



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

SEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

FIRST SESSION

MONDAY 20 JUNE 2022

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Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage

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Minister of Public Service, Administrative
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MAURITIUS

Seventh National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 17 of 2022

Sitting of Monday 20 June 2022

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis, at 10.30 a.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

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

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

The Deputy Prime Minister seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BILL**THE APPROPRIATION (2022-2023) BILL 2022**

(NO. IX OF 2022)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

Consideration of the Appropriation (2022-2023) Bill 2022 (No. IX of 2022) was resumed.

(10.34 a.m.)

Vote 3-1 Housing and Land Use Planning was called.

Mr Uteem: Page 119, Item 21110.005 – *Extra Assistance*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, the name and salary packages of the Advisors?

The Deputy Prime Minister: This Item refers to Advisor on Stakeholder Relations and Research. The hon. gentleman wants the post, the salary and?

Mr Uteem: The name and the salary.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Advisor on Stakeholder Relations and Research: Mrs Ramsamy - Rs32,350 per month; and one Advisor on Information Matters, Mr Ludor - Rs66,200 per month.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you. Page 123, Item 31410.801 - *Acquisition of Land*, I would like to know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister if the acquisition includes...

The Chairperson: We are on page 119. Any question on page 119? Is it on page 119 you are asking?

Mr Dhunoo: Yes.

The Chairperson: Okay, go ahead!

Mr Dhunoo: Item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary*, there has been an increase. Can the Deputy Prime Minister explain why?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Funds have been provided here for some 191 employees. An increase in provision is mainly due to the implementation of the PRB Report 2021, as well as payment of an increment in January each year, and for additional post of one Assistant Financial Operations Officer and seven Management Support Officers.

The Chairperson: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. In the second table, Summary by Sub-Heads, *Sub-Head 3-102: Social Housing Development*, I noticed that there is a sharp drop in the amount being provided as compared to last year, from Rs1.2 billion to Rs846 m. Can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister why is that so?

The Deputy Prime Minister: We are looking here at the total expenditure broken down and it refers to our projections for expenditure in respect of upgrading of infrastructure and the NSLD. So, based on past trends and planning as to the degree of advancement of the project, this is where we stand; what we plan on spending in the next financial year.

The Chairperson: Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Page 121, Item...

The Chairperson: No, 119! You don't have a question on that page. Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 121, Item 28222.013 - *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Housing Estates*, can we have a breakdown of the Rs96 m. and the list of...

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sorry, Mr Chairperson, just for clarification, are we going page by page or sub-head by sub-head? Are we on page 121?

The Chairperson: Not yet! We are on page 119! And I said clearly, if there is any question on page 119! So, let's move on. Now, we are page 120! Hon. Dhunoo, page 120?

Mr Dhunoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson. Page 120, Item 21210.001 - *Contribution to the National Savings Fund*, there has been an increase from Rs950 m. to Rs1.250 m. Can the Deputy Prime Minister explain?

The Deputy Prime Minister: This is provision for payment of contribution to the NSF for Government employees at the rate of 2.5% of monthly salary up to a ceiling of Rs498 per employee as we all know. The increase is due to the provision being made for recruitment of additional staff.

The Chairperson: Page 120?

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22030 – *Rent*, can I have details on that item, please?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Provision is being made for the payment of rental of building as follows –

- (1) Ebène Tower, 2nd to 7th Floor;
- (2) Ebène Tower 1st Floor, this is an additional space that is being rented;
- (3) Ebène Tower Ground Floor;
- (4) Additional office space at Ebène Tower Ground Floor.

So, there are separate contracts for the period May 2022 to April 2025. Now, the increase is due to additional space that is being rented following reorganisation of the Planning Unit, following the promotion and recruitment of new additional officers.

The Chairperson: Page 121! Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Thank you. Page 121, Item 26313.154 - *New Social Living Development Ltd*, we are being asked to vote Rs78 m. Can we have some details as to who are the members of that company, who is chairing that company and the purpose of this fund?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The hon. gentleman is referring to Item 26313.154? So, the provision is made for Government grant to the NSDL Ltd to meet its operating and administrative costs such as salaries of employees, Director and board meeting fees and other

related benefits as well as payment of rent and utilities, purchase of a stationary, furniture, and equipment.

Mr Bhagwan: What is the composition of the Board?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The Board is made up of –

- Mr Abdool Rahman - Chairperson;
- Mr Sonoo - Executive Director;
- Mrs Seetaram;
- Mr Dowlutrao;
- Mr Maurel;
- Mr Soopramanien;
- Mr Neerunjun;
- Mr Ayoob Saab;
- Mr Paligadu, and
- Mrs Rampadarath.

The Chairperson: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Item 28222.015 - *Transfer of Title deeds of ex-CHA Houses*, I see there is a sharp drop, 15% drop, between last year and this year. I believe this is referring to the sale of CHA plots to owners. There are some regions where this has stopped, even though the files are at the notary's office for a long time, including in my Constituency in Port Louis. Can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether this has got to do with the drop in the budget or so?

The Chairperson: This is like a PQ!

The Deputy Prime Minister: But I will try to provide the information. Generally, this item is for provision of financial assistance, as the hon. gentleman rightly states, to vulnerable lessees of ex-CHA Housing Estates whereby they are granted the land free of charge through the waiving of the purchase price of Rs2,000 and waiving of registration fees. Now, the notary fee of Rs1,500, survey fee of Rs1,500 and Rs1,000 for drawing of affidavit for finalising the deed of sale are also met by Government. Now, whether there are specific leases at the notary's that are

not progressing, I would need guidance. I will communicate it as soon as the information is provided, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Hon. Assirvaden!

Mr Assirvaden: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *À la page 121, Item 28.023 - Syndics for Maintenance of NHDC Housing Estates, est-ce qu'on peut savoir si il y a une liste des NHDC Estates et quels travaux sont prévus?*

The Deputy Prime Minister: So, if I may respond to hon. Osman Mahomed. I understand that all applications are under process, and I will check if there are any inordinate delays that may have occurred. The hon. gentleman is at liberty to speak to me and provide details and we will address any issues.

The next one is Item 28.023. So, my understanding is that Government contributes an amount of Rs200 per housing unit to the syndics of 41 housing estates. So, it is Rs200 per housing unit, and the syndics are paid upon receipt of summary of expenditure of previous months by the syndics on the housing estates. Now, the syndic expenses cover administrative costs, syndic remuneration, utility bills for common areas and maintenance and repairs such as cleaning, gardening or electrical and plumbing works, common arrears. I think I have responded.

The Chairperson: Hon. R. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 121, Item 28222.017 - *Construction of Social Housing Units*, a sum of Rs931,400,000 was allocated. Can the Minister give the status of the amount spent, the site construction and information regarding the sum of Rs410 m. earmarked for the financial year 2022-2023?

The Deputy Prime Minister: In financial year 2021-2022, a provision of Rs931.4 m. was provided as Government subsidy on projects at Argy, Petite Julie, there were two parts (a) and (b), Wooton, Mare d'Albert, Gros Cailloux, Chebel, Plein Bois and Baie du Tombeau. For the coming financial year, an amount of 410 m. is provided for the following projects: La Vallette, Agaléga, Mon Goût, Dagotière and Mare Tabac as well as specific expenses for soil investigation and management fee for dispatch of construction. Government has already disbursed the amount voted as subsidy for this category of new housing projects. Therefore, any

future payment will be met by NHDC Ltd as non-subsidy - this is a non-subsidy component. The NHDC has already contracted loans to finance the completion of these projects.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28222.015 - *Transfer of Title deeds of ex-CHA Houses*, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform the House if it does include people from Dubreuil for the ex-CHA houses, title deeds?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sorry, I could not get the question. Whether it includes?

Mr Dhunoo: Includes people from Dubreuil?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I expect that it does. We will under this Item meet our commitments, of course, for all the transfer of title deeds that are in process. And certainly, Dubreuil should be part of the batch, yes.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, Item 28222.013 - *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Housing Estates*, can the hon. DPM provide further details about this? Thank you.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Provision is made for major rehabilitation works which includes rehabilitation of existing wastewater network, operation and maintenance of sewerage treatment plants, desludging, minor remedial works and consultancy services for water disposal systems on different housing estates. Now, the list of projects is, of course, planned in advance. But then, from time to time, there are emergencies that are communicated to us.

For the next financial year, a sum Rs120 m. has been provided. Rs72 m. is earmarked for 7 NHDC Housing Estates, namely Nouvelle France, Notre Dame -where there are two sites, Tyack, Dagotière - where there are two sites, and Riambel. The remaining Rs50 m. is to meet other costs as I said such as desludging, consultancy services, maintenance costs in relation to wastewater management, etc.

Now, we have already completed rehabilitation works at Rose Belle Exim Shell Firinga 1V, at Bambous, at St Pierre, at Vieux Grand Port and at Highlands. There are ongoing

rehabilitation works as I mentioned earlier at Notre Dame, Tyack, Riambel, Dagotière and at Notre Dame, there are several different plots.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 121, Item 22120.008 - *Fees for Consultant for Housing Strategy*, Rs1 m., may we have some details on this housing strategy?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I understand that there has been a recommendation from the National Audit Office in its Performance Audit Report of June 2021 regarding provision of social housing. There has been this recommendation that a Consultant be appointed for the development of a social housing strategy. Of course, in the meantime, a lot of work has been done by the Ministry. Nonetheless, we do intend to obtain the assistance of a Consultant to evolve a holistic approach to social housing in the light of what has already been done and what remains to be done.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28222.012 - *Casting of Roof Slab Grant Scheme*. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, the number of applications received for the year that has just gone by and the amount disbursed under that item?

The Deputy Prime Minister: For clarification, this scheme has as its objective to motivate and help families from the low income categories to improve or construct their houses. Now, payments effected in the last financial year amount to Rs119.1 m. providing assistance to 1,553 families.

Now, the scheme covers two elements, not only the casting of roof slabs, but also the purchase of building materials although that is much less frequent. I do have the details of how much has gone to what number of families in different income brackets, and I also have the general criteria for eligibility. Does the hon. gentleman require this?

Mr Uteem: You can table it.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Thank you.

Vote 3-1 - Housing and Land Use Planning (Rs1,860,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.56 a.m.)

Vote 3-2 – Valuation Department was called.

Mr Uteem: Thank you. Item 22900 - *Expenses in connection with the Land Research and Monitoring Unit*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister the number of cases that have been referred by this unit to the Land Court and the amount of compensation paid to the victims as part of the scheme operating by this unit?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sorry, may I be reminded which page we are looking at?

Mr Uteem: *Land Research and Monitoring Unit*, Item 22900.

The Chairperson: Time is over. We already called vote 3-2, I already put the question. Now, we are looking for questions on page 126, 127, and now we are going back to 122. So, you have a question on page 126. Do you have a question on that?

Mr Uteem: No.

The Chairperson: Do you have a question, hon. Bérenger?

(Interruptions)

No, you misunderstand the concept. I do understand your case. The concept is that the time is over. There is an allocation of time. The time is over and we do not discuss on that. Do you have a question on that page?

Mr Osman Mahomed: No. I have a question on the principle, because this morning...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No, I am not going to listen, if you have no question. Hon. Nagalingum, page 126?

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22030 - *Rent*, can I have some details on that item, please?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, provision is being made for the payment of rental of building at Nexteracom Tower 2, and refund of payment of parking slots to eligible officers, who have to attend meetings in Port Louis. The increase is based on the actual trend of expenditure for the refund of payment of parking slots. Now, the rental of building comprises of office space at Nexteracom Tower 2, at Ebène, levels 3 to 5.

Secondly, renting of 3 000 sq metres, at the same building. Then, there is, as I said, refund of parking slots for officers who have to attend Committees, Tribunals and Courts in Port Louis.

The Chairperson: Last question, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. On Capital Expenditure, there has been an increase, can the Deputy Prime Minister explain why?

The Deputy Prime Minister: So, other machinery and equipment, the increase is due to the provision made for procurement of a new PABX system. Software of the existing PABX which was purchased in 2002 is considered to be obsolete and in case unavailable, so a tender was launched on 03 of March 2022. No responsive bid was received and new tender exercises have been launched on 13 May 2022 and for the PABX on 20 May 2022.

Vote 3-2 – Valuation Department (Rs135,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 3-3 – Tourism was called.

The Chairperson: You have 10 minutes. Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Mr Chairperson, Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants (a) Long Term Tourism Strategy, Cultural and Nature-based Tourism (Consultancy)*, Rs12 m., may we have some details on that?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes, if the hon. Lady will bear with me. Yes, I understand, this is in relation to the 10-Year Strategic Plan for the tourism sector. We have been given the opportunity of explaining. The idea is now that hopefully the worst of COVID is behind us, to have first a short term strategy for this year which has already been announced, and is being implemented. We are actively developing a medium term strategy up to end of 2024, and the consultancy fees here, refer to the 10-Year Strategic Plan which will provide us with a forward vision, in terms of development of tourism over the next 10 years and how this fits in within the larger picture of the development of the country.

The Chairperson: Page 132!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 22030 – *Rent*, an amount of Rs8 875 000 has been earmarked. Can the Deputy Prime Minister explain?

The Deputy Prime Minister: There is an increase in provision for payment of rental, building and parking. Additional provision has been made for additional office space of 700 sq ft required at Air Mauritius Centre.

The Chairperson: Page 132, hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under recurrent expenditure Item 22120.002 - *Fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees*, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister give us details about which Boards and the composition of same? Thank you.

The Deputy Prime Minister: So, this refers to payment of fees for bid and evaluation committees, training courses conducted locally. This is the Mauritius Civil Service College by local and foreign resource persons for staff at the Ministry as per PRB 2021 and fees to Consultant. Now, I do not think the hon. lady needs the rates of payment for Chairpersons. And as to which Boards this refers to, I presume this is the MTPA and the Tourism Authority, unless there are other specific Boards. And if so, I will provide the information shortly. I do not have the specific information. I will provide it as soon as it is available.

The Chairperson: Page 132, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to whom these fees are paid?

The Deputy Prime Minister: So, this is payment of allowances, salary contribution, contribution to CSG, travelling allowance and bonus. This is for one adviser only. I am referring to Mr Donald Emmanuel Payen. This is the information I have.

The Chairperson: Page 132, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22120.007 - *Fees for Training*. Can we have more details about those training, please?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes I need to obtain the information which I will communicate as soon as possible.

The Chairperson: Page 132, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants*, Rs14,900,000? Can we know who the Consultants are?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I don't think the Consultants have yet been appointed. So, this is I referred earlier to the 10-Year Strategy. No Consultant has been appointed as yet but we are working with the World Bank to identify appropriate human resources.

The Chairperson: Page 132, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: No. I got one on page 133.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha!

Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha: Page 133.

The Chairperson: Page 132! Hon Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Under Item 22090 – *Security*. Can I have the name of the firm or the beneficiary?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sorry, I will go back to the previous question, Fees for training. The information I have is that this refers to training of staff by Mauritius Civil Service College. As regards security, the information I have is that there is a tender that has been launched, tender closed and the question was who is the... there was only one bidder, SICOM Company Ltd. I did not know SICOM Company Ltd provides security services but I will check and finally obtain further information.

The Chairperson: Who else has a question on page 132? Page 133, I start with hon. Assirvaden.

Mr Assirvaden: A la page 133, Mr Chairperson, à l'Item 26210.184 - *Vanilla Island Organisation*. Petite somme mais je me pose la question : est-ce-que le *Vanilla Island Organisation* est une organisation toujours vivante, toujours active ou ?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Oui, M. le député a parfaitement raison. J'ai posé la même question quand je suis devenu ministre et oui c'est une organisation active mais qui a été lourdement handicapée évidemment par la Covid qui a empêché que le bureau puisse se rencontrer mais le travail se poursuit. J'ai eu l'occasion d'avoir des discussions avec le responsable, celui qui s'occupe de l'organisation au jour le jour et pour l'année à venir, il y a donc, je vais vous dire les tâches essentielles qui ont été confiées, donc, à l'organisation *Vanilla Island Organisation participation in* –

- (a) *Sea Trade Fairs in Miami and Germany;*
- (b) *promotion of cruises on the Vanilla Islands digital platforms;*
- (c) *Sales calls to Cruise companies, Costa Chewy to encourage resumption of activities post-COVID, donc ce n'est pas encore le cas;*
- (d) *Sales calls to cruise companies to attract expedition cruises, maximum capacity of 500 forming part of the organisation in terms of logistics and size;*
- (e) *Road show in Nordic countries and India, and*
- (f) *Social Media Campaign to increase visibility.*

Et vous pouvez être assuré, M. le député, que je vais suivre de près pour nous assurer que ce soit des sommes correctement utilisés.

The Chairperson: Time over!

Vote 3-3 Tourism (Rs352,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.12 a.m.)

Vote 4-1 Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology was called.

The Chairperson: Hon Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Page 141, Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. I will request the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to give complete details as to who the beneficiaries are and the pay package for each one of them.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, *Extra Assistance* refers to payment of salaries, passage benefits and gratuity of 5 advisers, increase is due to revision in salaries following implementation of the PRB Report. For the advisers, they are –

- (a) Mr Hiranand Boolchand Dansinghani;
- (b) Mrs Savitri Dookhee;
- (c) Mr Suresh Munbodh;
- (d) Mr Elvissen Adaken, and

(e) Mrs Lucinda Roberts - Holmes

And the sum that we have for each one of them –

(a) Mr Dansinghani – the basic salary is Rs103,875;

(b) Mrs Savitri Dookhee – Rs73,800;

(c) Mr Munbodh – Rs103,875;

(d) Mrs Holmes – Rs110,125;

(e) Mr Adaken – Rs66,200.

The Chairperson: Page 141, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Sub Head 4-107- Scholarships and Capacity Building-* There is an increase in the amount. Can I have some details on same?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Can I have the number of the Vote, please?

Ms Tour: The Sub Head 4-107.

The Chairperson: Make sure your question is appropriate hon. Ms Tour!

So, we move on page 141, hon. Dr. Boolell?

Dr. Boolell: Yes, thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 20 – *Allowance to Minister.* Not that the Minister does not deserve her allowance but can I call upon the hon. Minister...?

The Chairperson: No, this is not, we are on ...

Dr. Boolell: I have the right to.

The Chairperson: No, Committee of Supply *sa.*

Dr. Boolell: Oh, but still you know, allowance to Minister. I have a right to put the specific question to the hon. Minister in relation to alleged leakage of exams. Yes of exams paper. No, it is relevant.

The Chairperson: Let us agree.

Dr. Boolell: I will ask the hon. Minister to give us, enlighten us and to be focus in relation to the specific question I have asked on the alleged...

The Chairperson: You are taking the time of the House!

Dr. Boolell: On the alleged leakage of exam papers.

The Chairperson: Come with a PQ! Let me take somebody else. Page 142, hon. Bhagwan!

(Interruptions)

Let us agree to disagree!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 22900.999 – *Expenses icw National Examination Board - Rs5 m.* Can we have some indication whether the Board has been set up and who are the members chairing that Board? Are we paying them?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The Board has not been set up yet.

The Chairperson: You have the reply?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: *J'ai répondu.* The National Examination Board has not been set up yet, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: So, we move on. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 142, Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultant (Transaction Advisor for PPP Projects)*. There is a budgeted amount of Rs30 m. May we have more details please as to the Transaction Advisor?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The provision has been made for the recruitment of Consultants, Transaction Advisors for six Public-Private Partnership projects. I will tell you which projects we are talking about. It is the University of Technology. An agreement has already been signed with Landscape for 10 arpents on 05 November. It is for the project of coming up with an auditorium and students hostel, national research and education network, research centre for students, one stop shop centre and a resource centre for student enterprise and innovation centre, a language centre, amongst others. Construction is tentatively expected to be completed in May 2026. Not yet recruited.

The Chairperson: Page 142, hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under *Item 22130 - Studies and Surveys*, can the hon. Minister provide further details about which studies and surveys? Thank you.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: So far, Mr Chairperson, the surveys are for four studies that have been carried out on Grade 6 pupils. And then, we are talking about studies and surveys for consultations for the SACMEQ Project and the final study of the SACMEQ Project is expected to be over by June 2022.

The Chairperson: Page 142, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 142 Item 22900.801 - *Health and Wellness Activities (a) Drug Use Prevention (Rebound) Programme*, a sum of Rs4 m. is earmarked for 2022-2023. Can the hon. Minister give us some details regarding this programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, we have got the Drug Use Prevention (Rebound) Programme. The provision will cover the fees for Consultants, accommodation costs, contextualisation of the Programme, drafting workshop, validation workshop, Training for Trainers workshop, and printing of materials and resources. We have a number of projects coming under this. This is the Drug Use Prevention (Rebound) Programme. We have other programmes for health information, education and communication materials as well.

The Chairperson: Page 142, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Items 22900.955 – *Gender Mainstreaming* and 22900.995 – *Expenses icw Akademi Kreol Repiblik Moris*. Can I have some details about these two items please?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, we are referring to the development of a gender policy at the Ministry and studies to determine factors that should be addressed to increase performance of boys at schools with a view to come up with appropriate interventions. Universities and institutions of higher learning and other training institutions are also to develop their own gender policy statements.

The Chairperson: Page 142, hon. Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 142, Item 22900.922 *Conferences/Seminars/Workshops (a) Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) 2022 Triennale Conference*. Will the Minister give more details regarding this item?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, Government has agreed to the request of ADEA to host the ADEA Triennale 2022 on education and training in October 2022. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa, a Pan-African Organisation regrouping 54 Ministers of Education in Africa will be holding a global event in October this year. It is going to be a three-day conference which will be held in hybrid mode targeting around 600 participants; 300 in person and 300 virtually.

The Chairperson: Page 142, hon. Assirvaden!

Mr Assirvaden: A la page 142, Madame, à l'item 22900.995 – *Expenses icw Akademi Kreol Repiblik Moris*. Est-ce qu'on peut avoir des renseignements sur ce *Akademi Kreol Repiblik Moris* pour R 1.2 millions ?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We are talking about the setting up an operationalisation of a *Commission terminologie* with the aim to develop further autography, grammar, lexicon usage and norms of the *Kreol Morisien* as a standard language.

The Chairperson: Page 142, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 22120.024 – *Capacity Building Programme*. Can we have some details on the Rs4 m. earmarked?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We are talking of a provision made for the Academy for Educational Professional. It is, in fact, for the Resource Persons to be recruited for the process and we have Training Coordinators as well and Conveners. Other costs are related to logistics and the use of technology for blended approach.

The Chairperson: Page 143, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112.402 - *Upgrading of Schools - Multipurpose Halls and Playfields in Secondary Schools*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister provide more details on this?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We are referring to projects to be carried out at Pailles SSS, Rivière du Rempart SSS, GMD Atchia SSS, John Kennedy College, Bon Accueil SSS and Quartier Militaire SSS.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Mr Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the Item 26313.071 -*Early Childhood Care and Education Authority (c) Private Pre-Primary Schools*. With respect to grants to private pre-primary schools, may I obtain from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister a list of the pre-primary schools that will benefit from this grant and confirmation that all of them have the necessary licences and fire clearances?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, the grants are provided solely to registered pre-primary schools and we have 518 pre-primary schools and they are all covered.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Mr Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31112.002 - *Construction and Extension of Schools*, may we have more details as to the number of schools that would be involved in this construction and extension programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We are referring here to construction and extension of schools at Mount Ory Government School for a pre-primary unit, Sir Anerood Jugnauth Government School, again for a pre-primary unit; construction of a pre-primary school in M. Bérenger Government School for which the bidding documents are ready for launching.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Mr Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 143, Item 31112.002 *Construction and Extension of Schools*, can we know if the schools have already been identified and can we have the names of these schools?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The hon. Member would note that I have just given the names of the schools and the last one is Burrenchobay Government School.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Already canvassed. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha!

Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha: Thank you, Chairperson. Item 31112.401 -*Upgrading of Office Buildings*, can we know what office buildings are being upgraded?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It is, in fact, the upgrading of office buildings and we are talking about the buildings of the ...

The Chairperson: Maybe you can circulate the reply.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I will circulate.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: At page 143, Item 26313.201 - *Current Grant icw Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education*, will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister explain how this Rs10 m. will be used for that purpose?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, yesterday, I have mentioned, while we have reached another step in our educational reform and we are coming up now with the technical and technology stream and we will be working towards this.

The Chairperson: Page 143, hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Chairperson. Item 28211.042 - *Transfer Youth Club*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give us more details about the Transfer Youth Club? Thank you.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The transfers to non-profit institutions refer to health clubs, youth clubs and other clubs as well as a transfer grant to secondary schools for UNESCO clubs and the amount of Rs210,000 for Financial Year 2021-2022 has not been spent because of COVID-19 and the amount has been reduced this year for only Rs100,000.

The Chairperson: Page 143, hon. Woochit!

Mr Woochit: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.099 - *World Hindi Secretariat*, can we know why this budget has been decreased compared to last year?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Again, Mr Chairperson, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, less activities have been carried out and there are savings. There is a slight decrease in the budget and this can be explained by most of the activities being carried out online due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 143, Mr Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Chairperson. Under Item 26313.071 - *Early Childhood Care and Education Authority (d) Continuous Capacity Development Programme*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House how many people have been trained under this programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, most of the officers in the various schools go for training; we do not have the exact figure but as and when required, depending upon the requirements of the school, training is carried out.

The Chairperson: Page 144, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 22090 – *Security*, there is always controversy of allocation of tender to security companies; can we be enlightened as to which companies have been allocated this contract, please?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, the security services are RSL Security Services Ltd and the funds will be used for the provision of night security services in 216 primary schools, and 180 schools by RSL and the other schools will be covered by Rapid Security Services Ltd.

So, the name of the contractors, I have just mentioned, RSL and Rapid Security Services; there are two of them. The contract value for the schools is Rs1.9 m. for 23 primary schools and Rs5.1 m. for 43 primary schools.

The Chairperson: Page 144, hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 144, under Item 22120.025 - *Fees to Oriental Language Teachers*, may we be provided with the number of Oriental language teachers currently and if the Vice-Prime Minister could table the number of teachers per Oriental language?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We have, Mr Chairperson, 731 evening schools and 1,579 teachers. The breakdown for Teachers of Oriental Languages –

- Hindi – 703;
- Urdu – 417;
- Tamil – 118;
- Telegu – 47;

- Modern Chinese – 12;
- Marathi – 34;
- Arabic – 247;
- Sanskrit – 1.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.996 - *Natation Scolaire Programme*, an amount of Rs8 m. is earmarked for 2022-2023. Can we know what are the schools concerned with this programme and how is this amount of Rs8 m. going to be spent?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, as from this year, all schools will be concerned, all primary schools. The amount is disbursed for the transport of students as well as for the coaches, who are helping out, coaches from the Mauritius Sports Council.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Page 144, last line, Item 26313.034 - *Mauritius Examinations Syndicate*, we are being asked to vote Rs125 m. Can we have an idea of the composition of the Board, who is chairing the Board, the amount paid to them, and whether, it is the same Board which is responsible for the PSAC; whether it is that institution and the composition of the Board?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Yes, Mr Chairperson, I will table the composition of the Board. The payment is as per the PRB, Rs934.

Mr Bhagwan: Who is chairing the Board?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It is the SCE of the Ministry of Education.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you. Item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, there is, as we see, a drastic fall in the Budget, from Rs90 m. to Rs7.5 m. Will that not negatively impact on the quality of services and the health of the children?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, in fact, the decrease is arising because the cleaning services will be provided by Mauri-Facilities Management Co. Ltd and the payment will be met under the Vote of the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.034 - *Mauritius Examinations Syndicate*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister tell us the number of staff attached to the MES. How many are suspended and if possible provide the reason?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, I can say that for the time being there is one person suspended at the MES.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Hon. Vice-Prime Minister, we have the Item 21 - *Compensation of Employees*, may I know if the sum includes the item Discipline Assistant formerly known as *Surveillant* because provision was made to recruit 257 Discipline Assistants in 2021-2022, but we do not note in 2022-2023?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The assistants have not been recruited yet, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22900.996 - *Natation Scolaire Programme*, peut-on savoir pourquoi il y a une baisse dans le budget alloué, s'il vous plait ?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, the current school year has been extended till next year. So, we are providing for only part of the year.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22030.007 *Rent of which Rental of Line for Network Services*, there is an amount of Rs35 m. budgeted this year and there was Rs32 m. last year. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, whether today, all of our primary schools are fully equipped with Wi-Fi?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Yes, Mr Chairperson, this is so.

The Chairperson: Page 144. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister provide the information as to which buildings are concerned and who are renting the buildings?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It is provision for payment of rental for buildings, parking slots and other events required. We have the MITD Building for which rent is paid. Then, we have houses for the Chinese voluntary teachers who come over to Mauritius for primary schools. Then, we have Ken Lee Building, Port Louis, the Mutual Aid Building and Zone 1 Stores in Port Louis. We have as well in Zone 3, Gopal Building and in Zone 4 Ebène Heights.

The Chairperson: Page 145. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Item 28211.060 - *RCEA Schools (Operation Grant) of which Maintenance of Toilets & Classrooms*, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to provide the list of schools? Because for example, in my Constituency, in Raoul Rivet Government School, there is a serious problem in the toilets of that school having been reported time and again.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, all our schools are included in this list. And we have here for RCEA Schools Rs7 m. which is provided for the cleaning of toilets.

The Chairperson: Page 145. Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31122.823 - *Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*, there is an increase in the budget. May we know the reason for this increase?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, this is for the provision of tablets to Grade 6 students next year.

The Chairperson: Page 145. Hon. Mr R. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 145, Item 28212.004 -*Primary School Supplementary Feeding Project*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister explain why there has been an increase of Rs8 m. on this item?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It is because we have included more schools and the amount paid for the meals has increased also.

The Chairperson: Page 145. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. On the same Item 28212.004 - *Primary School Supplementary Feeding Project*, hon. Vice-Prime Minister, do we get any support also from the World Food Programme in respect of cash and grant?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: No, Mr Chairperson, I do not think it is so.

Dr. Boolell: No support from the World Food Programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: No, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 145. Hon. Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 145, Item 31112.402 - *Upgrading of Schools*, will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister table the complete list of schools and the nature of work for the upgrading of these different schools? Thank you.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It will be done, Mr Chairperson. We shall table the list.

The Chairperson: Page 145. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under same Item 31112.002 - *Construction and Extension of Schools*, can the Minister give the list of schools and the contractors which have been allocated for these projects?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Certainly, Mr Chairperson. This will be tabled.

The Chairperson: Page 145, hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you. Items 31122.802 and .823 - *Acquisition of IT Equipment and Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*, could we know the name of the supplier for the IT Equipment and whether any tender was launched?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, for all IT equipment, tenders are normally launched, and I believe this must be the case for this as well. As for the acquisition of equipment for early Digital Learning Programme, we have an agreement with the Government of India through one organisation under the Ministry of Education in India EdCIL, they are the one providing. Now, I will find out for the name for the contractors that are supplying.

The Chairperson: Page 145, hon. Bodha!

Mr Bodha: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On the same Item with regards to *Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*, may I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how many students are concerned by this programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It concerns all primary school students. We have completed for Grades 1 to 5 and we are embarking on the project for Grade 6 this year.

The Chairperson: Page 145, hon. Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 145, Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, Rs85 m. has been earmarked. Will the hon. Minister give us the details regarding how this sum of money will be spent?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, extra assistance refers to the payment of allowances made to Supply Teachers and to some General Workers who are on contract, those who are the ex-PTA General Workers, and for cash in lieu of leave, and also for the payment of end of year bonus. Increase is due to the revision of salaries.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28212.012 - *S.C and H.S.C Examination Fees*, there is a sharp drop from Rs200 m. being provided for this financial year as compared to last year, it was Rs290 m. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why is that so?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, this year, the exams have been postponed to November. So, part of the students has been taking exams in June and the remaining amount for the next examinations. They already have savings.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 146, Item 26313.123 - *Mahatma Gandhi Institute*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister provide us details as to why there is such a big increase in the budgetary provision?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, this would be due to the PRB, and the increase in salaries as a result of PRB.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Under Items 22070 and 22090 - *Cleaning Services and Security*, this is quite a huge amount. Can the hon. Minister give us some details about it?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, there is a decrease in provision, cleaning of schools will henceforth be provided by Mauri-Facilities which is an exempt organisation for the procurement of cleaning services. Payment for cleaning services provided by Mauri-Facilities will be under the vote of the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 22120 – *Fees of which Healthy and Supportive School Environment Initiatives*, may we know the nature of those initiatives?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, the provision has been made for the grant to school health clubs, Rs5,000 per school. We have 69 State Secondary Schools and 79 Private Secondary Schools. We have to develop the school health clubs and also for the promotion of the well-being of students.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Grants being allocated to Private Secondary School Education Authority, I refer to Item 26313.133 - *PSEA - Performance Grant to Private Secondary Schools*. If the Minister could enlighten us as to the specific criteria, how this grant is allocated which in itself is a good thing?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, the performance grant aims at rewarding schools for achieving relevant performance targets and the performance grant is an element of the comprehensive grant formula. It is for payment at rewarding academic performance and

improving performance at SC and HSC Examinations, for achievement in sports competition and also participation in extra-curricular activities.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Last items on that page, Items *31112.002 and .402 - Construction and Extension of Schools and Upgrading of Schools*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister table a list of all the Secondary Schools which has been constructed or extended or upgraded and the amount spent on the schools?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: This will be done, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 146, Item *26323.073 – Private Secondary Education Authority (PSEA)*, there is a sharp drop in the amount voted for this year and still more for next year, may we know why is it so?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, the provision had been made for the upgrading of IT infrastructure, including upgrade of software, servers and security licenses. This has already been done and there is only a small amount left to be done. That is why.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Last line, Item *31112 .402 – Upgrading of Schools*, can the Minister inform the House whether schools in Constituency No. 20 is on the list of the coming financial year for upgrading, especially in the village of Petite Rivière and Albion?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The list of schools will be tabled. I can see Constituency No. 20. So, I am tabling the list and you will be able to see.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under same item, since the hon. Vice-Prime Minister will be tabling the list, I wanted to know if it includes school from Curepipe?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I am just tabling the list.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Mrs Navarre Marie.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Yes, thank you! Item 26323.027 – *Mauritius Examination Syndicate*, we are asked to vote a sum of Rs7 m., could we know what this amount is meant for?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Speaker, Sir, the amount is meant for consultancy services, consultancy fees for infrastructural works, servers at the MES and IT equipment, printing equipment and an MES vehicle.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. R. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Item 28211.041 – *Mauritius Secondary Schools Sports Association (MSSSA)*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give us a breakdown and indicate the activities organised by the MSSSA, during the last financial year?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The MSSSA organises nine sports disciplines at regional and national level annually, and the promotion of individual sports competition like table tennis, badminton, athletics are also carried out. But, because of the sanitary measures this year, there was a reduction in the number of activities performed.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22090 – *Security*, may we know who are the beneficiaries, please?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: So, again, the contracts are with existing providers and the providers are RSL Security Services and Top Security Services Ltd.

The Chairperson: Page 146, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.802 – *Other goods and services, Expenses in connection with Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA)*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give more details on this programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The OECD Programme for International Students Assessment is an international assessment that measures competencies in 3 major domains of study namely, reading, mathematics and science, with a focus on students' abilities to think critically, and apply their knowledge creatively in novel context. It is administered among 15-year-old students every 3 years. Since 2000 when PISA was first introduced, more than 90 countries have participated in it, and we are planning to have the next edition and a pilot study

will be undertaken in 2024, targeting around 2 000 sample students. The main study is targeting approximately 6 300 students and will take place in 2025.

The Chairperson: Page 147, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.157 – *Institute of Technical Education and Technology (ITET)*, for which we are being requested to vote for a first time here - because last year there was no provision - Rs50 m. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what is it about?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The ITET is an Institute of Technical Education and Technology. Now, it is going to regroup around 6 institutions which were previously at the MITD, and will be responsible for preparing students for diplomas and higher certificates and higher national diplomas in the technical *filière*.

The Chairperson: Page 147, hon. Lobine.

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 147, under the same item 26313.157 - *Institute of Technical Education and Technology (ITET)*, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, who is the Chairperson of this institute, and also, who are the Board members.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I would table the Board members. The Chairperson, is Mr Matabadul. I am tabling the list of all members.

The Chairperson: Page 147, hon. Dr. Gungapersad.

Dr. Gungapersad: Page 147, Item 31122.802 – *Acquisition of IT Equipment of which Online Digital Pedagogy (Virtual Classroom)*, may we have more details regarding same from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Certainly! We are referring here to funds that will be used to acquire IT Equipment for secondary schools. 200 PCs for replacement in computer labs as well as laptops and projectors; as well as boot camp for hands-on training of educators to use techno pedagogical strategies in teaching and learning; acquisition of IT equipment for online digital pedagogy for the virtual classroom. So, we will need touch screen laptops with projectors for each classroom, once-off Wi-Fi equipment and etc.

The Chairperson: Page 147, hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Yes, thank you! Item 26323.157 – *Institute of Technical Education and Technology (ITET)*, along with the composition of the Board, could the Minister provide us also with the composition of the council?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It is the same thing. The council and the Board is the same. Yes, Mr Speaker, Sir, it is the same Board.

The Chairperson: Page 147, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112 – *Non Residential Building .042 – Construction of Building – Regional trading Centre at Beau Vallon, .442 – Upgrading of Building – Technical Education Centres*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister provide details on both projects and who are the contractors who have been allocated these projects?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Now, for Beau-Vallon, the contract was awarded to the Tianli Construction Co. Ltd. So, the funds have been used for the payment of consultancy services for the project, for the design and build. And the project is a design and build and it is a turnkey project. I see that the Consultants are Lux Consult Mauritius and the contractor is Tianli Construction Co. Ltd.

The Chairperson: Page 147, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under the same Item 31112.042 – *Construction of Building – Regional Training Centre at Beau Vallon*, can we know the expected completion date for the project?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I see here that the site was handed over in January 2021, and expected completion date is November 2022.

The Chairperson: Page 147, hon. Wochit!

Mr Wochit: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31122.999 – *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, can we know what are the machinery and equipment and why the budget has been decreased by Rs5 m.?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The funds decrease, it is because, I am told here, that the Act was proclaimed in January 2022 and the Council set up in February 2022. Once the ITET is fully operational, new requirements will be worked out for machinery and equipment in line with the

new fields of curriculum. There are new fields of curriculum also being chosen, so, there is a difference.

The Chairperson: Page 148, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Item 26323.0149 – *Special Education Needs (SEN) Authority of which (a) Upgrading of SEN Schools run by NGOs/RCEA (b) Acquisition of Pedagogical tools and materials.* Can we have details on these two projects from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, please? Thank you.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, the provision is here made for a one-off grant to SEN Schools run by NGOs – Rs2.7 m and the disbursement of the one-off grant to schools which have submitted new projects –

- (a) upgrading of SEN schools run by NGOs;
- (b) grant of Rs100,000 will be provided to SEN institutions run by NGOs and the 8 institutions run by SeDEC for repairs and renovation of buildings;
- (c) acquisition of pedagogical tools and materials;
- (d) grant of Rs50,000 will be given to 45 SEN institutions run by NGOs and 8 run by SeDEC; and then also we have
- (e) acquisition of vehicles, and
- (f) an adapted 16-seater high roof microbus and office equipment for CELA.

The Chairperson: Page 148, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 28211.023 - *Special Education Needs Schools.* Will the hon. Vice Prime Minister can give us a better outlay as to how this money is spent because we are talking of other expenses. What does it entail, please? Thank you very much.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We have other expense, transfers to Non-Profit Institutions, this is the point you have asked. The increased provision made is for the payment of grants that I have just explained right now for the upgrading of the Institutions as well as for the purchase of new equipment. We also have contribution to the monthly salaries of the staff,

carers, psychologists, occupational therapist and speech therapist and also a basic per capita grant amounting to Rs6,000 per student.

A yearly per capita grant of Rs5,200 which covers teaching aids and utilities as well as hot meals provided to students on a daily basis.

The Chairperson: Page 148, hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 148, hon. Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 148, Item 22120.043 - *Fees for Adaptation of Textbooks*. The fees will be paid to whom and what adaptation will take place regarding the textbooks? By whom?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, Mr Chairperson, there are certain people at the level of the MIE also at the level of an NGO *Lizie Dan La Main*, or *Lois Lagesse* that who normally help in adapting schools. However, now fees for adaptation of textbooks, for the adaptation of activity books for grades one to six and for digitalisation of textbooks as I have said at the level of the MIE and two NGOs, *Lizie Dan La Main*, and if I am not mistaken, or Lois Lagesse Trust Fund.

The Chairperson: Page 148, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Just been canvassed by hon. Dr. Gungapersad.

The Chairperson: Page 149, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Item 28212.020 - *Student Scholarship Schemes for Vulnerable Households*. I see the provision of Rs3 m. has remained the same as compared to last year. In view of the increase in cost of everything, didn't the Vice-Prime Minister find it necessary to request for more funds because life has become so expensive now?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, this should go to the Ministry of Finance I believe but we have already increased last year the amount two year's back if I am not mistaken, the amount given to students. I have just mentioned that we have paid the tuition fees, we gave the monthly stipend and a maximum of 100,000 to academic year and they have four academic years that are funded.

The Chairperson: Time over!

Vote 4-1 Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology (Rs18,300,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(12.12 p.m.)

Vote 5-1 Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Page 163, Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. Can we have explicit details on this item, please?

Dr. Husnoo: For Extra Assistance, for payment of salaries for the following three advisers: Advisor on Information Matter, Public Relations, Policy Matters, Employment of one Land Use and Planning Executive, contract for one year as from May 2022 – actual expenditure is about Rs1.9 m.

The Chairperson: Page 163, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: *Item 21210 - Social Contributions*. Can we have some details about this item?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for the contribution to National Savings for all staff in post. Actual expenditure is Rs1 m.

The Chairperson: Page 163, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: *Item 21110.004 – Allowances*. May we know why there is a decrease, please?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision made for the payment of allowances such as acting and responsibility, drivers allowance, duty, extra duty and *ad hoc* allowances. Increase is also due to the increase in salary due to the PRB Report 2021 and actual expenditure is about Rs1.9 m.

The Chairperson: Page 163, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Already been canvassed, Mr Chairperson!

The Chairperson: Any other question on page 163 before we move to page 164?

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22900.001 – *Uniforms*. May we know what those uniforms are and why there is a decrease in the allocated budget?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for the payment of cash in lieu of uniforms and protective clothing to drivers, office care attendants, store cadre and supervisory cadre, inspector etc. Decrease in provision as protective clothing to eligible officers has been issued in Financial Year 2021-2022. Actual expenditure is about Rs831,000.

The Chairperson: Page 164, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31122.802 - *Acquisition of IT Equipment*. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give more details on it?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for the replacement of 43 obsolete PC's on a phase-wise basis as recommended by the IT technician of the CISD. The actual expenditure is Rs300,000.

The Chairperson: Page 164, hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you. Item 31121.801 - *Acquisition of Vehicles*. Could we have more details on that?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for the purchase of a vehicle in replacement of an unserviceable one.

The Chairperson: Page 164, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22090 - *Security*. May we know who are the beneficiaries, please?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for the security service at the Field Services Unit situated at Mgr. Leen Street, La Butte, Port Louis. The security service has been contracted out to Top Security Service Ltd with effect from July 2020 for a monthly amount of Rs60,000.

The Chairperson: Page 165, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (c) Renovation of Port Louis Theater (Phase II)*. Now, this theatre has been under renovation for a long time. I see provision has been made over the next four financial years. Can I have the status of this project from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision of Rs25 m. made to kickstart the Phase II of the Port Louis Theater project. An additional amount of Rs10 m. has also been provided under the Lotto fund in financial year 2022-2023. Phase I, as you know is completed. Draft bidding document for Phase II has been submitted to the CPB for vetting.

The Chairperson: Page 165, hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120 - *Fees*. I can see that as from this financial year onwards, there is a provision of Rs4.1 m. yearly. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what are these fees meant for?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for the payment of fees to Chairman and members of the Board and Committees, Consultant for the human resource audit of the local authorities and licence fees for the Oracle technical support. Decrease is due to reduction of budgetary provision for the fees to Consultant.

The Chairperson: Page 165, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. In respect to Item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (d) Multipurpose Complexes (i) Idrice Goomany Centre, Plaine Verte (Upgrading)*, may we have an update from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister where matters stand?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision of Rs19.6 m. has been provided for the ongoing renovation of Idrice Goomany Social Centre. The contract was awarded to ChiselMET Ltd. on 30 November 2020 for a value of Rs42.6 m. The start date of the project was 26 January 2021. Expected date would be summed in about two months' time.

The Chairperson: Page 165, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Under Item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (b) Renovation of Plaza Theatre at Rose Hill*, can I know from the Vice-Prime Minister the timeframe for the phase II?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, there are some problems there. Provision was made for the refurbishment of rehabilitation work at Plaza. Contract was awarded for an amount of Rs268 m. but due to protest from the bidder, case was referred to IRP and set aside by that institution. However, one bidder has now referred the case to the Supreme Court for judicial review and this has been fixed for 26 July 2022.

The Chairperson: Page 165, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (c) Renovation of Port Louis Theater (Phase II)*. Last Budget, there was Rs10 m. and this Budget Rs25 m. May we know where are we with the renovation works in the theatre?

Dr. Husnoo: I have just replied it earlier.

The Chairperson: Yes, I am adjusting the list. Page 165, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, Item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (d) Multipurpose Complexes (vi) Roches Brunes*, of a project value of Rs12 m. Rs2 m. is earmarked for 2022-2023. Can we know, Mr Chairperson, if the contract has already been awarded, if so, to whom? Can the Vice-Prime Minister also state the exact location of this proposed complex?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision of Rs2 m. has been provided for the construction of a multipurpose complex at Roches Brunes, Morcellement Mont Plaisant. The contract for the global consultancy was awarded to VF Architects + Urban Designers Ltd on 28 December 2021 for Rs115,000. The expected start date is 30 August 2022 and the expected completion date is 30 May 2023.

The Chairperson: Page 165, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (d) Multipurpose Complexes (vii) 16ème Mille*, can the Vice-Prime Minister tell us what is the timeframe for the completion of this project?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, provision for Rs2 m. has been provided to start the construction of the multipurpose complex at 16ème Mille. Project value is Rs20 m. Expected start date is October 2022 and the expected completion date is November 2023. Award of contract is to be finalised by October. It is at design stage.

The Chairperson: Page 165, hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26322.030 - *Local Development Projects (a) District Council Head Offices (iii) Savanne*. The project value was estimated to Rs69 m. For the last financial year, it was estimated at Rs17 m. whereas for the next financial

year, it has substantially decreased, and now, it is at Rs7 m. Can we know what are the reasons?
Thank you.

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for Rs7 m. made for the construction of a new District Council Head Office in Savanne. Project value of Rs69 m. Expected start date is end of October 2022 and expected completion date is end of October 2023. The project is in two phases. The bidding document has been revised in view of the increase in construction costs and same have been sent to CPB for vetting on the 23 May 2022.

Mr Chairperson: Page 166, hon. Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha!

Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26322.030 (i) -*Small Development Projects (Indian Grant)*, can we know what projects will be implemented?

Dr. Husnoo: It is a long list, maybe I will circulate it. It is for almost all constituencies, it is a long list; I will circulate it.

Mr Chairperson: Last question, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: The Minister has stated that he is going to circulate the list of the grant under capital expenditure but I will expect it to be thorough.

Dr. Husnoo: Sure.

Vote 5-1 Local Government (Rs4,960,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(12.28 p.m.)

Vote 5-2 National Disaster Risk Reduction was called.

Mr Chairperson: Page 170, Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Recurrent Exenditure, Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants (Disaster Risk Reduction Studies)*, can we have further details pertaining to this? Thank you.

Mr Chairperson: If you don't find it, circulate the reply!

Dr. Husnoo: Fees to the Consultant for disaster risk reduction. Provision for the payment of fees to Consultant for the implementation of the CADRI report, firstly; secondly, for training on Sendai Indicators and UNDRR contingency planning for national and local level,

PIROI; these are the ones. Another Consultant was a Consultant Committee Disaster Response Programme. Provision for the consultancy service with diverse competencies that will favour these collaborative consultations with National Disaster and other close stakeholders to pursue actions contained both in CADRI report and the Action Plan of Disaster Committee. The next one is a committee sensitisation, together with provision for the training and programme, lectures, and workshop aiming to educate vulnerable groups on disaster risk measures, including schoolchildren and the elderly by PIRIOI with the collaboration of the Mauritius Red Cross Society.

The Chairperson: Page 170, Mr Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 21110.005-*Extra Assistance*; there is now extra assistance of Rs635,000. So, may we know to whom this amount will be paid?

Dr. Husnoo: Technical assistance from the High Commission of India is sought under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), for the secondment of an officer at the level of the Director Preparedness; provision is made for the payment of an inclusive allowance in respect of the deputed official.

The Chairperson: Page 170, Mr Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 170. Mr Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, can we have some details on the item?

Dr. Husnoo: It is for the provision of the payment of *ad hoc* allowances to staff of the Police Department and MMS on secondment; in-attendance allowance to the National Emergency Operation Command members and other allowances. The increase is due to full provision being made for the payment of in-attendance allowance to officers attending National Emergency Operation Commands whenever it is activated during emergencies.

The Chairperson: Page 170, Mr Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22170 - *Travelling within the Republic*, can the Vice-Prime Minister provide more details?

Dr. Husnoo: It is for the provision to meet the passage cost and accommodation cost for officers who will travel to Rodrigues and Agaléga to train volunteers in Community Disaster Response Programme. The decrease in provision is based on actual trend of expenditure.

The Chairperson: Page 171, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28222.025 - *Compensation for the Relocation of Inhabitants (Landslide)*, Rs1.6 m. was budgeted for last year and for this year it is Rs1.3 m. Can I ask the Vice-Prime Minister in which regions were the beneficiaries last year and in which region will be the beneficiaries for this coming year? Thank you.

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, this provision was made for the relocation of the inhabitants of Chitrakoot, Vallée Pitot and other sites, that is, Le Batelage, Rivière des Anguilles, Rivière des Créoles, to relocate 73 vulnerable families.

At Chitrakoot, 28 vulnerable families have been relocated. The decision of Government is awaited with respect to the site for relocation and eventual compensation to be paid to the affected families.

At Vallée Pitot, 19 vulnerable families have to be relocated. The decision of Government is awaited with respect to the site for relocation and eventual compensation to be paid to the affected families.

At other sites, 2 vulnerable families to be relocated from Rivière des Créoles, 15 families from Rivière des Anguilles; vulnerable families have to be relocated at Le Batelage, Souillac. The decision of Government is awaited with respect to the site for relocation and eventual compensation to be paid to affected families.

The Chairperson: Page 171, hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Already canvassed!

The Chairperson: Page 171, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under the same Item 28222.025 - *Compensation for the Relocation of Inhabitants (Landslide)*, does the list contain inhabitants of Petit Bel Air and if not, why not?

Dr. Husnoo: There are Chitrakoot, Vallée Pitot, Le Batelage, Rivière des Anguilles, Rivière des Créoles, Plaine Magnien, La Butte. It is not in this.

The Chairperson: Page 171, hon. Mrs Mayotte

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31122.999 *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment (Equipment for National Emergency Operation)*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give us more detail about those equipment? Thank you.

Dr. Husnoo: The provision is made for the purchase of new heavy duty photocopy machines. Provision is made for acquisition of other machinery and equipment: one Interactive Multi-Touch Display Board; IP phones and accessories.

The Chairperson: Page 171, Mr Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Already canvassed by hon. Mrs Mayotte.

The Chairperson: Page 171, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: I would like to come back to this question of compensation and relocation of the inhabitants under Item 28222.025 - *Compensation for the Relocation of Inhabitants (Landslide)*. In respect to the people in Vallée Pitot, last year also we asked the same question. They still have not been relocated. Can we have a time frame for the relocation of these people?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, Mr Chairperson, it is a very long process because we have to contact the people. Sometimes, some of them want to be transferred; some of them do not want to be transferred. Now, when we transfer them, we have to evaluate the land, whether it is State Land, whether it is private land, we have to evaluate the house and we have to find the rent. It is very complex. We contact these people and, unfortunately, it takes quite a bit of time because a lot of them are reluctant to move. Not just in Vallée Pitot, in most of the cases it is like that. That is why it takes time.

The Chairperson: Page 172, any question?

Vote 5-2 National Disaster Risk Reduction (Rs26,400,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(12.37 p.m.)

Vote 5-3 Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service was called.

The Chairperson: Page 173. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 173, under Item 22900.001 - *Uniforms*. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister provide further information, whether all the staff of the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service will be provided with new uniforms? Thank you.

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, these uniforms are provided to all the staff, Mr Chairperson, and you have about 16 items of uniform. Every year, some of the items are being provided and I think there are about 3 or 4 items which are left to be given.

The Chairperson: Page 173. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Same item, Mr Chairperson, Item 22900.001 - *Uniforms*. We have heard that recently there has been a shortage of uniforms. Can the Vice-Prime Minister enlighten us on this matter?

Dr. Husnoo: I have just explained that there are 16 items of uniform. I think there are only 3 items are missing. It is not missing; it is just taking a bit of time to come. So, it is not a question of missing. Most of the items, they have had it already. There are only 3 items that are missing.

The Chairperson: Page 173. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22120 – *Fees*, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why is there such an increase of Rs850,000 with regard to the component of fees?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision is made for the payment of fees to Consultant, Chairperson and members of the Departmental Bid Committee and a Bid Evaluation Committee and training courses. The actual expenditure is Rs543,000.

The Chairperson: Page 173. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22060.004 – *Maintenance of which Vehicles and Motorcycles*, can we know how many vehicles do we have in the *flotte* actually?

Dr. Husnoo: Just to give you an idea, the total number of vehicles that we have is 142.

The Chairperson: Page 173. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: On the same item, Item 22060.004 – *Maintenance of which Vehicles and Motorcycles*, can we have a bit more clarification? When you talk about vehicles, how many firefighting lorries are there in that Service?

Dr. Husnoo: Just to give you an idea, we have about 58 firefighting lorries. 15 of them are under repair and 6 are beyond economical repair.

The Chairperson: Page 173. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 173. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Page 173, under Item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, can the Vice-Prime Minister inform the House what is the forecast for the recruitment of new Firefighting Officers for the coming year, including Women Firefighting Officers?

Dr. Husnoo: The number of officers in post is 884; number of funded posts is: 919; number of funded vacancies is: 30; number of unfunded vacancies is: 24. The last recruitment exercise for the Firefighters was effected in Financial Year 2019-2020. The Scheme of Service for the post of Firefighter has been reviewed and is being finalised. That is why we have not recruited recently because we are waiting for the Scheme of Service. There are 13 Rodriguan Firefighters on the Mauritian establishment and have requested for permanent transfer to Rodrigues Assembly. The request is being considered at the level of the DFSC.

Mr Bhagwan: The number of Women Firefighting Officers?

Dr. Husnoo: Out of 884 Firefighters in post, 21 are female.

The Chairperson: Page 174. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Item 31112.424 - *Upgrading of Fire Stations*, can we have the list of Fire Stations that was upgraded last year and will be upgraded this year?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision is made for payment for upgrading works at Port Louis Fire Station, construction of emergency staircase at St Aubin Fire Station, Curepipe Fire Station, Coromandel Fire Station, and Triolet Fire Station.

The Chairperson: Page 174. Hon. Assirvaden!

Mr Assirvaden: À la page 174, l'item 31121.801 - *Acquisition of Vehicles*, peut-on savoir du vice-Premier ministre pour l'année financière 2021-2022, pour les R 211 millions, combien de *Fire and Rescue Vehicles* ont été achetés ?

Dr. Husnoo: An amount of Rs75 m. has been provided under the Item of *Acquisition of Vehicles*. This amount is meant for the procurement of the remaining 5 Firefighting and Rescue Vehicles, including 3 Water Foam Tenders. This project is funded under the Indian line of credit.

The Chairperson: Page 174. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31112.024 – *Construction of Fire Stations (d) Relocation of Quatre Bornes Fire Station*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give us more information about that, and when and where will the Quatre Bornes Fire Station be relocated?

Dr. Husnoo: The Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development has completed the preliminary drawings and approved by Mauritius Fire Rescue Service. Financial clearance for the increase in project value is being awaited from MoFED. Actually, it is going to be relocated along Avenue Tulipes, Quatre Bornes.

The Chairperson: Page 174. Hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31122.999 - *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment (Radio Communication System)*, I can see that there is a provision of Rs4 m. which has been earmarked as from this year. And as per my information hon. Vice-Prime Minister, all the radio communication systems of all our Fire Stations are now obsolete. So, this amount is clearly insufficient. This project of renewal of all the communication system seems to be difficult in phasing. May I know how your Ministry intends to do this project?

Dr. Husnoo: I am a bit surprised to hear that all the communication systems are not working. I am surprised to hear about this.

Mr David: I did not say not working. I said obsolete.

Dr. Husnoo: Even if it is obsolete, in other words, it is not effective. I am surprised to hear that because the Fire Services are still delivering. They are getting the emergency calls and they are delivering. They have done so many interventions this year. So, I am a bit surprised to hear about that. This item is about upgrading the radio communication system through

acquisition of a new radio communication equipment. So, that is part of it. But I do not think it is not working. If you have the impression that they are obsolete and they are not working, I think that is wrong.

The Chairperson: Page 174, hon. Ms Ramyad!

Ms Ramyad: For Item 31112.024 - (a) *Rose Belle Fire Station*, there was a final payment of Rs3 m. done last year. Can we know whether it is working in full capacity? The staffing, the logistic and equipment are there?

Dr. Husnoo: The project is completed. The Fire Station is fully operational since 15 June 2021. It is working alright.

The Chairperson: Page 174, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: On the same Item in respect of (d) *Relocation of Quatre Bornes Fire Station*, I would like to reinforce what hon. Mrs Mayotte has said. The hon. Vice-Prime Minister is a resident of Quatre Bornes. Quatre Bornes has become a very tight spot. Manoeuvring is very difficult. In case of emergency, we know what the consequences could be. Can I impress upon the Vice-Prime Minister to expedite this because this item is paid year in and year out?

Dr. Husnoo: Yes, I know. As I have just mentioned earlier, we are waiting to get things finalised. It is located in a better place. As you know, Avenue Tulip is a better place; it is going to have access to the motorway and to the Hillcrest Avenue as well. So, I think we have taken care of that as well.

The Chairperson: Page 174, hon. Dr. Gungapersad!

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 174, Item 31112.024 - (b) *Goodlands Fire Station*, may we know from the VPM what is the status of the work carried out over there?

Dr. Husnoo: Procurement process has been cancelled by CPB due to significant margin between the lowest bidder and the cost estimate. The Mauritius Fire Rescue has referred the matter to the Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development for further action so that the bid can be re-launched.

Vote 5-3 Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service (Rs810,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(12.49 p.m.)

Vote 5-4 Mauritius Meteorological Services was called.

The Chairperson: Page 176, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 22120 - *Fees of which Enhancing Meteorological Observation, Weather Forecasting and Warning Capabilities (JICA Funded)*, Rs13 m., can we have some details on this upgrading?

Dr. Husnoo: The amount of Rs60 m. will be used for fees to the Chairperson and member of the Board of the Committees. Fees for training JICA, Rs5,300,000, training diploma courses at the Open University; courses for Meteorological Technician cadre; training for trainee meteorologists; training on programming and ISO, Rs3 m.; fees for Japanese Consultant for the project of JICA, Rs7,700,000, and fees in connection with license, Rs350,000.

The Chairperson: Page 176, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: On the same item, I understand it is about training. Will training be provided to them to operate the new radar facilities as well because I understand that this is an ongoing process? Will enhanced investment be made there for more accurate forecasting?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, this is an ongoing training that is being done. I mean although the Consultant has been there for the last couple of years, they have trained our staff. But all the data that is collected at the radar are being sent to Japan. And it is an on-going training, even online.

The Chairperson: Page 176, hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services*, we see quite a considerable amount, can the hon. VPM table details about the other goods and services? Thank you.

Dr. Husnoo: Provision is made for the following: uniform allowance, protective clothing and equipment, and miscellaneous expenses. Provision for the payment of uniform allowance to Receptionists, Office Auxiliary, Security Guards, Drivers, Procurement and Supply Cadre Officers, General Workers: Rs90,000. Provision also made for the purchase of protective

overcoat, shoes and other equipment for technician posted in the Instrument and Electronic Section: Rs85,000. That was for the uniform.

The Chairperson: Page 176, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, can the Minister inform the House whether this Trou aux Cerfs radar is fully operational and when it has been calibrated the last time?

Dr. Husnoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, it is fully operational. It was calibrated, I think, it was about last year when the technician came. But as I mentioned earlier, the calibration is going to be done regularly by the Japanese expert.

The Chairperson: Page 176, hon. Woochit!

Mr Woochit: Item 22060 - *Maintenance*, can we know the name of the company and the frequency of the maintenance, please?

Dr. Husnoo: Provision for maintenance of building, plant and equipment, vehicle, IT equipment, ground and radar equipment at Trou aux Cerfs. Increase is due to maintenance of air condition system, IT and equipment.

The Chairperson: Any other questions on page 177? Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Under Item 26210.026 – *Contribution to African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development*, it has been seen that most of the contributions to all these organisations have had a considerable increase, can the Minister explain?

Dr. Husnoo: Mauritius, as you know, is a member of the World Meteorological Organisation. The actual expenditure is Rs619,253. Contribution to the World Meteorological Organisation inter-governmental panel, that is the next one. And then, we have contribution to the African Centre of Meteorological Application for Equipment, we have contribution to Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia. So, there will be different organisations, we have to contribute.

Vote 5-4 Mauritius Meteorological Services (Rs121,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: I suspend the Sitting for one hour.

At 12.55 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.09 p.m. with the Speaker in the Chair.

The Chairperson: Please remain seated and be seated!

(2.09 p.m.)

Vote 7-1 Finance, Economic Planning and Development was called.

The Chairperson: Page 210, hon. Dr. Boolell.

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. I refer to Item 26313.020 – *Gambling Regulatory Authority*, has been quite a controversial body, with some differential treatment to some specific gambling operators. Now, we see that there is a massive increase compared to the previous years' estimate. If the Minister can enlighten us as to the justification in respect to this massive increase, please?

Dr. Padayachy: Mr Speaker, Sir, increase in provision is to filling of eleven vacancies, Rs13.7 m.; increase in rent Rs6.5 m. and consultancy services for interactive gambling Rs20.2 m. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Page 210, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Under the same heading, Item 26313.161 – *Mauri-Facilities Management Co ltd*, we are being requested to vote for a first time, Rs450 m. for Mauri-Facilities Management Co. Ltd. Can I ask the hon. Minister to provide more details about this, the reason behind this, the rationale for half a billion rupees for this company?

Dr. Padayachy: So, Mauri-Facilities Management Co. Ltd, provision required is to enable Mauri-Facilities Management Co. Ltd to recruit 2 000 general workers on a permanent basis to carry out the national cleaning campaign across the island, and to provide cleaning and maintenance services in schools. The cost per employee is estimated at Rs15 000 monthly. The clean-up programme will be carried out in collaboration with the National Environment Cleaning Authority, the Local Authorities and other stakeholders.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same item 26313.161 – *Mauri-Facilities Management Co ltd*, can we know who is the Chairperson and members of the Board of that company, and their remuneration?

Dr. Padayachy: So, for the Chairperson, the remuneration is Rs20 000 and for the Directors it is Rs12 000. We have Mrs Currimjee as Chairperson; Mr Munien, Mr Paddia, Mrs Dabeesingh, Mr Boodhun, Mr Bajah, Mrs Guya, Mr Pawaray, Mr Nurkoo, Mr Bundhoo and Mr Hauroo.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31122.802 – *Other Machinery and Equipment – Acquisition of IT Equipment*, can the Minister provide more details about this increase?

Dr. Padayachy: So, acquisition of IT Equipment, provision is made for the purchase of laptops and other IT equipment. That is the information I have got. I think that we are changing because perhaps it is obsolete, these equipment.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 210, under item 28217.001 – *Insurance*, can we have more details about which insurance it pertains to? Thank you.

Dr. Padayachy: Provision made for payment of insurance cover for public officials preceding on overseas mission, the increase is due to rise in premium rate.

The Chairperson: Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Item 26313.148 – *Economic Development Board*, can the hon. Minister give us a breakdown of the amount spent for Dubai expo, and a complete breakdown of same. He can table it.

Dr. Padayachy: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sorry, I do not have any information on Dubai expo here, I have got information for the next budget. If the hon. Member wants to have information for the Dubai expo, we will table it.

The Chairperson: Page 210, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Speaker, Sir, item 26313.020 & 0.43 – *Gambling Regulatory Authority and Mauritius Revenue Authority*, one is Rs8 m. and another vote is Rs14 m. Can the Minister give us the composition of the Board of the GRA, the Chairperson, and the Board members, and how many expatriates are working who we will be paying in the next budget for the GRA?

Dr. Padayachy: Mr Speaker, Sir, the Chairperson is Mr Dabidin, Vice-Chairperson, Mr Beekarry. The members are Mr Bussier, Mr Krishna Jhugroo, Mr Molaye, Mr Chandrashekar, Mr Seetaram, Mrs Kautick, Mrs Callychurn and Mr Khuntoo.

So the fees payable is Rs50,000 for the Chairperson, Rs35,000 for Vice-Chairperson and Rs25,000 for the members. Concerning information on expatriates, I will table the information. I do not have it with me. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Page 210, hon. Bodha!

Mr Bodha: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26323.148 – *Economic Development Board*. There was a provision of Rs16 m. in 2021-2022 which is increased to Rs36 m. in 2022-2023 and which decreases to Rs8 m. year after. Can the hon. Minister enlighten the House as to this state of affairs?

Dr. Padayachy: There is the acquisition of IT equipment, replacement of old laptops and desktops computers for Rs6 m., purchase of integrated and manage printing facilities, purchase of UPS, this is for Rs6 m., and then you have got the acquisition of software upgrading of IT Infrastructure. Second phase implementation of IRP solutions - Rs6 m., online gallery for creative industry - Rs10 m., Online Business Obstacle Alert Mechanism Business Facilitations - Rs5 m., IP telephony for Ebène office, upgrade of central unit - Rs2 m., centrally managed CCTV camera system for Rs8 m. and we also need to know that UNDP is assuming this, the assuming costs for this project is 100,000 Dollars.

The Chairperson: Page 210, hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Item 26313.043 – *Mauritius Revenue Authority*. Can the hon. Minister give us the pay packet of the DG?

Dr. Padayachy: I do have for the Board members, just give me a second, I will have a look. No.

The Chairperson: We move on?

Dr. Padayachy: We will table it. I do not have it here. Sorry. I will table it.

The Chairperson: Still on page 210, hon. Dhunoo?

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item *31121.801 - Acquisition of Vehicles*. Can the hon. Minister give more details?

Dr. Padayachy: Yes, of course. Acquisition of non-financial assets for the transport equipment, acquisition of vehicles, provision made for the replacement of an old vehicle.

The Chairperson: Page 210, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item *26313.148 - Economic Development Board*. May I know from the hon. Minister, out of this Rs545 m., what is the amount budgeted for the promotion of financial services by EDB?

Dr. Padayachy: I am just going to give you some information, Mr Chairperson. On export and investment promotion items, you have got Rs106,247,000. I do not have the information concerning all sectors. I am just going to table it afterwards.

The Chairperson: Page 211, hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 211, Item *22120 – Fees*. May we know from the hon. Minister as to why the increase in fees by Rs5 m.?

Dr. Padayachy: The increase in provision is due to training of 100 officers on project management and contract administration in collaboration with the University of Technology, Mauritius.

The Chairperson: Page 211, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Item *31132.801 - Acquisition of Software*, Rs4.8 m. Can we know from the hon. Minister, it is the first time item, more details about this please?

Dr. Padayachy: Its provision is made for implementation of e-Data Management System for registry. That is why it is the first time.

The Chairperson: Page 211, hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060.005– *IT Equipment*. May we know which company proceeds for the maintenance? Thank you.

Dr. Padayachy: It is for NexTenders India Pvt Ltd.

The Chairperson: Page 211, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. Can we have the names of the Advisors and their package, please?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision made for payment of salaries to two members on contract –

- (a) Mr Dabeesingh – Rs97,625, and
- (b) Mr Jeewon – Rs97,625.

The Chairperson: Page 211, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under *Sub-Head 7-103: Independent Review Panel*. May I know from the hon. Minister, the number of cases that were lodged, determined and were pending before the IRP?

Dr. Padayachy: Sorry, which Item?

Mr Uteem: Page 211, under *Sub-Head 7-103: Independent Review Panel*. I just want to have some statistics. What is the number of cases that were lodged last year, it has been determined and that are still pending?

Dr. Padayachy: You have got 27 cases.

The Chairperson: Page 211, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Under capital expenditure, Item 31132.801 - *Intangible Fixed Asset - Acquisition of Software*. May we know the time of the implementation of this project?

Dr. Padayachy: I think I don't have so much information on this. I will table it. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 212, any question?

Mr Bhagwan: Page 212, Item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*. The composition of the Assessment Review Committee and their remuneration and their terms of contract?

Dr. Padayachy: We have got –

- (a) Mr Laulloo – Rs150,750;
- (b) Mr Bakee – Rs119,500;
- (c) Mr Jorai – Rs119,500, and
- (d) Mr Appajala – Rs119,500.

The Chairperson: Page 212, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*. Under the Assessment Review Committee, same Item. Can I have the figures, the number of cases that were lodged last year and that have been determined last year and that are still pending? There are three figures.

Dr. Padayachy: So, in total, we have 853 lodged cases. Cases pending as at 01 June 2021: 4,754 cases.

In total, you have 5,607 –

- cases withdrawn - 334;
- cases struck out - 64;
- cases determined disposed of - 36, and
- cases settled - 434.

The Chairperson: Page 212, hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. Can we have a breakdown of the Rs11 m.?

Dr. Padayachy: You have –

- Mrs S. Sonah-Ori;
- Mr S. Mathura;
- Mr S. Golam.

Mr Juman: Amount?

Dr. Padayachy: The amount is Rs96,295 monthly. You have –

- Mrs Chan Yuk Fee Li Ying Pin;

- Mr R. R. Ragnuth;
- Mrs D. Sobarun;
- Mrs S. Vythilingum-Ram;
- Mr A. Seesunkur, and
- Mr R. Maistry.

The Chairperson: Page 213, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. For the whole of this section 'Economic Research and Planning Bureau,' I see that all the budget provisions are first timers. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether this is a new department because I had flagged this in my budget speech that there was no planning *per se* being done right now?

Dr. Padayachy: Yes, it is a new department.

Mr Osman Mahomed: There was none before?

Dr. Padayachy: There was not a bureau before. At the level of the Ministry, some people were doing some planning but we did not have a proper bureau.

Mr Osman Mahomed: So, can I take it that at long last, we have a Planning Department at the Ministry of Finance?

Dr. Padayachy: Yes, we have a proper Planning Bureau Department at the level of the Ministry.

Dr. Boolell: So, the EDB is not fit for the purpose?

Dr. Padayachy: No, it is different. Perhaps just to clarify, Mr Chairperson, one is for microeconomics on different sectors of activities. The other one is going to be on macroeconomics.

The Chairperson: Page 213, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 22120 – *Fees*. So, we see that there is around Rs10 m. budgeted for next year and the following year. May we know what these fees would be paid to and for what purpose?

Dr. Padayachy: Breakdown for the fees –

- Fees for training - provision made for training of staff, and
- Provision made for recruitment of Consultants to assist the bureau and build capacity in the area of social economic planning, macroeconomics, etc.

Vote 7-1 Finance, Economic Planning and Development (Rs4,350,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.30 p.m.)

Vote 7-2 Central Procurement Board was called.

The Chairperson: Page 216, hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. Can we have a breakdown and the name and amount paid?

Dr. Padayachy: Okay. So –

- (i) Mr Prayag, Chairman - Rs163,650;
- (ii) Mr Ragen, Vice-Chairman - Rs138,650;
- (iii) Mr Jugroo, Vice-Chairman - Rs138,650;
- (iv) Mr Sénèque, Member - Rs88,650;
- (v) Mr Sairally, Member - Rs88,650, and
- (vi) Mr Chooramun, Member - Rs88,650.

The Chairperson: Page 216, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Item 27310.003 – *Employer Social Benefits in Cash – Gratuities*. May we know the names of the persons benefiting gratuities from Central Procurement Board, please?

Dr. Padayachy: It is for Mr Prayag, the Chairperson; Mr Ragen, Vice-Chairperson; Mr Jugroo, Vice-Chairperson; Mr Sénèque, Member, and Mr Sairally, Member. It is for these five persons.

The Chairperson: Page 21, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, there is an amount of Rs11.7 m. May we have a breakdown as to whom this money will be paid?

Dr. Padayachy: So, again, the details are –

- 1) Mr Prayag - Rs163,650;
- 2) Mr Ragen - Rs138,650;
- 3) Mr Jugroo - Rs138,650;
- 4) Mr Sénèque - Rs88,650;
- 5) Mr Sairally - Rs88,650, and
- 6) Mr Chooramun- Rs88,650.

The Chairperson: Page 216, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22120.006 - *Fees to Assessors*, can we have more details on this from the Minister?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for payment of fees to assessors for evaluation of bids. That is information that I have.

The Chairperson: Page 216, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. In respect of Item 22060 – *Maintenance*, I see a massive increase from Rs1,400,000 to almost Rs4 m. Can the Minister enlighten us as to which company this contract has been allocated to?

Dr. Padayachy: The contract has not yet been allocated.

Dr. Boolell: Is that why there is a massive increase compared to previous year's estimates. What explains this?

Dr. Padayachy: The increase is due to upgrading of IT equipment and introduction of a videoconferencing system.

Vote 7-2 Central Procurement Board (Rs72,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.35 p.m.)

Vote 7-3 Treasury was called.

The Chairperson: Page 218, hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060.005 – *Maintenance – IT Equipment*. Can we have more details about the contractor and type of maintenance?

Dr. Padayachy: For the IT equipment, it is for the renewal of Oracle licenses, IT applications, servers and Oracle support, hardware maintenance agreement, the TAS server. The company is SIL.

The Chairperson: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*, may we know where is the office located for which we are being requested to pay Rs9.9 m. in rental for this year?

Dr. Padayachy: For the rent, we have got Rabadia Building, Port Louis; Voucher Room at Farquhar Street, Port Louis; the Flacq Cash Office; Pamplemousses Cash Office; the Voucher Room No.2, Queen Street, Port Louis. That's it.

The Chairperson: Mr Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*; may we know from the hon. Minister, to which company this contract has been allocated?

Dr. Padayachy: The provision made for the cleaning of laboratories which have been outsourced to Keep Clean Ltd and Alpha Hygiene Ltd.

The Chairperson: Pages 219, 220?

Vote 7-3 Treasury (Rs175,400,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.39 p.m.)

Vote 7-4 Statistics Mauritius was called.

The Chairperson: Page 221, hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 221 under Item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*; may we know from the hon. Minister as to why there is such a substantial increase in the allocated sum?

Dr. Padayachy: The increase in provision is mainly due to continuous multipurpose household survey and household budget surveys. Rs252 m. for the continuous multipurpose household survey and Rs20 m. for the household budget surveys.

The Chairperson: Page 221, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Chairperson. It has been canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 221, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: May I know from the hon. Minister the composition of the Board of Statistics Mauritius?

Dr. Padayachy: The Chairperson is Mr Joseph Edward Charles Cartier; the members are: Mr Mukesh Dowoonauth, Mr Kevin Ramkaloan, Mr Ram Hittoo, Mr Ruben Thoplan, Mr Nasser Jeeanody, Mr Deerajen Ramasawmy, and Mr Ghanish Beegoo.

The Chairperson: Page 221, Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 221, Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26210 - *Contribution to International Organisations*; can we have further details pertaining to this item? Thank you.

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for the contribution to International Association of Survey Statistician (IASS) membership. The IASS promote the study and development of the theory and practice of sample surveys and censuses.

The Chairperson: Page 221, Mr Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31132.103 - *Statistical E-Platform (Maustats)*; can we know from the hon. Minister where the project stands?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for the implementation of the modern statistic platform, Maustats, which will help enhance the operation of Statistics Mauritius by automating and integrating SM data life-cycle from acquisition to dissemination using Generic Statistical Business Process Model. The UNDP is in process of assessment of tenders for this project; part

payment amounting to Rs21,200,600 has already been made in Financial Year 2021-2022. The implementation of the project will be initiated in this financial year.

The Chairperson: Page 222, Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: It has already been canvassed by hon. Dhunoo. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Another question at pages 222, 223?

Vote 7-4 Statistics Mauritius (Rs477,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.43 p.m.)

Vote 7-5 Corporate and Business Registration Department was called.

The Chairperson: Page 224, Mr Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 - *Rent*; Rs 20,272,000, can we have more details about the space rented?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for the payment of rent of office space of 19,611 ft²; lower ground, ground floor and third floor at a monthly all-inclusive rent of Rs1,184,182 at One Cathedral Square in Port Louis. We have got office space of 2,645 ft² at the rate of Rs47.22 at 11th floor at One Cathedral Square at a monthly all-inclusive rent of Rs143,503.95. We have got the office space of 7,500 ft² at One Cathedral Square at a monthly all-inclusive rate of Rs346,741. We have got the rental of parking slots; provision made for the payment of only two parking slots payable to MaxCity Property Fund Ltd. and there is also the provision made to meet expenses in connection with workshop to be organised by CBRD.

The Chairperson: Page 224, Mr Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.036 - *Expenses icw Extensible Business Reporting Language Project (XBRL)* and Item 22900.037 *E – Filers/Information Centre*. Can we know from the hon. Minister, because we are voting for the first time for these items, what is the time frame for implementation of these reporting language projects?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for payment to Mauritius Network Services for electronic filing of financial statements. For the other information, we will table it afterwards. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Page 224, Mr Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: With regard to the same Item, my question is slightly different, can we know the rationale and the nature of these two projects, please?

Dr. Padayachy: I will table it afterwards.

The Chairperson: Page 224. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 224. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 225. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Dr. Boolell: Moi j'ai demandé pour 224.

The Chairperson: Page 224? You want to put a question?

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much. So nice of you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: You are very romantic today!

Dr. Boolell: Item 22900.036 - *Expenses icw Extensible Business Reporting Language Project (XBRL)*, can the Minister enlighten us as to why there is a relative increase compared to this year's estimates and also on the expenses in connection with the Extensible Business Reporting Language Project?

Dr. Padayachy: Like I just said, Mr Chairperson, I am going to table the rationale and the idea behind this project because I think it is a new project.

The Chairperson: Page 224. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I will take it under Item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Registrar of Companies has been appointed now and how many vacancies there are in this Department currently?

Dr. Padayachy: Yes, we got Mrs Chinien, the former Registrar of Companies who had retired on grounds of age on 07 November 2020. The vacancy was reported to the Commission, which advised that the Scheme of Service for the post be amended in the first instance. Consequently, Mrs Chinien was re-employed as Registrar of Companies on a contract basis for a

period of 1 year with effect from 26 April 2021. Her contract of employment has been renewed for a further period of 1 year as from 26 April 2022 pending procedures for the finalisation of the Scheme of Service and filling of vacancy afterwards.

The Chairperson: Time over!

Vote 7-5 Corporate and Business Registration Department (Rs144,300,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.50 p.m.)

Vote 7-6 Registrar-General's Department was called.

The Chairperson: Page 227. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31112.401 - *Upgrading of Office Buildings*, can the Minister give more details about this item?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for the renovation works to be carried out and installation of new reception counter.

The Chairperson: Page 227. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: I take it under Item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*. Is the hon. Minister in a position to tell us, as at today, what is the outstanding amount of dues which has not yet been recovered by the Registrar-General's Department? What is the outstanding amount?

Dr. Padayachy: I will table it afterwards. I do not have the information here.

The Chairperson: Page 228. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Item 31132.401 - *Upgrading of ICT Infrastructure*, a huge sum is being voted this year, Rs33 m. Can we know the nature of this allocation?

Dr. Padayachy: It is consultancy services to revamp the e-Registry System. The services of an expert consultancy firm are required for the revival of the e-Registry System with restructured processes. The revamping of the system is expected to gain increased productivity and capacity to meet requirements for future years in line with the changing business environment.

We got also the enhancement to existing modules. The following improvements are being brought to the e-System –

- New Motor Vehicle Registration Module;
- Search Online;
- MauSign;
- MauPass, and also
- InfoHighway MRA/RGD.

These are the new modules that we have. We are upgrading all of them.

The Chairperson: Any question?

Vote 7-6 Registrar-General's Department (Rs156,300,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(2.53 p.m.)

Vote 23-1 Centrally Manage Expenses of Government was called.

The Chairperson: Page 475. Hon. Ms Ramyad!

Ms Ramyad: Under Item 28211.024 - *Financial Support to Religious Bodies*, can the Minister table the breakdown for all the beneficiaries, please?

Dr. Padayachy: Yes, I will table it.

The Chairperson: Page 475. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 22120.003 – *Fees - Commissions of Enquiry and Committees*. May I know from the hon. Minister of Finance, the commissions of enquiry that have been set up and paid for in the past year and which are pending for the current year?

Dr. Padayachy: It is provision made for payment of fees to Chairperson and members in respect of commissions of enquiry, fact-finding committees, work permit committees and disciplinary and other committees. The provision has increased taking into consideration the trend of expenditure. As at May 2022, an amount of Rs10.2 m. was spent –

- (i) for payment of fees to the members of the Commission of Enquiry on the Disposal of Assets of BAI Company, and

(ii) payment of fees to Mr Jeetoo for the Bid Evaluation Committee.

Rs10.2 m. for payment of fees to the members of the Commission of Enquiry.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 22180 - *Mission Expenses (Ministers, Delegates and Officials)*, I can see that an amount of Rs30 m. has been spent for last year. Can we have a list of the mission as well as the details?

Dr. Padayachy: I will table it afterwards. I do not have it with me. A list of missions of all Ministers?

The Chairperson: Page 475, hon. Ms Ramyad!

Ms Ramyad: Under Item 21111.350 - *Allowance in Lieu of Passages*, it has increased considerably. Can we know the reason why, whether it is for the retirees?

Dr. Padayachy: In the provision for financial year 2022-2023 has been increased as many civil servants are encashing their accumulated passage benefits following implementation of 2021 PRB Report.

The Chairperson: Page 475, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. In respect of Item 28217.003 - *Refund of Revenue*, Rs65 m., if the hon. Minister of Finance could enlighten us and give us a breakdown of what it entails? Thank you.

Dr. Padayachy: As at 31 May 2022, Rs12.4 m. has been refunded; Rs7.9 m. for Land Transfer Tax and Registration Duty, Rs1.1 m. for work permit fees, and Rs3.4 m. for license and other fees.

The Chairperson: Page 475, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Thank you. Item 28217.002 - *Compensation arising out of Government Liability*, Rs20 m., I think. Can the Minister at least give us an indication of the details of the expenditure?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for payment of compensation if any to third parties in respect to accidents involving Government vehicles, injury, death on duty, medical negligence and court cases, out of court settlement.

The Chairperson: Page 475, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Items 21210.002 and .003 - *Defined Contribution Pension Scheme and Civil Service Family Protection Scheme*, there have been an increase. Can the Minister give more details?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision represents Government's contribution towards the Civil Service Family Protection Scheme in respect of employees recruited as from January 2013. The increase in provision for the financial year is essentially due to increase in basic salaries of employees following the implementation of the 2021 PRB Report.

The Chairperson: No further question, I will put the question.

Vote 23-1 Centrally Managed Expenses of Government (Rs2,845,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.01 p.m.)

Vote 24-1 Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government was called.

The Chairperson: Page 476, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 21210.004 - *CSG Contribution (Social Contribution)*, for which last year, Government had disbursed Rs1.75 billion, but this sum is being reduced this year to Rs1 billion in so far as social contribution is concerned. Can the Minister enlighten the House on this please?

Dr. Padayachy: Lower provision made as the share of employees' contribution will be henceforth met under *Item 21110.015 - Allowance - Social Contribution* of this vote.

Mr Osman Mahomed: But still there is a shortfall of Rs250 m. Why is that so? Because on that allowance that you just mentioned, Rs500 m. is being provided for. The shortfall, if you take it from Rs750 m. to Rs500 m., its Rs250 m.

Dr. Padayachy: It is realignment in another item.

The Chairperson: Page 476, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Under vote Item 22120.040 - *Expert Skills Scheme*, Rs35 m., can we have some details on this item?

Dr. Padayachy: Increase in provision for financial year 2022-2023 because payment will have to be made to 20 experts whose services have already been retained, and the services of additional experts which will be required by Ministries in some areas where they have lack of skills and expertise.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Item 25110.014 - *Free Franking Service*, can we have more details about that, please?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision required to compensate Mauritius Post Ltd for providing free franking service to 26 socio-cultural organisations. We can table the list of these socio-cultural organisations. I will table it afterwards.

The Chairperson: Page 476, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22120.040 - *Expert Skills Scheme*, can we know what are those sectors where we need experts? Thank you.

Dr. Padayachy: The priority areas for the services of experts are infrastructure development, strategic planning and macro-fiscal management, digital economy, green economy, ocean economy, Marshall Plan against Poverty and social safety nets, project appraisal and management, institutional reforms and national heritage.

The Chairperson: Page 476, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 25210.008 - VAT Refund Scheme for Planters, Breeders, Fishers and Other Specific Sectors*, can the hon. Minister table a list of how many planters, breeders, fishers and other agro-processes that have benefited from this scheme?

Dr. Padayachy: As at May 2022, we have 239 beneficiaries. 183 small planters, 48 fishermen, 3 bakers, 2 breeders, 1 pig breeder, 1 artist and 2 cooperatives.

The Chairperson: 476. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, Item 21110.010 - *Service to Mauritius Programme*, may I know from the hon. Minister of Finance the number of people who has benefited from this scheme and the amount paid to each beneficiary?

Dr. Padayachy: The STM Programme was introduced in 2008; the programme targets bright graduates who have demonstrated high academic abilities and covers graduates as well as post graduates, including PhD holders. During the period 2008 to 2022, some 1298 graduates have benefitted from the programme.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Under item 26323.208 – *COVID-19 Projects Development Fund*, with an estimate Rs8.5 billion. Now, I know this has been the subject of debate during the budget, notwithstanding that there are many projects which are outstanding and yet to be implemented from flood management to housing project. Can we have a specific breakdown, in respect of where matters stand relating to those projects?

Dr. Padayachy: I will table it. I have got it here; there are many information on this. I will table it.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28212.041 – *CSG Income Allowance*, this year the Government is expected to recoup for Rs4.2 billion, but for last year, I noticed that this sum has been recorded in the column, when we all know that CSG started to come into operation in September 2020. This is being disbursed. So, can we know how come last year there was a nil return and this year it is Rs4.2 billion?

Dr. Padayachy: Because it is on this budget for this year, we are going to implement this measure this year. It is a new budget measure. That's it.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Item 28213.029 – *State Trading Corporation*, can the hon. Minister give us some precise details about how the Rs500 m. allocated to STC will be used and how it will work?

Dr. Padayachy: A one-off grant of Rs500 m. will be provided to the STC, to enable the latter to import some essential products such as edible oil, milk and pulses, and sell them at an affordable price to customer. That is, we are going to give it to subsidise the products that they are going to import.

Mr Juman: Only STC will sell at subsidised prices for these items?

Dr. Padayachy: Like STC is doing with flour, rice and edible oil. That is the same policy which will be adopted for other products. You have got Rs500 m. for these subsidies.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28217.005 – *Refund/Payment of taxes icw projects and schemes financed by Development Partners or under Special Programmes of which (c) VAT Refund Scheme icw Residential Units*, may we know from the hon. Minister, how many people have benefited from this project?

Dr. Padayachy: Provision is made for refund of payment of taxes on specific schemes as follows: Rs25 m. in respect of refund scheme for recycling of PET bottles; Rs5 m. in respect of refund scheme for recycling of used tyres; Rs120 m. for VAT refund in connection with construction or acquisition of residential units. Rs55 m. for refund of taxes concerning projects and schemes financed by development partners and under special programmes. As at date, Rs21 m. has been refunded for the export of 1 400 tons of PET bottles.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. In respect of the Item 28212.041 – *CSG Income Allowance*, can we know the number of self-employed who have been registered at the MRA, who will benefit from the scheme as well as the number of employees who have a gross salary of Rs50 000?

Dr. Padayachy: I think the information I have got; I am going to table it afterwards with more precision. I think we have got around 306,000 as at date who are registered at the MRA to benefit this allowance. But, we have made provision for some more for the coming year. That is why we are talking about 350,000. I do not have the breakdown; I will table it afterwards.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28217.005 - (a) *Refund Scheme for recycling of PET bottles*, can the hon. Minister tell us how this scheme works?

Dr. Padayachy: I do not have the information, I am going to table it afterwards.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28214.001 – *Transfers to Public Financial Corporations – Mauritius Africa Fund Ltd*, last year Rs15 m., this year Rs20 m. May I know from the hon. Minister of Finance the amount out of the Rs15 m. that has already been spent by the Mauritius Africa Fund?

Dr. Padayachy: The increase in provision is made to cater for recruitment of staff and payment of project consultancy fees. As at 31 May 2022, Rs15 m. has been disbursed under this item.

The Chairperson: Page 477, hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: Item I28217.005 – (a) *Refund Scheme for recycling of PET bottles and (b) Refund Scheme for recycling of Used tyres*, can we know who are the beneficiaries of these refunds, please?

Dr. Padayachy: For the PET bottles, two companies, namely Polypet Recyclers Ltd and Reso Green ltd are using PET bottles. For the tyres, again two companies, namely REC ltd and Continental Tyre Recycling Co. ltd benefited from this scheme.

Vote 24-1 Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government (Rs11,818,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(03.15 p.m.)

Vote 25-1 Contingencies and Reserves was called.

The Chairperson: Page 479, hon. Bhagwan!

I see 479. Anyway it does not matter carry on. No maybe you left some pages there.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, Item 32155.061 - *Metro Express Ltd*. We are being asked to vote Rs1.3 billion and past year Rs1.7 billion, can the hon. Minister give us the details for the

purpose of this sum and by now what has been the investment of Government itself, public money, in this project?

The Chairperson: I think there might be, let us agree to disagree, there might be a little confusion. This item falls under the Ministry of ... We already put the question. Now we move to page 479! Contingencies and Reserves.

There is no problem if there is no question. Then I put 479. Already voted!

So if you have no question, let me put the question.

Vote 25-1 Contingencies and Reserves (Rs800,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(3.18 p.m.)

Vote 8-1 Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities was called.

The Chairperson: Page 236, hon. Assirvaden!

Mr Assirvaden: Merci, Mr Chairperson. Je voudrais retourner à la page 233 sur les *Key Deliveries and Key Performance*. On nous demande de voter l'Estimates 2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025. À la page 233, au bas, *Contribution of Renewable Energy in Electricity Mix*. Je vois actuelle 2021-2022, c'est bon. Target 2022-2023 mais 2023-2024 est manquant et nous allons tout de suite sur 2024-2025. Peut-on savoir du ministre quel est le *target* pour 2023-2024 puisque le 2023-2024 n'est pas dans le *Contribution Of Renewable Energy In Electricity Mix* ?

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, as announced in the previous Budgets, our targets are set for 2025 and 2030 and the targets in detail are as per the Renewable Energy Road Map which has already been made public.

Mr Assirvaden: Pour 2023-2024, on ne sait pas encore.

Mr Lesjongard: No, it is there in the Roadmap which has been made public.

The Chairperson: Excuse me, may I put some order in this? We are right now on page 236 to 243. I am advised that we are on 236 à 243. Now your questions should be related to those items.

Mr Assirvaden: Donc, on ne peut rien dire sur les pages, la présentation du ministère ?

The Chairperson: Non.

Mr Assirvaden: Ou il y a des manquements ?

The Chairperson: Non. Maybe PQ or PNQ. Let us agree to disagree.

So, there is no question. Page 236, c'est qui? Hon Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 21110.002 - *Salary Compensation*. May we know from the hon. Minister why has the budgeted provision for the Financial Year 2022-2023 decreased substantially?

Mr Lesjongard: The decrease is because salary has been catered for under the Item - Basic Salary.

The Chairperson: Page 236, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. Can the Minister provide the details of the expenditure under this item?

Mr Lesjongard: This is the payment of salary to four Advisors namely –

- (a) Mr K. A. Lai Kong Ling, Advisor on Information Matters for a salary of Rs66,200;
- (b) Mr T. Moosun, Senior Advisor for a salary of Rs94,500;
- (c) Mr M. Murthoo, Public Relations Officer for a salary of Rs25,575, and
- (d) Mr Jhummon, Technical Advisor for a salary of Rs85,250 and other allowances.

The increase is due to revision in salaries with effect as from January 2021.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26313.098 - *Utility Regulatory Authority of which Capacity Building Programme (Grant Funded)*. Can we have further details pertaining to this capacity building programme and also why there is a decrease? Thank you.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, this Item caters for operational costs of the URA and implementation of projects. Provisions have decreased from Rs18 m. to Rs16.25 m. because of production in funding under grant Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions, that is, NAMA projects. With the full operationalisation of the URA following the proclamation of the Electricity Act with effect from 10 June this year, URA is expected to generate its own revenue.

As such, Government grants towards its operational costs will phase out. The Actual amount released to the URA for Financial Year 2021-2022 was at 16 June 2022 in respect of payment of salary of staff, renting of office space and payment of utilities 27.9 m.

Now under the NAMA, URA has benefited from grant of USD1,004 for the purpose of implementing the following activities namely –

- (a) Drafting of renewal energy metering regulations;
- (b) Drafting of tariff regulations;
- (c) Development of online dashboard for monitoring KPI, and
- (d) Development of excel-based tools for tariff calculation.

I understand that an amount of Rs13 m. for Financial Year 2021-2022 was disbursed in respect of tweaking of the online platform, advertising for procurement of projects and payment of fees to Chairman, Member and Secretary of Bid Evaluation Committee.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: The Utility Regulatory Authority, can the hon. Minister give us the composition of the Board for the URA?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, of course, Mr Chairperson. The Chairperson is Mr Philip Ah Chuen, and the members are –

- (a) Mr Sadatmanund Narain;
- (b) Mrs Jenny Mootealoo;
- (c) Mr Pratabsing Bacorisen;
- (d) Mr Gerard Bussier;
- (e) Mrs Madhumattee Ramkhelawon;
- (f) Mrs Geereesaha Topsy Sonoo, and
- (g) Mrs Vallie Mathuvirin, the Secretary.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120 – *Fees*. I can see that there is an increase of 25% from Rs620,000 to Rs775,000 for this financial year and onward. May I have more details behind this provision from the hon. Minister? Thank you.

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, of course, Mr Chairperson. The item provides for payment of fees to Chairman and Members of Boards and Committees as follows –

- Departmental Bid Committee and Bid Evaluation Committee - Rs600,000;
- Fees for training - Rs150,000, and
- Subscription fees to professional bodies - Rs 25,000.

The increases due is adjustment of fees the Chairman and Members of the Board following PRB 2021.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 26313.098 - *Utility Regulatory Authority*. So, if I understood correctly from the hon. Minister, it is only recently that this authority has become operational. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the vacancy for the executive has been filled yet?

Mr Lesjongard: I understand that the contract of appointment of Mrs Potani, that is, the Chief Executive Officer of the URA expired on 30 April this year, and has been extended up to 02 August so as to enable the recruitment of another Chief Executive Officer. The post of the Chief Executive Officer was advertised on 04 April with closing date of 20 May. Seven shortlisted candidates were interviewed. The selection process is still underway, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Under Item 22030 – *Rent*, there has been an increase. Can I know from the Minister about that increase in detail?

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, this item caters for rental charges at Air Mauritius building and Atchia building. Provision has increased because offices at Atchia building will be shifted to new premises.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Under Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, can the hon. Minister provide details of the allowances paid? Thank you.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, this is for payment of responsibility allowance, extra duty allowance, duty remission on car allowance, and car allowance *in lieu* of official car and drivers allowance as per the PRB Report 2021.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22050 - *Office Expenses*, I can see that there is a reduction in the office expenses. Can the Minister give details of the reduction?

Mr Lesjongard: The decrease is based on trend of expenditure for the following reasons, Mr Chairperson, that is, postage and cleaning materials used for cleaning of offices.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Under Item 26313.098 - *Utility Regulatory Authority*, the hon. Minister has provided the names of people based there. Can we also have additionally, the packages that they draw on an individual basis?

Mr Lesjongard: The Chairperson draws a fee of Rs110,000, each Member draws a fee of Rs60,000, and the Secretary draws Rs4,000 per sitting.

Mr Osman Mahomed: And the CEO?

Mr Lesjongard: The Chief Executive Officer has a monthly salary of Rs152,000.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22060 – *Maintenance*. Can we have the name of the beneficiary for the maintenance contract?

Mr Lesjongard: I understand that the amount is to meet the cost for maintenance works of offices at Air Mauritius and Atchia buildings. I believe that must be contractors falling under the purview of Air Mauritius building. Maintenance contracts and repairs of equipment such as photocopy machine, the increase there is based on the trend of expenditure, repairs and servicing of vehicles, and repairs for PCs, laptops and printers. With regard to photocopy machines, I understand that the contractors are CBE Ltd. and ImageRunner Ltd. And I stated that the

maintenance of the buildings falls under the purview of Air Mauritius and the owner of Atchia buildings.

The Chairperson: Page 237, hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22170 - *Travelling within the Republic*. Can the Minister inform the House whether expenditure has been included under this item and if so, give the dates and purpose of visit?

Mr Lesjongard: Visits already done?

Mr Dhunoo: Yes.

Mr Lesjongard: Because I have been provided with information that provision is made for travelling allowances payable to officers visiting Rodrigues, and no official mission was held during the current financial year.

The Chairperson: Page 238, hon. Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22130.001 - *Studies and Project Preparation (a) Consultancy on Electric Vehicles*. Can the hon. Minister provide the name of the consultant and scope of services, please? Thank you.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, the consultancy services on electric vehicles (EV) has been completed and Government has approved the roadmap. This item caters for the consultancy services which was related to the development of the legal framework for EV and associated costs related to sensitisation and training. The Consultant was EVConsult of Netherlands, appointed in March 2019 for an amount of 49,850 Euros and the local partner is Ecosis Ltd.

The Chairperson: Page 238, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under same Item 22130.001 - *Studies and Project Preparation (e) Promoting Sustainable Green & Blue Economy in Mauritius (Grant Funded)*. Can we know who is funding this project and some details about the project?

Mr Lesjongard: It is a new item under the Joint SDG Fund, Mauritius will be allocated an amount of USD 718,900 for the development of enabling environment to catalyse public and private sector investment in the ocean renewable energy sector. The project would include an in-depth technical and economic analysis of the potential of ocean renewable energy technologies,

development of a financing strategy and investment framework for the deployment of ocean renewables. The Ministry of Public Utilities will work in collaboration with the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping, and relevant stakeholders on this project.

The Chairperson: Page 238. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 26313.139 - *Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA)*, we can see a considerable increase. Can we have further details *par rapport à cet item? Merci!*

Mr Lesjongard: This item caters for Government grants and grants from GCF for implementation of projects. The grant funded element has reduced from Rs4.75 m. to Rs1.33 m. due to the closure of GCF Component 1. Government grants towards the operation of MARENA has increased from Rs14 m. to Rs24 m. to cater for recruitment of staff with relevant expertise, that is, engineers, compliance officer and HR officer to support MARENA in achieving the national RE target of 60% by 2030. Currently, MARENA has a workforce of seven employees which is considered inadequate and needs to be reinforced. The increase is also for provision for the conduct of studies and surveys on renewable energy; also related to rental costs from Rs2.2 m. to Rs5 m. as office space will increase. And also, increase in fees for software license for the Management Information System. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 238, Mr Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 238, under the same Item 26313.139 - *Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA) of which Capacity Building Programme (Grant Funded)*. May we know who is the Chairperson and who are the Board members of this Agency, please?

Mr Lesjongard: The Chairperson is Mr Beemadoo; he has a monthly allowance of Rs29,925. A representative of the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities, Mr D. Jahajeea and he draws an allowance of Rs890 per session, plus Rs230 travelling.

There are also –

- Mrs S. Meeheelaul, a representative of the Ministry responsible for the subject of Environment;

- Mr H. Urdhin, a representative of the Ministry responsible for the subject of Finance;
- Mr K. Ramkaloan, a representative of the Joint Economic Council, that is, Business Mauritius;
- Dr. Roddy Lollchund, a representative of the University of Mauritius;
- Mr Irshad Ebrahim Saib, and Mr Vishwanath Jhummon, two persons having wide experience in the field of energy sector, engineering, finance and management.
- Mr Zahir Allam and Mr Roshan Seeboo, two representatives of non-Governmental organisations;
- Hon. Osman Mahomed – we need to appoint another representative of Parliament on this Board, that is, we need to have two Members of the National Assembly;
- Hon. Grandcourt and hon. Franchette Gaspard Pierre Louis, two Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

They all draw a fee of Rs890 per sitting plus travelling allowance.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 238, Mr Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Item 22130.001 - *Studies and Project Preparation (c) Development of Regulatory Framework for Energy Performance Contracting*, can we know from the hon. Minister who will be developing this regulatory framework for Government?

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, funds have been provided under Budget 2021-2022 to recruit a Consultant to set up a framework to promote energy performance contracting in Mauritius. However, estimated cost for the project has been revised on the basis of terms of reference worked out by EEMO. Bids will be launched shortly for recruitment of a Consultant.

The objective of this project is to introduce EPC through the development of a suitable framework including regulations and templates of EPC documents, EPC guides, contract templates and provision of training to companies on EPC and ESCO concept. EPC can multiply energy-savings and in parallel increase private business activity and growth in the EE sector through job creation, and hence help to boost the economy. This is information that I have.

The Chairperson: Page 238, Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 238, Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha!

Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services (b) Awareness and Energy Efficiency*, can we have more details about the kind of awareness under this item, please?

Mr Lesjongard: Provision to meet the cost of hiring an advertisement agency to develop new awareness raising materials which will comprise posters, audio and video clips and e-brochures. During Financial Year 2022-2023, awareness material will be developed for a media campaign on new strategy labels following amendments made in the energy efficiency regulations. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Page 238. Hon Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 2213.001 - *Studies and Project Preparation (d) Framework to Promote Heat Pump Technology*, can we know from the hon. Minister the details of this item?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, this is a new item, Mr Chairperson. The funds have been provided to recruit a Consultant to develop a framework in order to maximise the energy efficiency gains made possible by heat pumps to achieve better energy efficiency than conventional heating solutions in the domestic, industrial and commercial sectors.

The Chairperson: Page 238, hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services (a) Energy Efficiency Management Office*, may I know from the hon. Minister what is the composition of this Office, staff wise, and what exactly is their mission, please?

Mr Lesjongard: The staff list of the Energy Efficiency Management Office –

- the Director's post is vacant but I understand that Mr Sewtohul has been assigned duties of Director;
- Engineers: Mr Ramkurrun, Ms Safee and Mr Sewtohul;
- Technical Officer: Mr Agathe, Mr Guinness and Mr Mahadawoo;
- The post of Technical Officer is vacant.

The Mission of that Office is as per the Energy Efficiency Act that we voted in year 2011. I do not have that detail with me, Mr Chairperson. I can table the information requested or if we go through the Energy Efficiency Act of 2011 we will find the objectives of that office. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 238, Mr Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson! Under the same item, Item 22130.001 - *Studies and Surveys (e) Promoting Sustainable Green & Blue Economy in Mauritius (Grant Funded)*. This is also a new item. Can we know what this project is about and what is the expected outcome? A sum of Rs10.2 m. has been allocated. It is a new item.

Mr Lesjongard: I replied on it earlier. Anyway, Mr Chairperson, I will say the same thing again. If we are referring to *(e) Promoting Sustainable Green & Blue Economy in Mauritius (Grant Funded)*, like I said, this is a new item under the joint SDG Fund, and we will be allocated an amount of USD 718,900. This will be for the development of an enabling environment to catalyse public and private sector investment in the ocean renewable energy sector. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 238. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 26313.139 - *Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA)*, can we know who the CEO is, and what is the salary of the CEO?

Mr Lesjongard: The CEO of MARENA is Ms M. Mungra. She was appointed on 03 February 2021 on a two-year's contract, and therefore, the contract will expire in February next year. She draws a monthly salary of Rs200,000 including allowances.

The Chairperson: Page 238. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: The question has already been canvassed.

The Chairperson: Page 238. Hon. Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.139 - *Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA)*, can the hon. Minister inform whether the staff at MARENA would be sufficient to implement the Renewable Energy Roadmap 2030 with that increase in the provision?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, Mr Chairperson, I explained earlier that we have made provisions for increasing staff of MARENA in order to be able to implement the RE Roadmap. I have given details earlier. At present, there are seven and we are recruiting a certain number of personnel to be able to increase and meet our targets. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 239. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 239, Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultant - Review of Legislation for Water Sector*. May we know from the hon. Minister as to the increase in the budgetary provision from Rs2 m. to Rs5 m., and who has been appointed as consultant to review this particular legislation on water sector?

Mr Lesjongard: This provision is for payment of fees to Chairman and members of bid committees, fees for training, consultancy for drafting of the Water Bill and refund of subscription fees to professional bodies. The increase is due to provision of Rs3 m. made in respect of consultancy services for drafting of the Water Bill. The Ministry has approached the UNDP for the selection of a team of Consultants for this assignment. The team is expected to start its assignment by the beginning of July this year.

The Chairperson: Page 239. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Capital Expenditure, Item 28222.014 - *Water Tank Grant Scheme*, I can see for last year, there was a provision of Rs100 m. Can we know the number of beneficiaries under that Scheme for last year, please?

Mr Lesjongard: I understand that at the level of the Ministry, from 01 July last year to the beginning of February this year, 8,485 applications of water tank and domestic water pump were approved. And, as now, the application is being processed by the Development Bank of Mauritius. Since the month of February this year until now, 8,412 applications have been approved and coupons issued. However, only 2,000 applicants have received their water tank and domestic water pump. This is the situation, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 239. Hon. Abbas Mamode!

Mr Abbas Mamode: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28223.010 - *Central Water Authority - Pipe Replacement Programme (i) Upgrading of Pumping Stations at Poudre D'Or*

Balancing Tank and Inlet of Boreholes, can the hon. Minister give us details on this project and whether it has started, and if so, the name of the Contractor?

Mr Lesjongard: Upgrading of Pumping Stations at Poudre d'Or Balancing Tank and Inlet of Boreholes, I understand that the bids were launched in 2021 and the Central Procurement Board has informed in April this year that no responsive bids has been received. A new bid document is under preparation with revised cost estimates. It is for this reason that we have provided funds in this year's estimates for the implementation of the project.

The Chairperson: Page 239. Hon. Wochit!

Mr Wochit: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys (a) Upgrading of La Nicoliere Reservoir*, last year Rs6 m. was earmarked, and this year also Rs6 m. has been earmarked. Can the hon. Minister inform the House on the starting date of the upgrading and the duration, please?

Mr Lesjongard: I understand, Mr Chairperson, that provision is for payment of consultancy services for feasibility study on the enlargement of La Nicolière Reservoir to improve the water distribution in the Northern region. The Phase 2 of the project started in May 2022 and is expected to be completed by November this year, with the submission of the final feasibility report and a preliminary cost estimates. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Page 239. Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 28223.010 - *(g) Salazie - Les Mariannes*, may we know from the hon. Minister, the status of this project at Les Mariannes?

Mr Lesjongard: The project consisted of replacement of 6kms of pipe at Salazie, Les Mariannes. The project has already been completed and it is under the defect liability period.

The Chairperson: Page 239, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 28223.010 - *(a) Beau Bassin and Rose Hill*, we know that since three years now that you are replacing the pipes in Rose Hill, can we know from the Minister where matters stand regarding replacement of pipes?

Mr Lesjongard: Yes, Mr Chairperson, with regard to the delays, I have already given the required information in the House. But with regard to that budget item, let me give the progress

of works first. Works have been completed up to 85%, that is, excluding reinstatement works for Rose Hill Zone 1 and 70% excluding reinstatement works for Rose Hill Zone 2. Now, we have had to terminate the contract of that contractor on 15 of May 2021 due to poor performance. Funds have been provided in this year's estimate for completion of outstanding works, that is, pipe laying, construction of chambers and trench reinstatement works.

After the termination of the contract, the remaining works had to be reassessed and required clearances sought before launching of fresh tenders. We also know, Mr Chairperson, that in the meantime, the Municipality of Beau Bassin- Rose Hill, the RDA and even the CWA have carried out remedial road reinstatement works along some of the streets. The expected start of works will be October this year, and the duration of the works will be for a period of six months. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Page 23, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On the same item, can the hon. Minister tell us if we can have a list of the remaining sites where the pipes are going to be replaced in Beau Bassin, please?

Mr Lesjongard: I will have to check whether I have the list with me, if it is there, I will definitely provide the information. Otherwise, I will table the information requested.

The Chairperson: Page 239, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28223.010 - *Central Water Authority*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether any provision has been made in this year's budget for pipe replacement in Constituency No. 2 -Tranquebar, Vallée Pitot, Ward 4, because all these places have old pipes, and I do not see any names on this list?

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, I will have to check, but I know there is an outstanding project in Constituency No. 2. I believe that is related to upgrading the capacity of the reservoir, that is, the renewal of pumping main from New Plaine Lauzun Pumping Station to Upper Monneron to increase water supply in that region. This is a new project to improve water supply in the regions of Vallée Pitot and Tranquebar. The project is expected to benefit around 4,000 subscribers with improved hours of supply from 10 to 16 hours daily. The objective of the project is to lay a dedicated pipeline from Plaine Lauzun Pumping Station to Upper Monneron

Reservoir in order to transfer some additional 2,000 m³ of water to the reservoir. Presently, Upper Monneron Reservoir is receiving about 6,000 m³ per day from Plaine Lauzun Pumping Station. The scope of the works mainly consist of supply and laying of, like I said, 5 km of 400 mm DI pipe from the New Plaine Lauzun Pumping Station to the Upper Monneron Reservoir and afterwards road reinstatement works. The expected launching date of the project is during the month of July 2022. Expected award date is October 2022, starting of works expected in November 2022, and the contract duration is for a period of 15 months.

Vote 8-1 Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities (Rs2,707,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, I invite the hon. Deputy Chairperson of Committee to chair the Committee of Supply.

At this stage, the Deputy Chairperson of Committees took the Chair.

The Chairperson: Please be seated!

(4.02 p.m.)

Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity

Vote 9-1 Social Integration was called.

The Chairperson: We will start from page 251. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, under Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may I know from the hon. Minister to whom this amount is paid?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, provision is made to cater for one Advisor, Mr Soyfoo, Advisor in Public Relation Matters.

The Chairperson: Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Yes, under Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*...

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: I have just answered.

The Chairperson: Page 252, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Under vote Item 22120 – *Fees*, may we know from the hon. Minister the breakdown of the fees and why there is a decrease for the financial year 2022-2023?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Provisions made for the following: payment of fees to Chairperson and members of Committee, namely Departmental Bid Committee, Bid Evaluation Committee, Audit Committee, *Ad-hoc* Committee and consultancy fees. But the amount has been decreased because we no longer need major consultancy services.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Page 252. Item 26313.135 - *National Empowerment Foundation*, can we know the composition of the Board of the NEF, the Chairperson and the members of the Board? Also, there is a Chief Operating Officer of the NEF or the General Manager, his remuneration?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Mr Raffick Sorefan is the Chairperson. Then, we have representatives from government institutions; from the private sector - Mrs Ragaven, and from the civil society, we have four members. We do not have a General Manager, but he will soon be appointed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.315 – *National Empowerment Foundation*, can we know, hon. Minister, why the operating cost are so high? Can we have a break-down of same, Rs155 m?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Provision made to meet the operating cost of the National Empowerment Foundation, including Mauritius and Rodrigues; it includes salaries, allowances, cost of utilities, maintenance of equipment etc. We have a staff of 245 persons. The social integration division has two arms, the NEF and the NSIF. So, they are the ones who provide all the support to our beneficiaries.

Mr Juman: What is the amount disbursed for the year by the NEF in all projects?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: But we have different projects. So, for example, we have an amount disbursed for the upgrading of living environment. I do not have the information, let me check with the officers.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, can you table it later on?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, I can.

The Chairperson: So, we move on to the next question, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 27210 – *Social Assistance Benefits in cash, (c) Educational Support of which (iii) school materials*, Rs40 m. earmarked for 2022/23. Can the, hon. Minister give us the names of the suppliers of these school materials?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: School materials, we have different items, we have bags, shoes, uniforms and stationary. So, for shoes, it is Triolet Noble Cooperative Society Ltd. For uniforms and socks, it is Nivra Enterprises Ltd., and for bags, Knight Trading Agency Co. Ltd.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same Item 26313.315 – *National Empowerment Foundation of which (c) TVET Training & Placement*, there has been a decrease in the budget. Can the Minister give more details?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, it has been decreased because we have not been able to give training because of the COVID-19 pandemic. So, now, we will start.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 27210 – *Social Assistance Benefits in cash*, most of these beneficiaries have to be on the social register. So, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of applications for admission on the social register that was made last year and currently how many people are on the social register?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, for the time being we have 5 784 people on the register. 3,294 in Mauritius and 2 490 in Rodrigues.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 252, Item 22130 – *Studies and Surveys*, can the hon. Minister state how much has been disbursed out of Rs1 m. allocated for studies and surveys? And, on what, please?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Studies have been carried on the Free Examination Fees Scheme by a Consultant from the University of Mauritius. We have paid him Rs97,500.

The Chairperson: Hon. Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 27210.014 – *Poverty and Empowerment (Marshall Plan Against Poverty) (ii) Child Allowance*, can we know the number of beneficiaries for same? Thank you.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: We have an average of 6 082 children per month.

The Chairperson: We move to page 253 if you do not have any question on page 252. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 26 – *Grants, 26131.135 – National Empowerment Foundation*, can the hon. Minister be kind enough to give us detailed information in relation to eligibility criteria, the number of beneficiaries, sites and locations of construction, and then the composition of the National Empowerment Foundation?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: With regard to the composition I have answered already. Now, with regard to the National Empowerment Foundation, for this Item we are concerned with three main types of social housing. The construction of fully concrete houses; the purchase of NHDC houses and also the upgrading of existing houses. The beneficiaries should be registered on the social register. If we are talking of fully concrete houses, we are, here, concerned about beneficiaries who are land owners. Now, with regard to NHDC houses, they are landless beneficiaries, we buy houses from NHDC and the beneficiaries refund up to 20% only. So, 80% are subsidised by Government.

Dr. Boolell: Do you have a progress report as to where matters stand, please?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: With regard to which Item?

Dr. Boolell: In respect of the specific question I have put to you.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: For the fully concrete houses, we have completed for the year 2021/2022, 76 houses. So, ongoing projects, 39. With regard to NHDC houses, we have acquired from the Ministry of Housing, 107 units, and with regard to the third scheme, upgrading of existing houses, we have been able to upgrade 11 houses. Are you okay?

Dr. Boolell: If you are happy, I am happy!

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: I am always happy!

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, may I request that you limit your questions specific to the expenses and if you have got other questions, you can come with a PQ. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. In fact, it relates to the same Item 26323.135 – *Extra-Budgetary Units, National Empowerment Foundation (i) Construction of Social Housing Units*. I am a bit surprised when I see the amount earmarked for 2022/23. The number of people on the Social Register of Mauritius is increasing and, I think, that the demand for social housing units also is increasing. How can it be that the amount earmarked for construction of social housing units, for the coming financial year, has decreased?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: It does not mean that if there is an increase in the number of beneficiaries, there is automatically an increase in the amount of demand for houses.

Yes, I understand your point. This amount has been decreased because this year, we have a forecast, we will acquire 48 houses from NHDC and if we need to acquire more houses then there is no problem. We will ask for funds from the Ministry of Finance, it has been the case in the past also.

You know it depends, when we talk about NHDC houses, it depends on the amount of houses constructed by NHDC and then from each lot, we buy 10%.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Under Item 26323.135 – *National Empowerment Foundation - Social Housing for Vulnerable Groups*. Can the hon. Minister table a list region wise on all the houses that have been allocated to beneficiaries.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, I will table. If we are talking about NHDC, so, we have 65 at Dagotièrre, 30 at Mare Tabac, 12 at Gros Cailloux and with regard to the fully concrete housing unit, I will table a list.

The Chairperson: The time is over!

Vote 9-1 Social Integration (Rs637,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(4.18 p.m.)

Vote 9-2 Social Security and National Solidarity was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 255, hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: It is Page 256, sorry.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo! Page 255

Mr Dhunoo: Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 - *Rent*. May I know from the hon. Minister what is covered under this Item, Rs11 m.?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Payment for rental of offices at NPF Building Port Louis, 10th Floor, then we have 12th Floor also and 13th Floor and also renting of 22 parking slots in NPF Building itself.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. May we know the beneficiaries and their package, please?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Provision is made for payment of –

- (a) Miss Louis, Advisor on Information matters Rs66,200;
- (b) Mr Hip Hoy Cheong, Advisor on Public Relations matters drawing Rs32,350, and
- (c) Mrs Sahebally, Advisor drawing Rs62,700, monthly.

The Chairperson: Any question on page 255? So we move to page 256. Hon Wochit!

Mr Wochit: Thank you, Mr Chairperson! Item 22140 – *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment*. We have a decrease in the budget and in fact in the local market we can see that there is an increase in the medical supplies and drugs and here we have a decrease. Can the hon. Minister inform the House, why?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Rs43 m. budgeted for 125,000 doses. However, only 65,000 dozens were purchased based on trend, that is why there is a decrease. For the time being, we are only using 65,000 doses of anti-influenza vaccines. That is why you can see there is a decrease.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Anquetil!

Ms Anquetil: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.093 – *Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board*. May we know from the hon. Minister when the Board will be reconstituted? How many persons have been trained and when will a full time manager be recruited? Thank you.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: We did the needful to have a full time General Manager but unfortunately we have not able to find one so far. In view of the fact that we are working on the Disability Bill, many things will change and then we will see if we will need a General Manager or not.

Ms Anquetil: The reconstitution of the Board.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: The Board has already been reconstituted, so let me see if the officer has the answer.

Ms Anquetil: How many persons have been trained, please?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: I can say not many persons, only 47. This can be explained. We have a list of persons on our databank. Very often we call them for training but they come for one day or two and then they do not continue with the training. So we are doing a lot of effort to encourage persons with disabilities to be on the training front and then this can help in their employment also.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. In respect of Item 22120.001 – *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*. There is quite a substantial increase. Will the hon. Minister be kind enough to enlighten us on what explains this massive increase?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: This can be explained by the increase in the number of beneficiaries and increase in the amount of fees paid to the different doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nurses also.

Dr. Boolell: If we can have a breakdown, please?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Domiciliary visits are normally given to persons who are bedridden and elders aged 90 and above. So the fees paid to doctors is Rs650 per visit and from July 2020 to April 2022 - 12,033 visits effected, an average of Rs1,200 per month and we have 62 nurses, 9 physiotherapists and 9 occupational therapists.

The Chairperson: Okay?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26313.081 – *Senior Citizens Council*. Can we have the composition of same and we can see there is an increase in the budgetary amount. Can we have further details? Thank you.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Composition of the Board, I do know that Mr Seebaruth is the Chairperson and then the Vice-President is Mrs Raseeda Hossenbaccus. Mr Seebaruth draws a salary of Rs27,300 and then your next question was about what, Madam?

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Details pertaining to the increase in the amount. You can table the information.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Increased provision is to cater for increase in salaries and allowances of staff of the Senior Citizen Council, aligned as per PRB 2021 recommendations.

The Chairperson: Hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.056 - *National Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons*. May I know from the hon. Minister the composition of this Council, please?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: The Chairperson is from our Ministry Mrs Ramdharee, Deputy Permanent Secretary; we have representative from the Ministry of Labour and other Ministries. We have a representative from the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development, Mr Ravindra Kumar Shabajee. We also have a representative from the other division of my Ministry - from Social Integration, Mrs Salma Hosany.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I will come back to Item 22120.001 - *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*. Can I request the hon. Minister to table a list of all the doctors who have performed the domiciliary visits and the fees paid to each of these doctors?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: It is the same fees. As I have said, it is domiciliary visits...

Mr Uteem: Table it. We do not know...

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Let me finish then you can put any supplementary. So, as I have said the fees paid are Rs650. We have a pool of 281 doctors, if I am not mistaken. If you

want a list, I will surely table the list of all the doctors who have effected the domiciliary visits. No worries!

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22090 – *Security*. May we know to whom the contract has been awarded for security please?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Provision is made for payment of security services for Recreational Centres: Foyer Trochetia, Bois Savon, Roches Brunes Elderly Day Care Centre, and La Marie Elderly Day Care Centre. And also for renting of CCTV surveillance system for Social Security offices. Now, let us start with security services –

1. Foyer Trochetia, the company is RSL Security Services Ltd to the tune of Rs83,000;
2. James Burty David Recreation Centre - Top Security Service, Rs72,000;
3. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Recreation Centre - RSL Security Services, Rs100,000;
4. Lady Sushil Ramgoolam Recreation Centre - Top Security Service Ltd;
5. Riambel, this Recreational Centre is mostly completed - Rapid Security Services Ltd;
6. Bois Savon Centre, normally a centre for women who are in good health and living alone - Top Security Service Ltd,
7. Roches Brunes Day Care Centre - Top Security Service Ltd.

For the Social Security offices, Brinks is doing the needful with regard to the security services.

The Chairperson: Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.081 - *Senior Citizens Council*, can the hon. Minister tell us what are the activities organised by the Council for the year 2021-2022 for the welfare of our senior citizens?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Good question! None, because of COVID-19 pandemic. You know, the Senior Citizens Council is very active when we talk about activities for the welfare of

our elders, to improve their quality of life. But due to the pandemic, we have not been able to do many activities for their own health.

Mr Juman: We can see Rs10 m. spent for the year 2021-2022.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: No, we have not spent the Rs10 m. As you have rightly pointed out, in normal times, we promote activities and projects for the welfare of our seniors, encourage them to lead a healthy life, but we have not been able to gather them for the past two years.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120.001 - *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*. May I know the composition of the Medical Appeal Tribunal and how many specialists sit on this Tribunal? Can the Minister also provide how many medical practitioners are currently employed by the Ministry on a sessional basis?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: For the Medical Appeal Tribunal, we have someone from the State Law Office who is the Chair. And then, if my memory serves me right, we have also 2 specialist doctors on the Board.

Mr Dhunoo: How many medical practitioners are currently employed by the Ministry on a sessional basis?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Well, it all depends on the sessions we are having, but we have a pool of 281 doctors attached to the Social Security Office.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 22120.001 - *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*. Can the hon. Minister circulate the composition of all the medical boards under that item? Can it be circulated?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: The medical board?

Mr Ramful: Yes.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: We move to page 257. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 27210.012 - *Assistance and Training of Disabled Persons*, may we have more details about what is the training? Is that very different from what is done by the training and employment of disabled persons?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: This item concerns refund of bus fares to accompanying parents of around 1,900 disabled children attending 47 specialised schools and NGOs, and 63 integrated units in primary, secondary mainstream educational institutions, and 9 pre-primary schools. Secondly, refund of taxi fares for 34 students with severe disabilities attending courses at primary, secondary and tertiary level and who cannot travel by normal means of transport. There is a decrease because it is based on actual expenditure.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha!

Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 27220.002 - *Assistance to Parents of Disabled Children*. Can the hon. Minister tell us how many parents benefit from this assistance?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: It all depends on the demand from the parents. It concerns the Respite Care Programme. We provide assistance to parents of disabled children through a residential stay organised every last weekend of each month for children with disabilities at recreational centres. But now, in view of the fact that recreational centres were used as quarantine, we have not been able to proceed with this particular Respite Care Programme.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 257 under Capital Expenditure, Item 31132.116 – *E-Social Security System*, may the hon. Minister inform the House how this Rs10 m. would be spent and the status of the project? Thank you.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Provision is made for the recruitment of a Consultant for reviewing the project specification and assessing the current and future needs of the Ministry's computerised system, and also to assist in the preparation of tender documents and supervision of the overall implementation of the E-Social Security project. This is a very important project. So, we do hope we will be able to materialise this particular project.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Anquetil!

Ms Anquetil: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31111.402 - *Upgrading of Recreational Centres*, sachant que les *recreational centres* ont été réorganisés en *COVID Centres*, peut-on savoir de la ministre quand ces centres seront à nouveau sous l'administration de son ministère et quand les seniors pourront en profiter ?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Let me clear this. Upgrading of disability centres does not concern the recreational centres; here we are talking of extension of Foyer Trochetia. Now, to reply to your question, yes, the recreational centres were used as quarantine centres. Now that they are no more being used as quarantine centres, they have been given back to us. But for two years they were not with us and they have been used as quarantine centres. We will have to refurbish all the centres; this is what we are doing now, and as soon as we can, the centres will be opened for our elders. Now, with regard to this item, upgrading of disability centres, here we are talking of provisions made for repair works at Wing 2 of Foyer Trochetia, repairs of wastewater system and supply installation, testing and commissioning of new refrigeration unit. Foyer Trochetia – it is good for me to mention – takes care of severely disabled persons.

The Chairperson: Hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28212.013 - *Gifts to Centenarians*, may I know from the hon. Minister how many centenarians we luckily have in Mauritius at the moment *et si je peux profiter de cette question pour demander à Madame la ministre quel est l'âge de la personne la plus âgée actuellement au pays ?*

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: For the first question, we have presently 184 centenarians of whom 155 are female and male are very far, only 29. Males have to run. Now, with regard to the oldest, I think the oldest is 102. I will have to check, let me check with the officers and then I will let you know.

Mr David: 107 à Cité Vallijee apparemment!

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: 107! *Très bien!* We do hope we have centenarians of older age; it is good for the country.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 27210.017 - *Social Aid for Assistive Devices*, I can see that Rs35 m. have been spent last year. Can we know what were the number of applications and the number of beneficiaries?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: So, let me start one by one –

1. Hearing aids: 358 applications; issued: 250, pending: 108;
2. Wheelchairs: 1,417 applications; issued: 1,156; pending: 261;
3. Dentures: 953 applications; issued: 930; pending: 23;
4. Spectacles: 3,215 applications; issued: 3,184; pending: 31.

The Chairperson: Let's move to page 258 because we have only three minutes left for this section. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 27210.301 -*Assistance to Ex-Servicemen*, I have seen that it has decreased from Rs43 m. to Rs30 m. Can we have more details on this?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Provision is made for payment of pension Rs2,000 and Rs500 to ex-servicemen and widows of ex-servicemen, respectively. Funeral grant is also payable as follows –

- (i) ex-servicemen: Rs5,500;
- (ii) widows: Rs3,000.

Number of beneficiaries –

- (i) ex-servicemen: 460;
- (ii) ex-servicemen widows: 3,013.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On the same page 258, Item 22120.001 - *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*, can we know how many cases were examined by the Medical Board in the Financial Year 2021-2022? Thank you.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: A monthly average of 4,600 cases per month. Fees paid to Doctors: Rs1,215 per Board and if it is home visit, it is Rs650.

The Chairperson: We have got one minute left. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Yes, actually it is on the same question which has just been asked, Item 22120.001 - *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*. Can the hon. Minister table the list of doctors who perform these visits and the amount paid to them?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: As I have said, we have a pool of 281 doctors. I will table the list of the doctors who have effected the Medical visits.

The Chairperson: Time is over!

Vote 9-2 Social Security and National Solidarity (Rs46,425,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(4.40 p.m.)

Vote 10-1 Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger, page 266.

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, can we know the name of the Advisors and their packages, please?

Mr Bholah: We have –

- (i) Mrs Ruquyya Kurreembokus: Rs66,200 monthly; She is the Advisor on Information Matters;
- (ii) Mr Kiran Darimdur: Rs 27,400 monthly, Advisor on SMEs.

The Chairperson: Page 266, anyone? So we move to page 267. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants (COMESA Funded)*; may I know from the hon. Minister what this consultancy fees relates to?

Mr Bholah: This relates to the promotion of the leather sector. In fact, we are going to engage consultants to identify international suppliers within the African continent from where Mauritius can source good quality rawhides and skins as well as identify potential markets worldwide including Africa for the export of Mauritian leather and leather related projects. The project will be financed under the 11th European Development Fund Technical Assistance

Facility of the Regional Enterprise Competitiveness and Access to Markets Programme to the tune of Euro116,199.

The Chairperson: You are done, Minister?

Mr Bholah: Yes.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item *31132.117 - Development of a Centralised IT System*, can we have further details with regard to this system? Thank you.

Mr Bholah: It refers to the system that we have at the level of the SME Mauritius. The project has already started. So, we have provided for another Rs2 m.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22 - *Goods and Services*, last year, it was Rs12.6 m., this year, it is Rs18.5 m. Can the hon. Minister explain why this increase?

Mr Bholah: The main item is *22120* under *Goods and Services*, for which I have just provided the answer following the question from hon. Uteem. This is the main reason why there has been an increase.

The Chairperson: Any other question on page 267? Page 268? Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 268, Item *26313.046 - Mauritius Standards Bureau*, may I know the name of the General Manager, and the pay packet?

Mr Bholah: She is Mrs Sandhya Boygah and her package is according to the PRB Report.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same Item *26313.064 - National Productivity and Competitiveness Council*, we see that there is a considerable increase. May we have further details *par rapport à cette augmentation* and the activities being carried out under this Item? Thank you.

Mr Bholah: There has been a report following a study on the terms and conditions of the workers by CAPFOR and there has been recommendation to increase the salaries and other

related expenses. The amount provided takes this into consideration because payment will be done with effect from January 2021. So, there are arrears that need to be paid.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Under the same Item 26313.046 - *Mauritius Standards Bureau*, may we know the qualification of the CEO, Mrs Boygah and also her salary package?

Mr Bholah: I have just mentioned about the salary package. The qualifications I will...

The Chairperson: Hon. Léopold!

Mr Léopold: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same Item - 26 -*Grants*, there has been a decrease. Can you explain why the decrease in the allocation of sum? There has been a considerable decrease in funding. Can you explain why?

Mr Bholah: Yes, because for last year, I mean, 2021-2022, figures were provided for acquisition. So, most of acquisitions have been made. This is why for this year, there has been a decrease.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you. Item 22090 – *Security*, can we know to whom the contract has been awarded, please?

Mr Bholah: The service provider is Hardware and Security Co. Ltd and they have a contract running from 10 October 2021 to 09 October this year. The rate is Rs27,600. We have Brinks as well - 20 hours surveillance of office premises.

The Chairperson: Any other question on page 268? No. Page 269. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. On the Item 28225.002 - *Accompanying Measures for SMEs*, can the Minister enlighten us as to why there is no provision for this year's estimates and as to how the accompanying measures were used; who have been the beneficiaries and what criteria were used extending this support to the SMEs?

Mr Bholah: For last year, the Rs2 m. were for the promotion of new segments, namely Aroma Therapy, Nutraceuticals and Stevia. We had launched bids for the appointment of consultants and, unfortunately, there was no response. So, we have relaunched again. Now, for

this year, it is true that this is not under this item but, in fact, we have provided for the same amount in the National Resilience Fund (NRF).

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 269, Item 22120 – *Fees*, can we have further details pertaining the fees?

Mr Bholah: The Item comprises of fees to Chairman and members of boards and committees, fees to assessors and fees for training.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.147 - *SME Mauritius Ltd*, a significant increase in the grant from Rs43 m. to Rs60.5 m. May I know from the hon. Minister, being given the reports of the National Audit on SME Mauritius, when will SME Mauritius appoint an Internal Auditor and when will it publish its financial accounts?

Mr Bholah: If you want an explanation on the figures as to why there is an increase, for the last year, they had to draw from the reserves. Now, for this year, an appropriate amount has been provided for spending. In fact, there is no Internal Auditor. The audit is carried out by the National Audit Office and as far as I know the audit work is going on. The problem arises when the accounts are ready, given the load of work at the level of the Audit Department over there, it always takes time to come and to do the audit work.

The Chairperson: Any question on page 269?

Mr R. Duval: Page 269, Item 22090 – *Security*, can I have more details about the increase?

Mr Bholah: Additional provision has been made to cater for increase in monthly rates from Rs39,100 to Rs43,125 and security service for the new Co-operative Business Centre at St Pierre.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*, there has been an increase. Can we have the list of buildings and where we are renting?

Mr Bholah: We foresee that there will be a relocation of offices. The office will move.

The Chairperson: We move to page 270. We start with hon. Mrs Mayotte.

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112.430 - *Upgrading of 'Maisons des Eleveurs/Maisons des Pecheurs' (i) Tamarin*, can the hon. Minister give us a status on the upgrading of this *maison des pécheurs*, specifically the one at Tamarin, can we know what is the scope of works too?

Mr Bholah: I know you came up with the same question last year and I thank you for that. In fact, much progress has been noted because, you know, we need to go through appropriate phases, and MNI has come up with its recommendations. Also with the implication with regard to electricity and others, because we are going to put a cold room as well over there. So, work is well on track. We hope that during this coming financial year, this will be operational.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell! Do you still have a question?

Dr. Boolell: Yes, you asked so politely. Other expenses, page 270 Item 28211.030 - *Mauritius Co-operative Alliance Ltd*, Rs2,415,000, if the Minister can enlighten us as to the proper monitoring and judicious use of the resources allocated. I know the registrar does a good work, but if he could update us as to whether there is transparency and accountability?

Mr Bholah: Of course, there is transparency. In fact, they are always apprised of the major progress and major programmes and schemes that the Cooperative Division of my Ministry launches. They are always present on the major meetings that we hold.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 270, under Item 26313.061 - *National Cooperative College*, can the hon. Minister table the list of activities which occur at the National Cooperative College? Thank you.

Mr Bholah: Yes, given that it is a National Cooperative College, the main function is to run courses, training, etc. So, I will give you some more information on that.

The Chairperson: Hon. Léopold!

Mr Léopold: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Capital Expenditure, Item 28225.017 - *Boost to Local Production Scheme*, why there is no money provided in this coming fiscal year?

Mr Bholah: There is no money because provision has been made under the National Resilience Fund (NRF).

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I will take it on the Item 31132.106 - *Cooperatives Division eRegistration Project*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of cooperatives which will be registered on this registration project including the number of cooperatives which are in default of their obligations?

Mr Bholah: For the last part of this question, I need to dig out the answer and provide it. In fact, what we wish is to have all the cooperative societies on the system so that we do away with, you know, the *paperasse*.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under same Item, is the Ministry going to make it compulsory for all cooperatives to register on the eRegistration Project?

Mr Bholah: Not at this moment because we have to train the personnel as well. You know with the cooperative society, the problem is that there is an ageing population who are not conversant with using computers. So, we cannot make it compulsory at this moment.

The Chairperson: Thank you. No more questions?

Vote 10-1 - Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives (Rs513,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(5.00 p.m.)

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change

Vote 11-1 Environment and Climate Change was called.

The Chairperson: We will start from page 278. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under same Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may we know the names of the Advisors and their respective package, please?

Mr Ramano: For this item, the amount provided is for the payment of salaries and end of year bonus to four Advisors of the Ministry. We have the name of the four Advisors –

- 1) Mr Prakash Kowlessar, Senior Advisor on Environmental and Solid Waste Matters for a period of one year with effect from 20 of September 2021;
- 2) Mrs Christelle M.B Chumroo, Advisor on Information Matters, renewed for a period of one year with effect from 02 of February 2021;
- 3) Mrs Sarita Ramkalawon, Advisor on Public Relations Matters, renewed for a period of one year with effect from 20 of May 2021, and
- 4) Mr Gilbert Clyde Bastienne, Advisor on Landscaping Matters for a period of one year with effect from November 2021.

The Chairperson: Hon. Abbas Mamode!

Mr Abbas Mamode: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 278, Item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary*, there is an increase. What is the reason for increase, hon. Minister?

Mr Ramano: Mr Chairperson, the increase is a provision made to meet salaries of 124 staff. It is based on the point of entry in the salary scale, promotional post and the yearly increment payable to employees. Increase is due to the PRB Report of 2021.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 21110.004 - *Allowances*, there has been an increase for allowances. Can the hon. Minister explain why?

Mr Ramano: The increase is provided for the payment of allowances as approved by the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms. Allowances relate to payment made to officers in the Administrative and General Services Cadre for performing higher duties during absence, on leave or training or on mission of the higher officers. Some officers have continuously performed higher duties from funded vacancies, for example, in the grade of Office Supervisor and Office Management.

Allowances have been paid during the financial year 2021-2022 in the following cases: for the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Assistant Permanent Secretaries, Office Management Assistants, Management Support Officers, Word Processing Operators and Office Auxiliaries.

The Chairperson: So, we move to page 279. We start by hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26323.003 - *Beach Authority*, for which, last year we had voted Rs51.4 m. For this year and subsequent years, there is a nil vote for this.

Mr Ramano: Non, c'est tout simplement une question administrative suivant les recommandations du ministère des Finances. Nous allons retrouver les mêmes items lorsque nous allons aborder le *Solid Waste Management*.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Now, I know the issue of rent is an issue that sometimes can be controversial. I wish the Ministry had its own building. Can the Minister apprise us as to rental, where are the locations? Where are the offices? If he can give us a breakdown in respect of the estimates for this year and last year?

Mr Ramano: For the rent, it is an amount provided to meet the cost of rental of office space, parking slots, facilities for events and other costs in connection with organisations of events under the aegis of the Ministry. So, for rental of buildings, it is an amount of Rs13,900,000. Rental of parking slots Rs600,000 and rental of facilities for events Rs10,000.

For the details, Mr Chairperson, funds for Financial year 2021/2022 was used for the renting of office space of an area of 42 267 sq ft. from capital development limited, Ken Lee Tower, Port Louis. The yearly rent is Rs13,720,732.80 for the period of 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022. And, we have a second building, the Emanuel Anquetil Building that is Government-owned.

The Chairperson: Hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22170 – *Travelling within the Republic*, we can see that for this financial year, the provision is Rs1.6 m. compared to Rs735 000 last year. So, this is more than doubled. May I know the reason behind this high increase?

Mr Ramano: Sure! Provision made to meet cost of air tickets, accommodation and other related cost for travelling within the territories of Mauritius *inter alia* Rodrigues, Agaléga and St Brandon; funds to carry out also two environmental monitoring exercises by enforcing agencies during the Financial Year 2022/2023 in respect of construction works being undertaken by

Afcons and monitoring of coastal erosion at Agaléga. The passage cost was Rs500 000 and accommodation Rs1 100 000 for the whole. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under capital expenditure, Item 31122.802 – *Other Machinery and Equipment, Acquisition of IT Equipment*, I have seen that there has been a considerable increase. Can the Minister inform why this increase?

Mr Ramano: Yes, Mr Chairperson. So, for this Item, the amount provided for the digitalisation of the attendance system for a better monitoring of attendance of employees. Electronic Time Recorders (ETRs) in six sub-stations of the living environment unit and for the purchase of IT equipment, such as personal computers, laptops, printers, photocopying machines, and other IT facilities for the Ministry.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22120 – *Fees*, can we have more details about those fees, please?

Mr Ramano: Provision provided for payment of fees to Chairperson, Members of Board and Committees, including training of officers attached to the Ministry. Fees to Chairperson and Members of the Board, Rs1 m.; fees for training, Rs150 000; fees for Consultants Environmental Management Strategy for Mauritius, Rs100 000.

The Chairperson: Thank you! So, we move to page 280. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.099 – *Other Goods and Services, Miscellaneous Expenses (e) Review of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan*, can the hon. Minister give us more details about the review of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan?

Mr Ramano: For the oil spill equipment, Rs100 000; for tabletop oil spill simulation exercises, and Rs20 m. under the National Environment and Climate Change Fund for procurement of oil spill equipment such as high seas, lagoons and absorbent booms, skimmers and accessories thereof.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 22900.099 (b) – *Institutional Strengthening-Ozone Layer Protection*, may we know what are the activities related for the provision of this budget?

Mr Ramano: So, for the institutional strengthening of the ozone layer protection, it is true to say that the amount voted in 2021/2022 was Rs800 000 and amount voted for 2022/2023 is Rs1 200 000 is to carry out awareness programme on ozone layer protection and its link to climate change for an impactful contribution to save the planet. So, the amount of Rs1 200 000 would be used for holding of a hands-on training workshop in Rodrigues to celebrate the world ozone day on 16 September 2022; design, protection and dissemination of resource materials for massive awareness campaigns in Mauritius and Rodrigues, and activities to celebrate the world ozone day 2022. And during the Financial Year 2021/2022, the sum was used for the holding of a workshop with journalists and media trusts to mark the world ozone day on 16 September 2021. Design, printing and distribution of 500 sets of 12 fact sheets containing basic information Ozone and Tips, and to develop a database on imports of refrigerants.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same Item 22900.099 - (*d*) *Review of the International Implementation Plan*, can we know the status and the content of same? And we can note there is an increase in the amount as well. Thank you!

Mr Ramano: So, the objective of the review of the NIP project is to carry out an inventory of Persistent Organic Pollutants at National Level and development of strategy and Action Plans for their management; hence, to meet our international obligations under the Stockholm Convention. The justification status, the project has not yet started as funds from GAF have not yet been made available. A project document has been prepared with the assistance of the UNDP, and submitted to GAF for endorsement on 13 May 2022. A deliberation from GAF is awaited. It is worth also mentioning that Mauritius signs the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants in May 2001 and ratified it in July 2004. Since acceding to the Stockholm Convention, Mauritius has undertaken its first NIP in 2003. Over the years, several new POPs chemicals have been added to the Convention and Mauritius has ratified the amendments. In light of the ratification of the new POPs, there is a need to review and update the NIP for Mauritius in order to comply with our International obligations under the Stockholm Convention.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister, for the long reply. We move to, hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you! Under Item 22900.903 – *Awareness Campaign*, can we have more details and can we know the objective, please?

The Chairperson: Will that be long also?

Mr Ramano: No. So, the objective is to organise various activities to mark the International Environment Days, such as Clean up the World, the Earth day, and the World Environment Day. And, during the Financial Year 2022/2023, a sum of Rs2 m. would be used for organisation of activities to mark Clean up the World on 21 September 2022; organisation of activities to mark Earth Day on 22 April 2023, and the organisation of activities to mark the World Environment Day, for a sum of Rs1 m. on 05 June 2023. The above sum includes production of sensitisation materials and items such as caps, t-shirts and banners. And, it is worth mentioning also that during the Financial Year 2020/2021 for the Earth Day 2021, an award ceremony for poster competition, painting competition and essay competition was held.

For the World Environment Day, there was a production of a 16 double sided sensitisation boards, 3-d *maquettes* and posters on plastic pollution.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 280, under Item 31122.804 – *Acquisition of Laboratory Equipment*. Can the hon. Minister give the list of the equipment and their purpose? Thank you.

Mr Ramano: Mr Chairperson, for the purchase of the laboratory equipment for the year 2022-2023, a sum of Rs6.3 m. is allotted. It is an increase. This amount will be used for the acquisition of the following equipment for the NEL, we have –

- (a) one automated discrete analyser for the sum of Rs3.5 m.;
- (b) a toxic gas analyser for the sum of Rs750,000;
- (c) autoclaves for the sum of Rs1 m.;
- (d) Laboratory oven for the sum of Rs550,000, and
- (e) replacement of one defective water still for the sum of Rs500,000.

For the year 2021-2022, the sum of Rs4.3 m. was used for the acquisition of various analysers for upgrading the capacity of two ambient air monitoring stations located at Port Louis and Vacoas.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: This has been canvassed. However I have one on page 281.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. In respect of Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants*. I see a substantial increase compared to previous year's Estimates and which is escalating; if the hon. Minister can give us the name of the Consultants. How was the exercise recruited and when will the reports be submitted?

The Chairperson: Can we take another question in the meantime?

Mr Ramano: So, for the fees of Consultants, during the Financial Year 2022-2023, a sum of Rs3 m. will be used for a payment to the Landell Mills International and Lim Pi Co SARL for Consultancy Services appointed by European Union and the organisation of workshops in Mauritius and Rodrigues and during the year 2021-2022, the sum was used as follows –

- (a) payment to the Landell Mills International and Lim Pi Co SARL for consultancy services;
- (b) the new project for an amount of Rs10,100,000 is to conduct a study of risk related to the two hazards namely coastal erosion and marine submersion on mainland, Mauritius and Rodrigues,
- (c) *Agence Française de Développement* is providing financial assistance to the tune of 1million euros grant, and
- (d) the *Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM)* is providing technical assistance to the project.

And during the Financial Year 2022-2023, funds earmarked would be used as fees to *BRGM* experts upon signature of contract for preparation details workplan and for preparation of

Phase I Reports, status on coastal erosion and marine submersion. During the Financial Year 2021, no funds were earmarked for this.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: May I know from the hon. Minister, we are looking at Item 22120.008 – *Grant from International Organisations*. Can he table a list of all grounds that this Ministry will receive from each International Organisations?

Mr Ramano: Same will be tabled, Mr Chairperson. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22120.007 - *Fees for Training – (b) (iv) Mitigation Strategy 2050* which also appears on the next page under Item 22900 – *Other Goods and Services – Grant from International Organisations (e) Mitigation Strategy 2050*. Can we have more details pertaining to this? Thank you.

Mr Ramano: Mr Chairperson, it is a new project. The objective of this project is to develop long term decarbonisation and adaptation trajectories in two sectors with the highest greenhouse gases emissions namely, energy and transport and the two sectors most vulnerable to climate change namely, tourism and agriculture. As a first step, long term visions will be set for the four key sectors coupled with capacity building to the development of climate change and other key stakeholders.

During the Financial Year 2022-2023, funds earmarked would be used for trainings to key stakeholders on the process for the formulation of long term mitigation and adaptation planning.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Item 22120.008 - *Fees to Consultants - (e) Capacity Building in Transparency*. Quite a huge contract from what I see, starting with Rs5 m. this year, then Rs13 m. and then Rs12 m. also. Can I ask the hon. Minister what is it about this particular exercise?

Mr Ramano: Mr Chairperson, the sum of Rs5 m. it is a new project for the year 2022-2023. The objective for this amount is to assist Mauritius on improving the quality of the

National Greenhouse Gas Inventory and the data collection thereby improving reporting and transparency. During the Financial Year 2022-2023, the sum of Rs5 m. would be used for payment of local consultants and contractual service companies to be remitted under component I for the development of country emission factor for greenhouse gas inventory and component II for development of customised excel tools for the greenhouse gas inventory process.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you, under Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*. May we know the beneficiaries and their package, please?

Mr Ramano: This amount is provided for the payment of salaries and End of Year bonus to Advisor on Landscaping matters as Mr Bastienne name has already been mentioned in the list of Four which I have already mentioned, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Thank you, any question on page 282?

Vote 11-1 Environment and Climate Change (Rs418,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(5.25 p.m.)

Vote 11-2 Solid & Hazardous Waste and Beach Management was called.

The Chairperson: It starts from page 285, hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22070.009 *Collection and Export of e-wastes*. There is an increase in the provision for the e-wastes management in Mauritius, can we have the reason for this increase?

Mr Ramano: For the collection and export of e-wastes, for the year 2022-2023, a sum of Rs7 m. is budgeted. The contract for recycling of e-wastes was awarded to Neel Trading & Facilities Ltd in February 2019 for a duration of 18 months as from 01 March 2019 to 01 September 2020 and was extended till 31 May 2021. The scope of services of the contract comprises for the transportation of e-wastes collected by the local authorities from transfer stations and landfill to its warehouses. Exportation of e-wastes as whole units to licence e-wastes recovery facility - for the year 2022-2023, the amount of Rs7 m. has been allocated mainly for

storage of remaining e-wastes collected, transportation to the site of the new contract and recycling of the e-wastes under the renewed contract.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 285, Item 22070.010 - *Operation of Interim Hazardous Waste Facility*. Can the hon. Minister give us more detail on that item and why the budget has substantially decreased for the next financial year? Thank you.

Mr Ramano: So, the amount is mainly for payment of invoices for the period of May 2022 to December 2022 for the services and supply of all items remaining under the current contract as per the Ministry's contractual obligations. Secondly, for the payment of invoices for January to April 2023 for services to be delivered by the new contractor and payment for the maintenance of the computerised hazardous waste management information system by Motion Hellas Ltd for the period January to April 2023. Only Rs29.1 m. was disbursed for financial year 2020-2021 since current contract has been extended, and expenditure is at Rs18 m. for financial year 2022-2023.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you. Under Item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, may we know to whom the contracts have been awarded please?

Mr Ramano: We have several cleaning services for public beaches, operation of landfill sites, operation and maintenance of transfer stations, collection and export of e-wastes. We are going to table the list.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*. We can see that there has been a considerable increase. Can the Minister give more details about it and to whom are we renting the buildings?

Mr Ramano: For the payment of rental of parking slots, it is an amount of Rs475,000 yearly. There is an increase in provision by Rs8 m. It is provided for rental of building to accommodate staff of the Solid Waste Management Division. So, we are looking forward for the department to be transferred to a new building eventually. Because of the increase of staff that we have had, we are looking for a new site.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. David!

Mr David: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22070.003 - *Operation of Landfill Sites*, I can see that specifically for this new coming financial year, there is a decrease of Rs6 m. compared to the other years; Rs180 m. and Rs174 m. for this new financial year. May I know the reason behind this drop in the provision for this item please?

Mr Ramano: For the landfilling operations which include activities such as waste placement, leachate and gas management which are currently paid under the contract for the emergency procurement and operation and maintenance of Mare Chicose landfill, works for creation of void space and completion of outstanding works for Cell 9. The contract was awarded on 30 November 2021 and came to an end on 31 May 2022. A shortfall of Rs3 m. is anticipated due to high inflation rates and escalation costs. The shortfall is expected to be met through savings or in case of need, from funds from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060.002 – *Maintenance - Other Structures (Closed Cells Mare Chicose)*. Just to clarify from the hon. Minister, is it to maintain the cells that are already closed or funds are being voted to close more cells?

Mr Ramano: So, for your main question, it is to maintain the cells which are closed. We also have post closure operations managed under contract of Cell 6 and the contractor is Eneotech/Sotravic Limitée. The post closure operations started on 01 June 2013 and were originally due to end on 28 November 2016 but there have been several extensions. So, for the scope of works, Cells 1 to 6 which have already been filled and capped, estimated to cover an area of about 20 hectares and post closure operations include mainly leachate and gas management, minor civil works and environmental monitoring.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22070.010 - *Operation of Interim Hazardous Waste Facility*. May I know from the hon. Minister what happened to the hazardous waste after this interim phase? Did they go to Mare Chicose? What happened to it?

Mr Ramano: According to the contract that we have with the operating contractor there, all these wastes are exported to facilities abroad while respecting all the international conventions, mainly to Greece.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We have got only one minute left for this section. So, let us move to page 286. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26313.003 - *Beach authority*, can we know how this amount would be utilized, and if the hon. Minister can table details? Thank you.

Mr Ramano: So, the amount voted is Rs58 m. for the year 2022-2023. We have recurrent expenditures consisting of –

- staff cost - Rs58.15 m.;
- rent - Rs4.1 m. ;
- maintenance and running of 10 vehicles – Rs1.8 m.;
- office expenses - Rs0.95 m.;
- utilities - Rs3.2 m.;
- repairs and maintenance of amenities on public beaches - Rs1 m.;
- other expenses - Rs0.61 m.;
- insurance costs - Rs0.45 m., and
- others - Rs0.3 m.

The disbursement schedule is on a monthly basis.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. The time is over!

Vote 11-2 Solid & Hazardous Waste and Beach Management (Rs825,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: I will now suspend the Sitting for half an hour.

At 5.36 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 6.15 p.m. with the Deputy Chairperson of Committees in the Chair.

The Chairperson: Please be seated!

Vote 12-1 Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 292; any question? No questions on page 292, so we move on page 293. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.016 *Financial Reporting Council*; it is a Council which one does not hear much about in spite of the fact that there is a substantial increase from previous year's estimates. I agree it is one of the most important councils which, in fact, audit the auditing firms. So, I would like to hear from the Minister the reason as to why there is a substantial increase? If we can have the composition of the Council; who is the Director of the Council and when was the last report submitted in respect of the obligations and discharge of the Council?

Mr Seeruttun: Well, Mr Chairperson, the increase is due to the provision made for the post of CEO, which was not provided for in the previous budget and also the impact of the implementation of the PRB report recommendations. And there has also been a number of officers who have been promoted; this is one of the main reasons for the increase in the provision made for the Financial Reporting Council.

Over and above that, I see provision made for Rs1.3 m. for overseas mission and overseas workshops which was not provided for last year due to COVID-19 restrictions. And there are also some workshops to be organised with the Forum of Independent Audit Regulator.

Dr. Boolell: What about the last report submitted?

Mr Seeruttun: I need to check when was the last audit report submitted by FRC. I will submit the information as I receive it.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.140-*Integrity Reporting Services Agency*, we are budgeting Rs41 m. and last year it was Rs37.5 m. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of applications made by the Agency to Court for an Unexplained Wealth Order to date?

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, with regard to the Integrity Reporting Services Agency, I have here for the year 2021-2022, 53 cases were reported to the Agency and since July 2016 up to now, that is, June 2022, there are 247 cases that have been referred to the Agency. And for 3

of them, application have been made for an Unexplained Wealth Order and I am also informed that in the year 2019-2020 one confiscation was effected.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Bhagwan! I thought you had left!

Mr Bhagwan: Why? Perhaps if you are tired, you can go.

The Chairperson: No, okay!

Mr Bhagwan: I am not tired. Same item, Item 26313.140 *Integrity Reporting Services Agency*; can we know the composition of the Agency? How many foreign nationals are working, what are their salaries and also members of the Board of the Agency; their names and their packages?

Mr Seeruttun: With regard to the Board of the IRSA, we have the Chairman who is Lord Phillips, a foreigner of British national. And as member, we have the former Judge Domah, and the former Permanent Secretary, Mr Phokeer.

Mr Bhagwan: You can circulate the information.

Mr Seeruttun: I can. If you want, I can just mention it to you.

Mr Bhagwan: Yes.

Mr Seeruttun: The retainer fee for the Chairperson, that is, Lord Phillips, is an annual retainer fee of £50,000 and for the members, it is Rs90,000 per month.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. It has already been canvassed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22030 *Rent*; can the Minister give us some details?

Mr Seeruttun: The Ministry is housed at the SICOM Tower; we are renting two floors; floors 9th and 14th and also part of level 8. And the amount paid is Rs12,000,750. If you want to know, the agreement will end in March 2025.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.015 - *Financial Intelligence Unit of which ARINSA Conference*; I have two questions. One is: can the Minister give details on this

ARINSA conference and, second: can he provide the list of members on the National Committee on Corporate Governance and their allowances?

Mr Seeruttun: With regard to the ARINSA Conference, you will be aware that ARINSA stands for Asset Recovery Interagency Network of Southern Africa. And Mauritius is actually holding the position of chairmanship and it is proposed that a conference be held before the end of next year. That is, by May next year, a conference is going to be held here and that Rs15 m. is being provided for is to cater for the holding of that conference in Mauritius.

With regard to the Board members of the National Committee on Corporate Governance; it is chaired by Mrs Radhakeesoon, and the members are Mr Thakoor; Mrs Sewraj-Gopal; Mrs Appadoo; Mrs Ramdin-Clark; Mr Lamport, and Mr Jugmohunsing.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Seeruttun: Sorry, Mr Chairperson, it goes on to the next page. I can see some other members as well who form part of that Committee. We also have Mr Ramgoolam, Mr Nagarajan, Mr Benimadhu and Mr Tuhobol.

The Chairperson: Thank you.

Mr Ramful: Under Item 26313.140 - *Integrity Reporting Services Agency*, the hon. Minister said that there was only one Confiscation Order. Can we know, in terms of proceed, how much does that represent, that one Confiscation Order?

Mr Seeruttun: I don't think I have been provided with that information, Mr Chairperson. If they have it, I will inform the House.

The Chairperson: Otherwise you will table it. Any question on page 293? We move to page 294. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.152 - *Financial Services Institute Co. Ltd*, I note that there is a budget of Rs3.7 m. earmarked for next year and then nothing after that; is there a plan to stop this institution? Why is it that no money is budgeted for other years?

Mr Seeruttun: This is the training arm of the Ministry and the objective of the institute is going forward to be a self-funded institution. So, they are going to provide training courses and we will not need any money from public funds to run the Institute.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you. Item 22120 – *Fees*, we voted a sum of Rs4 m. last year. Could we have details on the expenses incurred, please?

Mr Seeruttun: It is Rs400,000. Yes, we agree on that? These are fees provided for training of officers on AML/CFT matters. And also include induction for new recruits. I am also informed that provision is made for the refund of subscription fee to professional bodies as well.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Under Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, can we have some details about this Item?

Mr Seeruttun: Provisions have been made for the payment of salary for a period of 6 months only to contractual officers, that is, the Manager Financial Services, Assistant Manager Financial Services, and Analyst. These are people that are on contract. I am told this is going to go down. Permanent staff is going to be recruited to replace those who are on contract.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move to the next page, 295. Any question on that page? No. Page 296. Hon. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Page 296, *Sub 12-103: Public Sector Governance Reforms*, I see there is provision to fill the post of Director of Office of Public Sector Governance. Has this post been filled or is it about to be filled? Has the post been advertised?

Mr Seeruttun: Presently, there is an Officer-in-Charge. The post has to be advertised after scheme of service is finalised. The exercise is on, and hopefully it is going to be filled if we have the right candidate.

Vote 12-1 Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance (Rs 312,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(6.30 p.m.)

Vote 13-1 Office of the Solicitor-General was called.

The Chairperson: Page 301.

Mr Uteem: In relation to Item 21110.005 - *Extract Assistance*, may we have some details from the hon. Attorney General as to who are the beneficiaries?

Mr Gobin: I have one Attachée de presse, Mrs Boodhun. This is for her salary.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 - *Rent*, I can see that there has been an increase. Can the hon. Attorney General provide more details?

Mr Gobin: This is for payment of rental of building. There has been an increase from Rs14,495,000 to Rs15,500,000, for Level 2 up to Level 6 at Renganaden Seeneevassen Building, and also rental of new office space. So, the increase is also for rental of parking slots in order to accommodate new staff. The building is, as I said, Renganaden Seeneevassen Building in Port Louis (ex-NPF Building).

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 22090 – *Security*, can we know the beneficiary for this contract? Thank you.

Mr Gobin: Yes, it is Mauriguard Limited and the amount paid is Rs19,000 monthly for security services.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Nagalingum, your question is on which page? Page 301.

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, can I know from the hon. Attorney General who is the beneficiary?

Mr Gobin: It is Mauriclean Ltd. The amount paid monthly is Rs13,455 and that is for the offices in NPF Building, Port Louis.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move page to 302. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 302, under Item 22120.032 - *Fees for Legal Outsourcing*, may we know from the hon. Attorney General with regard to the budgeted sum of Rs80 m., some more details as to this Legal Outsourcing, please?

Mr Gobin: So, we have some cases, arbitration, namely a case of Patel Engineering Limited, the case of Mr Rawat, tribunal fees payable to the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). All this is lumped together.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 28216.012 - *Contribution for Operation of Mauritius International Arbitration Centre (MIAC)*, I see, of course, that Rs24,200,000 has been earmarked. Can the hon. Attorney General tell us as to the number of cases referred and if he can give us a breakdown in relation to the estimates for this year?

Mr Gobin: This budgetary provision is to meet the operational costs of MIAC. Unfortunately, I do not have the information requested by the hon. Member with me right now for the cases. I can supply it at a later stage.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 302, Item 31122.802 - *Acquisition of IT Equipment of which (a) Laws of Mauritius Online Project, (b) Central Archives System, (c) Video Conference Project*, it is all about IT. So, can the hon. Attorney General provide further details pertaining to the status of these projects? Thank you.

Mr Gobin: There are several. There was one for the revamping of the Registry System which was budgeted last year. The project, as the name suggests, was for the digitalisation of the registries through a software development and implementation of a web-based document management system. This project is completed.

Then, we have the Laws of Mauritius Online Project, the House will recall, the Amendment Bill to the Revision of Laws Act was passed by this House recently. It is to put revised laws of Mauritius and the revised subsidiary legislations on the website of the Attorney General's Office for access to the public.

Then, we have the Central Archives System. This provision is for payment of retention money under the project for setting up of a Central Archives System where all files of the different registries will be kept under one roof in a digitalised format which will be easily accessible thereafter.

For the video conference system, as the name suggests, we need to have a video conference facility because we have seen that the number of conferences being held online are increasingly on the rise. So, my office needs this system.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under the same Item, can we know to whom the contract for these projects have been awarded?

Mr Gobin: I can provide the information at a later stage because I recall that I have mentioned that in the debate, but it is not with me right now. I can provide it at a later stage. It was mentioned during the debates for the amendment to the revision of laws.

The Chairperson: You will table it later? Please do.

Mr Gobin: Yes, at a later stage.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 26313.029 - *Law Reform Commission*, can we have the composition members of that Commission?

Mr Gobin: I will table it, Mr Chairperson. The Chairperson is Senior Attorney, Mr Ramdewar. I have the information for the previous question. The online project: so the supplier is Infosystems AA Ltd, and for Central Archive System, it is Leal Communications & Informatics Ltd. For the Visio-conferencing, this is a new project, so now, the process will be launched.

And for the Law Reform Commission (LRC), Mr Gunness Ramdewar, Senior Attorney is the Chairperson, the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Sabir Kadel, the members of the Board are –

1. The representative of the Judiciary, his lordship Judge Oh San-Bellepeau;
2. The representative of the Solicitor-General is Mr Dinay Reetoo;
3. The Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Boolell;
4. The Representative of the Mauritius Bar Council is Mr Varma;
5. The Representative of the Notaries, Mr Nicolas Boulle;
6. The Representative of Attorneys, Mr Thierry Koenig;

7. Member of Civil Society, there are two: Mr Mohamed Iqbal Torabally and Ms Ashna Devi Gunpath.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. The time is over for this section.

Vote 13-1 - Office of the Solicitor-General (Rs334,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(6.39 p.m.)

Vote 13-2 Office of The Director of Public Prosecutions was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 305. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 305, under Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, may we have more details please?

Mr Gobin: Allowances cater for acting and responsibility allowances paid to officers called upon to assume higher responsibilities or working in specialised units and for payment of judicial and legal allowance, also known as the Robbing Allowance, the Special Legal Service Allowance to Law Officers and a Black Jacket Allowance paid to officers in the Cadre of Legal Assistants. The increase is due to the implementation of PRB Report 2021.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, under this item, may I know from the hon. Attorney General, the number of vacancies currently at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution?

Mr Gobin: If the information is forthcoming, I will provide it. We can take a question in the meantime.

The Chairperson: Please table it later. We have got only five minutes for this section, hon. Minister. We move to another question. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120 – *Fees*, can the hon. Minister provide more details on this?

Mr Gobin: That will be for payment of fees to Chairperson and members of Departmental Bid Committees and Bid Evaluation Committee. Also for training of staff

including the CPD courses and fees in connection with Privy Council cases, retainer fees to counsels.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22090 – *Security*, can we have more details about who is the beneficiary?

Mr Gobin: Mauriguard Ltd – a monthly amount of Rs132,825 is paid for security services. There are seven floors for the Office of DPP.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Next page 306! Any question on page 306? Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets, Item 31122.802 - *Acquisition of IT Equipment, (b) Certificate of Character Online Services, (c) Enhancement of the Certificate of Character Online Application*, can the Minister give more details on the timeline for the implementation?

Mr Gobin: For the Certificate of Character of Online Services, what is proposed is to provide online platform for application of Certificate of Character. This project is done in collaboration with the Police Department. Applicants will be required to send their application and effect payment online, and then, collect the certificate at the relevant District Headquarters.

For the enhancement, there will be additional features that will be included in the Certificate of Character. The additional feature will allow citizens to download a soft copy of the Certificate of Character.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Item 31122.802 - *(a) Online Project for provision of briefs to Counsels*, may we know where matters stand in regard to this project?

Mr Gobin: I will come back as soon as I get the information. I am informed that at the opening of bids, the lowest quote for this project was beyond the cost estimate. Therefore, the bidding exercise had to be cancelled. A request has been made to provide a fresh cost estimate. Therefore, tendering process will be re-launched.

The Chairperson: Thank you. The time is over.

Vote 13-2 Office of The Director of Public Prosecutions (Rs178,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(6.45 p.m.)

Vote 13-3 Office of The Parliamentary Counsel was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 308. Any questions? Thank you.

Vote 13-3 Office of The Parliamentary Counsel (Rs22,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(6.46 p.m.)

Vote 13-4 Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 314. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger.

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you. Under Item 21110 – *Personal Emoluments*, may I know how many officers are at the Pesticides Regulatory Office? Thank you.

Mr Gobin: I will have to come back to that later when I receive the information.

The Chairperson: Make sure you do. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Gobin: I will.

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 21110 – *Personal Emoluments, .004 – Allowances*. Can the hon. Minister provide more details?

Mr Gobin: This is to cater for the payment of the following allowances. There is ad hoc allowance, responsibility allowance, meal allowance, cash allowance paid to officers.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any question on page 314? So, we move to page 315. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 22130 – *Studies and surveys, .001 – Studies – Sugar Cane Sector (World Bank)*. Now, this is not the first study being conducted to revamp the sugar cane sector. I know the findings have been made public. There is an estimate of Rs4.5 m. Now, I would like to ask the Minister whether a committee has been set up to study the findings, and where do we stand in respect of implementation of the findings submitted in the report.

Mr Gobin: The hon. Member is right. We are implementing the recommendations of the World Bank. There is just one coming in my mind. To reduce costs, they have recommended the construction of a new facility for storage. This is being done for 150,000 tons of bag sugar here in the Harbour region. But the report is being implemented.

Dr. Boolell: They established the committee?

Mr Gobin: It is the MCIA which is leading the implementation.

The Chairperson: Thank you Minister! Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 22120 – *Fees*. Can we have some details about these Rs2,135,000?

Mr Gobin: Provision is made for the payment of fees to members of Boards and Committees, namely Bid Evaluation Committee, Departmental Bid Committee, Land Conversion Committee, the Ramsar Committee. Provision is also made for the payment of fees for training purposes; fees to Consultants; payment of fees for examination and interview, and provision for refund of subscription fees to professional bodies.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Chair. Under Capital Expenditure, Item 31132.801 – *Intangible Fixed Assets - Acquisition of Software*, can we have further details pertaining to this Item please? Thank you!

Mr Gobin: This provision is made for procurement, for licenses of personal computers and laptops for the whole Ministry.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22030 – *Rent*, there is quite a huge amount of Rs17 m. Can we have some details?

Mr Gobin: This is for payment of rent for the offices. We have 2 floors in NPF Building, in Port Louis, levels 8 and 9; levels 1 and 6 in Sterling House, Port Louis, and levels 4 and 5 of Blendax House, Port Louis. There are also 6 parking slots at Garden Tower and 25 parking slots at NPF Building, Port Louis.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, Item 31122.802 – *Other Machinery and Equipment - Acquisition of IT Equipment*. There has been increase from Rs1 m. to Rs2 m. Can the hon. Minister provide more details?

Mr Gobin: This provision is for the acquisition of IT equipment, namely personal computers, laptops, printers, etc., for the whole Ministry.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any more question on this page? Otherwise, we move to page 316. We start with hon. Dr. Boolell.

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Under *Capital Expenditure*, Item 28225.014 – *Transfer to Private Enterprises - Accompanying Measures to restore Abandoned Cane Lands (Cane Replantation Scheme)*. One of the biggest impediments to revamp the sugar cane industry is the encroachment on prime agricultural land. I am glad to see that there is an estimate of Rs55 m. earmarked for this financial year. Now, can the hon. Minister apprise us as to the programme of rehabilitation of abandoned sugar cane land? Where do matters stand? How is the money going to be spent? Is this an ongoing project, and can he also give us the number of beneficiaries and planters who have been willing to rehabilitate their abandoned land?

Mr Gobin: I would rather welcome a PQ from you. It is a very long answer to so many questions at a time. So, I would welcome a PQ.

The Chairperson: Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 316, under Item 28213.021 – *Transfers to Non-Financial Public Corporations - Mauritius Cane Industry Authority*, may we know from the hon. Minister who is the Chairperson, the Board members, number of staffs and the CEO of this Authority?

Mr Gobin: The Chairperson is the SCE of the Ministry, Mr Gunpath. The CEO is Mr Satish Purmessur. With regard to the other members of the Board, it will be better for me to table it at a later stage. Anyway, the information is readily available on the website of the MCIA.

I have it now. So, Mr Gunpath, SCE of the Ministry, is the Chairperson; the representative of the Ministry of Agro-Industry is the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mrs Rugjee;

the representative of the Ministry of Finance is Mr Vikash Ramkelawon. We also have Mr Jacques d'Unienville, Mr Amal Kumar Mungur, Mr Jean Li Yuen Fong Tin Young, and Mr Nundlall Basant Rai.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Under the same Item hon. Dr. Boolell asked, 28225.014 – *Transfer to Private Enterprises, Accompanying Measures to restore Abandoned Cane Lands (Cane Replantation Scheme)*. For 2021/2022, the sum earmarked was Rs30 m. and now it is Rs55 m. Can the Minister at least inform the House, for this year ending, how many hectares of abandoned land have been identified and whether replanting has started?

Mr Gobin: For the period ending May 2022, 250 hectares have been replanted and, of course, the increase here is because we have increased the amount to be provided for the replantation.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 28213.021 – *Transfers to Non-Financial Public Corporations, Mauritius Cane Industry Authority, (b) Certification and Accreditation to Sustainability Labels (Bonsucro), (c) Sugar Cane Transport Cost and (d) Training of planters on Organic Agriculture*. For the training of planters on organic agriculture, can we have the list of beneficiaries; the number of planters that have benefited from this training?

Mr Gobin: I will have to obtain the information and circulate at a later stage.

The Chairperson: We move to page 317. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22090 – *Security*. An amount of Rs23.5 m. is earmarked for 2022-2023. Can we know if the contract has already been awarded and if so, to whom?

Mr Gobin: I recall the tender process was on going. Under the Item provision is made for payment of security services for the following outstations operating under the agricultural services of my Ministry, there are 9 stations –

(a) Barkly;

- (b) Curepipe Station;
- (c) Plaisance;
- (d) Roche Brunes;
- (e) Richelieu;
- (f) Mer Rouge;
- (g) Richelieu Station;
- (h) Belle Vue, Albion Experimental Station, and
- (i) Quatre Bornes Horticultural Centre.

The last contract was awarded in December 2020 following a tender exercise and contract has been renewed for a period of 120 days and a fresh tender exercise was initiated on 06 May. The closing date was 08 June of this year and bids are being evaluated at this stage.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22120.008 –*Fees to Consultant (incl. Reimbursable Technical Assistance - IFAD)*. Can we have the name of the Consultant, please?

Mr Gobin: This is for the IFAD? The Ministry has signed a reimbursable technical assistance with IFAD for the setting up of an operational framework for the development of Seed Sector in Mauritius and to prepare the necessary legal framework related thereto. The project cost was Rs44 m. and it was coordinated by the National Plant and Variety Seed Office (NPVSO). Regulations are being made and will soon come into effect.

The Chairperson: You are done?

Mr Gobin: Yes.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060 – *Maintenance*. Last year, we voted a sum of Rs15.7 m. and this year we are being asked to vote Rs17.4 m. Could we know the details of what was or is being maintained; is it vehicles or office equipment?

Mr Gobin: Everything put together, so it will be maintenance of the buildings, plant and equipment, the air conditioners, bush cutters, lawn mowers, all the equipment including spare parts for vehicles, IT equipment, furniture fittings, all put together.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Under Item 22120.028 - *Fees for Laboratory Test / Food Technology*. Peut-on savoir en quoi consistent ces tests et combien de tests ont été effectués, s'il vous plait ?

Mr Gobin: Provision is being made for the payment of fees to overseas organisations for proficiency testing and certification of laboratory test procedures and also for calibration of the lab equipment, for example, the food tech lab is ISO certified, so this requires training and payment of certain fees.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22090 – *Security*. Can I know from the hon. Minister if is it the lowest tender and who the beneficiary is?

Mr Gobin: I think I have just answered previously for the number of outstations, there are 9 of them. I have just answered a few minutes back.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister answered a question from hon. Quirin and it was ...

Mr Gobin: So, the closing date for the tender was 06 May and bids are being....

Mr Nagalingum: Who was awarded the contract for last year?

Mr Gobin: RSL Security was awarded in 2020 and the new tender process as I said, closing date was 08 June and bids are being evaluated.

The Chairperson: We move to page 318. We have got 10 pages in this section. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 25210.013 – *Tea Sector Support Scheme (Fertilizer Subsidy)*. I can see for last year Rs5 m. was earmarked as subsidy and then there is no provision for this year, it applies to the sugar sector as well.

Mr Gobin: There is a footnote there, Mr Chairperson. So, wherever the footnote appears the disbursement will be from the National Resilience Fund.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. R. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Page 318, under Item 25210.017 – *Scheme to Encourage Use of Bio Fertilizers (including zero-based natural farming)*. Can the hon. Minister give more details about it?

Mr Gobin: In fact, first of all, I wish to correct a typing mistake, it is not zero-based natural farming, it should be zero-budget natural farming. As the House would be aware, we are encouraging the production of bio fertilizers and bio pesticides to registered growers under the Bio Farming Support Scheme. So, I have some figures for beneficiaries for year 2021-2022; there are 51 beneficiaries. The scheme has been revisited so as to extend the subsidy to tea planters as well and also for the procurement of insect traps including fruit, fly, baits and bags.

For the ZBNF (Zero-Budget Natural Farming), we intend to upscale the project and there would be a need to ensure adequate supply of raw materials and transport facilities for demonstration and distribution to the Planting Community and for the ZBNF, a sum of Rs8 m. has been earmarked. The project will comprise of the following –

- (a) setting up of infrastructural facilities for the collection of the raw material at livestock station;
- (b) procurement of ingredients and containers for the production of the manure mixture, and
- (c) procurement of vehicles to transport the said bio fertilizers for distribution.

And I am also pleased to inform the House that provision has been made for the extension of the scheme to Rodrigues as well.

The Chairperson: So let us go to Rodrigues. Hon. Léopold!

Mr Léopold: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Item 25210.005 – *Freight Rebate Scheme*. How the money will be used and which route does this apply to?

Mr Gobin: This is the scheme for producers and exporters of horticulture produce. *N'est-ce pas?* Let me check, so this is for producers and exporters for horticultural and fruits under the Freight Rebate Scheme. The Scheme caters for exports to non EU countries and a refund of 25% is payable under chargeable weight of exports at the rate of Rs30.45 per kilo.

For Financial Year 2021-2022, exporters benefitted under the scheme for an amount of Rs191,378 in respect of approximately 25 tons of fruits vegetables and flowers exported. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 26313.084 – *Small Farmers Welfare Fund*. We are being asked to vote Rs22 m. Can the hon. Minister inform the House who is heading that Fund, who is the Chairperson and members of the Fund? And also, whether it applies for Rodrigues as well?

Mr Gobin: Mr Bundhoo is the Chairperson of the Small Farmers Welfare Fund, and all the schemes as from this financial year are being extended to Rodrigues as well. So, let me give you the full composition of the Board –

- Mr Ashok Bundhoo – Chairperson
- Mr Dharmaratlal Ramjanum – Member
- Dr Louis Eric Orlando Felicite – Member
- Mr Riad Ali Shadoobacus – Member
- Ms Nandita Neelum Dookeika - Member
- Mrs Jacqueline Sauzier - Member
- Mr Vasudeven Moodely - Member
- Mr O. Halooman - Member
- Mr S. Maha - Member
- Mrs Lallsingh - Member
- Mr Arlanda Louis Regist Serge - Member
- Mr Jeetun Bharat - Member
- Mr Jitesh Etwaroo - Member
- Mrs Preetila Bai Lallsingh - Member
- Mr Roopesh Beekarry - Manager

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much. Just to reinforce on what has already been said in relation to Small Farmers Welfare Fund. Can the Minister circulate the projects which are

ongoing and the new schemes identified in relation to the amount earmarked because there is a substantial increase in the estimates for 2022-2023?

Mr Gobin: I can do that at later stage.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 25210.020 – *Fruit Fly Suppression with Environment Friendly Techniques*. The amount has been increased 12 times. Can the Minister explain why?

Mr Gobin: The provision is made for fruit fly rearing facility for the production of sterile flies at Reduit. To better protect crops, fruit fly control materials namely, lure traps and protein baits would be procured for area wide fruit fly control with a bait application technique. The technique of fruit fly control will be extended to other vegetables and fruits growing facilities.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. We move to page 319 now. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 28215.003 - *Sheltered Farming (Including Subsidy on Sheltered Unit Nets)*. I can see that an amount of Rs30 m. was spent last year. Can we know how many beneficiaries were there under that scheme?

Mr Gobin: I will have to circulate the information at a later stage. It is a very long list. In 2021-2022, 125 projects have been approved. So, it is going to be a very long list. I better circulate it at a later stage.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Under Item 28215.012 - *Organic Farming (National Organic Office)*, I see that there is an allocated budget for a National Organic Office. *Est-ce que je peux demander au ministre si ce National Organic Office va donc remplacer le Pesticides Regulatory Office parce que je n'ai pas vu des items alloués pour le Pesticides Regulatory Office.*

Mr Gobin: No, it will not replace but the National Organic Office is a new office that is going to be set up. Now, the policy of the Ministry is to come forward with the Organic Agriculture Bill which will set up the Organic Office. *Il y aura la transition vers organic.*

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Let us move to page 320. Hon. Dr. Boolell, please!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 31122.831 - *Acquisition of Agricultural Tractors*. Last year, Rs4 m. was budgeted. This year, I see no provision and you know acquisition of agricultural tractors is very important because there has been hue and cry from members of the planting community because the tractors are not available and are not being leased by the Ministry - Mechanical pool. So, can I ask the hon. Minister to look into it and to address this very important matter, please?

Mr Gobin: Yes, we have changed the policy. We are having recourse to private contractors and to leasing facilities instead of purchasing. I think it is more economical when we go to private contractors and leasing.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Dhunoo, please!

Mr Dhunoo: On the Recurrent Expenditure, 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, can the hon. Minister provide information to the House what is this for?

Mr Gobin: We are providing this provision for recruitment of veterinary officers on contract.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 320 under Item 31112.022 - *Construction of a National Wholesale Market*, the hon. Minister will note that there is a project value of Rs450 m. Rs30 m. was budgeted last year. Same figure this year. May we have a status report as to where matters stand?

Mr Gobin: As you know, the contract was awarded on 04 October 2018 to Chan Li Construction Ltd for a contractual amount of Rs389 m. inclusive of VAT. The initial completion date was December 2019. However, as the House will appreciate, there have been delays, and delays have been compounded later on during COVID-19. So, the last payment was effected in January 2021. Consultancy services for the project provided by Studio Valle Progettazioni Professional Association. What remains to be done is the standby generator and a sewer treatment plant. These two are the outstanding items, and then, it will become operational.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We move to page 321. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy, please!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 28215.008 - *Accompanying Measures – Non Sugar Activities (Bee Keeping)*; this appears to be something new. Can the hon. Minister give us further details pertaining to this item?

Mr Gobin: As the House will recall, during Budget Speech, it was announced that is subsidy of Rs500 per bee queen will be provided to bee keepers up to a maximum of 10 queens. Also, a one off grant of Rs150,000 per bee keeper would be provided to secure the bee keeping zones. Furthermore, a grant of up to 50% to a maximum of Rs20,000 for the purchase of bee keeping equipment for the past year. 14 bee keepers have benefited from this scheme. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 28225.007 – *Capital Transfers (Livestock) (a) Livestock Development Scheme*. Rs13 m. earmarked in the estimates of this year, can the Minister enlighten us as to how this scheme is going to be developed?

Mr Gobin: This item caters for provision to finance the Cattle Breeding Scheme, Pasture Development Scheme and Goat, Sheep and Pig Breeding Scheme. That is all I have for now.

Dr. Boolell: I know it is a very sensitive and not easy issue, but are we going to import breed to improve our local livestock? Because it is not easy.

Mr Gobin: Yes, I agree it is not easy but we need to keep ongoing.

Dr. Boolell: We have done it in the past and we know what the consequences are.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you. Under item 26313.110 *Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare*, can the hon. Minister state the amount earmarked for sterilisation and the number of veterinaries, and when the Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare will publish its financial accounts, please?

Mr Gobin: For the Mass Sterilisation Programme, as the hon. Member will recall, recently the MSAW has signed, I think, 8 Memoranda of Understanding with private clinics and private vets because we need collaboration of the private vets. This has just been signed recently, so, it is an ongoing campaign. We also have the intention of soliciting foreign Governments for

assistance on vets. It is a scarcity area. We need more vets in Mauritius. Thirdly, for the Annual Report, I agree that there were delays but we are catching up and all the reports will be laid as and when they are ready.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister. We are now on page 322. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 322, Item 31122.999 - *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment of which Acquisition of Veterinary Ambulance*. Can the hon. Minister provide more details, do we already have ambulances for animals, and how many ambulances does he intend to buy?

Mr Gobin: No, now we are going to buy. As you will see for last year a sum of Rs4 m. was provided but that was not enough. When we have received the quotes, it was more than that. So, that is why for this year, an amount of Rs6 m. has been provided. We are going to buy vet ambulances with this money.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Léopold!

Mr Léopold: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112.445 - *Upgrading of Slaughterhouse (Rodrigues)*, will the sum of that Rs20 m. be given to the private company with whom they have signed a MoU with the RRA to do same?

Mr Gobin: During my visit, in April, to Rodrigues, we have decided that the slaughterhouse needs to be upgraded. Of course, now, tenders will be launched for the upgrading. I think it is at *Baie Diamant, n'est-ce-pas?*

Mr Léopold: Yes.

Mr Gobin: So, that's the building at Baie Diamant, it is going to be upgraded through tender process.

The Chairperson: Page 324, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31410.401 *Rehabilitation of Nature Reserves (a) Pink Pigeon release sites at Black River and Petrin; (f) Construction of release cages for Pink Pigeon at Bras D'Eau National Park*. This has been a success story. In relation to

the provisions earmarked, Rs300,000 is estimated for 2022-2023. I would like to know whether this also includes breeding in captivity because I don't think that sum will be enough?

Mr Gobin: The captive site is in Rivière Noire. You have Petrin and there is one in Poste Lafayette. But I don't know whether we have this information. The question was whether this amount will be enough or not?

Dr. Boolell: Will it cater for breeding in captivity also?

Mr Gobin: Yes, surely! We also have assistance from donor organisations sometimes.

The Chairperson: You are getting involved into conversation and the time is over.

Vote 13-4 Ministry of Agro-Industry Food Security (Rs2,410,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(7.22 p.m.)

Vote 14-1 Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation was called.

The Chairperson: So, we start from page 336. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 21111.100 -*Overtime*; an amount of Rs3.5 m. earmarked for 2022-2023. Can we know from the hon. Minister to whom this amount will be payable?

Mr Toussaint: This is for Attendants working at the head office.

The Chairperson: Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 21210 - *Social Contributions*, can you, please, give some details?

Mr Toussaint: Social contributions, Mr Chairperson, contribution to the National Savings Fund for all officers, and the increase is due to increase of salary following implementation of PRB.

The Chairperson: Any question on page 336? I will allow only one question per page. So, you have got the next question on the next page 337. Go on!

Mr Quirin: Under Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, I see Rs11 m. has been earmarked. Can we have some details pertaining to this item?

Mr Toussaint: Yes, salary to advisers, adviser coaches, coaches on sessional fee to medical assistance. So, these are the adviser coaches; there are 17 in all. Mr Mocude, Mr Rewa, Mr Naiko; I can table the whole list afterwards.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 22090 - *Security*; can we have some details about who holds the contract for the security?

Mr Toussaint: This is mainly for our different sports infrastructures; there is a lot, 22. The contract is run by Rapid Security Services and it has been renewed up to 31 January 2023. And there is also Brink's Services for camera; contract was awarded on 01 November 2019 for a period of 12 months and renewed subsequently on the same terms and conditions.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 337, Item 22030 - *Rent*; can the hon. Minister state what is this amount for and who is the service provider? Thank you.

Mr Toussaint: Mr Chairperson, this is the renting of office space at Citadel Mall where we have our headquarters. We have the 7th and 8th floors and the mezzanine, and the lessor is Orland Ltd., and it is valid up to February 2023.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: The question has been canvassed. However, I have one on page 338 for later. On page 337, the question has been canvassed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you. Item 22140 - *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment*. Last year, we voted a sum of Rs500,000 for Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment. Can we have the name of the supplier, please?

Mr Toussaint: This is the different medical supplies that we use at the SMU. I will table the list of the supplier.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, can the hon. Minister inform as to whom these allowances are paid?

Mr Toussaint: Mr Chairperson, these allowances are paid as payment of responsibility for Actingship, *Ad hoc* and car allowances in lieu of duty free remission.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We move to page 338. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.045 - *Mauritius Sports Council*; there is a huge increase with regard to what was budgeted for the last Financial Year. For this coming Financial Year, there is Rs60 m. Can we have some details why this huge increase?

Mr Toussaint: This increase is due to the fact that there are additional infrastructures that are now being managed by the MSC. For example, all the swimming pools are being managed by the MSC. Also, the different outdoor centres: the Pointe Jérôme Outdoor Centre, the Flic en Flac Outdoor Centre, the Belle Mare Outdoor Centre, and the Anse la Raie Outdoor Centre. All these infrastructures are now being managed by the Mauritius Sports Council.

The Chairperson: Thank you very much. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 26313.141 - *Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd*, can we have the name of the CEO and his salary?

Mr Toussaint: It is Mr Ben Hiddlestone. He is a COO (Chief Operating Officer) and the salary is Rs216,700. He has call allowance of Rs10,000, and a fuel allowance of Rs12,000.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Item 31113.006 - *Construction of Sports Infrastructure (Multi Sports Complexes) of which (i) Port Louis*, last year I had asked a question at the Committee of Supply Stage and it was decided that the plot of land will be used for something else. Can I ask the hon. Minister how was the Rs5 m. spent in that case?

Mr Toussaint: We had a consultancy contract. So, we had a consultant who worked on the project. Unfortunately, we are not going ahead with this project.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 22900.939 - *Indian Ocean Island Games (IOIG)*, Rs22 m.; may we have a breakdown of how this money is going to be spent?

Mr Toussaint: We do not have a breakdown right now. This is mainly for the preparation of athletes. And when we talk about preparation of athletes, it is the different trainings, the training camps, purchase of their equipment, medicines, transport, and even their participation in different international competitions.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dr. Boolell, do you still have a question?

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much. Item 28211.056 *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions - Football Clubs*, Rs15 m. earmarked. Now, can the Minister enlighten us as to how this money is allocated and transferred to those Non-Profit Institutions?

Mr Toussaint: Normally, because for this year, we are still freezing all the support to the Mauritius Football Association. So, normally this sum will be made available to the different football clubs of the different leagues until we are satisfied that the Mauritius Football Association has corrected their different good governance issues.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Bhagwan, on page 338!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 26313.045 - *Mauritius Sports Council*, can the Minister inform the House on the composition of the Council; members of the Council and their remuneration; and what is duration of their appointment?

Mr Toussaint: Board composition of the Mauritius Sports Council, the Chairperson is Mrs Sarah Rawat Currimjee and there are different members appointed by me; and there are also different members coming from different other Ministries. The duration of the Board is two years. And, then, afterwards, there is a renewal after two years.

Mr Bhagwan: Can we have the name of the members? I have asked the name of the members.

Mr Toussaint: Yes, I will give you hon. Bhagwan. So -

- Mrs Bhoojhawon;
- Mrs Ramchurn;
- Mrs Henriette;
- Mr Kunthasami;
- Mr Mohadeb;

- Mr Rock;
- Mr Fatehmamode;
- Mr Mamoojee, APS of my Ministry;
- Mrs Saddul, representative of the Ministry of Education;
- Mr Binee, representative of the Ministry of Finance, and
- Mrs Isabelle Andre, Chairperson of the National Women's Sports Commission.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. R. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Item 22900.953 - *Anti-Doping Activities*, can we have more details about this item?

Mr Toussaint: Yes, this is for the Anti-Doping Activities whenever we have different competitions first, and as and when there is the need to undergo doping tests with our athletes, so that we comply with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 28212.015 - *Allowances to High Level Athletes*, can the hon. Minister table the list of athletes benefiting from same? Thank you.

Mr Toussaint: Yes, Mr Chairperson, there are around 113 athletes. So, I will table it afterwards.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 28211.064 - *Sports Federations*, can we have a breakdown of the amount for each Federation?

Mr Toussaint: We will start to work on the budget that will be allocated to each federation as soon as the budget is voted. So, for the moment, now, I cannot give you which budget has been allocated. In all, we have 48 federations that are being taken care of.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.939 - *Indian Ocean Island Games (IOIG)*, there is a sum of Rs20 m. that has been budgeted. Can the Minister state what are the sport disciplines for the IOIG and if Mauritius will participate in all the disciplines?

Mr Toussaint: There is a provisional list of the sport disciplines. In fact, there are around 26 sport disciplines but this is provisional. There will be a meeting of the CIJ soon. And in this CIJ meeting, they will be finalising the different disciplines. Yes, of course, we will participate in all the disciplines.

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you. Under Item 26313.094 - *Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports*, can we have more details about this? *Est-ce qu'on peut savoir combien d'athlètes sont bénéficiaires sous cet item, s'il vous plait?*

Mr Toussaint: *Donc*, the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sport is here to cater for our high level athletes. We provide support to around 200 athletes bar students in Mauritius, 50 athletes bar students in Rodrigues, and 15 athletes bar students who are abroad and taking different secondary level education.

Ms J. Bérenger: Can you table the list?

Mr Toussaint: Yes, afterwards. I do not have it here.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Léopold!

Mr Léopold: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28212.015 - *Allowances to High Level Athletes*, does that involve all the athletes in the Republic of Mauritius and how many Rodriguans are involved in the High Level Athlete's Allowance?

Mr Toussaint: De mémoire, je suis sûr et certain qu'il y a des athlètes de Rodrigues qui bénéficient du *High Level*. *So, I will look for the names and I will table it afterwards.*

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 28211.064 - *Sports Federations*. Hon. Minister you said you do not have the list. But how come we are approving Rs50 m. and you do not have a tentative list you can table for each Federation?

Mr Toussaint: Non, vous avez mal compris. J'ai dit que nous avons 48 fédérations. Mais à aujourd'hui, le budget n'est pas encore voté. Donc à aujourd'hui, nous n'avons pas encore

alloué une certaine somme, par exemple, à l'athlétisme, une autre somme à la natation. C'est cela que j'ai dit. Mais j'ai dit que nous avons 48 fédérations et organisations *that are taken care of by this sum that is budgeted.*

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. We now move to page 339. We start with the hon. Quirin again. You must be happy!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 339, Capital Expenditure, Item 31113.406 - *Upgrading of Sports Infrastructure (f) Beau Bassin Sports Complex*, can we know to whom the contract of upgrading works has been awarded, and can we also know what type of upgrading works are being carried out?

Mr Toussaint: For the Beau Bassin Sports Complex, we have a problem of the roof mainly – *donc, les feuilles des tôles qui s'envolent.* A provision of Rs10 m. has been made for this financial year. The project is at bidding stage.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed, please!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you. Item 31113.406 - *Upgrading of Sports Infrastructure (h) Others - Basic sports facilities around the island*, I see a full list but there is one that comprises of others for basic sports facilities. Can the Minister table the list of those sports facilities that will be benefitting Rs3 m. for the upgrading?

Mr Toussaint: No, this is as and when there is a need for minor repairs in different sports facilities. The Rs3 m. will be used in it.

Mr Osman Mahomed: So, for example, if there is any sports infrastructure in my Constituency that deserves upgrading, I come to the House, you will consider?

Mr Toussaint: No, you do not have to ask. My officers already know their work and they are already making a different survey. There are Officer-in-Charge in all infrastructures. So, this is their work, they have to – *comme on dit, remonter l'information au niveau du Headquarters pour dire que dans telle et telle infrastructure, il y a un souci, de tels problèmes, et donc il faut faire une réparation. C'est le travail de mes officiers.*

The Chairperson: Merci beaucoup, M. le ministre. Hon. Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item *toujours 31113.406 - (e) Glen Park Multisports*, there was amount of Rs4.9 m. for last year's provision and Rs6.3 for this year. Can we know from hon. Minister the progress of works, please?

Mr Toussaint: The project is at bidding stage. I am informed that there has been the opening of the bids on 15 June. So, we will see which person will have the contract.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: The same Item *31113.406 -(d) Harry Latour Stadium - Phase II*, can we know who is the contractor who has been awarded the contract, the total contract value, the completion date, and if there was any delay?

Mr Toussaint: Yes, there was delay, of course. The Rs500,000 is meant, of course, for retention money and we can say that the job has been completed. Maybe next year, we will be having another phase of upgrading. For the contract, I do not have it. I will give it to you afterwards.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Last item on the page, Item *22090 – Security*, the security issue, if the hon. Minister be kind enough to inform the House as to whom this contract has been awarded because Rs8 m. has been earmarked?

Mr Toussaint: Security is mainly for our different Youth Centers because this is the youth sector. The contract has been awarded, there is a contract, an actual one to Rapid Security Services, and there is also one contract to Brinks Security Services.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Item *21110.004 – Allowances*, can the hon. Minister state to whom are paid these allowances? Thank you.

Mr Toussaint: This amount is paid to officers: payment for responsibility, acting, *ad-hoc* and car allowances in lieu of duty free remission.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: I will come back again to Beau Bassin Sports Complex. We have been made to understand by the hon. Minister that it is at bidding stage. In 2021-2022, Rs7.5 m. was earmarked. Has that sum has been spent?

Mr Toussaint: No, unfortunately we were not able to go ahead in this financial year. The bidding is here now. Hopefully when we have a contractor, we will be able to start the work shortly.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, can we have details about this?

Mr Toussaint: These are for the payment of –

- Mr Pittea, Advisor on Public Relation,
- Mr Toorabally, Advisor on Youth and Sports Matters,
- Miss Seebaruth, Advisor on Documentation,
- Miss Andhin, Youth Animateur,
- Psychologist, we have on contract basis a Psychologist at the level of the Ministry.

So, Mr Pittea derives a monthly salary of Rs32,350 with an allowance of Rs5,545; Mr Toorabally - Rs25,525; Miss Seebaruth - Rs28,225; Mrs Andhin - Rs10,700, and the Psychologist - Rs35,000.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo, your question is on page 339? Go ahead!

Mr Dhunoo: So, under Item 22 – *Goods and Services, 22090 – Security*, can the Minister provide details on who has been allocated this contract?

Mr Toussaint: Already answered.

The Chairperson: It has already been answered, hon. Minister. We move to page 340. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy, please!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 340 under Item 26313.158 – *Extra-Budgetary Units, Mauritius Recreation Council*, can we know the composition of same? Thank you!

Mr Toussaint: This is a new Board that has been just set up for the promotion of different recreation activities. So, the Chairperson is Mr Rock. The Members are: Mrs Véronique Marisson, Mr Beelur, Mr Kholeegan, Mr Thisbe, we have Mr Beegun, from Ministry of Education, Mrs Bissumbhur, from Ministry of Tourism, APS Mr Mamoojee, from my Ministry, Mr Foolmaun, from Ministry of Environment, Mr Gopal, from Ministry of Agro-Industry, Mrs Bhantooa, from Ministry of Finance, Ms Jugroop, from Ministry of Gender and Mrs Foolessur, from Business Mauritius.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Ramyad!

Ms Ramyad: Item 22900.951 – *Other Goods and Services, Smart Youth Programmes, (i) Youth Programme on Prevention of Addictive*, may we know how many youngsters are benefitting from this programme?

Mr Toussaint: There is no limit, as many as we can reach.

Ms Ramyad: How many? Actually, how many?

Mr Toussaint: I have to look for the figures, yes.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Already canvassed.

The Chairperson: Hon Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets, Item 31112.407 – *Non-Residential Buildings, Upgrading of Youth Centres (d) Other Youth Centres*, I would like to ask the Minister if it does include youth centres in Constituency No. 17, Curepipe – Midlands, like, Cité Malherbes?

Mr Toussaint: To answer to all Members of this Parliament, because I will have the same question from everybody. There is no specific list for this Item, this is for minor repairs just like for the stadium and so on. This is for minor repairs as and when they arise in different youth centres.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Yes, thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.158 – *Extra-Budgetary Units, Mauritius Recreation Council*, I can see an amount of Rs12 m. earmarked for 2022/2023. I

presume that there is a list of activities already available, if so, can the hon. Minister, table this list? And, my second question ...

The Chairperson: One question at a time.

Mr Toussaint: *Enn à la fois, cerveau pa pou fonctioner la!* So, for the first question, there is no list because the Council has just been set up. It is for the Council to sit down and to say the different activities that they will organise during this financial year.

Mr Quirin: My question pertains to the same Item; that is why I was telling the hon. Minister that I have a second question. Since the set-up of the Mauritius Recreation Council, can we know how many meetings have been held, and what are the main decisions that have been taken?

Mr Toussaint: This is a new Council that has just been set-up, I think, two weeks ago.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Already replied.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful then!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 31112.407 – *Non-Residential Buildings, Upgrading of Youth Centres (a) Pointe Jerome Residential Youth Centre – Phase II*, can we know the contract value, the name of the contractor and the expected completion date?

Mr Toussaint: For the upgrading of youth centre at Pointe Jerome, the Contractor is Good Peace Company Ltd and the contract was awarded on 24 February 2022, for an amount of Rs7,086,260.

The Chairperson: Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 26313.068 – *Extra-Budgetary Units, National Youth Council*, can we know the composition of the Council?

Mr Toussaint: The Chairperson is Ms Keshikah Sohan. The Members appointed are: Mr Gopal, Mr Sirouven Sanghan. Mr Nabeel Hussein Uilly. A representative of the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Mr Anacooa, Senior Youth Officer; a representative at the Prime Minister's Office, Mrs Jeetun; a representative at the Ministry of Gender, Mr Pirbacosse; a

member elected by the National Youth Organisation, Mr Docky; a representative nominated by the Regional Youth Council, Mr Joomun.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Ms J. Bérenger!

Ms J. Bérenger: Thank you! Under Item 22900.951 – (j) *National Recreation Programme*, une somme de R 12 millions a été votée pour l’année dernière. Il n’y a rien pour les années à venir, pourrait-on savoir pourquoi et qu’est-ce qui a été fait des R 12 millions, s’il vous plaît ?

Mr Toussaint: Donc, les activités *recreational* seront pris en main par le *Mauritius Recreation Council*. So, if you look below, the same amount of Rs12 m. is now under Mauritius Recreation Council, and different recreation activities had been organised by the officers of my Ministry. So, there is a very long list, we will be glad to table it afterwards.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 223130 – *Studies and Surveys*, can we know from the hon. Minister what does this amount pertain to? Thank you!

Mr Toussaint: Yes, provision is made for the formulation of a National Youth Empowerment Policy and Strategy. And this is being done in-house by mostly the youth empowerment department.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 22900.951 – *Other Goods and Services of which – Smart Youth Programmes (a) National Youth Volunteer Scheme*, there is a decrease in the budget for Financial Year 2022/2023. May we know why the budget has been reduced?

Mr Toussaint: There is no decrease.

Ms Tour: Oh sorry, yes.

The Chairperson: We move now directly to page 342. Hon. Dr. Boolell has a question on this page?

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much! First Item, Position Titles – *Sports Medical Officer*, there is no provision earmarked. When is that post going to be filled or is there any intention of the Ministry to fill that post?

Mr Toussaint: For Sports Medical Officer, we were looking for this post since several years now. But, however, we already have a Sports Medicine Doctor seconded for duty from the Ministry of Health, and she is doing very well.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Time is over!

Vote 14-1 Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation (Rs788,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development

(7.56 p.m.)

Vote 15-1 National Infrastructure was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 347 and this time we got hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, do you have more details?

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, this provision is for payment of salaries to one Senior Advisor, one Advisor, one in Communication and one Public Relation Officer. Their names are as follows –

- (i) One Senior Advisor, Mr Sudheer Kumar Ramnarain who holds an MBA with a salary of Rs77,950;
- (ii) One Advisor in Communication, Mr Shanmuga Allagapen, holder of a Diploma in Journalism;
- (iii) One Public Relations Officer, Mr Veer Seerungen, holder of a BSc in Banking and Finance from the University of Mauritius, drawing a salary of Rs32,350.

The Chairperson: Thank you hon. Minister. Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, can we have details?

Mr Hurreeram: These are provision for payment of acting allowance, responsibility, ad hoc, duty allowance, hospitality, driver allowance to Permanent Secretary and car allowance in lieu of duty remission to eligible officers.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary*, can the hon. Minister explain the increase in provision for this Financial Year?

Mr Hurreeram: Increase in provision is due to a result of implementation of PRB Report of 2021, payment of yearly increment, filling of funded vacancies and refund of cash in lieu of sick leave.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Page 348! Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120.008 – *Fees to Consultants*, can the Minister provide details?

Mr Hurreeram: These are fees to consultant and we are appointing a Consultant to examine and recommend on the cap ceiling for third party liability insurance in construction contracts. And these fees consist also fees to Chairman and members of Board and Committees, fees to Assessors, fees for training and fees to Consultant.

The Chairperson: Can we move for the next question? Hon. Minister, you are done?

Mr Hurreeram: Yes, I am done.

The Chairperson: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.010 - *Construction Industry Development Board*, which, according to the document has as KPI, the registration of 2005 in total, consultants, contractors, suppliers and service providers in the construction industry, for which I believe the CIDB is paid a licensing fee. Can I ask the hon. Minister, then what is the rationale of providing Rs5 m. to them?

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, this provision is for the operating cost of Construction Industry Development Board. This is mostly an allowance that is being given to top up whenever required. In fact, yes, the CIDB is using its own fund but there is a provision that is being made in case there is a need for funding of more expenses.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same Item 26313.010 - *Construction Industry Development Board*, can we know the composition of same? Thank you.

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, so the Chairperson is Mr Tarkaswar Cowaloosur. Members are my DPS Mr Bundhooa, very competent Officer. From the Local Government, we have Mr Toolsy Garburrun, then we have Mr Vidianand Toofanny, Mr Veeprakash Sadeo, Mr Ravisingh Gutty, Mr Mohamud Eshan Gurreeboo, Mr Rambassun Sewpal, Mr Chandansingh Chutoori, Mr Dashwanyl Jhuboo, Mr Nishal Kona Herkanaidu and the Secretary to the Board is Mr Trilock Bhunjun who is also the Manager, Cooperate Services of the CIDB.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Item 22030.005 - *Rental of Facilities for Events*, can we have some information to enlighten us?

Mr Hurreeram: So, these are provisions for tent services, *per diem* and other facilities for religious and social events through contractors registered with my Ministry.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Mr Chairperson, Item 22030.001 - *Rental of Building*, a sum of Rs14.3 m. is being asked to vote, I would like to know where these buildings are situated and the names of the owners of these buildings?

Mr Hurreeram: So, nothing has changed. Since ages they have been there now. So, the rental of building, as everyone knows is still Moorgate House, 8th Floor and Moorgate House 4th, 9th and 10th floor, we have Moorgate House, 3rd floor and the lessor is Societé Paco, succession Chan Khin Lin Yip Tong, succession Chan Fong Lin Yip Tong, Chan Hoy Ling Yip Tong and Jean Chan Tam Ling Yip Tong, Co-owners, duly represented by Mr Jean Chan Tam Ling Yip Tong and we also have Medine Mews 10th floor, the lessor is Medine Limité.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Juman!

Mr Juman: Page 348, Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, National Infrastructure Division.

Mr Hurreeram: I already replied to that Extra Assistance.

The Chairperson: No. Sorry. The Extra Assistance you replied was on page 347. We are on page 348 now. This one is under National Infrastructure Division, hon. Minister.

Mr Hurreeram: Yes, this Extra Assistance is for provision for the payment of allowances as follows –

- (i) 3 trainee engineers;
- (ii) 1 geotechnical expert on contract which is here, Mr Ishikawa from JICA.

The Chairperson: You have already replied?

Mr Hurreeram: Yes.

The Chairperson: So, we now move to page 349. Hon Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22150 – *Scientific and Laboratory Equipment and Supplies*, there has been an increase in the provision. Can the Minister explain the increase and also what are the types of tests carried out and if ever we generate any revenue from them?

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, this is an increase in provision to cater for the updating of equipment for the material testing laboratory in Phoenix. This sum is provision for the procurement of consumables such as bitumen cartridge, filter cartridge, filter flask, amongst others for testing of materials. Yes, revenue are being collected from tests that are being done by the laboratory and for the financial year 2021-2022, an amount of Rs4.7 m. has been collected. The different tests that are being carried out are concrete test, soil test, aggregate test, bitumen test, and field test.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31122.829 – *Acquisition of Geotechnical Equipment*, a very big investment of Rs218 m. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether this department will now cover the Public Infrastructure Division, the RDA and also, will it be an income generation department because it is a huge investment per se?

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, this sum is for the acquisition of geotechnical equipment under the Economic and Social Development Programme 2020. This is a grant aid of Rs218 m. that has been obtained from the government of Japan. The Ministry has been designated as the recipient of the grant and has entered into an agreement with the Crown Agent Japan Limited designated by the government of Japan. The Ministry has submitted a list of

specialised equipment to be procured by the Crown Agent. The Crown Agent is actually finalising the bidding document regarding the approved lists of equipment, and after endorsement by the MNICD, it will proceed with the procurement process in line with the prevailing legislation in Japan. Obviously, as I replied earlier, the laboratory offers its services to the private companies.

As I said earlier, with the equipment that we have now, we have been able to provide services for Rs4.7 m., and we should agree that this is not an income generating business. First of all, this is for the geotechnical department within the Ministry to be at the service of the public to build the modern Mauritius that we are in the process of building.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22900.001 – *Uniforms*, can we know from the hon. Minister who are those who are eligible for those uniforms, please? Thank you.

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, these are for the professional and technical cadres (architects, engineers, tradesmen) for uniform, and also safety equipment and employees of the workmen's group.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31112.433 – *Refurbishment of Emmanuel Anquetil Building*, can we know the status of same and expected date of completion? Thank you.

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, much has already been done and completed. As at now, we remain with the minor repairs to the cost of Rs3 m. The works are due to be completed, 7% has been reached. We also have the servicing of the air conditioning system, the water treatment for central air conditioning that is due. And we are expecting the works to be completed by July this year.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. We now move to page 350. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31113.003 – *Construction and Upgrading of Roads (g) Reconstruction of Jumbo Phoenix Roundabout and A1 M1 Bridge, (l) La Brasserie-Beau Songes Link Road, (o) Flyover at Wooton*. Can we know from the hon. Minister

the expected date of completion for the A1 M1 Bridge, and the expected start date and completion date for La Brasserie-Beau Songes Link Road, and Flyover at Wooton?

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo – and it applies to all the hon. Members – please ask one line at a time. Otherwise, you will confuse the Minister.

Mr Hurreeram: So, I go with the A1 M1 Bridge. Mr Chairperson, we are expecting completion in June 2023. I would also like to highlight that due to the difficult geotechnical problems encountered for the A1 M1 Bridge during in-depth investigation before construction, it has been found that there is an issue with the stability of the cliff of the Grand River North West valley. It has shown that the safety of the bridge and its current format could be affected due to collapse of the cliff. With a view of avoiding any potential issue, a complete redesign of the A1 M1 Bridge was done whereby the massive concrete piles supporting the bridge were moved 20 metres away from both cliffs. So, this has resulted in some delay.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31113.003 – *Construction and Upgrading of Roads (b) De Caen Flyover, Port Louis*, Rs19.45 m. which is almost the same as last year. I believe this is the retention money that needs to be released to the contractor. My question is why was it not released last financial year as was envisaged, but this year? Is there any problem because of which it is not being released?

Mr Hurreeram: *Non! Il ne faut pas chercher midi à quatorze heures.* We all know that this bridge...

Mr Osman Mahomed: This is what you said last year.

Mr Hurreeram: But it is retention money.

The Chairperson: Let the Minister reply, please!

Mr Hurreeram: The start date of this bridge was October 2017. The completion date was December 2020. Then, we noticed there was a settlement and it was repaired at the cost of the contractor. Now, when we are having to pay that retention money, we are taking it from the new construction completion date. So, now, this is due next financial year. The defect liability period is being monitored, and so far, no settlement has been observed. We believe it has been built to our satisfaction, but we still need to monitor before releasing that retention money.

Mr Osman Mahomed: This is all you need to answer!

The Chairperson: Thank you. No need to argue, hon. Osman Mahomed! The Minister has given a very good reply. Hon. Ramful, please!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 31113.003 – *Construction and Upgrading of Roads (q) B28 Road at Cavendish Bridge*, the project value is at Rs475 m. Then, there is Rs60 m. that was disbursed last year, and then, we have Rs75 m. for 2024-2025. Is that the retention money?

Mr Hurreeram: No. The provision for 2021-2022 has been carried forward to 2024-2025. So, yes it has been postponed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31113.003 - *Construction and Upgrading of Roads (e) B28 Road from Deux Frères to Bel Air*, can the hon. Minister inform the House whether there is provision for a cycle lane on this road? Thank you.

Mr Hurreeram: Mr Chairperson, this is now a policy of Government to make provision for cycle lane wherever it is possible on all new roads. The hon. Member will realise that now, when we are talking about the B28 Road from Deux Frères to Bel Air, it is already a build-up area. So, here, we are talking about Phase 2 – there was Phase 1 which was the upgrading of Flacq to Mahebourg – which is at tendering stage, it will consist of widening of approximately 3.1 kilometres of existing 5.4 metres to 6 metres wide carriageway to a 6.4-metre carriageway together with provision of 1.2 metres to 1.5 metres wide footpath within the inhabited areas and wherever possible we are providing for 1 metre to 1.5 metres wide hard shoulder at other places, and this can provide space for the safety of cyclists. But, unfortunately, in this project we do not have sufficient space to provide for cycle lanes. But it remains a policy of Government to apply it wherever possible.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 351 and we start with hon. Osman Mahomed. Please, do not argue!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Item 31132.401 - *Computerisation of the RDA*, can we know more about this project?

Mr Hurreeram: This is a new project and the RDA intends to implement an Integrated Management Information System where its main department will have its own computer-based

information system to manage and automate the routine task and provide middle and top management tools to assist and provide a more organised and flexible approach in making the decision necessary to swiftly achieve the public expectations.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 31113.004 - *Construction and Upgrading of Bridges (a) Cavendish at Ville Noire (Consultancy)*, I can see consultancy Rs11 m; the project has been completed?

Mr Hurreeram: No, the hon. Minister is confusing with the upgrading of the existing Cavendish Bridge. As he surely knows the narrowness of this bridge, we cannot actually go and touch that bridge. *C'est un patrimoine* that we have upgraded and preserved and I am sure you must have been happy going through this at night. Now, what we are considering is studying the possibility of having a totally new bridge that can eventually link Mahebourg to Ville Noire and the rest of the island going towards Flacq. So, this is a totally new project, new road that we are looking into.

Mr Chairperson: Page 351, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: On page 351, Item 31113.403 - *Maintenance and Rehabilitation*, there is Rs600 m. earmarked. Can I ask the hon. Minister to table a list of all the various roads and bridges that are going to be rehabilitated? In particular, I am interested to know how many are in my...

(Interruptions)

Mr Hurreeram: It is a very long list, I will table it. It is all over the island, you realise.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ittoo!

Mr Ittoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31113.403 - *Maintenance and Rehabilitation*, I see a big provision for the maintenance of roads and footpaths, so, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for the works in No. 16. So, I would request him...

The Chairperson: Excuse me hon. Member, which item?

Mr Ittoo: Item 31113.403 - *Maintenance and Rehabilitation*.

The Chairperson: Which sub section?

Mr Ittoo: Roads and footpaths.

The Chairperson: No, one line at a time!

Mr Ittoo: Okay. 31113.403 - *Maintenance and Rehabilitation (b) Footpaths.*

The Chairperson: Now, we are on the right path.

Mr Ittoo: Yes. Thank you, Mr Chairperson. So, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for all the works being done across the footpaths which have been left unattended for many, many years. So, I would request him to put a substantial proportion of the budget for this footpath for Constituency No. 16, please.

Mr Hurreeram: We will look into it.

The Chairperson: No more question on this page? Page 352, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much. Item 31132.801 - *Acquisition of Software*; though it is not a sizeable amount, the amount is Rs1.4 m., can we know from the hon. Minister from whom this acquisition has been made?

Mr Hurreeram: These are provisions for procurement of IT equipment such as personal computers, printers as well as laptops for officers of ESD. The amount has been earmarked and payment will be affected by end of June. They are from various suppliers. Well, we have a full list of different suppliers.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Any more question on this page?

Vote 15-1 National infrastructure (Rs3,950,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(8.24 p.m.)

Vote 15-2 National Development Unit was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 358. Any question on page 358? No. So, we move to page 359. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy, please!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 359, under Item 26313.155 - *Drain Infrastructure Construction Ltd*, can we have more details about this item, please? Thank you.

Mr Hurreeram: We have a list of 55 projects that have been allocated to the Drainage Infrastructure Construction Ltd, by the Land Drainage Authority. And one project has been allocated so far; we have 11 projects that are at bidding stage to the tune of Rs176 m. Let me just make it clear here that these 11 projects will go for open national bidding, and we have another 43 projects estimated at around Rs7 billion which are at design stage.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Page 359, Item 26313.144 - *Land Drainage Authority of which Land Drainage Master Plan*, there is no budget earmarked for the year 2022-2023, may we know where we are with the Land Drainage Master Plan?

Mr Hurreeram: No provision has been made, Mr Chairperson, as the payment of Land Drainage Master Plan has already been effected. A copy has already been provided to the LDA and same will be presented to Cabinet.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Osman Mahomed: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.155 - *Drains Infrastructure Construction Ltd*, may I ask the hon. Minister about the name of the Chairperson of that Special Purpose Vehicle or Company and also about the CEO or Managing Director or General Manager who is in charge of that Company? And, if possible, the packages that they draw also? Thank you.

The Chairperson: You want it to be tabled?

Mr Osman Mahomed: No.

Mr Hurreeram: The Chairperson of DICL is Mr Gopee. We have one Director, Mr Suhootorah from the Ministry of Finance, one Director, Mr Pirthee who was PS of the NDU, he has now been transferred but he is still the Director at DICL. And the other Directors, we are in the process of nominating them.

Regarding the packages, it is still being discussed. I do not think it has been finalised yet, so we will communicate the information as and when.

Mr Osman Mahomed: Is it Mr Avinash Gopee?

Mr Hurreeram: Yes, it is Mr Avinash Gopee.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Can the Minister confirm that the Company, Drains Infrastructure Construction Ltd, does not fall within the purview of the Procurement Office?

Mr Hurreeram: No, it does not but, we, as politicians and my officers, we do, and *on a un devoir moral vis à vis le pays*. This is why I started by saying, we will go; we will procure by open advertise bidding, and people who are qualified will be. So, there is no need to try to *jeter des doutes sur quoi que soit*.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much. Capital Expenditure, Item 31113.003 - *Construction and Upgrading of Roads*, as you said Minister, in the spirit of transparency of course, open tender will be called for. Now, can the Minister enlighten us as to where and when these projects will be implemented, and if some of them are ongoing?

Mr Hurreeram: As at date, we have completed 61 projects to the tune of Rs162 m. *J'arrondis*. Then, we have ongoing projects, that is, works order have already been issued. We have 42 projects to the value of Rs183 m. And, yes, we can circulate a list of those projects at a later stage.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem, you got a question?

Mr Uteem: Yes, thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31113.045 *Construction and Upgrading of Amenities of which Small Development Projects (Indian Grant)*, may we have some details about what those Small Development Projects are? They are funded by India.

Mr Hurreeram: The provision is made for the construction and upgrading of children playground, football playground, open gyms, football pitch and petanque court, among others. These are the type of projects that will be built all around the island at the request of the respective PPS.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, Item 31122.802 - *Acquisition of IT Equipment*, can the hon. Minister give some details, please?

Mr Hurreeram: Provision has been made for the acquisition of computers, printers and other IT equipment for staff of the Ministry.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any more question?

Vote 15-2 National Development Unit (Rs794,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, I now suspend the Sitting for one hour.

At 8.32 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 9.43 p.m. with the Deputy Chairperson of Committees in the Chair.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Please be seated!

(9.43 p.m.)

Vote 16-1 Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation was called.

The Chairperson: We start from the page 366. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may we know from the hon. Minister, the name of the Advisors?

Mr Balgobin: Yes, Mr Chairperson, this is provision made for two Advisors, namely the Advisor in Information Matters, Ms Ferag and the Advisor on Project Implementation and ICT Promotion, Mr Jhuboo. Ms Ferag draws a salary of Rs66,200 and Mr Jhuboo Rs62,700.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Any other question on page 366? So, we move 367. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.042 - *Mauritius Research and Innovation Council*, with a slight increase in the estimates, the amount for 2022-2023. Can the Minister give us a breakdown as to how this money is being spent, and whether it is spent judiciously, please?

Mr Balgobin: Yes, Mr Chairperson, the Rs5 m. increase is mainly due to the implementation of the PRB Report 2021 out of which compensation of employees Rs39 m. and other administrative expenditure amounting to Rs11 m.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.040 - *Cybersecurity Drill*, may I know from the hon. Minister what does this relate to?

Mr Balgobin: The Cybersecurity Drill is done by CERT-MU, the Computer Emergency Response Team. And they have been organising Cybersecurity Drills since 2018. This is normally made for simulation of cyber attacks in controlled environments together with tabletop exercises with top management.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: It has already been canvassed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 26313.159 - *Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council*, can we know the composition of same? Thank you.

Mr Balgobin: Mr Chairperson, the composition of the Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council –

- Chairperson, Dr. Juddoo;
- Representative of the Ministries, Mr Arba, the CTO;
- Representative of the Ministry of Finance, the PS, Mr Puchay;
- Representative Ministry of Industrial Environment, Mr Seeboo;
- AG's Office, Maitre Puchay;
- EDB, Dr. Ramdeny, Representative of the Private Sector;
- Mr Seetohul from OTAM;
- Four technology experts, Mr Souboule, Dr. Hurreeram - not my good friend next to me - and
- Mr Vishal Seebooruth are members of the Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council.

The Chairperson: Thank you. At least no, Mr Gopall, this time. Any other further questions on page 367? So, we move to page 368. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Capital Expenditure Item 26323.042 - *Mauritius Research and Innovation Council of which (a) Research and Innovation Projects,*

there is a sizable increase compared to the last year's estimate. If we can have a list of the ongoing projects and new projects identified? Thank you.

Mr Balgobin: Mr Chairperson, this amount relates to two things –

- 1) committed projects amounting to Rs38.2 m. which are ongoing projects, and
- 2) new projects.

There is a long list, but I can give you a few examples for now.

The Chairperson: You can table it.

Mr Balgobin: Just one example, it is good to know, we are going to work on the innovative land base crop production, micro fragmentation of coral to speed their growth, on the smart agriculture nutrients that could use new nutrients, vermicompost, new types of composting. So, there is a lot of new incentives that is being worked out. The provision is for all those innovative measures that the Research Council will be undertaking.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Léopold!

Mr Léopold: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On the same item, is there any sum earmarked for the MRC Branch in Rodrigues and for what purpose?

Mr Balgobin: Mr Chairperson, Rodrigues always stays in our heart. We have earmarked funds for the Rodrigues Office. But at the same time, we have, as approved by Cabinet recently, extended *Les Assises de la Recherche et de l'Innovation* in Rodrigues which will be held on 27 and 28 of July next month.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 26323.042 - *Mauritius Research and Innovation Council of which (a) Research and Innovation Projects*, last year, there was an amount of Rs50 m. which was earmarked. May I know from the hon. Minister how much has been spent on *Les Assises de la Recherche et de l'Innovation*?

Mr Balgobin: Mr Chairperson, *Les Assises de la Recherche et de l'Innovation* is not completed yet because as I said, there is one part that has been done recently, and there is second part that is to be done in July. The whole amount will be shared to you later, but the amount left

from the previous Rs50 m. is none. All of them have been used and utilised in projects, incubators, financing various projects for various companies and organisations.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move to page 369. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much. Capital Expenditure Item *31132.401 - e-Government Projects of which (a) High Speed Connectivity in Secondary Schools*. I know this is a very thought after project, the high speed connectivity in secondary schools, Rs40 m. earmarked. Can we know where matters stand as to whether we can report progress in relation to this specific project?

Mr Balgobin: Mr Chairperson, this is a very important project for our children in the schools where we are connecting all the secondary schools in Mauritius and Rodrigues. It concerns some 150 different secondary schools, private and public. This project is in two phases. The first phase is to bring internet connectivity to the school, and the second phase is to bring connectivity in all the classes individually, libraries, computer rooms, administrative block etc.

So, the first phase is being done already by the Government Intranet System which is called GINS. The second phase, the tender will be launched by end of the month.

The Chairperson: Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Page 369, Item *22120.008 - Fees to Consultants - Technology Partnership Program*, there has been an increase in the budgetary provisions. May we know who is the consultant or consultants that have been appointed?

Mr Balgobin: Mr Chairperson, this provision is made but there is no consultant that is appointed yet. You would appreciate the fact that technology moves very fast especially with emerging technologies AI, block chain, machine learning etc. So, this provision is made to be able to get services of an international expert of repute, training of the staff of the Central Informatics Bureau.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item *31132.401 - (b) Certification Authority*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether this Certification Authority is now up and running and they are delivering electronic signature and registration?

Mr Balgobin: Yes, Mr Chairperson, this is a very important project whereby instead of using paper based signatures, everything is done by digital signature, like for example, you are applying a tender on e-procurement, you need to have digital signatures and this project is completed. The small amount that remains is the last payment of the 10% of the contract. But this project is up and running and is being managed by the National Computer Board.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Just one question, with regards to Item 31132.401 - *e-Government Projects of which (a) High Speed Connectivity in Secondary Schools*, can I know who is the contractor who has obtained this project? Because there was an issue with regards to the previous contractor, he did not complete the work.

Mr Balgobin: Well, you are referring to a matter back in 2017 or 2016 that is already sorted out. As I said earlier to hon. Dr. Boolell, this project is in two phases. The first phase is under the framework agreement that is signed with Mauritius Telecom whereby you bring internet up to the schools. Then, a tender will be launched for civil works to be done like cables, routers, etc. in all classes, public areas in those schools. That is still to be done. The first phase is already in progress by Mauritius Telecom.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move to page 370. Any question on that page? No question.

Vote 16-1 Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation (Rs906,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(9.55 p.m.)

Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training, and Commerce and Consumer Protection

Vote 17-1 Labour, Human Resource Development and Training was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may we have the name of the Advisors to the Minister and the Fees paid to them?

Mr Callichurn: Yes, Mr Chairperson. Provision is made for the payment of salary and allowances to six Advisors to the Minister and two officers on contract, that is, the President and Vice-President of the Redundancy Board. They are –

- Mr Baichoo, Advisor;
- Mr Bundhoo, Advisor;
- Mr Caremben, Advisor;
- Mr Jouan, Advisor;
- Mr Mareemootoo, Advisor;
- Mr Sungeelee, Advisor;
- Mr Abdool Rashid Hossen, President of Redundancy Board,
- Mr Claite Bernard Marie Vice-President of Redundancy Board.

The Chairperson: You are done? Thank you! I think we do not have any question on this page. We move to page 378. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Under the last Item 22900.967 – *Other Goods and Services of which, National Wage Consultative Council*, can we have the composition of the Council? I see that there is rather a substantial increase from what was earmarked last year, by almost Rs1 million. Can we be updated as to where matters stand in respect of the work entrusted to the Council?

Mr Callichurn: Mr Chairperson, the work is ongoing. The next review of the National Minimum Wage will be in 2024.

Dr. Boolell: The composition of the Council?

Mr Callichurn: Composition? As Chairperson, you have Mr Beejaye Coomar Appanna. Then, you have the representatives of the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Finance, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Agro-Industry, the Ministry responsible for the subject of Business, the Ministry responsible for the subject of Industry, the Ministry of Tourism, the National Remuneration Board, the Pay Research Bureau, Statistics Mauritius, Business Mauritius, Mauritius Export Association, *Confédération des Travailleurs des Secteurs Public et Privé*. There is a list, which I am tabling.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Mr Chairperson, under *Recurrent Expenditure*, Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, there is Rs6 m. earmarked for 2022/2023. Can we know to whom these allowances are payable?

Mr Callichurn: Provision is made for the payment of *ad hoc*, acting responsibility, duty, and entertainment allowances for officers of my Ministry. I can table the list to whom these allowances are paid.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under Item 22030 – *Rent*, there is a substantial increase. May we know to which offices the rent relates? Where are they located?

Mr Callichurn: Offices are rented at Victoria House; we occupy the 8th and 9th floors. There is also parking – 12 slots; Orleans Street, Port Louis, 4 and Garden Tower, one. It is payable to NexTeracom Services Ltd for the office spaces.

The Chairperson: Okay, thank you! We now move to page 379. Hon. Dhunoo.

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31122.802 – *Other Machinery and Equipment – Acquisition of IT equipment (b) Digital Court Recording System (for Redundancy Board)*, can the hon. Minister give more details on the status of the project?

Mr Callichurn: Mr Chairperson, an amount of Rs800,000 was provided in Budget 2021/2022 for extension of the existing digital recording system installed in the Boardroom of the National Remuneration Board and the Commission for Conciliation and Mediation, and to the Boardroom of the Redundancy Board, by the same supplier. However, following consultations held, the Public Procurement Office advised that it would not be proper to go for the extension of the system with the same supplier but to consider the project as a new one, and be implemented after an open advertised bidding exercise. The project specification, therefore, had to be reworked and the project value revisited. That is why the provision has been increased.

The Chairperson: Thank you Minister. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, on *Capital Expenditure*, under Item 31132.113 – *Intangible Fixed Assets – Computerisation of the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Division*, a sum of Rs3 m. is earmarked from a project value of Rs12 m. Can the hon. Minister enlighten us as to where matters stand, and to whom the contract has been awarded or allocated, please?

Mr Callichurn: Provision has been made for payment to SIL for the delivery of the application, software, scheduled for November 2022. As at date, 55% of the project has been completed.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120 – *Fees*, a sum of Rs2.9 m. is earmarked for 2022/2023. Can we have some details with regard to these fees?

Mr Callichurn: Provision is made for the payment of fees to the Chairperson and members of Board and Committees. Fees for training, refund for subscription fee to professional bodies are as follows: fees to Chairman and members of Board and Committees, Rs1.7 m; fees for training, Rs200,000; fees to Consultant, Rs1 m., and refund of subscription fee to professional bodies, Rs8,000. Inspection and Audit fee is Rs30,000.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Page 379, *Sub-Head 17-103 Registration of Associations and Trade Unions*. I will take it under Item 21110 – *Personal Emoluments*. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of associations and trade unions which are currently registered?

Mr Callichurn: I can table at a later stage.

The Chairperson: Thank you! We now move to page 380. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*, can the hon. Minister give details on the buildings rented and their owners? Thank you.

Mr Callichurn: Provision is made for the rental of office space at Silvercrest for a sum of Rs2.9 m., and also for the renting of 5 parking slots for a sum of Rs160,000. The increase in the provision is to cater for the payment of syndic fees, amounting to Rs33,009 per month.

The Chairperson: You are done?

Mr Callichurn: Yes.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Mrs Navarre Marie!

Mrs Navarre Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060 – *Maintenance*, there is an increase of more than 100%, going from Rs315,000 to Rs890,000. Could we have more information on that?

Mr Callichurn: The increase in provision as at Rs500,000 will be required for the payment of an annual maintenance fee for upkeep of the application software at the Registry of Associations.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. We now move to page 381. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 28212.028 – *Transfer to Households – Employability Enhancement Programme (a) Youth Employment Programme*, I can see that the budget for this year has been decreased by nearly half. Can I know why and can I also know how many youths have been employed under the Youth Employment Programme for last year?

Mr Callichurn: Mr Chairperson, the decrease is based on the trend of expenditure for the Financial Year 2021-2022. Furthermore, with the implementation of the newly introduced scheme, *Prime à l'Emploi* which targets the youths from 18 years to 35 years and women below 50 years old, it is expected that a requested amount of Rs70 m. will be sufficient.

As regard to the number of youths trained under the Youth Employment Programme, from April 2017 to May 2022, youths placed under this programme is 7,719 and the employment rate under YEP is 95%, that is, the success rate.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 381, Item 28212.028 - *Employability Enhancement Programme - (b) Women Back to Work Programme, (c) Trainee Engineer Scheme, (d) Training and Placement of Persons with Disabilities*, with regard to the three other components...

The Chairperson: Excuse me, hon. Lobine, I think you were not in the House when I said that we are going only one line per person.

(Interruptions)

No, one line per person! Only one line at a time!

(Interruptions)

No. You ask for only one line!

Mr Lobine: Okay, I pick and choose. Give me for the Item 28212.028 - *Employability Enhancement Programme - (b) Women Back to Work Programme*.

(Interruptions)

Mr Callichurn: From June 2015 to June 2022, the number of women placed under this programme is 1,344. The number of women registered under this programme is 5,738. The number of women who completed the programme is 1,197.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Under Recurrent Expenditure, Grants, Item 26313.027 - *Mauritius Institute of Training and Development*, where there is a substantial increase in the estimates for this year, if the Minister can enlighten us as to where matters stand, and as to how this money is being earmarked and being used judiciously? If he can enlighten us and give us the list of all the programmes involved.

Mr Callichurn: I undertake to table the answer.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31132.122 - *E-Register of Skills*, the project value is Rs25 m. and an amount of Rs10 m. is earmarked. Can we have some details on what this E-Register of Skills is about and whether the tender has already been allocated?

Mr Callichurn: An E-Register of Skills which will be a database for local workers in the manufacturing and construction sector will be launched in order to facilitate job search and recruitment. It will contain amongst others job profile, qualification as well as working experience of the workers. Also, it will facilitate exchange of information between employers and experienced workers in the mentioned sectors. The system will be developed by my Ministry in consultation with other stakeholders.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 382. Hon. Abbas Mamode!

Mr Abbas Mamode: Item 26323.027 – *Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (b) Equipment – Formation Professionnelle*, there is a decrease in the figures.

Mr Callichurn: Provision is made for the purchase of additional equipment for dispensing quality training in the 16 different trades. This is in general, for the reduction in capital grants for the Financial Year 2022-2023 is due to the fact that most of the major upgrading and refurbishment of MITD Centres have already been implemented during the Financial Year 2021-2022 and are nearing completion. It is with regard to the different Training Centres.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any other question? Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Just some clarifications on the same Item 26323.027 - *Mauritius Institute of Training and Development*, you can table the information if you do not have it. I just want to know the number of students that are enrolled in courses at the MITD.

Mr Callichurn: Like I said, we have different Training Centres, different courses running at the same time, so, obviously, I will not have all the figures in general but I undertake to table it at a later stage.

The Chairperson: You can come with a PQ on that. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. The question has already been canvassed.

The Chairperson: No more questions! Hon. Minister, just make sure that you table all the lists that you have undertaken to.

Mr Callichurn: Yes.

Vote 17-1 Labour, Human Resource Development and Training (Rs868,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.15 p.m.)

Vote 17-2 Commerce and Consumer Protection was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 389. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Yes, the usual question. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, may we know the name of the Advisors?

Mr Callichurn: Provision is made for the payment of basic salary and salary compensation, duty remission, car allowance, travelling allowance, end-of-year bonus and refund

of annual leave to one Advisor only on Information Matters. His name is Jean-Francois Cossigny.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister. We now move to page 390. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 26313.008 – *Competition Commission*, can we know the composition of the Commission?

Mr Callichurn: Chairperson - Mr Mahmad Aleem Bocus; Vice-Chairperson - Mr Désiré Pierre Alberto Mariette; Commissioners - Mrs Vedwantee Bikhoo and Mrs Sharda Devi Dindoyal, and the Executive Director is Mr Deshmuk Kowlessur.

The Chairperson: Are you done?

Mr Callichurn: Yes.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under Item 26313.008 – *Competition Commission*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of investigations carried out by the Competition Commission last year?

Mr Callichurn: Enquiries carried out last year - 24; Investigations - 6; Market studies - 1, and advice given to the Government - 1. Also enforcement activities for COMESA Mergers and Agreement Assessment - 32. That is for financial year 2021-2022.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move to page 391. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22900.903 – *Awareness Campaign (Consumer Education)*, there is a considerable increase in this amount. Can the hon. Minister provide further details to this item? Thank you.

Mr Callichurn: Provision is made for the payment of contribution to the National Savings Fund according to the number of officers in post. Increase is due to the new ceiling applicable yearly, and rise in salary following the implementation of PRB Report 2021.

Provision is made to cater for the holding of awareness campaign, that is, to prepare and pre-distribute. A workshop on awareness will be organised on the World Consumer Right Day on 15 March. Also, booklets and flyers will be prepared and distributed to consumers during awareness campaigns. Clips will be broadcast on TV, schools and in Woman Centres.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Hon. Minister. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Item 22120 – *Fees*, quite a substantial increase from what it was in the previous estimates. Can the Minister apprise us as to how the fees are paid and to whom, please?

Mr Callichurn: Well, the increase in provision is to cater for the fees payable to Chairperson, Members and Secretary of the Price Observatory Committee. Out of the Rs420,000 provided in the financial year 2021/22, Rs192,508 have already been disbursed, which make up as follows: fees were paid to the Chairperson, Members and Secretary, parking coupon, fee for training as well.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 21110 – *Personal Emoluments*. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of inspection carried out by officers of his Ministry under Consumer Protection Division?

Mr Callichurn: Mr Chairperson, number of control checks at trade premises is 8,805. Number of checks at bakeries is 150. Number of contraventions established is 805. Altogether, we have also recorded complaints which were registered on the Citizen Support Portal and that figure is 2,623. Number of complaints received on our hotline is 2,479. And number of complaints that were made at the Citizen Advice Bureau is 144.

The Chairperson: Thank you.

Vote 17-2 Commerce and Consumer Protection (Rs180,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(10.23 p.m.)

Vote 18-1 Ministry of Health and Wellness was called.

Mr Uteem: It has been agreed between the Whips that the Committee of Supply for today's session will end with the Ministry of Commerce and will resume tomorrow with the Ministry of Health.

The Chairperson: The list that I have from the Government Whip says stop with the Ministry of Health and Wellness. I understand that it has been agreed with the Whip of the

Opposition who has not been here at all this day. So, I am going as per the list that has been provided to me.

Mr Uteem: The Chief Whip also is not here.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: This is the list that I have got from the Chief Whip. Even the Opposition Whip is not here.

(Interruptions)

We are going as per the list that I have got. Okay? We start at page 398. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 398, under Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, can we have more details about these allowances please? Thank you.

Dr. Jagutpal: Provision is made to meet payment of responsibility allowance, duty allowance, *ad-hoc* allowance, driver's allowance. Increase in provision is due to implementation of PRB 2021 report.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Under Item 21110.005 – *Extra Assistance*, can we have more details from the Minister?

Dr. Jagutpal: Payment of salaries to Advisors and officers on contract. Increase in provision is due to salaries paid to the contract officers aligned with PRB 2021 Report. So, the names of the Advisors are –

- (i) Dr. Gaud - Senior Advisor;
- (ii) Dr. Jhugroo - Advisor on Substance Abuse and Harm Reduction;
- (iii) Mr Subdhan- Advisor in Biomedical Engineering, and
- (iv) Mr K. Pultoo - Senior Advisor on Policy and Communication Matters.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 22200 – *Overseas Travel - Treatment & Incoming Medical Teams*, can we know how many cases have been attended by the incoming medical teams?

Dr. Jagutpal: Provision is made for payment of air tickets in respect of incoming medical teams in different fields to intervene with patients with complicated and complex health issues and payment of air tickets for travelling abroad for medical treatment.

So, in this one, we have the incoming medical teams who visited Mauritius last year. I will give you their names –

- (i) Dr. Gulab Chand Pamnani who visited Mauritius for the Centre of Excellence for the Ayush project.
- (ii) Dr. Martin who visited Mauritius for the spinal surgeries; he reviewed 50 patients and operated 15 complex spinal cases.
- (iii) Dr. Moreea, he also visited Mauritius for endoscopy services, trained our doctors and oversee the National Hepatitis C Elimination Programme and Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme.
- (iv) Dr. Simon Clarke visited Mauritius twice for the implementation of the neonatal guidelines and protocols to standardise neonatal practice.
- (v) Dr. Douglas visited Mauritius to assess the facilities available for thoracic surgery; he operated some cases and provided training to surgeons at Victoria Hospital. Dr. Douglas operated on three complex cases.
- (vi) Dr. Ravi Ramalingum, Consultant ENT surgeon, operated on complex ENT cases during his visit; 21 patients underwent surgery at ENT Hospital.
- (vii) Prof. Ashley D’Cruz, operated on complex pediatric cases at SSR Hospital and several cases were reviewed and operated.
- (viii) Dr. Shetty, Consultant ophthalmologist, performed corneal transplantation of patients and 6 corneal transplants were performed.

So, these are the visiting doctors.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 399, under Item 25510.001 - *Interest Subsidy on Medical Loans (Special Zero Interest Medical Loan Scheme)*, Rs15 m. is earmarked

for 2022-2023. I think this is a new scheme; can the hon. Minister give us maximum details on this new scheme?

Dr. Jagutpal: Interest Subsidy on Medical Loans, Special Zero Interest Medical Loan Scheme is a new item following the announcement in the Budget Speech 2021-2022 for the payment of interest by the Ministry for loans taken by patients undergoing treatment in private hospitals. The Ministry is finalising the arrangement with the Association of Private Clinics, the State Bank of Mauritius and MauBank Ltd. Subsequently, an agreement would be signed between all parties concerned. So, this sum is earmarked to pay the interest.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 22120 - *Fees*, may we have a breakdown as to whom these fees are being paid?

Dr. Jagutpal: Provision for payment of fees to Chairman and members of Boards and Committees, Medical Disciplinary Tribunal, Dental Disciplinary Tribunal, Nursing Disciplinary Tribunal, Pharmacy Board, Bid Evaluation Committee, Departmental Bid Committee, and all that. I will table the list and the different payments done.

The Chairperson: Hon. Abbas Mamode!

Mr Abbas Mamode: Item 21111.100 – *Overtime*, the figure is on the rise by Rs1 m.

Dr. Jagutpal: It is provision for payment of overtime to officers of Purchasing and Supply Cadres, Human Resource and Finance Cadres, Office Auxiliaries and Drivers who are called upon to work beyond normal working hours as and when required, and also to cater for entitled leaves of officers. This is a table of the list of the officers for whom this provision of overtime is being made.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22030 – *Rent*, can the Minister inform the House why there has been an increase in this provision? Thank you.

Dr. Jagutpal: The increase in the provision is due to the escalation cost in view of the amount determined by valuation.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 400. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 27210.008 - *Assistance to Patients Inoperable in Mauritius (Overseas Treatment Scheme)*, can we know how many patients have benefited from assistance under this item for last year?

Dr. Jagutpal: From January to December 2021, 173 patients have benefitted, amounting to Rs69 m. and from January to May of this year, 104 patients have benefitted, amounting to Rs37 m.

The Chairperson: Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under 27210.008 - *Assistance to Patients Inoperable in Mauritius (Overseas Treatment Scheme)*, can we know why the amount budgeted for 2022-2023 has decreased by Rs20 m.?

Dr. Jagutpal: You will see there is another item, Item 27210.018 - *Assistance to Patient Referred for Treatment in Local Private Health Institutions*. So, that amount has decreased because we have a new item where we have Rs15 m. earmarked. So, this measure was announced in the Budget 2021-2022 to allow patients to undergo treatment locally in private health institutions. Those treatments are not available in public hospitals. Now, following consultations with all stakeholders concerned, the agreement of the Association of Private Clinics was obtained to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding which means that we will give this facility to the clinics to operate cases which are not operable in our public institutions.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 31132.118 - *Digitalisation of Hospital Services (a) e-Health* has a massive project value of Rs633 m. with Rs140 m. earmarked for this year's estimates. Now, can the Minister apprise the House as to whom the contract has been allocated and if he can report progress in respect of the ongoing e-health exercise?

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson, it is provision made for the implementation of the e-health solution starting with the patient administration system through the public health institutions. Still we are finalising the digital health strategy and a digital health law under the e-health portfolio initiatives with the UNDP. Now, the UNDP is at this time at the drafting stage of

the Request for Proposal which would be floated, hopefully by July 2022. So, we are still on that RFP stage.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 31122.999 - *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, may we have some details on the other machinery and equipment?

Dr. Jagutpal: It is provision made for the acquisition of computers, printers, file server and ICT infrastructure works for the whole Ministry. The ICT equipment is allocated to different departments. I will give the list of suppliers where all these equipment have been purchased.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 401. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 22140.001 - *Medicine, Drugs and Vaccines*, I see that an amount of Rs1,115,000,000 was spent last year. Can we have a list of the suppliers and a breakdown?

Dr. Jagutpal: Provision is made for the purchase of drugs and vaccines through competitive tendering. The main mode of procurement is Open National Bidding; quantification of needs is made by the user end, and, then, based on stock position and average monthly consumption, the procurement is made for the whole Ministry. So I will table the list of all the medicines procured be it for this item or for the other items in the different Votes. I will give all the lists so that you will have the details on the medications, the successful bidder and the amount that is being paid.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Quirin!

Hon. Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120.002 - *Fees of which Fees to Chairman and Members of Boards and Committees*, can we know what is the quantum of each session payment made to members of the Negligence Committee, and can you please state if it is governed by the PRB also?

Dr. Jagutpal: For the Medical Negligence Committee, the remuneration fees per sitting are –

- Chairperson - Rs2,910;
- Member - Rs1,455 (there are 3 members in all), and the

- Secretary - Rs873.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Item 22140.002 - *C.T Scan and MRI Fees and Materials*, with a substantial sum of Rs800 m. Can the Minister apprise as to how this sum is being used and unbundled to meet the request of patients who need to undergo C.T Scan?

Dr. Jagutpal: For this item, the sum earmarked is Rs800,000. So, provision is made for the purchase of films and consumables for C.T scan and MRI, and if ever, payments to private clinics to which patients are referred when hospital equipment is out of order. For example, last time we had the EEG which was out of order so we sent the patient for EEG in the private clinic.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 401, Item 22120.008 - *Fees of which Fees to Consultant (Transaction Advisor for Public Private Partnership Projects)*, may we have more details on this component with regard to Transaction Advisor for Public Private Partnership Projects?

Dr. Jagutpal: This is a new item. The Ministry is enlisting the services of one Transaction Advisor for the three BOT Projects, namely –

- (i) National Health Laboratory Service Centre at Côte d’Or;
- (ii) Modern Warehouse of International Standard for Storage of Medicines, Medical Consumables and Medical and Non-Medical Products, this is again at Côte d’Or, and
- (iii) the State-of-the-Art Cardiac Hospital at Côte d’Or.

So, all these projects will be under the item - the Transaction Advisor.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 22140.001 - *Medicine, Drugs and Vaccines*, may I know from the hon. Minister, out of the Rs1.1 billion that was budgeted last year for the purchase of medicine, drugs and vaccines, can we know the amount paid for the purchase of medicine, drugs and vaccines that have expired?

Dr. Jagutpal: For this budget, I have already submitted the list for all the medications that have been purchased; the total list of medications purchased. Among those medications that we purchased last year and which expired; so far, we do not have any expiry because at the time of purchase, the medications should respect the 18 months before expiry; so, that is still being used. But, so far, the Central Store Division has not given us the list of expired medications that have been purchased since 2021.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, last year we voted a sum of Rs117 m., this year we are asked to the Rs122 m. Can we know the name of the service provider, please?

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, it is Mauriclean Ltd.

The Chairperson: Any other question on page 401?

I suspend the Sitting for 10 minutes!

At 10.42 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 11.08 p.m. with the Deputy Chairperson of Committees in the Chair.

ANNOUNCEMENT

TIME ALLOCATION

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, I have an announcement to make. The agreement between the two Whips is only on the time allocated per item. Until a motion for the Committee to report progress is not moved, I will not adjourn the Committee of Supply.

So, we continue with page 402 with hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. On Capital Expenditure, Item 31112.003 - *Construction/Extension of Hospitals of which (c) New Cancer Centre*, which has a project value of Rs1,582,000,000, and Rs800 m. is earmarked. Can we know from the Minister where does matter stand in respect of this new Cancer Centre which has created a lot of expectations? I would like the hon. Minister to inform the House as to where matters stand and when will the New Centre be ready? Thank you.

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson. The contract for the construction of a New Cancer Hospital was awarded to Swadeshi Civil Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd in October 2018 for a contract value of around Rs1 billion. The project is completed now. The infrastructural work is completed and this project is funded under the Saudi Fund for Development through a loan agreement of USD 25 m. signed on 22 October 2018. The project is being supervised by Hospital Services Consultancy Cooperation in India, a government of India enterprise. We are in the procurement of the furniture, and the high-tech equipment is in progress. It is expected that before next year, the building is completed. Now, we are only working on the infrastructure and equipment.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ms. Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 31112.003 - (h) *New Autistic Ward at Brown Sequard Mental Health Care*, can we have some more details on this expansion?

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson, bidding documents are being prepared. The project will provide specific and specialised care to those patients who are suffering from autism spectrum disorder which will obviously improve the health care delivery in Mauritius. So, this project will be a first of its kind in Mauritius as there are no in-patient facilities for children and adolescents suffering from autism in the public health sector. These children are being admitted at present in the adolescent wards along with children suffering from other pathologies, like substance abuse, psychosis suicidal or gross behavioural disorders.

Autistic children have very severe disturbed behaviour and become unmanageable at home. So, the need for this dedicated ward has become a necessity.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26313.095 - *Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care*, we note a considerable increase. Can the Minister provide further details with regard to this increase? Thank you.

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson, the provision for payment of salaries and operational expenses to the staff of the Trust Fund for specialised medical care. So, the increase is due to trend of expenses, PRB provision and also the operational costs. Operational costs are on average Rs340 m. annually. The trust for specialised medical care is a parastatal body regulated by the

Act 52 of 1992. It operates under the aegis of the Ministry. It is administered and managed by the Board of Trustees.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Still under the same Item 26313.095 - *Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care*, I mean surely the medical care will give a budget to the Ministry for approval. In that budget, has any provision been made for the recruitment of additional heart surgeons?

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson, the staffing at present, there are: 32 medical cadre, 137 nursing cadre, 29 administrative, 8 paramedical and 105 support surgery. Funds are not earmarked for the recruitment for additional heart surgeons.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Under Item 31112.003 - (d) *New Eye Hospital*, can the Minister give more details?

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson, for the New Eye Hospital, the notification of award for the construction of this hospital, over 28,533 m² of land at Réduit Triangle, Moka has been issued to Varindera Constructions Limited on 18 May 2022 for contract value of around Rs714 m., following an open international bidding exercise. This New Eye Hospital will have a 7 storage building with 108 beds, 4 operational theatres, 6 ICU beds, and a teaching facility. Again, this project is being financed by a grant from Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. The project is being supervised by HSCC.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 31112.003 - (h) *New Autistic Ward at Brown Sequard Mental Health Care*, I would like to know when will this ward be operational, and whether there have been any consultations with stakeholders for the ward to be placed in Brown Sequard Hospital?

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson, the bidding document, as I have said earlier, is being prepared. Bidding document till the launching of the tenders will take the time required, obviously. All consultations have been made with the stakeholders. We should not forget that we have already opened one Autistic Centre at Triolet, and eventually, in this Budget, we will have another one in the region of the South for autistic behaviour. So, this one will cater for especially

these patients with severe behavioural problems, and that should be in the premises of the hospital because of those severe pathologies, severe management, that is, intense management for these disorders.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, before we move to page 403, let me request you all to limit your questions to the expenses in the provisions made under this Budget and to refrain from coming with policy matters. You will have ample time for PQs on these issues. So, we now move to Page 403. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item *31122.003 (r) New block at Mahebourg Hospital*, I can see that a project value of Rs843 m. has been earmarked. Can we have some details about this project?

Dr. Jagutpal: The existing building accommodating the wards of wooden roof dates more than 50 years. Given the proximity of the Mahebourg Hospital to the SSRN Hospital, this hospital would be equipped to address any emergency arising thereat. The project shall consist of construction of a ground plus 3 buildings, comprising the Accident and Emergency and NCD services, Pharmacy Laboratory and Physiotherapy Unit. Now, the preliminary design is in progress. So, we are still in the preliminary design stage.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Mr Chairperson, Item *31132.118 (c) – Upgrading of National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) Computer System*, can the hon. Minister give us more details on that item?

Dr. Jagutpal: The National Health Laboratory Services, isn't it? This will consist of a modern laboratory comprising mainly Immunology and Genetic Department, National Laboratory Quality Assurance Unit and National Biobank and Tissue Bank of an extent of 11,000 m². The plot of land has already been identified at Côte d'Or; 10 *arpents*. The lease agreement was signed on 08 June 2021. The project would be implemented on a BOT, design, finance, build and maintain, and was registered on 07 September 2021 with the BOT Project Unit. So, the request for qualification document was launched on 25 November 2021 with closing date on 20 January 2022. At closing date, one proposal was received. So, Request for

Proposals was launched for the provision of Transaction Advisory Services for BOT projects, including this project, on 11 May 2022, with closing date extended to 11 July 2022.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Page 403, Item 31122.801 – *Acquisition of Medical Equipment*. Can the hon. Minister give details pertaining to the medical equipment acquired as well as the names of the suppliers?

Dr. Jagutpal: This provision is made for the acquisition of high-tech medical equipment, anaesthetic machines and other equipment of Regional Hospitals through a competitive tendering process, and I will give the list of all the equipment procured.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Under *Capital Expenditure*, Item 31122.811 – *Acquisition of CCTV Cameras in Hospitals*, can the hon. Minister apprise us whether these cameras are functional and to whom was the contract allocated?

Dr. Jagutpal: Provision is made for the acquisition of CCTV cameras to be installed in corridors, near lift areas, waiting areas, usually Casualty and OPDs, and Outpatient Department. So, I have a list of the cameras that have been installed.

Dr. Boolell: Allocation of contract?

Dr. Jagutpal: There are suppliers for different hospitals. So, I will give the name of these suppliers; Gajview Ltd, Atiss Ltd, Kreshen Electricals. I will table that list.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Abbas Mamode!

Mr Abbas Mamode: Item 31112.403 – *Upgrading of Hospitals (b) A. G. Jeetoo Hospital*. Where are we concerning the upgrading and are there any contractors involved?

Dr. Jagutpal: The provision is for different upgrading of hospitals. So, I will give you a list of many projects that we have been able to conduct during the previous year. You have the project description, the contractor's name, contract amount, starting date and date of completion. This is for A. G. Jeetoo Hospital.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Mrs Navarre Marie!

Mrs Navarre Marie: Page 403, Item 31112.003 (k) – *New Cardiac Centre at Côte d’Or*, an amount of Rs10 m. was voted last year and the project value is Rs1.6 m. Could we have details on this project, please? What is the status of the project?

Dr. Jagutpal: Again, the project would be implemented on a BOT model, as I have already informed the House with regard to the National Laboratory Project. The plot of land has already been allotted for this Centre. The request for qualification was launched on 11 January 2022, with closing date 24 January 2022. No proposals were received as at closing date. The Request for Proposals was launched for the provision of Transaction Advisory Services for these BOT projects. So far, we first have to proceed with the Transaction Advisory Services.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Page 404, Mr Chairperson, Item 22140 – *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment*, Rs112 m. Can the hon. Minister table the list of medicines, drugs and vaccines that are going to be acquired?

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, I think I have already tabled the whole list of medicines, drugs and vaccines, but I can table it again. So, you will have the list of all the medicines procured for one year for the whole Ministry.

Mr Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 404, Item 22120.008 – *Fees to Consultants (Setting up of the Mauritius Food Standards Agency)*. May we know where matters stand?

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, the WHO has enlisted a Consultant for the drafting of legislation in relation to the setting up of the Food Standards Agency. The Bill is being finalised by the Attorney General’s Office. The amount voted would be for the administrative fees in connection to the operationalisation of the Food Standards Agency. The fees for the Consultant were paid fully by WHO.

The Chairperson: Thank you Minister, hon. Dhunoo.

Mr Dhunoo: Under same *Item 22120.008 – Fees to Consultants (Setting up of the Mauritius Food Standards Agency)*, may we know the name of the Consultant?

Dr. Jagutpal: I do not have it but I undertake to submit the name of the Consultant at a later stage.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Quirin.

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 404, *Item 22090 – Security*, can we know to whom the contracts have been awarded for security services please?

Dr. Jagutpal: It is in different hospitals. So, the first one, Rapid Service Ltd Security Services (RSL) is for regions 1, 2 and 3; Top Security Services for region 4; Edmond Security Services region 5. That's it; the different companies for different regional hospitals.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22130 - Studies and Surveys*, can the hon. Minister inform the House how the budget will be used under this provision? Thank you.

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, it is provision made for payment for studies and surveys such as reinforcing public health, sexual and reproductive health and infection prevention and control. This is the Rs100,000 earmarked for surveys and studies.

The Chairperson: Hon. Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Yes, thank you, *Item 22070 - Cleaning Services*, could we know the name of the company which provides the cleaning services please?

Dr. Jagutpal: For laundry services, it is Dry Cleaning Services Ltd, for cleaning of office premises, it is Mauriclean Ltd. Dry Cleaning and Mauriclean.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move to page 405. Hon. Abbas Mamode, is it 405 or 404?

Mr Abbas Mamode: Page 404.

The Chairperson: Okay, go ahead.

Mr Abbas Mamode: *Item 21111.100 – Overtime*, can the Minister elaborate?

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, provision is made for payment of overtime to nursing staff, community health care officers, public health and food safety inspectors, insecticide sprayer operators, health surveillance officers, minor grade staff in respect of extension of opening hours

of mediclinics, Area Health Centres, Community Health Centres, health surveillance in quarantine and fever survey. For the different officers it is a long list, so, I will submit the list of the different officers where the provision for overtime is being catered for.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move to page 405. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, *Item 31112 .006 - Construction of Mediclinics (b) Coromandel Mediclinic*, can we know when the Coromandel Mediclinic will be fully operational?

Dr. Jagutpal: Work is in progress. The contract is awarded to Canakiah Associates, handing over of site was on 15 January 2020 and now we have already completed up to 88% of the construction. It is expected that by early 2023, the building will be completed and will start operation. We will invite...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, under *Item 31112 .004 - Construction of Area Health Centres (AHC) - (e) New Curepipe AHC*, can the Minister give details on this?

Dr. Jagutpal: Page 405, which item is it? .004?

Mr Dhunoo: *31112 .004 - Construction of Area Health Centres (AHC) (e) New Curepipe AHC.*

Dr. Jagutpal: This is a new project; the project is at design stage. The preliminary drawings have been vetted and approved by the Ministry. The Ministry of Infrastructure would prepare the final design and cost estimates for launching of bids. So, hopefully we will invite you also.

The Chairperson: Hon. Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, *Item 31112.005 - Construction of Community Health Centres (CHC) - (d) Pointe Aux Sables CHC*, can we know what the status of the project is? When will the CHC be operational?

Dr. Jagutpal: Here, the physical completion as at 30 March is 20% and we will be expecting this building to be completed by next year.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: *Item 31112.004 - Construction of Area Health Centres (AHC) (d) New Plaine Magnien AHC*, can we know what the completion date is so that you can invite me?

Dr. Jagutpal: This project is funded by the Government of India. The project will be implemented on the site where the existing Community Health Centre at Plaine Magnien is. So, tender documents are under tendering process at the Ministry.

The Chairperson: Hon. Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, *Item 31112. 404 - Upgrading of Area Health Centres*, can the hon. Minister table a list of Area Health Centres which would benefit from this amount catered for under *Upgrading of Area Health Centres*? Thank you.

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, so the provision for the upgrading and rehabilitation of Area Health Centres, we have a budget of Rs5 m. The upgrading will include waterproofing, flooring, minor repairs, finishing work, painting and electrical works and plumbing. It is now that the Ministry is going work out which are the different Area Health Centres where such upgrading works will be required.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, *Item 31122.804 - Acquisition of Laboratory Equipment*, can the hon. Minister table a list of the equipment and the name of the suppliers?

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, acquisition of laboratory equipment for the Central Health Laboratory and Government Analyst Division; so here are the details of the different equipment procured with the supplier names and the amount value.

Mr Abbas Mamode: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, *Item 31112.005 - Construction of Community Health Centres (CHC) (a) St Francois Xavier CHC*, can the Minister inform the name of the contractor and where matters stand?

Dr. Jagutpal: Yes, the contractor's name is Ganessen Contractor Ltd and the work is already completed at 25%. Here we are - 25% completed, expected to be completed by next year. You will be invited *Inshallah*.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Dr. Boolell, on page 406.

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. On *Sub-Head 18-104 – Treatment and Prevention of HIV, AIDS and Drug Abuse, Item 22900 .915 - Multi-sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS Programme*, there is Rs18 m. earmarked for estimates 2022-2023. Now, can the Minister apprise us as to how the response will give us a better outreach and reach out to the HIV and AIDS programme?

Dr. Jagutpal: Mr Chairperson, for this Multi-sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS Programme, we have a grant from the Global Fund and this amounts to Rs90 m., and that grant is for the period 2021-2023. This amount also includes Rs26.2 m. to be allocated to PILS which has been selected as the NGO sub- recipient. The remaining Rs63.2 m. is used by the Ministry. Payment under Global Fund include, among others –

- the procurement of male and female condoms;
- condom vending machine;
- rapid HIV test kits;
- self-test kits, and
- reagents for CD4, FACS.

And then, the viral load reagents –

- needles;
- syringes, and
- alcohol swabs.

So, this is how we use this fund. Also, fund is provided in connection with the National Action Plan and Harm Reduction strategies under the National Drug Control Masterplan and activities related to World AIDS Day, International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. These funds are used for prevention and especially for treatment of HIV and AIDS.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Page 406, Item 22120.002 – *Fees to Chairman and Members of Boards and Committees (Drug Offenders Administrative Panel)*. A new provision made of Rs5 m. for fees to

Chairman and Members of Board and Committees (Drug Offenders Administrative Panel). Can the hon. Minister advise on the function of this panel?

Dr. Jagutpal: In order to deal with victims of substance abuse in a holistic way and to break the cycle of dependence so as these people find their way back to society, the Ministry is setting up a Drug Offenders Administrative Panel (DOAP). The DOAP would be an administrative body, completely independent from the criminal justice system. People intercepted will be dealt with under the Drug Offenders Administrative Panel and will thus, not be prosecuted under the current criminal justice system. They will be given the opportunity for treatment and rehabilitation in our services in the Harm Reduction Unit.

This would therefore allow them to obtain a clean Certificate of Character in order to reintegrate the mainstream society. So, provision is made for the payment of fees to the Chairperson, who will be a retired legal person, and two other Members; one officer from the medical cadre and one social worker, who have not been appointed. We are still working on the bill with the A.G Office.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Page 406, Item 22900.982 – *Synthetic Drugs Prevention Programme*. There is a budgeted sum of Rs8.5 m. May we have more details as to who prepared that programme and when will it be applicable to the society?

Dr. Jagutpal: Provision made for sensitisation and awareness campaigns, media and video cost on synthetic and other drugs targeting mainly the youth in and out of schools as well as community. So, a national mass media-social media campaign against synthetic drugs and other drugs has been launched in April 2022 and is ongoing. The campaign aims at sensitising youth and the population at large. Now, for that, a series of workshops targeting different stakeholders involved in the fight against illicit drugs and the Youth Empowerment Programme Against Drugs (YEPAD) which has two phases: phase I and phase II.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, we are running out of time. Your reply is as if you are replying a PNQ. Let us move to page 407! Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Item 22900.903 – *Awareness and Sensitisation Campaign*. Rs20 m. earmarked for year 2022-2023. Can we have some details with regard to this campaign?

Dr. Jagutpal: So, the annual contract agreement is signed between the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation and the Ministry with a view to facilitate and intensify sensitisation awareness campaigns on priority health issues. The increase of Rs2 m. is due to the introduction of new programmes known as *Minute Santé*, programmes on nutrition and revamping of the whole programme of *Priorité Santé*.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Time is over!

Vote 18-1 Ministry of Health and Wellness (Rs14,700,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.42 p.m.)

Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping

Vote 19-1 Blue Economy, Marine Resources and Shipping was called.

The Chairperson: We will start from page 424.

An hon. Member: Extra allowance *alors!* Extra Assistance!

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 21110.005 – *Extra Assistance*. The hon. Minister of Finance has already asked it for me. So, can you please give us the details of your Advisors and how much you pay them?

Mr Maudhoo: Sure! That is provision again for salary and allowances of two Advisors and the Head Ocean Economy Unit as follows –

- The Advisor on Information Matters - Mr D. Anacootee;
- One Advisor on Public Relation Matters – Mr P. Newoor, and
- the Head Ocean Economy Unit, this post is still vacant. We have advertised twice. We are going to re-advertise.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any other questions on page 424? Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the Recurrent Expenditure, Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, can we know to whom the Rs2.3 m. will be paid?

Mr Maudhoo: That is provision for payment of responsibility and *ad hoc* allowances to officers assigned higher additional responsibilities for replacing their colleagues on leave or mission, extra-duty, entertainment and internet allowance to senior officers in accordance with PRB Report 2016.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Item 21110.005 – *Extra Assistance*. Can we have more information on that?

The Chairperson: Already replied!

Mr Maudhoo: Already replied!

The Chairperson: We move to page 425, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 22900.970 – *Management of Coastal Zones (UNDP/GEF Funded)*. I can see Rs15 m. was earmarked for last year and Rs10 m. for this year. Can we have some more details about this project?

Mr Maudhoo: This is with regard to the UNDP funded project – Management of Coastal Zones. This project, in fact, has a lot of economic valuation for wetlands. In fact, we are dealing with the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agro-Industry and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. This project has been delayed for numerous reasons like COVID-19, there was one AKNL lodged case, and then now, this project is going to end by December 2022.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22120.008 – *Fees to Consultants (EU Funded)*, can the hon. Minister provide details as to how this amount has been used for the period 2021-2022? Thank you.

Mr Maudhoo: Mr Chairperson, in fact, this fund was provided for the recruitment of a Consultant. Unfortunately, again, we could not fill this post. An international advert was launched and finally, EU approved that this earmarked amount be utilised to provide assistance to fishers. So, life jackets, raincoats, ice boxes, torches, dry cell regarding safety of our fishers were purchased as approved by the EU.

The Chairperson: Hon. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Under Item 26313.040 - *Mauritius Oceanography Institute of which Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES)/Africa Support Programme (AU Funded)*, there is a decrease from Rs83 m. to Rs50 m., can the Minister enlighten us?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, Mr Chairperson, there was the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES and Africa) again, an African Union funded programme which has been completed now.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under Grants, Extra-Budgetary Units, Item 26323.040 -*Mauritius Oceanography Institute of which Acquisition of Oilmap and SARMAP Software (Funded by Australia)*, we are paying Rs50 m. to that Institute. May I know from the hon. Minister when will this Institute prepare and deposit its financial statements? The last one they have prepared was for 2017-2018, so they are 3 to 4 years late now.

Mr Maudhoo: I don't have this information; I will check and enquire from the MOI.

The Chairperson: We move to page 426. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much. On page 426, Item 22090.007 - *Maritime Communications Services*, there is a sum of Rs30 m. earmarked for the Financial Year 2022-2023. Can the Minister give us a breakdown as to how this money is being spent, please?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, Mauritius is party to the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), and as contracting State, Mauritius has a duty to provide the GMDSS Services and this is paid to the Mauritius Telecom which has the necessary infrastructure and expertise to provide this service on behalf of the Government of Mauritius on a contractual basis.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22090.006 - *Salvage assistance to vessels in Distress*, this appears to be a new item. Can the hon. Minister provide further information pertaining to this item? Thank you.

Mr Maudhoo: This is provision for expenditure to be incurred by my Ministry in case of salvage operations, wreck removal and voyage data recorder, that is, extracting information from the black box.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 25210.002 - *Ferry Boat Operators*, may we have some more details about the subsidies and how many ferry boat operators are concerned?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, this relates to Grand River South East. It is provision made for services of ferry boats across GRSE, only one ferryboat from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tender was launched and awarded for a sum of Rs34,900. It is a daily service, even on Saturdays and Sundays. The contractor is Mr Munohur Ramduth.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Léopold!

Mr Léopold: I have noted that on page 426, there is no provision for the acquisition of a new cargo vessel. Can the hon. Minister state why?

Mr Maudhoo: This is under the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Item 22120 - *Fees*; could we have details on this item, please?

Mr Maudhoo: It is provision for payment of fees as follows –

- Rs10,000 for board of examiners for oral examinations, that is, for the issue of certificate of proficiency and competency;
- Rs350,000 fees to assessors for vetting of regulations, surveyors and MSB external audit, and
- fees for training of staff.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Mr Chairperson, at page 426, Item 22090 – *Security*, Rs31.6 m. was budgeted for year 2022-2023. Can we know to whom the contracts have been awarded?

Mr Maudhoo: That is provision for payment to service provider, that is, the Falcon Maritime Service Ltd for the tracking of ships under the Mauritian flag. It is an open contract of Rs59,000 monthly.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Order, please!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Item 27210.009 - *Funeral Grants*, can we have the eligibility criteria and the number of beneficiaries, please?

Mr Maudhoo: Up to now, there has been no beneficiary under this scheme. So, the provision is made for funeral grants and other related expenses, that is what I have got.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 427, the last page! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: I will take it under acquisition of equipment, Item 31122.999 - *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*. We are talking about the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy; has any provision been made in this year's Budget for the acquisition of a boat so that practical exercise can be carried out because this was a comment of the Director of the National Audit. They do not have any boat to do practical experience?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, the two lifeboats are already there, only the installation of davits that will be done at the FITEC very soon. I think this has been funded. In fact, the two lifeboats are already at the MMTA; only the commissioning of a davit for one lifeboat at the jetty of FITEC is under progress.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any other questions!

Vote 19-1 Blue Economy, Marine Resources and Shipping (Rs245,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(11.56 p.m.)

Vote 19-2 Fisheries was called.

The Chairperson: Page 431, anyone? Page 432, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. On Item 22900.030 - *Safety and Security Equipment for Fishers (EU Funded)*, there is a sizeable amount earmarked for Estimates

2022-2023. Can the Minister apprise us as to when this equipment is going to be distributed and how many fishermen are expected to take advantage of this equipment?

Mr Maudhoo: Sorry, was it item 22900?

Dr. Boolell: Yes.

Mr Maudhoo: Provision is for the payment of security services at AFRC, FITEC and Mahebourg Fish Landing, Trou Fanfaron and Blue Bay Marine Park. The increase is due to higher market rate. And with regard to AFRC, FITEC and Mahebourg, the contractor is Quick Security Guards Ltd; for Trou Fanfaron, it is RSL Security Services Ltd; and for Blue Bay Marine Park, it is All Secure Ltd.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Tour!

Ms Tour: Item 26210.155 - *Indian Ocean South East Asian (IOSEA) Marine Turtle Conservation Programme*, can I have some details on this programme?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, this is a contribution to international organisation. Mauritius signed this MoU in 2002. The objective of this MoU is to protect, conserve, replenish and recover marine turtles and their habitats. So, this is our contribution to the Indian Ocean and South East Asia Marine Turtle Conservation Programme.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 432, under Item 26210.095 - *Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)*, may we know from the hon. Minister, who the representative of Mauritius on this Commission is, how many times have they been attending that Commission, and can we have a status report, please?

Mr Maudhoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, in fact, the Supervising Officer and the Ambassador Mr Koonjul recently attended the IOTC meeting in Seychelles. They are the two representatives with regard to the IOTC. It is also being followed virtually by the PMO and the SLO also. So, it was on a virtual, like a hybrid mode from here, and also with the presence of the Ambassador Mr Koonjul as Head of delegation, and Mr Bunjun, Ag. Permanent Secretary.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you. Item 26313.018 - *Fishermen Welfare Fund*, can we know the composition of the Board?

Mr Maudhoo: The Chairperson is Mr Beemadoo Kistnensamy, drawing a Chairman fees of Rs19,821. The Members are representatives of the PMO, the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, the Ministry of Blue Economy, and representative of fishermen organisation, representative of Bank Fishermen, representative of Fishermen Association in Rodrigues, and representative of organisation of operators from the fishing industry.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112.010 - *Construction of Fisheries Posts (a) Case Noyale - (b) Baie Du Cap*, can the hon. Minister give us a status on the construction of these two fisheries posts, and if we can also have the scope of work for the construction of these two fisheries posts? Thank you.

Mr Maudhoo: With regard to Case Noyale, works have been completed and, as my friend just said, it will be soon. We will invite you. It is your Constituency, you are most welcomed.

With regard to Baie Du Cap, it is provision for construction of the new fisheries post to replace the current fisheries post which has been damaged due to erosion. The site for the construction of the new building is being identified in consultation with the Ministry of Housing. The extent of land has already been earmarked so, we are awaiting the Ministry of Housing.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120.024 - *Fees icw Capacity Building Programme (a) Training of new fishers*, may I know from the hon. Minister, where is this training conducted and how many new fishers have enrolled on that course?

Mr Maudhoo: Mr Chairperson, this time, exceptionally, the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy (MMTA) and with the FITEC, we are using both schools for the training because we have been late with the training of fishers. So, both institutions have started and 106 have already been allocated the Fisher Card, 104 will be allocated in a few days, and the training is ongoing for the 500 applicants fishers first of all. And it will be ongoing because it is a new

allocation; we have got 500 new additional budgetary measures. So, it will be a total of 1,000 plus, as I said, 270 who have retired. It is ongoing.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We now move to page 433. Hon. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Page 432.

The Chairperson: Okay.

Mr R. Duval: Thank you so much. Item 22900.030 - *Safety and Security Equipment for Fishers (EU Funded)*, there is a huge rise. Can the Minister elaborate, please?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, Mr Chairperson, with regard to safety and security equipment of fishers, provision has been made to acquire 2,000 handheld VHF radios to be used by artisanal fishers for their safety at sea. So, we got a funding of Rs15 m. from EU and the remaining Rs6.3 m. from the Consolidated Fund. The contract has been awarded for 1,500 bailers' kits for fishers.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 433. Hon. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Item 28225.008 - *Off Lagoon Fishing Scheme of which (b) Purchase of Semi-Industrial Fishing Boat*, can the Minister give details?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, Mr Chairperson, provision is made for grants to eligible fishers for the purchase semi-industrial boats. An amount of Rs12 m. has been made available through the Consolidated Fund. This has been increased from Rs4 m. to Rs6 m. for registered cooperatives. In these cooperatives, there must be artisanal fishers who must be members of these cooperatives. They also benefit from leasing facilities from the IFCM. But, again, there is Rs36 m. which has been provided from the National Resilience Fund if there are applications from additional cooperatives. Also, provision has been made to give a grant of Rs1 m. to individuals or companies as a grant to give them an incentive to come in the semi-industrial fishing business sector.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, Item 31113.013 - *Construction of Slipway/Jetty – Mahebourg*, can the Minister give details?

Mr Maudhoo: In fact, I take this opportunity, Mr Chairperson, to announce with regard to the long awaited issue of dredging of the Remy Ollier path, by the 15 of July, the EIA will be

there. I think we can go with the tendering procedures afterwards. With regard to the slipway of jetty of Mahebourg, there is a new project, and Rs5 m. has already been put in this budget for the start-up of this project.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Item 28212.003 - *Compensation to Artisanal Fishermen (Relinquish Cards)*, I can see that an amount of Rs15 m. was earmarked last year for those artisanal fishermen who were willing to relinquish their cards. Can we know how many cards have been relinquished, and how much the fishermen were paid?

Mr Maudhoo: Those who took the lump sum of Rs52,500, out of 300 which were eligible at that time, 275 registered artisanal fishers have returned their fishermen cards as at 15 of June 2022.

The Chairperson: Thank you. We are running out of time. So, we move to page 434. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 22120.028 – *Fees of which Fees for Laboratory Test*, can we have more details about the tests being carried out, and if you can just table the information? Thank you.

Mr Maudhoo: This is for the sampling of water, ice and fish products. It is testing for the chemical microbiological parameters by Marine Biotechnology Products Ltd during the sea cyclonic sampling plan, parameters, testing on fish meal and fish oil for human consumption and fish oil which is not for human consumption. That is all.

The Chairperson: Thank you. A last one, hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 134, Item 31132.801 - *Acquisition of Software - Electronic Catch Reporting System (EU Funded)*, there is a project value of Rs11.5 m. Can we have a status report as to where matters stand, please?

Mr Maudhoo: My Ministry has embarked on the implementation, which is EU Funded, of an Electronic CAD System to receive the real time catch for data. So, the project started in 2019, that is, for the electronic catch reporting which is EU Funded for all the EU vessels, and for the catch, they have to report electronically. This project is expected to end by December 2022.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Time is over.

Vote 19-1 – Fisheries (Rs400,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(00.11 a.m.)

Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

Vote 20-1 Gender Equality and Family Welfare was called.

The Chairperson: We will start from page 442. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 21110.005 - *Extra Assistance*, could we have more information on that?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, it is regarding the Advisors at the level of the Ministry. There are presently four Advisors at the level of my Ministry. Would the hon. Member wish to know the name and the remuneration thereat? What was the question about?

The Chairperson: Can you please just repeat your question?

Mrs Navarre-Marie: The question is whether I could have more information about how the money was spent on the Item - *Extra Assistance*?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, I have just said that the extra assistance item is for the four Advisors presently at the level of my Ministry.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Could we have the names of the Advisors, please?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Same as last year, Mr Chairperson - very happily, since everybody wants to be awake at this time - Ms Annabelle Volbert, Advisor on Information Matters and her contract is renewed yearly. Would you wish to know her present monthly salary as well?

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Yes!

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Rs66,200.

- Mr Narain Sakurdeep, Advisor in Project Management, his contract is again yearly renewed, his present monthly salary stands at Rs73,800.
- Mr Bhupen Ramsewak, Advisor is on Legal Matters and his contract is yearly renewed. His present monthly salary is at Rs47,675.

- Mr Vishwantsing Joysurry, Advisor on Gender and Family Matters, his salary is Rs50,900.
- Additionally, Mr Chairperson, there is the post of Public Relations Officer (PRO) which is vacant.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Mr Chairperson, page 442, Item 21110.004 – *Allowances*, Rs3 m. budgeted for 2022-2023, can we know to whom these allowances are payable?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, this increase is due to the revision in rates as per the PRB Report 2021.

The Chairperson: That was not the question. The question was to whom it is paid?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Provision is made to meet payment of responsibility of acting, ad hoc and car allowance in lieu of duty remission, etc.

The Chairperson: We move to page 443. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Mr Chairperson, page 443, Item 22120 – *Fees*, there has been an increase in the budgetary provision from Rs300,000 to Rs1.2 m., can we have details of same, please?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: It is to meet the payment of fees to the Chairperson and members of the Departmental Bid Committee (DBC) of the Ministry and the Bid Evaluation Committee (BEC). It also includes the fees for training, fees to consultants and the stand alone building which has received consultancy services budget in this year's budget for multi-storage building at Jemmapes Street, to house the headquarters of the Ministry.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 31132.120 – *Licensing and Monitoring Information System*, may I know from the hon. Minister what this licensing and monitoring information system relates to, and whether the contract has already been awarded? And if so, to whom?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, following the recommendation of the National Audit Office Report of 2021 and to further improve on the efficiency and the service delivery, the licensing and enforcement information system which, as you know, is a web-based information management system. For the Ministry, to receive all application forms for RCIs for

children, this system is going to enable proper monitoring of Government-funded as well as NGO-run residential care institutions for our children victim of harm. The license for enforcement information system will automate manually intensive work practices, it will increase the efficiency and administering of the enforcement system. As to whether it has already been awarded, no, the award has not yet been awarded, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie !

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Item 22130 – *Studies and Surveys*, could we know what are the surveys and who conducted them, please?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Can I know the page number?

The Chairperson: Page 443.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Provision was made for the conduct of an impact analysis study of current programmes being implemented at the level of my Ministry. This recommendation, Mr Chairperson, emanates from the National Strategy and Action Plan of the High Level Committee of the elimination of Gender-Based Violence 2020/2024. Funds have not been provided in this Ministry for this financial year, and in line with the output 8 and Sub Strategic Component 1 of this National Strategy and Action Plan. An impact analysis study of the programmes implemented at the level of my Ministry is currently being conducted. The Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms is the lead agency. Regarding the consultancy services, bidding exercise has already been launched on the e-procurement system with a closing date of 01 June 2022.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. We now move to page 444. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy.

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26313.67 – *National Women's Council*, can the hon. Minister provide details of the Council and the composition of same? Thank you!

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, I am very happy to table the details and the composition of the said Council.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.014 (c) – *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) Award*, it seems that there is no provision made for this financial year for that event, can we know what are the reasons, please?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Can I kindly have the Item number, Mr Chairperson?

Mrs Mayotte: Page 444, Item 22900.014 (c) – *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) Award*.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: This financial year, Mr Chairperson, the gender networks will be implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the funds earmarked in the Financial Year 2021/2022 were used to award winners of the gender networks. There are various awards that have been allocated. So, I am happy to table that.

The Chairperson: Are you done?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Yes!

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Quirin, please!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 444, Item 28211.051 – *Women’s Associations*, Rs.2.1 m. budgeted for 2022/2023. Can the, hon. Minister give us the list of all the women’s associations as well as the sum allocated to each?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, there is a very consequent list of associations which I undertake to table to the library. And there has been a sum of Rs2,000 given to 861 women’s associations and a sum of Rs5,000 to the 4 regional committees, and I am happy to table the information, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Yes, please. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Already canvassed by hon. Quirin.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Item 22900.014 (b) – *Gender/International Women’s Day*, can we have a breakdown of expenses incurred for that day?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: The amount spent on this year's International Women's Day which was held in March, is Rs3.5 m. This was held at Sir Harilall Vaghjee Memorial Hall. Is that the question the hon. Member asked?

Mrs Navarre-Marie: I wanted to have the breakdown of expenses.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Yes, I can table that.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you!

The Chairperson: Thank you! We now move to page 445 and we start with hon. Dr. Boolell.

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 22900.912 – *Running Expenses of Shelters for Children*, there is Rs50 m. earmarked for the estimates of 2022/2023. Now, if the hon. Minister can give us a breakdown in relation to expenses of shelters? Because there is plenty of room for improvement, some criticisms have been levelled, what is being done to ensure that the money earmarked is being used judiciously? Thank you!

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, the provision for the running of shelters under the management services contract, there are the shelter La Cigogne which is managed for the Children's Foundation and that is an annual contract of over Rs4 m.; the shelter La Marguerite, which is managed, again by the Children's Foundation of an annual contract of over Rs11 m; - I will table the exact figures - the shelter L'Oasis which is managed by Association for Population and Development, an annual contract of Rs12 m. and something; Cap Malheureux Village Centre managed by the National Children's Council; Notre Dame Village Centre, again managed by the National Children's Council, and there is the shelter La Colombe. The increase in the budget, Mr Chairperson, is due to the operation cost of the new Notre Dame Relay Shelter which is managed, like I said, by the National Children's Council.

Dr. Boolell: When was the last report submitted on the management of these shelters?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: I did not hear the question.

Dr. Boolell: When was the last report submitted on management of these shelters because they have been subject to a lot of criticism?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Well, there are yearly reports that come out. I think the hon. Member...

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell, please come with PQ for this.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: He could come up with a PQ concerning that.

The Chairperson: It is not related to expenses please.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: I do not have the interval and the...

(Interruptions)

I would be very happy to answer your question hon. Member if you come up with a...

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell, will come with a PQ. Hon. Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Merci.

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Capital Expenditure, *Item 31111 .407 - Upgrading of Shelters for Children*, can the hon. Minister table a list of shelters which would benefit from this Item and which would be upgraded eventually? Thank you.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. I undertake to table the list because it is quite lengthy.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Navarre-Marie.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 26313 .050 - National Adoption Council*, could we have the composition of the Board for the National Adoption Council?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, the National Adoption Council is composed as follows –

- (i) The Chairperson is Mr Jai Prakash Singh also known as Deepak Rutnah;
- (ii) The Deputy Chairperson is Mrs Hemantee Sanmukhiya-Lee Chee Ying;
- (iii) The representative of the Ministry of Social Integration and Social Security and National Solidarity is the Assistant Permanent Secretary (APS) Mr Bheesam Sharma Cyparsade;
- (iv) Ag Permanent Secretary of the PMO is Mr Kenchan Balgobin;

(v) The Ag Deputy Solicitor General...

Do you want me to table the composition of the Board?

The Chairperson: Is it long?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: I think it will be a lot here.

The Chairperson: It is a long list.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Yes.

The Chairperson: If it is a long list, yes please table it.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: I will table it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under *Item 22900 .912 - Running Expenses of Shelters for Children*, may I know from the hon. Minister with respect to these shelters, how many of these shelters are not registered as place of safety.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: It is *Item 22900* and what decimal?

Mr Uteem: .912.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: .912, I do not have the exact number of shelters which are not registered but the hon. Member would appreciate that for the coming into play of the new regulations for place of safety which are further being amended, the regulations are further being amended, we are imposing on these places of safety to come up to the requisite criteria to register with the Ministry.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 446.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: One last question on that page, please.

The Chairperson: At the very start I said we are going to allow only question per page.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Sorry one last question please.

The Chairperson: Okay, exceptionally because we got some time. It is an exception.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Yes, thank you. *Item 31111.407 - Upgrading of Shelters for Children*, with regard to the shelter at Pointe aux Sables. Could the Minister confirm whether this shelter has been closed down?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: No, Mr Chairperson, for this shelter, there is an upgrading work being carried out at the moment and the number of toilet blocks available there were inadequate. That is being remedied currently.

The Chairperson: Thank you.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Thank you.

The Chairperson: Page 446, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under *Item 22900 .908 - (b) Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence*, would the hon. Minister share with us the number of cases of domestic violence that have been reported for the last financial years if she has some?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: You meant for this year hon. Member?

Mr Ramful: Yes.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: From January to April this year, there has been a total number of 1,577 cases of domestic violence reported to the level of the Ministry.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, in respect of *Item 22120.008 - Fees to Consultants - Integrated Shelter for Victims of DV (UNDP Funded)*, if we could have a breakdown as to who the Consultants are and to whom the fees have been paid other than Consultants or specifically to Consultants.

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Yes, fees paid to Consultants regarding the integrated shelter for victims of domestic violence, Mr Chairperson, the House will be happy to note that the UNDP provided the funds to the tune of USD9,800 to meet fees to Consultants for a feasibility study for integrated shelter for victims of gender base violence. The contract has been awarded to the Consultant, Mr Jason Meyer on 15 June last year following the proposals from two bidders in November 2021 last year. The final report was submitted and it has been announced in the

Budget Speech that the shelter will be constructed at Rivière du Poste and will include nursery and pre-primary facilities as well.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Tour!

Ms Tour: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22900 .908 - (d) Empowerment of Victims of Domestic Violence*, can the hon. Minister advise how this is done, how do we empower the victims of domestic violence?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, I would very kindly request my hon. colleague to come up with a full-fledged PQ because there is like a panoply of methods that we empower victims of domestic violence, mainly through training and guidance.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22120 .012 - Retainer fees to Counsel*, may I know from the hon. Minister the name of Counsel and how much he/she is paid monthly?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Currently, Mr Chairperson, there are four legal resource persons who are providing assistance to the six Family Support Bureau on a sessional basis, Mr Chairperson. And, for the fees payable to a legal resource person; the rate of payment is Rs880 per session with a maximum of 40 sessions per month and a legal representation of court level is at Rs1,955 per case.

Mr Uteem: Can you mention the name of the Counsel?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: The names? Okay. We have six Family Support Bureau –

- (i) the one at Port Louis, the legal resource person is Mr Wong Yuen Kook;
- (ii) the one at Goodlands is Ms S. Gaju and Mr Bundhoo;
- (iii) the one at Flacq is again Mr Wong Yuen Kook;
- (iv) at Phoenix, is again Ms Gaju;
- (v) at Bambous, is Mr Cheung and Mr Bundhoo;
- (vi) at Souillac, is Ms Gaju and Mr Wong Yuen Kook.

The Chairperson: Hon. Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22900 .908 - (i) Mobile Application LESPWAR*, will the hon. Minister state whether an evaluation exercise has been carried out on the effectiveness of this application?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, if you can appreciate this application, being a rapid response system to our victims of gender based violence is actually...Mr Chairperson, I do not actually have the information whether there is an assessment that has been carried out, but there is a monitoring of the number of cases being registered at regular intervals. The system is barely two years old. So, I understand that the evaluation has not yet been carried out.

The Chairperson: Thank you, any other questions? No?

Vote 20-1 Gender Equality and Family Welfare (Rs500,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(00.37 a.m.)

Vote 20-2 Social Welfare and Community-Based Activities was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 449. No one? So, we move to page 450. Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to *Item 28 – Other Expense, Item 28221.022 - Upgrading of Social Welfare Centres (a) Digitalisation of Social Welfare Centres*, can the Minister provide details on this, please?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, provision has been made to develop a strategy to transform business in the public sector, as we are all aware. Digitalisation of Social Welfare Centres will aim to connect electronically our Social Welfare Division with all the Social Welfare Centres. I do not have a comprehensive list, but I undertake to table it to the library of the Assembly.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, *Item 28211.022 - Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions Social Welfare Centres*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of Social Welfare Centres that we have and whether the amount is distributed evenly across all Welfare Centres or there are other criteria for allocation of funds among the centres?

Mrs Koonjoo-Shah: Mr Chairperson, we have 57 Social Welfare Centres, and out of those, 47 are used as Evacuee Centres. So, to come to the question, the query of the Opposition Member, *non*, it is according to the needs of the community around that specific centre that determines the requisite programmes or whether it is going to be used as a refugee centre, as an evacuee centre, what is going to be the main purpose of that centre. Is that what you are asking?

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Page 449 ?

The Chairperson: Page 450.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Sorry?

The Chairperson: Page 450.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Okay.

The Chairperson: Page 451.

Vote 20-2 Social Welfare and Community-Based Activities (Rs387,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(00.41 a.m.)

Vote 21-1 Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage was called.

The Chairperson: We will start from page 456. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: *Item 21110.005 - Extra Assistance*, may we know the name of the Advisors of the Minister and the amount that they derive?

Mr Teeluck: Mr Chairperson, *avant tout, j'en profite* to wish everyone *une bonne fête de la musique, et un clin d'œil à mon ami, Dr. Jagutpal*. Provision is being made for the payment of salaries of three Advisors.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Do not disturb the Minister please!

Mr Teeluck: He will sing. Provisions are being made for the payment of salaries of three Advisors; Advisor on Information Matters, Advisor on Public Relation Matters, Advisor on Cultural Heritage and Strategic Matters. I may table the more detailed information if you wish.

The Chairperson: Any questions on page 457? No? Page 458? Hon. Mrs Mayotte, on which page are you?

Mrs Mayotte: Page 458, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Okay.

Mrs Mayotte: *Item 22120. 008 Fees to Consultants (a) Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment for Buffer Zone (b) Restructuring Plan for Mauritius Society of Authors*, can the hon. Minister give us more details on provision for these two items?

Mr Teeluck: For *Fees to Consultants (a) Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment for Buffer Zone* of the Aapravasi Ghat, no provision is being made as the consultant, Eco Africa, enlisted by the Ministry following a tender exercise for the conduct of an overarching heritage impact assessment and visual impact assessment for the projects in the buffer zone of the Aapravasi Ghat has already submitted its report. As regard the restructuring plan for the MASA, provision is being made for consultancy services for the restructuring of the MASA based on international best practices for Copyright Management Societies.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: *Item 26313 .036 - Mauritius Film Development Corporation*, can I know what is the composition of the Board?

Mr Teeluck: Composition of the Board of the MFDC: the Chairperson, Mr Arnaud Martin. Of course, the representatives of the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation, Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, Arts and Cultural Heritage, these are extra officials but I will go straight to those appointed by the Minister. These are: Mr P. Ballgobin, Mr A. Teeluckdharry, Mr D. Adjodhya and the General Manager, Mr S. Jootun.

The Chairperson: Are you done, hon. Minister?

Mr Teeluck: Yes, I am done.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Luchmun Roy!

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. It has already been canvassed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, *Item 26313.116 - Speaking Unions*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether all Speaking Unions are now properly constituted, in particular the Arabic Speaking Union which was not properly constituted last year.

Mr Teeluck: Mr Chairperson, we have 11 Speaking Unions, after which, some had their elections held late last year and they are in the phase of being reconstituted. As regards the Arabic Speaking Union, the Arabic Speaking Union has been duly reconstituted and is now in operation.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Page 459.

(Interruptions)

The exception is becoming the rule now.

Mr Uteem: I am going by what has been agreed between the Whip as to the amount of time allocated.

The Chairperson: Okay, because you are a good friend of mine, go ahead!

Mr Uteem: Thank you. *Item 26313.100 - Islamic Cultural Centre for Hadjj Organisation*, may I know the composition of the Hadjj mission?

Mr Teeluck: The composition of the Hajj Mission is –

- (i) Mr Sairally the Chairperson of the ICC as Head of Mission;
- (ii) Mr Badulla, the Hajj Officer of the ICC;
- (iii) Dr. Rujubali, Medical Officer;
- (iv) Mr Somally, Interpreter, and
- (v) Mr Vavra, Mr Jeeawody, Mr Nazerally, and Mr Lotun Board members of the ICC.

The Chairperson: Thank you, Minister. We now move to page 459, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 459, *Item 31112.059 - Construction of National Arts Centre*, Rs20 m. is earmarked for 2022-2023. Can we know if contract has already been awarded or are we still at the bidding exercise?

Mr Teeluck: Nothing has been done yet. We are still in the initial phase of the project. So, now that funds have been awarded for this project, we will start with the design phase and construction will start afterwards.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. In respect of the last item, Item 28215.013 - *Assistance to Local Film Producers*, I see a reduction in the estimates earmarked for this year. Now, we know that the film producers have taken advantage of this assistance that has been extended to them, can the Minister enlighten us as to why there has been a reduction and who are the recipients of this assistance?

Mr Teeluck: Actually, there has not been a reduction in the assistance being provided. The fact that the decrease in provision as additional fund of Rs10 m. has been provided under the National Resilience Fund for assistance to local film producers so, this is why we will note a decrease in the provision whereas it has been compensated under the National Resilience Fund.

Dr. Boolell: Can we know who the beneficiaries are?

Mr Teeluck: Well, there is a call that is launched at regular intervals; we have applicants, they are processed and thereafter film producers are selected.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under the same item, Item 28215.013 - *Assistance to Local Film Producers*, can we know the number of beneficiaries for last year?

Mr Teeluck: As at date, Rs1.7 m. has already been disbursed to 50 applicants representing 50% of the financial assistance. So, the total amount will be doubled, Rs1.7 m.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 31112.059 - *Construction of National Arts Centre*, the project amount is Rs57 m. and Rs20 m. is earmarked for next year. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the contract has already been awarded and what is the status of this project?

The Chairperson: The Minister has already replied on this. We now move to page 460?

Mr Quirin: Page 460, Item 26210 - *Contribution to International Organisation*, can we know the names of the international organisations concerned by this item?

Mr Teeluck: Provision is being made for contribution to international organisations with a view to benefit from their experience and sharing of knowledge. For the Financial Year 2021-2022, Rs116,000 has been paid to the following international organisations –

- (i) International Centre for Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property;
- (ii) Contribution to the World Heritage Fund;
- (iii) International Council on Archives, and
- (iv) *Association Internationale des Archives Francophones.*

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under Item 26313.001 - *Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund*, may I know the current composition of the Trust Fund?

Mr Teeluck: The Chairperson is Mr R. Kanhye, the Vice-Chairperson is Mr M. Jhummun; ex-officio of different Ministries and lastly, Mrs S. Ramlallah, Dr. A. Janoo, Mr T. Ennergeet and Mrs K. Dookeeram.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dhunoo!

Mr Dhunoo: Under Item 28211.011 - *Mauritius Archives Publication Fund*, can the Minister give details on this?

Mr Teeluck: Provision is being made for the reconstitution of the Mauritius National Archives Research and Publication Fund. The fund was last reconstituted in 2015 for a period of 3 years; action is being initiated for the reconstitution.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. R. Duval!

Mr R. Duval: Item 26313.030 - *Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund*, can the Minister enlighten the House about the increase?

Mr Teeluck: Provision is being made to meet the recurrent expenditure such as salaries and allowances. Increase in provision due to adjustment in salaries following the publication of the PRB Report 2021.

The Chairperson: We now move to page 461. Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. In respect of capital expenditure, grants, Item 26323.039 - *Mauritius Museum Council*, the projects identified with a project value of Rs12 m. Can the Minister apprise us as to where matters stand in respect of the work entrusted to the Mauritius Museum Council relating to the two specific items? Work has been entrusted to the Council for the renovation of National History Museum and rehabilitation of SSR Memorial Centre for Culture. Can the hon. Minister give us an update as to where matters stand?

Mr Teeluck: As regards the National History Museum of Mahebourg, tender was launched on 21 January 2022. Tenders are at evaluation stage. As regards the SSR Memorial Centre, part of the work has already been completed, we still have other additional works to be done.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 31112.417 - *Upgrading of Cultural Complex/Buildings – Restoration and Conservation (a) Batterie de l’Harmonie at Black River (Consultant)*, we know that Batterie de l’Harmonie was a place where the youngsters usually came for rehearsals and it was also used as a regional school of music and we are happy to see that there is provision for upgrading of this regional school of music, Batterie de l’Harmonie. But can the hon. Minister explain why it is upon consultancy? Thank you.

Mr Teeluck: Mr Chairperson, Batterie de l’Harmonie, previously there was a project of *Village des Artistes* that was proposed on site but then after a communication exercise and an expression of interest which was launched, it occurred that there is not much interest from private investors. So, provision for this year is being made for consultancy services to rework the project and for the conduct of a technical study for finalisation of a BOT procurement document for the creation again of a *Village des Artistes* but under a different format.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, *Item 31132. 401 - E-Government Projects - Digitisation of Archives*, could we have information on the status of these projects please?

Mr Teeluck: Provision is being made for the digitalisation of 1.5 million pages of the indentured immigration records. Digitalisation will comprise the restoration, scanning, indexing

and quality control of the documents. For Financial Year 2021-2022, due to lack of storage space at the Government Online Centre, the tender for digitalisation could not be launched. This issue has now been addressed and the tender document is being finalised for launching in early July 2022.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under *Item 31112.417 - Upgrading of Cultural Complex/ Buildings -Restoration and Conservation (b) Ex-Beaugeard (Consultancy)*, first of all, may I know from the hon. Minister whether, this relates to the former school known as Beaugeard and if this is the case, I mean the building has already been destroyed, what is this Rs1 m. budgeted for?

Mr Teeluck: It is for consultancy services again. It relates to the ex Beaugeard Government School. Again, we are trying to implement a restoration, rehabilitation under a BOT model. This provision is for a consultancy services for technical study. Thereon, we will be able to move forward with this new BOT format for restoration, rehabilitation and to rework out the whole building.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On *Item 31113.005 - Erection of Monuments*, can the hon. Minister state if ever a list of monuments for this Financial Year has been finalised, if so, if he can table the list of the monuments? Thank you.

Mr Teeluck: The list of monuments has not been finalised. There is still work to be done, study to be done. So, we will communicate in due course on the list of monuments that will be erected.

The Chairperson: Time is over!

Vote 21-1 Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage (Rs590,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(1.00 a.m.)

Vote 22-1 Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms was called.

The Chairperson: We start from page 468. Any question on page 468? Hon. Navarre-Marie!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Yes, thank you. Under *Item 21110.005 - Extra Assistance*, I suppose it concerns advisors. May we know the number of advisors please?

Mr Hurdoyal: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Provision is made for the payment of salaries to three advisors employed on contract. Do you want to have the names also? Mr Rumjaun Belall, Advisor on Human Resource Administrative and Institutional Reforms. His contract is for one year and his monthly salary is Rs39,750. Second is Mr Mohadeb Dayawon, Advisor on Public Relations Matters, contract is for one year and the monthly salary is Rs32,750 and third is Mr Bangaroo Anesh, Advisor on Information Matters, his contract is for one year and monthly salary is Rs66,600.

The Chairperson: Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Page 468, *Item 21110 .004 – Allowances*, Rs2.6 m. budgeted for 2022-2023. Can we have some details?

Mr Hurdoyal: Yes, Mr Chairperson, provision has been made for payment of allowances such as Acting Allowance, Responsibility Allowance, Adhoc Allowance, Duty Remission Allowance and other allowances. The increase is in line with the recommendation of the PRB Report 2021.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any question on this page? So, we move to page 469. Dr. hon. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. *Item 31112 .058 - Construction of Civil Service College* with a project value of Rs396,000,000 and this year, in the estimates Rs175,000,000 have been earmarked. Can the Minister apprise us as to where matters stand in respect to the construction of the college and to whom the contract was awarded? Thank you.

Mr Hurdoyal: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Provision is made to cater for the construction of the Civil Service College Mauritius at le Réduit Triangle. Contract was awarded on 09 November 2021 and the contract amount is Rs395,797,353.97 and the name of the building contractor is Tayelamay and Sons Enterprise Ltd. The date of completion is for 18

months from the award of contract and the bidding method is Open National Bidding and it is expected also that the college will be completed by the end of next year.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Yes, thank you, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22030 – Rent*, there is an increase of around 10% to Rs 28 m. May I know from the hon. Minister the reason for the increase in rent?

Mr Hurdoyal: In which Item Number?

Mr Uteem: *Item 22030 – Rent*, from Rs26 m. to Rs28 m.

Mr Hurdoyal: Yes, Mr Chairperson. The increase in provision is due to the payment of rental of level 12 of Sicom Building 2 in Port Louis in respect of POWC and the fitness centre of 521 m². I have more details to give. The Ministry is currently renting the ground floor, part of level 2, level 3 to 12 and two commercial spaces which are used for the Civil Service Library of a total of 5,574.5 m² at Sicom Building 2 for a monthly rent of Rs2,338,522.97 including VAT. And, we have another, it is 107 m² at NPF Building to operate the correspondence service at the cost of Rs47,555 per month excluding VAT and third, we have five parking slots at the Garden Tower due to limited space at Sicom Building 2.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any other question on page 469? So, we move to page 470. Hon. Luchmun Roy.

Mrs Luchmun Roy: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under *Item 31132.111 - Intangible Fixed Assets - E-Document Management System - Business Continuity Model*, can the hon. Minister provide status of same? Thank you.

Mr Hurdoyal: Yes, the UNDP is financing free digitalisation projects for the Government namely, the Electronic Document Management System at my Ministry itself, the Parliamentary EDMS with electronic voting facilities for the National Assembly and automation of the data capture process as a registrar general's department. The UNDP is currently evaluating the bids and tender will be awarded shortly.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Lobine!

Mr Lobine: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 470, under *Item 22900.993 - Expenses i.c.w Sandbox Framework*, may we have more details from the hon. Minister, please?

Mr Hurdoyal: Provision made to implement two sandbox initiatives for the financial year 2022-2023 to test the possibilities of innovative technologies in Ministries and Departments.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 22900.950 - *Improvement of Counter Services*, there is Rs1 m. earmarked, can we know what is this Rs1m. for?

Mr Hurdoyal: Its provision made to cater for projects relating to improvement of counter services in Ministries and Departments. For this current financial year, my Ministry financed 38 projects. As at date, my Ministry financed 460 projects under this scheme.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Any other questions on this page? No? So, we move to page 471, hon Dr. Boolell!

Dr. Boolell: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. In respect of grant, Item 26313.075 - *Public Officers' Welfare Council*, being extended to the Public Officers' Welfare Council, with an estimate of Rs5 m., can the hon. Minister give us the composition of the Council, please?

Mr Hurdoyal: The composition consists of Mr Mulloo, MSK as Chairperson. You want all the members or I can table it?

Dr. Boolell: Don't you worry about that.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22060.005 – *Maintenance of which IT Equipment*, from a budgeted amount of Rs10 m. for last year, we now are budgeting Rs8.5 m., almost 100% increase. May I know from the hon. Minister the reason for the increase and the name of the company which has been awarded the contract for maintenance of IT Equipment?

Mr Hurdoyal: Mr Chairperson, in fact, provision is made for the maintenance of plant, IT equipment and furniture, and the provision has been increased to implement the phase 3 of the EHR Project. The contractor is Leal Communications and Informatics Ltd.

The Chairperson: Thank you. Hon. Mrs Mayotte!

Mrs Mayotte: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 471, Item 26313.075 - *Public Officers' Welfare Council*, can we know why there has been a drastic increase in the grant of the Public Officers' Welfare Council from Rs3.5 m. to Rs5 m.? Thank you.

Mr Hurdoyal: Mr Chairperson, provision is made to cover operating costs of the Public Officers' Welfare Council including administrative expenses of the Council, fees to Chairperson and Board members, maintenance of the Civil Service House and the cost of the Annual Civil Service Kermesse. The annual cost for operating the fitness centre is around Rs1.2 m. and comprises maintenance of equipment, payment of utilities and administrative costs. The increase in provision is also for the recruitment of staff for the POWC as recommended by the PRB Report.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. We now move to page 472, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Item 22900.934 - *Enhancement of Work Environment in the Civil Service*, an amount of Rs4.5 m. was earmarked last year, can we have some more details about this?

Mr Hurdoyal: Mr Chairperson, provision is made to cater for projects funded by my Ministry to improve the work environment in Ministries and Departments. As at now, some 1,200 projects have been funded under this scheme. I can table a list of those projects which have been done during this financial year.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Item 22120 – *Fees*, nothing was budgeted last year, and then this year, there is Rs800,000 and the subsequent years also. May we know what these fees relate to?

Mr Hurdoyal: Yes, very good question. Mr Chairperson, in fact, this provision had been made for training of public officers on occupational safety matters in compliance with safety and health norms of the OSH Act.

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. Any other questions? You are tired!

Vote 22-1 - Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms (Rs467,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Estimates 2022-2023 & Indicative Estimates 2023-2024 & 2024-2025 were considered and agreed to.

The Appropriation (2022-2023) Bill 2022 (No. IX of 2022) was considered and agreed to.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, I thank you all for your collaboration and cooperation. Now, the Speaker will resume his seat.

At this stage, Mr Speaker took the Chair.

Mr Speaker: Please be seated! Hon. Nuckcheddy!

On the Assembly resuming with Mr Speaker in the Chair, the Deputy Chairperson of Committees reported accordingly.

The Deputy Chairperson of Committees: Hon. Members, I have to report to the House that the Estimates of Expenditure 2022-2023 & Indicative Estimates 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 and the Appropriation (2022-2023) Bill 2022 (No. 1X of 2022) have passed the Committee of Supply without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Wednesday 29 June 2022 at 3.00 p.m.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

At 01.17 a.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Wednesday 29 June 2022 at 3.00 p.m.