



**EIGHTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

**(UNREVISED)**

**FIRST SESSION**

**TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2025**

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## THE CABINET

(Formed by Dr. the Hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam)

Dr. the Hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP	Prime Minister,  Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications,  Minister of Finance,  Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands
Hon. Paul Raymond Bérenger, GCSK.	Deputy Prime Minister
Hon. Shakeel Ahmed Yousuf Abdul Razack Mohamed	Minister of Housing and Lands
Hon. Rajesh Anand Bhagwan	Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
Dr. the Hon. Arvin Boolell, GOSK.	Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries
Hon. Govindranath Gunness	Minister of National Infrastructure
Hon. Anil Kumar Bachoo, GOSK	Minister of Health and Wellness
Hon. Christian Harold Richard Duval	Minister of Tourism
Hon. Ashok Kumar Subron	Minister of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity
Hon. Gavin Patrick Cyril Glover, SC	Attorney-General
Dr. the Hon. Mrs Jyoti Jeetun	Minister of Financial Services and Economic Planning
Hon. Patrick Gervais Assirvaden	Minister of Energy and Public Utilities

Hon. Dhananjay Ramful	Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
Hon. Darmarajen Nagalingum	Minister of Youth and Sports
Hon. Muhammad Reza Cassam Uteem	Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations
Hon. Mahomed Osman Cassam Mahomed	Minister of Land Transport
Hon. Mrs Marie Arianne Navarre-Marie	Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare
Hon. John Michaël Tzoun Sao Yeung Sik Yuen	Minister of Commerce and Consumer Protection
Dr. the Hon. Kaviraj Sharma Sukon	Minister of Tertiary Education, Science and Research
Hon. Sayed Muhammad Aadil Ameer Meea	Minister of Industry, SMEs and Cooperatives
Dr. the Hon. Mahend Gungapersad, PDSM	Minister of Education and Human Resource
Dr. the Hon. Avinash Ramtohul	Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation
Hon. Lutchmanah Pentiah	Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reforms
Hon. Ranjiv Wochit, OSK	Minister of Local Government
Hon. Mahendra Gondeea, OSK	Minister of Arts and Culture

**PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS**

Madam Speaker	Hon. Mrs Shirin Aumeeruddy-Cziffra
Deputy Speaker	Hon. Vedasingam Vasudevachariar Baloomoody
Deputy Chairperson of Committees	Hon. Mohamed Ehsan Juman
Acting Clerk of the National Assembly	Gopall, Mr Navin
Adviser	Lotun, Mrs Bibi Safeena, CSK
Clerk Assistant	Seetul, Ms Darshinee
Clerk Assistant	Naika-Cahaneea, Mrs Prishnee
Clerk Assistant	Tayelamay, Mr Niteshen
Adviser, Hansard Matters	Allet, Mrs Marie-Hélène Caroline
Assistant Hansard Editor	Hurdoss, Miss Doushika
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Acting Serjeant-at-Arms	Seegobin, Mr Somduth

**MAURITIUS**

**Eighth National Assembly**

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**FIRST SESSION**

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**Debate No. 09 of 2025**

**Sitting of Tuesday 25 March 2025**

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

**The National Anthem was played**

*(Madam Speaker in the Chair)*

**ANNOUNCEMENT****SESSIONAL SELECT COMMITTEES – COMPOSITION**

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Members, I have an announcement to make with regard to the composition of the Sessional Select Committees pursuant to Standing Order 69 of the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly 1995.

I have to inform you that I chaired the Committee of Selection on Monday 24 March 2025, and I have nominated the following hon. Members to serve on the different Sessional Select Committees as follows –

**A. Public Accounts Committee**

With regard to the Public Accounts Committee -

1. Hon. Kuvalayan Kugan Parapen, Junior Minister of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity
2. Hon. Gilbert Tony Apollon
3. Hon. Rameshwar Etwareea
4. Hon. Jean Francisco François
5. Hon. Shridhur Jugurnauth
6. Dr. the Hon. Sandeep Prayag
7. Hon. Kaviraj Rookny
8. Hon. Mohamed Reza Saumtally
9. Hon. Manoj Seeburn

Furthermore, pursuant to Standing Order 69(2)(a), I have appointed Hon. Adrien Charles Duval, Opposition Whip, as Chairperson of the said Committee.

**B. Standing Orders Committee**

With regard to the Standing Orders Committee, chaired by myself and also served by the hon. Deputy Speaker, we have –

1. Hon. Gavin Patrick Cyril Glover, S.C., Attorney General

2. Hon. Dhananjay Ramful, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
3. Hon. Georges Pierre Lesjongard, Leader of the Opposition
4. Hon. Pynivel Venkatasami, Deputy Chief Government Whip

### **C. House Committee**

With regard to the House Committee, chaired by the hon. Deputy Speaker, have been appointed –

1. Hon. (Ms) Marie Genevieve Stephanie Anquetil, Government Chief Whip
2. Hon. Nitish Sharma Beejan
3. Hon. (Mrs) Dianette Henriette-Manan
4. Hon. Shridhur Jugurnauth
5. Hon. Jean Patrice France Quirin

### **D. Broadcasting Committee**

With regard to the Broadcasting Committee, have been appointed –

1. Hon. Patrick Gervais Assirvaden, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities
2. Hon. Raviraj Sinha Beehook
3. Hon. Louis Ludovic Michel Caserne
4. Hon. Jacques Edouard
5. Hon. Rameshwar Etwareea
6. Hon. Jean Patrice France Quirin
7. Hon. Manoj Seeburn

The Broadcasting Committee will be chaired by the Hon. Patrick Gervais Assirvaden, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities.

### **E. Parliamentary Gender Caucus**



With regard to the Parliamentary Gender Caucus, chaired by myself and which is also served by the hon. Deputy Speaker as Deputy Chairperson, have been appointed –

1. Hon. (Ms) Joanna Marie Bérenger, Junior Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
2. Hon. (Mrs) Eileen Karen Lee Chin Foo Kune-Bacha, Junior Minister of Youth and Sports
3. Hon. (Ms) Anishta Babooram, Junior Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare
4. Hon. (Mrs) Marie Veronique Leu-Govind, Junior Minister of Arts and Culture
5. Hon. (Ms) Marie Genevieve Stephanie Anquetil, Government Chief Whip
6. Hon. Adrien Charles Duval, Opposition Whip
7. Hon. Chetan Anand Baboolall
8. Hon. Louis Ludovic Michel Caserne
9. Hon. (Ms) Marie Roxana Collet
10. Dr. the Hon. (Ms) Rubna Begum Daureeawo
11. Hon. (Mrs) Dianette Henriette-Manan
12. Hon. Roshan Jhummun
13. Hon. Chandraprakash Ramkalawon
14. Hon. (Mrs) Marie Anabelle Andelana Savabaddy
15. Dr. the Hon. (Ms) Babita Thannoo

These, of course, have been appointed by the Selection Committee.

Thank you.

**PAPERS LAID**

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

**A. Prime Minister's Office****Ministry of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications****Ministry of Finance****Ministry for Rodrigues and Outer Islands**

- (a) The Certificate of Urgency in respect of the Public Inquiries Bill (No. V of 2025). (In Original)
- (b) The Credit Facility Agreement between Government of the Republic of Mauritius as the borrower and State Bank of India as the lending bank. (In Original)
- (c) The Certificate of Audit on the Annual Statements of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius for the financial year 2023-2024.
- (d) The Certificate of Audit and Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius for the financial year 2023-24.
- (e) The Certificate of Audit on the Annual Statements of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the financial year 2023-24.
- (f) The Certificate of Audit and Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the financial year 2023-24.

**B. Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity**

- (a) The Social Aid (Amendment) Regulations 2025. (Government Notice No. 25 of 2025)
- (b) The Social Aid (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations 2025. (Government Notice No. 26 of 2025)
- (c) The National Pensions (Pension Points) (Amendment) Regulations 2025. (Government Notice No. 27 of 2025)
- (d) The National Savings Fund (Collection of Contributions) (Amendment) Regulations 2025. (Government Notice No. 28 of 2025)

**C. Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection**

- (a) The Consumer Protection (Control of Price of Taxable and Non-taxable Goods) (Amendment) Regulations 2025. (Government Notice No. 23 of 2025)
- (b) The Rodrigues Consumer Protection (Control of Price of Taxable and Non-taxable Goods) (Amendment) Regulations 2025. (Government Notice No. 24 of 2025)

**D. Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation**

The Annual Report and Report of the Director of Audit on the Financial Statements of the Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council for the year ended 30 June 2023.

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS****CHIKUNGUNYA & DENGUE FEVER – REGISTERED CASES – PROTOCOLS & MEASURES**

**The Leader of the Opposition (Mr G. Lesjongard)** (*by Private Notice*) asked the Minister of Health and Wellness whether, in regard to Chikungunya and Dengue Fever, he will state the –

- (a) number of registered cases thereof as at date, indicating if they are local or imported ones;
- (b) protocols put in place at the airport and the port for the detection thereof, indicating since when;
- (c) measures put in place for the –
  - (i) prompt detection thereof island-wide, and
  - (ii) efficient management of reported cases thereof in Government hospitals and health institutions, private clinics and by private practitioners, and
- (d) measures taken to quell the outbreak thereof and protect the public at large.

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, Chikungunya virus is an arbovirus transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. First identified in Tanzania in 1952, the virus has since spread to tropical and subtropical regions worldwide, causing sporadic outbreaks with significant public health and economic burdens.

Dengue is also a viral infection transmitted to humans through the bite of infected mosquitoes *Aedes albopictus*, which is the same vector for Chikungunya transmission. While many dengue infections are asymptomatic or produce only mild illness, the virus can occasionally cause more severe cases, and even death.

Madam Speaker, a first case of Chikungunya was reported on 15 March 2025 at La Preneuse. It was a 37-year-old lady residing at La Preneuse, Tamarin. She was admitted in a private clinic as she was suffering from fever, joint pains and had skin rashes. Appropriate treatment was given to the patient.

Public health measures were immediately initiated. The patient was put under mosquito net and provided with mosquito cream. Contact tracing exercise was carried out to identify all

persons who were in close contact with the patient. 22 contacts were identified. In addition, vector control measures such as fogging, larviciding and mist blowing were also carried out in the vicinity of the locality and the places the affected person had visited recently.

An entomological survey was simultaneously carried out by the Vector Biology and Control Division of my Ministry. Moreover, a multidisciplinary outbreak investigation team was set up to search for additional cases in the neighbourhood.

A second case was identified on 20 March 2025, a male patient of 45 years residing at EDC, Rivière Noire working at Tamarin, close to the first case. The patient attended Victoria Hospital with symptoms of fever and joint pains.

Subsequently, a third case was reported on 21 March 2025, a female patient residing at Royal Road, Tamarin suffering from fever and joint pains.

On 22 March 2025, two more cases were reported, a male patient of 73 years residing at Royal Road Pereybère and another male patient of 68 years residing at Tamarin, both complaining of fever and joint pains.

On 24 March 2025, three new cases have been reported.

As at today, we have eight reported cases of Chikungunya. I am informed that five have recovered and have been discharged. The remaining three are stable.

Madam Speaker, as regards Dengue, a first case was reported on 21 March 2025, a patient residing at Plaine Magnien and admitted at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital. The patient was immediately put under mosquito net and given mosquito cream.

A contact tracing exercise was carried out once again to identify persons who had been in close contact with the patient. Three close contacts were identified and the exercise is still ongoing.

Subsequently, two cases were identified on 23 and 24 March 2025, both persons residing in the same street as the first patient. Both patients have been admitted at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital.

Fever survey and all public health measures have been initiated by the Public Health and Food Safety Inspectorate and the Vector Biology and Control Division of my Ministry.

As at today, three cases of Dengue have been registered, out of which one has recovered while the two others are still admitted and are under care.

In short, Madam Speaker, with respect to part (a) of the question, the number of registered cases of Chikungunya and Dengue Fever are eight and three, respectively, and all these cases are local ones.

As regards part (b) of the question, the following protocols have been put in place at the airport and the port since they had come into operation –

- (i) All incoming passengers are screened for the following diseases at the health counters of the airport and port –
  - Avian Flu
  - Chikungunya
  - Dengue
  - Filariasis
  - Malaria
  - Plague
  - Yellow Fever
  - Cholera
  - Monkey Pox
  - Ebola
  - Marburg
  - SARS-MEAS
  - COVID-19
  - Zika
- (ii) Data captured include name, local address, contact number, country of origin.
- (iii) All data are captured through the Power Business Intelligence System daily from the online digital All-in-One Form or its printed version, and then transmitted to respective District Health Offices on the same day. Health Surveillance activities are conducted by both the Public Health Food Safety Inspectorate for non-vector-borne diseases and the Health Surveillance Cadre for vector-borne diseases.

There are actually 97 Health Surveillance Officers in post for the surveillance of vector-borne diseases.

- (iv) Health Surveillance activities are carried out through physical visits where body temperature, personal data, blood samples, blood smears or blotting paper are taken and despatched to the Central Health Laboratory.
- (v) Blood samples are then sent to the Laboratory for examination as soon as possible.
- (vi) The National Health Surveillance system has been reinforced.

The number of persons put under surveillance from January to February 2025 are as follows –

<b>Surveillance</b>	<b>No. of persons</b>
Cholera Surveillance	2,542
Malaria Surveillance	13,840
Ebola Surveillance	355
Zika Surveillance	8,772
Chikungunya Surveillance	3,673
Dengue Surveillance	5,632
Plague Surveillance	6,403
SARS/Avian Flu	6,531
Other diseases	37,701

Madam Speaker, as regards part (c) of the question, it is to be noted that Chikungunya and Dengue are notifiable diseases under section 42 of the Public Health Act 1925, which imposes the mandatory requirement for the notification of suspected cases by treating doctor of both private and public sectors of my Ministry.

In addition, as part of the ongoing surveillance, my Ministry has implemented the Integrated Diseases Surveillance and Response strategy wherein eleven priority diseases including Chikungunya and Dengue are reported to the Communicable Diseases Control Unit which operates under the purview of my Ministry.

Since there was an outbreak of Chikungunya in Reunion Island, and with the influx of the large number of passengers therefrom, a case definition of the disease was circulated to all doctors in the public and private sectors in Mauritius and Rodrigues. Continuous Medical Education was carried out in all health institutions of both private and public sectors.

An Operational Plan was revised for the prevention and control of Chikungunya and approved in February 2025 in view of the exponential increase in the number of cases in Reunion Island since the beginning of this year. The Plan was reviewed with special focus on Chikungunya and has been amended in view of the impending operationalisation of the Public Health Emergency Operation Centre to include components such as Incident Management System and Rapid Response team at both regional and national levels. The Operational Plan provides for the strengthening of surveillance, capacity building, and Risk Communication and Community Engagement during the inter-epidemic seasons. The Operational Plan has been circulated to allow for a standard approach at the management of an outbreak.

Even before the detection of the first case, I wish to inform the House that on 16 January 2025, I chaired a Multi Sectoral meeting on vector-borne diseases to enhance coordination among other Ministries, including Agro-Industry, Environment, Tourism, Local Government, Public Utilities, amongst others.

I also wish to inform the House that the Vector Biology and Control Division of my Ministry has conducted various mosquito surveys. Since 17 March 2025, 15 mosquito surveys around Chikungunya cases and 4 surveys around Dengue cases have been conducted. In total, 3,006 sites were inspected, out of which 34 sites contained larvae of *Albopictus*. Since the beginning of this year, 918 tests have been carried out for Chikungunya and Dengue by the Central Health Laboratory, out of which 8 cases of Chikungunya and 3 cases of Dengue have been confirmed.

I also wish to inform that the Central Health Laboratory is adequately equipped to diagnose Chikungunya and Dengue. The stock of reagents for Dengue is 34,000 tests and for Chikungunya, it is 8,000 tests.

The measures taken to quell the outbreak and protect public health at large are as follows –



- (i) We are conducting an intersectoral meeting chaired by me to assess the present situation; actions are taken to foster collaborative support from Governmental Bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations.
- (ii) Technical meetings are held daily to assess and review the situation.
- (iii) At district level, the following measures prevail –
  - Conduct of environmental health assessment in regions/localities affected within a radius of 300 m of the case locus to detect mosquito breeding places;
  - Perform field vector control operations which include indoor residual spraying/outdoor residual spraying; larviciding; mist blowing, and fogging.
- (iv) Conduct of entomological surveys to assess larva and adult mosquito indices.
- (v) Conduct of fever surveys and contact tracing.
- (vi) Rapid examination of blood samples by the Central Health Laboratory.
- (vii) Health Education at the community level.
- (viii) Raising of Community awareness through mass media (Radio/TV/ Digital Health Platform) and ensuring community participation also.

The following have been achieved as from notification of the first cases of Chikungunya and Dengue –

**Fever Survey since 16 March 2025 up to date:**

- Total number of households visited: 2,045
- Total number of blood sample/blotting paper taken: 201
- Total number of contact trace out: 72

**Notices served upon Author of Nuisances:**

- Total number of notices served: 25
- Total number of water notices served: 111

**Statement of Nuisances served upon Local Authorities/other Government Institutions:**

- Total number of statement of nuisances served: 62

**Larviciding:**

- Total number of premises larvicided: 11,543

**Mist Blowing:**

- Total number of premises mist blown: 4,566

**Fogging:**

- Total number of premises fogged: 3,346

Madam Speaker, the local authorities are involved in the cleaning of bare lands and also the collection of bulky waste. They are also responsible for the cleaning of drains as per established programme of work in collaboration with the Land Drainage Authority.

I am informed by the Ministry of Local Government that the above measures are ongoing. Following a meeting I had personally chaired on Monday 17 March 2025 with the officers of my Ministry and also representatives from the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Environment, I am informed that a coordination meeting was held at the level of the Ministry of Local Government with all the 12 local authorities, National Environment Cleaning Authority, Mauri-Facilities Management Company Ltd, and the Living Environment Unit of the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change on Friday 21 March 2025.

A dedicated team has been set up at the level of each local authority to undertake cleaning of bare lands comprising officers from the local authorities, Mauri-Facilities Management Co. Ltd, Field Services Unit, and Living Environment Unit. The cleaning programme is being coordinated by the National Environment Cleaning Agency.

The Ministry of Local Government has also obtained financial clearance to the tune of Rs11 million for the local authorities to embark on a bulky waste campaign across the country and same would start as from this weekend, that is, 29 March 2025 so as to ensure that the public are home to remove the bulky waste.

Madam Speaker, it is also with regret that I have to inform the House that the outgoing government has failed in its duty of protecting our citizens as it has made a poor provisioning of funds under the Budget of the Ministry of Local Government for the allocation to the local authorities for the cleaning of bare lands – only Rs3 million were made available to the 12 local authorities when it should have been Rs18 million. With regard to bulky waste campaign, only an amount of Rs15 million was provided instead of Rs30 million.

Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Ministry of Local Government that a total of 455 officers has been mobilised for the cleaning of bare lands and it is expected that in four

weeks, we would be able to clean all bare lands found in the radius of 300 metres from residential areas.

Madam Speaker, I seize this opportunity to make an appeal to the public in general to keep their premises and underdeveloped plots of land clean and tidy as otherwise, the local authorities would be cleaning the land of premises and subsequently charge owners accordingly under Section 61(9) of the Local Government Act 2011.

Madam Speaker, allow me to take this opportunity to shed light on how previously, during previous health emergencies, there had been very inefficient management of public funds.

Notwithstanding the scandals surrounding the procurement of Molnupiravir and ventilators from Pack & Blister, I wish to inform the House that Mauritius has an outstanding debt of around one billion rupees in respect of the acquisition of COVID-19 vaccines. I will come on this issue at a later stage in Parliament.

Madam Speaker, I am also informed that during the outbreak of dengue in 2024, the Ministry of Health had sought and obtained the collaboration of several local authorities and the private sector to step up the vector control measures. A significant number of employees were deployed from the Ministry of Local Government/Local Authorities, Ministry of Agro-Industry, the Ministry of Environment, Mauri-Facilities, and the Tourism Authority. Unfortunately, workers provided their services on a 24/7 basis, but, to date, they have not been paid their dues. An outstanding amount of approximately Rs55 million has yet to be paid to officers of my Ministry and Rs28 million for other ministries and departments.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to mention that yesterday, a High-Powered Committee was held by the Ministry of Education and attended by all top officers, including Rectors and Headmasters of the Primary and Secondary Institutions and they were briefed about measures that had to be taken. I would also like to add that about 300 employees from the Ministry of Environment and Mauri-Facilities are actually providing services in this field.

Yesterday, I had a meeting with the representatives of the World Health Organisation and we had formerly initiated step to seek technical expert from the World Health Organisation, specifically to assist in designing the Sero-Prevalence Survey Methodology and advising on risk assessment and vector control strategies and evaluating the public health system's preparedness for arboviral epidemics. At the same time, Madam Speaker, I would like to mention that Chikungunya vaccines are currently under development with one

IXCHIQ live-attenuated Chikungunya vaccine which has recently been approved in selected jurisdiction.

The Ministry is monitoring the issue and we hope that in the near future, this vaccine will be available to us. As far as dengue vaccines are concerned, there are two dengue vaccines that are currently in the global market. The first one, Dengvaxia, a live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine which is approved in several countries, but has got limited use, and the second one is Qdenga, a newer tetravalent live-attenuated vaccine recently approved in Europe and some parts of Asia. We are looking into the possibility of having those vaccines once they are cleared by the WHO.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you, hon. Minister. Hon. Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The hon. Minister has confirmed that we have 11 cases of Chikungunya and Dengue in the country. Will the hon. Minister agree that his Ministry has been slow in implementing the preliminary measures and this has resulted in an outbreak in the western part of the island?

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, the fastness with which I was reading the prepared paper, it would have taken almost two hours. So, I do not understand. Anything that is humanely possible is being done.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** I must hear the hon. Minister; I can't hear the last part...

**Mr Bachoo:** So, I had been so fast, Madam Speaker, because there is too much to speak on the actions that we have taken, and I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those workers who are involved. If we had not taken all these measures, then Mauritius would have been just like it was during COVID-19 a few years back.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Next question! Supplementary question! I am precisising because we have lots of young people here today; so that they understand what is going on.

**Mr Lesjongard:** Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Minister has stated in his reply that there have been no imported cases. Can he explain to the House how come? Because we know that both Chikungunya and Dengue are not endemic to Mauritius?

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Minister.

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, I am not an expert. I have been advised by my officers and the technicians of my Ministry that these are all indigenous. This means that those viruses must be in the air in the country, because they have tested everywhere. I have just mentioned that thousands of tests have been conducted. Up till now, we have not got any trace that it is coming from abroad. If that had been the case, definitely, I would have mentioned it. Those cases which are coming from abroad – imported ones – are easier to control than those which are indigenous in the country because you do not know where it comes from. That is the reason why we had to go throughout the nook and corner of the country to do larviciding and other cleaning works.

**Madam Speaker:** Do you have another one?

**Mr Lesjongard:** Yes, Madam Speaker. In his reply, the hon. Minister confirmed that there were no proper surveillance done neither at the airport nor in the port, and that is why we have not been able to detect imported cases. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether the body scanners for monitoring temperature at the airport are working and since when? Because we note that on a daily basis, there are around 10 flights coming from Reunion Island, and, as at date, there are some 10,000 cases of Chikungunya in Reunion Island.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Minister!

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, firstly, I was very, very clear, and my language was very simple. I did not say that we have not “controlled”. Since the very beginning, we have taken all the actions that needed to be taken.

**Madam Speaker:** For the port and the airport?

**Mr Bachoo:** At both the port and the airport! Also, even at places where there has been a lot of crowds, regular testing work has been going on. But I maintain that there have not been any imported cases.

Secondly, as far as the airport is concerned, even the hon. Prime Minister has been drawing my attention many times to the fact that there should not be any outbreak of any virus and that we have to be very careful at the airport. I can guarantee the House that all that is humanly possible has been done.

Some cameras/equipment were put by the previous government earlier, but none of them are working today. In the afternoon, I am going to reply to a question which has been addressed to me in that regard.

**Madam Speaker:** Okay!

**Mr Lesjongard:** Yes. In his reply, the hon. Minister made mention of an Operational Plan and he stated that he had met with stakeholders of government. Can I ask him whether a task force has been set up, comprising not only government bodies but also stakeholders in the non-health sectors?

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, I just mentioned that I had presided two meetings, and, at the same time, the local government, at its own level, is doing its best to rope in the private sector. I had forgotten to mention: I have a paper with me where it is mentioned that the Ministry of Tourism has also made an appeal to the private sector to come forward and help us.

So, we cannot say that the private sector is not being roped in. We are making an appeal to the private sector and they are openly supporting us. Definitely, in the days to come, if the situation goes bad – I hope it will not be so – then, of course, we are going to take additional measures. As of now, I can tell you that the private sector is fully on board, and particularly the Local Government, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Tourism, including my Ministry, we are doing the work.

**Mr Lesjongard:** The hon. Minister said that he had a meeting with his colleague, the Minister responsible for education. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether his Ministry has started fogging and larviciding in our educational institutions?

**Mr Bachoo:** In many places where the need was felt, the work has already started. For example, in the north, we have an institution in mind and we need to act fast; we are going to do it today. So, it all depends on wherever the need is felt. We cannot take all the institutions at one go. We have to go step by step. But, again, I assure the House, if anyone has anything to say, any request to make, we are going to immediately implement whatever we have to do.

**Madam Speaker:** Okay. Hon. Member, yes!

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Speaker, given that health diseases, such as Chikungunya, have devastating impacts on industries such as the tourism industry, which is already hurting, will the hon. Minister consider bold measures, like in India, to introduce genetically modified non-reproductive mosquitoes to immediately kill off the species of mosquitoes *qui sont porteurs du Chikungunya*?

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, we have not reached that situation. But, as he is talking about the tourism industry, I have a paper in front of me where the Ministry of Tourism has already sent letters to all the operators in the tourism sector to ensure that their premises and immediate neighbourhood have to be cleared and to be kept clean at all times with a view to preventing breeding of mosquitoes. At the same time, they have also procured additional equipment so that they can try to intensify the work that they are doing. But, for now, it is too premature to come to that.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes!

**Mrs Savabaddy:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Est-ce que l'honorable ministre a émis des directives claires aux cliniques privées à cet effet ? Et qu'est-ce qui est prévu si ces mesures ne sont pas respectées ? Merci.

**Mr Bachoo:** According to our existing legislations, private clinics are bound by the decision taken by the Government. My officers, that is, the responsible officers are monitoring the situation. We are repeatedly phoning and we are inquiring from the different private clinics as to the step that they have taken in order to help patients who are getting admitted there.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. François! Then, hon. Dr. Aumeer.

**Mr François:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, following the detected 11 cases in Mauritius, which makes Mauritius as well as Rodrigues vulnerable for an outbreak at any time and being given that the Regional Assembly has only an administration for health, may I ask the hon. Minister whether –

- (i) he is aware of any recent reported, suspected case from Rodrigues, and
- (ii) the Ministry has also activated strict control measures together with local authorities in Rodrigues for people travelling to Rodrigues from Mauritius as, at times, health cards are not distributed on the plane.
- (iii) And if you allow me, whether he will request the Regional Assembly...

**Madam Speaker:** One question at a time!

**Mr François:** ... for a...

**Madam Speaker:** He cannot answer five questions! One question at a time, please!

**Mr François:** I am trying to put all in one.

**Madam Speaker:** Please, let him answer the first question!

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, I would like to add one thing. I am informed by my officers that sterile mosquitoes are being developed and released in the atmosphere.

As far as this question is concerned, of course, Rodrigues is part and parcel of our country and of our Republic. So, I can assure the hon. Member that whatever is being done in Mauritius, the same will definitely be implemented in Rodrigues.

**Madam Speaker:** Hand in hand!

**Mr Bachoo:** And at the same time, I am sending a few officers to Rodrigues for that purpose.

**Madam Speaker:** Second question!

**Mr François:** I was going to ask whether he will request the Regional Assembly for thorough sensitisation and awareness campaigns for mass media and community at large to quell any outbreak at any time.

**Mr Bachoo:** I will look into it.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Dr. Aumeer!

**Dr. Aumeer:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. With regard to the detection of Chikungunya in private health institutions, currently, only Rapid Antigen Testing is being carried out. Subsequently, they are then referred to the Central Lab. May I ask the hon. Minister whether he could extend the facilities of PCR testing within private institutions so that we have a real value of the number of positive cases in the country? Thank you.

**Mr Bachoo:** The answer is in the positive.

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

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. May I ask the hon. Minister whether patients suffering from Chikungunya are being treated in the same ward as other patients, or is there a separate ward for those patients?

**Mr Bachoo:** Those patients who are admitted in the hospitals are being kept a bit separately from the other patients.

**Madam Speaker:** It's catching!

**Mr Bachoo:** They are detached from the other patients.



**Madam Speaker:** Do you have one more? Okay! Not much time is left.

**Mr Lesjongard:** Specific to senior and vulnerable citizens, can I know what are the measures being envisaged to protect our citizens from an outbreak of Chikungunya in the country?

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, all the measures that I have just enunciated are measures that we are taking everywhere. In fact, for the old aged, a special attempt will be made through propaganda via television and radio. We are trying to communicate with everybody. I will see to it that when they come for consultations in all healthcare institutions, they are looked at properly.

**Madam Speaker:** Last question!

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you. Madam Speaker, now that the hon. Minister is aware of sterile mosquitoes, may we know how many mosquitoes have been released under the programme since the outbreak to date?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, it is difficult to count mosquitoes! I am very sorry to say: I cannot count mosquitoes!

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Of course, I did not hear what the hon. Minister said! I am sorry, hon. Minister. Maybe it was recorded, but I did not hear you. Please!

**Mr Bachoo:** It is difficult for me or my Ministry to count the number of mosquitoes that have been released!

**Ms Anquetil:** Bravo Anil!

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Okay. Time is up!

So, now, hon. Jhummun!

**SMS PARIAZ LTD – LICENSES ISSUED – 2015-NOV 2024 – SHAREHOLDER/S  
AND/OR DIRECTOR/S**

**(No. B/197) Mr R. Jhummun (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in

regard to SMS PARIASZ Ltd, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Gambling Regulatory Authority, information as to the –

- (a) number of licenses issued thereto since 2015 to November 2024, and
- (b) names of the shareholder/s and/or Director/s thereof, indicating if Mr J. M. L. S. has a direct or indirect interest therein.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, in the Government Programme, under the subtitle “Restoring integrity in the gaming industry”, we have undertaken to restore public confidence in the Gambling Regulatory Authority, particularly in regard to its oversight on the horseracing industry.

Relevant amendments will be brought to the Act to ensure that the GRA operates as a trustworthy regulator of the gaming and betting industry, in a transparent and accountable manner.

Madam Speaker, the Gambling Regulatory Act 2007 has, *inter alia*, the following objectives –

- (i) promoting public confidence in the integrity of horseracing industry by ensuring proper standards of conduct and competence;
- (ii) ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and transparent manner;
- (iii) fostering responsible gambling in order to minimise harm caused by gambling, and
- (iv) promoting the welfare and leisure of the race-going public.

It is worth reminding the House, Madam Speaker, that under the last regime, the GRA instead of furthering its objectives – this is why I spelt them out – as in the Act, developed an incestuous relationship with some in the gambling world. The GRA became a den of notorious agents at the service of their political masters.

From 2015 to 2024, the GRA totally destroyed public confidence in the gambling industry and the horseracing industry. In fact, it literally decimated horseracing in Mauritius. It acted more as a Gambling Promoting Authority dishing out various licences in every nook and corner of the country. That is how the then Government, if you remember, in 2015, said they want to prevent Mauritius from becoming “*enn Nation zougader*”. This is precisely what they did.

Regarding part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Gambling Regulatory Authority, that a total number of 186 licences has been issued...

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** *Ça va ! Ça va !*

**The Prime Minister:** ...has been issued.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** *Il y a de quoi être choqué !*

**Madam Speaker:** I am sorry!

**The Prime Minister:** It was a mosquito!

*(Interruptions)*

I repeat, Madam Speaker...

**Madam Speaker:** I am sorry, hon. Prime Minister.

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, don't worry!

**Madam Speaker:** It is the equipment!

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, I am sure. Like everything else in this country; everything is falling apart!

I am informed, Madam Speaker, by the Gambling Regulatory Authority, as I said, that a total number of 186 licences has been issued to SMS PARIASZ Ltd from 2015...

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** *Bandit !*

**The Prime Minister:** ... to November 2024, and they are as follows –

- (i) 25 Bookmaker licences for conducting fixed odds betting through remote communication by SMS;
- (ii) 20 Bookmaker licences for conducting fixed odds betting on football matches taking place outside Mauritius, and
- (iii) 141 Limited payout machine licences.

With regard to part (b) of the question, Madam Speaker, I am tabling a list of the names of the current shareholder and Directors of SMS PARIASZ Ltd obtained from the Gambling Regulatory Authority.

According to this list, Mr J.M.L.S. is neither a shareholder nor a Director of SMS PARIAZ Ltd.

I am, however, informed by the GRA that Mr J.M.L.S. was a shareholder of SMS PARIAZ Ltd from 22 April 2009 to 23 May 2014.

He was also a Director of SMS PARIAZ Ltd from 15 January 2008 to 17 April 2009 and from 10 January 2013 to 18 March 2013.

According to records at the Corporate and Business Registration Department, there has been successive transfer of shares from Mr J.M.L.S. to a list of persons and, eventually, in 2014 to Mr P. T. – I am not saying the full name.

I am informed by the GRA that at the time of application of his personal management licence, Mr J.M.L.S. submitted a copy of the registered Power of Attorney in favour of Mr P. T. who is the sole shareholder of SMS PARIAZ Ltd at the time, and giving him Power of Attorney to generally act on his behalf to manage, conduct, carry on and administer all his affairs and properties in Mauritius and to represent and act for him in all matters.

It is clear, Madam Speaker, it appears at least, that it could be a case of *prête-nom*, and this is being looked into.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Yes, hon. Member!

**Mr Jhummun:** Thank you, hon. Prime Minister. Madam Speaker, given that there are other betting shops, I will mention a few –

- (i) Bosco;
- (ii) Silver Sports;
- (iii) Easy Win;
- (iv) ValuePlus;
- (v) Peerless;
- (vi) Toppool;
- (vii) Footy;
- (viii) Bet Online, and
- (ix) Booksystem.

All these are apparently operating under the same umbrella, but *sous des différents prénoms*. In order to shed light on all these issues and in public interest, can the hon. Prime Minister undertake to establish a full-fledged inquiry in order to enquire on the empire of J.M.L.S.? Thank you.

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, I could, but I must say that on 20 March 2025, SMS PARIASZ Ltd lodged a case at the Supreme Court against the GRA.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière!

**AGALÉGA – AIRSTRIP CONSTRUCTION – GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS &  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AGREEMENT**

(No. B/198) Mr F. Quirin (Third Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to Agaléga, he will state the terms and conditions of the agreement signed between the Government of Mauritius and the Government of India for the construction of an airstrip and its amenities, indicating the –

- (a) other facilities extended thereunder;
- (b) duration thereof;
- (c) rental fee perceived, if any, and
- (d) restrictions imposed, if any, to the inhabitants thereof.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that on 27 February 2015, Cabinet had agreed to the signing of a MoU with the Government of India for the improvement of Sea and Air Transportation Facilities at Agaléga.

I wish to inform the House that this MoU was signed on 11 March 2015. Subsequently, following a PNQ on 31 March 2015, a copy of the MoU was tabled in the House.

Madam Speaker, the Agreement with the Government of India on infrastructural projects in Agaléga was signed on 27 May 2017. It relates to the protection and safeguarding of our maritime security needs in the following areas, among others –

- (i) a surveillance and monitoring of our vast EEZ which is of 2.3 million square kilometres;
- (ii) counter-piracy, counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and human trafficking;

- (iii) controlling poaching and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- (iv) provision of hydrographic services;
- (v) promoting economic development, including blue economy initiatives;
- (vi) emergency response, including search and rescue;
- (vii) marine protection response, and
- (viii) Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster relief activities.

Madam Speaker, the new airstrip, the jetty and their associated infrastructure have been entirely financed and constructed by the Government of India. The Agreement provides that the title to all the immovable property being constructed in Agaléga by the Government of India will remain with the Government of Mauritius. In addition, the Government of India is also assisting the Government of Mauritius in the operation and maintenance of the facilities, and the relating costs are being borne by the Government of India. Accordingly, technical experts from the Government of India are currently operating and maintaining the facilities.

With regard to part (a) of the question, I would like to inform the House that the airstrip and associated facilities that have been constructed in Agaléga include a 3 km long and 45 m wide airstrip. It also includes an Air Traffic Control Tower, a Passenger Terminal Building, an Aircraft Hangar, an Electrical Station, as well as a new jetty.

With regard to parts (b), (c) and (d) of the question, there is a Confidentiality Clause in the Agreement, similar to other Agreements that Mauritius has signed with other States. We are bound by this Confidentiality Clause. However, I can assure the House that the hon. Deputy Prime Minister and myself have looked at the Agreement and we can state that there is nothing that should be a matter of concern, especially in respect of the sacrosanct principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Yes, hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Merci, Madame la présidente. Dois-je rappeler à la Chambre que l'actuel *Deputy Prime Minister*, de même que l'honorable Dr. Boolell, lors de ses précédents *PNQs*, alors qu'il était leader de l'opposition en 2022, le 26 juillet et en octobre 2023, les deux, avec raison, avaient réclamé que tout soit rendu public, qu'il n'y ait pas de clause confidentielle, comme le précédent gouvernement avait, je ne dirai pas caché, mais n'avait pas voulu, à l'époque, aussi rendre public cette clause confidentielle ? Donc, doit-on comprendre que, malgré que l'actuel *Deputy Prime Minister* et l'honorable Dr. Boolell, alors qu'il était leader

de l'opposition - qu'est-ce qui peut empêcher le Premier ministre, aujourd'hui, de dévoiler à la Chambre – comme il vient de l'affirmer – cet accord, puisqu'il n'y a rien de compromettant dans cet accord ; qu'est-ce qui l'empêche de rendre public justement cet accord entre l'Inde et Maurice ?

**The Prime Minister:** Not only the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister Dr. Boolell, I also said that during the campaign, but there is a clause of confidentiality in the agreement. We did not see the agreement at the time. There is a clause. That agreement subsumed the understanding reached in 2015 of the Memorandum of Understanding. That is the reason.

**Madam Speaker:** You have another question?

**Mr Quirin:** J'ai une autre question, Madame la présidente, avec votre permission. Plusieurs médias étrangers, dont certains journaux renommés, réputés de l'Inde avaient...

**Madam Speaker:** No! In this House, you are not going to talk about the media. We want to know what your question is.

**Mr Quirin:** Ma question est la suivante : il y a une question que toute la population se pose et même...

**Madam Speaker:** Ça c'est bien! Allez-y!

**Mr Quirin:** ...ceux qui sont concernés par ce qui se passe à Agaléga. Ils veulent savoir s'il n'y aurait pas une base militaire à Agaléga; est-ce que Agaléga ne serait pas utilisé, à l'avenir, comme une base militaire.

**Madam Speaker:** 'À l'avenir', okay.

**The Prime Minister:** I can assure the House that it is absolutely not the case.

**Madam Speaker:** Alright! Yes, hon. Third Member for Flacq and Bon Accueil!

**BRIGADE POUR LA PROTECTION DE LA FAMILLE – CHILD ABUSE &  
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY – EFFICIENCY & SYSTEM REVIEW**

(No. B/199) **Mr C. Ramkalawon (Third Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications,

Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the '*Brigade pour la protection de la famille*' he will –

- (a) for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the –
  - (i) efficiency of the unit in dealing with cases of child abuse and juvenile delinquency, and
  - (ii) new measures proposed, if any, in dealing with juvenile offenders and
- (b) state if he proposes to reinstate the '*Brigade des mineurs*' to deal with problems of child abuse and juvenile delinquency.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the 'Police Family Protection Unit' was set up in September 1994, to attend to cases of domestic violence, child abuse and child beyond control. However, over the years, with an increase in the number of cases of child abuse, another unit, the '*Brigade Pour La Protection des Mineurs*' was set up in May 2004 to deal particularly with cases of child abuse and juvenile delinquency. Both units were operating under the aegis of the Central Criminal Investigation Department.

With the promulgation of the Children's Act, the Child Sex Offender Register Act and the Children's Court Act in the year 2020, the Child Protection Act of 1994 and the Juvenile Offenders Act of 1935 have been repealed. Consequently, the role and responsibilities of the 'Police Family Protection Unit' and the '*Brigade Pour La Protection des Mineurs*' were replaced by a new unit under the appellation '*Brigade pour la Protection de la Famille*' in January 2022, in order to implement the provisions under the foregoing legislations.

Moreover, the '*Brigade pour la Protection de la Famille*' was assigned new responsibilities to include the implementation of the recommendations of the National Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2024 on the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence and to work with other relevant stakeholders, such as, the Ombudsperson for Children's Office, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare, among others.



To ensure effective service delivery, ten sub-units of the '*Brigade pour la Protection de la Famille*' have been set up by the Police in strategic locations throughout the island, including Rodrigues.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a)(i) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that since the inception of the '*Brigade pour la Protection de la Famille*' in January 2022, cases of child abuse are being addressed in a professional manner and there is proper coordination among the various stakeholders. The staff are given adequate local and overseas training to handle such cases and to fine tune their cognitive interviewing and investigative skills to be able to interview and record statements from victims. They have adopted a victim-centred approach to prevent secondary victimisation and stigmatisation.

Concerning juvenile delinquency, such cases are dealt in two ways according to section 41 of the Children's Act of 2020 –

- (i) The Police or the aggrieved parents may apply to the Mauritius Probation and Aftercare Services for a 'Parenting Support Intervention' in order to assist the parents in performing their parental duties with respect to the management of their child's behaviour. Thereafter, for this purpose, Probation Officers make an assessment of the child's behaviour. If the outcome of the assessment is favourable, a report is submitted to the Police.
- (ii) If the outcome of the assessment is unfavourable, the report is submitted to the Protection Division of the Children's Court for the issue of a 'Preventive Intervention Order' by the Magistrate, which may include, among others, placement in an institution in accordance with the Probation of Offenders Act; attending drug or alcohol treatment or mental health counselling plan; participating in group activities, including counselling and complying with such order as the Magistrate may determine.

As regards part (a)(ii) of the question, it is envisaged to reinforce the strength of the '*Brigade pour la Protection de la Famille*' with additional resources to enable this unit to further meet the growing demands for their services. Neighbourhood Officers at Police Stations will be encouraged to act as Family Liaison Officers for profiling and identifying children with deviant behaviours and for referring them to the relevant agencies for follow-up and counselling. During sensitisation campaign, members of the public will be encouraged to

tip off the Police of suspected cases of child abuse and child exhibiting anti-social behaviour for remedial actions.

With regard to part (b) of the question, in view of the increasing number of complaints being received concerning the follow-up of children beyond control and domestic violence cases, the whole system is being reviewed.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Yes, the hon. Fourth Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue!

***POLICE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT* – NOISE POLLUTION & DISTURBANCES –  
REPORTED CASES**

**(No. B/200) Mr A. Duval (Fourth Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the increasing number of reported cases of noise pollution and disturbances, he will state if he will consider using his good offices to request the Commissioner of Police to strengthen the *Police de l'Environnement* island-wide to enhance its manpower, capacity and effectiveness.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, the *Police de l'Environnement* is established under section 14 of the Environment Act 2024 to provide to the Director of Environment such assistance as may be required in order to enforce the environmental law.

The duties and responsibilities of the *Police de l'Environnement* include the enforcement of environment-related legislations and pollution prevention, sensitisation on environmental issues, investigation into breach of environmental laws and attending to public complaints on such matters.

On 01 October 2022, the following two Regulations on environment protection relating to noise pollution were promulgated –

- (i) The Environment Protection (Environmental Standards for Noise) Regulations 2022 which provide for three categories of noise and their respective permissible level, namely industrial, neighbourhood and power station. The primary sources of noise nuisances include playing of loud music, machinery

used in workshops, nightclubs and entertainment centres operating at night, particularly those located in densely populated residential areas, and

- (ii) the Environment Protection (Control of Noise) Regulations 2022 which, *inter alia*, enhance enforcement, facilitate prompt action, and reduce lengthy legal procedures. A fixed penalty system with a fine of Rs10,000 was introduced for the offence of noise pollution constituting a nuisance.

Madam Speaker, in addition to its main office in Port Louis, the *Police de l'Environnement* has been decentralised in seven divisions across the island to enhance its operational effectiveness and efficiency to ensure that they work closely with the community in their role to protect the environment. It also operates a hotline to receive complaints. The unit also carries out night patrols to monitor noise and disturbances around places of entertainment, as I said, such as night clubs, restaurants, pubs, private clubs, and bungalows.

Presently, the *Police de l'Environnement* is manned by 37 Police Officers who are deployed in seven teams and has eight vehicles to cover the whole island.

The number of contraventions for the offence of causing noise constituting a nuisance has increased significantly from 52 in 2021 to 138 in 2024. Since the beginning of this year to date, 60 such contraventions have been established by the *Police de l'Environnement*. Since the number of cases is clearly on the rise, the Police are considering strengthening their resources to better educate the public through awareness campaigns and for greater intervention on the ground.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Your next question!

**Mr A. Duval:** I have a supplementary.

**Madam Speaker:** You have a supplementary, yes!

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Prime Minister will agree that four officers spread along three Police shifts; so, during one shift, one Police Officer is not nearly enough, especially in regions like in the north, where we have around 12 public beaches plus night clubs, restaurants, etc. Therefore, will he consider firstly, like the question asked, reinforcing the ranks of the *Police de l'Environnement* significantly so that it can work as is expected?

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I have just said that.

**Mr A. Duval:** I have a second question, Madam Speaker. Pending the reinforcement to occur, will the hon. Prime Minister ensure that more Police Stations are equipped with noise detectors so that they may enforce the laws without having to wait for the *Police de l'Environnement*, for example, to issue a contravention, subject to having a noise detector emittance to ascertain that the person is in contravention? Will he consider equipping those Police Stations immediately, pending the reinforcements?

**The Prime Minister:** This is something we could consider, but the *Police de l'Environnement* already have the equipment.

**Mr A. Duval:** Yes, but, Madam Speaker, ...

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, I understood the question.

**Mr A. Duval:** If I may, Madam Speaker. We have established there is only one per shift. Therefore, pending that it is reinforced, a simple solution now would be to equip the Police Stations...

**Madam Speaker:** Do not tell the hon. Prime Minister what to do! Ask him a question!

**Mr A. Duval:** But that is the question: whether he will consider.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Prime Minister, would you like to elaborate?

**The Prime Minister:** I can't say that I have understood the question. I thought I already answered it. But, say it again, I will...

**Madam Speaker:** Let me rephrase! The question, hon. Prime Minister, from what I think I understand, is whether we can give this type of equipment to Police Stations, not to *Police de l'Environnement*. Is that the question?

**The Prime Minister:** I am not sure that...

**Mr A. Duval:** Clearly, they are understaffed. Pending a reinforcement at the level of the *Police de l'Environnement* and given the number of cases on the rise, will the hon. Prime Minister – it is an easy fix – ensure that more Police Stations are equipped with noise detectors so that they can enforce the law?

**Madam Speaker:** That is what I have just said!

**The Prime Minister:** It will be for the *Police de l'Environnement* to go and check.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** *Chut*, hon. Jhummun!

**The Prime Minister:** It is not the Police Officers in the Station who go and check; it is the *Police de l'Environnement*.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** *Sa kantite tapaz de happy-hour lamem sa!*

**Madam Speaker:** *Chut!*

Let us go to your next question!

**MOTORCYCLES – HELMETS, MODIFIED LOUD EXHAUSTS & LICENSE  
PLATES – CRACKDOWN OPERATIONS**

**(No. B/201) Mr A. Duval (Fourth Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to riding motorcycles without helmets, with modified loud exhausts and without license plates on public roads, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to whether consideration will be given for regular crackdown exercises to be effected in relation thereto and, if so, give details thereof.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that crackdown on motorcyclists riding without helmets or motorcycles with modified loud exhausts or without licence plates on public roads, are being conducted regularly. These operations involve the deployment of the Traffic Branch, local Police, Emergency Response Services and the Divisional Support Unit. The teams are reinforced by the Special Mobile Force (SMF) and the Special Support Unit, whenever required. An average of 300 crackdown operations are conducted monthly island-wide against motorcyclists.

I am also informed, Madam Speaker, by the Commissioner of Police that a three-pronged strategy comprising Enforcement, Education and Multi-sector partnership has been put in place to address road safety issues. These include –

- (i) conducting targeted, visible and covert operations at road accidents hot spots;
- (ii) setting up Road Safety Watch Schemes in collaboration with the local community to identify probable black spots and instances of reckless driving;

- (iii) conducting crackdown operations with the involvement of various units of the Police Force;
- (iv) performing snap alcotest and drug test operations, and
- (v) carrying out sensitisation campaigns on road safety through face-to-face forums, mainstream media, and social media.

Madam Speaker, the crackdown operations and the three-pronged strategy deployed by the Police are yielding results. From January 2024 to March 2025, a total of 9,142 crackdown operations were conducted, including 4,218 specifically targeting motorcycles. During these operations, the following contraventions were established –

- (i) 1,431 for riding without helmets;
- (ii) 1,541 for riding motorcycles with loud exhausts, and
- (iii) 4,622 for riding motorcycles without licence plates.

The situation is being carefully monitored, and if need be, legislations would be revised to impose higher penalties on offenders.

**Madam Speaker:** We have only five minutes left. If you ask one or two questions, nobody else will be able to speak.

**Mr A. Duval:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The figures given are concerning – thousands of contraventions. However, the problem persists! Will the hon. Prime Minister consider the use of Safe City cameras to pinpoint the areas where there are recurrences? I can tell the hon. Prime Minister of many areas, close to where I live, where there are recurring...

**Madam Speaker:** No! Question! Question! You can do that privately!

**Mr A. Duval:** ...where motorcyclists are using their motorcycles without helmet, without number plates, with loud exhausts, and the Police are not effectively tracking down on that.

**Madam Speaker:** So, your question is?

**Mr A. Duval:** The question is whether he will use the Safe City cameras to ensure that the Police are, in fact, being efficient, and not just rely on what the local Stations are saying.

**Madam Speaker:** That is enough! That is enough! Safe City cameras!

**Mr Jhummun:** *Bizin fer enn alcool test!*

**The Prime Minister:** In fact, Madam Speaker, the Safe City cameras are now not being used to spy on people...

**Madam Speaker:** *Voilà !*

**The Prime Minister:** ...but, in fact, to see things like these. And they are being used for that!

**Madam Speaker:** Okay! Next question!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** *Li pe rod filme son li!*

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. First Member for La Caverne and Phoenix!

#### MAURITIUS' PORT – IDLE VESSELS – COST IMPLICATIONS

(No. B/202) **Mr K. Lobine (First Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to abandoned and unattended vessels at the Port, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Ports Authority, information as to the –

- (a) number thereof, indicating the number which have remained thereat for over one year, and
- (b) impact and financial costs thereof to the Authority, indicating the immediate measures being envisaged in relation thereto.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, as regards part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Acting Director-General of the Mauritius Ports Authority that as at date, there are 27 idle fishing vessels lying in the Port for more than one year.

With regard to part (b) of the question, idle vessels do not have certificate of seaworthiness and insurance cover and accordingly pose serious environmental risk, navigational and fire hazards as well as security threats.

To discourage the long stay of fishing vessels, on 16 January of this year, the Mauritius Ports Authority has, under section 32(5) of the Ports Act, directed the owners, the agents or representatives of the 19 fishing vessels, to take reasonable steps to remove the vessels and to settle all accrued port charges within 15 days. Seven fishing vessels are subject to an inquiry

by the Financial Crimes Commission for asset recovery. The remaining one fishing vessel is a matter of foreign arbitration proceedings.

The advice of the Attorney General's Office is being solicited by the Mauritius Ports Authority to proceed with the disposal of these idle vessels in accordance with the provisions of the Ports Act.

I am informed by the Acting Director-General of the Mauritius Ports Authority that an amount of Rs4 million, representing parking fees due by the owners of the 27 idle vessels, is still outstanding. In addition, an amount of Rs227,295 has been incurred by the Mauritius Ports Authority in terms of publication of notices. In case the vessels cannot be sold, an amount of Rs5 million per vessel will have to be borne by the Mauritius Ports Authority for their disposal by demolition facilities.

Madam Speaker, the Mauritius Ports Authority is working closely with the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries to ensure that the measures are put in place to deter the presence of idle fishing vessels in the Port.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. We have two minutes left!

Hon. Fourth Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue, two minutes!

#### **PUBLIC BEACHES – INCIDENTS – LAW ENFORCEMENT MEASURES**

**(No. B/203) Mr A. Duval (Fourth Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to recent incidents on members of the public at public beaches, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the –

- (a) number of reported cases thereof since 11 November 2024 to date, indicating the number of –
  - (i) cases resulting in physical injury, including deaths;
  - (ii) cases involving sexual abuse;
  - (iii) incidents involving minors, and
  - (iv) persons provisionally charged in relation thereto, and
- (b) measures being proposed to maintain law and order on public beaches.



**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, in regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that as from 11 November 2024 to 24 March 2025, thirty-one cases have been reported to the Police, which relate to incidents on members of the public, on public beaches.

Out of these –

- (i) 22 resulted in physical injury, including one case of ill-treatment of child and one case of death, and
- (ii) 9 related sexual abuse cases, out of which 8 involved minors.

I am also informed that fifteen persons have been provisionally charged and enquiries are ongoing.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that, in order to maintain law and order on public beaches, the Police are implementing the following measures –

- (i) visible Police presence through regular foot, bike and vehicle patrols by the regular Police, as well as other specialised units, namely the Emergency Response Services, the National Coast Guard, the *Police du Tourisme*, Central Investigation Department, and Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit, particularly during weekends, public holidays and busy hours on the beach;
- (ii) surveillance through, again, Safe City cameras, where available, with constant monitoring at the Police Main Command and Control Centre;
- (iii) public awareness campaigns by officers of the National Coast Guard, *Police du Tourisme* and regular Police to educate beachgoers, including tourists, on safety measures and reporting mechanisms, and
- (iv) close collaboration with local authorities and other stakeholders, such as the Beach Authority, to enhance response and security of beachgoers.

Madam Speaker, moreover, with a view to increasing surveillance along coastal regions, especially during the night, police presence is enhanced along these regions, whereby various teams, including the Traffic Unit, the SMF (Special Mobile Force), the Special Support Unit and the local police conduct road blocks, Vehicle Check Points and targeted drink/drug test operations.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Time is up! Time is up!

**Mr A. Duval:** Madam Speaker...

**Madam Speaker:** No! No question! Time is up!

Hon. Members, the Table has been advised that the following PQs have been withdrawn: B/207, B/208, B/209, B/210, and B/211.

Now I call on Hon. Second Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien!

### **CARREAU ACCACIA, LE BOUCHON – PIG FARMS – RELOCATION**

**(No. B/213) Mr T. Apollon (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries whether, in regard to the proposed relocation of pig farm/s found at Carreau Accacia, Le Bouchon, he will state where matters stand.

**Dr. Boolell:** Thank you very much. Madam Speaker, the question is where matters stand. Matters are still at a standstill. We will address them forcefully to ensure that the process is reversed. This is a problem which acute and chronic and there are many stories to be told and there are many stories which remain untold.

Let me remind our friend that this issue of relocating pig farm at Carreau Accacia, Le Bouchon was raised in the House in July 2016 through Parliamentary Question B/475 addressed to the then Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, by Hon. Ritish Ramful. In fact, I also raised the matter at Adjournment time.

Now, at that time, it was stated that a potential site would be identified in the South within the next few months. Despite 10 years in power, the previous government failed to implement concrete measures offering only empty promises. Nevertheless, Members of the House should rest assured that the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute, and Rose-Belle Sugar Estate have already been requested to identify suitable site for the relocation of pig farm at Carreau Accacia and Le Bouchon.

But this is a one-off solution being undertaken given the exceptional circumstances. All actions will be guided by the need to uphold public health and sustainable agricultural practices ensuring that any solution for the pig rearing industry remains practical and compliant.

We even have to seek the views of the Wastewater Management Authority, CWA and there is also a call for a preliminary environment review. So, this is an issue that cannot be treated lightly. This is the reason as to why a committee has been set up at the level of my Ministry with the relevant stakeholders to look into all the issues which I have raised relating to pig breeding around the island in a holistic manner. We are going to hold a meeting with all the stakeholders on Thursday 27.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Yes, supplementary!

**Mr Apollon:** Thank you, hon. Minister. As the hon. Minister is aware there is a serious risk to water pollution and I can show you some pictures just taken near the rivers ...

**Madam Speaker:** Nobody can see that!

**Mr Apollon:** Okay, especially in case of heavy rain pigs' excretion can discharge in neighboring rivers. Whether he will find an appropriate place to relocate this pig farm and if he intends to meet both inhabitants and the owner of the said farm?

**Madam Speaker:** You can communicate the documents to the Minister.

Yes, Minister!

**Dr. Boolell:** It's one way of communication.

**Madam Speaker:** Non, mais comme cela...

**Dr. Boolell:** He has prime time also on television and it is right for the constituents.

Now, as I have stated, this is a problem which needs to be addressed forcefully in a meaningful and effective manner. Hence, the relevance of this committee which is going to be set up because there are many other issues. I have raised the problem of contamination of underground water. This is an issue that has to be treated with all the finesse and delicacy that it takes.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, Hon. Etwareea!

**RENEWABLE ENERGY HYBRID FACILITIES PROJECTS – COREXSOLAR  
INTERNATIONAL (MAURITIUS) LTD – POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT**

**(No. B/214) Mr R. Etwareea (Third Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the Renewable Energy Hybrid Facilities projects by SPV 30MW Belle Vue 2 Ltd., and SPV 30MW Belle Vue 3 Ltd., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to whether they are in breach of the provisions of the Power Purchase Agreement signed with the Board.

**Mr Assirvaden:** Madame la présidente, avec votre permission, je répondrai ensemble aux questions parlementaires B/214 et B/244 car elles portent sur des sujets similaires.

Madame présidente, j'ai été informé que la *Central Electricity Board* a attribué le contrat pour deux centrales hybrides d'énergie renouvelable, REHF, de 30 MW en 2022 à Corexsolar International (Mauritius) Ltd à l'issue d'un appel d'offres international. Le 15 février 2023, Corexsolar a signé deux contrats d'achat d'électricité avec le *CEB* concernant les deux projets REHF à savoir, Belle Vue 2 et Belle Vue 3.

Madame présidente, j'ai été informé par le *CEB* que les deux sociétés, Belle Vue 2 et Belle Vue 3, n'ont pas rempli les conditions préalables spécifiées dans leur PPA respectif. À savoir, l'obtention de tous les permis applicables, la sécurisation des accords fonciers et de servitude de passage et la finalisation des accords de financement. Belle Vue 2 a obtenu son certificat EDB le 23 décembre 2024 et a demandé sa licence EIA le 23 août 2024.

Concernant Belle Vue 3, la *Road Development Authority (RDA)* prévoit une déviation qui traversera le site du projet. Le 10 mars 2025, Belle Vue 3 a soumis son plan d'implémentation à la *RDA* pour approbation. Belle Vue 3 n'a pas encore son certificat *EDB*.

Madame la présidente, en ce qui concerne la partie (b) du PQ B/244, je suis informé par le *CEB* qu'un montant total de R 58,68 millions a été payé par le promoteur à la *CEB* à titre de dommages et intérêts pour retard pour Belle Vue 2 et Belle Vue 3.

Il convient de rappeler que ces deux projets, Madame la présidente, ont récemment suscités de vives controverses en raison de plusieurs changements d'emplacements. À ce jour, ils n'ont toujours pas été concrétisés et comme je l'ai indiqué, un autre problème foncier est apparu pour ce Belle Vue 3.

Madame la présidente, des doutes légitimes subsistent quant aux conditions dans lesquelles le contrat a été attribué à Corexsolar, notamment, en raison du changement successif de site après l'allocation du projet. À l'origine, Corexsolar, avait proposé un site

situé sur un terrain du groupe Terra dans le nord du pays. Par la suite, l'entreprise a proposé un site à Baie du Tombeau pour finalement opter pour Mare d'Australia. Ce changement, à plusieurs reprises du site initialement retenu, soulève des interrogations légitimes sur le respect des conditions du contrat.

De plus, deux avis légaux successifs émanant du même cabinet juridique sont venus semer le doute. Le premier avis, concluait que le changement de site n'était pas conforme aux exigences du contrat, du *Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)*, tandis que le second affirmait le contraire. Cette contradiction ne fait que renforcer la nécessité d'un examen approfondi de l'attribution de ce projet.

Madame la présidente, ma lecture de ce projet est claire. Le site initialement proposé faisait partie des conditions essentielles du contrat et toutes modifications ultérieures auraient dû être réglementées par un cadre légal sans ambiguïté. Un autre élément préoccupant concerne les permis nécessaires au projet que Corexsolar n'a pas obtenus dans le délai imparti. En conséquence, l'entreprise a pris du retard dans la réalisation du projet ce qui a impacté sur la planification énergétique du *CEB*. Le *CEB* est compté sur une production de 60 MW de ce projet pour son mixte énergétique.

Or, face à ces retards, le *CEB* ne peut pas attendre indéfiniment et qu'il est contraint d'examiner d'autres alternatives pour garantir un approvisionnement énergétique stable. Face aux nombreuses irrégularités potentielles relevées, j'ai décidé de solliciter l'avis légal du *State Law Office* afin de déterminer si les implications juridiques entourant l'attribution de ce contrat à CorexSolar ont été respectées. Cette démarche vise à clarifier plusieurs points essentiels. D'abord, tous les compétiteurs ont-ils bénéficié du même traitement lors des appels d'offres.

Les clauses du *Power Purchase Agreements*, le fameux, *PPAs*, ont-elles été scrupuleusement respectées ? Les avis légaux, contradictoires, peuvent-ils être justifiés ? Et en dernier lieu, pour quelle raison et dans quelle cadre, le *CEB* a-t-il sollicité deux avis légaux ?

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Member.

**Mr Etwareea:** Madame la présidente, puisque le ministre a déjà dit qu'il y avait beaucoup de controverses autour de ce contrat, est-ce que le ministre a-t-il une idée pourquoi le *CEB* est en train de s'obstiner à aller de l'avant avec ce contrat ? Je comprends maintenant

que le ministre va chercher un avis du *State Law Office* mais je ne comprends pas pourquoi le *CEB* est en train de s'obstiner à vouloir aller de l'avant avec le contrat.

**Madam Speaker:** Short and sweet.

**Mr Assirvaden:** Comment?

**Madam Speaker:** Short and sweet.

**Mr Assirvaden :** Madame la présidente, j'ai énuméré les zones d'ombre et j'ai donné aussi ma lecture de la situation. Je ne suis pas de formation légale. Je dirais que nous avons pris la décision de référer ce cas au *State Law office*. Je peux promettre à l'honorable membre qu'à la lumière des avis qu'on aura, des *advice*s qu'on aura du *State Law Office*, le gouvernement prendra une décision très rapidement.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr Etwareea:** Madame la présidente, est-ce que le ministre est-il au courant des négociations qui seraient en cours pour la reprise de l'entreprise CorexSolar par des investisseurs étrangers?

**Madam Speaker:** Êtes-vous au courant, M. le ministre ?

**Mr Assirvaden :** Non, je ne suis pas au courant, Madame la présidente.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Second Member for Grand Baie and Poudre D'or.

#### **GOODLANDS MEDICLINIC – OPERATING HOURS – FACILITIES & SERVICES**

(No. B/215) **Mr N. Beejan (Second Member for Grand'Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Minister of Health and Wellness whether, in regard to the Goodlands Mediclinic, he will state the –

- (a) operating hours thereof;
- (b) facilities available and services provided thereat, and
- (c) number of staff posted thereat, indicating their respective capacities.

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that the Goodlands Mediclinic started its operation in October 2014 and offers comprehensive healthcare services to meet the community's needs. It serves the population of approximately 25,500 people. The clinic provides medical services to patients from several localities namely; Goodlands, Bois Rouge,

Madam Azor, Mapou, Leclezio, Mamzelle Jeanne, Petit Village, Roche-Terre Saint-Antoine and Triangle.

Madam Speaker, concerning part (a) of the question, the Goodlands Mediclinic operates seven days a week from 08:00 a.m. to 09.00 p.m. daily including public holidays. The pharmacy services also operate 08:00 a.m. to 09.00 on a daily basis.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) of the question, the Mediclinic provides a wide range of facilities and services including general consultation for common illnesses, specialist consultations in fields such as internal medicine, Gynecology, Cardiology and Pediatrics and a dedicated Non-Communicable Diseases Unit. The Non-Communicable Diseases Unit offers vital services like diabetes management, diabetic retinopathy screening, nutritionist services and tobacco cessation program. The services include maternal and child care, dental consultation, family planning, vaccination programs and community health rehabilitation.

Madam Speaker, the Mediclinic also provides specialised diagnostic and treatment services such as Extreme Imaging, ECG, Ultrasonography and rapid testing for HIV, COVID-19 and Dengue. A fully equipped pharmacy ensures the dispensing of methadone and essential medications. The Mediclinic also caters for specialised care such as diabetic foot care and family planning counselling to meet the specific patient's needs.

Madam Speaker, as regard to part (c) of the question, the staffing of the Mediclinic comprises 49 staff members, including 14 medical professionals, 20 nursing staffs, 11 supporting staff and 4 general workers; all working together to provide health care services to the community.

**Mr Beejan:** Madam,...

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, one.

**Mr Beejan:** Will the Minister confirm whether, the Goodlands Mediclinic X-ray Department will operate in the afternoon, until it is closed to accommodate patients and what measures will be put in place to extend the services?

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, we have already got about 49 staff members there and we have an acute shortage of technicians in that field but nevertheless, I will convey your request to the responsible officers to of my Ministry.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you, Minister. Hon. First Member for Port Louis South and Port Louis Central.

**COVID-19 –THERMAL SCANNERS ORDERS –FUNDS DISBURSED**

**(No. B/216) Dr. F. Aumeer (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Health and Wellness whether, in regard to the procurement of Thermal scanners during the COVID-19 Pandemic, he will state the number thereof ordered through Bo Digital, indicating the –

- (a) amount of funds disbursed therefor, and
- (b) number thereof unused to date.

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the State Trading Corporation that in April 2020, the then General Manager of the Corporation was requested by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection to initiate action for payment of 11 units of body temperature measurement thermal camera solution procured from Bo Digital Co Ltd for the total amount of Rs6,600,000 exclusive of VAT. The Board of State Trading Corporation approved the payment of the invoices on 3 April 2020 and payment was affected by the State Trading Corporation as follows –

- On 03 April 2020, an amount of Rs690,000 per one thermal camera;
- On 06 April 2020, an amount of RS 4,200,000 representing 70% of total invoice amounting Rs 6 million for 10 units of thermal camera. The remaining 30% amounting to Rs1,800,000 was paid on 25 November 2020.

The State Trading Corporation has also informed that upon instruction from the National Task Force Committee COVID-19 chaired by the then Prime Minister, one thermal camera was installed at the entrance of the Prime Minister's for security control of visitors and guests whereas the other 10 units were delivered to my Ministry and hospitals and clinics.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (b) of the question, I am informed that all the thermal cameras were put to use and were installed as follows –

- (a) Health Region No.1 – One unit were delivered at Dr. AG Jeetoo Hospital and one at the Subramania Bharati Eye Hospital at Moka. Both are out of use, the one at Dr. AG Jeetoo since 2023 and the one at Moka since 2022 and both units are faulty.
- (b) Health Region No. 2 – One unit was provided at SSRN Hospital and the same is out of use since 2022 and is not in working conditions.



- (c) Health Region No.3 – One unit was delivered to Dr. Bruno Cheong Hospital. However, the unit is not being used following the relocation of services from Dr. Bruno Cheong Hospital to the New Flacq Hospital.
- (d) Health Region No.4 – Three units were installed namely at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital, New Souillac Hospital and L’Escalier Mediclinic. The one at Souillac Hospital is out of order since 2022, the other two units are in good working order but not in use actually.
- (e) Health Region No. 5 – One unit of thermal camera was installed at the entrance of Accident and Emergency Department of the Victoria Hospital. The thermal camera is in good working condition but actually not in use.

Regarding the Emmanuel Anquetil Building, I am also informed that one unit was placed at the ground floor of the building from a headquarters office of the Ministry of Health and Wellness and it was operational at that time. Parliament of Mauritius – I mean from the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection that one unit was based at the National Assembly and it is in good working conditions and is fully operational.

Madam Speaker, I am requesting the Acting Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry to carry out an enquiry into the matter, to find out any shortcomings and any measures to be taken so that the thermal cameras may be operational again, particularly at a time when there is a threat of Chikungunya’s outbreak.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, one question.

**Dr. Aumeer:** 6.6 million has been disbursed for the purchase of thermal cameras and we have heard that so many of them are either not in working condition...

**Madam Speaker:** Question please!

**Dr. Aumeer:** May I ask the hon. Minister whether these equipment were purchased at market value or at extremely high prices so that the beneficiaries could enjoy a bumper crop at the time?

**Madam Speaker:** This is an answer.

**Mr Bachoo:** Madam Speaker, I find in the quotation sheet that ‘approved for installation, approved on instruction from the National Taskforce chaired by the Prime Minister for installation.’ So, I get the feeling that there were no procedures involved. It was the Task Force Committee which took the decision and it was chaired by the Prime Minister.

Hence, I am not in a position to say on the question of pricing, but it was from instructions that came from above.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, Dr. Ms Daureeawo! Last question!

**ICTA – BARRISTER SERVICES – FEES PAID (2015-2024)**

**(No. B/217) Dr. Ms R. Daureeawo (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac)** asked the Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation whether, in regard to the Information and Communication Technologies Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom information as to the number of barristers whose services were retained thereat since January 2015 to November 2024, indicating in each case, the –

- (a) number of cases assigned, and
- (b) legal fees paid thereto.

**Dr. Ramtohul:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority that for the period January 2015 to November 2024, the services of 49 barristers were retained by the authority.

Madam Speaker, while preparing the response to this question, answers revealed that there was a similar question asked by hon. Ms Joanna Bérenger on 29 November 2022. The question pertained to the names of the legal people and the cases to which the names were related. In reply, the then Prime Minister to both parts of the questions, said that the answer are being placed in the Library of the National Assembly. Hence, to a certain extent, denying transparency to the public.

Further research revealed that there was an attorney Mrs S.S.O. who actually earned, in a period of 12 months, Rs2.8 m. I can tell you the name of the company – a company by the name of Ribot Chambers. They bagged Rs6.72 m. in 12 months! Now, we know the reason for which the then Prime Minister did not actually voice out the answer, but chose to go file the document in the Library of the National Assembly.

**An hon. Member:** *Par linposs!*

**Dr. Ramtohul:** *Par linposs* once again!

Coming back to the actual answer of today's question at hand, with regard to part (a) of the question, there was a total of 39 cases that were assigned to barristers. As to part (b) of the

question, the legal fees amounted to Rs63.84 m. for ten years. That shows how public funds have squandered.

However, there were some names that came with insistence, Madam Speaker. There is Mr S. T...

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Members, we have to listen!

**Dr. Ramtohul:** With your permission, can I give the names, Madam Speaker?

**Madam Speaker:** Of course!

*(Interruptions)*

But we will have to listen!

**Hon. Members:** Yes!

**Dr. Ramtohul:** Right! Just give me one second, I will come to this.

**Madam Speaker:** These are facts, hon. Minister? Hon. Minister, these are facts?

**Dr. Ramtohul:** These are facts, they are! So, there was the name of a barrister Trilochun who bagged Rs22.18 m. out of 26 cases.

**Ms Anquetil:** Jackpot!

**Dr. Ramtohul:** That is a jackpot!

**An hon. Member:** *Ena bez la!*

**Madam Speaker:** No, do not use...

**Dr. Ramtohul:** Ribot Chambers, for seven cases, bagged Rs12.37 m. Again, the name of Mrs S.S.O., that is, Mrs Sonah-Ori, comes again. Incidentally or interestingly, in IT terms, S.S.O. means Single Sign-On.

**An hon. Member:** She is multiple sign-on!

**Dr. Ramtohul:** For 42 cases, Rs7.6 m. in the last 10 years. Now, to me, this is unacceptable! We see there was a really reason then for why the Legal Director of the ICTA was not recruited. This position was left open for ten years so that space could be made for such services of the cronies of the MSM Government, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. We finish in one minute!

**Dr. Ms Daureeawo:** Can Dr. the hon. Minister inform the House what is being done to curtail such bad practices, and ultimately, avoid wastage of our public funds?

**Dr. Ramtohul:** Sure. So, I am tabling the details of the response.

With regard to the supplementary question, I would like to add that this Government takes good governance very seriously. The ICTA has already advertised for the position of the Legal Director and the applications have now been closed for the board to consider. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Okay, one question on this side!

**Mr Seeburn:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** He caught my eye!

**Mr Seeburn:** Being given that large amounts of money have been paid, which is a matter of public concern, would the hon. Minister consider, in public interest, to disclose the names of those beneficiaries and the amount that has been paid?

**Madam Speaker:** He will table the answer. He said he will table the full answer.

**Dr. Ramtohul:** What has been tabled actually pertains strictly to the question asked. But with regard to the supplementary question, I will table additional information, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you very much. I suspend the Sitting for one and half hour!  
*Bon appétit!*

*At 1.04 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 2.36 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please be seated!

Hon. Members, the Table has been advised that PQs B/226 and B/233 have been withdrawn.

Hon. Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac !

#### **MONKEYS – EXPORTATION – PERIOD 2014-2024**

(No. B/218) **Mr R. Jhummun (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac)** asked the Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries

whether, in regard to monkeys, he will state the number thereof exported, yearly, since 2014 to date, indicating the –

- (a) average selling price thereof;
- (b) annual revenue generated yearly, since 2014 to date, and
- (c) short and long run plan of the Ministry in relation to such trade.

**Dr. Boolell:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed that in the year 2014, a total of 8,809 monkeys were exported as compared to 13,484 monkeys in the year 2024. The average selling price per monkey in the year 2014 was USD 2235.60, that is, Rs101,130 as compared to USD 6424.53, that is, around Rs290,621 in the year 2024.

As regard to part (b) of the question, the annual revenue generated in the year 2014 was almost USD20 million, approximately Rs1 billion as compared to USD86,628 million, which is almost Rs4 billion in the year 2024. I am tabling information pertaining to the remaining years.

For each monkey exported, the long-tailed macaque, a levy of USD200, equivalent to Rs9,035 is charged and used for conservation initiatives across the country. The amount is relatively low and I shall be reviewing this amount.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, everyone in the House will conquer that the issue of long-tailed macaques has prompted heated debates. There are indeed a number of valid, legitimate, sensitive but conflicting interests which are at stake. For a sizable number of animal lovers and militants in favour of the welfare of animals, the trading of long-tailed macaques should stop.

Under international law, exportation of monkeys is lawful and is regulated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, whereby monkeys breeding companies are issued a CITES export permit for all consignments being exported. From a biodiversity perspective, long-tailed macaques are an invasive species which has been negatively impacting the local, native, endemic and endangered biodiversity. From an anthropocentric angle, these long-tailed macaques constitute a danger to our agricultural farms and sometimes to the safety of citizens.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is no short or long-term policy to date. In this context, a committee is being set up with all concerned stakeholders, including, *inter alia*, Ministries, academia, NGOs, and the private sector to look into all the aspects pertaining to the

exportation of monkeys. Any decision on the matter will be taken collectively with concerned stakeholders, subject to the agreement of Government acting in public interest.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay, hon. Second Member for Flacq and Bon Accueil!

**PALMAR, QUATRE COCOS & BELLE MARE/MARE DU PUIITS LOCALITY –  
PIPE REPLACEMENT PROJECTS**

**(No. B/219) Mr R. Beehook (Second Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil)** asked the Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the pipe replacement projects in the villages of Palmar, Quatre Cocos, and Belle Mare/Mare du Puits locality, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Water Authority, information as to where matters stand.

**Mr Assirvaden:** M. le président, j'ai été informé par la Central Water Authority, que la mise en œuvre des projets de remplacement des tuyaux proposés dans les villages des Palmar, Quatre Cocos, Belle Mare, Mare du Puits a rencontré plusieurs défis. L'appel d'offres lancé par la *Central Water Authority* pour le renouvellement des tuyaux dans la région de Quatre Cocos a dû être annulé trois fois en raison d'offres non conformes à deux reprises, et d'un prix d'offres élevé à la troisième occasion.

M. le président, je suis en outre informé par *la Central Water Authority* que le contrat pour le renouvellement de 1.5 km de tuyaux existants dans le village de Palmar a été attribué à Great Standard Solution Ltd pour la somme de R 8 500 000, le 31 mai 2024. De la même manière, un autre contrat pour le renouvellement de 1.5 km de tuyaux à Mare du Puits, Quatre Cocos, le contrat a été attribué à Solcon Ltd pour un montant de R 9,9 millions le 18 septembre 2024. Les deux projets n'ont pas pu être mis en œuvre, la CWA, comme je l'ai dit la semaine dernière, n'ayant pas respecté les dispositions de la loi sur le marché public en attribuant des contrats dont les montants dépassaient la valeur approuvée dans le projet. En bref, les deux contrats ont été attribués alors que les fonds n'étaient pas disponibles.

M. le président, comme je viens de le dire la semaine dernière lors de notre session du 18 mars, des irrégularités ont été constatées dans la mise en œuvre des projets de remplacement de tuyaux au niveau de la CWA. Dans le budget 2024-2025, le montant approuvé pour le projet – petit projet jusqu'à trois kilomètres – qui implique le remplacement de tuyaux d'une longueur de 1 à 3 km s'élève à R 1 milliard, le projet de la valeur de R 1 milliard, réparti sur trois exercices financiers. Entre 2023 et 2024, la CWA a attribué des contrats de remplacement de tuyaux à des petites et moyennes entreprises pour un montant

supérieur à R 1 milliard. Comme je le disais, des contrats l'année dernière, à la veille des élections, distribués ici et là, ce qui est contraire au principe de marché public. En règle générale, les contrats ne devraient être attribués que lorsque les fonds sont disponibles.

M. le président, je suis informé que la valeur du projet a augmenté dorénavant de – comme je l'ai dit – R 1.595 milliard, donc R 595 millions en dépassement. Mon ministère devra désormais d'adresser au ministère des Finances pour demander une augmentation de la valeur du projet, et solliciter l'approbation du gouvernement sur la valeur révisée du projet de R 1.5 milliard à peu près, conformément aux procédures en vigueur pour le projet d'investissement. Ce n'est qu'à ce moment que la CWA pourra procéder à la mise en œuvre d'autres projets de remplacement de tuyaux par des entrepreneurs de petite et moyenne taille, y compris les deux mentionnés par l'honorable député.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, hon. Member.

**Mr Beehook:** M. le président, puis-je demander à M. le ministre dans la mesure du possible d'accélérer ce projet parce que les gens qui habitent ces régions sont obligés de boire de l'eau des tuyaux qui sont infestés d'amiante ? Donc c'est une question sanitaire ; voilà, si vous pouvez prendre cela en considération.

**Mr Assirvaden:** Bien sûr, M. le président. Nous avons déjà fait une demande auprès du ministère des Finances pour augmenter ce plafond-là. Mais, vous savez avec la CWA, il faudra avoir pas deux yeux, mais quatre yeux pour surveiller ces gens-là, mais je n'y manquerai pas de voir cela.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, hon. Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière!

**MAURITIUS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION – ELECTIVE GENERAL ASSEMBLY – 27  
NOVEMBER 2024**

**(No. B/220) Mr F. Quirin (Third Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the Mauritius Football Association, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom information as to –

- (a) whether all procedures were followed regarding the Elective General Assembly thereof held on 27 November 2024, indicating the –
  - (i) names of the candidates standing for the position of President of the Association, and

(ii) reasons why the candidature of Mr E. R. for the said position was rejected and

(b) the composition of the newly elected managing committee.

**Mr Nagalingum:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, at the very outset, I wish to inform the House that the situation at the Mauritius Football Association was one of the most pressing issues that demanded my immediate attention upon assuming office. I was deeply concerned by the reports circulating in the Press and felt it was imperative to address the matter without delay. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation, I promptly requested a full and detailed brief on the issue, particularly whether the election could be held.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is important to distinguish between the election that was held at the Mauritius Football Association and the eligibility of Mr S.S. to stand as candidate. These are two separate issues. One does not preclude the other.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, subsequently, my Ministry obtained a copy of the Court ruling on the case of Mr S.S. through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thereafter, the advice of the Attorney General's Office was sought and the latter indicated that Mr S.S. could be considered as eligible to stand as candidate to the National Managing Committee of the Mauritius Football Association.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Mauritius Football Association that all procedures were followed as per the statutes and rules of the Mauritius Football Association Electoral Code. In fact, in the process leading to the election held on 27 November 2024, I am informed that the Mauritius Football Association must adhere to strict and well-established procedures, specifically the MFA was required to publish a notice of the election in newspapers, which was duly done on 12 October 2024 in *le Défi Plus* daily. Additionally, the Mauritius Football Association was obligated to issue a further notice ten days prior to the elections, confirming that the election would proceed as scheduled together with the official list of candidates. This requirement was also fulfilled in *Défi Plus* of 16 November 2024.

The election was conducted under the supervision of representatives from FIFA and the African Football Confederation and at the local level, Mr D.M., a retired Superintendent of Police was entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the electoral process.

With regard to part (a)(i) of the question, I am further informed that only two individuals submitted their candidacies for the position of President: Mr S.S. and Mr E.R.



As for part (a) (ii) of the question, I am also informed that in accordance with the statutes of the Mauritius Football Association, any candidate for the position of President, must be supported by at least five members. Unfortunately, Mr E.R. was unable to secure the required level of support whereas Mr S.S. successfully met this criterion.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, concerning part (b) of the question, I am tabling, with your permission, the composition of the current Managing Committee of the Mauritius Football Association for the information of the House.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to inform the House that while I am fully prepared to report on matters pertaining to sports federations in relation to their obligations under the Sports Act 2016, it will not be appropriate to report on their internal affairs as such. Sports federations are autonomous entities similar to many other associations that receive various formal support from the Government. As such, I can only report on issues pertaining to the federation that falls under the purview of the Sports Act 2016.

In the meantime, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to highlight that the Sports Act 2016 provides comprehensive provisions for any individual who feels aggrieved by the action or omission of a sports federation. The Sports Arbitration Tribunal, an independent body established under the law, is specifically tasked with addressing such matters. Therefore, any aggrieved parties have the right to refer their concern to the Sports Arbitration Tribunal for appropriate redress.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, my Ministry will not walk away from its responsibility of bringing order to the catastrophic situation which I inherited in the sports sector. We will bring order to this disorder. We are already working on the introduction in the National Assembly of a new Sports Bill that will address many of the seemingly unresolvable problems.

I wish to conclude by stating that I will not condone any form of malpractice from any national sports federation which may jeopardise the interest of the sports community.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Merci, M. le président. Permettez-moi, tout d’abord, de dire que je suis en totale désaccord avec ce que vient d’affirmer l’honorable ministre...

**The Deputy Speaker:** Put your question!

**Mr Quirin:** ...par rapport aux procédures suivies lors des dernières élections. M. le président, ma question est : comment le ministre peut-il justifier la candidature de Monsieur S. S., qui a été condamné à un an de prison avec sursis et une amende de 900 000 ariarys pour violence physique, psychologique et morale à l’encontre de son épouse, alors que la *Sports Act 2016*, la loi suprême du pays en matière de sports, est claire là-dessus ? Et je cite, rapidement, la section 9 (5) (c) –

“(5) No person shall be eligible for election as a member of a Managing Committee of a National Sports Federation where –

(c) he has been sentenced to imprisonment by a Court for an offence;”

Donc, comment une personne condamnée peut être candidat à une élection fédérale ? Et je vais déposer, M. le président, une copie de l’acte de condamnation de Monsieur S.S., accompagnée d’une copie de la section du *Sports Act* que je viens de citer.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it a certified copy of the judgement?

**Mr Quirin:** Bien sûr.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am asking if it is a certified copy.

**Mr Quirin:** Vous pouvez jeter un coup d’œil si vous le voulez.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Minister!

**Mr Nagalingum:** The view of the Attorney General’s Office in respect of the election is as follows: ‘Since section 9(5) (c) of the Sports Act simply refers to a term of imprisonment and is silent regarding, for example, a suspended sentence, *peine d’emprisonnement avec sursis*, a sentence whose execution is suspended pending appeal, etc., an interpretation of section 9 (5) could be that it was intended to apply to a person who is actually made to serve a sentence as imprisonment.’

Hence, on the basis of the above, it may be said that Mr S.S could be considered as eligible to stand as candidate, as the State Law Office stated.

**Mr Quirin:** M. le président, je suis totalement, encore une fois, en désaccord. En plus de la *Sports Act* qui a été transgressée avec l'accord de l'honorable ministre lui-même, il y a également le questionnaire *for integrity checks* de la *MFA* qui stipule à la section 1 (4) (a), et je cite rapidement –

“An integrity check shall be deemed as not passed if the candidate concerned has been subject to criminal conviction or disciplinary sanctions by a State court, in particular, if the underlying behaviour was a substantive issue and not a minor infraction or procedural behaviour.”

Avec cela, ce qui fait que la transgression de la loi du pays, il y a aussi des règlements internes de la *MFA*. M. le président, est-ce que l'honorable ministre ne considère-t-il pas que Monsieur S.S., après que j'ai énuméré tout ce qu'il y a contre Monsieur S.S., qu'il n'était pas qualifié pour être candidat à cette élection et de surcroît assumer la présidence ?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Member, the....

**Mr Nagalingum:** The question has already been answered, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Please, sit down! The hon. Minister has stated that he is going according to legal advice and he has acted on legal advice submitted to him. So, we cannot, in this House, challenge a legal advice. So, I take it that the answer has already been forwarded to you.

**Mr Quirin:** My last question...

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, but we cannot challenge the legal advice upon which the hon. Minister is acting.

**Mr Quirin:** D'accord, je vous comprends. Donc, pour clore sur ce dossier, M. le président, le ministre a parlé des conseils qu'il a pris, qu'il aurait reçus avec la *State Law Office* ou le Bureau de l'*Attorney General*. Peut-il, donc, déposer une copie des échanges qu'il y a eu entre son ministère et la *SLO* et le Bureau de l'*Attorney General*, incluant la...

**Mr Nagalingum:** Of course, I am prepared to lay any document related to that issue.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The document between a lawyer and the institution is a privileged document which cannot be laid on the Table of the Assembly. It is a privileged document between the client and the Attorney.

**Mr Nagalingum:** I am guided by what the Deputy Speaker said.

**Mr Quirin:** Sauvé par M. le président ! Merci.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Sorry, what did you say?

**Mr Quirin:** Sauvé par M. le président !

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay. Be careful!

The hon. First Member for Rodrigues!

#### **RODRIGUES – POOR NETWORK COVERAGE – IMPROVEMENT MEASURES**

(No. B/221) Ms M. R. Collet (First Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation whether, in regard to the current poor mobile and internet network coverage in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to the measures being envisaged to improve same, giving details thereof and the expected start and completion dates thereof.

**Dr. Ramtohul:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority that two mobile operators, namely Cellplus Mobile Communications Ltd, a subsidiary of Mauritius Telecom, and Emtel Ltd operate networks in Rodrigues and provide mobile network internet services.

As at date, Cellplus Mobile Communications Ltd and Emtel Ltd have 23 and 16 base stations, respectively and have deployed 5G, offering a maximum download speed of above 100 Megabytes per second in Rodrigues. Moreover, both Mauritius Telecom and Emtel provide home broadband internet services.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as regards the quality of the internet in Rodrigues, I am informed that ICTA carried out, between 30 June 2024 and 06 July 2024, an assessment exercise of the broadband to test the quality of service. The tests were conducted principally

on the 4G mobile networks that were deployed by both the operators and this covered 92 locations. Actually, those 92 locations cover a majority of the inhabited regions of Rodrigues.

Although the assessment exercise concluded that the mobile internet coverage was satisfactory across majority of the areas in Rodrigues, several regions such as Songes, Roseaux, Rivière Banane, Pointe du Diable and Rivière Pistache still suffer from poor coverage and that is due to the topography of Rodrigues, which is a challenge actually to ensure a maximum coverage. Therefore, Emtel has informed that two new mobile sites will be implemented during the course of 2025, namely at Mangues and Rivière Banane.

However, the long delays in securing clearance from the authorities in Rodrigues are hampering the setting up of additional sites at the moment. As far as connectivity by Cellplus Mobile Communications Ltd is concerned, a major network upgrade was undertaken in 2024, in order to enhance 4G services across all the existing sites and for the deployment of 5G network on all the sites. As part of its 25-26 expansion strategy, Cellplus is planning the deployment of new sites and the regions that would be covered are as follows –

- Baladirou Technopark;
- Port Mathurin – This will be done by September 2025;
- Mon Plaisir and Grande Montagne, which will be done by November 2025, and
- L'Union which is due February 2025, which just passed and that should have been covered.

Cellplus Mobile Communications Ltd has requested assistance from local authorities in Rodrigues for facilitation of space and permits that are needed for the installation of infrastructure and locations that are aforementioned.

Cellplus has also informed that replacement and service restoration are undergoing and this is being done at Mont Lubin and are expected to be completed by May 2025.

Finally, ICTA is currently implementing a quality service measurement platform that will allow any subscriber to test its internet service subscription and to communicate the results through an app deployed by the ICTA itself. In this respect, the ICTA will continue conducting regular quality of service measurement, campaigns in Mauritius and Rodrigues too and will publish comparative performance of different broadband internet service providers.

It is believed that this measure will empower consumers to make informed choice of services and service providers and will motivate the internet service providers to improve their quality of service in the interest of subscribers. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes. hon. François!

**Mr François:** Just one supplementary. I thank the hon. Minister for his extensive answer. May I ask the hon. Minister whether he is aware that in 2023, there were two major technical equipment failures at the level of Mauritius Telecom in Rodrigues, causing disruptions of services thereat. May I know from him whether there is any backup plan or redundancy plan for Rodrigues if any failures arise again in the future?

**Dr. Ramtohul:** So, because the question was focused on the quality of service currently, not on the redundancy of service, the answer focused on the quality of service.

With regard to the redundancy of service, I will revert at a later stage. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Second Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien!

#### **LIVERPOOL FOOTBALL ACADEMY PROJECT – FUNDS INVESTED**

**(No. B/222) Mr T. Apollon (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the Liverpool Football Academy Project, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to the amount of funds invested into the academy as at December 2024, indicating the outcome derived under this project for Mauritius.

**Mr Nagalingum:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed that as at December 2024, a sum of Rs154,789,022 has been disbursed by the Ministry for the operation management and payment of the annual license fee in respect of the Liverpool Club International Academy.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd., a state-owned private company that has been entrusted with the responsibility for hosting the Liverpool Club International Academy, that since its inception in 2019, the latter has produced the following results –

1. The enrolment of 650 trainees, out of which, 75 are playing in national leagues;
2. 38 persons of the under 20 COSAFA Men's Team were Liverpool Club International Academy Trainee;

3. 50 persons under 17 Boys' Team were Liverpool Football Club International Academy Trainees;
4. 20 persons under 17 Girls' Team were Liverpool Football Club International Academy Trainees, and
5. 24 Mauritian coaches have successfully completed the Liverpool Club International Coach Accreditation Course.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes!

**Mr Apollon:** I was hoping that one day we will see a Mauritian player at Anfield, but I do not think so. Will the hon. Minister state to the House when the contract was signed, the duration of the contract and if this contract will be reconsidered?

**Mr Nagalingum:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the contract was signed in June 2019 between Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd. and Liverpool Football Club and Athletic Grounds Ltd. The contract is due to expire on 31 May 2025. So, Government has decided that the existing agreement between Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd. and Liverpool Football Club and Athletic Grounds Ltd. will not be renewed upon its expiry.

The Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd. has been requested to work on winding up procedures and arrangements. The Ministry of Youth and Sports is presently working on suitable alternatives that will replace the Liverpool Football Club International Academy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay! Hon. Second Member for Vieux Grand Port and Rose Belle!

#### **FLACQ-MAHEBOURG B28 ROAD – RESURFACING**

**(No. B/223) Mr M. Seeburn (Second Member for Vieux Grand Port & Rose Belle)** asked the Minister of National Infrastructure whether, in regard to the pipe laying projects currently being undertaken along the coastal road of Vieux Grand Port, Bois des Amourettes, Bambous Virieux, Quatre Soeurs and Deux frères by the Central Water Authority, he will state if provision will be made in the forthcoming budget for the resurfacing of the road which is in a deplorable condition.

**Mr Guinness:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Flacq-Mahebourg B28 Road is a classified road that links several coastal villages, such as Vieux Grand Port, Bois des Amourettes, Bambous Virieux, Quatre Soeurs and Deux Frères.

I am informed by the Central Water Authority that with a view to providing adequate water supply to the inhabitants of these coastal villages, it has embarked on a project for the renewal of the pipelines along the B28 Road with the objective of addressing the long-standing issues of low water pressure, water leakages and pipes burst due to aging infrastructure. The pipeline renewal project is being undertaken in two phases, namely –

- Phase 1: from Anse Jonchée to Bambous Virieux to Petit Sable, covering a distance of 6.4 km, and
- Phase 2: from Ferney to Anse Jonchée, covering a distance of 6.7 km.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in line with the provisions of the Road Act, the CWA made application for wayleaves to the RDA for implementing the pipe laying works. Wayleave for Phase 1 was granted on two occasions, namely on 19 June and 18 July 2024 for the stretch from Anse Jonchée to Bambous Virieux to Petit Sables. For Phase 2, wayleave was granted on 26 September 2024 from Ferney to Anse Jonchée.

The wayleaves were subject to strict compliance with the RDA Wayleaves Conditions for laying of pipes, ducts and cables. In fact, the CWA and its contractors have to ensure that works are executed with minimum disruption and inconvenience to road users.

In addition, any damage caused to the road infrastructure shall be made good at their own cost. These conditions include, *inter alia*, the following –

1. Temporary reinstatement of all trenches along the classified roads using crusher run and a 30 mm layer of asphalt concrete as per specifications;
2. After completion of the permanent works for the stretch from Ferney to Bambous Virieux, half width of the existing road should be milled and resurfaced, and from Bambous Virieux to Petit Sable, the whole width of the existing road should be milled and resurfaced, and
3. The works should be properly delineated with appropriate fluorescent bands.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, despite these measures, the RDA has raised concerns regarding the poor conditions of the temporary trench reinstatement along the B28 Road. Several inspections have revealed that the reinstatement works were not up to the standard of the RDA wherein the presence of dangerous pits, crusher run having washed away or exposed to



traffic were observed, therefore, representing a serious threat to the safety of road users as well as the public at large.

Accordingly, the RDA has issued several notices to the CWA; a recent one on 18 March 2025, requesting it to take immediate remedial action. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the forfeiture of the Rs20 m. bank guarantee provided by the CWA for these works.

As regards the villages of Quatre-Soeurs and Deux-Frères, no request for wayleave was received by the RDA for pipeline renewal works. I am informed that the existing water pipeline which is an old one is subject to recurrent bursts and leakages resulting in the asphaltic wearing course thereat to be damaged. The RDA has consequently requested the CWA to consider permanent pipe laying works at the earliest.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am further informed by the CWA that all works including road reinstatement for the Phase I project will be completed in this financial year and those for Phase II will be completed in the next financial year.

Additionally, a separate contract is currently being prepared by the CWA to appoint a grade A contractor for the permanent road reinstatement from Ferney to Petit Sable. Same is expected to be launched under the Open National Bidding by April 2025.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Second Member for Flacq and Bon Accueil!

#### **SUPPORT PROGRAM TO STUDENTS/ATHLETES – BENEFICIARIES**

**(No. B/224) Mr R. Beehook (Second Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the program Support to Students/Athletes pursuing Tertiary/Vocational Studies (Locally & Abroad), he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports, information as to the number of athletes having benefitted thereunder and amount of funds disbursed in relation thereto over the past five years.

**Mr Nagalingum:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports was set up under the Finance and Audit (Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports) Regulations 2002. Its mission is to design, finance and implement projects and schemes for the benefit of, first, sportsmen and sportswomen who have achieved excellence in their respective field at national and international level, young athletes who have achieved excellence in their

respective field at school level, and retired sportsmen and sportswomen who need support and financial assistance in order to embark on other professional activities.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports that in pursuant of the aforementioned mission, it has established a programme to support students-athletes who are perusing tertiary/vocational studies, locally & abroad. In this context, the Trust Fund has supported, over the last five calendar years, that is, from the year 2020 to the year 2025, 71 athletes at the sum of Rs13,263,716.40 has been disbursed.

**Mr Beehook:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it takes eight long years for a junior student; eight long years of sweat and blood to become a professional athlete. Will the hon. Minister confirm whether the amount disbursed has been slashed by almost 50 % for all those athletes pursuing tertiary level studies?

**Mr Nagalingum:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I have been made aware that the quantum allocated to the athlete pursuing tertiary education has been reviewed by the previous Board from Rs2,060 up to Rs2,000 per academic year based on a revised set of performance-based criteria. The newly constituted Board of the Trust Fund will assess the existing scheme holistically and will come up with a proposal in due course.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Quirin!

**Mr Quirin:** Merci, M. le président. Si je comprends bien la dernière réponse de l'honorable ministre, un nouveau *Board* vient d'être constitué et peut-on savoir qui est à la tête de ce *Board*?

**Mr Nagalingum:** I will table the list of all the members to the Table of National Assembly.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Second Member for Rodrigues!

**RODRIGUES – NATIONAL HERITAGE SITES – RESIDENCY BUILDING, PORT  
MATHURIN – PROTECTION POLICY**

(No. B/225) Mr F. François (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Arts and Culture whether, in regard to National Heritage Sites in Mauritius, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Heritage Fund Board, information as to –

- (a) the policy, if any, established for their protection from disaster risks and impacts of climate change, and

- (b) whether the Board is in presence of a request from Rodrigues for the renovation or demolition of the Residency building in Port Mathurin and, if so, indicate if approval has been granted therefor and, if not, why not.

**Mr Gondeea:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the National Heritage Fund, a parastatal body operating under aegis of my Ministry, that there is currently no national policy in place specifically dedicated to the protection of National Heritage Sites from natural disasters and the impacts of climate change. This is a serious concern especially as Mauritius being a Small Island Developing State is increasingly exposed to extreme climate related hazards such as cyclones, torrential rainfall, rising sea levels, flooding and coastal erosion, all of which pose significant risk to our cultural heritage.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, while no national policy was developed or implemented by the previous government to address this challenge in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, some isolated efforts were made in response to obligation under the World Heritage Convention. As such, I am informed that there is a Disaster Risk Management Plan for the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage property and there is a draft plan which is under preparation for Le Morne Cultural Landscape. These were initiated as part of UNESCO World Heritage Sites requirements.

However, for the vast majority of National Heritage Sites across the country, no disaster preparedness or climate adaptation measures have been systematically adopted nor has the legislation been updated to reflect these urgent needs.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Government has placed this pressing concern high on its agenda, recognising that the conservation and safeguarding of our national heritage must go hand-in-hand with disaster and climate resilience. This priority is clearly reflected in the Government Programme 2025-2029: A Bridge to the Future, which pledges to strengthen cultural identity and reinforce the protection and valorisation of heritage sites.

Accordingly, the National Heritage Fund Act 2003, which is now outdated, will be reviewed. A new National Heritage Authority Bill will be drafted to include, *inter alia*, emergency preparedness plans, integration of climate change adaptation into conservation planning and use of modern tools such as Artificial Intelligence and 3-D scanning to document, monitor and protect heritage assets.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed by the National Heritage Fund that it did not receive any request from the Chief Commissioner's office of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the renovation or demolition works of the Residency building in Port Mathurin, Rodrigues.

However, during a visit in Rodrigues, carried out by two officers of the National Heritage Fund, on 18 March 2025, at the request of the Rodrigues Tourism Office, the two officers were informed that a tender had already been awarded for the repair and restoration of the Residency building. Thereafter, the two officers were called upon to attend a meeting with the Departmental Head of the Commission whereby more details of the renovation project were communicated to them. Since the building is a National Heritage since 2001, the Departmental Head was informed that prior to any repair or restoration works, the clearance of the National Heritage Fund should have been sought as stipulated under Section 13(3) of the National Heritage Fund Act 2003.

I am further informed, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that the National Heritage Fund has on 20 March 2025, instructed the island's Chief Executive to stop all works thereat with immediate effect and to submit a detailed clarification on the matter to enable the technical committee of the National Heritage Fund to examine same and thereafter make appropriate recommendations to the National Heritage Fund Board. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr François:** I thank the hon. Minister for his answer. May I ask the hon. Minister whether the NHF Board will consider the identification of additional sites of monuments deserving to be designated to the status of historical and cultural heritage sites in Rodrigues, just to name a few such as St Gabriel Cathedral, Mauritius Telecom Building at Mont Venus and also the last recoverable terraces remained at Dansamy?

**Mr Gondeea:** Yes of course, we will do it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** One last question?

**Mr François:** No, I have two, if you allow me, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. It is very important. As per Schedule (Section 2) of the National Heritage Fund Act - National Heritage of Mauritius, Territory of Mauritius, Rodrigues -, out of the list of six sites, there is only one private property, namely Ben Gontran House at Barclay Street, Port Mathurin. May I seize this opportunity to humbly ask the hon. Minister to request the National Heritage Fund Board to discuss with the private owner for necessary measures and support as may be necessary to

maintain and protect this House so that it does not lose its national heritage identity and value? Thank you.

**Mr Gondeea:** Yes, hon. Member, I will ask the National Heritage Fund to do so. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. First Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE.

#### **LODGING ACCOMMODATION PERMIT – PERMITS GRANTED**

**(No. B/226) Mr N. Beejan (Second Member for Grand’Baie & Poudre d’Or)** asked the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations whether, in regard to Lodging Accommodation Permit, he will state the –

- (a) expected time frame for an inspection to be carried out upon receipt of a new application therefor, and
- (b) number of permits granted in Constituency No. 6, Grand’ Baie and Poudre d’Or since 2019 to 2024, giving details thereof.

*(withdrawn)*

#### **BEL AIR RIVIÈRE SÈCHE SSS – LACK OF FENCING**

**(No. B/227) Mr C. Baboolall (First Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE)** asked the Minister of Education and Human Resource whether, in regard to the Bel Air Rivière Sèche State Secondary School for girls, he will state if he has been made aware that same is not fenced at the back by the river side constituting a very serious security issue to the students and, if so, indicate –

- (a) when the works will be carried for the fencing thereof, and
- (b) the expected completion date thereof.

**Dr. Gungapersad:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed that the Bel Air Rivière Sèche State Secondary School was constructed some 15 years ago. I wish to inform the House that the riverside of the school is secured with 1.8 m chained linked fencing. This was meant to be a deterrent for students to leave the school premises and have access to the river. However, I have to admit that the fencing does not prohibit intruders from entering the school. I am also informed whilst the fencing is still in good condition, yet it might not have been placed at the right place.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, with a view of enhancing security at the school, I have instructed that the possibility of having another fence be explored along the alignment of the existing retaining wall over a stretch of some 120 m, further upwards which will be a more suitable deterrent to intruders. This new proposed structure would go a long way towards ensuring the safety and security of our students.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to inform the House that subject to technical feasibility and availability of funds. This work can be completed in a short span of time approximately four weeks as from the date of start of the works.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. First Member for La Caverne and Phoenix!

**METRO EXPRESS PROJECT EXTENSION – FEASIBILITY STUDY –  
PROJECT COST**

**(No. B/228) Mr K. Lobine (First Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Minister of Land Transport whether, in regard to Phase 3 of the Metro Express project connecting Rose Hill to Réduit and to be subsequently extended to St Pierre via Cote D’or, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to –

- (a) whether a feasibility study was carried out thereinto and, if so, table copy thereof, indicating the name of the consultant and amount of funds paid thereto, and
- (b) the costs of the project, indicating the amount of funds for infrastructural works to be incurred by Government therefor.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed that the phase 3 of the Metro Express Project which pertains to the extension of the Metro line over a distance of 3.4 km from Rose Hill to Reduit was implemented following a decision taken by the then Government on 30 December 2020.

I would like here Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir to remind the House that at the time, according to records available at my Ministry, the light-rail project was being spearheaded by the then Prime Minister’s Office.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by Metro Express Ltd that a proper feasibility study that is, a proper technical and financial study was not carried out for phase 3 of the Metro Express Ltd project. In fact, the decision to proceed with the project was made following a case put forward by the consultant for the project, Singapore Corporation Enterprise in 2016 in its references design.

The Consultant had identified the regions of Ebène including the Cybercity and Reduit as a critical commuter base which justify the need for an efficient mass transit. The then management of Metro Express Ltd estimated the number of commuters to be 30,000 at Ebène and 11,000 at Reduit.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed by MEL that this line has much low work commute figures, averaging daily 3200 commuters on weekdays, 1490 Saturdays and 522 for Sundays. The total fair amount generated for year 2024 is Rs30,736,428; resulting an average monthly amount Rs2,561,369. Worse, if we take the fair amount for last month, February 2025, it is only Rs1.7 million, that is much less than the expected ridership income. It is therefore evident Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that MEL is operating at a terrible loss over the line.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, during the previous mandate, I had, on two occasions, personally drawn the attention of the House and the population at large, firstly, in the much-debated Parliamentary Question No. B/223 of 18 April 2023 and the next one, one month later, PQ No. B/596 that the project was not workable.

In fact, I had used the word 'total failure'. It is in Hansard. When we take into account that the cost of phase 3 stood at Rs4.55 billion, which is the figure hon. Lobine had requested for in part (b) of the question, a simple calculation shows that this tantamount to Rs1.3 billion per km without any cost of trade, that is, R 1.34 *million par mètre linéaire de voie ferrée*. This costed Rs1.34 million from on average from Rose Hill to Reduit. This cost quite a lot.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, these Rs4.55 billion worth of works were effected through a variation to the existing main contract for Metro Express project with Larsen & Toubro. This amounts coincidentally to 24%, slightly less than the prescribed threshold of 25% of the equivalent of Rs18.8 billion for the main contract.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as a professional of the construction industry, I have always viewed this particular course of action adopted by the then Government for this particular variation as being highly debatable because the extension per se, was not along the line Curepipe to Port Louis but was in a completely distinct new line from Rose Hill to Réduit which is not in the direction of the main metro line which costed Rs18.8 billion.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, with regard to the further extension of the metro line, I am informed that a feasibility study was carried out in October 2021 by a team of Metro Express Ltd with a technical assistance of RITES Ltd. This study covers the extension of Metro line

from Reduit towards Cote D'or and St Pierre and from Curepipe to La Vigie. The report was submitted in April 2022 at a total cost of Rs21.98 million nearly Rs22 million out of which, Rs 18 million was paid to RITES Ltd and Rs3.968 million to the inhouse team at Metro Express Ltd. No tender exercise was done for this consultancy exercise.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to point out that the procurement process for the construction under phase 4 of the Metro Express project was cancelled by the empowered Inter-Ministerial Committee of the Government of India in September 2023 and that the project is currently put on hold as advised by the EXIM Bank of India. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, hon. Lobine!

**Mr Lobine:** May I ask the hon. Minister, with regard to the total failure of the Metro Express Project, will his Ministry conduct a comprehensive and full-fledged study as to the impact on the coffers of the State with regard to additional money that this Government will now have to pour in to make this workable, in view of this total failure of Metro Express that has been implemented?

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Certainly! We are implementing measures. As a matter of fact, I have given instruction to stop the trains working on Sundays because it is a total wastage. As regards to the other days, we will be working on it and try to see how to enhance ridership on that line.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Third Member for Port Louis South and Port Louis Central!

#### **INVALIDITY PENSIONS – CANCELLATION**

**(No. B/229) Dr. F. Aumeer (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity whether, in regard to invalidity pensions, he will state the number of persons whose pensions have been cancelled over the past four years, indicating the –

- (a) reasons therefor, and
- (b) measures taken by his Ministry to ensure that bona fide persons are not penalised.

**Mr Subron:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all, let me thank the hon. Member for this question and also let me take this opportunity to congratulate the hon. Member for his National Day Award 2025 as Grand Officer of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean for his contribution in the medical and social fields.



Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to inform the House that persons suffering from a disability are entitled to an Invalid's Basic Pension or a Disability Allowance and/or a Carer's Allowance after an assessment by medical board. Under the prevailing system established prior to the present Government, a medical assessment is carried out by medical practitioners of my Ministry to determine the eligibility to the Invalid's Basic Pension or Disability Allowance or Carer's Allowance.

Assessments are carried out either by a medical board which comprises two medical practitioners or by one medical practitioner at the claimant's residence for those whose mobility is limited and who cannot attend the medical board. As per law, the entitlement for the Invalid's Pension is based upon the claimant being at least 60% incapacitated for a period of at least 12 months. The law as such does not make any provision for the duration of any of the pensions. A medical guideline, last updated in 2016, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Wellness is used by medical practitioners who sit on medical boards for assessment of claimants for the benefits.

This guideline also provides for the duration of the award of the disability benefits. Statistics recently compiled by my Ministry revealed that under the present system, one in two cases where pension benefits are approved, they are for a period of one year. In 32% of cases, pensions are awarded for two years. This means that every year, more than 50% of invalidity pensions or benefits claims being assessed relate to renewal cases, that is, cases where pension has lapsed, and thus, needs to be reassessed for renewal. This is one of the reasons why many Mauritians are dissatisfied with the present system.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, to reply to part (a) of the question on how many cases have been cancelled for the last four years, firstly, please allow me to make some clarifications. Disability related pensions and benefits can be stopped for two reasons –

- (i) they can be suspended in departure cases or in cases of three consecutive non encashment of pension or where doubtful documents were produced by applicants or malpractices have been reported by whistleblowers, and
- (ii) pensions and benefits are discontinued after the duration period of the pension has lapsed and same has not been renewed by the medical board.

With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that for the period July 2021 up to 20 March 2025, there were 335 suspended cases of Basic Invalidity Pension (BIP), Disability Allowance and Carer's Allowance. Additionally, 16,134 cases of BIP, Disability

Allowance and Carer's Allowance have been discontinued for the period of July 2021 up to 20 March 2025 after reassessment by the Medical Board.

Moreover, 29,013 cases of BIP, Disability Allowance and Carer's Allowance have been disallowed that is not granted by the medical board for the same period. It should be pointed out that for the same period, my Ministry has received 33,360 applications for Basic Invalidity Pension, 1,179 applications for Disability Allowance and 42,915 for Carer's Allowance. For the benefit of the House and the public, I am tabling indicative statistics on what I have just mentioned.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that under the present legislation, a person's whose case has been disallowed or discontinued is only provided a statement that the claimant has not satisfied the 60% incapacitated criteria. The onus to prove the contrary is put on the claimant who has the right to make an appeal to the Medical Appeal Tribunal within a period of one month from the date of disallowance notice. In case claimants do not appeal, they may make a fresh application to the medical board for the benefit after six months. An earlier application can be made in the event that there is aggravation of the medical condition of the person supported by a medical certificate.

As for measures envisaged by my Ministry, I need to highlight that the assessment system is based on medical guidelines under the Sixth Schedule of the National Pensions Act. Thus, a broad-based reform is being explored to include the functionality of a potentially disabled person, that is, can the person work? Can the person feed himself or herself? Can the person use public transport? Can the person take care of himself? Just to mention a few examples.

In addition, my Ministry is also exploring the reform of the entire operation of medical board. Shall the board have access to the entire medical file of the claimant and perform its operations within public hospitals and centres as is presently the case for the claims based on Eye Vision Disability. Shall the doctors serving on medical boards and carrying domiciliary visits continue to be employed on a sessional contract basis or shall they be the backbone of a new system. Proposals are being considered to include representatives of organisation representing people with disabilities within the medical board and appeal tribunal dealing with disabilities benefit entitlements.

Furthermore, the very criteria of 60% incapacity are being questioned. The possibility of introducing a graduated benefit system based on the percentage of incapacity and

functionality is being explored. We are studying different systems from different countries in this respect.

In the long run, the introduction and the talking of e-Health System with the e-Social Security System will greatly facilitate the efficiency and modernisation process once we settle the core issues on the coming reform.

To conclude, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, my Ministry with the support of the Government is moving towards a significant change of the system to ensure a dignified, right-based and efficient disability pension benefit system in Mauritius. In this context, to promote inclusiveness, my Ministry has opened as from 18 March until 10 April 2025 a last round of input from citizens and associations defending people with disabilities to formulate proposals for changes in disability pensions and benefit system, as well as amendments they deem appropriate to the not yet proclaimed Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2024.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you for your long and comprehensive answer. No additional? Do you have a supplementary?

**An hon. Member:** *Ena ankor?*

**The Deputy Speaker:** One last supplementary because the answer was quite comprehensive.

**Dr. Aumeer:** Yes. Thank you and thank you for the compliment at the beginning of your answer. May I ask the hon. Minister, based on the medical assessment that we have at the present by medical practitioners and the Medical Board, whether he would also consider the implementation of a Barema system. The Barema system which is being used widely in Europe – and I have copies of them from different countries which I will handover to you afterwards – that encompasses the medical, functional needs, assistance needs, and above all, the additional cost incurred by relatives. I am hoping that this can be implemented and my next...

*(Interruptions)*

There is a small question. This is a very sensitive issue. It is on the radio every day, very sensitive. I would like to ask the hon. Minister that there should be in the department, an emergency appeal system rather than the normal appeal. An emergency appeal system with

regard to certain individuals who have been invalid since birth, whose condition have not changed but have been denied of the invalidity pension, namely of one case that may make history for him, of a young boy born epileptic, cerebral palsy, one arm longer than the other, one leg shorter than the other, who cannot talk, and yet, his pension has been denied. I will share the documents with you. Please look at how these individuals who are *bona fide* invalid people, can have an emergency system through your Ministry, so that they can have the funds to have a better living.

Thank you.

**Mr Subron:** We are on the same wavelength. Since I took this Office, we share the same concern and we are studying in the same direction. All these suggestions and the documents that you will submit will be considered.

Thank you, hon. Member.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will call B/230! Hon. Third Member for Port Louis South and Port Louis Central!

#### **IMMACULÉE CONCEPTION SCHOOL – BUILDING SECURITY**

**(No. B/230) Dr. F. Aumeer (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Education and Human Resource whether, in regard to the Immaculée Conception School located at corner Jules Levieux Street and Monseigneur Leen Street Ward 4, he will state –

- (a) the number of years the school has not been used for educational purposes, and
- (b) if he has been made aware of severe security and health concerns arising from the lack of maintenance and oversight of the premises and, if so, indicate the measures being envisaged to secure the building.

**Dr. Gungapersad:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as regard to part (a) of the question, I have been informed that the Immaculée Conception School is no longer being used for educational purposes since 2012 given its state.

I am also informed that the premises where the school was formally housed were officially handed over to the Mauritius Police Force in April 2017 for the setting up of a Police warehouse. Following complaints received on the Citizen Support Unit Portal in 2021 by inhabitants of the region, my Ministry took note that the Mauritius Police Force did not go ahead with the said project.

Moreover, the Ministry of Housing and Lands has informed my Ministry on 12 October 2021 that the premises are under its control, but were being occupied by the Field Services Unit, a department falling under the aegis of the Ministry of Local Government. Therefore, this school no longer falls under the purview of Ministry of Education and Human Resource since April 2017.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as regard to part (b) of the question, my answer is yes. We are conscious about the insecurity there. Complaints from the public were made to my Ministry in 2021 pertaining to drug addicts and dangerous squatters occupying the premises. The Ministry of Housing and Lands was accordingly requested to undertake necessary and appropriate actions, given that the land on which stands the ex-Immaculée Conception School is under the control of the latter Ministry.

Additionally, the Mauritius Police Force was requested to reinforce Police patrol around the premises of the school and take necessary actions against the illegal occupants for the safety and security of the public. This request was reiterated this year again.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. First Member for Savanne and Black River!

**CHAMAREL/PLAINE CHAMPAGNE ROAD – REOPENING – 20 FEBRUARY 2025  
– ROAD SAFETY SURVEY**

**(No. B/231) Mr B. Babajee (First Member for Savanne & Black River)** asked the Minister of National Infrastructure whether, in regard to the Chamarel/Plaine Champagne Road, he will state if –

- (a) a road safety survey has been effected prior to its reopening for road users on 20 February 2025 and, if so, give details thereof, and
- (b) consideration will be given for the cleaning and trimming of trees along same.

**Mr Guinness:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Plaine Champagne B103 Road starts at Les Mares and ends at Chamarel Village, and is approximately 13 km long. Several significant signs of distress and road edge failures were noted along a stretch of 1 km of the B103 road, specifically between Chamarel Rhumerie and Varangue sur Morne, which required rehabilitation and grading along that segment. A project for the upgrading of the road and slope stabilisation works was accordingly implemented by the Road Development Authority.

Works have been substantially completed and the road reopened to the public on 20 February 2025.

I am informed by the RDA that while major construction works have been completed, there are some minor works and monitoring activities which are still ongoing. As regards road safety survey, I am informed by the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit (TMRSU) that a road safety audit is usually conducted in the context of the construction of a new road, to see whether road safety may be improved on the road prior to its opening. The TMRSU has further informed that in the case of the B103 road, the works comprise slope stabilisation along a small stretch of the existing road, and accordingly, a road safety audit was not required.

However, a site visit was carried out by the TMRSU and several road safety improvement measures have been recommended namely, placing of handrails and guardrails which I am informed have already been implemented. In addition, as part of the project, the RDA has submitted road marking, traffic signage and other road furniture details to the TMRSU for approval prior to implementation. Given that the road is still being monitored jointly by the TMRSU and the RDA, a site meeting will be held by both parties by the end of March 2025 to identify additional safety measures to be implemented if required.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as regard part (b) of the question, it should be highlighted that the road is heavily bounded by trees and vegetation. Prior to the opening of the road, the contractor on the project had carried out a first cleaning and trimming of trees within the one-kilometre segment of the road where the works were ongoing. The cleaning and trimming of trees along that stretch are still ongoing and will be completed by the end of this month. Only last Monday during the management meeting at the level of the RDA, I highlighted that I was not satisfied with the lopping of branches along B103 Road and requested the RDA to take urgent remedial actions. The RDA has accordingly committed to complete the cleaning and trimming of trees along the remaining section of B103 road very soon. Subsequently, this will form part of the ongoing routine maintenance programme by the RDA's maintenance section.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. First Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue!

**VALLEE DES PRÊTRES, CHITRAKOOT & CAROLINE REGION – BUS  
TRANSPORT PROBLEM**

**(No. B/232) Mrs A. Savabaddy (First Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Minister of Land Transport whether he will state if he has been made aware of the acute problem of bus transportation affecting the inhabitants of Vallée des Prêtres, Chitrakoot and Caroline and, if so, indicate the remedial measures being envisaged in relation thereto.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the House is aware that I have been replying to several Parliamentary Questions recently about the poor level of bus transport service island-wide and I believe, this is also the case for regions which the hon. Member has referred to in her question today.

In fact, the House will recall that I have also made several public announcements, in and outside the House, stressing on the prevailing malaise in the bus industry. I seize this opportunity to reassure the House and the travelling public at large, that the improvement of the level of public bus transport is one of my priorities. We, at the level of my Ministry, are fully committed to look for workable solutions with a view to improving the services around the island in line with the numerous measures which I have already enumerated in the House during my previous replies.

Now, coming to the regions of Vallée des Prêtres, Chitrakoot and Caroline, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the National Land Transport Authority that the public transportation services in these localities are exclusively offered by the United Bus Service through the following routes –

- Route 41, Vallée des Prêtres-the New Transportation Centre;
- Route 41A, Upper Vallée des Prêtres;
- Route 160, Vallée des Prêtres-New Transportation Centre;
- Route 160A, Upper Vallée des Prêtres-Cité Vallijee, and
- Route 237, Vallée des Prêtres-Morcellement Raffray, Pailles.

I am further informed that 13 road service licences have been granted to the United Bus Service to operate its buses along the aforesaid routes. In accordance with the established timetable, buses along Route 41A, 160 and 160A should operate at 30 minutes interval during peak hours and on an hourly basis during off peak periods.

As regards Route 237, buses are required to ply at an hourly interval throughout the day. The hours of operation along these routes are 05.25 in the morning to 08.00 o'clock at night.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to also point out that inspections conducted by the NLTA Inspectorate have revealed that the UBS buses plying in the regions which I have just mentioned are not adhering to the prescribed timetable and this has undeniably resulted in complaints from commuters thereat, in respect of service delays and inconsistencies. The NLTA Inspectorate has, in fact, pointed out that the UBS is operating at a lower number of buses out of its operational fleet and this situation has been observed across all its routes island-wide. It is a malaise actually right now despite they have been availed of free transportation service.

To this effect, I have been informed that the NLTA has had dedicated meeting with the Traffic Manager of the UBS on 30 August 2024 whereby the latter was apprised of the issues and complaints. The representative of the UBS undertook to take remedial actions, highlighting the main cause thereof related to the shortage of drivers and that necessary arrangements were underway for the recruitment of foreign labour. The representative of the UBS was once again convened at the NLTA last month, that is, in February 2025, in view of the persistent situation and it would seem there has been no improvement so far.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to inform the House that I can humbly state that, after four months in Office, I have been able to understand the problems being encountered by the travelling public and the reasons thereof which are multiple-pronged. Let me give you three reasons –

- Firstly, I am inclined to strongly believe that the issue of recruitment of foreign workers has become some sort of a pretext for several bus operators to keep their buses in their garage while benefiting at the same time from government subsidies monthly. This is across the board and across all companies. Unfortunately, it is a malaise right now.
- Secondly, I have been made aware, through various representations that I have received, several bus operators do not treat their employees properly, and hence, potential candidates are reluctant to join these companies. And they do not realise that importing foreign labour can be more expensive.



- Thirdly, in some cases, bus operators have resorted to employing drivers and conductors who are not fit and proper for the job and this has led to the alarming and dangerous situation whereby we are having cases of bus crew operating under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

I have had extensive meetings with the Mauritius Police Force during the course of last week and even before that, to try and address the situation. The recent accident which occurred at Solitude whereby a school bus was being driven a conductor, who was not only under the influence of illicit drugs but was not even the holder of a valid driving licence, is telling of the situation we are in right now.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me reassure the House that the introduction of the Fleet Management System, a project on which my Ministry is actively working on, will be a game changer for the bus industry and that will certainly redress the issue of inadequate buses and non-adherence to established timetable. The request for proposal is currently being worked out by the consultant and, hopefully, the project will be in place by the end of this year.

Nevertheless, in the meantime, based on the recommendations of the NLTA regarding the timetable, on the immediate plausible remedial actions, I have asked the latter, I mean the NLTA, to consider the possibility of licensing additional RSLs, according to section 77 of the Road Traffic Act 2023 which empowers me to do so, to other bus operators in order to improve the level of service in the regions where inhabitants are encountering acute transport problems, including the regions mentioned in the question of the hon. Member, and I am waiting for a reply from the NLTA. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, one question!

**Mrs Savabaddy:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Bus transport is a real headache in the regions that I have mentioned in my PQ, Vallée des Prêtres, Chitrakoot and Caroline.

M. le président, il est déplorable de constater que certains autobus de la United Bus Service sont âgés de plus de 15 ans, lesquels sont bons pour de la vieille ferraille, sont toujours en circulation dans la circonscription à l'instar dans les régions citées à l'instant. Donc, ma question : est-ce que le ministre compte ouvrir des lignes à d'autres compagnies d'autobus ? *Clearly, there is no will from the side of the actual bus operators to improve their services there. Can the hon. Minister ask the Inspector of the NLTA to be more active there until the situation improves? Thank you.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** You repeated what you have just said in the last phrase.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** The end of a lifetime of a bus is 20 years old, legally. So, 15 years is five more years to go, but that is not the reason why the bus should not be in good condition. So, I will look into the issue for the specific buses plying that route and will come back to the Member in due course.

#### **MAURITIAN ECONOMY – BRAIN DRAIN ISSUE – REMEDIAL MEASURES**

**(No. B/233) Mr R. Etwareea (Third Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations whether, in regard to the lack of qualified and unqualified workers in the Mauritian economy, he will state the measures being proposed to address the issue of brain drain currently affecting the country.

*(Withdrawn)*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Second Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien!

#### **BUSES & TAXIS – TEMPORARY ROAD LICENCES DELIVERY – INQUIRY**

**(No. B/234) Mr T. Apollon (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Minister of Land Transport whether, in regard to the issue of temporary public service licenses to buses and taxis, he will –

- (a) for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Land Transport Authority, information as to the number of such licenses delivered since 2015 to 2024, indicating the procedures adopted to award these licenses, and
- (b) state if consideration will be given for the setting up of an inquiry to look into the circumstances for the granting of these licenses.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the National Land Transport Authority that prior to the amendment which was brought to section 77 of the Road Traffic Act in 2023, no temporary Road Service Licences were granted. However, I am informed that during the period 24 October 2023 to 16 September 2024, 45 Road Service Licences have been granted for the operation of buses, that is, 42 in Mauritius and 3 in Rodrigues, and the Rodriguan ones are under judicial review right now following application made by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

I wish to point out that according to information provided to me, approval was obtained from the then Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail for 13 other Road Service Licences on 01 October 2024 but these licences were not issued by the NLTA as the general elections were imminent. That was 3-4 days before the Parliament was dissolved.

These RSLs have been granted under the provisions of section 77D of the Road Traffic Act, which was introduced in 2023 under the Road Traffic (Amendment) Act No. 10, which came into operation on 17 July 2023. This section of the law, in fact, empowers the Minister to either –

1. direct the NLTA to allow an existing license sheet to redeploy his bus from an existing route to another, or
2. direct the NLTA to grant a new road service license to an existing licensee to operate services along a route designated by the Minister.

In both instances, the Minister has to ascertain that the redeployment of any bus for the grant of a new license is in the public interest, based on a report from the NLTA, to the effect that the redeployment or grant of license is justified and that there is a need to supplement the service along any designated route. The Minister while directing the NLTA has also to specify the duration for which the license is to be granted.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, according to the NLTA, all 45 new licenses have been granted following applications submitted by existing licenses to the then Minister for specific routes. The NLTA then submitted a report on the need for supplementing bus services along the route applied for. The then Minister subsequently directed the NLTA to issue the license.

Another pertinent observation was in respect of the grant of these temporary licenses, is that the law clearly stipulates that –

“Where the Minister is satisfied that a particular route or area is inadequately served and in public interest to improve bus service on that route or area, he may direct the NLTA to grant a road service license for such duration he may deem fit [The word ‘duration’ is listed there]to an existing licensee so as to allow him to operate bus services on such route or area designated by the Minister.”

However, it is worth pointing out that although it is the prerogative of the Minister in law to determine the duration for which their license is to be granted, such was not the case, I

am given to understand. It would seem, therefore, that the NLTA has taken it upon itself to decide on the temporary licenses to be for an initial period of three months.

I have also been made aware that these temporary licenses have been subsequently been renewed for an additional period of three months administratively, solely at the level of the regulator, which is the NLTA. I have also been informed that in the case of the 45 new licenses issued, officers of my Ministry were not at all involved in the whole licensing processes. Sealed confidential files moved to and fro between the NLTA and the office of the then Minister.

The Ministry did not have the slightest hint of the rules where licenses were being granted, the manner in which the existing licenses were becoming informed that they should submit applications to the Minister for any specific route, and the mechanism as to how the NLTA was requested to submit a report on the level of service. Nothing could be found in any file in my Ministry, I am told.

I am further informed that the whole licensing exercise seems to have been carried out in strict confidentiality both at the level of the then Minister's office and the NLTA. As a matter of fact, there have been several representations from operators as to the manner in which these temporary law survey licences have been granted, and I am inclined to think that these may have prompted hon. Apollon to come up with this question. The hon. Member may rest assured that since I took office at the Ministry, I have stressed that henceforth, all legal and administratively established processes should be strictly adhered to.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the established administrative procedures have not been duly followed and it would appear that the then Minister was approving the applications for temporary road service licenses without referring these files through proper channel, that is, the administration, resulting, in fact, to no record regarding these applications and the grant thereof at my Ministry;

I am informed by the NLTA that the Officer-in-Charge of the NLTA took it upon himself to grant these temporary road service licenses for an initial period of three months despite the fact that such duration should have been specified by the Minister as provided under the law.

In the light of the above, I wish to reassure the hon. Member and the public that, I have already given instructions for an enquiry to be conducted promptly, as per the request of hon. Apollon for an enquiry, in his main question.

In the event, any malpractice is confirmed, in the manner these temporary licenses have been granted and/or renewed, necessary actions, as may deem necessary, will be initiated accordingly.

Additionally, an assessment will be undertaken as to whether these temporary licenses are still required. In the affirmative, the NLTA will be requested to open up application for permanent road service licenses to be granted along the relevant routes for the benefit of the traveling public.

Finally, I wish to enlighten the House that the buses licensed with a temporary road service licences are benefiting from free travel compensation monthly.

Thank you.

**Mr Apollon:** Thank you, hon. Minister. According to your answer, I think, a full-fledged enquiry should urgently take place. Can the hon. Minister table the list of those who have been granted these licenses as well as those who have not been granted the licenses. Also, can the hon. Minister confirm to the House who signed all these documents?

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Yes, I will table all the information, as requested by the hon. Member, for those who were issued a license and for those who made an application, but who were not issued a license because the elections were imminent. The signature of the former Minister Ganoo is there.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Second Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes!

#### **VICTORIA & AVENUE BELLE ROSE JUNCTION – TRAFFIC FLOW**

**(No. B/235) Ms S. Anquetil (Second Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes)** asked the Minister of Land Transport whether, in regard to the traffic lights situated at the junction of Victoria and Avenue Belle Rose, he will state if consideration will be given for the rescheduling and/or readjusting thereof to improve traffic flow and enhance road safety for all users.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed that the junction of Victoria Avenue, Sir Guy Forget Avenue and Avenue Belle Rose is a signalised cross junction

found along the Metro Express corridor. The signalised cross junction falls under the traffic signal priority system which is managed by the Metro Express Ltd.

The signalised cross junction caters traffic movement in eight directions – so, quite busy – as well as for train movement. The traffic signal sequences were configured thereat following a traffic survey carried out in 2018 based on the train's movement, traffic volume and traffic flow.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, with the present configuration, the train has priority signal at this junction, as is the case at all metro road junctions. Additionally, traffic along Sir Guy Forget, which is a one-way street towards Belle Rose Avenue, is provided more green time in mornings peak due to higher volume of traffic. Similarly, additional green time has been allocated for traffic coming from Victoria Avenue in the direction of Quatre Bornes in the morning and vice-versa in the afternoon based on the traffic survey of 2018.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, almost six years have passed since the traffic light thereat has been configured and traffic patterns may have evolved during these years. The Metro Express Ltd. has already been requested to carry out a fresh survey in collaboration with the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit of my Ministry to that effect and with a view to adapting the configuration of the traffic light based on the findings. The exercise is expected to be completed in one month's time. I have, therefore, to thank the hon. Member for coming up with this question as it has given the technicians of my Ministry the opportunity to question the relevance of the six-year-old configuration.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, go on with your question.

**Ms Anquetil:** Je vous remercie, M. le président, en effet nous avons reçu, le Dr. Boolell, vous-même et moi, de nombreuses plaintes des usagers de la route concernant les embouteillages au carrefour de l'avenue Victoria et de l'avenue Belle-Rose à Quatre-Bornes.

Will the Minister inform the House if his Ministry will envisage to introduce smart traffic light system, *communément appelé en français, des feux de signalisation intelligents*, that adjust based on real time traffic conditions to enhance efficiency? Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr Osman Mahomed:** I thank the hon. Member for this question. We are actually working in that direction. There is a consultancy exercise that my Ministry is conducting now and it is called Adaptive Traffic Control System, which has as qualities, I must say, it is

smart because it uses Artificial Intelligence to monitor traffic. It will, henceforth, going forward, prevent long waiting time when there are no cars, for example. Also, red-light cameras – if someone *brûle un feu rouge, par exemple*, it can spot it. So, we are working in that direction.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay, we will take one last question for this session, B/236.

Hon. Second Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes!

**BABY S. CASE – NICU, SSRN HOSPITAL – FACT-FINDING COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

(No. B/236) Ms S. Anquetil (Second Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes) asked the Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare whether, in regard to Baby S. admitted at the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the SSRN Hospital on 21 October 2022, she will state if consideration will be given to making public the recommendations of the Fact-Finding Committee set up to look into this case.

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed that the report of the Fact-Finding Committee set up to shed light on the circumstances that led to Baby S. being admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital on 21 October 2022, was handed over to the then Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare on 22 November 2022.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am further informed that the committee was mandated to carry out an in-depth enquiry and to submit its report on the basis of the terms of reference as follows –

- a) Investigate into the circumstances leading to the baby being admitted to the NICU;
- b) Investigate on the management of and services being provided to the baby;
- c) Investigate on the management of the residential care institutions, shelters for children falling under the purview of the National Children’s Council, in general, and
- d) Make recommendations for –
  - (i) addressing shortcomings identified;

- (ii) reforms to be brought with regard to the procedures for the placement of minors in residential institutions/shelters for children, and
- (iii) the management of residential institutions/shelters for children.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to inform the House that the report of the Fact-Finding Committee is being presently examined and consideration will be given to the recommendations or even the report itself being released in due course.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes, one last question. Time is nearly over!

**Ms Anquetil:** *Je vous remercie, M. le président*, would the Minister inform the House what measures have been implemented so far based on the recommendations of the Fact-Finding Committee? Thank you.

**Mrs Navarre Marie:** As I informed the House, the report is still under consideration and further actions will be taken in due course.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Hon. Members, the Table has been advised that the following PQs have been withdrawn: B/237, B/238, B/240, B/242, B/243, B/245, B/246, B/247, B/248, B/249, B/250, B/251, B/252, B/254, B/255, B/256, B/257, B/258, B/259, B/260, B/262, B/263, B/264, B/265, B/266.

Time is over!

The hon. Madam Speaker will take the Chair.

*At this stage, Madam Speaker took the Chair.*

**Madam Speaker:** Please be seated. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

## MOTION

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

**The Prime Minister:** Madam 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 rose and seconded.**

*Question put and agreed to.*

## PUBLIC BILLS

*First Reading*



*On motion made and seconded, The Public Inquiries Bill (No. V of 2025) were read a first time.*

*Second Reading*

**THE BAIL (AMENDMENT) BILL**

**(No. III of 2025)**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

(4.16 p.m.)

**The Minister of Housing and Lands (Mr S. Mohamed):** Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Bail (Amendment) Bill (No. III) of 2025 be read a second time.

Madam Speaker, the term “bail” is a common term that is frequently used in our legal jargon, and I presume, in other jurisdictions also. However, the term “bail” remains an undefined term in our law books. It is not even defined under the Bail Act of 1999, which is the main legislation that deals with bail. Even in the Constitution, the term “bail” is not defined, nor is the term “bail” used, other than under section 5(3A) which has, anyway, been declared unconstitutional. However, Madam Speaker, the alternative term use in the supreme law of this country is “liberty”.

In the law book “Released on Bail: Law and Practice”, written by one D. C. Pandey from India, it is mentioned under Chapter 2 thereof, and I quote –

“The dictionary meaning of the expression ‘bail’ denotes a security for appearance of a prisoner for his release. Etymologically, the word is derived from an old French verb ‘*bailer*’, which means to “give” or “to deliver”, although another view is that its derivation is from Latin term ‘*bajulare*’, meaning “to bear a burden.””

Just like we all *bajulare* the previous government.

It goes further on to state, and I quote –

“That [T]he intent of the arrest being only to compel an appearance in court at the return of the writ, that purpose is equally answered, whether the Sheriff detains his person, or takes sufficient security for his appearance, called *bail* ... because the defendant is bailed, or delivered to his sureties, upon their giving security for his appearance...”

Bail is accordingly, Madam Speaker, a conditional liberty and the right to personal liberty is a fundamental right that is enshrined in our Constitution under section 5 thereof. Bail thus stands at the crossroads of liberty and security, between the presumption of innocence and the imperative of justice.

However, Madam Speaker, in lieu of upholding this fundamental right of a citizen to be at liberty, this House will recall that, in the not so past, the then Commissioner of Police disagreed on many occasions with the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions not to object to the release of on bail of several defendants. This situation even led to the Commissioner of Police lodging a plaint before the Supreme Court [*The Commissioner of Police v The Director of Public Prosecutions SCR No.124745*] for constitutional relief pursuant to section 83 challenging the powers of the DPP with regard to, *inter alia*, bail proceedings at investigation stage.

Madam Speaker, since the institution of this new Government, this House will certainly agree that this conflict has subsided, but to avoid any such conflict occurring again in the future, this Bill is being proposed so as to amend the Bail Act with a view to delimiting the respective powers of the DPP and those of the CP with regard to matters pertaining to the release on bail of a defendant or detainee, and with a view to bringing about certainty in this area of the law.

Madam Speaker, let me now explain to the House how this uncertainty arose. As per section 4(4)(b) of the Bail Act, it provides that where, immediately after ordering the release of a defendant or detainee, the Magistrate is notified by the DPP that an application to set aside his decision is being made before the Supreme Court and that a stay of execution is required, the Magistrate shall stay execution of the order and remand the defendant or detainee until the Supreme Court determines the application. In other words, Madam Speaker, only the DPP, and not the Commissioner of Police, has the power to move for a stay of the decision of the Magistrate.

However, and most surprisingly, section 4(4)(b) of the Bail Act further provides that where a Magistrate has ordered the release on bail of a defendant or detainee, both the DPP and the Commissioner of Police have the power to make an application before the Supreme Court to set aside the decision to release the defendant or detainee on bail.

These aforementioned provisions are not in consonant with each other as, on the one hand, it is only the DPP who has the power to move for a stay of execution of the decision of the Magistrate to release a defendant or detainee on bail while, on the other hand, both the DPP and Commissioner of Police have the power to make an application to the Supreme Court to set aside the decision of a Magistrate to release a defendant or detainee on bail.

This is absurd, Madam Speaker. If you do not have the power to move for a stay of execution of the decision of a Magistrate, which power is conferred precisely make an application to the Supreme Court to set aside the decision of the Magistrate, how can you, when not having the power to move for a stay of execution of the decision of the Magistrate, have the power to make an application to the Supreme Court? In fact, this uncertainty in the law has created this situation of conflict, the more so that two authorities cannot have the same powers.

I have perused the Hansard debates to the Bail Bill of 1999 and, astonishingly, the Bail Bill which was debated in this Assembly did not contain the provisions that I mentioned earlier. In fact, Madam Speaker, these provisions were introduced at Committee Stage of that Bill. Maybe, and I say maybe, when amending the Bill, the Bail Bill of 1999 at Committee Stage, a mistake in the drafting of the new provisions may have been made, thus creating that uncertainty in the law.

Moreover, the current law grants parallel authority to both the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Commissioner of Police to object to bail. The intention was never to create conflict but to ensure continuity. Therefore, in the absence of the DPP's representative, the police could object to bail based on factual concerns. The DPP, upon reviewing the case and preparing for the hearing, would determine whether the objection was legally justified. If the DPP disagreed, the objection would be withdrawn, and the police would abide by this decision.

However, recent practice has deviated from this. The then Commissioner of Police has claimed the power to persist in objecting to bail, and even when the DPP - constitutionally entrusted with prosecutorial oversight - considered that there was no legal basis for such opposition. Worse still, the Commissioner of Police engaged the services of lawyers in the private practice to argue cases of the DPP found untenable.

This encroachment blurred the lines between investigation and prosecution, two distinct functions assigned by the Constitution to two separate authorities. It led to a toxic situation – one where the police and the apex prosecuting authority were in open conflict, forced into lawsuits against each other. One where public trust in this justice system eroded, as citizens questioned whose orders the police were truly following. One where suspicions of political interference in the detention of citizens became all too justified.

With a view to therefore addressing these issues, this Bill reinstates the primacy of the DPP in prosecutorial decision-making, ensuring that bail objections are legally sound, free from undue influence, and consistent with the rule of law.

Madam Speaker, a Magistrate's ruling on bail depends on the objections raised by the prosecution. These objections must be grounded in facts – facts best known to the police. Whether an accused has strong family ties that mitigate the risk of evading justice, whether key witnesses remain to be interviewed and need to be protected from interference, these are factual considerations for the police to highlight. As such clause 4 of the Bill provides that the Commissioner of Police will have the sole discretion not to object to the release on bail of a defendant or detainee before a court.

However, where an application is made before a Court for the release on bail of a defendant or detainee and the Commissioner of Police has the intention to object to such release, he shall seek the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions thereon and the decision to object or not to object to such release shall rest solely on the DPP. The reasoning to give the DPP the sole discretion is because denying bail is a question of law, one that falls within the competence of the DPP only.

Madam Speaker, Clause 6 of the Bill further provides that where a Magistrate orders the release on bail of a defendant or detainee, the power to appeal to the Supreme Court for an order setting aside the determination of the Magistrate to release the defendant or detainee on bail shall henceforth rest solely on the DPP, in lieu and instead of both the DPP and the Commissioner of Police.

In addition, it is being provided, in clause 6 of the Bill, that where the DPP fails to apply to the Supreme Court for an order setting aside the determination of the Magistrate to release a defendant or detainee on bail not later than 7 days after such an order, the defendant or detainee who had been remanded to custody must, on the next day following the expiry of the 7-day period, be brought before the Court who shall thereupon release him on bail as originally ordered by the Court.

Opportunity has also been taken, Madam Speaker, –

- a) in clause 3 of the Bill, to redefine the term “detainee”; and
- b) in clause 5 of the Bill, to clarify some bail-related provisions.

I wish to inform the House that the Office of the DPP and the DPP have been consulted and he has no objection to the amendments being proposed to the Bail Act.

Madam Speaker, I am being tasked in the absence my good friend, the hon. Attorney General, who is not present and is unable to come here today to pronounce this speech. I would like to...

**Madam Speaker:** I am sorry, hon. Minister, may I just say a word?

**Mr Mohamed:** Yes.

**Madam Speaker:** I was actually thinking that maybe, it is important for the record, that you should say that you are now Acting Attorney General and it is in that capacity that you are making this speech and you are going to run through the Bill. Thank you.

Carry on, please!

**Mr Mohamed:** This is precisely what I was about to say at this juncture. This is what I was about to say now, and this is why I took note here. I have said that I have been tasked with having to pronounce this speech today in the National Assembly as Acting Attorney General. My good friend, the hon. Attorney General, cannot attend the National Assembly today.

I have spoken to him just before pronouncing this speech and sought further instructions from him. I would like to not only thank him, but also, thank all the officers at the Attorney General's Office and those who have drafted this Bill. They have done an excellent job. I also thank them for having briefed me in the absence of my, I would say, a Senior Counsel, my learned senior, for pronouncing and presenting this Bill to the Assembly.

So, if I may now go on. The Bill is not merely a procedural matter, Madam Speaker. It is a constitutional and societal issue. The right to liberty is sacred, but so too is public confidence in our justice system. This Bill reaffirms a fundamental principle, that is, the administration of justice must be guided by law, not convenience, and certainly not political influence.

The Bail (Amendment) Bill before the House brings much needed clarity to a legal framework that, in recent times, has been clouded by uncertainty and exploited for political ends.

Like the recent amendments to the Financial Crimes Commission Act, this Bill restores clarity, fairness and the rule of law. It ensures that the decisions on bail are made by those constitutionally entrusted to do so and that the balance between individual freedom and the pursuit of justice is upheld.

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

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you.

**The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.**

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Minister!

(4.31 p.m.)

**The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (Mr D. Ramful):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I will be very short since we are dealing with a few amendments to the Bail Act. But I should say that although the amendments are few, they go a long way in showing our determination and our commitment to enhance transparency in the decision-making process of our institutions and also in reinforcing the powers and the independence of our institutions.

Today, we are talking about the powers of the Police, the Commissioner of police in particular, and also, the DPP's Office. Madam Speaker, we probably do not realise, but in a very short span of time, we have done so much in restoring the image of our institution. Some of the Ministers here will concur with me – we are part of the Cabinet and we know how the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Deputy Prime Minister have been working so hard in bringing amendments before this House to restore the image of our institutions.

We are talking about institutions having constitutional status, not parastatal bodies, not institutions under Ministries, but we are talking here about very important institutions which are in our Constitution. The population has witnessed that as soon as we have come in power, the hon. Prime Minister has brought in very important amendments in order to restore the image of these institutions.

Madam Speaker, this Parliament is a vivid example – your nomination as Speaker. You are shining in the Chair, Madam Speaker!

**Mr Ramful:** Votre rayonnement est en train d'éclairer les débats dans cette Chambre.

For just one minute, just compare, I was in this House...

**Hon. Members:** *Ayo!*

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Do not compare!

**Mr Ramful:** Just for one minute...

**An hon. Member:** Non ! Même pas ! Même pas !

**Mr Ramful:** ...just compare how the debates are going on now and compare it to the ten last years!

**An hon. Member:** Ayo!

**Mr Ramful:** I know in the previous debates, orators have been speaking about it. But it is important that we repeat it and repeat it again because we do not want this to happen again to our democracy. *On a récemment apporté les amendements*, the Financial Crimes Commission (Amendment) Bill was introduced. Once again, in order to bring transparency, *afin de restaurer la crédibilité et l'indépendance du DPP* on cases with regard to corruption and anti-money laundering.

*Madame la présidente, il y a plusieurs exemples* where this Government has had to intervene, as I have said, in a very short span of time to bring in corrective measures. The Police Force is another example. *Qu'est-ce qu'on n'a pas vu ? Qu'est-ce qu'on n'a pas témoigné sous l'ancien régime par rapport au commissaire de police ?* Today, we have a new Commissioner who is rebuilding the trust of the people in the Police Force. Never in the history of our country have we seen, have we witnessed our institutions being so undermined. Their image tarnished by a government as has been the case over the past 10 years.

As I have said and I repeat it because it is important that people know we are not talking about minor institutions; we are talking about very important institutions that have constitutional status. *Madame la présidente*, when the drafters of the Constitution, the past political leaders were sitting in Lancaster House trying to bring in propositions to consolidate our Constitution, *ils mettaient des garde-fous* so that they can secure the independence of our institutions. There was a reason behind that. It is because they wanted the population to have trust in our Constitution and in our institutions. These were the reasons why they had imposed *garde-fous*. They wanted the institutions to not only operate in independence, but also be seen to operate in independence.

*Madame la présidente, on parlait à cette époque*, if you go through *le procès-verbal de ces comités*, you will see that they were even talking at that time about the queen appointing the Commissioner of Police, because they wanted these institutions to have the independence that is required so that the people can trust these institutions. *Mais malheureusement, sous*

*l'ancien régime, cela n'a pas été le cas.* By starting from the top; *la présidente, Madame la présidente*, there was a mistrust between the President at that time, and the Prime Minister.

*L'affaire Sobrinho...*

*(Interruptions)*

*La présidente de la République a même institué une commission d'enquête ratée* without consultation from the Cabinet of Ministers. *Et puis, elle s'est retrouvée elle-même face à une commission d'enquête.* So, there was that mistrust between the two institutions and *c'est comique, mais* we could have ended up in an institutional clash between two very high institutions in our Constitution: *la présidente de la République et le bureau du Premier ministre.* *Vous imaginez?* There was also the Commissioner of Police. You remember, the Commissioner of Police was placed on probation, even the head of the CID! He also was on contract and they were being used to arrest political opponents.

Madam Speaker, there was also the recommendation of the Commission on the Prerogative of Mercy. I remember the case of the son of the former Commissioner of Police, wiping out a conviction of twelve months' imprisonment without any reason and in total opacity. This is how our institutions were functioning at that time. The political appointment of political agents *dans l'Electoral Supervisory Commission* and the Electoral Boundaries Commission shows a blatant disrespect that the previous government had to the independence of these constitutional institutions.

*Madame la présidente*, with regard to this...

**Madam Speaker:** Bill.

**Mr Ramful:** ...Act, similarly back in 1999, the Labour Party had brought a new Bail Act and when the Act was passed, the idea was to make the granting of bail the rule and the objecting to bail, the exception. But again, little did we know that we would have a former Commissioner of Police who would usurp the powers of the DPP and refuse bail as explained by the Acting Attorney General, in cases where there were political opponents. This even resulted in an institutional clash between the Police, the Commissioner of Police, and the DPP's Office, resulting in Court cases before our Courts of Law.

This is why, Madam Speaker, we are having to intervene today once again in order to bring back trust in our Constitution, in our institutions that have constitutional status, by



defining with clarity the powers of the Commissioner of Police and the powers of the DPP when it comes to bail applications.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you so much. Yes, hon. Junior Minister!

(4.43 p.m.)

**The Junior Minister of Arts and Culture (Mrs V. Leu-Govind):** Merci, Madame la présidente.

**Madam Speaker:** Try, Junior Minister! If I may, try and speak a bit about the Bill, please.

**Mrs Leu-Govind:** Okay sure, fine.

Madame la présidente, comme les deux honorables ministres qui m'ont précédée, je ne suis ni avocate et je n'ai aucun bagage juridique. Je m'adresse à cet auguste Assemblée sur le *Bail (Amendment) Bill* en étant qu'une citoyenne concernée et engagée avec ce présent gouvernement pour promouvoir l'espace démocratique dans le respect de la Constitution et de notre Etat de droit.

Madame la présidente, je constate que l'honorable Adrien Duval du PMSD et l'honorable leader de l'opposition...

*(Interruptions)*

...ne se sont pas engagés à prendre la parole sur cet important projet de loi. Je comprends que le MSM ne participe pas, car durant leur parcours de ces dix dernières années, ils ont torpillé le bureau du *DPP*. Mais, l'honorable Adrien Duval et le PMSD ne participent pas ; c'est la preuve de ce qu'est devenu, et de ce qui reste du PMSD en termes de respect et d'importance accordée au mot 'démocratie', et du bureau du *DPP*.

Madame la présidente, notre pays a traversé une grave crise institutionnelle. Nos institutions étaient gangrenées, pourries par le gouvernement MSM sans scrupules, avec la complicité d'un commissaire de police corrompu qui a abusé de ses pouvoirs pour des fins politiques. Ce commissaire n'était rien d'autre qu'une marionnette entre les mains du couple Jugnauth, dont la toxicité a empoisonné nos institutions.

Madame la présidente, dans cette force policière, la compétence, l'expérience, n'étaient plus critères de promotion. Ce qu'il fallait, tout simplement, participer dans des *cover-up* ou simplement une simple application de gel. C'est écœurant...

(Interruptions)

...dégradant, et tout simplement honteux, Madame la présidente !

(Interruptions)

La police qui sensée nous protéger, était devenue un motif de peur ; poursuites fabriquées, *plantings*, arrestations sélectives, abus du recours aux charges provisoires, un climat d'oppression s'est installé, et nous en avons été profondément choqués d'apprendre qu'il existait dans nos rangs des policiers tortionnaires, Madame la présidente. Oui, tortionnaires ! Ceux qui ont torturé, humilié des prisonniers en utilisant des *tasers* sur leur parties intimes. Ce sont des actes inhumains et j'espère sincèrement qu'ils paieront très bientôt pour leurs crimes, Madame la présidente. Notre pays était devenu un véritable état policier, au service d'une police politique dirigée par le MSM.

Madame la présidente, dans tout cela, notre seul rempart était et reste le judiciaire. Heureusement, deux femmes magistrates ont su redonner espoir à notre système judiciaire. Face aux pressions politiques, elles ont tenu bon. Avec conviction, je parle-là des cas Kistnen et de Bruneau Laurette.

Madam Speaker, we must also reflect on the disgraceful and unprecedented attack on judicial independence made by the former Prime Minister, who had the audacity to call a Court Ruling "*enn zizman bankal*". This shocking statement exposed the MSM's utter disregard for the judiciary. It is disgraceful coming from a so-called lawyer.

Today, in stark contrast, the current Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister have given a lesson in governance by not interfering in his case when he was arrested by the FCC, even when the public wanted to see him behind the bars.

Madame la présidente, regardons dans le rétroviseur. Le MSM a toujours voulu contrôler le *DPP*. Souvenons-nous de la fameuse *Prosecution Commission* en 2016 qui a mené à la démission du PMSD, grâce à des experts en droit qui ont su éclairer son leader sur les dangers de cette loi. Je tiens à remercier chaleureusement l'un d'entre eux qui, bien en n'étant même pas membre du PMSD, a agi par conviction profonde pour la démocratie et l'indépendance judiciaire, c'est l'honorable Khushal Lobine.

Madame la présidente, je saisi cette occasion pour saluer l'honorable Adrien Duval qui fut le premier à démissionner à cause de cette dérive. Mais, hélas, quelques années plus tard, il a oublié son combat et s'est précipité, aveuglé par le pouvoir ou peut-être l'argent, pour aller s'asseoir sur la chaise du '*Loudspeaker*'. Le pauvre, lui-même ne savait pas qu'il a été démis de ses fonctions par le Premier ministre.

'*Putting my son first*', tel a toujours été la devise du leader du PMSD –c'est pour cela qu'il est le seul à avoir échappé à la colère populaire – en sacrifiant des piliers comme Aurore Perraud, qui a tant travaillé dans la circonscription numéro 4, et bien d'autres compagnons, jetés comme des pions. Comme on dit en créole, *dan karo kann* !

Je suis fière d'avoir été la première à quitter ce parti et fière aussi de l'honorable Richard Duval et de l'honorable Khushal Lobine qui ont, eux aussi, quitté ce navire pour fonder ensemble avec d'autres amis les Nouveaux Démocrates, un parti d'avenir.

Madame la présidente, je félicite notre *Attorney General*. Depuis sa nomination, il n'a pas eu un jour de répit. Il a travaillé sans relâche sur plusieurs amendements pour restaurer la démocratie et redonner son indépendance au judiciaire et au *DPP*. Je sais qu'il n'a pas eu le luxe de déguster du sanglier ou de chiper un *Blue* au *Stag Party* comme son prédécesseur.

Madam Speaker, I would like to express my strong support to the Bail (Amendment) Bill, a crucial legislative reform brought forward by this Government. This Bill ensures that the DPP alone has the final say on the prosecution matters, free from any interference. It removes the Commissioner of Police's abilities to independently object to bail, making it crystal clear that only the DPP can challenge a bail decision before the Supreme Court.

With this Bill, we send an unmistakable message. Never again will a government be able to manipulate the DPP's Office for political ends. Never again will the Police be turned into a political weapon. Never again will the Judiciary be undermined for the sake of power.

Madame la présidente, notre pays a traversé une grave crise institutionnelle. Nos institutions étaient engrainées, comme je vous l'ai dit, mais grâce à cet amendement, aujourd'hui, on va retrouver la liberté et l'indépendance de notre système judiciaire.

To conclude, Madam Speaker, I would like to quote George Herbert –

“Where there is a will, there is a way.”

Madam Speaker, today, in this House, we have the will, we have the competence, we have the motivation, the quality and the quantity and under the guidance of our Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, we are on the right path to make Mauritius be Mauritius again.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Junior Minister, thank you. I would like you to be careful and perhaps withdraw one part of your speech because you were talking about hon. A. Duval who, maybe, is not present, but he is a Member of the House, and I don't think you are allowed to impute motives when you said that part. You know what I mean, that 'maybe he did it for money'. That would be imputing motives. We don't want to open a debate later on this issue. If you could, please, kindly withdraw that part.

**Mrs Leu-Govind:** I withdraw it, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you!

Yes, now, I have Mr Baboolall.

(4.53 p.m.)

**Mr C. Baboolall (First Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE):** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Bail (Amendment) Bill is indeed clarifying the powers of the DPP and the Commissioner of Police. Madam Speaker, the Republic of Mauritius is a democratic State and the Constitution is the supreme law. The Constitution guarantees our fundamental rights and freedom of the individual. Section 5 of the Constitution embodies the protection of right and personal liberty.

Madam Speaker, the right to liberty of an individual is enshrined in section 5 (3) of our Constitution and is reflected in section 3 of the Bail Act 1999, which provides that –

“Notwithstanding any other enactment and subject to section 4, every defendant or detainee shall be entitled to be released on bail.”

In considering any application, the learned Magistrate bears in mind the fundamental conditional principle that freedom is the rule and detention on account of reasonable suspicion the exception, and must see to it that bail is not being withheld as a form of punishment.

Madam Speaker, on the other hand, the Director of Public Prosecutions derives his powers under section 72 of the Constitution. Section 72(6) states that –

“In the exercise of the powers conferred upon him by this section, the Director of Public Prosecutions shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.”

Whereas the Commissioner of Police, powers are vested in him by section 71 of the Constitution.

Madam Speaker, this Bill presented by the hon. Attorney General is a clear sign that the liberty of the people that they voted for on 10 November 2024, will always be respected and this Government is doing its best to restore democracy.

Madam Speaker, the previous government was a fake one. We had a fake Prime Minister, a fake Speaker and not forgetting, the fake Commissioner of Police, where powers were abused upon the citizens of this country. People were scared because the ‘Kitchen’ could strike at any time with a ‘Striking Team’. And even when the Judiciary was protecting the rights of the citizens as per the Constitution and the laws of this land, all kind of loopholes were circumvented to oppress people and control the liberty. One of them is the Bail Act, as rightly pointed out by the hon. Acting Attorney General at section 4 (b) of the Bail Act.

Previously, this was not the case, this law has been here since long but all has started when the Commissioner of Police wanted to control everything. Madam Speaker, the case of Bruno Laurette is a clear-cut case to explain how the CP wanted to control everything. Hon. Minister Shakeel Mohamed, who is presenting the Bill today, was his barrister, he stated at that time: ‘*Le Commissaire de police n’a pas le locus standi selon la loi pour entrer une telle action.*’ That was at that time. Madam Speaker, the Commissioner of Police wanted to attempt a kind of constitutional revolution that would make the CP the one who would hold the power of release or detain a suspect alone. The case of Akil Bissessur – this explains why

this Bill is necessary. What happened in the case of Akil Bissessur? He was arrested by the Striking Team; he was presented before a court of law; his counsel put a motion for his release on bail and the Commissioner of Police asked for the DPP to be present on that day, and when the State Law Officer was present on that day, he stated that there was no objection for his release. What happened? On that day, Madam Speaker, the fake government and the fake Commissioner of Police were not happy. They had to do everything in their capacity to prevent this release. Everything was done to please *Pinokio* because he nominated the CP.

Madam Speaker, this has never happened before any court of law in Mauritius, and neither did the Police prosecutor say a word. But what happened? The Superintendent of Police, Mr Gungadin, made the following statement on the floor of the court, he stated –

“The CP is abroad in France. Prior from leaving the country on Saturday, he was formally instructed to attend court today in virtue of the constitutional powers vested upon him. He has instructed me that if the DPP goes against the Police instruction, then it is for the police to object and to mention his stand that, if need be, the Office of the CP will solicit help from outside of the DPP’s Office.”

He states that this is interference of the DPP. Guess on whom the Commissioner of Police placed his bet in this case? It is none other than Mr Yerrigadoo who knows how to play, and Mrs Sonah-Ori, the former Prime Minister’s Attorney, looting again the tax payers’ money from backdoor.

The Commissioner of Police felt aggrieved in the manner in which the DPP appeared to have usurped the CP’s power, which was never his power in any way! He filed six grounds before the Supreme Court. All these grounds failed, Madam Speaker, on the preliminary objections raised by the Counsel for Mr Akil Bissessur.

In relation to the Supreme Court, Madam Speaker, in relation to the case of Rangasamy v the DPP, the full bench of the Supreme Court considered the jurisdictional basis to review any decision of any subordinate court in criminal matters. It is throughout law that a review envisaged under section 4(4) (a) of the Bail Act and section 82(1) of the Constitution entails a rehearing of the Supreme Court. Even though in the case of Mr Bissessur, there was no ruling. Still, the Machiavellian team tried to challenge the learned magistrate and the DPP.

Madam Speaker, the fake CP was willing to improvise a disguise way of challenging the constitutional powers that the DPP holds and wanted to hold the power to arrest, release

and detain a suspect. Now, the Bail (Amendment) Bill will amend the Bail Act so as to delimit the respective powers of the DPP and those of the Commissioner of Police.

Madam Speaker, the DPP will be the only one to decide whether to object or not for the release of a detainee and also, the power to apply to the Supreme Court for an order setting aside the determination of the magistrate to the release of the detainee on bail. This Government will make sure that the rights and freedom of the citizens are respected, the rule of law prevails, and where the DPP will continue to enjoy the constitutional powers entrusted to him as guaranteed by the Constitution.

I commend the Bill to the House, Madam Speaker. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you. Yes, Ms J. Bérenger!

*(Interruptions)*

No? You want a break? Okay! I am so sorry.

I am in the hands of everybody. I think everybody wants to go for tea. Let us break. *Vous ne perdez rien à attendre votre tour.*

*At 5.02 p.m., the Sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 5.44 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.*

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, can we carry on, Ms J. Bérenger?

**The Junior Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (Ms J. Bérenger):** Madam Speaker, *les mo komanse par dir ki mo akeyir pozitivman sa proze lalwa-la Bail (Amendment) Bill. Gouvernman ena rezon pou vinn klarifie rol direkter pourswit piblik (DPP) ek rol lapolis konsernan kosion. Li enn reform ki nesaser...*

**Madam Speaker:** Do not go too long in *Kreol*. You know I am in favour, but according to the Standing Orders, we have to use English and French. I am not stopping you for good. I do appreciate you are using *Kreol*, but we are not, strictly speaking, allowed to use *Kreol*.

**Ms J. Bérenger:** Madame la présidente, je comprends les contraintes et je suis disposée à donner une copie de mon discours au Hansard Unit s'il le faut.

**Madam Speaker :** Non, non ! Je ne peux pas vous laisser parler et dire votre discours en entier en *Kreol* pour le moment. Ça va venir.

**Ms J. Bérenger:** Madame la présidente, c'est tant mieux si l'on veut adapter la technologie et les compétences, si l'on veut consacrer le *Kreol Morisien* dans nos lois. Mais comme je l'ai expliqué la dernière fois, rien ne nous empêche aujourd'hui de donner une lecture plus démocratique à notre constitution dès maintenant, sans attendre la création des comités.

**Madam Speaker:** Je ne peux pas être d'accord avec vous !

**Ms J. Bérenger:** Je respecte votre décision, mais dans ces conditions, je n'ai...

**Madam Speaker:** Non, mais je tiens compte de ce que vous dites. Je tiens compte.

**Ms J. Bérenger:** Dans ces conditions, je n'ai pas d'autre choix, Madame la présidente. Mon discours sera, comme le *Kreol Morisien*, aujourd'hui, réduit au silence.

**Madam Speaker:** Too bad!

Hon. M. Seeburn!

(5.48 p.m.)

**Mr M. Seeburn (Second Member for Vieux Grand Port & Rose Belle):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, let me first thank the hon. Attorney General for working relentlessly and coming forward with this amendment to the Bail Act that will bring certainty to this area of the law.

This Government is leading the fight to build a fairer and more equitable justice system. The previous government has aimed to circumvent the powers of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions when they allowed the Commissioner of Police to challenge the constitutional powers of the DPP, something that never happened before.

Madam Speaker, the amendment to the Bail Act is to consolidate and restore the powers of the DPP that was originally vested with. Our Prime Minister, Dr. Navin Ramgoolam rightly said that we are at a defining moment in the history of our country, moving towards a total reconstruction of our nation and foster a system with an inclusive society where unity and justice will prevail.

Madam Speaker, the existing conflict between the Commissioner of Police and the Office of the DPP, our fundamental right of liberty guaranteed under the Constitution, is at stake. As we know, the rationale behind the Bail Act is to ensure that liberty is the rule and



deprivation of liberty on the grounds of objection is merely an exception. Time and again, this has been emphasised by the courts of law in Mauritius and by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council where its decision is grounded in our Constitution, being the final quote of appeal.

Madam Speaker, it is section 72 of the Constitution that establishes and sets out the powers of the DPP where the DPP has the power to institute and undertake all criminal proceedings before a court of law. The DPP is further empowered to take over and continue any such criminal proceedings that may have been instituted by another person or to discontinue any such proceedings at any stage before judgment is delivered.

Madam Speaker, section 10(6) of our Constitution secures a constitutional guarantee of the independence of the DPP to exercise its powers free from the direction, no control of any other person. This further enriches the principles of separation of powers embodied in our Constitution. The integrity of the judicial process with the powers of the DPP would be compromised, should the Police be allowed to object bail applications without the DPP's consent.

Madam Speaker, the Commissioner of Police already has a huge responsibility for overseeing its operations and ensuring the effective enforcement of laws that are implemented for the safety and security of the community. They must further demonstrate that they are applying the law fairly and operate with transparency.

Madam Speaker, we recently felt the troubling times the country went through, with the disturbing turn of conflict between the Office of the DPP and that of the Commissioner of Police, who opposed the decision of the DPP who decided not to challenge the ruling of the Senior Magistrate at the Moka District Court in the case of one Mr B. L. who was granted bail, and again, in another case of lawyer Mr A. B. where the Office of the DPP stood up, not to object to his bail application.

This confrontation between the important organs of the State became public when we saw the head of a constitutional post, being the Commissioner of Police, who came out publicly against another head of a constitutional post, thus, putting in serious doubt its legal judgment.

Madam Speaker, I am sure that when the father of our nation, late Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam, who campaigned for our independence 57 years back and negotiated and

approved the Constitution that time, the prominent question in his mind would have been to ensure that a proper set of checks and balances are upheld so that our young generation, and the people of Mauritius do not feel threaten by a single police force. Those checks and balances were indeed specified in our Constitution at that time to ensure that the constitutional powers are granted to the DPP in all matters of prosecution.

Madam Speaker, to preserve the integrity of our institution, it is not a good practice for the Commissioner of Police to initiate private prosecution and to bypass the constitutional prerogatives of the DPP in prosecution matters when in fact both institutions were intended to collaborate and avoid conflict to meet the end of justice in our democratic society.

Madam Speaker, it is highly essential to bring clarity and delimit the respective powers of the DPP and those of the Commissioner of Police with regards to a defendant or detainee who has been provisionally charged and is awaiting on bail. Both the police and the office of the DPP are meant to be highly trusted important institutions of our democratic society where they must work together, play their independent roles and implement their powers for good governance and for proper administration of justice, and cannot have any conflict whatsoever as they carry hopes and expectations of the people for peace and justice.

Madam Speaker, the public has entrusted this Government to restore the independence of the public institutions and further, to foster ethics and integrity in all walks of life, to enhance our fundamental rights and for the DPP to prosecute offenders in the name and on behalf of the State. Under the Bail Act, it is the police who has the power to object for the release of a defendant or detainee when a provisional charge is raised. The grants of objection raised by the police must be carefully analysed and based on the nature of the evidence gathered to ensure that he does not violate the rights of that person established in our Constitution.

The office of the DPP has the expertise and is fully equipped with trained and experienced lawyers in the field to analyse the nature of the evidence gathered by the police in each and every case, and to conclude whether or not an objection for release of a defendant or detainee should be raised. Each and every case, must be based on its evidence and on its own merits and own facts.

Madam Speaker, the new section 3B introduced in this Bill under section 4 of the Act, rightly makes it clear that where the Commissioner of Police has the intention to object for

the release of a defendant or detainee provisionally charged, he shall seek the advice of the DPP under the new law and the decision to object shall rest solely on the DPP.

Madam Speaker, where the court has heard an application for the release on bail after analysing the grounds of objection raised by the police where the court concludes and orders that the release on bail of a defendant or detainee, in such circumstances, section 6 of the Bill introduces a new section 4A that is to be inserted in the principal Bail Act. And, again, makes it very clear that the power to apply to the Supreme Court for an order to set aside the decision of the magistrate to release the defendant or detainee on bail shall rest, again, solely on the DPP.

Madam Speaker, to conclude, as our Prime Minister says, we have a difficult task ahead but with this team holding experience, competence and determination; we are confident that we shall overcome all the difficulties in building our nation and to ensure that a proper administration of justice is established to meet the ideals of the rule of law.

Madam Speaker, I welcome and support the amendments to the Bail Act introduced by the hon. Acting Attorney General as these clarify the powers and integrity of both institutions.

I thank you all for your attention and commitment for a better Mauritius.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY - USE OF *KREOL MORISIEN* - STANDING ORDER 5

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Members, after having ruled out Junior Minister, hon. Ms Bérenger, I would like to refer the House to Standing Order 5 so that you understand why I had to take this stand. It is nothing personal, of course, and everybody knows my personal stand on the issue of introducing Creole in the National Assembly. It is not just a question of technique or technicity.

Standing Order 5 says –

“The proceedings and debates of the Assembly shall be in the English language, but a Member may address the Assembly in French.”

I do not think there is any doubt on the fact that this is the way that is it for the moment.

Hon. Prime Minister, may I seize this opportunity to tell you that maybe you can think about whether we should not have a Select Committee on the question of introducing Creole in the Assembly.

I have no doubt that most Members will probably support this, but there are things to be discussed including the amendment of the Standing Orders and, as we told the House the other day, now we have lots of committees including the Standing Orders Committee, which will have to sit and maybe amongst the issues to be discussed will be the issue of language.

If you wish to start again, Ms J. Bérenger, you may do so now, but I will respect your choice.

Okay! Hon. Ramdass!

(5.55 p.m.)

**Mr A. Ramdass (Third Member for Vieux Grand Port & Rose Belle):** Merci, Madame la présidente.

Madame la présidente, d'abord permettez-moi de commencer par saluer tout bas et remercier l'honorable Attorney General ainsi que l'honorable ministre des Terres et du logement pour avoir présenté en toute urgence à l'Assemblée ce projet de loi. Un projet de loi qui traite la question des limites du pouvoir du Directeur des poursuites publiques d'une part, et des pouvoirs du Commissaire de police de l'autre, quant au droit fondamental à la liberté de l'individu et, cela, dans le contexte spécifique du *Bail Act*.

Madame la présidente, la gravité de cette question et l'urgence de la situation se reflètent précisément dans la crise institutionnelle dont faisait face notre démocratie sous le précédent gouvernement. Effectivement, c'était bien une première pour notre pays de voir deux institutions constitutionnelles clés de notre système de justice, notamment, le Directeur des poursuites publiques et le Commissaire de police impliquées dans une bataille juridique sans précédent. Une bataille juridique effectivement sans précédent sur la limite de leurs pouvoirs, de leurs attributs respectifs et, cela en ce qui concerne la remise en liberté d'un suspect en attendant l'issue d'une enquête.

Cette bataille juridique, Madame la présidente, a, dites-vous bien, coûté pas moins de R 14 millions à l'État mauricien. Il y a quelques semaines de cela, nous avons entendu la réponse du Premier ministre suite à une question qui lui avait été posée par rapport aux dépenses encourues en termes des frais légaux et des conseils juridiques retenus par l'ancien

Commissaire de police et nous avons appris que la somme de R 14 millions a été dépensée pour cette bataille juridique. Il est malheureux, Madame la présidente, que le peuple mauricien fasse le frais d'une question d'ego de la part de l'ancien Commissaire de police, celui qui agissait, selon toute évidence, clairement sur les instructions de *Lakwizinn*.

Et, rappelons-le, Madame la présidente, la source même de cette tension institutionnelle était la décision du bureau du Directeur des poursuites publiques de ne pas soutenir mais surtout ou plutôt, de se poser à une contestation du Commissaire de police, de l'ordre de la cour, autorisant la remise en liberté conditionnelle des plusieurs individus dont, M. Bruneau Laurette, Maître Akil Bissessur, Sherry Singh, Vimen Sabapati, entre autres. Et, nous avons par la suite appris, Madame la présidente, que les charges provisoires pesant sur plusieurs de ces personnes dont je viens de vous citer, ont été purement et simplement rayées. Nous avons aussi appris qu'un ancien membre de la force policière, une certaine WPC Goomany, avait pris le devant, il n'y a pas longtemps, pour rapporter un cas possible de *planting of evidence dans* le cas de Vimen Sabapati.

Imaginons, Madame la présidente, ces nouveaux faits, en fait, nous poussent à nous interroger si cela aurait fait honneur à notre système de justice et à notre identité comme une démocratie, si ces personnes avaient été reconduites en cellule policière, si ces personnes avaient été privées de leur liberté, si le DPP avait capitulé sous l'insistance du Commissaire de police d'alors de continuer à objecter à leur remise en liberté.

Madam Speaker, this Bill could not have been presented to this Assembly at a more appropriate time. In fact, it addresses a core issue; an issue that strikes at the very heart of our democratic values and the rule of law. It relates, in fact, to the importance of giving to the Director of Public Prosecutions, the DPP, clear and unfettered powers to prosecute and also with a view to promote the sacrosanct principle of the presumption of innocence in criminal proceedings. In order to properly understand the importance of this Bill, *Madame la présidente*, we must first examine the constitutional provisions, its historical context, and its present implications. One must understand, Madam Speaker, that the independence of the DPP is not only vital for justice but it is crucial for the very survival of our democratic institutions. The role of the DPP in Mauritius, as set out under section 72 of our Constitution, confers upon him the power to initiate control and discontinue criminal proceedings.

Now, Madam Speaker, with the adoption of the present Bail Act back in the year 1999, the presumption in favour of bail was given a statutory footing under section 3 of the Act. In

fact, section 3 provided that every defendant or detainee shall be entitled to be released on bail subject to section 4, and section 4 of the Act provided exhaustively the grounds on which a Court may refuse to release on bail a defendant or a detainee.

Now, one major shortcoming in the Act, which is precisely what is sought to be curbed, what is sought to be corrected under the present amendment, was that it did not clearly specify which entity between the Commissioner of Police and that of the DPP was vested with clear powers to decide whether or not to object to the release on bail of a defendant or detainee. And quite regrettably, Madam Speaker, this important shortcoming allowed for a tension to creep into the rapport between the Commissioner of Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions, as section 4, subsection 4 of the Act referred fleetingly to an objection to bail formulated either by the Commissioner of Police or the Director of Public Prosecutions. But it did not, unfortunately, cater for any situation where there is a conflict, there is a divergence of opinion between those two posts as to whether or not a defendant or detainee ought to be released on bail. *Et bien évidemment, Madame la présidente, cette incertitude, cette lacune dans nos lois a été utilisée tout naturellement par le MSM, fidèle à son habitude, à travers l'ancien commissaire de police, à des fins politiques, afin de satisfaire un agenda politique et dans l'unique but de persécuter ses adversaires politiques.*

In fact, when a political party controls the prosecution process, Madam Speaker, there is danger. There is danger: danger that the justice system will be used as a tool for retribution; danger of a loss of trust in the legal system, leading to an erosion of our democratic values. And it is precisely the mandate of this newly elected Government, Madam Speaker, to consolidate our constitutional and democratic values already embodied in our Government Programme. Justice cannot, Madam Speaker, be impartial if those in power can manipulate it for their own political advantage, and this is, in fact, precisely why an independent judiciary, and by extension, an independent Director of Public Prosecutions is essential for the protection of human rights and the rule of law.

This Bill, Madam Speaker, provides that where the Commissioner of Police intends to object to the release of bail of a defendant or detainee, he will now be under an obligation to seek the legal advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions and will be bound by such advice and decision of the DPP. And by adopting this mechanism, Madam Speaker, the Bail (Amendment) Bill seeks to grant a prerogative to the DPP who, unlike the Commissioner of Police, is always required to be a person with legal training and experience as a barrister in order to be eligible for the post. In fact, a legal background, in my very humble view, Madam

Speaker, is essential to enable the decision maker, the DPP, to assess whether the exceptions to bail, as set out under section 4 of the Act, can be invoked and whether such motion has a reasonable prospect of success. And this, undoubtedly, Madam Speaker, allows for an efficient allocation of resources and to present before the Court only meritorious cases for a lawful restriction of a person's freedom of movement. It is also apposite to recall that the DPP is required, Madam Speaker, to act fairly and impartially in presenting a case and it is not the role of the DPP to secure a conviction at all costs.

In my humble view, Madam Speaker, in fact, he is a disinterested party insofar as a defendant or a detainee is concerned. Lastly, Madam Speaker, the DPP's security of tenure is akin to that of a Supreme Court Judge, reinforcing the very notion that justice cannot and should not be influenced by political or external pressures.

Madame la présidente, je faillirais à mon devoir si je ne profitais pas de cette occasion qui m'est accordée aujourd'hui pour exprimer quand même une certaine crainte ; une certaine crainte par rapport à l'application d'un aspect de ce *Bail (Amendment Act)*. Cette loi, Madame la présidente, si elle est votée, si elle est promulguée - et elle le sera certainement - pose quand même une certaine difficulté. Donc, j'ai une crainte. Si elle est votée, elle aura pour conséquence qu'il y aura un nombre grandissant de dossiers qui seront référés au bureau du Directeur des poursuites publiques. Et là, nous avons probablement une difficulté, dans la mesure où il est impératif que ces dossiers soient traités, soit étudiés de manière rapide et diligente, puisqu'il y va de la liberté de l'individu ; il y va de la liberté du citoyen mauricien.

Donc, il est impératif, *Madam Speaker*, que nous ne nous retrouvions pas dans une situation – et là, je parle un peu sous la correction de mes confrères et consœurs ici présents, dont vous-même, Madame la présidente – où nous sommes en cour, ayant à faire face à des demandes répétitives de renvoi de la part du représentant de la poursuite sous prétexte que *the stand of the DPP is not ready*. On ne le souhaiterait pas. C'est une phrase que nous entendons souvent en cour nécessairement, n'est-ce pas, *Madam Speaker*. Donc, je souhaite que le bureau du Directeur des poursuites publiques fasse des arrangements nécessaires afin qu'une équipe soit dédiée justement pour traiter ces dossiers en toute urgence et avec diligence puisque, comme je l'ai dit, il y va de la liberté du citoyen mauricien.

En guise de conclusion, *Madam Speaker*, *if we agree that the power of prosecute must rest with an independent Director of Public Prosecutions as the principle is enshrined under section 72 of our Constitution, it logically follows that we should also agree that the power to*

*object or not to object to the release on bail of a defendant also rests with an independent Director of Public Prosecutions. And this is precisely what the Bill brings about, and this is precisely why I am supporting this Bill.*

*Thank you, Madam Speaker.*

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you for respecting the time.

Hon. Prime Minister!

(6.05 p.m.)

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, recent times have seen an unprecedented, I should also say unfortunate conflict between the Commissioner of Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions in matters relating to bail. Of relevance, as hon. Baboolall mentioned, is the case of the Commissioner of Police against Mr Akil Bissessur and others. The police objected to bail in that case for Mr Bissessur, but the Office of the DPP representing the Commissioner of Police had no objection. That should have been the end of the matter, but, in spite of this, the representative of the police, in Court, made a statement to state that the stand of this Commissioner of Police was to object to bail in the present case in spite of what the DPP had said and went further to say that if need be, the Office of the Commissioner of Police will solicit help from outside of the DPP's Office. In fact, the Commissioner of Police hired the services of counsel from the Bar to represent the police and entered a case before the Supreme Court to quash the decision of the District Magistrate.

The Supreme Court refused to intervene in the matter pursuant to section 82(1) of the Constitution. As I have said, Madam Speaker, this is unprecedented. I think hon. Baboolall put his finger on it. It should never have happened; we should not have had the Bill today. Worse, Madam Speaker, public funds had to be dished out to various lawyers, which was totally unnecessary. Waste of public funds; dishing out money to lawyers chosen by the Commissioner of Police, probably in cohort with the Prime Minister, and we do not have to guess who were the lawyers and how they were chosen!

From August 2021 to November 2024, the CP has retained the services of five counsels for eight cases, including one King's Counsel and one attorney – we all know who the attorney is. The cost to the State, as hon. Ramdass just said, is over Rs14 m. Over Rs14 m.! The only objective was to undermine the professional integrity of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions – a post which is constitutional. This situation arose because as per the then provisions of the Bail Act, namely section 4 (4) of the Bail Act –



## Section 4

“(4)

(a) Where a Magistrate has ordered the release on bail of a defendant or [a detainee notwithstanding an objection by the Commissioner of Police or the Director of Public Prosecutions on any of the grounds set out in this section], the Commissioner of Police or the Director of Public Prosecutions; [as the case may be], may, within 7 days of the determination of the Magistrate, apply to the Supreme Court for an order setting aside the decision of the Magistrate [to release the defendant or detainee].”

Conflicts of such nature between law enforcement authorities undermine public confidence in our institutions and must never be allowed to happen again. Such conflicts could also be due because nobody in their right mind thought that this could happen. This is why we have to come with this amendment to the Bill, to make it clear what are the provisions of the new Bail Act, especially in cases where bail is objected to or in cases where a decision to grant bail is challenged.

In order to avoid such situations from recurring, through the Amendment Bill that is being brought to the House, we want to make it absolutely clear what are the powers of the Director of Public Prosecutions and what are those of the Commissioner of Police.

First of all, we have to make it crystal clear what we mean by detainee, the definition of a detainee. Under the current law –

““detainee” means a person who is under arrest upon reasonable suspicion of having committed an offence;”

From what we see now, “reasonable suspicion” leaves room for interpretation, and it is a wide definition. Under this Amendment Bill, in order not to leave any room for doubt as who is concerned by the provisions of this Act, a detainee is defined as –

““detainee” means a person who is under arrest and is provisionally charged before a Court;”

The ambiguity of the law, as it is, requires more clarity. This is why, now, with this Bill

–

“5. **Section 4 of principal Act amended**

(3) where an application for release on bail of a defendant or a detainee is refused, the Court shall place on record the written reasons for its determination.”

Additionally, the Bill provides for a situation of conflicts in relation to the release on bail of a defendant or a detainee. Accordingly, the sole discretion not to object to bail would be that of the Commissioner of Police. However, where the Commissioner of Police has the intention to object to the release on bail of a defendant or a detainee, he shall seek the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and the decision not to object or not will rest solely with the Director of Public Prosecutions.

More importantly, Madam Speaker, the law as it currently stands, provides that when a magistrate has ordered the release on bail of a defendant or a detainee, both the Commissioner of Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions have the power to challenge the decision before the Supreme Court. That shall no longer be the case. The Bill provides that the power to challenge such decision before the Supreme Court shall henceforth rest solely with the Director of Public Prosecutions. Nothing to do with the Commissioner of Police!

The Bail (Amendment) Bill, therefore, will give greater clarity and unambiguity to the respective powers of the CP and the DPP in relation to bail. This amendment, Madam Speaker, to the Bail Act makes it clear what are the powers of the CP and what are the powers of the DPP in relation to bail.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you very much. You will probably be in time for Iftar, I suppose.

**Mr Mohamed:** Yes, there is time.

(6.13 p.m.)

Madam Speaker, thank you very much. I would like to thank all those who have participated in this debate.

Again, what we have heard is the importance of democracy; what we have heard is liberty, and we have also heard about ‘gel’! But all this with the whole idea of what we have to do away with! In God’s name, thank God, we did away with them! We are now fighting, struggling and working together as one country, as one people, in order to restore democracy.

Let me also, at this juncture, state the following: it is quite interesting how things change in life, and so fast! Only a few years back, I recall, since I am a barrister by profession, I was involved in a case that is being dealt with – so, there is no issue of conflict – , I am sure that the then accused would not mind me saying his name today. It was Bruneau Laurette. I remember when I was in Court appearing for him to move for bail, all those sections of the law that we have seen, how it has been abused of by the then Commissioner of Police, came up.

We won bail in spite of it being a very difficult task. I recall how in those days, there was fake democracy, as a hon. Member said. Why do I say that? Because when we won bail, the Commissioner of Police issued a communiqué. That was on 28 February 2023. For all to remember, in that communiqué, the Commissioner of Police said the following –

“The decision of the Office of the DPP therefore creates an ‘evil precedent’.”

That ‘evil precedent’ that the then Commissioner of Police was referring to was the decision of the Office of the DPP, after having looked at the ruling of learned magistrate, decided that he will not object to the release. The Commissioner of Police, for the first time in history, for the first time ever since we had our Constitution, our independence, went as far as to say it was an ‘evil precedent.’ To add insult to injury, what did the then Prime Minister do? He made a declaration and he said –

*“Mafia finn infiltrre ban institision sa pei la.”*

The GIS published the communiqué of the Commissioner of Police. The GIS does not publish the communiqué of a Commissioner of Police! The GIS publishes the work of Government – the Executive! So, there had disappeared the respect one must have for institutions, where the Commissioner of Police had himself felt that he was part of the Government Ministers! He was a little department in the Office of the Prime Minister whereby whatever he said had to be aligned with what the then Prime Minister wanted, and had to be published by the GIS!

Those days are over! When hon. Mrs Leu-Govind said, ‘let Mauritius be Mauritius again’, how right she is! This is what we are standing up to fight for. So, this is a very important date for democracy. I said it last time when I intervened, I say it again: it is a pity that the Leader of the Opposition is not present here. His position, his role and his responsibility are in the Constitution. It is not only for him to earn his packet at the end of the month! It is for him to be here and to be the voice of the people!

But then, not only is he not here, they will also not be at the Municipal Elections! Then, again, as I said, things change very rapidly! I will say to the Almighty: thank God, we are now coming on the right path.

So, these are my words, Madam Speaker. I do commend this Bill to the House.

**Madam Speaker:** Thank you.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill read a second time and committed.*

**Madam Speaker:** You are not going to miss Iftar.

### COMMITTEE STAGE

*(Madam Speaker in the Chair)*

*The Bail (Amendment) Bill (No. III of 2025) was considered and agreed to.*

*On the Assembly resuming with Madam Speaker in the Chair, Madam Speaker reported accordingly.*

#### *Third Reading*

*On motion made and seconded, the Bail (Amendment) Bill (No. III of 2025) was read a third time and passed.*

### ADJOURNMENT

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 08 April 2025 at 11.30 a.m.

**The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.**

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Madam Speaker:** The House stands adjourned.

*At 6.21 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 08 April 2025 at 11.30 a.m.*

### WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### RODRIGUES – PORT MATHURIN PORT MASTER PLAN

**(No. B/204) Mr F. François (Second Member for Rodrigues)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of

Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to Port Mathurin Port Development Master Plan, he will state where matters stand as to the implementation thereof.

**Reply:** The Mauritius Ports Authority is required under Section 5 of the Ports Act to prepare and periodically update a port master plan for Mauritius and Rodrigues with a view to formulating its policy for port development and land use. The Mauritius Ports Authority is responsible for the proper implementation of such master plans.

I am informed by the Acting Director-General of the Mauritius Ports Authority that the services of HaskoningDHV Nederland B.V. were enlisted on 30 May 2023 to update the forecasts and recommendations contained in the Port Master Plan 2016. As part of their scope of services, the Consultants also reviewed the port master plan for Port Mathurin which trades solely with Port Louis.

I am informed that the consultants undertook a field visit to Rodrigues on 16 and 17 August 2023 for data collection and interactions with the then Chief Commissioner of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and other stakeholders.

On 19 August 2024, the consultants made a presentation of the main findings and recommendations of the draft final port master plan study to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and other concerned parties in Rodrigues.

The final port master plan was submitted on 07 October 2024 to the Mauritius Ports Authority.

The Board of the Mauritius Ports Authority has, on 18 March 2025, approved the findings and recommendations of the port master plan.

I am informed that the Mauritius Ports Authority and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will meet on 26 March 2025 to discuss the recommendations of the Report and the way forward.

#### **COCAINE DISCOVERY – TRACTOPELLE’S ENGINE – INQUIRY**

**(No. B/205) Dr. F. Aumeer (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the 95 kgs of cocaine discovered in the engine of a tractopelle in July 2019, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to

where matters stand as to the inquiry initiated thereinto, indicating the number of arrests, if any, effected in connection therewith to date.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that on 10 July 2019, at around 15:30 hours, the employees of Scomat Ltd, located at Grewals Lane, Pailles, discovered three black kit bags while inspecting the engine compartment of a Wheel Loader imported from Brazil. The black bags which were concealed near the exhaust muffler, contained suspicious substances. They informed the Service Manager, who subsequently sought the assistance of the Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (ADSU).

Upon the arrival of the ADSU officers, the three bags, which were suspected to contain cocaine, were handed over to them for investigation. At the ADSU Headquarters, the exhibits were weighed together with the wrappings. The total weight of the exhibits was 92.5 kilograms, with an estimated street value of Rs1.4 billion.

The exhibits were sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory for examination. On 14 July 2020, the Laboratory forwarded its report to the ADSU, confirming that the exhibits secured were indeed cocaine. As of 14 March 2025, statements were recorded from twenty persons and one person was interviewed in connection with the case but no person was arrested.

I am further informed that on 17 June 2022, the case file was forwarded to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for advice and on 01 July 2022, it was referred to the Police with queries. After these queries were addressed, the case file was resubmitted to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions on 23 July 2023. On 01 August 2023, the case file was returned to the Police with instructions to keep it in abeyance pending confirmation from the Financial Intelligence Unit as to whether they have any information on this matter. The Financial Intelligence Unit has up to now not submitted any reply.

On 10 August 2021, the Wheel Loader was returned to Scomat Ltd following the advice of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

This is again another high-profile case which the previous Government allowed to remain unresolved for nearly five years, with no concrete progress. As I have indicated in my reply to the Parliamentary Question B/78 during the Sitting of 04 March 2025, my Government has enlisted the services of foreign investigating bodies to assist the Police in its investigation to elucidate high-profile cases, including this one.

**MR P. K. DEATH – INQUIRY**

**(No. B/206) Mr F. Quirin (Third Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the death of Mr P. K. on 11 December 2020, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to where matters stand as to the inquiry initiated thereinto.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that on 11 December 2020 at 09.40 hrs, Police attended a request at “La Roche qui Pleure”, Souillac and found the dead body of a male person. The dead body was conveyed to New Souillac Hospital.

The body was identified as one Pravin Kanakiah, Procurement and Supply Officer/Senior Procurement and Supply Officer posted at the Government Analyst Division, Reduit under the purview of the Ministry of Health and Wellness. He was reported missing at Moka Police Station on 10 December 2020.

On the same day, the Chief Police Medical Officer performed an autopsy on the dead body and attributed death to ‘Traumatic Subarachnoid Haemorrhage’.

On 16 December 2020, the case was referred to Major Crime Investigation Team for an in-depth enquiry and during the course of the enquiry 35 persons were interviewed by the Police. On 10 February 2022, the report on the investigation conducted by the Police was sent to the Office of Director of Public Prosecutions for advice.

On 26 April 2023, the Office of Director of Public Prosecutions required the District Magistrate of Savanne to hold an inquiry into the cause of death of Mr Pravin Kanakiah and the circumstances connected with it. The Judicial Inquiry was lodged on 02 June 2023.

I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the matter is still being heard before the District Court of Savanne. The last hearing was held yesterday, Monday, 24 March 2025, and the next hearing has been fixed for continuation on Wednesday, 02 April 2025.

#### **CONSTITUENCY NO. 9 – DRUGS & ILLICIT PRODUCTS’ SEIZURE & CONVICTIONS**

**(No. B/207) Mr R. Beehook (Second Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fight against drugs in Constituency No. 9 Flacq and Bon Accueil, he will, for the benefit of the House,

obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of searches carried out in relation thereto in the said constituency over the past ten years, indicating the –

- (a) amount of drugs and other illicit products seized in the course thereof and the value thereof;
- (b) number of arrests effected, and
- (c) number of convictions secured.

*(Withdrawn)*

**POLICE INQUIRIES – CHARGES AGAINST SUSPECTS – RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS RANKS**

**(No. B/208) Mrs A. Savabaddy (First Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to Police inquiries, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the rank of Police Officers responsible for the determination of the section of the law under which charges are preferred against suspects, indicating if legal advice is sought prior thereto.

*(Withdrawn)*

**GOODLANDS POLICE STATION – POLICE OFFICERS & VEHICLES**

**(No. B/209) Mr N. Beejan (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Goodlands Police Station, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the –

- (a) number of –
  - (i) Police Officers posted thereat, indicating their respective rankings, and
  - (ii) vehicles attached thereto, and
- (b) measures being envisaged, if any, to increase the manpower thereat for more effective policing within its jurisdiction.

*(Withdrawn)*

**MAURITIAN PASSPORT – BIOMETRIC FORMAT – CONVERSION**



**(No. B/210) Mr L. Caserne (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Mauritian passport, he will state if consideration will be given for the conversion thereof into biometric format and, if so, when and, if not, why not.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARIES –RECRUITMENT EXERCISE 2023**

**(No. B/211) Mr N. Beejan (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the recruitment exercise for the post of Deputy Permanent Secretaries, advertised in 2023, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to the number thereof recruited.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **MAURITIUS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY – NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION – EXTENSION TO RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**(No. B/212) Mr F. François (Second Member for Rodrigues)** asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister of Finance, Minister for Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the proposed construction of a new building to house the Mauritius National Assembly under the India-Mauritius Joint Vision for an Enhanced Strategic Partnership, he will state the –

- (a) site identified, if any, therefor;
- (b) preliminary works carried out, if any, therefor, and
- (c) if consideration will be given to extending this cooperation for the construction of a new building to house the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

**Reply:** It is worth recalling that in 2015 the then Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms unveiled what the previous government described as the ambitious Heritage City project which in effect was but an eccentric and ego-centric project to house key government institutions including the Prime Minister's Office and a new Parliament building, at an estimated cost of USD800 m., that is, Rs36 billion, as per the current conversion rate from USD to Mauritian Rupee.

The project became a subject of internecine squabbles over its feasibility, financial viability and environmental implications. What emerged was a growing belief that the project was not just mismanaged but potentially a well-thought-out scam. An amount of Rs39.7 m. was paid to the firm Stree Consulting for preliminary studies.

In 2016, Cabinet decided to discontinue the Heritage City project amidst concerns over its high costs and potential risks.

Notwithstanding the decision taken in 2016 not to go ahead with the overambitious Heritage City project, the previous government, in January 2024, agreed to the implementation of a new mega-project, the development of an Administrative City at Côte d'Or on land of an extent of about 18 arpents, which would comprise four Government Administrative Buildings and a new Parliament House. This project was included in the Public Sector Investment Programme 2024-2027 and was proposed to be implemented in phases at a total cost estimated at Rs8.5 billion, excluding the construction of the new Parliament House.

In regard to the proposed new Parliament House, I am informed that the previous government had held preliminary discussions with the Government of India on the possibility of financial assistance being extended to the Government of Mauritius for that project. It was understood that the Indian architect firm HCP Design, Planning and Management Pvt. Ltd. would be approached for the conceptual design of the new Parliament House and working out the cost estimates. On 24 September 2024, Cabinet took the decision to set up a Project Monitoring Committee under the chair of the Prime Minister's Office for that purpose. However, there has been no follow up since then.

It is in this context that the project was included by the Indian side in the discussions that led to the adoption of the Mauritius-India Joint Vision for an Enhanced Strategic Partnership during the recent visit of the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, on the understanding that the Government of India would provide grant assistance for the project.

I wish to highlight that the projects identified under areas of collaboration with the Indian Government in the strategic partnership document, will be implemented on a priority basis. The proposed New Parliament House project will be discussed anew with the Indian authorities in due course. The whole concept, including the identification of a new site and the proposal to include a new building to house the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, may then be reviewed.

**FSC/OECD REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE – ACHIEVEMENTS –  
FUNDING & EXPENDITURE**

**(No. B/237) Mr K. Rookny (Third Member for Pamplémousses & Triolet)** asked the Minister of Financial Services and Economic Planning whether, in regard to the Financial Services Commission/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (FSC/OECD) Regional Centre of Excellence, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to the –

- (a) background, objectives and mandate thereof;
- (b) specific achievements made under each of its objectives to date;
- (c) annual expenditure of the Centre, and
- (d) key performance indicators put in place to ensure that public funds are utilised efficiently, and
- (e) the term/duration of the Memorandum of Understanding between the FSC/OECD.

*(Withdrawn)*

**PLAINE MAGNIEN – SHELTERED FARMING PARK – BENEFICIARIES**

**(No. B/238) Mr C. Lukeeram (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries whether, in regard to sheltered farming park at Plaine Magnien, he will state and table a list of the beneficiaries thereof, indicating –

- (a) if all the units have been leased and are under cultivation, and
- (b) amount of rent due, if any, by each beneficiary and, if so, further indicate if consideration will be given for the re-allocation thereof in case of default.

*(Withdrawn)*

**NATIONAL PENSION APPEAL TRIBUNAL – APPEAL PROTOCOL REVIEW**

**(No. B/240) Mrs A. Savabaddy (First Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Minister of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity whether, in regard to the National Pension Appeal Tribunal, he will state –

- (a) the number of pending cases thereat;
- (b) the timeframe for the hearing and disposal of an appeal;
- (c) the assistance provided to appellants, if any, and

- (d) if he will consider reviewing the actual protocol for a more humane approach when dealing with and determining such cases thereat.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **BEL AIR – DEPLORABLE ROADS – REMEDIAL WORKS**

**(No. B/241) Mr C. Baboolall (First Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE)** asked the Minister of National Infrastructure whether, in regard to the Père Dorbec Road and Chemin Kamilaye in Bel Air, he will state if he has been made aware of the deplorable state thereof and, if so, indicate –

- (a) when remedial works will be carried out thereat, and
- (b) the expected completion date thereof.

**Reply:** Pipe replacement works are being carried out along Railway Road, Damree Road, Dorbec Road and its laterals in the region of Bel Air, Flacq by the Central Water Authority.

It is expected that permanent road reinstatement will be undertaken by the Central Water Authority's contractor as from the second week of April 2025 and would be completed in one week's time.

With regard to Kalimaye Road, ten pits were excavated for reparation works and connection of new water supply by the Central Water Authority.

Reinstatement works would be undertaken by the Central Water Authority's contractor and works are expected to start by end of March 2025. Same will be completed by the first week of April 2025.

### **RING ROAD PROJECT, PHASE 2 & 3 – IMPLEMENTATION**

**(No. B/242) Mr L. Caserne (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Minister of National Infrastructure whether, in regard to Phases 2 and 3 of the Ring Road Project, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Road Development Authority, information as to whether consideration will be given for the implementation thereof and, if so, when and if not, why not.

*(Withdrawn)*

**POSTE DE FLACQ REGION – FLOODING ISSUES – MITIGATION PLAN**

(No. B/243) Mr R. Beehook (Second Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil) asked the Minister of National Infrastructure whether, in regard to the recurring flooding issues in Poste de Flacq and surrounding area and the subsequent site visit effected by Officers of the Land Drainage Authority on Wednesday 5 February 2025, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to where matters stand as to the proposed mitigation actions plan to be implemented thereat.

*(Withdrawn)*

**RENEWABLE ENERGY HYBRID FACILITIES PROJECT – PPA – BREACH & DAMAGES**

(No. B/244) Mr T. Apollon (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the renewable energy hybrid facilities projects by SPV 30MV Belle Vue 2 Ltd., and SPV 30MV Belle Vue 3 Ltd., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to –

- (a) whether the projects are in breach of the provisions of the Power Purchase Agreement signed therefor, indicating if the dates for their coming into operation have been respected, and
- (b) the total amount of damages, if any, paid to the Board.

*(Vide Reply to PQ B/214)*

**RESIDENCES CITÉ LA CHAUX – STATE LAND – LEASEHOLDERS**

(No. B/245) Mr C. Lukeeram (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Housing and Lands whether, in regard to State land at Residences Cité La Chaux, he will state the number of leaseholders thereof, indicating the mechanism, if any, put in place at the Ministry to regularise these leases and/or if consideration will be given to amending the law to make the lessees owners of their lands.

*(Withdrawn)*

**QUATRE BORNES – PAVILLON FOOTBALL PLAYGROUND – UPGRADING**

**(No. B/246) Ms S. Anquetil (Second Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the Pavillon Football playground in Quatre Bornes, he will state if consideration will be given to –

- (a) improve the lighting thereof;
- (b) replace the defective fencing, and
- (c) fix the rocky surface thereof.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **CWA – PIPE LAYING PROJECT – CONTRACTORS & FUNDS**

**(No. B/247) Mr B. Babajee (First Member for Savanne & Black River)** asked the Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the pipe laying project across the island, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Water Authority, information as to the amount of funds disbursed therefor, indicating –

- (a) if the project was carried out by contractors or in-house workers;
- (b) where works have not yet been completed, and
- (c) the reasons why the pipes were not buried at the depth of 900mm as per specifications.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **STRAY DOGS – RISING POPULATION – REMEDIAL ACTIONS**

**(No. B/248) Mr L. Caserne (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries whether, in regard to stray dogs, he will state if he has been made aware of the increasing number thereof over the past years and, if so, indicate the remedial actions being envisaged in relation thereto.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **LAND DRAINAGE MASTER PLAN – PUBLICATION**

**(No. B/249) Mr A. Duval (Fourth Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue)** asked the Minister of National Infrastructure whether, in regard to the Land Drainage Master Plan, he will state where matters stand as to the proposition to making the document public.

*(Withdrawn)*

**MAHEBOURG, HARRY LATOUR STADIUM – RENOVATION WORKS**

(No. B/250) Mr C. Lukeeram (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the renovation works being carried out at the Harry Latour Stadium at Mahebourg, he will state where matters stand, indicating the terms and conditions of the contract awarded therefor.

*(Withdrawn)*

**COP30 – NDC 3.0 – CONSULTATIONS**

(No. B/251) Mr J. F. François (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change whether, in regard to the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) 3.0 update for the forthcoming COP30, he will state where matters stand, indicating –

- (a) if consultations have been held thereon with the community at large;
- (b) the financing mechanisms and strategies put in place therefor, and
- (c) the outcomes of the previous NDC.

*(Withdrawn)*

**ST MARTIN, PIG FARMS – LEASES – PRODUCTION YIELD & INSPECTIONS**

(No. B/252) Mr K. Rookny (Third Member for Pamplemousses & Triolet) asked Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries whether, in regard to the pig farms set up by the Ministry at St Martin, he will state the –

- (a) number of pig farmers granted leases thereat;
- (b) production/yield compared to the optimal production capacity for the land deployed thereat for pig farming;
- (c) frequency at which inspection is carried out thereat and the reports produced, and
- (d) number of applications received for lease of land to operate pig farms at St Martin over the last five years, indicating the number thereof –
  - (i) approved and land allocated therefor, and
  - (ii) turned down and the reasons therefor.

*(Withdrawn)*

**PUBLIC SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD – OBJECTIVES & ELIGIBILITY  
CRITERIA**

**(No. B/254) Ms R. M. Collet (First Member for Rodrigues)** asked the Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reforms whether, in regard to the Public Service Excellence Award, she will state the –

- (a) objectives thereof;
- (b) eligibility criteria to participate therein, and
- (c) scope of participation for public officers in Rodrigues.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **TAXI OPERATORS WELFARE FUND – FUNDS COLLECTED & EXPENSES**

**(No. B/255) Mr C. Lukeeram (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Minister of Land Transport whether, in regard to the Taxi Operators Welfare Fund, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to –

- (a) the amount of funds collected and expenses incurred therefrom since its implementation to date;
- (b) if consideration will be given to amending the relevant legislation to render contribution thereto optional, and
- (c) if a proper medical scheme has been designed for taxi operators registered thereunder.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **PESTICIDES – USAGE MECHANISM & SENSITISATION CAMPAIGN**

**(No. B/256) Ms M. R. Collet (First Member for Rodrigues)** asked the Minister of Health and Wellness whether, in regard to pesticides, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Dangerous Chemicals Control Board, information as to the –

- (a) mechanisms put in place to monitor the use and handling thereof, indicating the statistics provided by licensed companies thereon;
- (b) sensitisation campaigns held and/or proposed to be held on the use thereof in Rodrigues, and
- (c) names of the representatives from Rodrigues on the Board.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **PBAT – HEADMASTER & DEPUTY HEADMASTER – APPOINTMENT CASES**



**(No. B/257) Mr K. Lobine (First Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked Minister of Education and Human Resource whether, in regard to cases referred to the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal regarding the appointment of officers to the grades of Headmaster and Deputy Headmaster since 2019 to 2021 and after the final determination of the Tribunal confirming their substantive appointment, he will state if a High-Powered Committee was set up to that effect and, if so, indicate the recommendations made by the Committee regarding payment of gratuity and pension benefits for all those officers who retired before the final determination of the Tribunal.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **DRUG ADDICTS – REHABILITATION & TREATMENT**

**(No. B/258) Mr K. Rookny (Third Member for Pamplemousses & Triolet)** asked the Minister of Health and Wellness whether, in regard to the rehabilitation of drug addicts, he will state the –

- (a) protocols put in place therefor, indicating the treatments administered;
- (b) amount of funds spent by Government on such programs over the past three years, indicating if any survey has been carried out to assess the effectiveness thereof, and
- (c) number of drug addicts salvaged from this scourge over the past ten years, indicating the number of cases of overdose recorded due to drug abuse.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **CHIKUNGUNYA – REPORTED CASES**

**(No. B/259) Mr B. Babajee (First Member for Savanne & Black River)** asked the Minister of Health and Wellness whether, in regard to Chikungunya, he will state the number of suspected cases thereof, since January 2025 to date, reported –

- (a) at public hospitals, community health centres and mediclinics, and
- (b) by private medical practitioners, indicating the number of positive cases thereof identified.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **CONSTITUENCY NO. 13 – HOUSING UNITS – DISMANTLING**

**(No. B/260) Mr R. Jhummun (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac)** asked the Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change whether, in regard to the housing units containing asbestos, he will state the number thereof identified in Constituency No. 13, Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac, indicating the –

- (a) expected timeframe for the dismantling thereof, and
- (b) redeployment plan, if any, devised therefor.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **BEL AIR – FOOTBALL PITCH – REMEDIAL WORKS**

**(No. B/262) Mr C. Baboolall (First Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE)** asked Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the football pitch situated behind the St Esprit Church in Bel Air, he will state if he has been made aware of the bad conditions thereof and of its surrounding walls and, if so, indicate –

- (a) when remedial works will be carried out, and
- (b) the expected completion date thereof.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **NTC – SPARE PARTS – PROCUREMENT EXERCISE**

**(No. B/263) Mr K. Lobine (First Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Minister of Land Transport whether, in regard to the National Transport Corporation, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the bidding exercises launched by the Corporation for the procurement and award of contracts for spare parts since January 2023 to date, indicating –

- (a) the names of the suppliers thereof, further indicating in each case the –
  - (i) contractual value thereof, and
  - (ii) amount paid to the suppliers, and
- (b) if he has been aware of any irregularities and/or malpractices regarding the procurement thereof.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **SICOM LTD – PENSION FUNDS 2012-2024 – MISMANAGEMENT**

**(No. B/264) Mr R. Jummun (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac)** asked the Minister of Financial Services and Economic Planning whether, in regard to the

pension funds managed by the State Insurance Company of Mauritius Ltd., she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom information as to –

- (a) the status of the funds since 2014 to 2024, indicating the qualifications and benefits drawn by those managing same, and
- (b) whether any case of mismanagement has been reported in relation thereto and, if so, the remedial actions taken thereon.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLE (TAXI) LICENSE – HOTEL-BASED OPERATORS**

**(No. B/265) Mr B. Babajee (First Member for Savanne & Black River)** asked the Minister of Land Transport whether, in regard to the Public Service Vehicle (Taxi) Licence with hotels as base of operation issued over the past ten years, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Land Transport Authority, information as to the number thereof, indicating –

- (a) the procedures followed for the allocation thereof, and
- (b) if all applicants complied with the required criteria in terms of –
  - (i) character certificate test;
  - (ii) age of applicant, and
  - (iii) number of taxis per hotels.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **MAURITIUS EEZ – FISHING LICENSES – FOREIGN COMPANIES**

**(No. B/266) Mr R. Etwareea (Third Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries whether, in regard to the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Mauritius, he will state –

- (a) the number of –
  - (i) fishing licenses awarded to foreign companies, indicating the conditions attached thereto, and
- (b) bilateral fisheries partnership agreements signed, indicating the –
  - (i) countries concerned therewith, and
  - (ii) conditions attached thereto, and
- (c) where matters stand as to fish stocks taking in our sea.

*(Withdrawn)*