied to ZEP primary schools. Has it come to the attention of the hon. Minister of the quality of the food that is being served and the fact that the diet does not match what most of people attending? This is all vegetarian food. Is the Ministry considering reviewing the menu with the help of a nutritionist?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, the menu has been prepared and decided upon by the Ministry of Health along with members of my Ministry. It is a menu provided by a nutritionist, which is supposed to be a balanced diet. However, I have heard that some parents have complained because the food is totally vegetarian. Now, this was decided upon because of problems cropped up earlier because of food turning sour during the day, especially for non-veg food. So, this was a precautionary measure. I will also circulate the menu being provided to the children and, obviously, whenever we have any complaint about the quality of food, the contractors are taken to task.

**The Chairperson:** Page 174, hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** At page 174, item 31122.823 - *Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*, can we have some information about this item, please?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Now, the Early Digital Learning Programme refers to the tablets that are being procured through the Government of India, an Indian company known as EdCIL India. The final specifications have been submitted in view of the floating of bids and the procurement of tablets which will be done through the Indian counterparts.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Yes, it is in relation to the Educators. We are on page 174, item 21110, there is an increase of more than 200 Educators who would be recruited. May I know from the hon. Minister the timing, when is it planned to advertise these vacancies?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, we have already taken up this year of around 257 Educators. Is the hon. Member referring to Secondary School Educators?

**Mr Uteem:** Yes.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** So, they will be taken up as soon as the PSC is ready. We are going to forward to the PSC. We have 200 additional posts that will be reported to the PSC after the amendment of the scheme of service for the post of Educator (Secondary) for the following reasons –

- there are new subjects being introduced: travel/tourism, business studies and entrepreneurship, and
- a new curriculum framework is also being introduced for grade 9.

So, we will have to wait for the scheme of service to be ready.

**The Chairperson:** Page 175! Page 176, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Under item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, may I know from the hon. Minister who has been awarded this contract and how much?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** For the cleaning services, we have cleaning of office premises and cleaning of school premises. We have Mauriclean Ltd, Professional Cleaners Group Ltd and New Cleaning Services.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 26313.027 - *Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (Prevoc)*, Rs15m. have been budgeted for last financial year and approximately the same, Rs15.4 m., for next financial year. Can we have a breakdown for both amounts, please?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** So, for the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development, we have salaries and allowances to the 56 staff of the prevocational education. We have payment for utilities, security and cleaning services for the prevocational centres. We also have increase of the budgetary provision to cater for the payment of incremental credit to eligible officers and also to meet the payment of salary compensation with effect from January 2018.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, thank you Madam Chairperson. Under item 21110 – *General Worker*, similar to hon. Minister Nando Bodha, here they are nearly doubling a funded position for general workers. This is delegated by the PSC to the Ministry and we see that for

year 2018/19 there is another increase; so, therefore, probably up to 500 being the total - about 500. Can we have a guarantee from the Minister that she will recruit from all over the country and not only in St Pierre, Moka?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, the Ministry has always recruited through the delegation of powers by a list obtained from the Ministry of Labour and it has always been across the island.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** So, page 176, under item 22 - *Goods and Services*, can we have some information about this item, please?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, I find that it refers to the cost of utilities, payment of utilities to zone of directorates and public secondary schools, electricity and gas chargers, telephone, water charges, wastewater charges, fuel and oil for vehicles.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Item 22090 – *Security*, there is a provision of Rs18 m. for years 2018, 2019 and 2020. Can we have the name of the company?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, for security services, we have contractors for both primary and secondary schools. For night security, we have RSL Security Services Ltd; Rapid Security Services Ltd, and for daytime security, we have Defence Hi-tech Security Guard Ltd and RSL Security Services Ltd.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Yes, under item 26313.123 - *Mahatma Gandhi Institute*, there is a huge amount half a billion rupees. May we, at least, have a breakdown of this sum?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** The grant for Mahatma Gandhi Institute is for the provision of payment, increments and other commitments; for example, the filling of vacancy, including 81 posts of educators which have been filled recently and also for the filling of vacancies arising through retirement of officers.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Barbier!

**Mr Barbier:** Page 176, fourth line, General Worker. There is considerable increase from 237 to 417 posts. May we have some justification for that considerable increase in the labour force?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Just give me one second, I will come to that. So, we have here the 200 additional posts. The Ministry of Labour has submitted a list of qualified candidates to enable the Ministry to conduct selection for the filling of the post. Due to lack of qualified candidates for appointment as school caretaker, because they need to have certain qualifications, we are taking a corresponding number of general workers.

**The Chairperson:** Page 177, Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item *26313.131 - PSEA - Private Secondary Schools (Salary & other staff costs)*, there is a provision of Rs3.9 B; for the forthcoming year it is Rs3.95 B. It should be including the salaries of teaching and non-teaching staff of private secondary schools. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the PSSA has a *droit de regard* in the recruitment of the teaching and non-teaching staff in the private secondary schools?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, according to the Education Act, this is not so. The recruitment is done by the private secondary schools, however, according to the qualification requirements of the PSEA.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item *31112.002 - Non-Residential Buildings - Construction and Extension of Schools*, may I know from the hon. Minister how these schools have been selected please - items from (a) to (j)?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** According to the requirements of the school, Madam Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Thank you. Under item *27210.013 - Social Assistance Benefits - S.C and H.S.C. Examination Fees*, can I ask the hon. Minister, how much was actually disbursed in the last financial year and what measures is she envisaging taking at the

Ministry to alleviate the havoc that has happened over the last two years, for reasons we are not aware of?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, may I inform the hon. Member that the MES had paid the whole amount last year and out of all the students who sat, if I am not mistaken it is around 8,000 students in total - the last time I took information from the MES, those who haven't paid turn around 1,500, and the total fees paid last year was Rs280,925,879.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On the same item, payment of fees for S.C and H.S.C., there was a circular note issued this year about qualifying the criteria, the 90% eligibility. Has the hon. Minister received any representation to review the criteria, to include, for example, absences due to bereavement or due to religious activities?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, in the regulation, we have provided around 15 days per year for the students as absences. Now, in case someone is ill or has got a prolonged illness, he is already taken care of if that person provides the necessary documents at the time that he was not well.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jahangeer!

**Mr Jahangeer:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 26323.123 - *Mahatma Gandhi Institute*, there is actually a building under construction in the yard of the school. The building is intended for design and technology classes. The construction of the same building has been stopped due to lack of funds. Can the hon. Minister elaborate?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** I have got no information regarding stoppage of work at the MGI. In fact, I see that provision has been made for the institution.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 28211 - *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*, with the centralisation of the CSR now, with regard to these NGOs, the handicapped schools, can the hon. Minister tell us if she will increase the grant to these private run handicapped schools? Because they are now facing a lot of difficulties to get financing.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, in the Budget, the amount that is allotted to these schools has been increased to Rs115 m. this year.

**The Chairperson:** Page 178, hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I may take the hon. Minister to item 31112.402 in relation to *Upgrading of Schools*, I am interested particularly with item (h) *R. Prayag SSS*. I anticipate that it is Ramsoondur Prayag State Secondary School in Rivière du Rempart. This is a school that has been in a lamentable condition for the past 10 years. My constituents would be interested to know, through me today, as to when work is likely to start and where students would be relocated during the course of upgrading work.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** I need to mention that decision has already been taken to demolish the existing classroom blocks and the construction of new ones in phases. So, an estimated Rs70 m. has been earmarked to carry out the processes of the first phase. The MPI is working on the design of the new school.

**The Chairperson:** Page 179, hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Item 28211.067 - *RCEA for Special Education Needs (SEN) Schools*. I would like to have a list of schools, please.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** I will circulate the list, Madam Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Under the same item, Madam Chairperson, following what I was saying earlier, if the hon. Minister can take into consideration schools in Curepipe. There are some schools now in Curepipe that are not being financed, and if she can, at least, give them some time to receive them and sort it out. There are schools for handicapped, and it is a very serious matter.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, all schools need to be registered with the SEN sector of my Ministry before being eligible for any formal support.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, certainly, ask them to contact the Ministry!

**The Chairperson:** Page 180, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Page 180, under item *21110.001 - Careers Guidance*, there is going to be an increase in Careers Counsellors. May I ask the hon. Minister, in relation to the Careers Guidance, Careers Counsellors, how do they operate? Do they go to schools and advise students or do they carry out fairs? If they do fairs, how many fairs were organised last year?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, for Careers Guidance, we now have the support of the Human Resource Development Council where a consultancy service has been provided by a British firm to review the whole system, and together with the HRDC, the professionals there and members of my Ministry do carry out fairs in schools at the request of schools. And then, after Form 3, careers guidance is provided to the students during their choice of subjects.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jahangeer!

**Mr Jahangeer:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item *31112.002* with regard to *Rivière des Anguilles GS*, will the hon. Minister inform the House as to where matters stand?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** For Rivière des Anguilles GS, I note that the project value is around Rs28 m. and the starting date was 16 February 2015. Now, the construction has been completed and the centre was operationalized with effect from 16 August 2016 in partnership with an NGO, the Southern Handicapped Association.

**The Chairperson:** Page 181, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item *28212.020 - Student Scholarship Schemes for Vulnerable Households*, may I know from the hon. Minister why there is a decrease from Rs55 m. to Rs50 m. in the Estimates of 2016/2017?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** This Student Scholarship Schemes for Vulnerable groups is normally done upon the request of the students. They get admitted in a tertiary institution and then they turn to the Ministry for support. Now, if the sum has not been utilised, it is carried forward.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item *28212.032 - Scholarship Scheme to Students with Disabilities*, we see that the amount has remained the same for the

four years to come. Can we know, first of all, how many students are benefiting from it, the criteria, and how many students who should be benefiting from it but are not?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In fact, Madam Chairperson, this has been started this year only. We have provided five scholarships. So, we take these students who are already in our institutions, whether private or public. Those wishing to go for tertiary education are selected, and we select five every year. That is why the sum is the same.

**The Chairperson:** Page 182, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Item 26313.088 - *Extra Budgetary Units Grants to Tertiary Education Commission/Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs)*. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Tertiary Education Commission has taken any actions against any institutions that were not licensed by it and were providing courses to students? What action has been taken since last year?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, I do not think tertiary institutions can operate without having been provided a licence from the TEC. And TEC can only monitor those that are registered with it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo, page 182!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 22130 – *Studies and Surveys*. What are studies and surveys that are carried out?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** For studies and surveys, the first one being the setting up of the Mauritius Higher Education Desk for the marketing and enhancing the visibility of Higher Education and to conduct market research. These are the studies that have been carried out.

**The Chairperson:** Hon Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 26313.088 - (c) *University of Technology, Mauritius*, I see the budget has nearly doubled. Can we, please, have some details?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In the case of the University of Technology, they have been provided funds for the construction of the UTM Tower.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Barbier!

**Mr Barbier:** Page 182, last item *26313.143 - Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd*, it seems to be a private body and maybe it is the first time that we are asked to vote for Rs35 m. for that item. May we know who are the shareholders or owners of that institution?

(*Interruptions*)

Shareholders or owners because it looks like a private body! So, who are the shareholders and who is going to manage that institution?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd is a company where the Government is the sole shareholder. It is managed by a team of members from the private sector as well. The private sector sits on the Board of Polytechnics Mauritius.

**The Chairperson:** Page 183, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Item *26323.088 - Tertiary Education Commission/Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs), (a) Infrastructure Funding for Tertiary Education Institutions*, an amount of Rs50 m. is earmarked as from next year. So, may I know from the hon. Minister which tertiary education institutions are concerned by this funding?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** We are talking about UTM and Université des Mascareignes.

**Mr Uteem:** There is already a sub-heading for UTM, etc?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** This is a special fund, the infrastructure fund that TEC is going to provide.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval, page 183!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Same item *UTM and Université des Mascareignes*, can we appeal to the hon. Minister to put the money where it is required in terms of student facilities, equipment and printers, etc? A lot of complains have been registered. Please, we appeal to you to put it where it matters.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Chairperson, I have just informed the hon. Member that this has already been done.

*Vote 9-1 Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research (Rs16,600,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

**The Chairperson:** I suspend the Committee of Supply for half an hour.

*At 5.22 p.m., the sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 6.06 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.*

*Vote 10-1 Ministry of Tourism was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 185, hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. May I refer the hon. Minister to page 185, item 21110.005 in relation to *Extra Assistance*? Can the hon. Minister assist us in relation to the figures, which appear to be Rs4.2 m. for last financial year, whereas for the forthcoming financial years, it has been reduced to Rs1 m.? Can we know who provided the assistance and what were their qualifications?

**Mr Gayan:** Mr Chairperson, the reduction is on account of the fact that instead of five advisers, who were attached to my predecessor in the Ministry, today there is only one adviser. The five advisers are -

- Mr Jean Maigrot, who was Senior Adviser, who holds a degree in law from the University of Wales Aberystwyth;
- Mr Ranjeet Maybadee Baron, who holds a Cambridge School Certificate;
- Mrs Poonum Thylam, MA Indian Philosophy, University of Mauritius;
- Mr Mohamed Reshad Lotun, Teacher Diploma in English, and
- Mr Paul Louis Thierry Fleuriau-Chateau, *les années de DEUG langues étrangères appliquées l'Université de Rouen section Provence, France.*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 185, last line, item 26313.089 *Tourism Authority*, Rs80 m. For many years, I have been asking, there have been, since over past years, employees who have been manual workers, who have been recruited on contract and they have been waiting for their turn either to be confirmed. I have had lots of complaints, I would not use nasty words, but they have been persecuted at times. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether he is working on a scheme to have those workers who

have worked for many years, who are still on contract, and if provision is made for their confirmation within the Establishment?

**Mr Gayan:** Chairperson, in fact, 56 employees have already been placed on the permanent and pensionable establishment of the Tourism Authority. There are 19 employees who are on contract. As per the regulations, they were aged over 48 and they were not able to be fitted into that particular system. But I understand that representation has been received by the Tourism Authority and we have a new Board at the Tourism Authority. Maybe they are going to have another look at it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.047, *Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority - (iii) Mauritius Joint Promotion Campaign*. May the Minister give us some more details about this campaign, please?

**Mr Gayan:** Mr Chairperson, the MTPA is now embarking on a joint promotion campaign because it is focussing more on e-marketing campaign with operators in France, the UK, Reunion, Germany and also airlines; the airlines being Air Mauritius, Condor, Lufthansa, Air Emirates, KLM. The MTPA proposes to use their customer database to ensure more direct and effective targeting for potential travellers, as I am sure the hon. Member knows the tourism industry is changing, there are new players in the area, and we need to be more focused on what the future has in store.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, in the past there was a budget that was earmarked for the organisation of Regatta-League at Mahebourg. Can I have confirmation from the hon. Minister whether there is an item for this particular activity in the current Budget and if I may know the amount?

**Mr Gayan:** In fact, my understanding is that the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority is basically an organisation that promotes Mauritius overseas in all the major markets. But as part of that promotion campaign, regattas have been held under the aegis of the MTPA with other sponsors.

It was only from 2015 that the MTPA started to organise the regatta series comprising one regatta per month in Mahebourg, except for June to August where this event was

replaced with kite surf because the weather is not very favourable in Mahebourg. We are having another look at it. We believe that regattas must be held, but they must be held all over the island and not only in one particular place.

The hon. Member also wanted to know about the amount. I have the prizes, but I know that for 2017/2018 the amount is likely to be in the region of Rs6 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Concerning the Tourism Promotion Authority in relation to branding, we have heard that there is another branding exercise in preparation. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether an allocation has been provided in this financial exercise? Because I don't see it anywhere in this exercise.

**Mr Gayan:** The branding exercise has been talked about because we consider that after about 10 years of '*Maurice c'est un Plaisir*', we need to have another look at the branding, but the idea which is being worked on is whether we need a branding for the whole country or we need a branding for the tourism sector. A decision has not yet been taken, but we will be able to allocate funds once we decide which way to go for a rebranding exercise. But we have quite a number of ideas in mind.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Same item as earlier with regard to extra assistance. He said that there were five advisers, but the last incumbent was Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure, so a number of Ministries! In any case, will he give the composition of the Board of the Tourism Authority and the composition of the MTPA, Director, Chairman for both? Thank you.

**Mr Gayan:** Well, I can have the information circulated. The composition of Board of the MTPA –

- Chairperson is Mr Bhujohory;
- Mrs Seewooruthun is a member;
- Mrs Pareatumbee;
- Mr Poonoosamy;
- Mr Kwok;

- Mr Jeetoo, and
- Mr Martin

And, for the Tourism Authority –

- Mr Rochecouste;
- Mr Moolye;
- Mrs Beekoo;
- Ms Velappa-Naiken;
- Mr Rajabally;
- Mr Ramkalaon;
- Mr Balgobin;
- Mr Kamalsingh, and
- Mr S. Kowlessur

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** Merci, M. le président. Toujours en ce qui concerne la question qui a été soulevée par l'honorable Bhagwan pour les *manual workers*, il y a un certain nombre qui ont été transférés au *National Empowerment Foundation*. Est-ce que je peux savoir du nombre qui a été cité par l'honorable ministre si ces personnes en font partie ? D'après les renseignements que j'ai pu glaner, ces personnes vont être retransférées à la *Tourism Authority*.

**Mr Gayan:** From the information that I have, Mr Chairperson, it appears that there were about 75 employees. Out of the 75, 56 are now on the permanent and pensionable establishment since December 2016, 10 are on a six-month probation, 19 are aged over 48 and they are on a five-year contract. So, I think that makes 75.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313 – (b) (ii) *Emerging Markets*, we can see a huge increase in the Estimates. Can we know which market he is aiming at?

**Mr Gayan:** For the emerging markets, provision has been increased. The markets that we are thinking about are in Eastern Europe, Scandinavian countries, Middle East and Asian. The MTPA, with other partners, will have a more focused presence and visibility and this is

why a provision of Rs93 m. for India and China markets which was earmarked last year under the *Traditional Markets* have now been allocated under this item, and as the hon. Member knows, China and India are the superpowers for tourism in the future.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. In relation to item 26313 – *Extra Budgetary Units*, there is this provision at .047 in relation to Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether there is from the provision of this Budget for *Festival International Kreol* and other festivals? Because I don't see any provision in this estimation, and if it is in the affirmative, how much was spent on those festivals.

**Mr Gayan:** Mr Chairperson, the information I have is with regard to *Festival International Kreol* 2016 and it would appear that the amount that was spent was Rs20,153,264. I have a long list of details. So, with your permission, I would like to table the information because it makes very good reading.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** M. le président, est-ce que je pourrais savoir de l'honorable ministre ce qu'est advenu du *tourist village* à Belle Mare ?

**Mr Gayan:** I need some help for this one, but as far as I know, it was not much of a village for the tourists.

(*Interruptions*)

I understand that it has now been transferred to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development; it no longer falls under the Ministry of Tourism.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** For the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, can we be provided with a list of all the representatives or those who represent the MTPA outside Mauritius in other countries, whether there are representatives of the MTPA based in other countries and who are these people, when have they been appointed and what is the amount paid to them, even in foreign currency? It would be interesting.

**Mr Gayan:** Mr Chairperson, there are no permanent representatives of the MTPA overseas, but we have public relations representatives. We have people in various countries that are the reservoirs for tourists, for example –

- in France, we have AVIAREPS and the contract amount for the year 2017/2018 is 484,800 euros;
- for the UK, it is Hills Balfour Limited for an amount of 288,200 pounds, which makes about Rs14 m.;
- for Italy, it is Algo SRL for 145,250 euros for Rs6 m.;
- Germany, it is AVIAREPS again for 339,300 euros, making it Rs14 m.;
- In India, it is one Mr Sanjay Sondhi for Indian rupees 10,760,000;
- Reunion, Mr Thomas Giraud, 424,40 euros;
- South Africa is Meropa Communications for ZAR 1,859,996;
- Switzerland is AVIAREPS for CHF151,800;
- China Travel Link Marketing Company Limited for 4.6 m., and
- Australia, we have AVIAREPS again for EUR73,200, which makes a total of Rs85,300 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson! Can the Minister tell us, with regard to arrival of tourists, the figures for last and the forecasted figures for end of this year, if he can state, first of all? Secondly, can the hon. Minister give the name and qualification of his adviser?

**Mr Gayan:** According to Statistics Mauritius, Mr Chairperson, the forecast for this year is 1,350,000 tourists, making an increase of about 6%, and for 2016, it was 1,275,227. My adviser? I do not have the information, but it is Ms Tatiah!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.047- *Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority*. May I know from the hon. Minister, following the Assises du Tourisme, there was a proposal for a branding exercise to be carried out, have there been funds earmarked for this?

**Mr Gayan:** Well, I have just answered the question. In fact, we had les Assises du Tourisme and one of the ideas that came up was a rebranding exercise. We have now *les ateliers* which are doing the implementation work, and we will be looking into all the possibilities of a rebranding exercise. I know the hon. Member has, himself, suggested quite a number of catchy slogans to me, and I get suggestions from members of the public like Marvellous Mauritius, Delicious Mauritius and all this. So, we are looking at it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item *31113.431 - Zoning of Lagoons*, could the hon. Minister give us some details about it, as it seems to be a new item?

**Mr Gayan:** Well, provision has been made for the Zoning of Lagoon project which has been transferred from the Tourism Authority to the Ministry, and this is why the amount for the Tourism Authority has gone down and the money has been transferred to the budget of the Ministry. For the year 2017/18, we propose to implement the following: the cleaning, repair, reinstatement and maintenance of existing zoning systems, the demarcation of a snorkelling zone at Belle Mare in the lagoon, in front of Long Beach Hotel, the implementation on navigable passages at Grand Baie and Rivière Noire, the setting up buffer zone and mooring area at Crystal Rock, Ile aux Bénitiers, and finally reinstatement of navigational aids with lighthouses.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** I think the hon. Minister has already answered.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item *31113.416 - Upgrading of Touristic and Leisure Infrastructure*. I want to know why the sum allocated is twice that of last year, and what are those infrastructures that would be upgraded?

**Mr Gayan:** Basically, the tourism signage project on eight routes around the country in order to increase the visibility of those tourists' sites because, very often, we hear complaints that tourists get lost. So, we need to have better signage. Provision has been made for the upgrading of existing panels and installation of information boards at major iconic tourists' sites, directional panels at frequent intervals on existing routes, additional panels in

Chinese language at historical tourists' sites. I think we are banking on China providing us more tourists; so, we need to be China-friendly in this regard.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson, same item *31113.461 - Upgrading of Upgrading of Touristic and Leisure Infrastructure*. There is an amount of Rs39 m. being earmarked for this project, and we can see that for the year 2016/17, Rs5 m. has been earmarked. Can we have details about this item and the breakup of the Rs5 m., if it has been used or not?

**Mr Gayan:** The increase is due to the fact that the scope of work for the renovation and restoration of La Citadelle has been enlarged to include pointing work to solve the problem of lime leaching; waterproofing works on roof of the southern wing of La Citadelle, varnishing works on the doors and windows to make it very attractive to everybody.

*Vote 10-1 Ministry of Tourism (Rs747,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 11-1 Ministry of Health and Quality of Life was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 188! Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson! Item *21110 - Health Promotion Coordinator*. Why is there no budget for this anymore?

**Dr. Husnoo:** This post will not be filled for the time being!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 188, I take it on the item Minister itself, because it is a very serious matter which I consider I must take upon this vote. We, MPs, are being queried about this question of virus H1N1 which is creating problems to the public. Can the Minister, at least, give us an idea of how many of our population have got problems, how many have passed away? About the question of vaccines, can the Minister give exactly, through the House, to the population, the assurance that we have sufficient vaccines; how much? We are being told that there are different types of this H1N1 and 2, or 3, or 4. Is the Ministry equipped? Has foreign assistance been sought from the WHO Geneva? Are there experts coming these days? We have asked for experts to come, and help us to see all our equipment, or whatever we have to cater for this urgency.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Thank you. Firstly, I would like to mention that from the beginning of January this year till 20 June, that is, yesterday, for H1N1, we had about 162 cases from January this year, not just in the last one month. For H3N2, the other virus which the hon. Member mentioned, we had about 229 cases, much more than H1N1. So far, we have had eight deaths, but in most cases - I have got the report - there are some people who are very vulnerable - you know what I mean - for different reasons. I am not going to go in the details of the individual patient. Most of the people who passed away were very vulnerable people. I examined them and I have seen the report. That is number one.

I would like to mention as well that this infection has not started just in the last few weeks; it has been going on from the beginning of this year. We had it last year as well. Since 2009, this disease has been here with us in Mauritius. So, it is nothing new. We are having it every year since 2009.

As far as the vaccine is concerned, 154,947 vaccines have been done. We have still about 64,000 vaccines today.

As far as the Tamiflu is concerned, which we use to treat the disease, we have for about 18,000 patients in the pharmacy now and we have ordered 20,000 doses as well for the future.

*(Interruptions)*

I have discussed it as well because at one stage we were worried just in case we are having an epidemic or not. I have discussed with the statisticians in Mauritius. There is no question of epidemic. I talked to Dr. Monsanto, who is the WHO representative in Mauritius, and told him to have a look at the facts as the statistics told us because to describe whether we are in a situation of epidemic or not, it is not just saying like that. It is a complex mathematical study. He told me that he is following it at Brazzaville, the regional office in Africa, and they are following it as well in Geneva. He told me that it is not in epidemic proportion up to now.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 21110 .001 - *Technical and Mechanical Officer*, we can see for the year March 2017, the post is vacant and then we have two posts. The sum that is

being earmarked is Rs695,000 for the year 2016/2017, then we see that the sum goes down for the year 2017/2018 to Rs470,000. May I have some clarifications on that, please?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Yes, it is for two new posts. The salary has been earmarked for six months only for the two vacant posts. It is not for the full year salary.

*(Interruptions)*

He is not employed now. By the time we make the advertisement, we do the interview; he will be here for this financial year, only for six months. So, it has been provided for six months only.

**The Chairperson:** Page 189, hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. If I may take the hon. Minister to page 189, there is an item, *Procurement and Supply*. As at March 2017, there were 42 staff and for the current financial year, there is a provision for 51 staff. The estimation for the last financial year is Rs23 m. whereas for the current financial year it goes down to Rs21.6 m. and thereafter it goes a bit further up to Rs22 m. I do not understand the variance in the figures because I would have anticipated that when there is an increase in staff, the budget would have possibly been increased rather than decreased. Can the hon. Minister give us some clarifications, please?

**Dr. Husnoo:** The hon. Member has mentioned well; there were 42 posts before and now we have nine additional posts to be filled. A decrease in provision is due to officers with the lowest salary in the grade joining the department. When they join, they do not join on the top salary, they join on the bottom salary and that's what it is.

**The Chairperson:** Page 190, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** *Merci, M. le président.* Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, can we have the details, the names and the sum allocated to them?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I mean the extra assistance is for payment of salaries to advisers on contract. The number of advisers was reduced from 12 in 2014 to 8 in 2017/2018.

**Mr Henry:** Can we have the names and the sum allocated?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I do not have it. I can circulate it if you want. In 2014, there were 12 advisers. Now, we have eight advisers. I do not mean just advisers for me because there are some doctors who are taken as advisers. I will just mention a name, for example, Dr. Jugoo, who is looking after addiction. He is an adviser although he is a doctor working in the hospital. You see what I mean. It is not just personal.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** May I know why the post of *Chief Hospital Administrator* has not been filled until now?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Which page?

**Mr Baboo:** Page 190, the first item, *Hospital Administrator Cadre - Chief Hospital Administrator*.

**Dr. Husnoo:** The Deputy Chief Hospital Administrator has been appointed on 16 September 2016 and two years after, that is, on 16 September 2018, the latter will be appointed as Chief Hospital Administrator.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to the same item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may we have the list of all the advisers, qualifications and salaries, etc., for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I will circulate it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud, page 191!

**Mrs Perraud:** At page 191, item 22070 concerning *Cleaning Services*, I would like to know whether this service has been contracted out and which contractor was awarded the contract.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Provisions for cleaning of toilet at Bacha and Atchia Buildings. For Bacha Building, it is Ideal Cleaning Services Ltd, Rs63,000 per annum. For Atchia Building, it is Mauriclean Ltd, Sanitact Service at Emmanuel Anquetil Building. For Bacha Building, it is Hardy Henry Services Ltee. The expenditure is more or less the same like last year. There has not been any increase.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Leopold!

**Mr Leopold:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22140.008 - *Quality Assurance of Drugs*, is there any independent agency which assures quality of drugs in the Ministry and on which frequency?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Can you repeat your question, please?

**Mr Leopold:** Yes. On *Quality Assurance of Drugs*, does your Ministry have any independence agency in Mauritius to check the quality of drugs and on which frequency?

**Dr. Husnoo:** The increase in provision is due to more samples of drugs being analysed in the private laboratory and to meet the cost of sending some of the pharmaceutical products abroad for testing.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to item 22200 - *Overseas Travel - Treatment & Incoming Medical Teams*, I can see that the budget has been reduced by half for this year. From what the previous Minister of Health told us, it was to get a maximum number of overseas teams to come to Mauritius so that the number of patients that would go abroad for treatment could be reduced and the budget be reduced accordingly. Why is there a reduction of the budget for this item?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, the budget has been more than half. We do not have to send a lot of patients overseas because the overseas teams are coming and operating the patients here in Mauritius.

**Mr Ramful:** Why has the budget been reduced by half?

**Dr. Husnoo:** This is travel. Actually, it is less number of teams coming as well.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rugoobur!

**Mr Rugoobur:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22130.001, (c) *Health Care Waste Management*. In the previous Director of Audit Report, there has been mention of medical waste. May I know from the hon. Minister if this survey carried out on Health Care Waste Management has something to do with the treatment where we are going to treat these medical wastes? Have you been able to identify the item?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Can you repeat the question, please?

**Mr Rughoobur:** With regard to item 22130.001, (c) *Health Care Waste Management and Preliminary Project Preparation*, can the hon. Minister elaborate on this?

**Dr. Husnoo:** It is nil for 2017/2018, but this has been transferred to sub-item 11.102.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. The questions have been answered.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I refer to item 22140.008, *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment - Quality Assurance of Drugs*. Can the hon. Minister tell us why the sum allocated for this year has been multiplied by four times the value of last year?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, it is for provision to meet the cost of sending the pharmaceutical products abroad for testing. That is why it is a bit more expensive.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Regarding item 26313.037, *Extra-Budgetary Units - Mauritius Institute of Health*, we can see that for the Estimates 2016/17, there is a sum of Rs20 m. earmarked. May we have some details and the breakup of this amount, please?

**Dr. Husnoo:** This one is provision for operational expenses of MIH; increase is due to payment of increment and salary compensation.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I refer to hon. Minister to item 22120 - *Fees*. There was a provision for the Financial Year 2016/17 for Rs6.3 m. and for the current year, it is Rs5.8 m. Can I ask the hon. Minister to whom these fees are payable and what are the qualifications of those who are beneficiaries of these fees?

**Dr. Husnoo:** These fees are paid to Chairman and Members of the Board of Committees. Provision for payment of fees to Chairman and Members of the Board, Medical Disciplinary Board, Dental Disciplinary Board, Nursing Disciplinary Tribunal, Pharmacy

Board, Bid Evaluation Committee and Departmental Bid Committee, Ethics Committee for clinical trial and Pharmacovigilance Committee for clinical trial.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Regarding item 27210.008, *Assistance to Patients Inoperable in Mauritius*, can we have a list of all the beneficiaries for the Rs40 m.? Can the hon. Minister circulate the list?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Sorry, a list of all the beneficiaries?

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Yes.

**Dr. Husnoo:** From which year? For the last one year?

(*Interruptions*)

The teams are coming to Mauritius, that is why the sum is coming down.

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Can the hon. Minister circulate the list for the beneficiaries for the last one year?

**Dr. Husnoo:** It is a bit difficult as well. Do you want me to circulate the list for sick patients?

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Why not!

(*Interruptions*)

**Dr. Husnoo:** I do not have any objection personally, but I am just wondering whether it is fair to the patients.

**The Chairperson:** Hon Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** I refer to item 22200 - *Overseas Travel - Treatment & Incoming Medical Teams*. The hon. Minister explained that it is going down because doctors are flown in. Since it was announced in last year's Budget and supposed to be operational since last year, can the hon. Minister tell us how many doctors, how many teams were flown in, how many patients benefitted from that scheme?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I can circulate the list. We have many teams coming to Mauritius and naturally, when they come they operate on a number of patients as well.

**Mr A. Duval:** Why is it that it was announced in last year's Budget and not implemented until this year? The Minister before you had explained that it would take effect, and that was since last year, but it appears that it has not. I would like to know if the hon. Minister has the information now, how many people have benefitted from it and how many teams were flown in to Mauritius?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Maybe I will circulate it because there are a number of teams. I will circulate it, if you do not mind

**The Chairperson:** Page 192! Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** I refer to item 31132.401, *e-Health*. Can we be enlightened on where matters stand with regard to *e-Health*?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As you know, the e-Health is a new project that we are going to start now. I am sure you will appreciate there will be many advantages. We are going to start it with Dr. Jeetoo Hospital first and then we will try to involve the five medi-clinics over the island. Once we have done that, I am going to take over the area health centres and the community health centres in the Port Louis area. Once we have done the project and it is functioning well, then I am going to enrol it to the other four district hospitals across the island. So, that is what we are planning. We have had different meetings and we are working along this line.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Page 192, *Medical Council*. There have been a lot of controversies these days. We have heard Medical Council everywhere. We have been asked to vote Rs1,386,000. Can the hon. Minister give us an information whether the Council is fully operational, whether he has appointed members, who are those persons who have been appointed, whether he can give an assurance to the House - as stated outside, which I don't think is a case, the Medical Council is being manipulated by the Minister, the Ministry. Now we are being asked to vote. So, I would wish that the Minister gives assurance to the medical personnel that this is not the case.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I would like to assure the House, it is the least of my intention to interfere with the work of the Medical Council. I can give you the guarantee.

(*Interruptions*)

I can give the guarantee!

(*Interruptions*)

Appointment, okay! Now, I am going to Cabinet this week to have some new members appointed. I am going to do that this week. I am going to Cabinet this week. But once the Council has been constituted, it is not my intention to interfere with them because I feel that there were some problems before. A lot of things have been happening. Not the last few months I have been here, it is well before. So, it is just a matter of trying to sort it out that I am taking this step. But once the Council is functional, I can assure the hon. Member that he won't hear me at all. Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Mr Chairperson, I am interested in item 31121 in relation to *Transport Equipment*, and in particular item .801 *Acquisition of Vehicles* for Rs3 m. last year, and there is a provision for Rs2 m. for this financial year and thereafter same amount. Can I ask the hon. Minister what were the vehicles bought for and at whose service were these vehicles placed?

**Dr. Husnoo:** For this sum, we are going to buy two cars, engine capacity is 1600, and one forklift because at the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life we have a fleet of vehicles. We have about 350 vehicles in the Ministry. So, naturally as you know, each time we have to keep replacing because they are going to get damaged and whatever. So, we have to keep replacing it. So, this is to buy two cars and one forklift.

**Mr Rutnah:** To improving the service!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Baboo:** Item 21110.001 regarding the *Manager, Hospital Services*. May we know why this post is vacant; it has not been filled yet, please?

**Dr. Husnoo:** The scheme of service is being worked out, that is why.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Question answered!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, thank you. This is a very important subject, item 31132.401 - *e-Health*. It has been announced last year as well in the Budget, *e-Health*, and there is a project value of Rs700 m. Yet, we see only Rs5 m. for last year. I would like to know, first of all, how much of that Rs5 m. has been spent, if any. And then, only Rs51 m. for this year and Rs150 m. for next year and the one after that. May we know, first of all, how much was spent in the Rs5m? Secondly, when is this project going to be up and running, and how is the hon. Minister going to speed up matters? Because it is a very important subject.

**Dr. Husnoo:** As far as how much was spent last year, I am sorry, I don't have the figure. But I can let you have it later. As mentioned, it is Rs51 m. this year, Rs150 m. next financial year and Rs150 m. the one after.

*(Interruptions)*

I mean, as I explained just now, there are different phases. I have just explained earlier. We are going to take Dr. A. G. Jeetoo Hospital in Port Louis first, and then the five medi-clinics around the island. Because you know, let me take Jeetoo Hospital and the Jeetoo Hospital's area; you have the Community Health Centres, the Area Health Centres. I have not done the Community Health Centres and Area Health Centres because we have some problems. Some of these are rental places. In some places, the security is not good for the building. You can't put a lot of sophisticated equipment there when the security is not good. So, that is why I have to go a bit slowly. Even in Port Louis, the first phase, I have to go a bit slowly. I mean, it is very easy to launch the whole project, but if the building itself is not safe, it is a bit difficult to put a lot of equipment. But once I have done Phase I, I have consolidated the building and everything, then I am going to roll it up across the island. You see what I mean! So, it is in different phases.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

*(Interruptions)*

**Dr. Husnoo:** No. I mean, we are talking about it. Actually, we are trying to organise the system in such a way that we are going to have only one contractor if possible. I don't want to have three contractors, then we are going to get problems; incompatibility problems with one system to the other. That is why. We have the framework, but we will roll it phase by phase.

**The Chairperson:** Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary*. There is one post *Head, Neonatology* which is new, and I can see that there is no provision made for this post. May I know from the hon. Minister if the Ministry intends to recruit someone for this post?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Yes, we are working on the scheme of service. It is very important. I completely agree with you, the Head, Neonatology, as I mentioned yesterday or the day before in my speech on the Budget. This is an area which is near to me, neonatology. So, I am going to get the Head of the Department obviously. We have to work on the scheme of service first.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to the doctors cadre, we have learnt recently that those candidates who have taken part in the Pre-Reg exams, apparently half of them have not succeeded. Has the hon. Minister enquired into this and does he propose to review the criteria?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As the hon. Member mentioned, I mean in the last exam on 06 June, 134 doctors took the exam; only 50 passed the exams, and 80 did not make it. This exam is set not by us in Mauritius, but by the Examination Board from India. We decided on an independent body to avoid any criticism. You see what I mean! But for the 80 who have not passed the exam, I am going to arrange so that they can come to the hospital, follow a course, and then in about a few months' time they can take the exam, hopefully they can pass. So, we are going to arrange for them to come in the hospital. Okay, we are not going to pay them. But we are trying to help them.

**The Chairperson:** Page 193, hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Mr Chairperson, item 21110.001 on page 193, *Pre-Registration House Officer*. I can see that 375 have been funded, but no budget has been allocated for 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. Can I know why?

**Dr. Husnoo:** The staffs have been earmarked from last year, 375. Now we are going to recruit them. This figure has been earmarked from the year before.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Already answered.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Regarding *Nursing Cadre, Charge Nurse (Male) and Charge Nurse (Female)*, we see that there are posts which have been funded and we wanted to know why the Estimates of this year are less than those of last year.

**Dr. Husnoo:** It is the entry scale. It is just because when you get new staff coming, they don't get the salaries of the top person in that department. That is why when you get a new batch coming, the salary may be for the first year. This is what I mean. That is what it is.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Answered.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnab!

**Mr Rutnab:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I may refer the hon. Minister to page 193, from top of the page, item 21110 - *Specialist/Senior Specialist*, as at March 2017, there were 261 Specialists/Senior Specialists, whereas for the current financial year, there is a provision for 314 Specialists, that is, an increase in 53 Senior Specialists/Specialists. Can I ask the hon. Minister when those Senior Specialists will be recruited and why the provision made in 2016/17 is almost similar to the provision made in 2017/18?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Again, the hon. Member is right; it is to fill 40 vacancies and 13 additional posts for Senior Specialists. Interviews are being carried now; the post will be advertised shortly.

**The Chairperson:** Pages 196, 197, 198! Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Under item 21110 - *Health Records Clerk*, I see 187 posts are being funded for 2017/18, but there is not a big increase in the budget. I believe now it's because...

**Dr. Husnoo:** I will circulate.

**The Chairperson:** Pages 199, 200. Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Item 21111.100 concerning *Overtime*, we are asked to vote for a provision of Rs150 m. Now, in the light of the Audit report on the numerous cases of abuse concerning the overtime, is the Minister satisfied that the control procedures are in order?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As you have seen, compared to last year, the overtime is less in this financial year by Rs28 m. We appreciate. The hon. Member is right. With the Audit, we always get the criticism because lots of people are doing overtime. This provision for overtime has been made to run a 24-hour public service pending the filling of all the vacancies. We are taking staff in all the departments from the lower grade to the higher grade. Naturally, it takes a bit of time to control everything. But you will see the intention is there, we are decreasing the overtime by Rs28 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 200, under item 21111.005 - *Extra Assistance*, I would like to ask the hon. Minister to whom this amount is being paid. Can the hon. Minister give names and the full details, please?

**Dr. Husnoo:** This provision is for payment to medical officers and retired nursing officers employed on a sessional basis, on contract, on a month-to-month basis. I don't have the list with me, but I can circulate it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 21120.001, there is a massive number of people funded position, almost an increase of 2,000 employments to be created this year. I reiterate what I have been asking hon. Bodha and hon. Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun, especially for positions like charge nurses and nursing officers usually delegated to his Ministry.

**Dr. Husnoo:** No, that's PSC.

**Mr A. Duval:** In any case, I appeal to the Minister to spread it all around. Don't take the bad examples of few...

(*Interruptions*)

Because we know how it works and...

(*Interruptions*)

**Dr. Husnoo:** As the hon. Member knows, a lot of these jobs are done by the PSC. We cannot intervene at PSC level, as the hon. Member knows. For the lower grades, I take your point, but as the hon. Member knows, that comes from my colleague and from the Ministry of Labour, and that goes round.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. If I may refer the hon. Minister back to the item in relation to Extra Assistance referred to by hon. Mrs Aurore Perraud. Under item 21110.005, there is a provision for Rs36 m. for this financial year compared to Rs53 m. for the previous financial year. Now that we are aware that this provision is for those who work on contract, do I understand that the hon. Minister is using his best endeavours not to recruit people anymore on contract whereas to give them full time employment and that is why we see the decrease?

**Dr. Husnoo:** No. The intention is there. We are decreasing by Rs17 m. for extra assistance, but there are some cases where we need these people to help. I mean, in some speciality, for example, there are people more qualified. So, we have to take those people who are retired to fill the post like anaesthetists, for example. We do not have enough anaesthetists. So, we have to take the retired doctors to provide assistance. So, it depends in which discipline we are looking at.

**The Chairperson:** Page 201, hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Mr Chairperson, under item 26323.095 - *Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care*, can he give us the last incumbent, the Director of the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care? Can the hon. Minister give us the salary, the packages, because it is a huge amount of Rs240,000 in the package of the Trust Fund, we need to know how much was paid from that to the Director, and, secondly, what has become of the *commission d'enquête* on that same Director?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As the hon. Member will remember, I replied to a question on that, but I can circulate the salary. There is no problem. As far as the *commission d'enquête* is concerned, we are still waiting.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Under the same vote, this famous Trust Fund, *l'évènement du siècle*, can the Minister give us information on this Aujayeb report? The Minister had deponed, I believe. Can the Minister inform us whether he has deponed?

Secondly, things have changed at the level of the Trust Fund. Is there a new management? Has a new Board been appointed? Is there a new Chairperson? Can the Minister, at least, circulate the names, the qualifications and the salaries? Can the Minister give an undertaking to the House that directives will be given not only to the Trust Fund, but to the other funds or parastatal bodies or organisations falling under his responsibilities, that nobody is allowed to give allowances here and there, at his whims and caprices?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I have already deponed personally in front of the Fact-Finding Committee. As far as the new Members of the Board are concerned, I am going to circulate the names. For the last part of the question of the hon. Member, I will try to impress on the different boards that we have so as to be a bit careful next time. Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 201, item 22030 regarding *Rent*, I would like to have details about which building it is.

**Dr. Husnoo:** The increase in rent is due to the rent payable to Tobacco Board because we had quite a lot of problem to store our drugs. Drugs were not being stored properly. So, we have to take extra space to store the drugs properly.

- Tobacco Board is number one;
- rental of building at Flacq for Dialysis Unit belonging to Mr Sauba;
- for a health club and Ayurvedic clinic at Flacq belonging to Mr D. Khamajeet;
- Sunray building, where we are keeping the drugs as well.

So, it is for where we are keeping the drugs basically.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, we are still keeping them there although we are trying to improve the situation because we have a project to build a new central drugstore. But we are starting the process, now it is being budgeted for the consultancy service and that will take a bit of time. It is a very large surface area. We have advertised for the large surface area of about 50,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> and it is not easy to get it. We have advertised for it and whatever we have got, we are trying to move the drugs, but the main project will take a couple of years.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** A la page 201, l'item 31112 - *Capital Expenditure* concernant *Construction/Extension of Hospitals*. M. le président, je souhaite ici attirer l'attention de l'honorable ministre en ce qui concerne la situation dans les salles pour les hommes et les femmes souffrant du cancer à l'hôpital Victoria. Les salles sont dans un état lamentable, il y a un manque aigu de lits et ceux qui viennent pour la chimiothérapie doivent attendre sur les bancs de fortune. Je demanderai à l'honorable ministre de bien vouloir faire un *site visit* et de constater de visu la situation déplorable de ces patients et de prendre des mesures urgentes, parce que ce sont des personnes qui sont vraiment dans le besoin.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Thank you. I can assure the hon. Member that I am very well aware of the situation and that is why we are working to have a new centre with proper equipment and proper facilities to look after patients with cancer. We care about it. I take the point of the hon. Member. *Entre-temps*, I am going to sort it out as well at Victoria Hospital and make sure that it is a bit more decent. I am going to look into it. Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Chairperson. Item 31112.003 – (d) *New ENT Hospital*, can we know where matters stand?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As the hon. Member knows, this project is a G-to-G project with the Government of India. To build a hospital in Mauritius is a very complicated thing. It is not like building a house or an ordinary building. So, we need to get people who know the subject properly, I mean, how to build it and the different places that we need for a hospital.

So, I have contacted the Government of India and we have got HSTC, which is a parastatal type of organisation in India, which has built about 100 sophisticated hospitals in India. We have contacted these consultants. They have come to Mauritius and they have seen

the place, that is, the ENT. They have drawn the map. It was the preliminary studies. They came about 10 days ago. We have discussed. They are going back, they are going to finalise all the paperwork and then we are going to launch it. So, they have been here, they have seen the place and I met them 10 days ago. They are working on it now. Once the final papers are done, we are going to launch the tender.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22140.001 concerning *Medicines, Drugs and Vaccines*, we are asked again to vote for a provision of almost a billion...

**Dr. Husnoo:** Sorry, which page, please?

**Mr Jhuboo:** Page 201. So, the Minister mentioned his strategy concerning the storage and my question pertains to the procedure. The Audit Report revealed several issues, namely some medicines that were stored in Coromandel and which had expired. So, almost Rs100 m. of medicines were lying in a store. So, my question to the Minister is again concerning the procedure. Is he satisfied that the procedure he has put in place is in order?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I completely share the concern of the hon. Member about the storage of drugs. That is why we are trying -

- (i) to build a new central store where we can keep the drugs at the proper temperature and humidity, and
- (ii) together with the e-Health, we can computerise the system because once we computerise it we will know what stock we have, which drugs are expiring, and we can use them in a proper manner.

I completely share the point of the hon. Member and we are working on these two projects, as I said, the central stores and the e-Health as well. In the meantime, because that is going to take a couple of years, we are trying to see how we can improve the situation in terms of monitoring not just the physical facilities but the stock keeping.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dayal!

**Mr Dayal:** Mr Chairperson, item 31112.003 - *construction of a New Hospital at Flacq*, can we have some details about it, as we are having lots of problems with the existing hospital in Flacq?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Yes, I know it is a major problem as well with the existing hospital. As the hon. Member knows, we have got a plot of land and we are doing the soil test now. Once the soil test is positive and we get the go-ahead, we are going to confirm that plot of land with the Ministry of Housing and Lands. Then, naturally, because we have got money for consultancy, we are going to launch the consultancy.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. If I may go back to item 22030 in relation to *Rent*, can I ask, as a consequence of the answer previously given to the hon. Member who asked the question and if I have rightly heard, there is rent being paid to Mr D. Khamajeet. Can I ascertain firstly...

(*Interruptions*)

May I, please? Can I ascertain firstly, how much rent is paid to him and for how long is the contract of rent in relation to Mr Khamajeet? And, secondly, if I may ask in relation to item 22140...

(*Interruptions*)

Okay!

**The Chairperson:** One question at a time!

**Dr. Husnoo:** As I mentioned earlier, it is for health club and Ayurvedic clinic, a monthly rent of Rs45,540 is being paid every month to Mr Khamajeet.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Rughoobur:** Item 22140.007 - *Renal Dialysis*, there have been funds of Rs120 m. earmarked...

(*Interruptions*)

May I know from the hon. Minister how is the maintenance of those equipment - I think at Pamplemousses - whether there has been a contract for the maintenance of those equipment?

How is the equipment being maintained? If there is a contract, who is the contractor who is dealing with this...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Order!

**Mr Rughoobur:**... or whether it is being maintained internally?

**Dr. Husnoo:** No. Actually, we have a contract with a contractor to maintain it. I do not have the name of the contractor, but I can circulate it.

**The Chairperson:** Page 202!

**Dr. Husnoo:** Sorry, the officers have got it here! Maintenance done by contractor and supplier of equipment to maintain this contract; Contractors are namely Chem Tech Ltd, IBL HealthActiv.

**The Chairperson:** Page 202! Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Page 202 - 31112.03 (g) - *New Cancer Centre (i) Upgrading and Renovation of Building*, the Minister must give us an idea where matters have reached concerning the building and also for the equipment. From what we have gathered, these are very specialised equipment. This has been discussed here even with his predecessor last year or the year before; the choice of the equipment is of paramount importance. Can the Minister inform the House whether consultants have been appointed, whether the choice with a strategic partner has already been made, and where do matters stand exactly? When can we say this centre would be operational? Can the Minister, at least, give us an idea as for the building, whether work has started or not and especially the choice of this very specialised equipment?

**Dr. Husnoo:** We are going to build the cancer hospital with the Indian financial assistance. As I just mentioned about ENT earlier, I am going to work with HSCC. As I mentioned, HSCC is a very good organisation which has brought a lot of sophisticated advanced facilities in India; more than 100 hospitals. They have been doing the hospitals, I think for AIIMS. It shows what kind of consultancy there has been. The last time they came, they visited MedPoint at Solferino, and they are working on it as well. They are doing the assessment, and once all the paperwork is done, we are going to launch it. As far as equipment is concerned, we have asked for engineers as well to help us for the equipment. The equipment is very sophisticated and we do not have the know-how here in Mauritius

unfortunately; so we need these people. They are going to help us, but it is not just there but for Victoria hospital where we have some urgent problems like the Linear Accelerator is broken. So, they are going to help to set up the Linear Accelerator very urgently for Victoria Hospital and they are going to help us for Solferino as well. Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** Merci, M. le président! Monsieur le président, il existe dans la cour de l'hôpital Victoria des structures religieuses en état de décrépitude, qui sont aujourd'hui un repère pour rats. Je comprends parfaitement la décision du gouvernement de garder une certaine neutralité religieuse dans les institutions publiques et je la respecte. Autant qu'on puisse venir de l'avant une fois pour toutes, ce serait de convertir ces structures en store ou autre bâtiment à vocation sanitaire qui soit quand même propre, convenable.

**Dr. Husnoo:** The hon. Member will agree with me that it is a very delicate, very sensitive issue. What have we decided? I would say we have about three or four major projects on which we are working - ENT Hospital, Cancer Hospital, Drug Store, Eye Hospital. We have about five or six major projects coming. After that, we are going to get these consultants from India to work on a Master Plan for Victoria Hospital. The hon. Member would agree with me that the hospital is more than 56 years old, maybe 70. It has to be the whole thing because it is difficult just to get in and out of Victoria Hospital. The whole place needs to be reorganised. Okay, it will not be tomorrow, but we have to think on this. Once we have worked on the Master Plan, then we can take care of all these structures at the same time. It is a bit difficult to do it now. I am sure the hon. Member will appreciate that. Thank you!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to the item for *Extension of Hospitals*, I can see that provisions have been made for various hospitals except for Mahebourg Hospital. Anyway, in particular, I am making reference to the maternity ward at Mahebourg Hospital. The service in that particular ward has been reduced considerably! Even the number of staff has been reduced, and most of the patients are asked to go Nehru Hospital, and you would imagine that Mahebourg Hospital covers a very wide area. Can I make a humble request to the hon. Minister, if possible, to consider a full-fledged service at the maternity of the hospital?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Okay, let me look into it because I cannot answer offhand. I will look into it and see.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Page 202, item *31112.003 (h) (iii) - New Eye Hospital*, I would like to know where this new Eye Hospital will be built.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, for the new Eye Hospital, we have got a plot of land opposite Wellkin, ex-Apollo Hospital. We are going to build this there.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same item as mentioned by hon. Mrs Perraud with regard to the *(i) New Hospital, Flacq* ; *(ii) National Health Laboratory Services*; *(iii) New Eye Hospital*, and the New Cancer Centre, we see that there has been provision for Rs5 m. for each - 2016/17. I would like to know how much of these Rs5 m. for each of these items has been spent, and why is it that there is only Rs10 m. for this financial year, and then no mention for the years to come? Is it still at a very, very preliminary stage, and, therefore, it is not for the years to come as it has been announced last year.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, I cannot answer for last year. I am going to say for this year, because we have allocated the money for consultancy. Even if it is not mentioned here, once the project starts, hopefully, next year, it is going to be included in the Budget. That is what it is.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval, no question from a sitting position!

**Dr. Husnoo:** I am afraid I do not have...

*(Interruptions)*

It is not that!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson! If I may refer to the hon Minister item *(h) Preliminary Preparation & Design – (vi) New Neurosurgery Unit at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital*, can I ask the hon. Minister whether the Neurosurgery Unit at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam

National Hospital has ceased to operate or is it going to operate parallel to the new Neurosurgery Unit at Dr. Jeetoo Hospital?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, we are trying to refurbish Jeetoo Hospital. A lot of money will be spent to buy sophisticated equipment. We are going to put another new building, because the existing one cannot accommodate the new equipment. So, a new building will be built at Jeetoo Hospital and will be furnished with sophisticated equipment. As you know, a lot of patients with neurosurgical problems go overseas for treatment, but then we should be able to do these kinds of operations here eventually.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 31121, *Transport Equipment - .801 Acquisition of Vehicles*, may the hon. Minister give us more clarification on that? What kind of vehicles? Will there be ambulances? If the hon. Minister can clarify, as we can see on page 201, same item, 22060.004, *Vehicles*. Is it the same? Can I have some more clarification on that?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Is it .801, please?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Yes.

**Dr. Husnoo:** It is provision made for acquisition of five sophisticated equipment to be used by SAMU?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** It is for the SAMU.

**The Chairperson:** Page 206, hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112.006 (c) *Coromandel Mediclinic*, last year, it was budgeted for a new Mediclinic at Coromandel for an amount of Rs10 m. and for this year it is supposed to be Rs10 m.. But up to now, nothing has been done. Will it be done this year for Rs20 m. or only Rs8 m. as mentioned in this budget?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As mentioned there, Rs8 m. have been earmarked, but then Rs15 m. for next year and Rs20 m. for the year after.

**Mr Lepoigneur:** But it was supposed to start last year with an amount of Rs10 m.

(*Interruptions*)

**Dr. Husnoo:** I am going to look into it. Don't worry! We have five Mediclinics; all of them are going to be sorted out.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** L'item 22070, *Cleaning Services*, est-ce qu'on peut avoir des détails et qui le contracteur, s'il vous plaît?

**Dr. Husnoo:** This is basically for laundry services for different hospitals and cleaning of office premises by Mauriclean Ltd.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano!

**Mr Ramano:** A la page 206, M. le président, toujours sous l'item Capital Expenditure.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Which item, please?

**Mr Ramano:** Item 31. M. le président, en ce qui concerne le *Med Point Clinic*, est-ce que je peux savoir de l'honorable ministre le coût de maintenance du bâtiment et le nombre de personnes attachées au bâtiment? Pourquoi il n'existe aucune dotation budgétaire en ce qui concerne le *Med Point Clinic*?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, we do not have anybody who is looking after that building. No money is being spent there for the time being. But as you know, we are working on the project now to start the construction. No money is being spent on that.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I'll come back to the Coromandel Mediclinic. *Ce projet a été annoncé en fanfare.* It will be good that the Minister, at least, gives us an idea of where matters exactly stand because I will not go into the personal matters that were discussed before. The hon. Minister was not here in the Assembly the other day. The impression given was that the project was being left aside. I will not say by whom, it will be improper. Can the hon. Minister give assurance to the House – as he is the Minister of Health now – that work has started, whether land has been found and whether consultancy services have been contracted out? When are the people of that region expected, at least, to have the first treatment? Will it be in five years? Will it be in ten years? Will it be in two years? Can the hon. Minister at

least give an idea? Because there has been a wrong interpretation that this project was being abandoned while he was not here in the Assembly.

**Dr. Husnoo:** I would like to mention that the Ministry of Housing and Lands, on 02 August 2016, that is, last year, has vested land to the extent of 2,567 m<sup>2</sup>. The preliminary design, the scope of work and the cost estimate will be submitted by MPI. So, work is on. We have got the land, but we are waiting for MPI to give us the design. The project is on, I can assure the hon. Member on that. It is not going to be stopped. This project is on. The hon. Member can rest assured.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Item 31112 - *Area Health Centre and Community Health Centre*. I had in the past made a request to the previous Minister to consider the possibility of constructing either a Community Health Centre or an Area Health Centre at Ville Noire. Ville Noire is a village which consists of about 4,000 inhabitants. I had made a request in the past, but I do not know if the Minister can consider the possibility of coming up with such a project at Ville Noire.

**Dr. Husnoo:** It is not in the budget, but anyway we will have to look into it. You know, when we try to set up a Community Health Centre or an Area Health Centre, we have to see how far it is from the next point of treatment. You know what I mean. We have to take all this into consideration and then we will decide on that.

**Mr Ramful:** Can I have a clarification? In some places, I understand, doctors are sent on a weekly basis, once a week. Is this possible? Because there is already a Village Hall, I think, at Ville Noire. Can provision be made for a doctor to be sent once weekly at Ville Noire?

**Dr. Husnoo:** We have to study. I mean, we cannot take over the Village Hall just like that. You know what I mean. We'll have to have a look at the situation. I think there is somebody coming half a day, I think, every day. Am I right? Anyway, I will look into it at Ville Noire.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to item 28211 - *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*, avec les changements du CSR et l'étatisation du CSR, est-ce que le ministre va s'assurer que les

organisations comme la *Mauritius Red Cross*, enfin toutes les organisations qui sont sur cette liste-là, recevront plus de financement, parce qu'on ne voit pas vraiment d'augmentation subséquente sur cela ? Est-ce qu'il peut donner une garantie qu'il travaillera sur cela pour donner plus de subvention à ces organisations surtout que maintenant avec l'étatisation du *CSR* et les décideurs politiques qui décideront de qui méritent d'avoir de l'argent du *CSR* et les contributions et si au moins il peut lui, de son ministère, augmenter les contributions à toutes ces organisations qui font un travail formidable ?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As you have seen in the budget, we are not going to stop funding all these organisations. We are going to continue funding them. They have been increased by about 5%.

*(Interruptions)*

I know. It depends on the budget, obviously. But it has been increased by 5% and this is what we do for all the organisations. We do not go more than that *en général*. But we will have to see.

**Mr A. Duval:** Perhaps, just a little clarification, if the hon. Minister could meet them and see how he could help, because they are complaining of funding and all these. They are doing a good job.

**Dr. Husnoo:** We will look into that.

**The Chairperson:** Page 207, hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112.405 - *Upgrading of Community Health Centres*, more specifically the one in Black River, Yves Cantin, ma question au ministre est la suivante: qu'est-ce qui est envisagé en termes de mise à niveau de l'hôpital Yves Cantin et quelle somme a été budgétée à cet effet ?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Sorry, can you repeat the question, please?

**Mr Jhuboo:** Qu'est-ce qui a été envisagé pour la mise à niveau de Yves Cantin et quelle est la somme qui a été budgétée à cet effet?

**Dr. Husnoo:** For Yves Cantin, we do not have any in-patient facilities there. All the patients who have got even a minor problem, have to come to Victoria Hospital to get

admitted. It's a bit difficult for the patients because they have to travel a long way. That's what we are trying to do. I am trying to set up an in-patient facility.

Okay, they are not going to do any operation there. I am not going to do any delivery there because there is a need for a lot of facilities. I am going to start with medical facilities. I have earmarked Rs15 m. to set up the in-patient and then gradually we'll see how it is and then if we have to increase, we will increase the facility.

*(Interruptions)*

That would depend, *exactement*. Initially I am going to make it 10 because I am not going to put a lot of beds, and then we will take it from there.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Concerning Area Health Centre, I think the Minister is aware. He must have been informed about the situation at the Petite Rivière Area Health Centre, where work had started, work had stopped and the temporary dispensary has been transferred to the Social Welfare Centre. Can the Minister, at least, give the assurance to the inhabitants of Petite Rivière that the Area Health Centre of the region will be operational, modernised, fully equipped within the least possible delay?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Yes. The hon. Member has mentioned the problem about this place with me and again I give you the guarantee that I'm going - I mean it has started, it has stopped - to see why it has stopped, because I realise that Black River is far from Candos and everything. I realise the problem, but I will look into it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** On the same item *31112.404 - Upgrading of Area Health Centres and 31112.405, Upgrading of Community Health Centres*, I would like to ask the hon. Minister if he can give the list of all those centres, be it Area Health Centres and Community Health Centres.

**Dr. Husnoo:** For the upgrading, we can circulate the list.

**The Chairperson:** Page 208, hon. Duval! Sorry, we are already out of time.

**Mr Henry:** Yes. I have been raising my hand on several occasions, please. I have missed four pages and I have very important questions for the Minister. I have given my name to the...

**The Chairperson:** We are already at page 208. Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** My problem is the whole issue of drug, rehabilitation and treatment. So, on page 208, under item 22900.925 - *Rehabilitation Programme for Alcoholics and Drug Addicts*, under item 28211.018 - *Prevention, Information et Lutte Contre Le SIDA (PILS)* and also under item 28211.054 - *Dr. Idriss Goomany Centre*, can the Minister inform the House why NATReSA was closed, especially with the havoc which is being caused by the synthetic drugs? What immediate action has the Minister set up, at least, with all the parties concerned like Idriss Goomany Centre, PILS and other NGOs for the rehabilitation programme which, I think, is an urgency? I will not go into the issue of the Commission of Inquiry on drugs. Some people might have nightmares. So, I prefer that the hon. Minister let us know what urgent action is being taken at the Ministry pending what will be recommended by the Commission of Inquiry, especially we have to bring all the NGOs which have been left apart.

**Dr. Husnoo:** I can assure you, since I took office, I met the NGOs like PILS, Idriss Goomany. I met them all, we discussed and, following that, we started the methadone treatment. There was a big problem. When we started the methadone treatment, 500 persons wanted to go on that treatment. We cannot start 500 on Day 1; we have to go slowly because it takes time to start them on the treatment; that's one. Naltrexone and suboxone treatment is going on as well. We are trying to expand that treatment because some people settle down on the methadone treatment. They would improve on that whereas others may improve on the other type of treatment. We have to keep both types of treatment going on. So, we are working on that. I have met different organisations and we are working together. I can assure you. Working with the drug addicts and all that is not an easy job. Let's face it.

*(Interruptions)*

The hon. Member knows what I mean. It's not an easy job, so we need the help of the NGOs to do a good job. We are working together. I appreciate that.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramano! You have question?

**Mr Ramano:** Merci, M. le président. Monsieur le ministre a annoncé la réintroduction de la méthadone. Est-ce que je peux savoir la raison qui a motivé sa décision, et sur la question de rapport qualité prix quelle est son appréciation en comparaison avec le suboxone?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Firstly, methadone treatment has proved itself all over the world, not just in Mauritius. In UK, in Australia, in Canada, methadone treatment has proved itself that it works well. So, that's why I have introduced it.

Secondly, suboxone and naltrexone treatment is a bit more expensive. As I just mentioned, some people are going to settle down because the advantage of the suboxone and naltrexone is that the treatment will be a bit shorter. If you can win the patient off the drug, so much the better for him. He does not have to take the drug for the rest of his life, whereas with methadone the problem is that once you start on methadone you have to continue for long time, sometimes eight years. If you are lucky, then you can get a small percentage, you can win them off the drug. Both treatments have their advantage and their disadvantage. They suit different people. So, that is why we are keeping both treatments on.

**The Chairperson:** Page 210. Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I have a very, very delicate question. I hope my friend here will not mind. We are being asked to vote under item 28211.01 - *NGO's for Anti-Smoking and Anti-Alcohol Campaign*. Has the Minister, at least, tried to discuss with the Clerk of the National Assembly to start an anti-smoking campaign within the precinct of the National Assembly? Apart from this being a wooden building, I think it would be good some anti-smoking campaign - I won't say anti-alcohol campaign - for my very good friends there on my side and maybe some on the other side with regard to anti-smoking.

**Dr. Husnoo:** I agree with the hon. Member. It is not advisable to smoke in any close ring. I think that we all know about it because passive smoking has been shown to affect the health of the bystanders as well and they can get all sorts of diseases. It is known. We are all grown up here and I am sure we appreciate what the hon. Member has just said. Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Last question, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Chairperson, item, 22900.903 - *Other Goods and Services of which Awareness and Sensitisation Campaign* where there is a sum of Rs18 m. that is going to be voted. May we have some more details? What kind of campaign will it be and have they already been identified?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, provision is made for the expenditure on campaign for the prevention of NCDs - Non-Communicable Diseases, that is, diabetes, hypertension, cancer and all that and tobacco cessation cleaning through the MBC and private radios. Then there are other expenses like World Health Day for cancer, for tuberculosis, for malaria, no tobacco day, mental health, diabetes. We have a lot of functions, that is what this provision is for.

*Vote 11-1 Ministry of Health and Quality of Life (Rs11,672,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 12-1 Ministry of Arts and Culture was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 212, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, M. le président. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, peut-on avoir les détails, les noms et la somme allouée à ces personnes ?

**Mr Roopun :** Mr Chairperson, the sum of Rs1.6 m. as Extra Assistance is to cater for the salary of Advisers. Actually, there are two Advisers, Mr Ramgoolam, Adviser in artistic matters, and also Ms Hurry, Adviser in information matters.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.955 - *Gender Mainstreaming*, if the hon. Minister could clarify and give us some details about the coming legislations and policies about this item.

**Mr Roopun:** In fact, Mr Chairperson, this is a new item which has been provided in all the Ministries so that we can focus on training sessions and that every policy is gender focus to ensure that there is a gender balance in whatever is being done in terms of gender equality. Workshops will be carried out so that nobody is left behind, especially men actually in the Civil Service.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 22170 - *Travelling within the Republic*, can the hon. Minister give us more details about this Rs150,000?

**Mr Roopun:** Yes, Mr Chairperson. This is a new item in the sense that whatever...

(*Interruptions*)

... travelling within the Republic is done. It is a new item. I must say that up to now I have not travelled within the Republic. There have been visits to Rodrigues in the past, but this is a new item where we are going to manage it through every Ministry.

**The Chairperson:** Page 213, hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Yes, thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 21110.001 - *Assistant Coordinator, CELPAC and Executive Assistant (Arts & Culture)*, can we know why these posts are still vacant?

**Mr Roopun:** For Assistant Coordinator, the scheme of service is being amended and the Assistant Coordinator will subsequently be recruited.

**The Chairperson:** Page 214, hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

(*Interruptions*)

Regarding item 22090 - *Security*, may we know which company is providing the security services and for which sites, please?

**Mr Roopun:** Provision is made for security services as follows-

- Serge Constantin Theatre, Vacoas;
- Baden Powell Building, Port Louis;
- Centre de Formation Artistique at Paillot to Defense High-tech Ltd.;
- Open Air Theatre at Mahebourg to Quick Security Services, and
- A new contract is being awarded to Keep Pace Security Guards with effect from August 2017.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, peut-on avoir les détails et aussi si c'était *contract out*, les noms des contacteurs, s'il vous plaît?

**Mr Roopun:** Provision has been made for the cleaning of toilets at different venues and the contract has been awarded to Keep Clean Ltd.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Page 215. Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Concerning Grants, item 26313.031 - *Malcolm De Chazal Trust Fund*, I think the hon. Minister would not have the information right now, but if he can circulate the number of board meetings held during the last financial year?

**Mr Roopun:** We are on page 215?

**The Chairperson:** Page 215.

**Mr Roopun:** Insofar as Malcolm De Chazal is concerned, unfortunately, since 2009, if I am not mistaken, the Board has not been reconstituted. We are working on it so that we have a new Board and we can give a new boost to this particular body.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Leopold!

**Mr Leopold:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28212.014 - *Financial Assistance to Artists (a) Scheme for Concerts*, I just want to know the eligibility criteria for the financial assistance for concerts.

**Mr Roopun:** I believe I have to seek help from my officers. But in any event, it is quite a long list of criteria. I am going to circulate the details for eligibility criteria.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Page 215, item 26313.121 - *Centres de Lecture Publique et d'Animation Culturelle (CELPAC)*, could we know from the hon. Minister why there is no estimates under this item?

**Mr Roopun:** This is now under another heading. It is now under heading 22900.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnab!

**Mr Rutnab:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 215, item 26313 - *Extra Budgetary Units* and in particular item .044 in relation to *Rights Management Society*, can I ask the hon. Minister whether there is a Director for that Society, when was he or she recruited, and what is his or her remuneration?

**Mr Roopun:** Unfortunately, there is actually an Acting Director. The substantive Director has been suspended since quite some time. There is presently a case in Court and we are waiting for the outcome of the case to know how to move further.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Mr Chairperson, item 22900.018 - *Hiring of Services for Events*, I will ask the hon. Minister to enquire and see whether he is satisfied with the hiring services for events and whether there are no malpractices because I have received representations concerning certain malpractices with the award of contracts for tents etc. For *Mauritius Film Development Corporation*, whether the hon. Minister will give us a list of the Members of the Board.

(*Interruptions*)

He is the Minister! I don't know Baboo!

(*Interruptions*)

For the Mauritius Film Development Corporation, whether the Board has been reconstituted. Our famous Danny Denzongpa is no longer there. And also, overseas missions effected, to which countries have they gone to perform the excellent arts of actors and actresses. And also, for socio-cultural organisations, we have been asked to vote Rs2 m. Can the hon. Minister give us a list?

(*Interruptions*)

I will give you three in one. I will finish with you!

**Mr Roopun:** I will start with the hiring of services for events. I understand that we are adhering strictly to the various procedural guidelines. But if there is any issue, I am here, and I am sure hon. Members can share information with me so that I am going to cross check. Insofar as MFDC is concerned, presently the Chairperson has not been appointed, and so far as overseas missions, this...

(*Interruptions*)

Nobody has been appointed to replace the Chairperson at this stage and so far the overseas missions are concerned, I circulate the details.

**The Chairperson:** Pages 216, 217, 218. Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Yes, page 218, under items 26313.030 - *Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund* and 26313.062 - *National Library*, I want to know firstly who is the Chairperson of the National Library and how many times the Board has not met since January 2017.

**Mr Roopun:** Actually, the acting Chairperson is the Permanent Secretary. I believe that they met two or three times. If I can have the information; no, I don't have it, but the acting Chairperson is the PS.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Thank you. Page 218, under item *26313.030 - Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund*, may I know who is the Chairperson of Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund, and why has there been no Board meeting despite there is a Vice-Chairperson?

**Mr Roopun:** As far as I recollect, Mr Chairperson, there is a Deputy Chairperson in the name of Mr Ballock and they meet whenever there is need to.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to item *26323.039 - Mauritius Museums Council of which (c) Peopling of Mauritius Museum at Pointe Canon*, there was a budget of Rs1.5 m. last year and for this year there is no budget. May I know why?

**Mr Roopun:** In fact, the amount budgeted last year has not yet been spent in the sense that exhibits have been transferred from the Museum of Port Louis to Peopling of Mauritius Museum. I understand that part of the work has been completed; this is for false ceiling which will be completed once the exhibits have been transferred back to Port Louis.

**The Chairperson:** Page 219. Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item *31112.101 - Construction of New Building for the National Archives and National Library*, on a entendu parler dans le budget de la construction du palais des arts, mais on ne voit aucun item pour le palais des arts dans ce budget.

**Mr Roopun:** Mr Chairperson, in fact, mention was made in the Budget and also the hon. Prime Minister did mention that this is going to be a project which will be materialised not immediately because land has to be identified and it is going to be in the region of Côte d'Or.

*(Interruptions)*

I cannot say at this stage.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan! Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item *31112.101 - Construction of New Building for the National Archives and National Library*, may we know where matters stand with regard to the construction of National Library and National Archives?

**Mr Roopun:** The feasibility study has been completed at the level of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure. Provision is now being made for the recruitment of a consultant to drive the project and prepare all the documents. This will be finalised and financed through the Indian financial assistance.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Perraud!

**Mrs Perraud:** Item 31132.401 - *E-Government Projects-Digitalisation of Archives*, could we know where matters stand please?

**Mr Roopun:** Insofar as the digitalisation is concerned, it's a long process involving around Rs100 m. and now we are at phases two, three and four. This is going to be completed within phases and now we are with the digitalisation of records at the level of MGI. It started in 2011 and a sum of Rs100 m. has been earmarked. This is going to take a runaway period of about 16 years for the digitalisation, and up till now I believe 1.2 million pages have been done. This is ongoing.

**The Chairperson:** Last question, hon. Henry.

**Mr Henry:** Thank you Mr Chairperson. Sous le même item 31112.417 - *Upgrading of Cultural Complex/Building (b) Batterie de l'Harmonie, Black River*, je vois qu'une somme de R 3 millions a été votée dans ce budget. Pourrait-on savoir quand le projet va démarrer, et est-ce que l'accès à ce site est opérationnel ?

**Mr Roopun:** Yes, during my intervention on the Budget Speech, I mentioned that, in fact, there are lot of projects going on around. Government, together with the help of all the promoters there are going to build a new access road to this site. Actually, the site has been cleaned and we working on a scheme to fence the site.

*Vote 12-1 Ministry of Arts and Culture (Rs525,300,000) was on question put agreed to.*

*Vote 13-1 Social Security and National Solidarity (Rs22,780,000,000) was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 221, 222. Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 222, under item 21110.010 - *Service to Mauritius Programme*, could we know, hon. Minister, why there is no estimates for this financial year?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I thank the hon. Member for her question. The reason for which there are no estimates for this year is because the nine graduates, under the Service to Mauritius Programme who are posted to my Ministry, will henceforth be paid under the vote of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may we have the names and the qualifications of the advisers?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Well, I have their names: one is adviser on information matters, Mr Adaken; one is adviser on NGO matters, Mr Konaya, and one is adviser on disability matters, Mr Bankrer. But I don't have their CVs with me. We may certainly circulate them.

**The Chairperson:** Page 223, hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to...

*(Interruptions)*

No, sorry, I have a question. With regard to item 22120 - *Fees*, can the hon. Minister give a breakdown of the fees, please?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Now, the provisions at item 22120, Mr Chairperson, constitute of payments first of all to the University of Mauritius in respect of three officers of the Social Security Cadre who are following a diploma course in Social Work sponsored by the Ministry that costs Rs238,500 per year. And then we have two other payments, one for resource persons conducting induction courses and one for in-house training expenses.

**The Chairperson:** Page 224, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060 - *Maintenance*, we can see that the sum of money for the year 2016/2017 is Rs21,800,000 and then it increases to Rs24,980,000. May we know from the hon. Minister why this increase?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I do apologise to the hon. Member, I just did not catch her question. Thank you.

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Concerning *maintenance*, item 22060, the hon. Minister can see that there is an increase of around Rs3 m. from Rs21,800,000 to Rs24,980,000 and then it goes down to Rs23,480,000.

**Mr Sinatambou:** The provisions are made for maintenance of buildings, swimming pools, plant and equipment, IT equipment and the maintenance of grounds and local offices for Foyer Trochetia, Bois Savon and recreation centres, and it includes pest control at social security offices. The increase is actually explained by new contract prices. Would the hon. Member like me to give her the...

*(Interruptions)*

Sure. For the maintenance of buildings, we have a total amount of Rs10,180,000 which is spread among a number of contractors. I can list them –

- Cogestimo Ltd ;
- Mauriclean Ltd;
- Alpha Pest Management Company Ltd;
- Keep Clean Ltd;
- Pest Handlers Company, and
- Eradicators.

That is for the maintenance of buildings. I also have for the maintenance of grounds. There, we have among the contractors –

- Mauriclean Ltd;
- Keep Clean Ltd;
- Maintenance Logistics, and
- Cogestimo Ltd.

**The Chairperson:** Page 225, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, I have three questions but, anyway, I will ask one by one. The fees for Medical Boards and...

**Mr Sinatambou:** Which item, please?

**Mr Bhagwan:** *22120.001 - Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*, I have heard some time back that he was going to increase the pool of medical practitioners. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether it is for the same vote, whether there are sufficient medical practitioners to have the visits at home and also with regard to the *service de proximité* for elderly?

**Mr Sinatambou:** In fact, what I know, Mr Chairperson, is that - I do not have the exact number here, but if my recollection is correct - the number of doctors has been increased from 37 to 92. What I have understood is that we may have a fall now in the number of doctors because some may have joined the public service.

*(Interruptions)*

But you can rest assured, Mr Chairperson, that we will do the needful to ensure that there is an appropriate number of doctors.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.093 - *Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board*, can I know from the hon. Minister who is the person chairing the Board right now? Does the Board have a Chairperson, if yes, what is the package being offered to the Chairperson?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Well, as far as the members of the Board are concerned, there are seven members. Out of the seven members, five are ex officio members. The Chairperson is appointed by the Minister, but was appointed before me and it is the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry.

(*Interruptions*)

No, here I am told he is the Chairperson. And the seventh member also appointed by the Minister is a representative of the Mauritius Employees Federation who was appointed on 30 May 2014, neither by me nor by the previous Minister. It is Mr Felix who is the group Human Resource Manager.

The members are paid Rs890 per sitting, the Chairperson who is the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, appointed in September 2016, earns Rs23,152.50.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to item 22900.004 - *Catering Services*, can we be enlightened on this particular item? We can see there is an increase from Rs11 m. to...

**Mr Sinatambou:** Excuse me, my brief has fallen apart.

**Mr Ramful:** It is 22900.004 – *Catering Services*.

**Mr Sinatambou:** I understand that the caterer for all three recreation centres, that is, the James Burty David Recreation Centre, the Lady Sushil Ramgoolam Recreation Centre and the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Recreation Centre, are all serviced by a supplier called Tropical Times and the contract period is from 14 April 2017 to 13 April 2018.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson, my question was answered.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Can I refer the hon. Minister to page 225, item 27210 in relation to *Social Assistance Benefits in Cash* and in particular to item .002 – *Social Aid*. For the last financial year, there was a provision for Rs919 m. and for this year and next year, the provision is Rs910 m. Now, we know that in Mauritius there are people from Madagascar, Sri Lanka, India, China and other countries who come and seek employment. Against that background, can I ask the hon. Minister whether he will consider reviewing his policy on eligibility criteria for social aid so as to encourage people who are on social aid to go back to work and come out of the poverty cycle?

**The Chairperson:** It is a question on policy matters which are not normally....

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Sinatambou:** You will appreciate that I cannot reply to this question now at this time, but I can certainly take a parliamentary question.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Hon. Minister, item 26313.093 - *Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board*, first of all, can he tell us how many people have been trained through this Board since it was created especially for year 2016/2017 where Rs11,800,000 were allocated to it? Secondly, is it dealing - with the laws to compel the private sector to recruit a percentage of disabled persons - with that?

**Mr Sinatambou:** The hon. Member does surely know that this matter is regulated by the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act of 1996. What I have at the moment is the number of applications and so on, but as regards the way of enforcing it, I am again at the stage of committee...

(*Interruptions*)

How many people have been trained so far? I have a number of people with disabilities who have been trained. This includes outbound training and new skill development programme. The number from July 2016 to June 2017 is 153.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Under the same item, there was an amount of Rs20 m. earmarked for the current financial year. What is the amount that has been spent under this item? I do not know if the hon. Minister was referring to the mandatory requirement by private firms to recruit disabled persons. Maybe the hon. Minister can enlighten the House also on this provision of the law. Thank you.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Mr Chairperson, I have here the number of people with disabilities who are employed, at least for the year starting July 2016 to June of this year; it is 55. Maybe I should add that there is a register for persons with disabilities who are certified disabled but have actually shown themselves to be able and willing to work. That register records 617 individuals for the year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Going to where hon. Ramful left, concerning the catering services, can we know from the hon....

**Mr Sinatambou:** Which item?

**Mr Jhuboo:** Item 22900.004 – *Catering Services*, we are asked to vote for a provision of Rs18 m. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether the contract is allocated to a single supplier or to various suppliers, and the name of the suppliers, please?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I just stated in an earlier reply, Mr Chairperson, that for this year, I think starting from April 2017 to April 2018, it is a one-year contract which was actually split in three tenders, but all three tenders have actually been won by one company, Tropical Times.

**The Chairperson:** Page 226! Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Yes, with regard to the construction of recreational centre at Riambel, item 31111.002, can we know where matters stand?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Yes, Mr Chairperson. The fourth recreation centre situated at Riambel is currently under contract. The contract was awarded to Beijing ZhuZong Group Company Ltd for an amount of Rs202,352,417.28, inclusive of the contingency sum of Rs7 m. and value added tax. Now, a provision of Rs110 m. was made in the Budget of 2016/17. Payment effected to the contractor to date is Rs46,947,198.12. The initial completion date of

the project had been scheduled to 26 August 2017, but has had to be extended up to 13 October of this year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson! Item 3111.012, can we know where this Home for Elderly will be constructed and when will it start?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Well, as the House is aware, Mr Chairperson, the construction of the two homes for the elderly has just been announced in the Budget Speech on 08 June. So, the hon. Member will appreciate that it would just take us some time to identify the location suffice it to know that we are expecting to spend Rs28 m. this year for the edification of the two homes.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to the same item just mentioned, *Construction of Recreational Centre at Riambel*, we see an amount of Rs110 m. that was procured for last year. May we know, out of these Rs110 m., how much was spent, and if not all was spent, the reason why?

**Mr Sinatambou:** As I was saying, the contract has been awarded for a total amount in excess of Rs200 m. - let us round up the figures. Now, a provision of Rs110 m. was made, as can be seen in the Budget 2016/17; payment effected to the contractor to date amounts to Rs46 m. - let's say Rs47 m.

*(Interruptions)*

Well, we go according to what is built by the builder. So, according to the amount of building which has actually been erected, he is paid accordingly.

**The Chairperson:** Page 227! Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. This is a very important matter, item 27 - *Social Benefits*. We have been receiving a lot of complaints from people not...

**Mr Sinatambou:** Which item, please?

**Mr Armance:** 27!

**Mr Sinatambou:** Yes, thank you!

**Mr Armance:** So, we have been receiving a lot of complaints from people who have stopped receiving their pension, for whatever reason it is. They have been sent to the Medical

Board. I have, myself, met some of these people where they show real disability or they really need invalid, orphan, child allowance. We do not know for which reason they are being refused their pension. Unfortunately, they have to wait for 2-3 months, without any allowance, without any allocation, without any money to go to the Board, and then have their pension again. Can the Minister please have a look at this matter? Because every month, we have 10 to 15 in the CAB where we are receiving the constituents.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Although this a policy issue, I can assure the House that I looked into the matter already quite closely. From item 27, if one goes down the list at 27210.101, 27210.102, 27210.103, 27210.104 and 27210.105, one will know that quite a substantial amount of money is actually paid. On .101, it is Rs15,600 billion; on .102, it is Rs1,390 billion. So, a lot is already being done, but I can assure the House that the needful will be done to ensure that people are not actually penalised.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to the same item, the *Basic Invalid Pension*, and in particular with regard to the composition of the Medical Board, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the members of the Board, and in particular the specialists, are permanent members or are they on a rotational basis depending on the problem that the patient has? How is this done?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Now, let me just start by saying that we have 92 doctors, as I stated earlier, who actually are part of the Medical Board. What I have here is that they have held 1,728 sessions in the course of the last financial year. I understand there are two ways for conducting the medical assessment for cases referred to the Medical Board. Either claimant appears before the Medical Board or if the claimant is bed-ridden, the medical assessment is done at the residence of the claimant through a domiciliary visit. For now, this is all I have. If anyone is dissatisfied after being boarded, one then is allowed to go to the Medical Tribunal, where I understand that by virtue of Section 36 of the National Pensions Act, we have one Chairman who has to possess appropriate legal background, and two specialist doctors who will sit on the Board. I am told here that the Tribunal is serviced by a pool of five chairpersons, and 47 specialist doctors such as cardiology, psychiatry, orthopaedic. I am quite sure, therefore, that it must be on a specialised approach that the people go on appeal.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060 – *Maintenance*, can we know what are these maintenance and why this provision of Rs1 m.?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Now, the provisions here for maintenance at item 22060 are actually for the payment of maintenance contracts for the benefits branch of the Ministry, and the payments are as follows –

- Plant and Equipment – Rs100,000, and
- IT Hardware/Software – Rs2,700,000 (this provision includes a new cabling work and installation of new data points).

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Taking up from what hon. Armane and hon. Ramful just said concerning the Medical Board and which the hon. Minister replied, on page 227, item 22120.001 - *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*, we can see there is a sum of Rs14 m. being earmarked. If we see – this is what I want to know – on page 225, there were some similar items. Can I have some more clarification on that?

**Mr Sinatambou:** One aspect of the fees, you will see, falls under social protection, social benefits, whereas the payment of fees at page 227 relates to the payment of fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits.

As I said earlier, we are speaking of –

- (i) payments to the 92 doctors who are employed on a sessional basis for assessment of cases;
- (ii) the Domiciliary Medical Examinations and Medical Boards, and
- (iii) the payment to the 47 specialists and five Chairpersons who sit on the Medical Appeal Tribunal.

*(Interruptions)*

Not the same at all!

**The Chairperson:** La dernière question, honorable Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 27210.103 - *Basic Invalid Pension*, let us say someone below 60 is benefitting from the Basic Invalid Pension and when the same person reaches 60, can I know if this invalid pension is cancelled and the person receives only the old age pension? Is it the case or the person can receive both pensions?

**Mr Sinatambou:** In fact, I do not know whether it is the hon. Member who has put a Parliamentary Question on exactly that issue, which is coming for next week. What happens is that the recipient of the basic invalidity pension receives the pension until the age of 60. As he reaches retirement age, he actually qualifies for basic retirement pension, at which stage the basic invalidity pension lapses. However, if the person is in receipt of a carer's allowance, that carer's allowance keeps on except that as opposed to carer's allowance for people below 60, they would receive a sum of Rs2,500, the recipient of carer's allowance will receive Rs3,000 when he/she reaches 60.

*Vote 13-1 Social Security and National Solidarity (Rs22,780,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 13-2 Environment and Sustainable Development was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 229, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, M. le président. L'item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, pouvons-nous avoir les détails, les noms et la somme allouée à ces personnes ?

**Mr Sinatambou:** This item of extra assistance, Mr Chairperson, at item 21110.005 is the amount of money provided for the payment of salaries and end-of-year bonus to advisers posted to the Ministry. Now, there is a decrease here in line with the reduction in the number of advisers posted to the Ministry from two to one only. I do not think there is one yet. I do not recall having approved the nomination or appointment of any adviser as of yet.

**The Chairperson:** Page 230! Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28222.006 - *Solar Water Heater Scheme*, could the hon. Minister state why there has been a decrease in the estimates for this financial year and no provisions for the coming financial years?

**Mr Sinatambou:** The reason is that this particular scheme, if I do understand properly, has had a number of phases. In its current phase, we have had 27,750 applicants of whom 20,998 households have benefitted from this fourth phase. The number of qualifiers from other phases -

- Phase I actually had 24,000 households which benefitted. Phase I was in 2009;
- Phase II in 2012 had 13,508 households which benefitted;
- Phase III in 2013 had 19,762 households which benefitted, and
- Phase IV, the current one, actually has 20,198 households which have benefitted.

Now, what has happened is that from a number of 27,150 applications, you will, therefore, note that only 20,198 households have benefitted because there is an excess of 5,000 applicants who have not actually come forward after receiving their letter of acceptance, which means that there seems to be a slowdown in the number of potential beneficiaries. That is why, although this scheme is a very interesting and important one from an environmental point of view, it has been decided to reduce the amount of money to be made available for the next financial year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31132.107 - *Environmental Impact Assessment Licensing Project*, there is a project value of Rs10 m. May we know what exactly this Assessment Licensing Project is and if projects like the Metro Express etc., will go through - there seems to be a Board - this Board? Can the hon. Minister give us some clarity?

Secondly, if the hon. Minister can tell us why, after six months, he still does not have an adviser for environmental affairs appointed.

**Mr Sinatambou:** In fact, there were three advisers.

*(Interruptions)*

No, I did not. Their contract has lapsed and Government has taken the decision to wait before renewing. It has got nothing to do with me. That is number one.

Secondly, coming to this Environmental Impact Assessment Licensing Project, this project is in line with the Government policy to expedite all licensing systems.

As it is today, the licensing procedure is actually a hard copy system and it is intended to progress to an e-licensing project which should enable a more efficient permitting procedure and especially help avoid delays in the implementation of development proposals.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Thank you Mr Chairperson. Under item 28221.010 - *Solar PV Projects*, there was an amount of Rs700,000 last year and it seems that this project is not going ahead again, there is no provision made for the next coming three years. Can we have some clarification please?

**Mr Sinatambou:** In 2016/2017, the amount of Rs700,000, as provided in the Budget, actually remained unutilised. In 2017/18, this project has now been waived and is no longer to be provided.

**The Chairperson:** Page 231. Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 22120.007(iii) *Hydro Chloro Fluoro Carbon*, may we know why the sum allocated this year is less - Rs98 m.?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Well, if the hon. Member is speaking of item 22120 *on fees*, the fees have increased, not decreased.

**The Chairperson:** Roman (iii) you mean?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Now, let me just find out. Well, Mr Chairperson, as you will note from the labelling, this activity is actually a grant activity. Now, what I understand is that it is about the fizzing out of HCF refrigerants used in the air conditioning and refrigeration sector.

The funding organisation is the Multilateral Fund to Montreal Protocol. Since it is joint money, some has been used this year and the rest will be used next year. So it's just that the pot is getting reduced and will be exhausted.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Selvon!

**Mrs Selvon:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 22120.007 (b)(ii) *Third National Communication*, could the hon. Minister give us some clarifications on this new item, please?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Yes, Mr Chairperson. The Third National Communication is actually part of our obligations under Article 12 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Now, this particular item is again a project which is actually by way of grant and the money is actually provided, I understand, under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund.

**The Chairperson:** Page 232. Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to item 31122.999 – *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, can the hon. Minister tell us exactly, with regard to the acquisition of lightning equipment, the grant from China, what equipment was purchased with that and to be used as what?

**Mr Sinatambou:** No funding had been provided, as Mr Chairperson will see, for the year 2017/18. The amount, therefore, for 2016/2017 is in the books and actually was a donation from China. Now, as per instructions received from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, this grant has not been used.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 22900.099 (vii) *Enhancing the resilience of vulnerable communities to Climate Change*, can the hon. Minister tell us what are the criteria and how the funds allocated will be spent?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I am just checking. Sure, we have here a grant from international organisations. It is about enhancing the resilience of vulnerable communities. Once again, it is a grant which actually is in line with decision number two of COP 17 Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Now, what I understand is that, in the year 2016/2017, that is, the current year, no training had been carried out as the project implementation plan was finalised and signed only on 28 March 2017 between the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and the United Nations Environment Programme. However, for the year 2017/18, it is estimated that an amount of Rs543,000 is going to be used, in particular for capacity building and training sessions, namely an inception workshop, two capacity building workshops on greenhouse gas inventory, one capacity building workshop on mitigation actions and policies, one capacity building workshop on domestic measurement reporting and verification and, finally, the midterm review workshop.

**The Chairperson:** Page 233. Hon. Armance!

**Mr Armance:** Regarding item 31410.402.402(c) *Beach Reprofiling Programme*, there is a project of Rs65 m., an amount of Rs8 m. earmarked every year. May I know which beaches have been identified to benefit from this programme?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Yes. I thank the hon. Member for his question, especially because there was a misunderstanding, I think, on the side of the Opposition, where they felt that there has not been money provided for reprofiling. What we are speaking here is that, for the coming financial year 2017/2018, five sites have been pre-identified. These are –

1. Résidence La Chaux in Mahebourg;
2. Deux Frères for a waterfront;
3. Baie du Tombeau;
4. Grand Baie near Sunset Boulevard, and
5. Providence on the Eastern Coast.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 31410.402(b) (iii) - *Coastal Adaptation Works at Rivière des Galets*, gabions have been erected on the coastal line and there is a plan to relocate the inhabitants of Rivière des Galets on a site which is located behind the actual village. Now, could the hon. Minister give us some more details on the coastal adaptation works? What does it really entail?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I thank the hon. Member for his question. Now, the objective of the coastal protection works at Rivière des Galets is actually to provide the protection and increase the climate change resilience of the exposed communities living in the sea frontage of Rivière des Galets which actually is vulnerable to swell and storm surges. Now, the project itself consists of the construction of a rock revetment of the length of not less than 450 metres with a parapet wall and landscaping works. Now, I must say, however, that it is expected that this particular coastal protection work should be sufficient to prevent the relocation of the inhabitants who are presently vulnerable, but who, we expect, will not be vulnerable after the implementation of the project. However, relocation has not been excluded in case this measure does not work. So, relocation remains a possibility, but only as a long-term measure.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to the same item (c) *Beach Reprofiling Programme*, it was proposed to the inhabitants of Mahebourg by the elected Members, hon. Jhugroo and hon. Hurreeram, that they would be favoured with artificial

beaches along the Waterfront of Mahebourg and Remy Ollier. Unfortunately, I do not see any provision in the Budget neither for 2017/18 nor for 2018/2019. Now, is this project being considered by the hon. Minister or have they been duped?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I must say that the request has been made to my Ministry. The issue is where the money is going to come from. So, the request is there. The money which is actually in the Budget is for sites which I have said, have been pre-identified, which is why I use the word ‘pre-identified’ because we may reject one or two other sites to accommodate the request of the hon. Minister and his colleague.

*(Interruptions)*

I beg your pardon?

*(Interruptions)*

As I just explained - Mr Chairperson, I may be allowed - the request has been made to my Ministry. So, the request is there and it is exactly that just for it not to be a ‘*menti, menti budget*’, we are not saying that we will do something which we have not planned. So, we are trying to make sure that we can make it happen and then we will inform this House.

**The Chairperson:** Page 234, hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes. I had a question for the previous one. I had raised my hand, but in any case! Item 21110 - *Recruitment*. We see recruitment of 200 staffs. A lot of General Workers! Has the Minister seen in what state our public beaches are today in terms of its cleanliness?

**The Chairperson:** We are on page 234!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, I am talking about general workers, and he is recruiting more, but these people are seen very rarely. At least, in the north they are very rarely to be seen for the cleaning of beaches. I would ask the hon. Minister to please concentrate his efforts on cleaning up the beaches because they are becoming eyesores more and more.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Well, I thank the hon. Member for his comment, but I am unable to agree. First of all, public beaches fall under the purview of the Beach Authority and the cleanliness of public beaches is actually monitored and regulated by the Beach Authority Act of 2004. Now, this has nothing to do with the recruitment...

(*Interruptions*)

... which is actually envisaged at page 234. However, I must say that I am trying to make a particular effort to insist that the public beaches should be clean, and I would invite each and every Member of this House to please not hesitate to inform me whenever and wherever they find any eyesore, not only on public beaches, but anywhere on this island, and we will do the level best, but if we can just do it in an orderly manner.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin, next question!

**Mr Quirin:** Under Capital Expenditure, item 31113.425 - *Embellishment of Infrastructural Works*, Rs18 m. budgeted for the last financial year. Can the hon. Minister give us a detailed list of all the sites where embellishment works have been carried out and completed? And the same question applies for financial year 2017/2018, if the sites have already been identified, please circulate a detailed list.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Now, I will circulate, if you don't mind; I have to find them.

(*Interruptions*)

There has been no planning yet because we were awaiting the budget. So, the planning for the 2017/18 sites is not yet done. But for those which have happened, we will...

(*Interruptions*)

Although I will add that for the current year, what we have been busy doing is purchasing a lot of equipment. We have about Rs3 m. which have been used for the purchase of solar lamps. We have nearly Rs3 m. also for the procurement of 360 cast iron benches and we have about Rs400,000 for the procurement of 120 street metal litter bins. What had happened is this embellishment work is actually made a little bit more difficult because quite a number of the staff now have to be used to clean the motorway. Now, the result of doing that work from Plaisance to La Croisette, they have done less work on the embellishment site. So, this is why some of the money has now been used to make sufficient purchases to at least put equipment to embellish.

**The Chairperson:** Page 235, hon. Bhagwan!

(*Interruptions*)

We are running out of time, hon. Bhagwan!

(*Interruptions*)

Hon. Bhagwan, if you have any question on page 235! Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item *31410.403 - Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Public and Other Sites*, Rs20 m. for 2016/2017 and the same amount for the next financial year. Can we have a breakdown of the amount of Rs20 m. for the last financial year?

**Mr Sinatambou:** This one, Mr Chairperson, I do have. So, from the amount which has been done, first of all, we have upgrading works at Richelieu Leisure Centre which has been completed and has cost Rs747,500. We have an upgrading work for the *Fédération des malades et handicapés* at Canal Dayot, Grand River North West, which work has been completed for an amount of Rs708,112.50. We have the supply fixing and installation and testing and commissioning of 10 sets children play equipment for the tune Rs1,156,900 which is ongoing. We have upgrading works at Bon Accueil near the market fair and Riche Mare Family Corner which have been completed for a project amount of Rs655,500. We have upgrading works at Bois Marchand Sub-Station...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Order, please!

**Mr Sinatambou:** ... which has been completed for a project amount of Rs596,505. We have the procurement of 40 sets of children play equipment which is ongoing for a total project amount of Rs3,059,000. We have the construction of a metallic shelter at Case Noyale Social Welfare Centre, which is ongoing for a project value of Rs221,260, and finally the setting up of a health track at Mapou which is ongoing for a total project amount of Rs3,371,512.50.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item *31410.402 - Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Rivers/Mountain Reserves/Islets* concerning a provision of Rs15 m. which we are asked to vote today, can we have some details on this

provision? Can I know from the hon. Minister whether îlot Fourneau in the region of Le Morne is included in this improvement, upgrading project?

**Mr Sinatambou:** So, there is an increase in the amount provided for improvement, upgrading and rehabilitation of rivers, mountain reserves and islets across the island. Like previous years, the Ministry will continue to carry work for cleaning and maintenance of additional rivers and canals for national festivals like the Ganesh Chaturthi and Cavadee in order to allow the public to have a clean place to perform their religious activities. Also, the cleaning of rivers where there is a risk of flooding is carried out normally throughout the year, and an amount of Rs15 m. had been provided in this Budget. The increase is essential to meet rising costs in contract prices. Now, I have a list of 18 sites which are actually under this budget item. If the hon. Member so wishes, I will communicate it to him. As regards îlot Fourneau, I understand that this particular islet falls under the purview of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security.

**The Chairperson:** Last question, hon. Duval! Page 235.

**Mr A. Duval:** Under item *31410.403 - Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Public and Other Sites*, will he give a list of all the sites that have been improved last year and also table it?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I just replied to a question from one of the hon. Members that I will indeed circulate it, but I did also explain. For item *31410.403*, I just replied to a question from another hon. Member, Mr Chairperson, explaining that a substantial amount of money is being used for the purchase of equipment as opposed to the cleaning of sites because my Ministry has been entrusted with the additional task of cleaning the motorway from Plaisance to La Croisette - the right and left hand sides of the motorway. So, it makes that we have spent more money on the purchase of equipment. I listed them just a few minutes ago.

**The Chairperson:** Page 236, hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item *21110.005 - Extra Assistance*, can the hon. Minister give the list of beneficiaries and the amount they are each paid?

**Mr Sinatambou:** So, the extra assistance here is actually made up of provision for the payment of the salaries to 20 employees who are on transfer from the Tourism Authority to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, in particular the Solid Waste Management Division.

**The Chairperson:** Page 237, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** May I ask the hon. Minister one question? Because we have two items, 22070 - *Cleaning Services* and also at the bottom, 31113.009 - *Mare Chicose Landfill Site*.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Page 236?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Page 237. Can the Minister give us the latest situation concerning Mare Chicose, the remaining life expectation of the last cell? Also, I see there is cell 7 Rs30 m. What about the rehabilitation after the end of service of the Mare Chicose landfill site? Is there any planning which is being done to rehabilitate the landfill site?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Let me try to answer this triple barrelled question. Firstly, although the construction of cell 7 has been completed and the works are now under landfilling operations, there still remain some items of work which relate to capital expenditure. Therefore, there is a provision of Rs30 m. for financial year 2017/2018 which provides for successive works which are to be conducted as the landfill progressively reaches its final heights and secondly, for landfill gas works which are to be installed during the landfill operation phase. That is for cell 7.

As for Sub Cell 7A, there is a balance of Rs2 m. for retention money which is provided, but there is no additional provision allocated for this year. There is also now the need to consider the construction of wedge works because the landfill is expected to reach saturation by July 2018. I understand that, with the support of consultants, the best value for money short and medium terms solution to the problem which has been identified is referred to as wedge works. This will optimise the space by landfilling in an existing valley between all cells – one to three and the new cell 7 to form a wedge of waste. It is estimated that the wedge will provide an additional void space of about 500,000 metric tons for landfilling, thereby increasing the lifespan of the landfill by, at least, another 12 months. It is expected that the wedge works will commence in November 2017 to be completed by June 2018. This takes into account any disruption to the works, which may be due to the rainy season. The cost estimate of the wedge works is Rs75 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 22070.001 - *Public beaches*, can the hon. Minister tell us who are those contractors who have got those contracts?

**Mr Sinatambou:** So, provision is here made for payment to contractors for cleaning and maintaining our main beaches, popular beaches, and toilet blocks across the island. This also includes payment of time to staff of in-house Field Services Unit. Now, let me just have the list. As the House is aware, we have 124 proclaimed beaches, out of which 56 beaches and 11 toilet blocks are serviced in-house by the Field Services Unit. It is the personnel employed by the Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands, but which does the job for my Ministry regarding the cleaning of beaches.

As for the rest of the money which covers contracts for the cleaning services for the period July 2017 to June 2018, I can see that we have nine lots. Would you prefer me to circulate it?

*(Interruptions)*

It is better to circulate than to read them out. It's quite a long page. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 26313.003 – *Extra Budgetary Units Beach Authority*, we can see that there is an increase from Rs28 m. to Rs35 m. May we have some more details and clarifications on that item?

**Mr Sinatambou:** This is, in fact, a recurrent grant to the Beach Authority to provide for the payment of its recurrent expenditure, salaries, allowances, travelling, rent, postage *et cetera*. Indeed, one will appreciate that a 20 per cent increase means that they are going to do more work.

**The Chairperson:** Page 238, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 238, about this hazardous waste storage facility at La Chaumière, can the hon. Minister at least give us an idea where matters stand? Recently, there has been a fire, which is in our Constituencies No. 19 and 20. Can we know where matters stand concerning the implementation of this hazardous waste storage facility at La Chaumière?

*(Interruptions)*

I have not yet finished, hon. Minister. Whether this transfer station also has been damaged and whether the transfer station is operational at La Chaumière.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Let me say that this item 31113 regarding the hazardous waste storage facility at La Chaumière has nothing to do, I think, with the fire which started at the transfer station. The hazardous waste storage facility, as the name says, is for the storage of hazardous waste, and the contract for the construction of that interim storage facility for hazardous waste was awarded to Rehm Grinaker for the total sum of Rs229,391,999.90. Work has been completed in July 2016. An amount of retention money upon submission of final certified certificate of works completed remains to be paid, which explains the Rs1 m. there.

Then, there is going to be an operator. I understand that there was a tender exercise before my being appointed Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development and that it is a Greek company which won the tender to operate the hazardous waste storage facility at La Chaumière.

As regards the consequences of the fire at La Chaumière Transfer Station, I am awaiting a report and I can share the report with the hon. Member.

**The Chairperson:** Page 239, hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to item 28222.025 - *Transfers of Households, Compensation for the Relocation of Inhabitants of Quatre Soeurs (Landslide)*, may I know where matters stand? Have all of them been relocated?

**Mr Sinatambou:** As per the assessment by a Japanese expert team under the aegis of JICA, the region of Quatre Soeurs has indeed been identified as a site classified as critical. With the worsening of the situation and complaints from the inhabitants of Quatre Soeurs to the effect that considerable cracks were being observed in their houses, a committee comprising of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and my Ministry was requested to look into the problem.

In view of preserving public safety and security of the inhabitants, it has been decided to relocate the 11 families from Quatre Soeurs to Camp Ithier, where the inhabitants would construct new houses.

*(Interruptions)*

Sorry?

(*Interruptions*)

The replacement value of the 11 affected houses has already been estimated. There are 11 families, therefore, who are concerned. Ten out of the 11 families have already signed lease agreements. So, we are indeed doing good progress.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants*, can we know if this item relates to a specific project and are they local or foreign consultants?

**Mr Sinatambou:** I have here for the amount of Rs2,650,000 under item 22120 fees for training, which is Rs650,000, and fees to consultants Rs2 m. The fees for training of Rs650,000 is for a Community Disaster Response Team which has been introduced to help in training community members to be better able to respond to emergency situations in their communities.

Secondly, the item of Rs2 m. for fees for consultants is for the development of a strategic framework and plan in line with the Sendai Framework. It is intended to retain the service of consultants to conduct training workshops on operational management and manning of local emergency operations command.

I think resource persons will be from UNISDR, which is the UN agency for disaster management. They will be, therefore, resource persons from the United Nations organisation and other experts for holding the training workshops for local authorities. That is all I can say for now.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28222.025 - *Compensation for the Relocation of Inhabitants of Quatre Soeurs (Landslide)*, can the hon. Minister tell us where matters stand?

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Sinatambou:** In fact, I just replied to a query from hon. Ramful and...

(*Interruptions*)

There is no need to? Okay, thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, with regard to item *31132.105 – Multi-Hazard Early Warning, Emergency Alert and Advisories System*, we see that the project value is Rs35 m. and that there has been provision for, if you look at the four years, Rs48 m. This means clearly that only Rs2 m. has been spent this year. Can the hon. Minister confirm that only Rs2 m. has been spent this year for that project of Multi-Hazard Early Warning, Emergency Alert and Advisories System?

**Mr Sinatambou:** What I know is that a contract was awarded in November 2016 for consultancy services to a Canadian group. This is for a contract amount of Rs15 m. If the whole amount has not been paid, it is because of the disbursement rate agreed in the contract. 10 per cent of the contract value, Rs1.5 m. plus VAT was disbursed in February 2017 after submission of the inception report. 40 per cent of the contract value, which is Rs4.5 m. plus VAT, ought to be disbursed by the end of June 2017 after validation of the final report and bidding documents from the consulting company.

Then, phase 2 of the project is expected to start in the coming financial year. The House will appreciate that I am particularly not in the business of validating final reports without making sure that they are, first of all, valid and acceptable to the country.

*Vote 13-2 Environment and Sustainable Development (Rs1,436,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 3-1 Meteorological Services was called*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 240 to 242! Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 242, under item *31122.817 - Acquisition of Doppler Weather Radar*, which has been long awaiting, I know it is a donation from the Government of Japan. Can the hon. Minister give the population an idea where matters stand with regard to the construction of the building and the equipment and also when it is supposed to be fully operational? I see that it is spread over another two financial years.

**Mr Sinatambou:** I thank the hon. Member for this very interesting question because it will allow us to have a much clearer view of the situation. Now, since this is the last page we are dealing with, I will allow myself to be a little bit more comprehensive.

*(Interruptions)*

No, it is not long, but the information is comprehensive. It has to be recalled, Mr Chairperson, that the Grant Agreement was signed on 10 June 2013 between the Government of Mauritius and the Japan International Corporation Agency. However, the reality is that nothing happened for quite some time. Now, what I know is that there has been a first amendment to that Grant Agreement on 13 December 2013, where there was a change in the grant amount, from JPY1.059 B. to ZAR150 million. Then, there was a second amendment to the Grant Agreement on 25 November 2015, and this time, the reason for the amendment was that the period of the grant from Japan was extended from 30 April 2016 to 30 April 2018. After that, it is on 15 July 2016 only that the signature of contracts between Mauritius and Japan occurred in Tokyo, firstly, for the construction of the Doppler Radar Tower itself and, secondly, for the supply and installation of the radar equipment, including the training of personnel. And thereafter, in mid-September 2016, works finally commenced at Trou aux Cerfs in Curepipe. The project status to date is that 30% of the construction of the building has, at long last, been completed. And 50% of the weather radar equipment has now been completed in Japan. The construction work is expected to be completed by April 2018 for the building and the installation of the equipment of the Doppler Radar System is due for October 2018. In short, we expect the radar to be operational by the end of 2018.

**The Chairperson:** Last question! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We remember that the Doppler Radar project in 2014, the project value, if I am not mistaken, was around Rs400 m. Can the hon. Minister confirm whether there has been a revision in the increase in price and, if so, why?

**Mr Sinatambou:** Well, I cannot say the reason, but what I read is that there was a first amendment to the grant amount already on 13 December 2013, where the grant amount was increased from JPY1.079 B. to JPY1.150 B. Today, the project value is estimated at Rs537 m., out of which the grant from Japan is Rs437 m. and a grant from the Government of Mauritius, including tax refund, is of a sum of Rs100 m.

*Vote 13-3 Meteorological Service (Rs357,000,000) (January-June 2016) was, on question put, agreed to.*

**The Chairperson:** I suspend the sitting for one hour.

*At 9.27 p.m., the sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 10.33 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.*

*Vote 14-1 Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 243! Page 244! Page 245, hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, can we have the list of his advisers and their qualifications?

*(Interruptions)*

*Oui, mais nu bizin conné avek qui sanla nu pe gagn zaffaire !*

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Chairperson, there are three advisers: Mr Choonea, Mr Ramkarrun and Mr Samputh. I can circulate their CVs if the hon. Member wishes to.

**The Chairperson:** Page 246, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*, can the hon. Minister enlighten us with this item, as we can see there is a sum of Rs11.5 m. for the years 2016/2017 and it has increased to Rs14.5 m. for the other year?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Provision is made for the –

- Agricultural Bio-Technology Institute for Rs3 m.;
- Consultancy services for the implementation of the Quality Management System for Mauritius Agricultural Certification Body (MACB) Rs3.5 m., and
- Survey for agricultural State lands and parcel identification number for the surveyed plots.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to the Capital Expenditure, item 31132 - *Acquisition of Equipment* for the value Rs57 m., can the hon. Minister provide some information on that, please?

*(Interruptions)*

*31132!*

**Mr Seeruttun:** Is it acquisition of IT equipment?

**Mr A. Duval:** The one for the project value of Rs57 m.

**Mr Seeruttun:** This is for an e-Government project for the Ministry. Provision is being made for the procurement of IT assets also with the installation of a local area network, mainly at the office at Réduit and also for the deployment of WIFI at the Head Office in Port Louis and also for the computerisation of the Cash Office. These are what are being catered for within that project.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Item 22030 – *Rent*, est-ce qu'on pourrait savoir quels sont les bâtiments et où cela se trouve, s'il vous plaît ?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Provision is made for the rent of the main Ministry building, that is, the one at the Renganaden Seeneevassen Building in Port Louis, the Blendax House and also the Sterling House. These are for the amount provided for. There is also for the rental of parking slots at the Renganaden Seeneevassen Building in Port Louis and Sterling House as well.

**The Chairperson:** Page 247, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Items 28212.030 - *Payment to Planters, Sugar Cane Sustainability Fund* and 28212.034 *SIFB: Compensation for Insurance Premium to Small Planters*, can the Minister inform us how many planters are involved in that scheme?

**Mr Seeruttun:** For the Sugar Cane Sustainability Fund, provision has been made to cater for the payment of the bagasse that is supplied to power producers. This concerns about 15,000 small planters. With regard to the premium to small planters, this is the premium being waived by planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar. This is the contribution from Government to pay for the premium of those categories of planters.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 28213.021 - *Transfers to Non-Financial Public Corporations*

...

**Mr Seeruttun:** Which page?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Page 247.

**The Chairperson:** Page 247. We are going page by page.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Item number?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** *28213.021 - Mauritius Cane Industry Authority.* We can see that there is an amount of Rs70 m. for the years 2016/2017. May we have a breakdown of this amount? We can see that there is an increase for the following financial year. Can we know how this amount will be spent?

**Mr Seeruttun:** This is the contribution from Government to cater for the expenses to be incurred by the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority. This has been created with the merging of several services providing institutions and the contributions from Government is that amount.

*(Interruptions)*

Well, the breakdown is to cater for all the expenditure.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, the expenditure of that institution and for which the Government contributes Rs70 m. in this year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item *28225.001 - Accompanying Measures for Sugar Sector (Derocking)*, there is a project value of Rs3,150,300,000. May we know for the year 2016/2017, out of the Rs305 m., how much was spent, and can the Minister provide more details on this measure?

**Mr Seeruttun:** This is a scheme that was created and put in place in the year 2007 in the reform of the sugar industry to rehabilitate the land of the small planters and from funds received from the European Union to improve the productivity of those lands. So, there was a target to rehabilitate some 12,000 hectares of land.

It has been ongoing from that time and we are reaching the end of that particular scheme now in terms of the target that was set. So far, for the year 2016/2017, the amount already disbursed is Rs250 m.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 28212.030 - *Payment to Planters, Sugar Cane Sustainability Fund*, I take it that the contribution is being made by the CEB. Now I can see that provisions are being made for this financial year, but there is no provision for the next financial year. Now, is there going to be an extension of this Fund for the next financial year?

**Mr Seeruttun:** I am informed that there is a steering committee which has been set up at the level of the Ministry of Public Utilities and discussions are ongoing between all the stakeholders. Once the decision is finalised, Government will decide on the way forward to finance that particular Fund.

**The Chairperson:** Page 248. Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** For agricultural support, can you explain why the amount is coming down please?

**Mr Seeruttun:** What is the question?

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Why is it less than in 2016/17?

**Mr Seeruttun:** The hon. Member will see that this discrepancy is happening in almost all the items with regard to salary related expenditure. For the year 2017/18, what has been done is that the provision made is based on the amount spent for the year 2016/2017 and on the number of employees that were in post in March 2017. If there is need for additional funds, the Ministry of Finance will provide for same.

**The Chairperson:** Can I ask those who are asking questions to be brief and those who are replying also to be brief, please? Pages 249, 250, 251. Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to the provision for general worker, can we know how many general workers were recruited for the last year and can we have a list of their names and addresses?

**The Chairperson:** No, usually, we don't ask these questions.

**Mr Seeruttun:** 274.

**The Chairperson:** Page 252. Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Madam Chairperson, under item 25210.009 - *Fruit Growers (Litchi and Banana)*, I am taking it on this issue of bats. We all know which problem we have been discussing over the past years. Can the Minister inform the House whether a new scheme has been prepared for the coming season for the end of the year, especially with regard to fruits which are being damaged by bats?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Chairperson, the amount that has been provided here, Rs25 m., is to cater for the nets. Nets will be provided to those litchi growers and bags will be provided to the banana growers.

With regard to bats, we have been carrying out some surveys and, based on these, we will look forward a particular scheme to control the bats.

**Mr Bhagwan:** We have been criticised by the international organisation IUCN and local NGOs. So, have they been consulted? Are they on board to discuss the issues?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Yes, Madam Chairperson. We have had discussions with them. They came to Mauritius. They assisted us in the survey and all that. So, we have regular contact with them and we keep them informed about our decision as well.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to item 25210.005 - *Freight Rebate Scheme*, I can see that for the last financial year, a sum of Rs25 m. was budgeted; for this year, only a sum of Rs5 m. has been budgeted. Is it because the scheme is not attractive?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Chairperson, this is now being funded by the Ministry of Finance - what I am told.

**The Chairperson:** Page 253. Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 26323.019 - *Capital Expenditure - (f) Promotion of Macadamia Nut*, we are asked to vote for a provision of Rs15 m. Is a grant?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Which item?

**Mr Jhuboo:** Item 26323.019 - (f) *Promotion of Macadamia Nut.* Is it a grant given to small planters *ou cette dotation concerne-t-elle des mesures d'accompagnement qui vont être proposées aux petits planteurs, et quelles sont ces mesures ?*

**Mr Seeruttun:** This is to cater for the nursery that we are going to set up to produce those seedlings, to be able to provide for all those who are interested to grow that particular plant.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Under item 31112.022 - *Construction of a National Wholesale Market*, this issue again has been discussed. Can the Minister tell us exactly what is the situation? Is it in full swing for construction? Are the operators involved? They have been against some time back. Can the Minister brief us?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Chairperson, this is the problem that has been going on for some years now. We have decided to go away from this project. We have only appointed a consultant to come up with the design of the infrastructure, and I believe the document from the consultant will be available very soon. We will be launching a tender for the construction of this particular wholesale market as soon as we have all the detailed plans.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 31112.040 - *Construction of a Multipurpose Containment Facility (Plant)* where there is a sum of Rs55 m. earmarked, may we have some more details about this item, please?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Yes, Madam Chairperson. This is a project that has been put in place by the Ministry for the quarantine infrastructure. This facility is going to be constructed very soon. I believe that we have already launched tenders and as soon as all the procedures for the tender exercise are completed, that will be materialised.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes. Under item 31113.032 - *Setting up of Quarantine Facilities*, are these the quarantine facilities to be set up at Wooton? If so, when will these be completed?

**Mr Seeruttun:** This is going to be set up for quarantine facilities at the Port at Mer Rouge and which is going to be upgraded for the National Plant and Protection Office of the Ministry.

**The Chairperson:** Page 256, hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 28215.009 - *Transfers to Private Enterprises, Accompanying Measures for the Livestock Sector*, Rs10 m. has been budgeted since 2016/2017 and for the coming years also. Can we know what are these measures for this sector?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Chairperson, this is a scheme that has been put in place by the Ministry to get the small breeders to supply the agro processes for the daily products and there are some upgrading works that have to be done in terms of husbandry system. So, this is the amount that has been catered for to assist those small breeders.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I will be a bit long on animal welfare. Item 26313.110 - *Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare*, Madam Chairperson, the greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated. We all know there is a very serious problem there. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether euthanasia of dogs and cats by MSAW and other public bodies will be legally banned, whether the hon. Minister is satisfied with the activities of MSAW, whether there is a definition for 'dangerous animals', the control of the funds of this organisation and the Animal Control Unit, and whether more NGOs will be involved? Because this is a very delicate issue, the treatment animals are undergoing. I think there is a nationwide solidarity towards animals. Can the hon. Minister give us some further information of his plans, and also how to put order in that organisation?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Chairperson, this problem of stray dogs has been with us for years now and we have been trying to come up with some ways and means to control this problem. Unfortunately, we have not been able to control it as we would have wished. The MSAW, which is an organisation that is supposed to look after the welfare of animals, is being asked to also do the catching of the stray dogs and sometimes to put them to sleep. We feel that it is in contradiction with regard to its mandate as an organisation to look for the welfare of animals and also to do that kind of....

*(Interruptions)*

Not barbaric, but I will say that type of activity. So, we have decided to release the MSAW from that particular activity and at the level of the Ministry, we are going to have an Animal Control Unit to look after all those problems of stray animals.

**The Chairperson:** Page 257, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Item 28225.007 (f), est-ce que l'honorable ministre a fait provision pour le déplacement de ces éleveurs de porcs de Le Bouchon et Camp Carol qui devaient être bougés de là parce qu'ils sont illégaux ?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Oui, Madame la présidente. Il y a un projet de relocaliser les éleveurs parce que quand-même ça pose un problème environnemental et aussi au niveau du voisinage. Donc, des sites ont été identifiés et on cherche les avis des autorités concernées pour pouvoir aller de l'avant avec le projet.

**The Chairperson:** hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Item 31113.041- *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, with regard to *Establishment of Livestock Zones*, there is a provision of Rs50 m. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether the zones where these projects will be implemented have already been identified and can we know where are these areas?

**Mr Seeruttun:** In fact, following the FMD, the disease that hit our cattle last year, we decided to re-launch this sector. In this regard, we have put in place several schemes, and one of those schemes is to come up with this livestock zones. There are several sites which have been identified, and one of those zones is the Melrose Heifer Farm which we are going to put in place.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to 31112.045 - *Construction of New Slaughter House*, can the hon. Minister tell us where it will be? This will be in Wooton?

**Mr Seeruttun:** This is the one which is going to be put in place at Wooton. We have already launched a tender some time back. We had a challenge from one of the bidders. We had to restart again this exercise and we have decided to move forward now with the turnkey

project. So, hopefully we are going to have this project materialise in this coming financial year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 31113.041- *Establishment of Livestock Zones*, may we have some more details about this item?

**Mr Seeruttun:** I have just answered that question.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, the hon. Minister has already answered. Page 259, hon. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 22090 – *Security*, can the hon. Minister give a list of the security providers, and if there are more than one, then the amount paid to them?

**The Chairperson:** In the meantime, we take another question.

**Mr Seeruttun:** If I can have another question in the meantime.

**The Chairperson:** Page 261, hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to the last item 26313.129, we are being asked to vote for provisions for *Vallée d'Osterlog Endemic Garden Foundation* and then on the next page, again we are being asked to vote for the same item. Is there any explanation for that?

**Mr Seeruttun:** The Rs10 m. provided for is to cater for the expenditure of that particular foundation and the one on the other page is to cater for some equipment and machinery to be bought by this particular foundation.

**The Chairperson:** Page 262, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Item 31410.401 - (d) *Implementation of Islet Management Plan*, can the hon. Minister inform the House how many islets are under the jurisdiction of his Ministry, whether a plan has been reviewed, and what arrangement has been made for the control of access on these islets? Under the same item - (e) *Round Island Restoration*, what initiative is being taken especially with regard to control of access to Round Island?

**Mr Seeruttun:** I am informed that there are 16 islets that are under our responsibility and all those islets are for conservation purposes. We have regular visits of our officers to

carry out that restoration exercise and also control about the movement of the public to those islets.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can the list of islets be circulated, please?

**Mr Seeruttun:** The list of those islets! Yes, I think we can circulate that.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Seeruttun:** I am also told that Round Island is a Closed Reserve islet and access is not permitted.

**Mr Jhuboo:** Under item *31410.401 - (a) Removal of Invasive Alien Species*, I believe we received a grant from the UNDP to the tune of Rs35 m. So, concerning the removal of the goyave de chine, is the contract allocated to individuals?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Well, as far I can recall, this project of removing those invasive plants is being carried out by the Department of the National Park and Conservative Service, where they have people on contractual basis that are under their supervision to carry out that exercise.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** I refer to the same item with regard to the pink pigeons. Do we know how many pink pigeons are to be released in this rehabilitation programme?

**Mr Seeruttun:** I can't tell the hon. Member of the number, but I know that tomorrow itself we will be releasing a number of pink pigeons at the Vallée de Ferney.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** At page 262, under item *31113.14 - Landscaping Works within Black River National Park/Bras D'Eau National Park/Public Gardens*, may I ask the hon. Minister if Curepipe Botanical Garden falls under this item?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Chairperson, the Curepipe Botanical Garden is under the responsibility of the Municipal Council of Curepipe. It's not under our responsibility, unfortunately.

*Vote 14-1 Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security (Rs2,592,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 15-1 Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Rs321,000,000) was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 263 to 266! Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. At page 266, item 26313.134 - *Enterprise Mauritius (a) Operating Budget (b) Export Market Development Support (c) Freight Rebate Scheme for Africa (d) Credit Guarantee Insurance Subsidy Scheme for Africa* where huge amounts of money have been budgeted for 2016/17. From all these sums which have been budgeted, may we know how much have been spent and why, for the financial year 2017/18, there is only an amount which has been budgeted for the operating budget and not for the other items?

**Mr Gungah:** I don't have the figures for the amount spent for Enterprise Mauritius, but as announced in the Budget Speech, Enterprise Mauritius together with other institutions will be under one umbrella and financial support will be under the Ministry of Finance. I have the income and expenditures for the period of 2016/17, which is Rs48,545,612.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Under the same item 26313.134 - *Enterprise Mauritius*, can the hon. Minister inform us who is that lucky guy who is the Chairperson of Enterprise Mauritius, his qualifications, and also whether the list of the Board members could be circulated? What is the fees payable to the Chairperson and, on the same count, how many fairs are being planned for Enterprise Mauritius to be carried out during the coming financial year as compared to this financial year?

**Mr Gungah:** Madam Chairperson, the Chairperson of Enterprise Mauritius is Mr Yusuf Salim Mohammed. He is drawing a monthly salary of Rs50,000 and was appointed on 05 March 2015. As far as the number of overseas missions is concerned, I don't have the answer with me. Well, I have the number of fairs, the number of buyers and sellers meetings and contact promotion programme that Enterprise Mauritius organised and participated in 2016/17 and for 2017/18, in total 39 events. They participated in 39 events, that is, buyers and sellers meetings, contact promotion programme and fairs.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, I refer to page 266, item 22120 - *Fees*, where there is a discrepancy of Rs4 m. for this year. Can the hon. Minister just give us a breakdown?

**The Chairperson:** In the meantime, we take another question. Pages 267 to 269. Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** I have a general question with regard to consumer protection. Can we know when the Minister will be coming up with the new Consumer Protection Bill? Is it ready?

**Mr Gungah:** Well, by latest early next year, because most of the work has already been done, but we are still analysing a few things and consultations are still being held.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to page 269, item 31112.442 - *Upgrading of Building - Legal Metrology Services*. May we have some more details about this item?

**Mr Gungah:** With regard to the upgrading of building - Legal Metrology Services, it is for the construction of a garage for vehicles and for lighting, CCTV and alarm system.

*Vote 15-1 Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Rs321,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 16-1 Office of the Solicitor General was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Madam Chairperson, I refer to page 272, item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary of the Attorney General*. Can the Attorney General provide us with a list of all matters where people are suing Government outside for litigation purposes, giving us the details when the cases have been entered into Court, where matters stand as at to date, and the total amount as at to date which Government is liable under litigation of prosecution?

**Mr Yerrigadoo:** There is a specific item later on legal fees where I was going to give the answer, but I can give it now. With regard to the list of all the cases we defend in

Mauritius, I can compile that and circulate, but probably the hon. Member is looking for the arbitration cases; I can give the status very rapidly.

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Attorney General can circulate, but it will take time to do so; you can table it right now.

**Mr Yerrigadoo:** Yes, I'll circulate straightaway.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** I refer to page 274, item 22120.0.32.

**The Chairperson:** We are on page 272!

**Mr A. Duval:** Sorry, I have a question for page 274.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful then!

**Mr Ramful:** Under item 21110, I can see that there are three new posts that have been created. Can we know what are the qualifications required for those posts and what are those posts for and the recruitment as well?

**Mr Yerrigadoo:** In fact, in the last PRB Report, as the hon. Member knows, the Office now has an Office of Parliamentary Counsel as well, and right now, for instance, we are busy drafting the Finance Bill. It is a new position and the scheme of service is still being drafted. These are paralegals and legals which will be in those posts. They will be trained in legal research, drafting, support officers and that kind of thing, and it can also be legal practitioners. But I can circulate once the scheme of service is finalised.

**The Chairperson:** Page 273, page 274 hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Page 274, under item 22120.032 - *Fees for Legal Outsourcing*, there is a huge increase. If he could account for?

**Mr Yerrigadoo:** Rapidly, these are to cater mainly for the arbitration cases. The first case is that of Mr Rawat. This is heard under the aegis of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. Our legal adviser in this is LALIVE SA. Up till to date, an amount of Rs14,745,000 has been paid as fees and expenses, and budgeted for this year is Rs47.8 m.

*(Interruptions)*

I can table all. The second case is - I will table everything.

*(Interruptions)*

I can give you rapidly, Le Morne, it's Paul Reichler of Foley Hoag LLP and Alison Macdonald of Matrix Chambers, all international lawyers. And these lawyers were appointed after a selection exercise for all these cases and they are specialist law firms for each one of them.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, of course.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to item 26313, can we know what is the composition of the Law Reform Commission?

**Mr Yerrigadoo:** The current Chairperson is Mr Abdool Raouf Gulbul. For the members, there is a representative of the Judiciary who is currently the Deputy Master and Registrar, the Solicitor General or his representative who is Mr Reetoo when the Socilitor General is not there, the Director of Public Prosecutions or his representative, more often it is the DPP, the representative of the Mauritius Bar Association is Mrs Narghis Bundhun, Senior Counsel, representative of the Attorney is Mr Gilbert Noel etc., we have a representative for the UUM.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I need only one information. How much is being paid to Mr Gulbul as Chairperson?

**Mr Yerrigadoo:** As per PRB, it is Rs29,925 per month.

*Vote 16-1 Office of the Solicitor-General (Rs334,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 16-2 Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 275, page 276, page 277, yes, hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** This is the third year since 2015 that the Budget of the DPP is now under the control of the Attorney General's Office. Can we know the difference now of the total budget and before it was under his control?

**Mr Yerrigadoo:** Okay. The ODPP functions independently; administratively, it falls under the aegis of the AGO, but the ODPP makes its own representations and it is completely free on its budget. So, there is no - whatever it asks it goes and fights its budget, it is completely independent.

*(Interruptions)*

No, whatever proposals, as any Department would make prior to budget consultations, it makes.

*Vote 16-2 Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (Rs148,300,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 16-3 Office of the Parliamentary Counsel (Rs21,900,000) was called and agreed to.*

*Vote 17-1 Ministry of Youth and Sports was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 279, page 280, hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*, an amount of Rs16,050,000 budgeted for the last financial year and the same amount for the coming years. Can we have some details regarding this item?

**Mr Toussaint:** Madam Chairperson, this pertains to the renting of office space at Citadel Mall for the centralisation of the Ministry CNSF, TFES, CJSOI. Surface area is 24,760 square feet, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> floors at a rate of Rs52.9 per square feet.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigne, page 281!

**Mr Lepoigne:** Merci Madame. Je vois qu'il y aura des recrutements qui vont se faire dans l'année financière. Est-ce que le ministre pourrait donner la chance aux anciens athlètes par rapport à ces postes? Je vois que c'est prévu *Technician (Youth and Sports), General Worker* et ainsi de suite.

**Mr Toussaint:** Je n'ai pas bien compris quel poste.

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Il y a différents postes, *Technician (Youth and Sports)*, il y a aussi *General Worker*, je vois qu'il y a six postes qui sont prévus. Il y a beaucoup d'anciennes gloires qui sont chômeurs actuellement.

**Mr Toussaint:** Madame, nous avons certains jobs comme *technicians*, etc., et c'est bien sûr par la PSC.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Under item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, there is Rs12,500,000, then increased to Rs13 m., and then another increase to Rs13,500,000. May we have the breakdown of this extra assistance, the names and qualifications of the advisers to the Minister as well?

**Mr Toussaint:** Extra Assistance is for payment of salaries to advisers on contract, sessional coaching fees; provision is also made for the recruitment of four Technical Officers in connection with capital projects and 16 Sports *Animateurs*. I have a very long list, Madam.

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Minister can table the list.

**Mr Toussaint:** Yes, thank you.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Page 282, is it?

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam. In fact, I have many questions regarding this page and I will start by the first one. Item 22900.939 - *Indian Ocean Islands Games (IOIG) (a) preparation of athletes*, Rs80 m. budgeted. Can we know how this sum is going to be allocated disciplinewise, and the next one is regarding an amount of Rs8 m. budgeted for the COJI? Can we know here also who are the employees, the names and the respective jobs as well as the salaries. I would like to know also...

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Member, I am sorry to interrupt you. I have said one question at a time and you are taking, at least, four questions! One question at a time!

**Mr Toussaint:** Donc, Madame la presidente, les R 18 millions seront utilisées pour la préparation générale et spécifique de nos athlètes à travers une aide financière aux fédérations

sportives pour les compétitions locales et extérieures, les camps d'entraînement, l'achat des équipements techniques, la préparation physique, le support médical et paramédical, le transport des athlètes.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes. With regard to *26313.094 - Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports*, we see that there is an increase in the budget. May we know for the year 2016/17, how many athletes have benefited from this scheme?

**Mr Toussaint:** Alors, est-ce que la question est juste par rapport au nombre d'athlètes ? Parce que l'honorable Membre a parlé de *increase*. Je ne sais pas ce qu'il veut savoir exactement.

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports, I would like to know the number of athletes that have benefited and why there is an increase of Rs5 m. for the years to come.

**Mr Toussaint:** Donc, Madame la présidente, par rapport à l'augmentation, c'est pour un *new scheme for retired athletes*. Par rapport aux athlètes qui ont bénéficié, la liste est très longue ; je pourrais la faire circuler éventuellement.

**The Chairperson:** Page 283! Hon. Lepoigneur! Well, I have seen for page 283, I move on to page 283, please!

**Mr Lepoigneur :** Sorry, I was on page 282, but my name was...

(*Interruptions*)

I can confirm that! Under item *31113.006 (b)(iii) Curepipe (Design and Tender)* for the swimming pool, *c'est prévu, et puis il n'y a rien les années suivantes avant 2020.*

**Mr Toussaint:** Il y aura un autre budget l'année prochaine.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item *31113.406(k) - Upgrading of stadiums*, can we know the stadiums that will be upgraded?

**Mr Toussaint:** So, upgrading of stadiums: St François Xavier, Anjalay, George V, Germain Comarmond, Quartier Militaire Stadiums.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Leopold!

**Mr Leopold:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item *31113.406 (d) - Camp du Roi Stadium*, why is there no money allocated for the renovation of the sport infrastructure of Camp du Roi despite the coming of COJI?

**Mr Toussaint:** Par rapport à la piste synthétique du stade de Camp du Roi, cela a été déjà complété.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson! Page 283, under item *31113.406 (g) - Upgrading of Sports Infrastructure - Beau Bassin Gymnasium*, Rs6.6 m. was budgeted for 2016/17. Can we know what are the works that have been carried out pertaining to this amount?

**Mr Toussaint:** So, in financial year 2016/17, an amount of Rs6,650 m. was budgeted. The contract was for repairs of floodlights and the attenuation of noise emission from existing extractor fans.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Concerning item *31113.006*, the swimming pool of Curepipe, may the hon. Minister inform us if the place has already been identified? Is it earmarked in the design and tender?

**Mr Toussaint:** Madame la présidente, je suis en train de voir avec le ministère des Terres et du Logement, parce que le ministère a un terrain à Curepipe. La demande au ministère des Terres et du Logement a été faite bien avant le budget.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, Madam Chairperson. Well, Curepipe Swimming Pool again, the Minister said earlier there will be a Budget next year, but he has to be precise about this. We see other swimming pools in Phoenix and Rivière des Anguilles with funds allocated for next year, and the year after that. He has to be honest. If there is just one million in the three years

to come, therefore, no funds will be provided next year; otherwise, it would have been on this.

**Mr Toussaint:** Madam Chairperson, honestly, the Rs1 m. is for the design and tender. For the location of the land, I have just replied, and there will be a Budget next year for starting the works! Do not worry!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson! Under item 31113(a) - *Multi Sports Complexes*, regarding the first one, Port Louis, an initial project value of Rs75 m, can we know where exactly in Port Louis this complex is going to be constructed?

**Mr Toussaint:** Madam Chairperson, it has been established that there is a case for Port Louis as a sports region as defined in the Sports Act 2016 to have a multipurpose complex based on demand for such facilities, the current state of play and the extent of the presence of involvement in the region of other stakeholders like local authorities departments, GO technical consideration, urbanisation and population migration, consultation with Mauritius Olympic Committee and National Federation. *Donc, après avoir fait tout cela, nous allons déterminer le meilleur endroit pour le faire.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 284! Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may we have a break-up of this amount of Rs4 m. please?

**Mr Toussaint:** This pertains to payment of salaries to advisers and contract, sessional coaching fees, duty; provision is also made for the payment of 15 *animateurs*.

**The Chairperson:** Page 285! Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Upgrading of Youth Centres - I do not find the Youth Centre of Mont Roches situated in my constituency, which is in a most deplorable state. Can I know from the Minister whether his officers have ever visited that youth centre since they assumed office? I would advise them, even the Permanent Secretary, to go and visit that youth centre. It is a shame for the Ministry.

**Mr Toussaint:** Madame la présidente, j'ai entamé une visite. J'ai été voir de visu. Donc, nous sommes en train de réfléchir exactement, dépendant aussi de la demande des

habitants. Comme vous le savez, j'ai déjà entamé une série de rencontres à travers les Youth Centres pour aller à la rencontre des jeunes et voir un peu leurs aspirations. Quand on arrivera au Youth Centre de Mont Roches, on verra un peu les aspirations de ces jeunes-là, et à partir de là, on pourra mettre un projet sur pied.

*(Interruptions)*

I will invite you!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you Madam! Under item 31112.007(b) - *Extension of Floreal YC - additional floor*, has a survey already been done and, if yes, when will the project be started?

**Mr Toussaint:** So, an amount for the financial year of Rs3 m. has been earmarked. The aim of the project is to provide for an additional floor to host the Secretariat of Volunteer Mauritius. This place will also be used for training sessions with the Police, first-aid, and so on. *Donc c'est un budget qui a été proposé, et nous allons travailler très bientôt sur...*

*(Interruptions)*

*Pas tracas, to ene brother toi!*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. L'item 31112.407 - *Upgrading of Youth Centres (c) Pointe Jerome Residential Youth Centre*, j'aimerais savoir quels sont les travaux qui vont être entrepris là-bas, et aussi je demande au ministre de bien vouloir voir le centre de jeunesse de Mahebourg qui est dans un état délabré et s'il peut faire le nécessaire. Merci.

**Mr Toussaint:** Madam Chairperson, on 05 June 2017, a contract was awarded for the new toilet block to existing dormitories. Au fait, le problème c'est qu'au niveau de Pointe Jérôme, il y a plusieurs blocs, des dortoirs, et les toilettes sont un peu loin. Ce n'est pas évident le soir pour les filles. Donc, on va mettre des toilettes attenantes comme on dit. Par rapport aux *Youth Centre de Mahebourg*, c'est le même système, c'est-à-dire je fais la tournée, je rencontre un peu les jeunes de la région, je regarde un peu leurs aspirations et à partir de là on peut trouver des solutions.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin, page 285!

**Mr Quirin:** Regarding the *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets, Construction of Youth Centres*, in fact, in our Constituency No. 20, there are the Mont Roches Youth Centre as well as the Barkly Youth Centre that need to be renovated as the hon. Minister is well aware. So, my question is: Can we know why no amount has been budgeted for these two youth centres?

**Mr Toussaint:** Madame la présidente, je viens de répondre pour celui de Mont Roches. Donc, j'ai déjà expliqué à l'honorable membre. Par rapport à Barkly, on a déjà fait des rénovations et il y a aussi des jeux qui ont déjà été donnés aux jeunes de la région, et au fur et à mesure on va apporter d'autres changements nécessaires.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 26313.068 - *National Youth Centre*, can the hon. Minister provide details of the National Youth Council and explain if this is up and running, where do we have antennas of the Council? If it is around Mauritius, where is it found, if it is running, and who is heading it?

**Mr Toussaint:** The National Youth Council which has been set up by the National Youth Council Act of 1992 operates under the aegis of my Ministry. *Alors, il y a trois pages de littérature dessus.*

(*Interruptions*)

Yes!

*Vote 17-1 Ministry of Youth and Sports (Rs732,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 18-1 Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 287, hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Item 22030, there is an excess of nearly 100% for rent. Can the hon. Minister explain this?

**Mr Bholah:** Provision is made for renting of office space. Actually, our office covers an area of 6,265 square feet only. In view of the increased number of staff, we shall need additional space.

*Vote 18-1 Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives (Rs384,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence, please!

*(Interruptions)*

Hon. Thierry Henry, you are interrupting me!

*Vote 19-1 Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 293, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Allowance*, est-ce qu'on peut avoir les détails des *advisers*, leurs noms, leurs qualifications et l'argent attribué ?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** Extra allowance, provision has been made for the payment of salaries to one adviser on information matters and one adviser to hon. Minister. In fact, I do not have the information about the qualifications for the adviser for information matters. We all know who he is, Mr Jean François Cossigny, and the adviser for Minister is Ms Jessica Lemême. I will table their qualifications.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** At page 293, *Internal Control Officer*, may we know why this post is still vacant and when will it be filled?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** Which item, please?

**The Chairperson:** Page 293, which item, hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Madam Chairperson, item 21110 - *Internal Control Officer*.

**The Chairperson:** Internal Control Officer, at the top of the page.

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** It is not provided in the Budget.

**Mr Baboo:** I want to know why this post has not been filled and when will it be filled.

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** It will not be filled this year, that is all.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to item 22030 – *Rent*, the rent is doubling. May we know where the offices are and why the rent is doubling?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** The increase is due to provision made to additional office space for the Ministry in view of the following additional responsibilities –

- (i) the setting up of a full-fledged technical unit with additional permanent staff in connection with the establishment and updating of the database of vulnerable household living in absolute poverty under the SRM Mauritius;
- (ii) there is provision of space for the IT unit which is responsible for the updating and maintenance of the database and the different modules and preparations of the payroll sheets for the different empowerment schemes;
- (iii) there will be a space for the poverty observatory;
- (iv) there will be help, complaint information desk at the level of the Ministry, and
- (v) provision of adequate space for additional staff.

The Ministry is presently located in two buildings, namely level 9 of Air Mauritius Building, 8,100 square feet, and 10<sup>th</sup> floor of Victoria House, 4,210 square feet, accommodating HR and procurement sections.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22900 - *other Goods and Services* of which .946 *Expenses icw Poverty Observatory/Monitoring and Evaluation Unit*, may the hon. Minister give us some more details about this item, please?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** Provision is made for expenses in connection with the operation of the Poverty Observatory. So, the provision of funds are made –

- for operation of the Poverty Observatory;
- setting up of a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit at the level of the Ministry to undertake the monitoring and evaluation of the database of eligible households living in absolute poverty under the SRM, and also
- for monitoring and evaluation of Marshall Plan, social contract and the different empowerment schemes being implemented.

**The Chairperson:** Page 294! Hon. Leopold!

**Mr Leopold:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to item 26323.135 - (a) *Social Housing for Vulnerable Groups*. There is the same item under the Ministry of Housing and

Lands. So, how is the hon. Minister going to harmonize to prevent duplication from his Ministry?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** The provision of funds of Rs115 m. is to meet the following: the cost for ongoing fully concrete housing unit for Rs30 m. and the construction of a new model of housing unit for Rs85 m.

There is an estimated cost of Rs500,000 for houses ranging from 40 to 50 square metres and this will be done hopefully in less than a month in order to cater for the housing units of eligible SRM households having signed the Marshall Plan social contract and before in the different categories.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to item 26323.135 - (a) *Social Housing for Vulnerable Groups*. Can we know where these houses are going to be constructed, if the sites have already been identified, of course?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** In fact, it is in different places and there are families who are landowners and living in deplorable conditions and there are families living in asbestos housing units. There are squatters relocated by the Ministry of Housing and Lands. For example, sugar planters, Pointe aux Sables and Beaux Songes and there are others also.

(*Interruptions*)

I will table it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to item 27210.014 - (b) *Educational Support*, where there is an amount of Rs188 m. Can the hon. Minister say whether it will be a cash grant or *matériel scolaire*?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** There are a few pages of explanation. If the hon. Member wishes so, I can read them.

(*Interruptions*)

I can circulate.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to item 26313.135 - (b) *Upgrading of living environment in deprived regions*. Can we know what are the deprived regions that are being targeted by the Government?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** There are new items included in the Budget. A fund of Rs3 m. is provided for the upgrading of the living environment and maintenance of deprived regions across the island by the multipurpose unit of the Foundation.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Sous le même item 26323.135 - (a) *Social Housing for Vulnerable Groups*, un budget de R 85 millions a été voté pour l'année 2016/17. J'aimerais savoir combien de maisons ont été construites. Je vois que pour cette année-ci une somme de R 115 millions a été votée. J'aimerais savoir où seront construites ces maisons ?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** It's everywhere, scattered around the island because these are people who are land owners like I explained earlier. If the hon. Member wants to have a list, I can circulate it.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Henry, not from a sitting position! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** I refer to item 28222.017 - *New Decent Shelters Programme (Marshall Plan Against Poverty)*. We see a one-off payment of Rs200 m. May we know why is it a one-off, first of all? And, secondly, how many decent houses are supposed to be constructed from that and if the hon. Minister can also give the areas?

**Mr Wong Yen Cheong:** In fact, this sum has been transferred to the Ministry of Housing and Lands for the construction of social housing units which are long overdue. These are *longère tôle/blanc*, Baie du Tombeau. As I said, the fund has been transferred to the Ministry of Housing and Lands, which will be doing it.

*Vote 19-1 Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment (Rs752,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 20-1 Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 297 to 302!

*Vote 20-1 Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare (Rs473, 000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 20-2 Social Welfare and Community was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 303 to 304! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you. I refer to item 26313.085 - *Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund*. First of all, this access has been refused to us now.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes! It's not the first time I'm saying it. Please, look into it. Secondly, with regard to the activities organised by these centres in Curepipe, if the hon. Minister can review its management because right now, as I understand it....

**The Chairperson:** Ask your question, hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** People are complaining that it's not well organised at the moment. Will the hon. Minister please look into it?

**Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo:** With regard to the first question, the hon. Member did raise the issue earlier. Well, those centres are not allocated for political activities. With regard to the second issue raised, all community centres and social welfare centres around the island are well managed. Many activities are being carried out there.

*Vote 20-2 Social Welfare and Community (Rs344,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 21-1 Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 306 to 308! Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to page 308, under item 26 – *Grants*. There is an extra budgetary sum of Rs44 m. Now, the decision that this Government

took to venture into aquaculture has caused a major outcry among the population and the public. My question to the Minister is whether, in this Rs44 m., provision is made by the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute to carry out a study on the adverse impact of aquaculture on our local ecosystem.

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Chairperson, this question of aquaculture, before we issue any certificate to any person, we have to get the clearance from the MOI about the study, whether we can go ahead with the project or not. The clearance is given by MOI and they do all the exercise, all the study before giving any clearance. And then, it is our turn at the Ministry to give the green light.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, coming back to the same item 26313.040 - *Mauritius Oceanic Institute*, can the hon. Minister tell us, out of the Rs49 m., if a study has been undertaken - same subject aquaculture, fish farming - first before going into that aquaculture and, if yes, can he table that study?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Yes, Madam Chairperson, I will table it. I will circulate the answer.

**The Chairperson:** Page 309, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22090.007 - *Security of which Maritime Communications Services*, where we can see there is an increase of Rs23,050,000 for the financial year, may we have some details about it?

**Mr Koonjoo:** What is the item no., please?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 22090.007.

**Mr Koonjoo:** Can you repeat the question, please?

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Can we have details about this item? We can see that the sum for the financial year 2017/2018 has increased to Rs1 m. May we have some details about it?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Yes, I will circulate the reply.

**The Chairperson:** Page 309, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Sous l'item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, est-ce qu'on peut avoir les détails de qui sont ces *advisers* et quelles sont les sommes allouées?

**Mr Koonjoo:** We have got Mr Shakeel Burthoo Barah, Mr Raju Ramasawmy and Mr Swaley. He has left.

(*Interruptions*)

One of them has left. Mr Sok Appadu, Mr Burthoo Barah, Mr Ramasawmy, I said, and Mr Swaley. The fourth I will circulate.

**The Chairperson:** Page 310, hon. Ramful! No question! Page 311, hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 22120, can the hon. Minister tell us what are these fees?

**The Chairperson:** Can the officers provide the information if they have, please!

**Mr Koonjoo:** Which item, please?

(*Interruptions*)

Yes. Fees for training. It is training for skippers. 26 candidates enrolled for the 22 weeks training course for skippers to operate fishing boats 12 metres or above, but less than 24 metres in length. The course ended in February 2017.

*Vote 21-1 Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping (Rs324,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 21-2 Fisheries was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 312, page 313! Page 314, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Item 28212.002 - *Transfer to Households, Compensation to Net Fishermen*. Après la catastrophe qu'il y a eu de MV Benita à Le Bouchon, jusqu'à présent ces pêcheurs n'ont pas encore eu leur compensation. Je demanderai à l'honorable ministre quand est-ce qu'ils vont toucher leur compensation.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Silence, please!

**Mr Koonjoo:** You are talking about...

(*Interruptions*)

...MV Benita. Part of the compensation, they have already received and they have asked for more. The request has been submitted to the company concerned and probably they will get it in the coming weeks.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, item 22900.030 - *Safety and Security Equipment for Fishers*. Can the hon. Minister provide the list of equipment purchased for the past financial year and explain why it is decreasing? And secondly...

**The Chairperson:** No, one by one!

**Mr A. Duval:** But it is on the same, Madam Chairperson!

**The Chairperson:** One by one! The hon. Member is confusing the hon. Minister!

**Mr A. Duval:** I will not get another one.

**The Chairperson:** One by one, please!

**Mr Koonjoo:** I'll give the answer. First of all, why it is decreasing! It is decreasing because of the Marine Ranching Project of Rs12.5 m. completed and release of retention money will be effected in 2017/2018.

**The Chairperson:** Page 315, hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Very simple question, Madam Chairperson! Item 31121.803 - *Transport Equipment, Acquisition of Patrol Vessels (Dinghies)* where there is sum of Rs8,200,000. May I know how many dinghies have been bought with this?

(*Interruptions*)

Shall I repeat?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Yes, please!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 31121.803 - *Transport Equipment, Acquisition of Patrol Vessels (Dinghies)*. I can see that the project value is Rs8,200,000. May I know how many dinghies will be bought? Can I have some details about this?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Chairperson, the provision is made for the acquisition of two lorries; one for AFRC...

(*Interruptions*)

Dinghies! The answer is 8.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. A. Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, thank you Madam Chairperson. Item 31121.999-*Acquisition of Other Transport Equipment (Multi-Purpose Support Vessel-Fisheries)*, Rs57 m., can I know how many vessels are being purchased, what types of vessel and where these vessels will be posted?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Chairperson, provision is made for the acquisition of multi-purpose vessels from Australia, under the Government-to-Government agreement, to support the research and training activities of MOI, FiTech and MMPA. The project value is about Rs60 m. with a grant of Rs20 m. from Australia.

(*Interruptions*)

Only one vessel, it is a multi-purpose.

*Vote 21-2 Fisheries (Rs374,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 22-1 Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training (Rs751,000,000) was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 317,318, 319. Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Under item 21110.010 - *Service to Mauritius Programme*, can the hon. Minister tell us how many people are benefiting from the Service to Mauritius Programme, and can he explain why there is no budget for the years to come?

**Mr Callichurn:** The Service to Mauritius Programme has been transferred to the Ministry of Finance who is catering for the salaries.

(*Interruptions*)

I don't have the figure.

**The Chairperson:** Page 320, hon. Baboo!

(*Interruptions*)

No? Pages 321,322,323. Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Rampul:** The last item 28212.028 - *Employability Enhancement Programme*, can I have the number of applicants and the number of persons who have been retained under those programmes?

**Mr Callichurn:** Which programme?

**Mr Rampul:** *Employability Enhancement Programme*, all the five programmes; (a) *Youth Employment Programme* (b) *Women Back to Work Programme* (c) *ICT Training Scheme* (d) *Dual Training Programme* and (e) *Trainee Engineer Scheme* – the number of applicants who have been retained under these programmes.

**Mr Callichurn:** Okay. Under the Youth Employment Programme, as at May 2017, there were 28,702 youth registered and 17,497 placed in enterprises, whereas there have been 1,150 trainees placed in the public sector. Women Back to Work Programme, the number of women placed is 594. ICT Training Scheme is being catered for under the Youth Employment Programme whereas for the Dual Training Programme 128 trainees have been placed.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Yes. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 22900.903 - *Awareness Campaign*, Rs6 m. was budgeted for the last financial year. Can we know what it's all about this awareness campaign?

**Mr Callichurn:** Yes, it is payment for the awareness campaign and sensitisation campaign to MBC for TV and radio programmes to disseminate information on existing vacancies and to sensitise people on the world of work, while promoting the services provided by my Ministry.

(*Interruptions*)

Period? The agreement was signed between my Ministry and the MBC in March 2017.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes. Under item 28212.028 - *Employability Enhancement (a) Youth Employment Programme*, I see there is an amount of Rs200 m. for the past financial year and Rs250 m. for the years to come. Is the Minister aware that there is a delay in payment and can he look into it for the repayment of Youth Employment Programme to employers?

**Mr Callichurn:** Yes, the hon. Member is right. Actually, we are looking into the problem and we should come with a solution soon.

*Vote 22-1 Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training (Rs751,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 23-1 Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands (Rs4,282,000,000) was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 326, 327. Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci madame la présidente, item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, page 327. Pouvons-nous avoir des détails de qui sont ces *advisers*, leurs noms et la somme allouée, s'il vous plaît ?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, my adviser on information matters is Mrs Marie Melissa Seebaluck.

*(Interruptions)*

The sum is Rs59,700. My senior adviser on policy matters is Mrs Parbotia, Rs64,800. The adviser on public relation matters receives Rs21,475, and the Land Use and Planning Executive attached to the Ministry is Mr Hemu, Rs70,450.

**The Chairperson:** Page 328, hon. Adrien Duval.

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 31121 - *Transport Equipment*, is the Minister aware that for the Municipality of Curepipe, there are a number of vehicles that are not currently in working condition? Can he look into it, please?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, yes, I am aware that in several local authorities we have got the same issue. So, I will look into the matter.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 31122.814 - *Acquisition of Air Conditioning Equipment*, can we have details about this item?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, I will circulate this information.

**The Chairperson:** Page 329. Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (c) Landslide Management at Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel*, from an initial project of Rs23 m., only Rs2 m. has been budgeted for 2017/18; can we have some details regarding this amount how it is being spent?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Yes, Madam Chairperson, with regard to landslide management at Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel, in order to prevent the recurrence of landslide at Hermitage, technical committees were held at the level of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Centre and site visits effected on several occasions to finalise countermeasure works submitted by the Landslide Management Unit of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure. It includes measures to stabilise the slope and minimise the risk of mudflow, construction of reinforced concrete retaining walls along Maxim Boodhoo Street, Société Hermitage and construction of drains, the proposed retaining wall to divert surface run-off. So, these works are to be carried out.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Madam. Item 22120, can we know what these fees are?

**Mr Jhugroo:** On which page, please?

**The Chairperson:** Page 329, item 22120 - *Fees*.

**Mr Jhugroo:** With regard to the question asked by hon. Quirin, the Rs2 m. is for consultancy.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, but has the hon. Minister replied to hon. Baboo?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, it is fees payable to members of the Departmental Tender Committee. The Chairperson is the Deputy Permanent Secretary and the members are Manager Financial Operations and Manager Procurement and Supply, and the Secretary is an

Office Management Assistant and the Bid Evaluation Committee selected among the staff of the Ministry and sometimes from other Ministries, departments and training of staff locally.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you. On the same page 329, item 26322.030 – (a) *Construction of Drains*, can we have a list, first of all, of the drains constructed in years 2016/2017 and can the hon. Minister tell us how much of the Rs391 m. was spent for 2016/2017 on construction of drains?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, if you have got a long list, you can circulate the list.

(*Interruptions*)

The list I have said.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Yes, I will compile and it will be circulated, and I have been informed that Rs300 m. will be used up to the end of June.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh, page 330.

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. There is an item on page 330, (h) *Renovation of the Town Hall of Curepipe*. We can see the project value is Rs110 m. Can the hon. Minister give us details on how this project will be funded, as we can see that no sum has been earmarked for 2016/17 and 2017/18?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, with regard to the renovation of the Town Hall of Curepipe, the quotation exercise for consultancy service for the repairs of the Town Hall building was launched in October 2015.

Following evaluation, Desai and Associates Ltd was awarded the contract, which was signed in July 2016. In September 2016, the consultant submitted an estimated cost of Rs134,987,000 inclusive of VAT for the repairs and renovation of the Town Hall.

The proposed roof structure is under construction; however, we should go again for Tec Singles or another materials be used, which could extend its lifetime. This project would be implemented under the Indian financial assistance for which consultative meetings with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development have already started.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With regard to the construction of the Plaine Magnien market fair and the market fair at Mahebourg, I can see that these two projects will last for about three years. In the meantime, has the Minister found a site for the temporary relocation of the stallholders and, if so, can I be informed of the site?

**Mr Jhugroo:** With regard to the site for the market fair of Mahebourg, it has already been identified, and this project will be implemented under the Indian financial assistance.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** The location?

**Mr Ramful:** The temporary site for the relocation of the stallholders pending the completion of these two projects.

**Mr Jhugroo:** They have already been relocated since the year 2010, Mahebourg!

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, back to the renovation of the Town Hall of Curepipe, as the hon. Minister has said, in 2016...

**Mr Jhugroo:** Just to clarify, hon. Ramful, they were relocated in the year 2010. The hon. Member is not aware about what is going on in his own constituency! But now this Government is coming with a project to have a new market fair. They were already relocated.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr A. Duval:** Well, the hon. Minister is interrupting me!

**Mr Jhugroo:** You can ask my friend, hon. Henry!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to the renovation of the Town Hall, in 2016 the hon. Minister said that everything was signed. The Municipality was supposed to go for a loan to start with the project - it would have already started. Why has the decision been changed now? Now, we have to wait for 2018 to have the first *tranche* of the finance, which is Rs15

m., then another year to get Rs55 m., and the rest we do not know. So, why has the decision been changed and now *les Curepiens vont devoir attendre encore trois ou quatre ans pour avoir leur Town Hall?*

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madame la présidente, c'est un projet daté de très, très longtemps. Nous avons un Premier ministre responsable, un gouvernement responsable. Ce projet va être réalisé et le projet a déjà été mentionné pendant le discours de notre Premier ministre et ministre des Finances.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. At page 330, (g) *Renovation of Plaza Theatre at Rose Hill*, from an initial project value of Rs324 m., I see that for 2017/18, nothing has been budgeted. Can we know why?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, the information that I have is the consultancy will be from the Lotto Fund.

*Vote 23-1 Local Government and Outer Islands (Rs4,282,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 23-2 Fire Services was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 331 to 332! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, with regard to item 21110, we see that there is going to be a recruitment of, at least, 100 firemen. In fact, 110 staff in the Fire Services. Can we know when these posts will be filled?

**The Chairperson:** Can we have another question in the meantime? Page 333! Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** In regard to the construction of the Rose Belle Fire Station, may we know where matters stand? The Minister is looking at the back!

**The Chairperson:** Which item is that hon. Ramful?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, with regard...

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful, ask your question!

**Mr Ramful:** I refer to item *31112.024 - Construction of Fire Stations – (a) Rose Belle*. Can I be informed of the status of this project?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Answering to hon. Adrien Duval, it will be the DFSC which will recruit after the Budget's approval through advertisement of vacancies. Now, with regard to the question asked by hon. Ramful with regard to the new Rose Belle Fire Station, the construction is planned to start in a few weeks' time. It will provide additional fire and emergency cover to the localities in the districts of Savanne and Grand Port and will also provide assistance to Curepipe, Mahebourg and St Aubin Fire Stations, which will also function as a Regional Fire Prevention Office and Committee Emergency Preparedness Education Centre. Procurement method of bid e-procurement through the Central Procurement Board: closing date of submission of bids 03 April 2017 and extended to 19 April 2017. Date and place of opening bids: 21 April 2017 at the Central Procurement Board; number of bids received by closing date was seven; contract awarded on 13 June 2017 to Kisten Enterprise Co Ltd for a contract price of Rs55.2 m. inclusive of VAT, and contingency contract period for 140 days after start of work.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to page 333, under item *31121.801 - Acquisition of Vehicles* where there is a provision of Rs200 m. Since mention is made that this provision will be financed under the Line of Credit from India, are there any conditions attached to this Line of Credit? Can we know from the hon. Minister whether we will have to acquire these vehicles from the Indian suppliers?

**The Chairperson:** In the meantime, we will take a question from hon. Adrien Duval.

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Chairperson, with regard to item *31122.403 - Acquisition of Fire Fighting and Rescue Equipment, (b) Others*, which I presume are equipment for fire fighters to wear, may we have a list of the equipment purchased for this year? And may we also be given the reason why the budget is drastically reduced for the years to come?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Chairperson, I have been informed that the conditions under the Line of Credit cannot be disclosed.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon Adrien Duval says he did not get his reply. I thought the hon. Minister had replied.

**Mr A. Duval:** I'll ask again. With regard to the *Acquisition of Fire Fighting and Rescue Equipment, (b) Others* under heading 803, we see that Rs33 m. was spent supposedly this year. Can we have details on what it was spent on exactly and also why it has been reduced drastically in the following years? It is reduced to Rs3 m.

**Mr Jhugroo:** I have been informed by the Chief Fire Officer that one high volume pump will be delivered in October of this year.

*Vote 23-2 Fire Services (Rs570,000,000) (January-June 2017) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 24-1 Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (Rs634,000,000) (January-June 2017) was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Pages 334 to 335! Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I refer to item 21110.005 – *Extra Assistance*. Can the hon. Minister tell us more about this Extra Assistance?

**Mr Boissézon:** Madam Chairperson, I have a Senior Adviser on Human Resource and Administrative Matters, Mrs N. Ramiad; an Adviser on Information Matters, Mr Arvind Mootoocurpen. Does the hon. Member want to know about their salaries too? Mrs Ramiad will earn Rs43,625 monthly and Mr Mootoocurpen Rs58,000 monthly.

**The Chairperson:** Page 336! Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** I refer to page 336 with regard to Capital Expenditure, under item 31132.401 - *Upgrading of ICT Infrastructure*, where there is a massive project of Rs413 m. Can the hon. Minister give the details of this project and when it will be completed, and the reasons why we are having it?

**Mr Boissézon:** Madam Chairperson, in fact, it is a project for the HRMIS, which comprises 5 Oracle-based modules, namely Human Resource, Payroll, Self-Service, Learning Management, and Performance Management. The initial project was for Rs237 m., but was increased to Rs413.54 m. The increase in the project value includes –

- payment for maintenance agreement for hardware and software for the next three years;
- performance of overtime by public officers for data capture;
- service of 60 interns of NEF for data input;
- provision for IT equipment for the setting up of an IT laboratory at the Ministry to provide training to users, and
- data centre facilities for hosting of HRMIS.

To date, we have Rs294,000 which have been incurred for the project, including Rs36.7 m. for the present year, and next year the expenditure will amount to Rs25,925,677 representing payment for implementation services and support for the development of the four main modules of the software solution, Rs29 m. representing payment for technical support system and Rs5 m. for training and other expenses.

**The Chairperson:** Can I ask Ministers to be brief in their reply? Hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Sous l'item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, pourraut-on savoir qui est le contracteur, s'il vous plaît ?

**Mr Boissézon:** Quelle page?

**Mr Henry:** Page 336, item 22070. Qui est le contracteur?

**The Chairperson:** Only the name of the contractor, nothing more.

**Mr Boissézon:** It is Express Cleaning Services Ltd.

**The Chairperson:** Page 337, hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Under item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*, can we know from the hon. Minister what are the studies and surveys and whether there is any consultant who has been appointed and, if so, who is he?

**Mr Boissézon:** Provision is made to meet the cost of customer satisfaction service and other studies in view to enhancing service delivery in Ministries and Departments.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22120.008 - *Fees paid to Consultants*, the amount budgeted for 2017/2018 is twice the amount that was budgeted for 2016/2017. Can we know why there is such an increase?

**Mr Boissézon:** Nous avons budgétisé -

- fees to assessors - Rs800,000;
- fees for training - Rs1 m.;
- fees to consultant - Rs13,100,000;
- Fees to assessors - provision is made to meet payment to Mauritius Standard Bureau in connection with ISO Certification of Ministries and Departments;
- Fees for training - provision is made to meet expenses in terms of training in connection with improvement of counter service and ISO Certification of Ministries and Departments;
- Fees to consultant - Rs13,100,000; provision is made to meet expenses for consultancy service ...

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, if the list is long, you better circulate the list instead of reading it. Table the list! Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultant*, we are being asked to vote a provision of Rs13 m. ...

**The Chairperson:** It is the same question.

**Mr Boissézon:** I just explained.

**Mr Ramful:** Can we have the names of the consultants?

**The Chairperson:** The document has been tabled.

**Mr Boissézon:** It is Mauritius Standards Bureau.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Another simple question, Madam Chairperson. Item 22900.950 - *Other Goods and Services, Improvement of Counter Services*, we can see there is a sum of Rs4.3 m which has been earmarked. What are the counter services, please?

**Mr Boissézon:** It is for the improvement of Counter Customer Service.

(*Interruptions*)

We are doing it ourselves.

**The Chairperson:** All counter!

**Mr Boissézon:** It is for improvement of counter service.

**The Chairperson:** Page 338, Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 28213.008 - *Civil Service College*, it looks like it would be terminated or there is no provision for the years to come or will it be transferred under something else. Can the hon. Minister explain exactly what is going on?

**Mr Boissézon:** In fact, there was a grant of Rs5 m. to the Civil Service College. This year, since the College has enough fund, we do not have to give them a grant.

**The Chairperson:** Page 340, hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22900.934 - *Enhancement of Work Environment in the Civil Service*, can the hon. Minister tell us why the estimates value for 2017 is lower than that of 2016?

**Mr Boissézon:** We have to ask Departments and Ministries to send projects, but in the past, they could not send projects for the budgeted amount. So, it has been reduced to Rs8.3 m. for this year.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Under the same item, *Enhancement of Work Environment in the Civil Service*, can we have details of what works are undergone?

**Mr Boissézon:** It is a long list. I will table it.

*Vote 24-1 Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (Rs634,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 25-1 Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 341! Page 342, hon. Henry!

**Mr Henry:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, peut-on savoir quels sont les *advisers*, leurs noms et la somme allouée ?

**Mr Sesungkur:** Madam Chairperson, my Ministry has not got any advisers yet, but this is a budget which provides for future appointment in the coming weeks and months.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Under the same item, does that mean then that the Minister does not have any advisers appointed?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Please, no crosstalking! Hon. Baboo!

**Mr Baboo:** Item 22120, can we know what are the fees?

**Mr Sesungkur:** These are fees for consultants in relation to capacity building and training.

**The Chairperson:** Page 343! Page 344, hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Item 22120 – *Fees*, it was Rs800,000 before and now its Rs4.5 m. Can I know why?

**The Chairperson:** The bottom of the page.

**Mr Sesungkur:** Which page?

**The Chairperson:** Page 344.

**Mr Sesungkur:** So, what I can see here is that, last year, provision was made for a higher amount for Fraud Act Law Review Financial Crime, but this year this has been reviewed because these projects are no more there.

(*Interruptions*)

It has not increased.

**The Chairperson:** We are on page 344.

**Mr Sesungkur:** No, I cannot see the explanation; I suppose this is a budgetary provision.

**The Chairperson:** Page 345, hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** Under item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants*, I can see that an amount of Rs12 m. was budgeted for last year. May I know the name of the consultants, the purpose for which their services were retained and the fees payable to each of them?

**Mr Sesungkur:** Again, there was a provision last year, but this was not used. So, that is why the budget has been reviewed and the consultants have not been recruited yet.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes. Under item 26 – *Grants*, 26313.140 - *Integrity Reporting Services Agency*, may we know the composition of the agency, Director/Chairman, the fees, the remuneration drawn, the number of cases investigated and disposed of for financial year 2016/2017?

**Mr Sesungkur:** The Board Members are –

1. Lord Philips;
2. Judge Domah, and
3. Mr Phokeer.

I will circulate the number of cases and the individual fees. There are 20 cases.

(*Interruptions*)

Not yet.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** The last item 22900.943 - *Financial Crime Commission*, I can see an amount of Rs10 m. has been earmarked. Is this project still on the Financial Crime Commission?

**Mr Sesungkur:** Yes, Government is still envisaging to progress with this.

*Vote 25-1 Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms (Rs325,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 26-1 Centrally Managed Expenses of Government (Rs2,168,000, 000) was called and agreed to.*

*Vote 27-1 Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 348, page 349. Hon. Lepoigneur!

**Mr Lepoigneur:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 31121.801 - *Acquisition of Vehicles*, can we know which vehicle will be purchased for Rs100 m., its make, model and use?

**The Prime Minister:** The provision is made for the acquisition of official cars for senior civil servants and eligible Members of the National Assembly. For the year 2016/17, a financial clearance of Rs91.4 m. has been provided for the acquisition of 50 cars. I do not have the makes of the vehicles, but for those that have been acquired I can circulate.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Under item 28217.005 (a) *Refund Scheme for recycling of PET bottles*, can we have some information regarding this scheme?

**The Prime Minister:** For this scheme, the refund is made at the rate of Rs5 per kilo on export or recycling of the PET bottles exceeding 1,000 kilos yearly and, for financial year 2016/17, refund is expected to be around Rs6 m., that is, on 1,200 kilos. The export recycling of PET bottles has been, in fact, lower than expected due to lower petroleum price on the international market and, as at date, Rs4.8 m. has already been refunded.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** With regard to item 28213.024 - *Expenses icw Special Purpose Vehicles*, can we have some details concerning those expenses?

**The Prime Minister:** Provision was made for payment of management fee and commitment fee by the Special Purpose Vehicles for the implementation of the projects under the additional financial assistance of USD 500 from India. It also provides for meeting the initial operating cost of such SPVs and, of course, as I have said in my Budget Speech, they are for the Metro Express Ltd, the Landscope Ltd, the National Housing Development Company Ltd and for SPVs; as the Deputy Prime Minister has said, for the energy sector which has already been set up or that will be set up and for water projects that will be set up.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ms Sewocksingh!

**Ms Sewocksingh:** Item 28225.010 - *Transfers to Private Enterprises Film Incentive Framework*, we can see that there is a sum of Rs75 m. being earmarked for 2016 and it has been increased to Rs130 m. for 2017. Can the hon. Prime Minister give us some details and why there is an increase about this item, please?

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, I must say that this scheme is really doing well because it is attracting a number of producers to come and shoot in Mauritius. I have a list of films that have already been shot, and another list also of films that are expected to be shot in 2017. I must point out that one of them would be 'Serenity', which is worldwide known, and I will circulate the list.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** With regard to item 28213.023, *Air Mauritius – Contribution icw Africa/Asia Air Corridor Project*, may we know how many passengers have used that corridor, and if the hon. Prime Minister can tell us for Air Mauritius the revenues directly generated by this project?

**The Prime Minister:** Well, I must say that this is again another success because it is doing very well. As at 31 May 2017, Rs65 m. has been spent, but I will get the figures from Air Mauritius. I know that the number of passengers have been increasing on a monthly basis so much so that Air Mauritius is contemplating of putting another aircraft to service the Singapore-Mauritius route. I do not have the figures with me, but I will circulate it.

**The Chairperson:** Page 350, hon. Adrien Duval!

**Mr A. Duval:** Item 32145.200 - *Development Bank of Mauritius icw setting up of SME Parks*, may we have a list of the SME Parks and the completion?

**The Prime Minister:** Well, DBM is, in fact, currently converting two industrial building blocks at Coromandel and the project is expected to be completed by October 2017. Madam Chairperson, with regard to the two sites that had been mentioned in the previous Budget, that is, Vuillemin and Plaine Magnien, it is unfortunate, I must say. We were expecting that they would have been completed during this year, but I am told that for some practical problems. Now that this has been cleared, therefore, action has already been taken so that we hope now that the design of the buildings is being presently finalised and I am convinced that throughout this financial year, they will be set up.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. With regard to item 32155.063 - *Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd*, Rs900 m. is budgeted for 2017/2018. Can we have some details regarding this item?

**The Prime Minister:** Details with regard to?

**Mr Quirin:** Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd.

**The Prime Minister:** Well, this is the project that will include the construction of an aquatic centre of olympic standard, a football stadium of international standard and a gymnasium.

*(Interruptions)*

At Côte d'Or, yes!

*Vote 27-1 Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government (Rs7,129,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vote 28-1 Contingencies and Reserves (Rs700,000,000) was called and agreed to.*

## **THE APPROPRIATION (2017-2018) BILL 2017**

**(NO. VII of 2017)**

*The Schedule was agreed to.*

*Clauses 1 and 2 were called and agreed to.*

*The title and the enacting clause were agreed to.*

*The Bill was agreed to.*

*On the Assembly resuming with Madam Speaker in the Chair, Madam Speaker reported accordingly.*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Friday 30 June 2017 at 3.00 p.m.

**The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.**

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Madam Speaker:** The House stands adjourned.

*At 00.57 a.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Friday 30 June 2017 at 3.00 p.m.*