



SIXTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

(UNREVISED)

FIRST SESSION

WEDNESDAY 17 AUGUST 2016

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BILL (*Public*)

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Hon. Showkutally Soodhun, GCSK	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands
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MAURITIUS

Sixth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 28 of 2016

Sitting of 17 August 2016

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

The National Anthem was played

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

MOTION

SUSPENSION OF S.O. 10(2)

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

The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

ANNOUNCEMENT

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY - CONSIDERATION OF VOTE ITEMS

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, before we proceed with the resumption of the Committee of Supply, I have to inform the House that I will not accept questions on policy matters.

Furthermore, for an optimum use of time, I will request hon. Members to put short and precise questions and request hon. Ministers also to be short and precise in their answers.

I also have to remind hon. Members that both Whips have agreed on the allocation of time in respect of each vote item. Flexibility will as usual be exercised, as and when necessary, but I appeal to all hon. Members to collaborate for the smooth running of the exercise.

PUBLIC BILL

THE APPROPRIATION (2016-2017) BILL 2016

(NO. XVII of 2016)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

Vote 7-1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Page 161, Madam Chairperson, in relation to the opening of an Embassy in Saudi Arabia...

The Chairperson: Page 160 first. As usual, page by page.

(Interruptions)

Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under *Main Achievement for FY 2015/16*, I see that there is an *Agreement for the setting up of a Joint Commission and a General Framework Agreement signed with Madagascar*. May we know the composition of that Commission and when was the last time that Commission sat?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: The decision was taken in March 2016 for the setting up of a Joint Commission between Madagascar and Mauritius. We are in the process of processing the whole file; it will take some time.

Mr Uteem: Under *Strategic Direction 2016-2019*, mention is made for *the opening of new Embassies* - in the plural - but in the *Key Action*, there is one Embassy in Saudi Arabia that is scheduled to be opened. So, may I know from the hon. Minister where are we going to have the other Embassies mentioned in the Strategic Direction?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, thanks for the question. We have taken the decision to go ahead with the opening of the Embassy in Jeddah. As present, in the Budget, we have two items of expenditure in connection with the opening of Embassies and Consular representatives. We have one, which is the Embassy in Saudi Arabia, and the second one is the opening in Reunion Island of a *Consul general*. Both are being processed.

Mr Ameer Meea: Page 160, under *Main Achievement, Visa Exemption Agreement signed with Russia, Ghana, Indonesia and UAE*. As the hon. Minister is aware, we have discussed this issue in the House in relation to visa exemption for United Arab Emirates. Only Government Officials, and this, on official mission, are exempted for visa in UAE. So, can I ask the hon. Minister where are matters regarding all Mauritians to be exempted visa to Dubai, the more so that the UAE people don't need visa to come to Mauritius?

The Chairperson: Hon. Member, you are asking a question which relates mostly to policy. Where is the related cost aspect in it? Can you tell me?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: It's a process. With UAE, it is a process. The first one has been that officials on mission with a diplomatic passport will be exempted from the payment of entrance visa, but we are in the process of discussions with the authorities to ensure that gradually all Mauritians be exempted from the payment of visa.

Mr Bhagwan: Page 161, *Promotion of Investment in Strategic Markets – Number of Counsellors (Economic Matters) recruited*: 7. Can we have the names of the persons who have been recruited, the process of recruitment, and where they have been posted?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, I thank the Member for putting a question, because this relates to the economic diplomacy, as announced in the programme of Government Lepep. On top of this, it relates to our new economic diplomacy strategy, which involves, in fact, that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will, in the course of time, within the next three years, have a new department, which will be made up of economic and trade counsellors. But, in the process, it takes time. Therefore, in-between, we are going to recruit under contract seven economic and trade advisers that will be posted in the most important markets for Mauritius. As to the process, the procedure for the selection of those people, since those are contracts, they don't go through PSC. Therefore, we are planning to set up a Committee that will comprise of No. 1, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, No. 2, Board of Investment and No. 3, the other organisations which will be involved in the implementation of the measure. We won't forget to put on the board of selection also a representative of Build Mauritius, to ensure total transparency when it comes to selection.

Mr Jhuboo: Concerning the opening of the new Embassy in Riyadh, can we have the cost attributed to the opening of the Embassy?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, that would be too early. We have proposed an item in the Budget for this; but that's too early to say. I must say here that it will all depend on the Saudi Authorities and on the confirmation that they are going to put at our disposal buildings and other facilities. These have been promised and we are waiting for a formal letter from the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Saudi Arabia to ensure, therefore, that the Mauritius Embassy in Jeddah and the consular representative in Riyadh will both have the premises put at our disposal by the Government. Therefore, this is an item which we don't yet know in terms of cost.

Since the hon. Member set up the question of Saudi Arabia and, I am sure, that there are many hon. Members who would like to be informed as to what is happening, we are opening an embassy in Saudi Arabia plus a consular representative in Riyadh.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, I am sorry to interrupt. I just said that questions have to be short and precise and that replies also should be short and precise. Please!

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Okay! I tried to pre-empt, thank you.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, submission of the *First African Peer Review Mechanism Country Progress Report*, can I ask the hon. Minister whether he is prepared to lay a copy of this report in the Assembly?

Mr Jugnauth: May I seek your guidance, Madam Chairperson? Whenever a hon. Member ask any question with regard to the strategic note, he has to relate it to a vote item, so that we may know what are the questions that are being asked with regard to the Estimates. So, may I seek your guidance on that?

The Chairperson: Thank you, hon. Minister. I just said that whatever question has to be asked, and this is why I made an announcement right at the beginning that your questions, should not relate to policy matters. This is the first thing. The second thing is that your question should be related to the cost aspect of the estimates and that is why I just asked hon. Ameer Meea how his question was related to the cost aspect of it. But, the Minister chose to reply. I can't ask the Minister not to reply if he wishes to, but I ask hon. Members to ask questions related to the cost aspect.

Mr Baloomoody: Let us go to the next page then. So, item 21110 – *Minister*. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he is prepared to lay the report of the African Peer Review Mechanism on the Table?

The Chairperson: To which Item are you referring, is it under item 21110?

Mr Baloomoody: Item 21110.001 – *Basic Salary, Minister*.

The Chairperson: The salary of the Minister has nothing to do...

Mr Baloomoody: It is a general item. I am asking the Minister whether he is prepared to lay on the Table a report which his Ministry has prepared.

The Chairperson: Okay, this is either yes or no.

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, I don't mind answering. The hon. Member is referring, in fact, to the first African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) that was approved a long time back in 2003 and whereby countries in the African region need to share information and to cooperate. So, we are supposed to submit a country report on the whole issue. The report is coming out in December 2016.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 162! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: On page 162, under item 21110 – *Ambassador (Roving)*. There is provision for one Roving Ambassador. In the past we had an African Roving Ambassador, so may we know from the hon. Minister where that Ambassador will be roving to?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, there is provision for the nomination of two roving Ambassadors. This has not yet been filled.

Mr Baloomoody: Same question with regard to the Non-Resident Ambassador. There is supposed to be one Non-Resident Ambassador. May we know who is that person and for which country he is supposed to supervise?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: The roving ambassador, Mr Doomun, resigned from employment with effect from 09 June 2014. There has been no nomination since. As for the Non-Resident Ambassador also the post is vacant.

The Chairperson: Okay. Page 163! Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: In relation to *Extra Assistance* under item .005, last year it was Rs1.6 m. and now it is Rs5.4 m.; there has been a massive increase. May we know the reason of such an increase and also the details of this amount?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: The increase is due to two items –

- (i) To PRB, and
- (ii) For the payment of the three advisers who followed me from the Ministry of Finance, namely Mrs Jugmohun, Mr Roopun and Mr Lochun.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Sorefan do you have a question? Is it of a general nature or is it related to one item of expenditure?

Dr. Sorefan: Madam Chairperson, it is not of a general nature, but there is no vote item regarding Russia where we have a private agency promoting tourism to Mauritius. I don't see any item for this. Is this still going on in Russia?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: I would think this question relates more to tourism than to our Ministry.

The Chairperson: It is a question of Policy, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Mr Uteem: At page 162, under Item 21110.001 - *Basic Salary Ambassador* where there is going to be an increase from 17 to 24. May we know from the hon. Minister where will the additional seven ambassadors be located?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: We have 17 Ambassadors in post, 15 on a contract basis and 2 Career Ambassadors. There are 7 vacancies; 5 vacancies for Career Ambassadors and 3 former Ambassadors retired from service, namely Ambassadors Curé, Soborun and Servansingh. I don't know whether I have replied to your question.

(Interruptions)

Maybe the hon. Member is referring to the fact that one Ambassador from Pretoria resigned as he becomes Vice-President and he has been replaced; we are in the process of going through the procedures.

Mr Ameer Meea: In relation to Ambassador, obviously, the sum has increased from Rs21 m. to Rs30 m.. I will link my question to the key performance indicator to the opening of an Embassy in Riyadh and a Consulate in Jeddah. On this side of the House, of course, we are totally for this opening. But, can I ask the hon. Minister what is the rationale behind opening an Embassy plus a consulate in Jeddah?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, I would think that this is a Policy matter, Madam Chairperson.

(Interruptions)

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, item 22030 – *Rent*. We find that there has been a tremendous increase in rent, from ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr Baloomoody: There has been a tremendous increase from Rs137 m. to Rs164 m. may we know which premises we are talking about?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, as far as renting of office is concerned the Ministry is occupying one building, Behlem Ltd. at Sir William Newton Street with a total rent of Rs1,916,247. There is also the question of renting more space on the 8th floor, which is under discussion now. The Ministry is also occupying 5,138 sq. ft in Fooks House and we are also occupying 3,100 ft.² in Moorgate House.

Dr. Joomaye: On the same page, under item 22090 *Security*, we can see that there is an increase in the Budget from Rs4.8 m. to Rs7 m. Can we know what is the purpose of this increase in the budget for security?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: For item 22900 *Other Goods and Services* ...

Madam Chairperson: No, it is Security, hon. Minister, item 22090!

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: The item has increased from Rs4.8 m. to Rs7 m. I must remind the hon. Member that the Estimates for 2015/2016 was Rs7 m. and was underspent. Therefore, the Rs7 m. relates to the provision for security services in Embassies, increase in the price of the services and security services will be provided also in other Embassies.

Mr Baloomoody: May I come back to the issue of *Rent*. The hon. Minister just informed us that they are negotiating to take another floor in the building. I do not know which building. Can I know which procurement procedure is being used and whether there will be tender? What will be the cost of that additional floor per square metre or feet, I do not know?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, I do not have the information. I would not mind circulating it later on.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 164, there is another item 21110.005 *Extra Assistance*. It is the second time that this item is appearing under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade for Rs4.5 m. May we have the details?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: What is the question, sorry?

Mr Ameer Meea: Under item 21110.005 *Extra Assistance*. It is the second time that we have this item and an amount of Rs4.5 m. is budgeted. May we have the details?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: This is in connection with the recruitment of seven Economic and Trade Counsellors.

Mr Bhagwan: Under item 26310.058 *SADC and Affiliated Institutions*, we are being asked to vote Rs83 m. compared to Rs56 m. Can we know what are the affiliated institutions and whether a list can be circulated? Can the Minister give some details?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: This item covers the Indian Ocean Secretariat and also our commitments to SADC. It is mandatory contribution to SADC regular budget, only part payment was effected in the year 2015/2016.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, you have been asked, if you do not mind, to circulate the list of affiliated institutions. If you have got the list of affiliated institutions, you can circulate.

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Okay. Thank you. The affiliated institutions are the SADC Plant Genetic Resources Centre based in Zambia.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: If the list is long, you can circulate!

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: It is done.

Mr Jhuboo: Under item *31112.408 Upgrading of Chanceries*, could we know from the hon. Minister or maybe he could circulate the information concerning the Chanceries that will be upgraded and renovated, please?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, this also involves a long reply. I will circulate the reply.

Mr Mahomed: With regard to item *22900 Commonwealth Climate Finance Skills Hub*, there is a huge increase from last year to this year from Rs217,000 to Rs4.5 m. May we know why is there such an increase and where is the hub being operated from?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, this is the provision which is being made for setting up in Mauritius, in fact, a Commonwealth Climate Finance Skills Hub and we have made a provision for Rs4.5 m. for the opening of this in Mauritius.

Dr. Joomaye: Under *Capital Expenditure, items 31112 Construction of Chancery and staff residence (Addis Ababa)* and *31112 Upgrading of Chanceries*, there is an amount of Rs123 m. voted. Can we know whether there will be tender in their respective countries, and if the contracts have been awarded?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Well, it is a long time decision taken by the Government to ensure that we buy more and more our Chanceries abroad. We have presently seven Chanceries which belong to Mauritius. The question is whether procedures are being followed. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has, in fact, employed under contract one person who ensures that all those contracts follow normal procedures.

Mr Rughoobur: Under item *31112.408 Upgrading of Chanceries*, may I know from the hon. Minister the mode of procurement for these upgrading works in these Chanceries, please?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: That is a good question. May I circulate the answer, please?

Mr Uteem: On page 165, under item *31112 Non-Residential Building, Renovation of Government Building at Guy Forget Street, Quatre Bornes*, can I know from the hon. Minister what use is made of that building in Quatre Bornes?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: The office will be allocated to the Commonwealth Climate Finance Skills Hub.

The Chairperson: Sorry! We have already exceeded the allotted time. We have got two more pages to go. So, if you do not have many questions on the two other pages, then I can allow one more question.

Mr Baloomoody: The problem is that the Minister does not answer the questions. There was a specific question where matter stands with regard to the Addis Ababa Chancery. From my information, I know we have acquired land and the land is being bared for many years.

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: The Government is going ahead with the construction of the Chancery and as far as I can remember, provision of Rs50 m. has been made in the Budget for the construction. But this was delayed. Therefore, the same provision existed in the last budget also.

Mr Uteem: With respect to item *31122 Acquisition/Upgrading of Other Machinery and Equipment* for next year, there is a four-time increase in the budget. So, may I know from the hon. Minister what machinery and equipment are we referring to?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Here again, we have the same issue. In the Estimates for 2015/2016, there was a provision for Rs13 m. underspending and it came to Rs13 m. It is the provision for acquisition, renewal of household items for residences of home-based staff posted in Embassies, and Counsellors. It is also due to the increase for the opening of new Embassies and Consulates and recruitment of Economic Counsellors.

Mr Ameer Meea: Item *31122.799, Acquisition/Upgrading of Other Machinery and Equipment*, last year it was Rs3.3 m., this year it is Rs13 m.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister has just replied to this question! Hon. Baloomoody!

(Interruptions)

Order!

(Interruptions)

Order, please!

Mr Baloomoody: International Trade, item 21110.001 - *Director, Trade Policy*. May I know whether we have a Director now, and if so who is that gentleman or lady?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: The post is vacant with effect from 13 of May 2016, upon the retirement of Mr Bangla. The Deputy Director, Mr Boodhoo, assigned duties of the post.

Mr Ameer Meea: Item 22120 – *Fees*, there is an amount Rs3.5 m. budgeted. May we know the details of these fees?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Those are fees for Chairman and Members of Boards, DTC, BEC and for training of staff - Rs315,000. The decrease is due to the fact that last year's provision included fees for the drawing up of the Millenium Development Goal Report.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, again we have a tremendous increase of more than Rs2 m. for rent, item 22030. May we know why this increase?

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Yes, the increase is from Rs137,087,000 to Rs164,342,000. It is for rental of building and parking for the Ministry at Newton Tower- Rs15.2 m.; and rental for Embassies – Rs149.142 m.

Mr Baloomoody: We are talking about International Trade, we are not talking about Embassies. There is an increase in rent of about Rs2 m. The hon. Minister does not answer questions.

Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo: Provision for the rental of building and parking slots at Fook House and Moorgate. The increase is due to relocation of the industrial property office and renting of additional office space.

Vote 7-1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (Rs1,194,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 8-1 Ministry of Youth and Sports was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On page 169, with regard to the Smart Youth Programmes, can we know if this item is related to page 175, item 22900.951 (*e*) *Youth Programmes*, where a sum of Rs2 m. has been earmarked? Is it related, and if not, can we have some details such as the starting date and the total cost of the programmes?

Mr Sawmynaden: Increase of the budget is due for expenses; increase of activities falling under the implementation of the Smart Youth Project.

Mr Jhuboo: Item 22030- *Rent*, there is an increase from Rs9 m. to Rs16 m. Can we have the details of that provision, please?

Mr Sawmynaden: Actually for the last year, it was only part of year and it is regarding the rent payable for the 7th and the 8th floors which amounts to Rs1,309,804 for a total area of 24,760 m². Rs35,000 is also payable in respect of 10 parking slots.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 171, item 22030 *Rent*. There has been a substantial increase from Rs9 m. to Rs16 m.

(Interruptions)

May we know the space area...

(Interruptions)

I have not finished! May we know the floor area that is being occupied for this item until when the *bail* expires?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Can we take the next question in the meantime! Hon. Dr. Joomaye!

Mr Sawmynaden: Rent for three years!

Dr. Joomaye: Item 22900.955 *Gender Mainstreaming*. There is a provision of Rs200,000. Can we have some details on how this amount under this item will be spent?

Mr Sawmynaden: The amount of Rs200,000 is meant to cater for conducting gender analysis and evaluation of the services offered by the Ministry of Youth and Sports as well as the analysis of its policies, programmes and plan of action with a view to achieving gender equality. This is in line with the Government objective to increase efforts to attain gender equality. It is noted that Mauritius ranks at the 120th position out of 145 countries of the Global Gender Gap Index 2015.

Mr Uteem: Item 21110.010 *Service to Mauritius Programme*. May I know from the hon. Minister what is the criteria for eligibility under that Service to Mauritius Programme and how many people would be enrolled under that programme?

The Chairperson: You can circulate it if you don't have it.

Mr Sawmynaden: Actually, it is written here payment to salary, but I will circulate all the information.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 172, there is no provision made for the Sports Medical Officer. May we know why? Item 21110.001 *Sports Medical Officer*.

The Chairperson: Can we take the question of hon. Quirin in the meantime!

Mr Quirin: Item 21111.002 *Travelling and Transport*, an amount of Rs9 m. has been earmarked for 2016/2017. Can we have a breakdown of this sum, please?

Mr Sawmynaden: It is a grant for the transportation of athletes. For the Sports Medical Officer, it is on a sessional basis.

(Interruptions)

No! We don't have one on a permanent basis.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 173, item 005 – *Extra Assistance*, there is an amount of Rs12.5 m. May we have the details and a breakdown of this figure?

Mr Sawmynaden: Payment of salaries to advisers on contract, sessional coaching fees and extra duty allowance. I will circulate all the information.

The Chairperson: Hon. Jhuboo!

Mr Jhuboo: Item 21110 – *Coach*. Concerning the coach, there has been 10 new coaches that have been appointed, from 19 to 29. Can we know for which discipline they have been appointed?

Mr Sawmynaden: I will circulate all the information regarding the coach.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Under item 22900.939 - *Indian Ocean Island Games*, an amount of Rs13 m. has been earmarked for this financial year. Can we know when and how this sum is going to be disbursed?

Mr Sawmynaden: I will circulate the information, it is better.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Joomaye!

Dr. Joomaye: On the same paragraph, item 22900.953 - *Anti-Doping Activities*, there is a sum of Rs1 m. voted. Can we know how this money would be spent and on which items?

Mr Sawmynaden: *Anti-Doping Activities*, it is a long answer. Does the hon. Member want me to circulate it?

(Interruptions)

It is better to circulate it. There are three pages.

The Chairperson: You can just answer briefly and then you circulate.

Mr Sawmynaden: Actually, it is the constitution of the NADO Board members, the functions and the amount paid to have the test done abroad.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under item 28211.064 - *Sports Federations*, we are being asked to vote Rs67 m. Can the hon. Minister circulate a list showing the expenses for each federation?

Mr Sawmynaden: Okay, I will circulate the information.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: On page 173, item 26313.45 – *Mauritius Sports Council*. It is not a question of policy, Madam Chairperson, because from this vote, members of the Board of the Sports Council are being paid a stipend. I raised the issue of somebody who was on bail and who was supposed to be thrown away from the Mauritius Sports Council. From the information I have gathered, that guy is still a member of Mauritius Sports Council. Can the hon. Minister give the assurance to the House that we are not voting money here to pay that individual, who is still a member of the Mauritius Sports Council? He should not have been a Member of the Mauritius Sports Council despite the assurance given by the hon. Minister.

Mr Sawmynaden: He has already resigned from the Council.

(Interruptions)

Well, I have got the information.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 26313.094 – *Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports*, we have been budgeting Rs15 m, may we have a list of the beneficiaries, how much they have received for the last financial year and how much has been spent?

Mr Sawmynaden: I have the list, but I don't have the list of those who got the scholarship. The Trust Fund grants financial assistance in the form of scholarship to eligible candidates, namely athletes who have performed well at the national, regional and international level. I will get the list and then I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: In relation to the same question as my friend, hon. Bhagwan, concerning the Mauritius Sports Council, there is a sum of Rs26.2 m. earmarked for this financial year. Can we have a breakdown of this amount?

Mr Sawmynaden: Does the hon. Member want to know about the grant allocated?

(Interruptions)

The increase in the grant is due to the implementation of the PRB 2016 salary, cost and maintenance.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: Under item 22900.008 - *Medals, Prizes and Rewards*, may we know from the hon. Minister whether this is on a yearly basis for certain items?

Mr Sawmynaden: Yes, it is done by procurement.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Joomaye!

Dr. Joomaye: On the same page, under item 28217 - *Expense Not Elsewhere Specified*, Rs500,000 has been earmarked. May we have some details about this expense?

Mr Sawmynaden: It is with regard to insurance to athletes travelling abroad.

The Chairperson: Page 174.

(Interruptions)

I draw hon. Members' attention to the fact that we have got two minutes left for the allotted time and we have got three pages more to go.

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On the last item of page 173, item 31113 *Reconstruction of St François Xavier Stadium*, may I ask the hon. Minister why nothing has been budgeted this year, the more so that this stadium is not covered and has no lighting for matches to be played at night, and that this stadium is the one where we have got the largest number of spectators?

Mr Sawmynaden: Since this stadium will be used for the Indian Ocean Island Games, it will be part of that Budget.

The Chairperson: Page 174. Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under item 31113.406 – *Lighting of training grounds*, would the hon. Minister kindly circulate a list of all the training grounds where lighting is being provided for?

Mr Sawmynaden: Okay, I have the list, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under the same item *Upgrading of Sports Infrastructure* with respect to *Fencing, turfing and waterproofing*, may we have a list of the places where the turfing and waterproofing would be carried out?

Mr Sawmynaden: Yes, I have the full list. For the waterproofing work, it will be at the Rivière du Rempart Youth Centre, the Serge Alfred swimming pool, the Brisée Verdière Youth Centre and the Floreal Youth Centre. The detection of leakage treatment of same, removal of damaged fencing, replacement of metal structures, supply and fixing of new galvanised fencing and replacement of turf where required.

The Chairperson: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: On that same item *others - basic sports facilities around the island* for which we are exceptionally voting Rs15 m. as compared to Rs2.4 m. last year, may we know what does it covers and which sports facilities are concerned here?

Mr Sawmynaden: Which item is it?

The Chairperson: Same item, .406 *Others - basic sports facilities around the island*.

Mr Sawmynaden: Actually, they are minor works to be executed in the schools. With the new policy that we have put, all sports infrastructures in Government schools will be opened to the public. We have some minor works to be carried out in major schools so that it can be opened to the public.

Mr Ramful: On the same item, Madam Chairperson, *Upgrading of Sports Infrastructure* provision is made for Harry Latour Stadium. Can the hon. Minister give us details about the works that are to be carried out and would that include the construction of a *gradin* as well?

Mr Sawmynaden: Actually, the construction has already started. The hon. Member should have seen it in his constituency and it will be delivered soon.

(Interruptions)

Actually, it is nearly to be completed.

Mr Baloomoody: On the item Upgrading of Stadiums, several stadiums are mentioned and a total of Rs6 m. has been budgeted only for the design and tender and then no provision is made for the subsequent years for renovation. So, may I know what is the use of doing a design and tender this year and then there is no money allocated for any work in these stadiums in the following years?

Mr Sawmynaden: The upgrading and renovation works will be undertaken in the subsequent financial years in few of the IOIG Games in 2019.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 175 under *Smart Youth Programmes* there is an item *Youth Parliament* and a sum of Rs500,000 has been budgeted. May we know what is this youth Parliament and may we have some details on this project?

Mr Sawmynaden: The Youth Parliament is an educational programme which will bring together young people from all over the country to discuss on current topics in a parliamentary setting. The Youth Parliament aims at strengthening the roots of democracy and imparting citizenship education.

This program comprises amongst others group discussions and role-playing techniques essential for the development of young people. The Youth Parliament would be a regular event involving around hundred young people in each cohort. Training of participants Rs150,000, equipment and materials Rs100,000, participation in international forum Rs250,000. Age range is 16 to 17.

Mr Uteem: Same item code 22900 – (e) *Youth Programmes*, there is a sum of Rs2 m. budgeted. So, may I know what youth programmes are we talking about here?

Mr Sawmynaden: Sum of Rs200,000 to each of the ten regions, eight districts plus Upper and Lower Plaines Wilhems to implement programmes in line with the strategic areas of the National Youth Policy, informal education, employment and employability, entrepreneurship, recreational activities, wellness and attitude. Ten regions, Rs200,000 each.

Mr Mahomed: On that same item - *National Youth Volunteer Scheme*, may we have some details on this for which we are being asked to vote Rs2 m. for this year?

Mr Sawmynaden: The National Youth Volunteer Scheme promotes, celebrates and facilitates volunteering projects in the Republic of Mauritius. The scheme operates with the conviction that our young people can fulfil their potential through volunteering and that volunteering can change our world for the better.

The National Young Volunteer Scheme pledges to uphold on fundamental values including empathy and solidarity. Administration and management Rs500,000, communication and publicity Rs425,000, project *lire ek ecrire Creole* Rs150,000, solidarity team un live un cadeau Rs25,000, environment and food security team Rs100,000, training of national youth volunteers Rs800,000.

Mr Ameer Meea: Item .005 - *Extra Assistance* where there is a sum of Rs4 m. budgeted. May we have the details?

Mr Sawmynaden: Payment of salary to advisers on contract basis, sessional code - I will circulate, I mentioned that before.

Mr Uteem: Page 176, under item 28211 - *Youth Clubs*, may I know which youth clubs are going to receive the sum of Rs50,000?

Mr Sawmynaden: I will get the information for you. Recent statistics compiled show that there are actually 529 youth clubs. The National Youth Council through the Dynamic Youth Project is training young people to form youth clubs. 13 new youth clubs associations have been created through this project.

Mr Rughoobur: Item 31112.407 – (a) *Anse La Raie Youth Training Centre* for the upgrading, may I know if the tender documents have been prepared or the contract has been awarded? May I know the status, please?

Mr Sawmynaden: The project consists of upgrading of two dormitories including MNE works and furniture. Actually, it is now that we are going to launch the tender.

Mr Jhuboo: Item 28211.044 - concerning the provision of Rs100,000 for *Girls Guide*, could the hon. Minister enlighten us on that?

(Interruptions)

Mr Sawmynaden: It is grants to girls guides, there is nothing more.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No, excuse me! Excuse me! The hon. Member did not ask for more information on girls guides, he asked with respect to the Rs100,000.

(Interruptions)

Mr Sawmynaden: Actually it is a grant allocated to them.

Vote 8-1 Ministry of Youth and Sports (Rs612,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 9-1 Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport was called.

Mr Fowdar: I just wanted to ask the hon. Minister regarding the achievements for 2015/2016 - removal of asbestos undertaken in 51 sites, does it include Goodlands?

Mr Bodha: I think, Madam Chairperson, I have a list of the different sites where this has been done and I am going to circulate it. I have seen the list in fact.

Mr Baloomoody: Yes, page 181. On the item Minister, can I ask the hon. Minister whether he can inform the House about the National Road Safety Programme which was supposed to go to primary and secondary schools? If we could have a list of the primary and secondary schools where this National Road Safety Programme has been carried out?

The Chairperson: No, excuse me, the hon. Member has asked that under the item Minister? But, I think he should relate it to one item.

(Interruptions)

Minister is only for the Minister's salary! You can't ask questions related to a vote item on Minister's salary! Page 182, yes hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: On page 182, Madam, I will ask two questions so that the officers can give the Minister the information. With regard to *item 22120.002, Fees to Chairperson and Members of Board*, Rs1.3 m., can the hon. Minister give us the list? As regards *item 26313.010, Construction Industry Development Board*, can we know why this increase from Rs13 m. to Rs3.9 m.? Can we have the composition of the Board, the name of the Chairperson and his salary?

Mr Bodha: The increase is due to the payment of fees to the Chairperson and members of the Building Control Advisory Council and members of the six Sub-Committees Advisory Council. Fees for the Chairman is Rs23,000; members, Rs1,500, and for the Sub-

committee, it is Rs1,140. For the Construction Industry Development Board, the Chairperson is Mr Gaëtan Siew.

The Chairperson: Can we pass on to the next question in the meantime? Hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. *Item 22030.005, Rental of Facilities for Events.* Which sort of events does it cover?

Mr Bodha: The fees is Rs40,000 for the CIDB. With regard to *Rental of Facilities for Events*, in fact, there is a list of facilities that we grant for Maha Shivratri, for Cavadee, for Ganesh Chaturthi, Venkateswara, tents, over the year.

Mr Ameer Meea: On the same item, rental of building, there is an amount of Rs11.4 m. May we have the details of this figure?

Mr Bodha: Rental of building is for Jade House, Epping Investment, Sugar Industry Pension Fund, Agricultural and Marketing Board. This is the list in Moorgate House, where the different Departments of my Ministry have been located.

Mr Uteem: With respect to the Rental of Facilities for Events, the hon. Minister is going to circulate the list. But can the hon. Minister also circulate the list of contractors who have been awarded the contract for these *tentes vertes*?

Mr Bodha: In fact, you will recall, Madam Chairperson, every year, there was an extra expenditure as regards tent - about Rs15 m. What we have done, we have streamlined it. We have an in-house service, and it is for the first come first served. When it comes to events, we have all the list of requirements and then we launch the tenders as per the event, just like we are doing now for Ganesh Chaturthi.

Mr Mahomed: Madam Chairperson, under *item 21110*, we can see that there will be recruitment of additional Architects, Engineers, Quantity Surveyors and Technical Design Officer for the design and supervision of construction of buildings and related infrastructure. May we know from the hon. Minister what are the buildings that they are going to work on that warrant this increase in professionals in those fields?

Mr Bodha: I will provide a list, but it relates to new buildings and also to maintenance of a number of buildings which are being in use now by different Ministries.

Mr Mahomed: Mention was made in the Budget for the recruitment of 200 Trainee Engineers, for them to be registered eventually as professional Engineers. May we know under which vote item this has been catered for, and what is the sum?

Dr. Sorefan: Madam Chairperson, on recruitment of General Worker, there is in post 96, and funded for this financial year 189. But coming to the estimates 2016/2017, there is only an increase of Rs700,000. So, I take it this additional 93 will not be recruited this financial year, but in the next financial year, that is, 2017/2018. Will the hon. Minister confirm that those 93 will be recruited not this year, but the year after, as per estimates that I see?

Mr Bodha: We in a transition period. The exercise has been carried out by the Public Service Commission, and the list is going to be submitted to us. In fact, it is included in the budget of this year, that is, 2015/2016.

Dr. Sorefan: For 93 General Workers, only Rs700,000 have been ...

Mr Bodha: It is already included for 2015/2016. It was included, but we did not have the possibility to do the recruitment before the end of the financial year.

Mr Mahomed: Madam Chairperson, under *item 21111.100, Overtime*. We are being asked to vote Rs13.3 m. at a time when we have twice the number of General Workers and also a substantial increase in the number of Tradesman to be recruited. Why is it that we recruiting, and at the same time, we are being asked to pay so much overtime?

Mr Bodha: There is a shortage as regards General Worker. Overtime is allocated to work being done during the weekend, public holidays, because in a certain number of cases we have to provide staff during those days.

Dr. Sorefan: *Item 22060, Maintenance*. It is actually going up by twice, from Rs8 m. to Rs15 m. May we know whether this will be done in-house or by private contractors, and which item are we talking for maintenance, please?

Mr Bodha: Madam Chairperson, maintenance is increased due mainly to new contract for servicing central air conditioning system. It is being done by the Ministry. In fact, it relates to Emmanuel Anquetil Building. We have also here, in the Government House. It relates to maintenance of staircases, lifts, central AC system, and electrical system. In fact, it is the maintenance of the two buildings.

Mr Jhuboo: *Item 31113.799, concerning the Asbestos Treatment Programme.* Does it relate to the Emmanuel Anquetil Building or the ex-CHA or the EDC houses?

Mr Bodha: We had a programme earlier. Well, it involves Government buildings. This budget is for Government buildings only. So, I think it will relate to Emmanuel Anquetil as well.

Mr Mahomed: On same page 187, item 31410.407, *Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management* for which we are being asked to vote Rs57.3 m. May I ask the hon. Minister whether this includes the Vallée Pitot region because many houses there have condemned and they are on the verge of collapse?

Mr Bodha: This relates to rehabilitation works for Landslide Management which we are conducting together with the Japanese Technical Assistance. It relates to areas in Chitrakoot, Vallée Pitot, La Butte and Macondé, Kewal Nagar and Camp Carole for an estimated cost of the budget that we have here.

Mr Bhagwan: On the same item, I have not heard the hon. Minister mentioning *Morcellement* Hermitage, Coromandel. Can the hon. Minister inform the House why?

Mr Bodha: *Morcellement* Hermitage, Coromandel, is not there. Hon. Quirin has raised this issue before. In fact, we will see to it that we allocate a budget. I have said we will give it a certificate of urgency.

Mr Fowdar: Madam Chairperson, I have got two questions. First, it is again about the asbestos. I understand this is only for Government buildings. Do we have the treatment for domestic purposes, for example, at Cité St Claire, Goodlands? The second question relates to item 31410, *Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management*. May we know why there is such a big difference from Rs1.2 m. to Rs57.3 m.?

Mr Bodha: I will answer the second question. The Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) has been working on the design and the tests. Now, we can proceed to the actual works on the terrains. As regard to Hermitage, we have taken a series of actions and we are going to see to it that we have a budget allocated for this exercise. For the domestic asbestos programme, I have a list of 46 sites over the whole island and I am going to submit it. For the disposal of the asbestos material, this is done by the Ministry of Environment.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 31122.811, *Acquisition of CCTV*. May we know how many cameras have been acquired in the last financial year and why is it that no provision is made for the next year?

Mr Bodha: There is no provision for this year, but the provision is for next year. It is as regards security at the Mechanical Division at Plaine Lauzun. In fact, it is a very specific exercise. *Cela n'a rien à voir avec les caméras.*

Mr Uteem: *Upgrading of Office Buildings, (b) Construction of building for QS Section*, there is Rs52 m. earmarked in the Budget. May we know from the hon. Minister where will that building be located and whether tender procedure has already been launched for the construction of that building?

The Chairperson: Can we pass on to the next question in the meantime? Hon. Osman Mahomed! Page 187!

Mr Mahomed: On that same question of rehabilitation due to landslide, does the sum include intervention in the housing units as well, those which have been condemned and are severely affected?

Mr Bodha: Extension of space for the Quantity Surveying Section, project value is Rs53 m. Well, the present office space by the QS section is an old building. It is going to be situated at Boundary Road in Phoenix.

On the Land Slide Management, in fact, budget includes the technical works, but also we have the relocation of a certain number of households and we also have a problem regarding land. The Ministry of Housing and Lands has been requested to propose sites, which they have done. So, I will include the social package as well.

Dr. Sorefan: Item 31112.433 *(d) Refurbishment of Electrical Equipment*, to the tune Rs34 m. May we know from the hon. Minister what electrical equipment are we planning for refurbishment and if he can give us a list?

Mr Bodha: From what I see here, it relates to the refurbishment of Emmanuel Anquetil Building where we are going to have a number of issues such as lifts, fire doors and refurbishment of the electrical equipment. I am going to ask for a detailed list of the works which are going to be carried out.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, are you waiting for your technicians to provide you with the information?

Mr Bodha: Yes.

The Chairperson: So, we move on to the next page in the meantime! Page 188!

Mr Uteem: On page 188, under item of *Road Development Authority* a sum of Rs146 m. is budgeted. May we know from the hon. Minister what happened to the various officers who have been suspended in connection with various enquiries? Have they been dismissed or reinstated?

Mr Bodha: Well, we had first an investigative committee, and then we had a disciplinary committee. Afterwards, there is an appeal, which is going on actually. It relates to two or three officers. I don't have the name of the officers. Two are suspended officers.

Mr Gobin: On page 188, item 31113, *Other Structures, (o) Construction of Third Land at Grand Bassin*. Since it says 'Construction of Third Land at Grand Bassin', may I ask the hon. Minister to circulate the *tracé* from where to where?

Mr Bodha: In fact it is not at Grand Bassin. It is at the access of Grand Bassin from the South. Last time, we had parking which was built near Avalon up to Bois Chéri. The third lane from Grand Bassin comes to the parking and we are going to continue the third lane up to Bois Chéri.

Mr Jhuboo: I will take from where hon. Gobin left. Concerning the construction of the A1-A3 Link Road, can we have some indication concerning *le tracé*, please?

Mr Bodha: I have it, Madam Chairperson. The A1-A3 comes from Bambous up to where Gamma-Civic is and it will connect with the A1-M1 bridge up to Sorèze. So, part of the traffic from the West will go to the region of Cassis or part of it can be channelled through the A1-M1 bridge and up to Sorèze and the Ring Road. The project is part of the road decongestion programme. The start date is supposed to be March 2017 and the completion date is to be March 2018. The contract has yet to be appointed. The design is almost ready.

Mr Mahomed: Item 22130, *Studies and Surveys*, for we are being asked to vote a total of Rs60 m; Rs20m. over the next three years each. May I know from the hon. Minister what kind of studies is being envisaged here because we all know insofar as roads are concerned, there has been a lot of studies, so far?

The Chairperson: Pass on to the next question, hon. Ameer Meea, in the meantime!

Mr Ameer Meea: Page 188, item 31113.003 (d) *Design and Construction of grade separated junction on M1 at De Caen Street, Port Louis*. There is a project value of nearly Rs300 m. May we know whether the contract has already been awarded, whether works have already started and may we have some details on the project in general?

Mr Bodha: As regards to this project, Madam Chairperson, the design is ready. We are just integrating it with the urban terminal where the bus passenger terminal is going to be and the Metro Express is going to be. It is just a question of integrating it and we are going to start the works. Luxconsult has already done the design and we are going to launch the tender. Once we agree on the urban terminal concept which will integrate the access, the passenger terminal and the Metro Express terminal. The contract has been awarded to Luxconsult and we expect to start floating of tender in October, we expect that the works could start early 2017 and it will take one and a half years, 18 months.

(Interruptions)

No, no! Rs100 m.?

The Chairperson: Rs300 m.

Mr Bodha: No. Rs300 m. is the whole project.

The Chairperson: Hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: I just wanted to ask the hon. Minister, regarding resurfacing of main roads, is that for the MPI? Can I ask when the road from Candos to La Caverne, Vacoas would be resurfaced? It has been a long time it is in a bad state following works carried out by the CWA.

Mr Bodha: We had a working session with the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities as regards works which had been carried out by the WMA and CWA. First of all, we have the trenching and now we have come to a *modus* so that we can do the resurfacing under the supervision of the RDA because the road has to be reinstated, in fact, by either the CWA or the WMA, but we have now a calendar and this is going to be one of the priorities.

The Chairperson: The last question on this page. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: The hon. Minister has just mentioned the Road Decongestion Programme. I can't anything in here for the Ring Road. Is that not going to be budgeted for in this coming year?

Mr Bodha: As regards the Ring Road, we are repairing the Ring Road Phase I. The Capital Budget provides also, as regards to the decongestion programme, we have established an order of priority. It is the Jumbo-Phoenix project grade separator first; the A1-M1 Bridge second, and the Ring Road Phase II, that is, the tunnel third.

The Chairperson: Page 189. Hon. Rughoobur!

Mr Rughoobur: Item 31113.403 – *Maintenance and Rehabilitation (a) Roads and Bridges*. May I ask the hon. Minister to circulate the list, especially, for the northern region for the rehabilitation and maintenance of roads?

Mr Bodha: I will do that, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 31113.404 (a) *Rehabilitation of Steel Bridges*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether we are talking about Le Pont Grande Rivière and where the project stands?

Mr Bodha: As regards Pont Grande Rivière, we are doing a test to see whether the base of the bridge is still solid and we will proceed from there. We have asked the consultants to do the test as regard the strength of the bridge because we would like to open it on a one-year basis.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Item 31113.403 – *Maintenance and Rehabilitation (c) Road Marking and Signage*. Can I know from the hon. Minister whether he has looked into the quality of paint which has been of a bad quality - over the years, we have been asking questions – whether there have been studies and by whom, and whether there is a programme of work for the whole island, *en termes de délocalisation des responsabilités*?

Mr Bodha: Madam Chairperson, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development has granted us Rs200 m., in fact, for road signage, road markings, pavements and this has to be done in the next months. We have set up a Committee, in fact, to see to it that this money is spent and well spent.

As regards the technology, I totally agree with the hon. Member, a lot of things have changed. In fact, we have only one company to do road marking in Mauritius and we should be able to have the latest technology and I think that this is a very good question and we will see to it that with the Rs200 m., we'll have the best.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: Under the same item *31113.403 – (b) Footpaths*, will the hon. Minister give us a list of the footpaths that he is contemplating to be done in this financial year?

Mr Bodha: We will do that, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: On the same item – *Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Roads and Bridges*, can I have confirmation from the hon. Minister whether that would include the Cavendish Bridge which is found at Ville Noire?

Mr Bodha: You would like to know whether the Cavendish Bridge is being included in this list of maintenance. It's Cavendish Bridge in Mahebourg?

Mr Ramful: Yes.

Mr Bodha: I think we did a study. I answered a PQ. I think we are doing some works there.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Jhuboo!

Mr Jhuboo: Under item *31113.004* concerning the *Construction of St Denis Bridge at Chamarel*, could we know from the hon. Minister whether the design stage has been completed and whether works will start in 2017?

Mr Bodha: Construction of St Denis Bridge at Chamarel?

Mr Jhuboo: Yes.

The Chairperson: Construction of St. Denis Bridge at Chamarel. Any other question on page 189? No!

Mr Bodha: St Denis Bridge, Chamarel.

The Chairperson: Yes. So, we pass on to page 190 pending the fact that the replies are coming. Page 190! Yes.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item *21110.001*, I find that the posts of *Senior Inspector, Inspector, Senior Procurement and Supply Officer* are vacant and no provision has been made. Can I know what will happen to these posts: Senior, Inspector, Inspector, Senior Procurement and Supply Officer?

Mr Bodha: These recruitments will have to be done by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, by the Central Procurement Office.

(Interruptions)

The recruitment of Inspector is being carried at the PSC level. So, we don't know when this exercise is going to be carried out.

The Chairperson: Any other question on page 190? Page 191! Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: Under item 22060 – *Maintenance*, an amount of Rs4 m. has been earmarked. I would like to know for which building, for which item it is.

Mr Bodha: In the meantime, as regards Chamarel, the design is being carried out. For maintenance, on page 191, we have a series of buildings, we have meetings, expenses for maintenance of buildings of the different offices of the Electrical Services Division, which is not provided under the Lease Agreement. We have also plant and equipment; we have vehicles and motorcycles maintenance, the re-roofing of Curepipe road. These are the maintenance costs.

Vote 9-1 Public Infrastructure (Rs2,472,200,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 9-2 Land Transport was called.

Mr Bhagwan: I have two questions, Madam. Under item 22120.02 - *Fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees*, can the hon. Minister give us some details being given the sum and also under item 22120.08 - *Fees to Consultants*, we are being asked to vote Rs15 m. Can we have a breakdown if there are one, two or three consultants and how have they been recruited?

Mr Bodha: Madam Chairperson, it is provision provided for payment of fees to Chairperson, Members of Boards and Committees. It is the Motor Vehicle Arbitration Committee which, in fact, arbitrates when you have a *constat à l'amiable* in the case of insurances when you have accidents. It is the National Road Safety Council, the Road Transport Advisory Council, the Traffic Impact Committee, the NTC Appeal Committee, the Bid Evaluation Committee and the Departmental Committees. The increase is due to the PRB Report 2016, Madam.

Mr Mahomed: Item 22030 – *Rent*, may we know why there is a doubling of the amount catered for as compared to last year?

Mr Bodha: It is charges for office space at Air Mauritius Building, 12th floor for the Land Transport Division; provision for 6 reserved parking slots in Port Louis; rental of facilities for events. The additional provision has been made to accommodate the finance, the store and the Motor Vehicle Insurance Committee under the same roof at the Air Mauritius Building.

Mr Baloomoody: On the item of fees, the hon. Minister just mentioned a Board, may we know who is the Chairman of the Arbitration Board and who are the Members?

Mr Bodha: Mr Panglose.

Mr Uteem: On the same items of fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees and fees to Consultants, may I ask the hon. Minister to circulate the package given to each Board Member and Consultant?

Mr Bodha: I will certainly do that, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Yes. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Under item 22060.003 - *Plant and Equipment (a) Traffic Lights*, Rs20 m. Can the hon. Minister give us a list of the places where the traffic lights will be installed? About the speed cameras, again can we have a list where these speed cameras will be installed, their date of operation, the suppliers and the operator?

Mr Bodha: We will certainly do that, Madam Chairperson. The most important thing as regards speed cameras is to make an audit of the system as it is now because I don't think that it is...

(Interruptions)

No, this is expenditure for the new cameras but, the cameras will not be installed up and until we have an audit of the system as it is today.

Mr Ameer Meea: Coming back to the same item, in fact, it is with regard to maintenance, it is not the purchase of new equipment. I will go to the maintenance of speed cameras. May we know whether all the speed cameras are operational because we remember, at times, there was one which had been cut with a grinder?

Mr Bodha: Well, all have been reinstated, Madam Chairperson. I have a list where new traffic lights will be installed so this is to inform hon. Bhagwan. Of course, junction at Mont Roches along Saint Martin Road, it was a request and I think it is a genuine one.

As regards the speed cameras, it is the maintenance for speed cameras and back office, but it also includes the renewal of the software licence and the calibration of each and every camera.

Mr Uteem: Again on the issue of speed cameras, can the hon. Minister tell us which company has obtained the award for the maintenance of the speed cameras?

Mr Bodha: In fact, the whole system has been designed and installed by ProGuard Limited for the last three years. We made a tender to have a maintenance contract and, in fact, we ended up again with ProGuard Limited.

Dr. Sorefan: It was on the same item - speed cameras, but the hon. Minister has already given part of the answer. Why did we go again with ProGuard Limited?

Mr Bodha: I explained it. In fact...

The Chairperson: The Minister just explained, you should have listened!

Mr Bodha: We launched an open advertised bidding for the maintenance and there was only one bid. That is why I said that we are going to do an audit of the system at present and then we will upgrade the system.

Mr Mahomed: While the auditing is being done, are the cameras functioning, because we are paying heftily for their maintenance? Are they working now fully?

Mr Bodha: They are working.

The Chairperson: Page 196, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: I have three questions in one for the Minister, Madam. First, it is under item *31113.001 Construction of Traffic Centres (a) Ebène*. It is a long outstanding project and the land is there. Can the Minister give us a brief about the planning? Under item *31113.311 (f) Road Safety Observatory*, can we have some details about the expenditure which is being earmarked? Under item *22900.952 (c) Education Program*, can he give us some details?

Mr Bodha: For the road safety I am going to wait for some additional information. With regard to Ebène, the traffic centre at Ebène is to cater mostly for bus transport which has been estimated at Rs200 m. and the project has already obtained the clearance of the Project Plans Committee. The project is planned to be completed in two years. It will start end 2017.

Mr Uteem: Under the item 22900.952 – *implementation of National Road Safety Strategy (a) Road Safety Audit & Hazardous Roads*, is the amount budgeted to carry out a survey and, if it is so, has tender already been launched and has the consultant already been recruited?

Mr Bodha: There was a question as regards to road safety talks. Road safety talks were delivered to around 135 primary schools and touching about 12,000 pupils at the III and IV Standards in 2015. A new programme is being set up to provide a continuum of road safety education throughout the education cycle starting from the pre-primary. In fact, this is the contribution of the Ministry of Education to the Road Safety Programme.

As regards the National Road Safety Strategy, the issue was about the consultancy services. It is to set up a road crash investigation and research team to collect vital road crash data and to carry out analysis. At least four teams will be constituted for that purpose with professionals from the Police Department, Forensic Laboratory, TMRSU, RDA and psychologists trained and equipped to study and monitor accident causation particularly what we call the care side in the killed and serious injury accidents. So these trainings will be provided by experts from a centre of accident research and road safety.

The Chairperson: I am just drawing your attention to the fact that I have got a long list of those who want to ask questions on page 196, but we have exceeded the time allotted by already half an hour. So, on this page, I will allow four more questions and then we will move on to the next page. According to my list, we have hon. Fowdar, hon. Mahomed, hon. Ramful and hon. Baloomoody. Hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will come to item 31122 (c) *Speed Cameras*. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether we are going to use the same model of camera that we are using now or we are going to improve to average speed check, a new model?

Mr Bodha: The present system, Madam Chairperson, started three years back and I think we have many generations of speed cameras since then. What is important is that today, people just slow in front of the camera and they start accelerating just after the stretch where we have the camera. What we are thinking of is to have what we call point to point average speed check and this will need an upgrading of the system. That is why I said we will do an audit first.

Mr Mahomed: Under item 26313.990 *Expenses i.c.w ex-Mauritius Land Transport Authority*. So if it is 'ex' why are we being asked to vote Rs11 m. for this year? Furthermore, the remit of this department was to spearhead the Light Rail Transit Project, since it is now 'ex', which department of the Government is going to spearhead the Metro Express Project?

Mr Bodha: Today, it is being spearheaded by the Prime Minister's Office. This was said. Once we are going to have the report of the re-assessment by the Singapore Corporation Enterprise, then we will have a proper project management unit. From what I have been told is as regard to this Budget, it is an outstanding payment that we still owe for consultancy for the SCE.

Mr Ramful: Concerning *Speed Cameras* - can we have a list of the places where those new speed cameras are going to be placed?

Mr Bodha: We will certainly do that, Madam Chairperson.

Mr Baloomoody: Madam Chairperson, with regard to the *Implementation of National Road Safety Strategy*, there is one item (e) where we are supposed to vote Rs19 m. for *Traffic Calming Measures*.

Mr Bodha: These are the speed breakers. From the past, we have tried a number of techniques, we have had the speed breaker; we have the rumbles. So, what is being done, in one place in Vacoas, we have something, we have some bricks where you have a thickness ...

(Interruptions)

No. And then, you have a level space and then you go down. The idea is to prevent people from speeding in urban areas.

The Chairperson: Page 198, hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 198, item 22030 *Rent*. Last year, it was Rs9.4 m. and this year it is Rs12 m. And also a second item, if I am allowed, item 22120, *Fees*, last year it was Rs10 m. and this year there has been a substantial increase from Rs10 m. to Rs42 m. May we have details on the breakdown of this figure fees and also in relation to which item these fees are being paid for?

Mr Bodha: It relates to the lease agreement between the Mauritius Secondary Industries Ltd. and the National Transport Authority. The agreement has been renewed and the monthly rent is Rs700,000. The building has been leased to the National Transport

Authority since 2000 and the lease agreement was renewed. The assessment for rent is being carried out by the Valuation and Real Estates Consultancy Services of the Valuation Department. So, the payment as at 30 June is Rs9.4 m.

As regards item 22/20 fees, as from 16 August 2016 with the privatisation of the vehicle examination centre, the National Transport Authority will be using the equipment of the operators for the examination of the vehicles pending the new law which will allow the private companies to be operating on their own. Accordingly, the operators will have to be compensated for the technical assistance and the use of equipment during this transition period of one year.

Dr. Sorefan: Under item 25, *Subsidies – Free Travel Scheme*, may we know from the hon. Minister whether the same old formula is being used for the last five years because we are being asked to vote Rs1 billion? What actions had been taken for those who did not accede to our elders, especially the private buses?

Mr Bodha: As regards the free travel system, we know that there are a number of flaws and weaknesses in the system and we need to re-engineer it. So, in fact, we have a study which is being carried out. The contract was signed today. It is a study by Pricewaterhouse Coopers funded by *l'Agence Française de Développement au titre de R 15 million* to re-assess the system and to see what would be the best way to spend the free travel budget and secondly, to re-structure the NTA and the CNT. So, we all know that we have a number of issues. We have also the issue about school buses which we increased last year because we reduced the number of students travelling per bus. When we will have the report, then we will be able to re-engineer the free travel system because, indeed, it is a huge budget and we should see to it that the budget is used properly.

Mr Baloomoody: Let me come back to the issue of fees again. The hon. Minister replied that it is transitional, only for the next few months. But provision has been made for the next two years, from Rs10 m. to Rs42 m.

(Interruptions)

Under item 22/20 fees. So, it cannot be only for the transitional period. Can we have more details?

Mr Bodha: It is fees to Chairman and members of the Board and Committees. It is fees to Mauritius Post. It is fees for training and fees for vehicle examination during this transition period.

Mr Bhagwan: Concerning *Free Travel Scheme*, can the hon. Minister circulate a breakdown of the amount paid to the different bus companies and private operators during the past two years and for the year which we are being asked to vote. Under the sub heading .013 *Supply of Bus Passes (Free Travel)*, how many bus passes have been issued for students and old-age pensioners?

Mr Bodha: As regards the free travel, the monthly payment for the compensation to the bus companies is Rs104 m.; the CNT: Rs27 m., private companies: Rs31 m and individual buses Rs40 m. The monthly payment is Rs104 m. and the CNT gets Rs27 m.; private companies – Rs31 m.; individual buses - Rs40 m. And we have also the dedicated school buses which is Rs1.8 m. For the supply of bus passes; I don't have the number which has been issued. We know who are the people who are qualified. They are eligible disabled persons, students, the elderly. So, I will have this information given to you a bit later.

Mr Uteem: Madam Chairperson, under the item *Free Travel Scheme for Disabled Persons*. May I know from the hon. Minister what transport schemes are there for disabled persons?

Mr Bodha: The bus passes are issued only to eligible disabled persons whose details are sent to the Road Transport Commissioner by the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions. So, applications are sent directly to the NTA. The applications have to go through the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions. I think there are people who are on the Social Register.

Dr. Sorefan: As per the Strategic Note, *Improved for free transport service for students by increasing the number of school buses by 59*, which the hon. Minister has mentioned that there has been an increase. On one side Government is increasing the buses to the students, but on the other side we are still paying the same amount, about Rs1.2 billion to private buses; how does that tally? Because Government is helping to give students free travel and at the same time the private buses are being paid.

The Chairperson: We have understood your question!

Mr Bodha: The study will enable us, Madam Chairperson, to re-engineer completely the whole system with the introduction of the MetroExpress because many of the students will be travelling by the MetroExpress and the integration of the MetroExpress with the bus network.

Vote 9-2 Land Transport (Rs2,053,200,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 10-1 Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research was called.

Mr Mahomed: We have been asked to vote a substantive budget for nine-year schooling. It is at page 200, *Main Achievements*. It talks about a new curriculum for primary education, but nothing is mentioned for a new curriculum for the nine-year schooling project for which we know that the curriculum is the heart of the education system.

The Chairperson: But this is a policy question! It is not related to cost, I can't allow it!

Mr Baloomoody: Madam Chairperson, on page 203, item 21110.001, *Co-ordinator, Health and Anti-Drug*. There will be a Co-ordinator for Health and Anti-Drug. May I know whether this person has been recruited and, if so, how does it function because we are going to have only one for the whole Ministry?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: So, for the Co-ordinator for Health and Anti-Drug, there is no one actually attending this function right now, but two educators will be called upon to perform the duties of Co-ordinator. They have now returned to school. Following the advertisement by the Public Service Commission to fill the post, no candidate was found suitable. Now, we are planning to review the Scheme of duties so as to be able to fill the post.

Mr Uteem: On same page, *Counselling Service Manager*. May I know from the hon. Minister what function will be performed by this Counselling Service Manager, and whether this position has been filled?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The Counselling Service Manager will be responsible to administer the counselling service, to plan and coordinate the work of the Senior Educational Psychologist, to advise on the formulation of policies and designing of programmes relating to psychological, pedagogical practices and guidance of counselling services and also to work in collaboration with other Ministries, para-statal bodies, Non-Governmental Organisations for the conduct of guidance and counselling, sensitisation sessions for pupils, teachers and families.

Mr Fowdar: Madam Chairperson, I don't see anything about career guidance on the Key Actions, can I ask the hon. Minister whether it has been removed from the Ministry?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The Career Guidance Unit is at the Ministry, but a major part of the work is also being done at the level of the HRDC. But we are, in fact, reviewing the whole unit after its recent re-introduction at the Ministry of Education.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, what about the Senior Physical Education Organiser? Has this post been filled?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The post of Principal Physical Education Organiser, we have got one in post. And the Senior Physical Education Organiser's post is vacant and will be filled after the Public Service Commission advertises for the post.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I refer the hon. Minister to the last item on page 204, Health and Welfare Division. There is a Director for Health and Wellness and an Assistant Director for Health and Wellness. May I know whether these posts have been filled?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: No, the posts have not been filled. In fact, we have advertised the posts, but we could not fill the posts. So, what is being planned to do now is that we are planning to advertise the post at the level of the Public Service Commission and fill them. In fact, we are trying now to look for a General Practitioner with at least 10 years' of proven experience relevant to the common problems afflicting schoolchildren.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 205, World Hindi Secretariat. Can the hon. Minister inform us about the latest position concerning the building which was supposed to be constructed at Phoenix and how the World Hindi Secretariat is run actually?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, the land has already been invested in the World Hindi Secretariat and the funding will be done by the Govt of India. The building will be funded by the Government of India. In fact, we have got a collaboration. The budgetary provisions for the past year was Rs5,129,000, whereas for the coming year, it is a budget of Rs14 m. A sum of Rs7 m. will be provided by the Government of Mauritius.

Mr Mahomed: Item 22120.008 (a) *Study on Green Jobs*. We are asked to vote Rs3 m. for this. Is the hon. Minister aware that in 2013 the International Labour Organisation together with the University of Mauritius conducted a green job assessment for Mauritius?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Obviously, Madam Chairperson. The work has not been properly done. That is why we have to propose for new studies to be carried out and this will be mainly in terms of jobs that would be required in these fields and we are having funds from *l'Agence Française de Développement* for this particular project.

The objective of the project is to carry out an assessment of the demand and offer regarding green jobs, both in Mauritius and Rodrigues, the needs in terms of adaptation of existing training programmes for a better consideration of environmental stakes in the sectors where this adaptation is most necessary, so as to allow better integration of green skills in the offer of training at the MITD.

The Chairperson: I remind hon. Members to ask brief questions and hon. Ministers to reply briefly. Hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: I am coming back to the *World Hindi Secretariat* again. Why is there an increase of nearly Rs2 m. for the forthcoming year?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, an increase of Rs2 m. is because now the Secretariat is going to be operational. We have already recruited the Secretary General and we have also to recruit the Deputy Secretary General.

Dr. Joomaye: Under *item 22120, Fees, .008 (b) National Strategy for Development of HR*, a sum of Rs7 m. has been voted. Has the consultant been identified, and if yes, who is he?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, the consultant has not been identified yet. He will have to come and work on the Vision mission and focus on the future skills, methodology and the Action Plan of the HRDC.

Mr Ameer Meea: In relation to *Studies and Surveys, item 22130 – Nine Year Continuous Basic Education*, we are asked to vote a sum of Rs10 m. But, as we know, Nine Year Schooling is coming into operation next year. So, how come next year, we are going to do the studies and surveys?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Speaker, for the Nine Year Schooling, a lot of work has to be carried out; surveys in terms of requirements, as far as training is concerned. All this will have to be carried out, and it is being done. Presently, a large number of educators are being trained, and such surveys will be required.

Mr Uteem: Under *item 26313.201, Current Grant icw Nine Year Continuous Basic Education*. Will the hon. Minister circulate a list of all the institutions which are going to benefit from this grant and the amount of grant that they will receive?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I'll circulate the information.

Mr Baloomoody: Let me come back again to that *Nine Year Continuous Basic Education* and link it to the grant that we are going to give to the institution. On what basis are we giving the grant to these institutions when we have not done any survey yet, and now we are going to do a survey?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: No, the grant is not only related to surveys. The grant will be with respect to - for example, if I take the MIE - content development, to the training, to staffing, to assessment and evaluation. The same for MES; we will need again training of staff, assessment and evaluation. All this will be required and the fund is for that.

The Chairperson: Last question on page 205!

Mr Baloomoody: The Nine Year Schooling will be operational in January, and now the hon. Minister is informing us that we have to do teaching of staff, etc. Has this not been done yet? May I know whether we have spent any money on this?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It has already been started and it is an ongoing process. Each year, teachers will change. Teachers move on with their students.

The Chairperson: Page 206. Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Under *Item 31112.002, construction of schools and item 31112.999, Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, there is a sum of Rs525 m. plus Rs175 m., making a total of Rs700 m. The Budget Speech states the Nine Year Schooling will cost Rs2 billion. Here, we see a figure that is far below. So, can the hon. Minister shed some light on this?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Chairperson, the Nine Year Schooling is being done in phase. For this Budget year, we have Rs580 m. that has been given. I can circulate the breakup. We know that there are about Rs20 m. going for the upgrading of primary schools; Rs18 m. for curriculum and textbooks, content development; Rs250 m. for digital resources; Rs3 m. for continuous professional development of school staff; recruitment of educators, Rs115 m.; enhanced meals for ZEP schools; giving up of impetus to the SEN sector; regional scholarship for Special Education Needs students, TVET reforms, setting up of polytechnics. All this will be included.

Mr Uteem: Page 206, under *item 31112.002, Construction and Extension of Schools*, is there a list where the new schools will be located?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I'll circulate same.

Mr Baloomoody: Under *Capital Grants, item 26323.071, Pre-Primary Schools - (a) Early Childhood Care and Education Authority*, the project for is for Rs6 m. and we are allocating only Rs500,000 for the coming year. May we know how that Authority is functioning?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The Authority is for the organisation of the pre-primary sector, and the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority takes care of all the primary units that we have.

Mr Baloomoody: The members of that Authority.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I will circulate the number of staff involved in the Authority.

Mr Mahomed: On that same *Authority*, Rs500,000 only is being provided for. Is that sufficient to cater for the budget of an Authority?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: For the Early Childhood Care Education Authority, we have Rs33 m. We also have funds going to the public pre-primary schools, and we have the private pre-primary schools. So, the amount going to the public pre-primary schools would be Rs157 m. and for the private pre-primary, Rs58 m.

Mr Baloomoody: We are talking about the budget. I don't know where the hon. Minister gets the sum of Rs157 m. It is not in the budget. On the public pre-primary schools, the project value is Rs34,790,000, and for the coming year we are projecting Rs8 m. So, may we know exactly? Can we have a list of the public schools which would benefit from that expenditure?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The information will be circulated.

The Chairperson: Pages 207 and 208! Page 209! Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 209, item .005 - *Extra Assistance*, there has been a huge increase from Rs18 m. to Rs26 m. may we have the details of the breakdown of this amount?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The payment under extra assistance goes for supply teachers, support teachers, project managers ZEP, cluster coordinators and parent mediator.

Mr Baloomoody: On item 22120.007 - *Fees for Training*. It has come up from Rs156,000 to Rs3 m. may we know for what purpose?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Under item Fees for Training, funds will be used for the payment of fees to resource persons in respect of the training of Headmasters, Deputy Headmasters, Mentors, Assistant School Superintendents and School Clerks. The training courses will aim at improving leadership, managerial and administrative skills.

Mr Uteem: Under item 22120.025 - *Fees to Oriental Language Teachers*, there is Rs28 m. earmarked and, at the same time, when you look at the establishment there is no increase in the number of teachers, senior teachers of Oriental Language. So, may I know from the hon. Minister how many people benefit from this fee to Oriental language teachers and why are they not on the establishment?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: They are not teachers on the establishment for Oriental Languages. These are teachers who are operating in NGOs and sociocultural set ups. We have 21,239 pupils for Hindi, 11,498 students for Urdu, 2,421 for Tamil, 1,068 for Telugu, 412 for Modern Chinese, 967 for Marathi and if I talk now about the teachers, for Hindi you have 789, Urdu and Arabic 450, Tamil 108, Telugu 45, Modern Chinese 17, Marathi 40, a total of 1,449 teachers.

Mr Mahomed: On page 209, item 26210.183 - *Contribution to International Organisations*. Do we not contribute to the UNESCO because UNESCO has been complaining lately that they have got a lot of financial problems?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: With regard to the current grant to international organisations, we contribute to the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality and we have contributions made to the CONFEMEN, the UNESCO and the ADEA.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 22900.935 - *Summer/Winter School Programme*. Do we still have this programme and, if so, can the hon. Minister give a list of primary schools where this programme is being run?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I will circulate the list.

Mr Quirin: At page 209, under items 22070 and 22090 - *Cleaning Services* and *Security respectively*. May we know if the contracts have already been awarded and, if yes, to whom?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The contracts for cleaning services have been awarded to Mauriclean Ltd and New Cleaning Services. For Security, I find that Defence Hitech Security Services Ltd have got the contract. I will circulate the list of schools involved.

The Chairperson: Page 210!

Mr Bhagwan: At page 219, under item 31122.802 - *Acquisition of Equipment for Sankoré Project*. I have two questions. Can the hon. Minister inform the House how many schools are actively engaged in the Sankoré Project and give us some details?

Under item 31122.823 - *Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*. May we have some details about the amount which has been earmarked and the number of equipment which is supposed to be purchased and which schools will be involved in the programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: All schools are involved in the Sankoré Programme. I will circulate information regarding the equipment purchased.

Mr Fowdar: At page 210, under item 28211.040 *Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) (Parent Aided Primary Schools Association)*. May we know from the hon. Minister whether these grants are meant to cover expenses towards activities organised by the PTA or is it to cover expenses of the schools?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, the PTA receives money for activities as well as for payment in certain cases for staff involved in the cleaning of the premises.

Mr Bhagwan: Since yesterday we have been asking questions. Madam Chairperson, we have been Ministers also. Every time Ministers say that replies will be circulated. Can I appeal to the Chair, in the past years we have seen that replies are not circulated. It will be in Hansard and we will be following up to see that these replies be circulated at appropriate time.

The Chairperson: Hon. Member, I take the point which has been raised. I would request hon. Ministers to give replies as far as possible, but where the reply is very long and they think they would take time to give this reply then they can circulate the reply. For lists which are requested, they can circulate; but, where facts and arguments are concerned, then they will have to give the reply.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I refer the hon. Minister to the grants to the Roman Catholic Education Authority? Can we know from the hon. Minister whether the RCEA schools will be converted into Academy Colleges when it comes to the Nine-Year Schooling?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Chairperson, this is a question regarding a policy of the RCEA.

Mr Baloomoody: If we are giving grant, it is specific and it is mentioned for the Nine-Year Schooling, so may we know whether they will be part of the Nine-Year Schooling?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Chairperson, the Academy is part of the secondary education. When we talk about RCEA, we are talking about Primary sub sector.

Mr Uteem: I think what my hon. friend is asking is whether they are part of the Nine-Year Schooling, or not.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The *Bureau d'Education Catholique* has expressed its wish to join and to be part of the Reform.

Mr Uteem: At page 210, under item *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, there is construction and upgrading of schools. May I know from the hon. Minister the amount budgeted for the construction or upgrading of schools for the integration of children with disabilities?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Chairperson, the funds are not attributed thus, but obviously, it goes into the whole amount that is required for upgrading of schools. We have not made a special provision here, however, we do have funds for the setting up of resource centres for children with special education needs.

Mr Ameer Meea: Madam Chairperson, under item 31122.823 in relation to the *Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*, the hon. Minister stated that she would circulate the list of equipment. Can I ask her all about this Early Digital Learning Programme?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, Madam Chairperson, we are providing digital tablets to students in grades I and II as from next year. The equipment will include the racks for the tablets, the electrical units that have to be set up, the servers, etc.

Mr Ramano: Under item 28212 *Transfers to Households*, there has been a supplementary increase from Rs73 m. to Rs110 m. Can we know from the hon. Minister what the difference stands for?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: This is, in fact, because of the increase in the funds available for the School Feeding Programme in the ZEP schools.

Mr Mahomed: Under the same vote 31122.823 *Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*, in the House we heard before that at secondary school level, it did not quite work for numerous reasons. Have we catered for these reasons because we are being asked to vote Rs500 m. for this project?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Madam Chairperson, we are using the tablets at the level of the primary school, placing within the tablets all the educational resource materials required so that children do not have to carry their heavy bags to school. These will be kept at school and the students will have to learn to use the tablet as a tool for their learning. Furthermore, we are coming up with connectivity in another vote at the level of the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation for the connectivity at the level of the schools.

Mr Baloomoody: Coming back to the tablets, we know there was in the past a project for the tablets which has been a total failure and a lot of money has been wasted. Have we identified a specific supplier who can guarantee not only the supply, but also the servicing of these tablets?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We do agree that the former project was not a very good one, but now we are proceeding very cautiously and we will be working together with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to determine how the supply will be made.

The Chairperson: Last question!

Mr Uteem: Is there any amount earmarked in that programme for installation of WIFI in the schools for these digital tablets?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: This is not in my vote. This is in the vote of the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation.

Mr Quirin: Under item 31112.402 *Upgrading of Schools*, can the hon. Minister table a list of all the schools which are going to be upgraded and, of course, if they have already been identified?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I will circulate it.

Mr Ameer Meea: In relation to the tablets, that is, item 31122.823 *Acquisition of Equipment for Early Digital Learning Programme*, the hon. Minister stated earlier that there was a programme. But the programme that we had earlier cost, I think, almost a billion rupees. What will happen to this project in relation to the new project that is being launched now? Will it be scrapped or will it be incorporated in this project?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: This is a policy decision, Madam Chairperson.

The Chairperson: I suspend the sitting for one hour.

At 12.56 the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.04 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in Chair.

The Deputy Speaker: Page 211. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: In respect of item 21110 - *Rectors*. There is an increase from 42 to 62 rectors. So, do I take it that they are going to be 20 more schools or where will the additional Rectors house?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: There are a number of acting Rectors who will need to be nominated.

Mr Uteem: My question is easy. We are increasing the number from 42 to 62. So, do we have 62 colleges for these Rectors? Does it take into consideration new schools that are being constructed?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: There are vacancies. There are about 25 vacancies and we are filling the vacancies.

Mr Mahomed: With respect to General Workers, we are passing from 93 to 242. May we know when will they be in office because many schools are complaining that there is a lack of attendants and General Workers?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The recruitment is being done and the vacancies are being filled.

Mr Baloomoody: Home Economics Attendant - we see no provision for home economics attendant. Are we abolishing this post?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The new post has been created in PRB report 2016. A new draft scheme of service has been referred to the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms for its prescription. As soon as the scheme of service is prescribed, action will be taken for the funding and filling of the appropriate post.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on page 213, item 21110.005 *Extra Assistance*. There is an amount of Rs55 m. Can the hon. Minister give the details and breakdown and also circulate it?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The funds will be used for the enlistment of supply teachers in State Secondary schools in all subject areas including physical education.

Mr Mahomed: Item 21210 - *Social Contributions*, for which we are being asked to vote Rs67.5 m. May I know what is it about, please?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The *Social Contributions* are contributions to the National Saving Funds in respect to all officers paid under this Sub-Head.

Mr Bhagwan: I have two questions. Under item 27210.013 - *S.C. and H.S.C. Examination Fees*. Can we have an idea of the number of beneficiaries which are being targeted? I'll ask another one. Under item 26313.133 - *PSSA - Performance Grant to Private Secondary Schools*, we are being asked to vote Rs35 m. What is this Performance Grant?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: For the first one, we are referring to all SC and HSC students sitting for the examination for the first time. Now, for the Performance Grant to Private Secondary Schools, there is a component of the Comprehensive Grant Formula which is linked to the performance of the schools. So, the performance grant is used for the payment to the Private Aided Secondary Schools in line with the new Comprehensive Grant formula. It has an element of block and performance grant. The Performance Grant is paid on the basis of achievement of performance indicators which include among others: academic performance, participation in sports and extracurricular activities.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 22120 *Fees*. It was 589,000. Now, it is Rs2.5 m. May we know why there is such a tremendous increase?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The funds will be used to pay resource persons for the training of rectors, deputy rectors, senior educators, school superintendents, school clerks, Lab. Attendants and workshop attendants as well as library staff.

Mr Uteem: In relation to item 27210.013 *Social Assistance Benefits - S.C. and H.S.C. Examination Fees*, the amount budgeted for next year is the same as for last year which is Rs310 m. I thought that the criteria are being revised so, why is the amount the same?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The criteria are not being revised. The fund that is made available is according to the number of students sitting for exams every year. Now, for people going for a re-sit, they are normally paid under another vote at the level of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, not at the level of the Ministry of education.

Mr Baloomoody: We find that there has been a tremendous increase in rent as well, from Rs491,000 to Rs2 m. Item 22030- *Rent*, on page 213.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: For this particular item, we are referring to rental of building which turns to around Rs1.5 m. and rental facilities for events in public secondary schools in terms of rental of podiums, *salles vertes*, sound systems amounting to about Rs450,000.

Mr Mahomed: There is a list of schools where there will be extensive construction and extension. I believe there will be an extensive construction and extension for a series of schools. Is there a project implementation unit or department at the Ministry of Education and how many staff does it comprise of.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, we do have a unit and we do have support from the MPI as well. The construction work is done normally through the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, but we do have a unit comprised of officers of my Ministry for the supervision.

Mr Uteem: On page 214, in respect of *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, item 31112.402 – *Upgrading of Schools (b) R. Seeneevassen SSS*, there is Rs44 m. project, but last year, less than Rs1 m. was spent. So, may I know the reason for the under spending and whether the contract has been awarded for the extension of the school?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We have for R. Seeneevassen Rs17 m. made available and it is for the rehabilitation of the veranda, repairs to cracks and concrete, waterproofing work, demolition of two classroom blocks comprising canteen, art room, toilets, classrooms and construction of two new blocks on ground plus three.

Mr Uteem: Has the contract already been awarded? Because since last year, it was supposed to be.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Soil test and investigation are completed. Now, drawings are under preparation.

Mr Baloomoody: On item 26323.073 *Capital Expenditure – Grants*, a grant of Rs11,750,000 has been earmarked for this year and Rs25,700,000 for next year to the PSSA. May we know for what purpose?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: For the PSSA, we have rehabilitation of the PSSA building, computerisation and hardware projects.

The Chairperson: Page 216, any questions? Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Item 28211.023 – *Special Education Needs Schools*, Rs90 m. is budgeted. May I know from the hon. Minister which school and Day Care Centres will be obtaining the grant-in-aid?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: There are at present 42 NGOs running 54 registered SEN schools which are paid this grant-in-aid. The grant-in-aid caters for salaries of managers, teachers, assistant teachers, carers and handy workers as well as specialised support services such as psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists etc. The amount disbursed to NGOs is Rs61,263,000.

The Chairperson: If it's long, hon. Minister, you may circulate it.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Okay, I will circulate it. The number of NGOs is 42.

Mr Mohamed: On item 22120, we are being asked a sum of Rs200,000 for *Fees*, when it was Rs46,000 in the previous year. May we know why, although not a big amount, such a huge increase, comparatively?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The fees are for the training. We are making provision for the training of the Special Education Needs personnel.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 31122.821 – *Acquisition of Braille PC for Visually Impaired Children*. May we know how many children have benefitted from the provision this year and how many are we projecting for next year?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, it depends on the number of students that we have having these impairments. I'll give you the number. I have the impression that it is around 54

students this year. 58 braille PCs have been provided for students this year and the braille PCs contained also screen readers and screen magnifier software.

Dr. Joomaye: Under the same item, may we know through which institution these brail equipment are being distributed.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: To Loïs Lagesse Trust Fund and to *Lizie Dan La Main*.

The Chairperson: Next page, 217. Hon. Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: On item 28212.020 – *Student Scholarship Schemes for Vulnerable Households*, the Budget is being increased from Rs29 m. to Rs55 m. Are we increasing the number of students or the amount of contribution or both?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The object of the scheme was to award a fully funded scholarship of a maximum of Rs150,000 per academic year covering tuition fees, examination fees, books and a stipend of Rs3,000 per month for Mauritian students and Rs8,000 for Rodriguan students. The amount spent up to June 2016 was Rs7,780,000 for the ex-HRKAD Fund and the amount spent for the SRM scholarship is around Rs13 m. So, we have extension of the scholarship of the ex-Human Resource Knowledge and Arts Development Fund and payments are still being effected. Scholarship to children from vulnerable families, the amount has been increased ...

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun, the question was: has there been an increase in the number of students?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In fact, we are now providing scholarships for students with Special Education Needs as well.

Mr Uteem: In respect to Scholarship Scheme to students with disabilities, may I know from the hon. Minister what is the criteria and whether the Scholarship Scheme refers to only tertiary education or other education?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: It will be for the tertiary or even for MITD and polytechnics as well. The criteria has to be worked out.

Dr. Sorefan: On the same item as my friend, hon. Uteem, how many students are we planning to give scholarships?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: For the Special Education Needs, we have made provision for five scholarships.

Mr Baloomoody: On the last item on that page, *Capital Expenditure, Grants* to the *Mauritius Institute of Education*, there is an increase of Rs7 m. May we know for what purpose?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: In the light of the Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education, training of staff, preparation of content material, curriculum development, etc.

Mr Uteem: Under Item 28211 *Transfer to non-profit institution*, Rs1 m. is earmarked for Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Foundation. May I know for what purpose?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: This was the Foundation that was put up earlier normally to provide support to children who have a need in some forms of loan, etc. but, now with the number of different schemes that are available, very little requests are made from that particular fund.

Mr Baloomoody: We have under item 26 – *Grants*, which is the *Extra-Budgetary Units, Mauritius Institution of Education*, Rs240,000,000. There is an increase of Rs8 m. Then we have the *Extra-Budgetary Units* in *Capital Expenditure* Rs17 m. So, may we have some details?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Apart from the operational cost, in the case of MIE, we are talking about the Capital Budget, we also have the extension of the MIE building and the project value is Rs48 m.

Mr Ameer Meea: On 218, the last item 22120 – *Fees*, last year it was Rs17,000 and this year it is Rs6.5 m. May we know the reason for such an increase and also the details of this amount?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The amount refers to the fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees and now it is absorbed under the subhead of vote 101. The fees to consultants which support for system wide educational reform and development and regulatory framework for high education turns around Rs6,000,500 and the remaining amount, as I mentioned earlier, has been absorbed under the vote subhead 10101.

Mr Jhuboo: At the paragraph *Capital Expenditure* item 26323.077 concerning the construction of a planetarium at Réduit for an amount of Rs153 m. Could the hon. Minister shed some light on that provision, please?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: We will have to acquire exhibits and equipment for a value of about Rs2,800,000. The construction of the planetarium at Réduit for Rs10 m. and the total amounting to Rs12.8 m.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 219, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Item 26323.088 *recruitment of foreign lecturers*. Can we know how many lecturers we are planning to recruit and whether some have been recruited and also, for Africa scholarships, how many scholarships are we planning to give to our African brothers?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: As far as the recruitment of lecturers is concerned, it is normally done through the universities at times, as and when required, foreign lecturers are made to come and to run courses and this is on an *ad-hoc* basis, as and when required. The target groups for this service is the UoM, UTM, l'Université des Mascareignes, Open University, MGI and the Fashion and Design Institute.

Mr Mahomed: If I heard the hon. Minister correctly for the planetarium we are going to purchase about 2 million plus rupees of equipment, is that correct? And then, the building project is costing Rs153 m. so, can we not use that Rs2.7 m. of equipment and place it somewhere else like, for example, the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre?

The Chairperson: This is a policy decision.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The Planetarium is part of the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre. Secondly, as far as the building is concerned, it is being funded by the Indian Government.

Dr. Sorefan: Item 26313.088 - *Open University of Mauritius*, may we know from the hon. Minister why the budget has gone down by Rs11 m.? Is this programme not functioning?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The Open University of Mauritius is a self-financing institution which gets money from its students as course fee as well.

Mr Uteem: In respect to the grant to the Tertiary Education Commission, we are asked to vote for an increased budget of Rs120 m. May I know from the hon. Minister whether she has carried out any investigation to find out whether any sanction has been taken against members of the TEC or are we still voting the budget for the same people who, in the past, did not perform?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, in fact, the previous people have left and there are new officers who have replaced those who have left.

Mr Ameer Meea: In relation to expenses to Polytechnics item code 22900.963, it seems to be a new item because last year nothing was budgeted, but this year it is Rs25 m. and then it went on to Rs35 m. and Rs45 m. for the coming years. May we have some details on this figure?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Polytechnics are going to start running next year and, therefore, the operational costs are included as well. In fact, all three polytechnics will start operating: one in Pamplemousses, one in Montagne Blanche, one in Réduit and the financial details for the expenditure...

The Chairperson: Can the hon. Minister circulate it?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I will circulate it.

Mr Baloomoody: Coming back again to the Open University of Mauritius, for the capital expenditure we are allocating Rs5 m. each year, may we know for what purpose?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: For the Open University of Mauritius provision will be used for the acquisition of equipment and furniture.

The Chairperson: Next page 220, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: May I know from the hon. Minister for the Knowledge Parks Limited there is a loan of Rs72 m. and there is nothing for the coming years, so can I know what was that?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: The Knowledge Parks Co Ltd was meant for the launching of the building, the construction of the three polytechnics. Now that the construction has been completed, we will no longer need the Knowledge Parks of Mauritius.

Vote 10-1 Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research (Rs16,109,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 11-1 Ministry of Health and Quality of Life was called.

Dr. Joomaye: Page 221 in the main achievements more than Rs8.5 m. attendances and Rs2.1 m. at the primary healthcare centres. Can we have the breakdown of the cost impact on the budget of the 2.1 million attendances at the primary healthcare centres?

Mr Gayan: I will circulate the details.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Baloomoody!

(Interruptions)

Don't waste time, please! Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Yes...

(Interruptions)

Will the hon. Minister be able to reply?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Usher, please make sure that they come in a timely fashion we are losing time here!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Baloomoody! Hon. Jhugroo, silence please! Page 224.

(Interruptions)

Mr Baloomoody: We are still on page 221?

The Chairperson: Page 221, I am sorry I could not hear! Hon. Dr. Joomaye!

Dr. Joomaye: We feared a walk out of the officers, fortunately they are there!

(Interruptions)

Walk in!

In the *Strategic Direction*, it is specified that there will be promotion of Mauritius as a medical travel destination. But going through the items, I have not seen any funds allocated to that effect.

The Chairperson: This is a policy question.

Mr Gayan: Can the hon. Member repeat his question?

The Chairperson: Hon. Member, please, we have no time to waste. Speak louder!

Dr. Joomaye: In the *Strategic Direction*, it is stipulated that there will promotion of Mauritius as a Medical Travel Destination. But I cannot see any funds allocated to that effect.

Mr Gayan: The private sector, Mr Chairperson, is already doing it. In fact, the hon. Member is aware of the promotion that he is doing for his Hair Clinic!

Dr. Sorefan: Under *Main Achievements*, there is *New Operation Theatre block, including a new Cardiac Surgery Centre at Victoria Hospital operational*. If this is so, may we know, especially for the Cardiac Surgery Unit, how many cardiac surgeons are being recruited there?

Mr Gayan: Well, I do not think that there will be need to recruit any more cardiac surgeons. We have a number which is adequate for the needs of Mauritius.

Mr Mahomed: *Strategic Direction - Develop traditional medicine as an alternative to allopathic medicine*. In the Assembly itself, the Minister said in the past that there was a lack of resources, and yet, in this budget we do not quite see it, because in Plaine Verte Mediclinic, we have been waiting for a unit for more than a year now. The hon. Minister will recall.

Mr Gayan: The idea is to develop traditional medicine, not only Ayurvedic medicine, but also Chinese traditional medicine and African traditional medicine. So, we are working on a holistic approach with traditional medicine. For the Plaine Verte Mediclinic, there will be sessional doctors there.

Dr. Joomaye: *Item Total Expenditure – Recurrent*. Regarding the key action at page 222 for the shift system implementation, how much increase of the recurrent expenditure would there be due to the implementation of the shift system?

Mr Gayan: The intention is to recruit about 300 doctors, and to have a shift system which is fully operative. From the workings we have done, it is going to cost about Rs50 m. in excess of what we are already paying in terms of overtime.

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding *Implementation of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programme for Medical Practitioners and Dentists*, the target is next door, August of this year. Is the hon. Minister aware that the Dental Council has now advertised for the CPD? How can this be targeted for this month?

Mr Gayan: I am afraid that the dentists are a bit late, because we have been announcing it for a while.

(Interruptions)

The hon. Member is a member of the dental professional. He can take care of that.

Mr Leopold: On summary of expenditure, I just want to know under which sub-head will the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of substance abusers will fall, and then how much money has been earmarked for same.

Mr Gayan: There will be the items later on. Can the hon. Member hold his file until then?

Mr Jhuboo: On Recurrent Expenditure, *item 21110.001, Director, Health Services and Director Diabetes and Vascular Services*, can we know from the hon. Minister why these posts have not yet been filled and no provision made for the coming years?

Mr Gayan: I need to check this.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, you can come back later for this answer.

Mr Gayan: Yes, I will come back.

Mr Baloomoody: While the hon. Minister is looking for the answer, can he also inform us why for Quality Control Pharmacist/Chemist, no provision has been made for such an important post?

The Chairperson: Perhaps you can circulate both answers.

Mr Gayan: Yes, I will circulate both.

Mr Uteem: On page 225, there are a number of posts that have been created for former NATReSA. So, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of people who were employed at NATReSA and who are now going to be relocated to his Ministry?

Mr Gayan: Well, they have all been relocated to the Ministry. They are at the Harm Reduction Unit, and others who are Clerical Officers and other grades have been absorbed in their relevant grades.

The Chairperson: Do you have the number, hon. Minister?

Mr Gayan: They are about 16 in all.

The Chairperson: Do you have the answers for page 224?

Mr Gayan: I see it is just a blank. So, even if I circulate, it seems that the posts have not been filled. Diabetes and Vascular are being run under the supervision of a Diabetologist and fall under the RHD of Dr. Nehru Hospital. I think that is why it has not been filled. The Quality Control ...

The Chairperson: Perhaps you can circulate it hon. Minister!

Mr Gayan: This one cannot be circulated; it is too dirty to be circulated.

Mr Baloomoody: Only when the answer is long, you circulate. We have to ask supplementary questions. If everything is circulated, then there is no point for us to be here.

Mr Gayan: For the Quality Control, this is a post which has been proposed by the previous PRB, and then the Ministry decided not to go ahead with it.

Dr. Joomaye: We can see that under the item *Hospital Administrative Cadre*, the post of *Chief Hospital Administrator* was vacant and is left vacant. It is not budgeted for the coming years. So, does that mean that we will not have a Chief Hospital Administrator?

Mr Gayan: Well, with regard to the post of *Chief Hospital Administrator*, there is none, but for the Deputy, the provision has been made to fill one vacant post and the interview will be carried out by the PSC later this month.

Mr Uteem: In relation to *item 22130, Studies and Surveys (e) Health Care Waste Management*, there is an amount of Rs4 m. this year and Rs10 m. for the following years. May I know from the hon. Minister why are we still carrying out surveys when he, himself, stated in the Assembly, following a PQ, that the decision has been taken to have a central incineration for all wastes? So, why are we still doing more surveys?

Mr Gayan: The reason is that we have just obtained the land at La Chaumière and it takes time to process everything. That is why it is being...

(Interruptions)

The land has been acquired. A survey has been carried out to see if it is appropriate for that purpose, and also the consultants. This is the high technology, so we have to be careful about what we do and how we spend the money because you will be asking questions later on as to why we spend that kind of money.

Mr Mahomed: At page 227, under item 22200, *Overseas Travel (Treatment & Incoming Medical Teams)*. The budget is being increased from Rs17 m. to Rs37.5 m.. Is

there any particular reason for that? Although it is good! Are we favouring doctors coming over to treat patients rather than sending patients overseas, for example?

Mr Gayan: The intention is to reduce as far as possible the number of patients travelling overseas for treatment and to get specialists from overseas to come and treat our patients here. We are still on a transitional phase. So, we have to see how it works out over time; but, that is intention.

Mr Quirin: On page 227, item 22120 - *Fees*, can we know to whom the fees are payable?

Mr Gayan: The fees are paid to consultants, to foreign teams in connection with exchangers in the field of Health and Clinical Quality Assurance Framework, but there has been no payment for 2015/2016.

Dr. Joomaye: At page 227, under item 22130.001 (d) *Cost Centre Project*, Rs2 m. has been voted. Can we have some details about this course and the project?

Mr Gayan: The Cost Centre Project was initiated in the five regional hospitals since October 2013. 15 officers in the grade of Management Support Officers, Office Management Assistants and Health Record Clerks posted at hospitals have been assigned the duties of costing accountants and are paid a monthly allowance of Rs1,500.

Mr Ramful: With regard to *Overseas Travel (Treatment & Incoming Medical Teams)*, last year we budgeted an amount of Rs17 m. and this year we are being asked to vote Rs37 m. Can we have a breakdown of the costs of the fees for the Overseas of Medical Officers and the money that is being earmarked for the treatment of the patients?

Mr Gayan: I can circulate the information.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 22130, *Studies and Surveys*. Last year, we allocated Rs4.2 m. to the Institute of Women's Health and Rs1.4 m. to the New Warehouse at La Tour Koenig, and no provision is made for the subsequent years. Are we to understand that the studies have been completed, and if so, may we know what was the specific topic of that study?

Mr Gayan: With regard to the New Warehouse at La Tour Koenig, no provision has been made because the project is in abeyance. We are considering what to do with Sunray and the ex-Tobacco Board Building. We are thinking of having something totally new, that is

why there is this provision. For the Institute of Women's Health, the contract was awarded in August 2013 and the final payment has already been made.

Dr. Joomaye: At page 228, under the items 28211.065, *Pharmacy Council* and 28211.066, *Allied Health Professional Council* respectively. I understand, two councils will be set up this year and budgeted Rs500,000 each. Would Rs500,000 be enough to set up a Council?

Mr Gayan: We have to start somewhere. I think we consider that to be reasonable.

Mr Mahomed: At page 228, under item 31132.401, *e-Health*. This appears to be a mega project to me. Rs509,860,000! We are starting this year with Rs5 m., next year Rs10 m. and the next year Rs25 m. In my view, it is a very timid start. Is there any reason for that?

Mr Gayan: In fact, I have explained to the House why we are starting small with the e-Health. We are doing it on a small basis in one of the hospitals and then we are going to expand it to all the other hospitals. The reason is very simple. We cannot simply import a system which operates in one country and impose it here. Some countries have tried it and then it was money that was totally gone down the drains. That is why we are starting small and we hope to have a home-grown system overtime. We are looking for a home-grown solution.

The Chairperson: May I remind hon. Members to keep questions and answers short and concise, please!

Mr Bhagwan: *Capital Expenditure, Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets, Acquisition of Vehicles*. We have been asked to vote Rs3 m.. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether provision is being made for the purchase of new ambulances, and if yes, how many; whether there are new types of ambulances other than the existing ones which are being purchased?

Mr Gayan: In fact, we are providing for the acquisition of new ambulances. I think there are about five. We are going to build up on that. There are also provisions for other vehicles to be acquired.

Mr Quirin: Atn page 228, item 27210.008 - *Assistance to Patients Inoperable in Mauritius*. Can we know why the amount budgeted for 2016/17 has been decreased?

Mr Gayan: It is because the quality of care in Mauritius has improved.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Silence, please!

Dr. Joomaye: Under the item Recurrent Expenditure, item *21110.001*, there will be three new posts of Head of Units for Medical Oncology, Gastro-Enterology, Neonatology that are supposed to be created, but there is no budget allocated. So, will this happen or not?

Mr Gayan: We are planning to recruit these persons but there is a scarcity of talent in those grades, which is why it is taking some time.

Mr Uteem: I want to come back to the e-Health project. Can I know from the hon. Minister whether the contract has already been awarded and to whom?

Mr Gayan: My understanding is that we are working in-house with the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation and other bodies.

Dr. Sorefan: An page 228, under item *28211.007 - Dental Council* and item *28211.014, Medical Council* respectively. These are ongoing project and we financed those councils. There is provision, but why didn't we pay for the Dental and Medical Councils last year? I don't see the amount paid to them for the last year.

Mr Gayan: I understand that this is only part of the operational expenses of Dental Council and a study is now on by our Financial Analyst on the grants being made to all these councils.

Mr Baloomoody: May I refer again to the Acquisition of Vehicles. The hon. Minister just answered that we are making provisions to buy several ambulances and only Rs3 m. has been earmarked. I am sure that one ambulance cost much more than Rs3 m.

Mr Gayan: Well, right now we have three types of ambulances. I am going to circulate all the information about the ambulances.

The Chairperson: Next page 229. Hon. Jhuboo!

Mr Jhuboo: Concerning the Head of Department/Director of Ayurvedic Healthcare Services, there is an important contradiction between the policy and the implementation. The Minister himself stated that he wants to develop traditional medicine as an alternative to allopathic medicine, on one hand, and, on the other hand, no provision is made for the recruitment of the Health and Department Director for Ayurvedic Services for 2016, 2017 and even for 2018. Could the hon. Minister shed some light on that provision?

Mr Gayan: Well, this is a new post which has been created and this is because we want to upgrade the traditional medicine.

Dr. Sorefan: Item 21 regarding *Pre-Registration House Officer*. I see there will be...

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Sorefan, which page you are referring to?

Dr. Sorefan: At page 229 item *Pre-Registration House Officer*, I see that for this year there are 375 Pre-Registration House Officers and I see as allowance they will have about Rs90,000. Will the hon. Minister inform us when we are going to recruit those Pre-Registration House Officers?

Mr Gayan: Well, we are hoping to do that by September because I have already intimated to the House, there will be - like it is the case in other countries - an examination for the pre-registration and once they pass, they will be admitted to the pre-registration training.

(Interruptions)

In September.

Mr Baloomoody: The Director of Emergency Services, I think the provision is made for one post. May we know whether this post is filled and what exactly he is supposed to do? There is only one Director for Emergency services around the island?

Mr Gayan: We hope there won't be too many emergencies.

(Interruptions)

We don't have any. So, we have one. We'll start with one.

The Chairperson: Next page! Page 230! No question! Next page! Page 231! Hon. Dr. Joomaye!

Dr. Joomaye: Under item *Physiotherapy Cadre*, we have *Pool Attendant (Hydrotherapy Unit)*. May we know in which hospital these two are posted? The one in post, where is he posted in Hydrotherapy Unit?

Mr Gayan: I understand it is at Dr. A. G. Jeetoo Hospital. There is a service.

(Interruptions)

There is one at Victoria Hospital and one at Dr. A. G. Jeetoo Hospital.

The Chairperson: Page 232. Any questions? No questions! Page 233! No questions! Page 234! Yes, hon. Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Under item *Biomedical Engineering Cadre*, we have had a lot of questions in this House about equipment that break down very often and entail a lot of high cost in repair. Is this Department responsible for looking after the expensive equipment that we have in a hospital?

Mr Gayan: Well, this is an area where we have a shortage of engineers and we are trying to recruit more engineers so that they can look after all the equipment, especially the hi-tech equipment which we will be purchasing.

Dr. Joomaye: On page 234, under item *CSSD Cadre, Senior Surgical Technologist*, there are three in post, that means that all our regional hospitals do not have this post filled in. So, where are they posted, those three in post?

Mr Gayan: They should be in the medical services somewhere. I'll try to get the information.

The Chairperson: Perhaps you can circulate the information if you don't have it.

Mr Gayan: I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Next page! Page 235! Any questions? No questions! Page 236! No questions! Page 237! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item 22140 – *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment*, there is actually a reduction in the medical drugs and vaccines by Rs80 m. So, may I know from the hon. Minister why this reduction?

Mr Gayan: Well, what I have here is the provision is to meet the cost of sending pharmaceutical products abroad for testing.

Dr. Joomaye: Under item 22140.007 – *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment – Renal Dialysis - Consumables and Fees*, estimates for this year are Rs120 m. and last year it was Rs137 m. So, there is a decrease of Rs70 m. May we know why there has been a decrease in the sums allocated for this post?

Mr Gayan: Well, I understand that the cost of consumables has gone down.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 237, item 22120 – *Fees to Chairman and Members of Boards and Committees* Rs9 m. May we know the name of the Chairman and the Board members as well as their respective fees?

Mr Gayan: Well, it's too long; I'll circulate it.

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding the same item *Medical Supplies, CT Scan and MRI Fees and Materials*, do I take it that those fees are for the private sector, because I am made to understand that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life is not resorting to going to the private, they are just doing it in-house. Can I know what these fees are meant for?

The Chairperson: This is policy, hon. Member.

Mr Gayan: Well, when there are breakdowns and there are emergencies, of course, there is recourse to the private clinics for CT Scan. These fees are for that purpose. There are two things, the number of times they do that.

Mr Uteem: On the same question of *Medicine, Drugs and Vaccines*, may I know from the hon. Minister for 2015-2016, the amount of medicines, drugs and vaccines which had been disposed of as having passed the expiration date. How much money has been spent?

Mr Gayan: Well, I can have the information circulated. But what I can inform the House about is that there was a whole stock of expired drugs and within the next three months, we will have disposed of them all.

Mr Mahomed: On the same item, since it is the third time, I am going to go direct to the point. Many of my constituents have come to me telling me that the medicines that they use to get from hospitals are being rationed, so to speak for all it is worth. Now, is that anyhow associated with that reduction in budget, because there is a question of perception, would you clarify?

Mr Gayan: No, there is no shortage with regard to whatever medicine has to be given to a patient. There is no problem at all on that.

Mr Ameer Meea: Under the third item *Extra Assistance*, there has been an increase of Rs10 m. to reach the figure of Rs53 m. May we know the reason for such an increase and also the details of this figure?

Mr Gayan: I need assistance for that question.

The Chairperson: Perhaps you can circulate it if you don't have it.

Mr Gayan: Unless it is a short one. This is for new recruits.

Dr. Joomaye: Under item 22120.007, I can see *Fees for Training*. May we know what kind of training is it and who will be trained, and the Budget has been increased from Rs2.7 m. to Rs5 m.?

Mr Gayan: Well, this is for Capacity Building Programme and upgrading of skills.

Mr Uteem: In respect to *Extra-Budgetary Units*, item 26323.095 - *Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of cardiac surgeons operating at the Medical Centre and the number of people on the waiting list to be operated?

Mr Gayan: There are three cardiac surgeons and there is no waiting list.

Mr Bhagwan: On the same item, we are being asked to vote more sum than last year. Can the hon. Minister justify this increase and also for the new cancer centre, upgrading and renovation of the building where is the building situated in what is this bunker and equipment? Could we have some details about this bunker?

Mr Gayan: The new cancer unit will be at the former Medpoint clinic. The bunker is required for the housing of the radiation equipment because otherwise the radioactive material can escape so the bunker has to be prepared for that.

Mr Fowdar: With regard to capital expenditure, we were made to understand that there would be the purchase of an incinerator to dispose of outdated medicines but there is no provision.

Mr Gayan: No. The idea is to have a place where we are going to have a waste disposal for all medical waste and it has to be a new building with new equipment. This is what I was answering to earlier on for the *terrain* at La Chaumière.

Dr. Sorefan: Item 26323.095 - *Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care*, the hon. Minister informed us that there is a cardiac surgeon who is on contract for years and is doing additional surgeries. He is paid and, on top of that, he is taking the waiting list of another cardiac centre surgeon who retired...

The Chairperson: It is a very long question, hon. Dr. Sorefan, come to the point!

Dr. Sorefan: and he is being paid from this sum. He is getting a lot of money, but is not working for the health centre.

Mr Gayan: That is more the ambit of a parliamentary question and not for...

The Chairperson: Exactly! Next page, 239!

Mr Mahomed: Item 31112.403 - *Upgrading of Hospitals (b) A. G. Jeetoo Hospital* for which we are voting Rs35 m. Pending the Central Waste Disposal Unit which is being put in place, does those Rs35 m. comprise of the high extension of the existing chimney at Jeetoo Hospital because there have been many requests in the past.

Mr Gayan: There is a total rethink about the storage of medication and we are going to have a new system because the way it is now is totally archaic and we have to modernise.

Dr. Joomaye: Under item 31122.811 - *Other Machinery and Equipment, Acquisition of CCTV cameras in Hospitals*, Rs2 m., would these cameras be dedicated to security of staff or security of the compounds?

Mr Gayan: Basically, it will be for the security of the staff and the patients and eventually if we need to have it in the compound we will.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 31122.801 - *Acquisition of Medical Equipment* from Rs65 m. to Rs250 m. may we have the breakdown?

Mr Gayan: I can circulate the list.

Dr. Sorefan: On the same line, Acquisition of Medical Equipment...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Silence, please!

Dr. Sorefan: Does the provision for Rs250 m. include the CT Scan because there is a tender for CT Scan at the SSR Hospital and, if this is so, are we going only for one CT Scan?

Mr Gayan: I think we are going for two and the 160-slice which is a better version of what we have.

Mr Uteem: Again, on the acquisition of medical equipment, can the hon. Minister also circulate a list of contractors, if ever the contract has been awarded, for the procurement of those equipment?

Mr Gayan: It is by the Central Procurement Board, we can always ask the Board to circulate the information. It is all by way of tender anyway.

Dr. Joomaye: Under the item Health Surveillance Unit there is only one supervisor for rodent control for the entire island. How come there is only one in post for pest control?

Mr Gayan: We have one supervisor but we have lots of officers doing rodent control attendance and he is a good supervisor.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*, it was Rs200,000 and now we have come to Rs3 m. May we know the reason of such an increase?

Mr Gayan: I will circulate it.

Mr Jhuboo: Capital Expenditure item 31112.405 - *Upgrading of Community Health Centres*, there is an amount of Rs88 m. provided. Can we know if there is an amount provided for the Yves Cantin Community Health Centre in Black River?

Mr Gayan: Well I will circulate the list of all the Community Health Centres which we are upgrading.

Dr. Joomaye: Under item 31112 - *Capital Expenditure, Construction of Area Health Centres* Rs60 m. project value. Which Area Health Centres will these be?

Mr Gayan: I will circulate the information.

Mr Uteem: Could the Minister circulate the list of the Area Health Centres also not just the Community Health Centres?

Mr Baloomoody: Can I go to the *Sub-Head 11-104 - Treatment and Prevention of HIV and AIDS*. We see that there has been provision for one Head AIDS Unit, may we know whether that person is in function or we have not recruited yet?

Mr Gayan: Here again there is some thinking being done about having one single body to look after all HIV related issues so there is a merger that will take place. It is being restructured.

Dr. Joomaye: Under the item *National Aids Secretariat*, I can see that the post of coordinator is vacant and will be left vacant since there is no provision in the Budget for that.

Mr Gayan: No, I have just mentioned that we are restructuring the whole thing about HIV.

Mr Uteem: Under item 22140 - *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment*, does that cover the needle exchange programme?

Mr Gayan: Yes, it does.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22900 *Other Goods and Services*, .925 *Rehabilitation Programme for Alcoholics and Drug Addicts*, it has increased from Rs6 m. to Rs23 m. Does that take into account those who are using synthetic drugs? May we know more about that Rehabilitation Programme?

Mr Gayan: Well, with the closing down of NATReSA, this is why the amount has increased. The function of ex-NATReSA will be taken up by an Addictology Unit which we are setting up in each of the Regional Hospital.

Mr Mahomed: Part of the question has already been asked, but since we are there, why is prevention not part of that programme? Because I see in other items, the Ministry is doing prevention, but in so far as drug is concerned, prevention is not taken on board.

The Chairperson: This is a policy decision.

Mr Gayan: Prevention is an ongoing programme of the Harm Reduction Unit. It is already there.

Dr. Joomaye: Under item 28211 *Other Expense*, I can see *NGO's for Anti-Smoking and Anti-Alcohol Campaign*, Rs500,000 has been earmarked. May we know which NGO is benefitting from that and is it not an insufficient amount, Rs500,000?

Mr Gayan: Well, I think the NGO is called Visa.

Mr Uteem: Under item 22900.903 *Awareness and Sensitisation Campaign*. The Budget is being more than doubled to Rs18 m. May I know whether these campaigns are carried out by the Ministry or are being sub-contracted to NGOs and other operators?

Mr Gayan: Well, the National Drugs Observatory has just presented its report and the Harm Reduction Unit is working together with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and other stakeholders with a sensitisation campaign around the country. But it also applies to tobacco cessation clinics and campaigns on the radio and MBC.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Joomaye, this is the last question!

Dr. Joomaye: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under item 22130 *Studies and Surveys* Rs4 m. is allocated. Can we know studies and surveys about what?

Mr Gayan: Well, the whole issue of drug abuse.

Vote 11-1 Ministry of Health and Quality of Life (Rs10,900,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 12-1 Local Government was called.

Mr Quirin: On page 247, with regard to the *Main Achievements for FY 2015/2016 on-line application of Building and Land Use Permits*, can we know from the hon. Minister the number of online applications submitted to each Local Authority?

Dr. Husnoo: I will circulate it.

Mr Quirin: The same item, but this time concerning online payment of fees. Can the hon. Minister circulate the number of online payments?

Dr. Husnoo: Okay, I will circulate it.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, item *21210 Social Contributions*, can the hon. Minister give us some details about the amount which we are being asked to vote? Can we have the list of the social clubs or whatever?

Dr. Husnoo: This item is meant for contributions to the National Savings Fund for employees.

Mr Gobin: On page 253, Capital Expenditure, under item 26322 (g) *Other Capital projects* – Rs120 m, I would just request the hon. Minister to circulate the list of capital projects and their respective sites?

Dr. Husnoo: Yes, I will circulate it.

Mr Uteem: Under Capital Expenditure, item 26322 (a) *Construction of drains*, there is an amount of Rs250 m. earmarked. May I know from the hon. Minister what will be the amount allocated for the construction of drains in the region of Port Louis?

Dr. Husnoo: We have got a long list of the drains. I can circulate it.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 253, under item 26322 (c) *Renovation of Port Louis Theatre Phase I*, there is a project value of Rs374 m. Nothing is budgeted for last year and for the current year. May we know where matter stand in relation to this project?

The Chairperson: On page 253, hon. Minister, 26322 (c) *Renovation of Port Louis Theatre Phase I*.

Dr. Husnoo: Can the hon. Member repeat the question, please?

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, the question was: why has there not been any provision for the years to come, what happened to the project? Where matter stand?

Dr. Husnoo: Money has been earmarked in the Budget.

Mr Uteem: With regard to the renovation of the Theatre of Port Louis, We just want to know what stage have we reached? Have we launched tenders? Are we doing surveys?

Dr. Husnoo: Bids document has been sent to CPB for vetting and payment.

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding *Grant to Local Authorities*, especially for *Municipal Council of Vacoas-Phoenix*, may we know whether we are still using the old formula as per capita, if this is so, the number of residents have increased in Vacoas-Phoenix by quite a lot and we see that the grant is more or less the same as last year?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, a different formula is being used by the Ministry of Finance, taking different factors into consideration, the works that have to be done and the services that have to be provided. It is a new formula. It is different from last year actually. I can let the hon. Member have more information on that later on.

Ms Sewocksingh: On page 253, under item 26322 *Capital Expenditure, (e) Renovation of the Town Hall of Curepipe*, I can see that there is around Rs38 m. which has been earmarked. Can I know from the hon. Minister where matter stand?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, for the renovation of the Town Hall of Curepipe, a request for proposal was launched for the project by the Municipal Council. The contract has been awarded to Desai & Associates Ltd for an amount of Rs1 m. It is consultancy fees. So, we are working on it.

Mr Bhagwan: Under the sub heading *.999 Global Positioning System for scavenging vehicles of Local Authorities*, we are being asked to vote nearly Rs17 m. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether his Ministry has conducted an assessment and whether all these equipment are working in the Local Authorities? Because according to our information – it was not you, before - there have been a *magouille* in that project. Can the hon. Minister conduct an inquiry to see how the project was being channelled at the Ministry and the outcome thereof?

Dr. Husnoo: Well, that is a different question. That is in the past. We will look into it, anyway.

The Chairperson: The hon. Member can come with a Parliamentary Question. Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Item no. 22120.002, *Fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards*. May we know who is the Chairperson and the members of the board and their respective fees?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No cross talking please! He is asking a question, no cross talking!

Dr. Husnoo: We will circulate it, Mr Chairperson; the Chairman, the members of the Board and the Fees.

Mr Quirin: Mr Chairperson,, on page 253, it is mentioned that Port Louis Theatre, Plaza Theatre and the Town Hall of Curepipe will be financed under the National Lottery Fund. Can we have some details pertaining to this Fund? Is it a new one or an existing one and what is the amount of money actually in this Fund?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, there are different projects there. There is the Port Louis Theatre, the Plaza and the Town Hall of Curepipe. They are at different stages. Money has been earmarked. For example, for Port Louis Theatre, the majority of the money has been earmarked already. Whatever is missing is going to be given from the Lottery Fund. Same goes for Plaza and for the consultancy for Town Hall as well.

Mr Armance: Item 26322.030 (g) *Other Capital Projects*. Can we have some details or the hon. Minister circulate it?

Dr. Husnoo: Yes, it is a long list of projects and we will circulate it.

(Interruptions)

Vote 12-1 Local Government (Rs3,816,300,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 12-2 Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service was called.

Mr Uteem: Item 21110.001, *Fire Fighter*, on page 254. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of vacancies currently?

Dr. Husnoo: Actually, there is no vacancy. In fact, last year we recruited about 170 firefighters. This year we are going to recruit another 100. So, we are just trying to build up the unit. We are trying to have different specialised units. So, this year we are going to take 100 more firefighters.

Mr Baloomoody: May we know the number of firefighters who are still on the payroll, but suspended from duty?

Dr. Husnoo: Well, I don't know about this. I have to check it and circulate afterwards.

Mr Bhagwan: Item 22060.004, *Vehicles and Motorcycles*. Can we know how many new fire lorries are being planned to be purchased for the coming year?

The Chairperson: Do you have the answer hon. Minister?

Dr. Husnoo: I have to look for it now.

The Chairperson: Perhaps, you can come back to it later!

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, there is an increase in rent from Rs5.6 m. to Rs9.3 m....

Dr. Husnoo: Sorry, may I answer for the last question! This year we are going to buy one water tanker and three double cabs for the transport of the officers.

Mr Baloomoody: For the rent. Why that increase of Rs3 m.?

Dr. Husnoo: You want me to give the breakdown or I circulate it?

Mr Baloomoody: I just want to know why there is an increase. Have we acquired new buildings, new spaces? I don't want the breakdown!

The Chairperson: Perhaps, find out and then come back to it!

Dr. Husnoo: They are new rates for buildings. That is what I have been told!

Mr Uteem: *Other Goods and Services, Uniforms*. The amount is being increased from Rs7 m. to Rs10 m. There are only 100 additional firefighters and the uniforms are being increased from Rs7 m. to Rs10 m. So, may I know why there is this increase?

Dr. Husnoo: Last year, I have told you we have 170 new firefighters and this year we are going to have 100 new firefighters.

Mr Baloomoody: I can't understand that answer with regard to rent. The hon. Minister told us: "they are new rates". What new rates? The law allows rent to be increased by only 10%. Has that new rate been agreed by the official Valuer of Government.

Dr. Husnoo: Rental of buildings is Rs7 m. here. It includes – Meem building, Head Office, Rs3.39 m.; Bahemia Building, Fire Safety Division – Rs1.2 m.; Port Louis Fire Station- Rs1.1 m.; Quatre Bornes Fire Station – Rs 100,000. That is what I have got here.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister the question is why has the rate gone up by Rs3 m. in one year?

Dr. Husnoo: I will find it and let you know. That is all the information I have been given here.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, item 31112.024, *Construction of Fire Station, (d) Relocation of Quatres Bornes Fire Station*. This has been a long overdue project for the last 15-20 years. I am glad that the Government has earmarked Rs60 m. May we know the site and the *superficie* of the land that has been earmarked?

Dr. Husnoo: I think it is going to be located at Tulip Avenue; about one acre.

Mr Ramful: With regard to the New Rose Belle Fire Station, may I know if the site has already been identified, and if so, can we be informed of the whereabouts?

Dr Husnoo: A plot of land of the acreage of 4,179 m² has already been invested for the project. Presently, bidding documents are being finalised and has been submitted to the Procurement Board. Once bidding is ready....

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, the question is has a new site been identified and the whereabouts!

Dr. Husnoo: Yes, it has been identified.

Mr Uteem: Item 31122.803, *Acquisition of Fire Fighting and Rescue Equipment*. May I know from the hon. Minister whether that includes any firefighting lorry and, as at to date, in the existing fleet or what is going to be acquired, how high up can the firefighter ladder goes up to in terms of building, how many storeys?

Dr. Husnoo: I just mentioned earlier, this coming year there will be one new fire tender and there are three double cabs as well. As far as the ladder is concerned, there is one which reaches about 30m or so. About 10 storeys high!

Mr Baloomoody: On the issue of construction of fire stations, the Minister has gone on record by saying that in Port Louis, the fire station behind the Municipality will be

transferred and I see no provision in the budget, neither for this year, neither for next year nor for the year after. You have gone on record by saying so.

Dr. Husnoo: We will discuss it with the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport when we are going to consider the Immigration Centre Project, but it has not been finalised yet.

Vote 12-2 Fire Services (Rs533,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 13-1 Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment was called.

Mr Baloomoody: Page 257, *Strategic Note, Main Achievements - Marshall Plan against Poverty finalised in collaboration with UNDP*. May we know when it was finalised and whether the hon. Minister is prepared to lay a copy on the Table of the Assembly?

Mr Roopun: The final report was given to Government in March this year and it will be laid in due course.

Mr Mahomed: Page 257a, *item 21110.001 – Basic Salary*. Provision is being made for new cadres: *Coordinator, Psychologist, Research Analyst*. But no financial provision is being made for the next three years. Is there any reason for that?

Mr Roopun: No. Actually, these cadres will have to be recruited and the scheme of service has yet to be finalised with the Ministry of Civil Service. We are waiting for the clearance, but they are going to be recruited in due course. Provision is made for those cadres now.

Mr Uteem: There are a number of positions which are to be filled by ex-NESC. So, may I know how many NESC former staff is being transferred on the Establishment?

Mr Roopun: There is about five.

Mr Jhuboo: Page 257b, *Item 22130 – Studies and Surveys*, a budget of Rs4 m. is earmarked. Can we know for which purpose will these surveys be carried out?

Mr Roopun: Those surveys for this year were for the Marshall Plan, and for next year it is going to be in respect to the new survey for SRM.

Mr Uteem: *Item 22130.946, Expenses icw Poverty Observatory/Monitoring and Evaluation Unit*. May we have some details about this Unit, how many staff there are and what is its purpose?

Mr Roopun: In fact, this is going to be an observatory, which is going to be set up in line with decision taken at the level of SADC and also within the Marshall Plan. Last year, we had earmarked a sum of Rs4.8 m., which represented also the salaries for the ex-NESC, and this year, it is going to be essentially for the payment of the Chairperson and members who will be recruited for the Observatory and also for other expenses such as seminars as well as for the International Poverty Day, which is organised in October.

Mr Baloomoody: Under *item 22120, Fees*, there has been an increase of more than 100%. May we know why and who are the beneficiaries of the fees?

Mr Roopun: For last year, it was Rs894,000 and it was for fees of Chairperson and members of the Board Audit Committee, training of staff, fees for the consultant of the UNDP, and this year it is going also to be for consultants of the UNDP essentially, Rs1.7 m., in terms of cost sharing for various projects which are going to be implemented during this year.

Mr Uteem: Under *item 22130, Studies and Surveys*. Answering to a PNQ, the hon. Minister stated that we need to have a new survey carried out for the purpose of determining families comprising two parents and three children. Is the cost of that survey included under the item Studies and Surveys or is there another budget for that?

Mr Roopun: Yes, it is included for this year.

Mr Mahomed: Page 257c, under *Capital Expenditure*, construction of housing units, I see that quite a substantial budgetary provision has been made. For those who are non-landowners, how does it work? Where does the land come from and in what way does it differ from the NHDC?

Mr Roopun: In fact, there is now a new arrangement made with NHDC, so that around 10% of all houses, which are going to be constructed, are going to be reserved for those under the SRM.

Mr Quirin: Mr Chairperson, under *Capital Expenditure, Grants, item 26.323.135, National Empowerment Foundation, Social Housing for Vulnerable Groups*, construction of *Fully Concrete Units*, an amount of Rs85 m. is earmarked for 2016/2017. Can we know from the hon. Minister if the sites have already been identified and, if so, the number of units to be constructed on each site?

Mr Roopun: In fact, I may refer the hon. Member to page 257, where we under key action for this year, there is going to be 140 for those who own land; these are lands belonging to the beneficiaries themselves, and also about 125 for non-landowners within the NHDC compound.

Mr Ameer Meea: Under the *National Empowerment Foundation*, there are so many ongoing projects like the Welfare and Empowerment Programmes and other projects. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether all these projects cover also the inhabitants of Agalega, and if he can give any specific example for Agalega?

Mr Roopun: As regards Agalega, I understand there is no beneficiary under the SRM. I enquired, and it would seem that all of them are employed and they are not within the bracket of my mandate as Minister of Social Integration. But, in due course, I intend to visit Agalega to see if there is need for my Ministry to intervene.

Mr Ramful: For the construction of social housing, I see there is no provision for the construction of houses...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No cross-talking, please!

Mr Ramful: ...made of CIS. Do I take it that now the policy of the Ministry is to stop constructing CIS houses?

Mr Roopun: In fact, the policy of the Ministry is to go straightaway to concrete houses, because CIS houses were temporary shelters. But, under the upgrading scheme, we do cater in case there is really need for CIS.

Mr Baloomoody: With regard to item Grants to the National Empowerment Foundation, does it include owners of all CHA houses where the slabs are falling? And if they want to have a new slab, can they apply under that scheme?

Mr Roopun: No.

Mr Baloomoody: There is no provision for these people?

Mr Roopun: At the level of my Ministry, it is difficult to know whether by the mere fact of having a new slab is going to hold, because the building itself is quite of bad quality. But they can benefit from the grant of slabs, which is under the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

Mr Barbier: With regard to social housing, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the conditions attached, the criteria to obtain same, and whether there is some repayment or loans to be refunded. If so, may we have all the conditions or if not, we can have it later on?

Mr Roopun: May I invite the hon. Member to come with a substantive question on that issue?

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under the item *Social Benefit Empowerment Support Scheme*, if the hon. Minister does not have the information, can he circulate a list of the Empowerment Scheme that is going to be proposed for next year.

Mr Roopun: This is going to be worked out actually with a Consultant of the UNDP who is expected to come to Mauritius in September.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: At page 257, under the last item 28222.017 - *New Decent Shelters Programme (Marshall Plan Against Poverty)*, where there is a budget of Rs200 m. for the next three years. May I ask the hon. Minister what is the difference between the fully concrete units, the CIS units, the CCIS units and now we have a new one, which is 'New Decent Shelters' Programme?

Mr Roopun: In fact, this is a new scheme which has been launched only within this Budget from funds made available by the Government of India. We are still working with the Ministry of Finance to find out ways and means by which we can cater for those who are not owners of land, especially for those who are the most needy and do not have sufficient means, in fact, to repay whatever we have under the other schemes. This new scheme is going to cater for fully concrete houses for the most needy.

Vote 13-1 Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment (Rs843,000,000) was on question put and agreed to.

Vote 14-1 Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: My question relates to page 261. I don't know if others have questions before that page.

The Chairperson: Is there any question for page 258a? Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: One of the main achievements is the deletion of the 986,000 fingerprint data from the Mauritius National Identify Card (MNIC) database. Can I ask the hon. Minister when this was done and the cost thereof?

Mr Sinatambou: The fingerprint data of all previously enrolled citizens in the MNIC database was removed from 24 August 2015 to 14 September 2015. I don't have the exact cost, but I know that it was drawn from unutilised funds relating to the MNIC budget.

Mr Ameer Meea: In relation to the job placement of 680 unemployed in ICT/BPO companies under the ICT Skills Development Programme (ISDP), may I ask the hon. Minister how did this Skills Development Programme work and what was its duration? I believe that the 680 persons have been employed in sector. But, may we know the number of unemployed jobseekers in the ICT/BPO companies who have been employed?

Mr Sinatambou: I would suggest that the hon. Member comes with a substantive question, but I will try to answer, at least, for one thing. I understand that almost all those who went on placement have been employed.

The Chairperson: Page 259! Page 260! Page 261! Yes, hon. Uteem !

Mr Uteem: Under item 21110.001 – *Legal Executive (New Grade)*! There is no amount being budgeted for the appointment of a Legal Executive. May we know why?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No cross-talking, please! Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Sinatambou: I understand that no fund is budgeted for this year because we first need to have the scheme of service to be made and that will take some time, then it will have to be circulated and that is going to take more than a year.

The Chairperson: Page 262! Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Under item 22120.035 – *Fees of which Fees icw IT Security*. Last year, it was Rs40,000 and this year a budget of Rs12 m. is earmarked. May we know whether this is an in-house expense or is it being outsource and to which company name?

Mr Sinatambou: I understand that the figure is made up as follows. First of all, a security audits to the tune of R6.45 m.; tenders have already been made for three out of seven audits. Evaluation has been completed and the contract is waiting to be signed. For four

others, the exercise is on.. Then, there is a sum of Rs5.4 m. for Information Security Management Systems, which makes Rs11.85. The remaining Rs600,000 as fees to Chairperson and Members of Boards and Committees, Departmental Bids Committees, Bid Evaluation Committees.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: In relation to item 26323.054 - *National Computer Board*, may we know from the hon. Minister who is presently the Chief Executive Officer of the National Computer Board and how much is his salary?

Mr Sinatambou: I understand that, at the moment, there is an Ag. Director who is actually operating there.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: On the same question, there is a substantial increase in the grant which we are being asked to vote, nearly Rs11 m. for the coming financial year. Can the hon. Minister justify this increase? And also who is chairing the Board

Mr Sinatambou: The grant to the National Computer Board is actually made up as follows –

- Rs44.4 m. as staff cost;
- Rs15.56 m. as recurrent expenditure, and
- Rs7.05 m. for IT Security, ICT and promotion.

I do have a list explaining the increase of Rs10.5 m. I will circulate it to the hon. Member. The last question was about the Chairperson?

The Chairperson: Who is the Chairperson of the NCB?

Mr Sinatambou: At the moment, the Chairperson who is acting is the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: At page 262, under *item 22900.092 – Other Goods and Services – Conferences/Seminars/Workshops*. There has been a substantial increase from Rs539,000 to Rs6,700,000> May we have details about the Conferences/Seminars/Workshops that the Ministry intends to organise?

Mr Sinatambou: Provision has been made to meet expenses for the organisation of Conferences/Seminars/Workshops. One is an ICT Innovation Award which has a provision of Rs1.5 m.; one is an International Conference on Technology, Communication and Innovation, which is Rs5 m. And then, another project for Rs200,000.

Hon. Ameer Meea: At page 263, under 21110.005 – *Extra Assistance* where an amount of Rs2.8 m is earmarked. May we have the details and breakdown of this figure?

Mr Sinatambou: The sum of Rs2.89 m. is for payment of monthly salaries and allowances to an Adviser and to a Public Relations Officer.

Mr Uteem: I am going to ask the question on the National Computer Board and the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer again. May I know from the hon. Minister for how long has this position been vacant and whether there has been *appel de candidature* to fill in these positions?

Mr Sinatambou: At least, for the five months I have been at the Ministry, I know this has been the case. I will find out for before and let the hon. Member know.

The Chairperson: Next page 263, any questions? Hon. Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Mr Chairperson, under item 26323.054 (c) *Digitally Empowered Development*, we are being asked to vote Rs40 m. to increase the number of e-mail accounts by 45,000. So, may I have more details about this project?

Mr Sinatambou: I must say that I was also surprised when I was told that it cost Rs40 m. to give 45,000 additional e-mail accounts for Government officers, but I understand that this is the cost. Specifications are ready and tenders should normally be launched by mid-September in consultation with the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, under item 26323.054 (c) (ii) *Setting up of 200 additional wifi zones*, has these zones been identified and can we be provided with a list?

The Chairperson: Can the hon. Minister circulate the list of the wifi zones?

Mr Sinatambou: No, I am not in a position at this stage. I suppose that if the funding is in the budget now, it is afterwards that the survey will be done to locate the 200 additional wifi zones.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Mr Chairperson, under item 28215.007 (a) (*Innovation Schemes*), we are being asked to vote Rs125 m. for Innovation Schemes. May I have more details about these Innovation Schemes?

Mr Sinatambou: Mr Chairperson, a national innovation framework is actually being finalised to support joint private sector and Government innovative projects. Already you will see in last year's budget, a figure of about Rs70 m. has been earmarked and 11 projects have been approved to the tune of nearly Rs95 m. So, it is expected that the figure of Rs125 m. which will go for innovation schemes, there are - if my understanding is correct - 19 such innovation schemes.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: In relation to setting up of 200 additional wifi zones, this has been announced in the budget and even mentioned in the electoral manifesto and the Government Programme, but we neither find any figure for this year nor for next year. It is budgeted for the year after, 2017/2018 for Rs40 m. Why is this so?

Mr Sinatambou: My understanding is that because it is not going to be paid from Government funds; this is being ensured by Mauritius Telecom.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: In relation to the *ICT Training Scheme* - it is the first item -28212 - last year, there was Rs23 m. budgeted and now there is no longer any money budgeted. Is there any item anywhere to provide for the setting up of the ICT academy? I cannot find it anywhere in the budget.

Mr Sinatambou: I understand from the Budget Speech that this is actually part of a budget allocated to the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training which is for the training for 4,000 individuals of whom 1,000 will be for the ICT sector.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea, last question on this page, please!

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 263, there is a project under item 26323.042 (c) *Australia-Mauritius Wave and Micro Grid Project*. There is an amount of Rs17 m. which is budgeted. May we have some details on this project?

Mr Sinatambou: Could you repeat the question, please?

Mr Ameer Meea: There is a project called *Australia-Mauritius Wave and Micro Grid Project*. There is an amount of Rs17 m. budgeted. May we have some details on this project? What is all this about?

Mr Sinatambou: In fact, this is a project which is joint Mauritius Research Council/Government of Australia. It is a joint exercise. The project will lead to the design of a prototype with energy device and is being fully funded by the Australian Government. It is expected that it will be finalised at latest by 2017.

Mr Mahomed: On the same item, 26323.042 (d) *Clusters for Research and Innovation*, we are being embarked on a new project that is going to cost Rs180 m. over the next three years, starting with Rs29.5 m. May I have more details about this project?

Mr Sinatambou: As the House may be aware, Madam Chairperson, there are actually in existence two existing national clusters, one for bio-materials and the second one for bio-chemistry. Now, in this particular budget item, three new research and innovation clusters will be set up –

- (i) Renewable energy;
- (ii) Bio-Technology, and
- (iii) High-Powered Computing.

The Chairperson: Page 264! Hon. Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Under item 22060.005 *IT Equipment (a) InfoHighway*, an amount of Rs46 m. is being budgeted. Can I know more about this item?

Mr Sinatambou: What happens here is that we have maintenance and consultancy services for the InfoHighway. We are actually stuck out of the Rs47.020 m. which one will find in this budget item. Rs46.25 m. is for InfoHighway specifically. Now, because we are bound by contract for that InfoHighway from the previous Government, we are bound to pay an amount of Rs33 m.

However, we have tried to find consultants to do the same work at a lesser fee. Now, tenders have been launched and a local consultant has been selected at a cost of Rs13.25 m. per year as opposed to Rs33 m. When you add those two together – until the local consultant can fully proceed without the existing one – it is Rs33 m. plus Rs13.25 m. which makes Rs46.25 m.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I take the hon. Minister to item 22030.007 *Rental of Lines for Network System, (b) SchoolNet II* where a sum of Rs21 m. is allocated. May we know more about this system?

Mr Sinatambou: The SchoolNet II project actually ensures the provision of high speed connectivity in all the secondary schools of this country. The project is going to be completed this year and it is the rental of telecommunication lines which is going to cost Rs21 m. a year. It is for 164 colleges.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: On the same item, the hon. Minister stated that this is for colleges. What about primary schools, because earlier the hon. Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research said that it is your Ministry who is going to be responsible putting wifi in the primary schools?

Mr Sinatambou: I thank the hon. Member for this question. In fact, a budget of Rs100 m. has been provided, I think, for the next three years of which Rs10 m. is provided for this year for the provision of high speed connectivity in primary schools especially to cater for the grades I and II which are being provided with tablets.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members we have exceeded already the allocated time for this item. I would ask you, please, to be very concise and very short, and I will have to limit the questions.

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you Mr Chairperson. In relation to the first item 21110.001, we see that the posts of *Director, CIB; Deputy Director, CIB and Programme Manager, CIB*. All these posts were not funded in 2016, that is, there was no one in these posts and they have been funded in 2017. May we know whether these people have already been recruited and also who is heading the CIB Unit actually?

Mr Sinatambou: The Schemes of Service for the two posts of Director and Deputy Director of CIB have recently been prescribed. Action has been initiated to fill the post of Deputy Director. However, the post of Director cannot be filled for the time being as the Deputy Director should reckon, at least, two years' service in the grade to be eligible for the post. At the moment, it is the two senior most members of the Central Informatics Bureau who are actually acting in the position of Director and Deputy Director.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody, last question for this page!

Mr Baloomoody: Item 22030.007 - *The Rental of Lines for Network System, (a) GINS Rental (SkyGovNet, GFN, GOC Internet)*. It was Rs76 m. last year, Rs85 m. this year and Rs100 m. next year. May we know why these variations?

Mr Sinatambou: The figure of Rs10.5 m., difference from Rs76 m. to Rs85 m. is justified by number of additional projects of which I will circulate the list to the hon. Member. However, one must appreciate that GINS - GOC Internet line rental implies that it is this particular institution which pays all the telephones and Internet bills for the GINS infrastructure for Government and that makes quite a hefty amount of money.

Mr Uteem: On page 268, item 22900.099 - *Miscellaneous Expenses (Operation and Support - Managed Services)*. There is an amount of Rs60 m. which is 300% increase. May I know what does that item relate to?

Mr Sinatambou: This is another of the unfortunate remnants of the previous Government. It is part of the operations and support, and managed services of the national ID card. The Rs60 m. actually encompass arrears for money which is due for operations, support, and managed services of the ID card. And there was a delay which was due to procurement exercise for contracting out to a local firm in order to reduce the high costs of the operation and support of managed services by Singapore Corporation Enterprise (SCE). This is what explains the big sum now.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 22900.099 - *Miscellaneous Expenses (Operation and Support –Managed Services)*. It was Rs19 m., now it is Rs60 m. May we know why such an increase?

Mr Sinatambou: I just explained that this is one of the unfortunate remnants of contracts which are binding on Government because of the MNIC bad contract. Now, the Rs60 m. actually concerns Rs33.3 m. which are arrears, which are due for the period April 2015 to June 2016, and Rs26.7 m. is the amount which is expected to be less when we contract out with a local firm to take over the managed services of the MNIC card from Singapore Corporation Enterprise. This is what explains this hefty sum.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members may I please remind you again, especially the Ministers. If it requires a long answer please circulate the answer so that we don't lose time because we have already exceeded the allocated time. Hon. Uteem last question for this page!

Mr Uteem: Item 22060.005 – *Maintenance IT Equipment*. Last year, Rs128 m., this year is Rs106 m. In view of what the hon. Minister has said about downsizing the National

Identity Card, do we still need the maintenance contract for that much money, and who has been allocated that maintenance contract?

Mr Sinatambou: In this particular case, these are the maintenance charges payable to Singapore Corporation Enterprise for the MNI system. We cannot get out of that contract. I can tell you it is much against my will if I say Rs106 m. going to that particular vote item.

Vote 14-1 Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation (1,282,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 15-1 Office of the Solicitor-General was called.

Mr Baloomoody: The *Main Achievements for FY 2015/2016* - there is a number of litigation cases which have been dealt with including both civil and criminal. May we know the number of cases which have been lodged? We know how many have been dealt with, but how many cases have been lodged during that period both civil and criminal?

Mr Yerrigadoo: I don't have the information. I will circulate same to the hon. Member.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 272, item 22120.032 - *Fees for Legal Outsourcing*, Rs20 m. We have seen our local Rs19 m. man. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether Rs20 m. is for one case?

Mr Yerrigadoo: No.

Mr Bhagwan: Would that sum be sufficient to have the services of our local..., then we would have reallocation?

Mr Yerrigadoo: In fact, the amount is Rs26 m. Which item is it? Is it item 22120? The Legal Outsourcing is fees for the services of Lalive from Switzerland which have been retained by Government of Mauritius in the arbitration case of Dawood Rawat and State of Mauritius. The fees payable will amount to USD1,545,000 plus expenses.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, listen to the answer!

Mr Yerrigadoo: It is worthy to note during November 2015 to June 2016, an amount of Rs7,430,911 has also been paid Lalive. Now there is another case as well which is the extradition of Mrs Soornack. The services of Saccucci Fares & Partners of Italy have been retained in this case and the fees payable will amount to 14,250 euros plus costs and

expenses. It is worth noting that during the period April to June 2016, an amount of Rs639,000 has been paid.

Mr Ramful: Under item 22100 *Publications and Stationery*, there is an increase from Rs9 m. to Rs21 m. Can we have some details about this?

Mr Yerrigadoo: Yes, the breakdown is as follows: the sum of Rs1,250,000 for printing and stationery, fax, photocopiers and toners. Books and periodicals Rs800,000, these would be the general law reports you have. And Rs19.3 m. payment to Blackhall publishing Ltd in respect of publication of digitalised and consolidated version of subsidiary laws of Mauritius and for payment to Lexis Nexis for access to specialised legal database. Now, the increased provision is due to the fact that an amount of Rs10 m. will have to be paid to Blackhall publishing Ltd for publication and supply of 450 sets of seven volumes of the subsidiary laws of Mauritius. Now, it is worth noting that these sets will be sold at a rate of Rs40,000 each. This is subsidiary legislation.

Mr Ramano: Toujours sous l'item 22120, est-ce que je pourrais savoir de l'honorable ministre si cela inclu l'affaire Betamax éventuellement pour les *legal fees*?

Mr Yerrigadoo: L'affaire Betamax est sous le vote de la STC.

Mr Baloomoody: May I ask the hon. Attorney General with regard to Law Reform Commission, last year there was a provision for Rs17 m., next year Rs19 m. and then it comes back to Rs18 m. May we know why this variation?

Mr Yerrigadoo: It is very simple. There is next year the organisation of the Association of Law Reform Agencies for Eastern and Southern Africa ALRAESA and the cost of which is Rs1.5 m. This is the difference.

Mr Uteem: With respect to the publication and stationery, we have just listened to the Attorney General, he is telling us that for subsidiary legislation, Blackhall has been awarded the contract. May I know what was the tender procedure followed for the selection of this company?

Mr Yerrigadoo: This was allocated under the previous Government. I'll find all the information and circulate it to the hon. Member.

Mr Baloomoody : We are talking about the Office of the Solicitor-General . Under item 21110.010 - *Service to Mauritius Programme*, how does this program fit the Office of

the Solicitor-General? I don't know why, probably it does not fit because last year there was Rs1.5 m. and this year there is only Rs400,000 and no provision is made thereafter.

Mr Yerrigadoo: Yes. It is very simple. Regarding the Service To Mauritius Programme, the Minister of Finance explained what it is about in the Budget. In all our respective Ministries, there are young graduates who are posted. The reason there is a fall is very simple. The Judicial Legal Services Commission has proceeded to the recruitment of legal cadres and some of them are already being appointed at the level of the Solicitor-General's Office. This is why we don't need so much young graduates for STM and the amount has been reduced.

Mr Baloomoody: We were told that this programme was more or less to assist young graduates, young lawyers, but why your office is not providing that service. Okay, the Ministry has recorded professionals permanently, but at least they should carry on to assist the young graduates, young lawyers who come on the market.

Mr Yerrigadoo: Those young graduates will go back to the pool of STM and reallocated to other ministries.

Vote 15-1: Office of the Solicitor-General (Rs204,200,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 15-2: Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions was called.

Mr Uteem: On page 274, there are a number of positions: Chief Legal Support Officer, Chief Legal Assistant, Principal Legal Support Officer etc. where no money is budgeted. May I know why these are included and if there is any intention of recruiting these people?

Mr Yerrigadoo: These are recommendations which the DPP had made to the PRB and in its report those are new grades. The scheme of service has to be worked out before these can be implemented.

Mr Baloomoody: What about the Law Library Officer? Do we have one in post now? There was none, there is provision for one, has he or she been appointed?

Mr Yerrigadoo: Not yet appointed, there is one post only.

Mr Armance: Under item 21110.001 *Legal Research Officer*, the amount jumped from Rs17,000 to Rs1 m., is it because of the four new legal research officers ?

Mr Yerrigadoo: Yes, it is.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22120 *Fees*, there is an increase of nearly 100% from Rs3.6 m. to Rs6.1 m. May we know the reason thereof?

Mr Yerrigadoo: The breakdown is as follows: fees for training Rs900,000; consultancy fees Rs600,000; Mr Rosario Domingue is a consultant at the DPP's office; fees in connection with Privy Council cases Rs3 m.; Retainer fees to prosecuting Counsel - these are District Court Counsel who are all over the island to give support to prosecutors Rs1.6 m.

Vote 15-2: Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (Rs117,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 15-3: Office of the Parliamentary Counsel was called.

Mr Uteem: Under item 21 *Compensation of Employees, 21110 Legislative and Litigation*, there are five new positions. May I know what the litigation is about?

Mr Yerrigadoo: This again is the recommendation of the PRB report, the scheme of service is being drafted.

Vote 15-3: Office of the Parliamentary Counsel (Rs19,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

At 4.21 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 5.08 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, before we resume with the Committee of Supply, I have to inform the House that I have allowed the hon. Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security and hon. Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms to make their statements out of turn. Hon. Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MAURITIUS & RODRIGUES – FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

The Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security (Mr M. Seeruttun): Madam Speaker, thank you first of all to allow me to make the statement out of turn. I am making the statement to keep the House informed of developments regarding the evolution of the Foot-and-Mouth disease in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

With regard to Mauritius, my Ministry is taking all measures to ensure that the Foot-and-Mouth is contained within the regions of Vallée des Prêtres and Cité La Cure. So far, 156 infected animals have been culled in these regions. 102 other cases in 16 farms in the same localities have been detected and these animals are presently being culled.

Madam Speaker, some suspected cases have recently been reported at Highlands and Notre Dame. After investigation, it has been confirmed that three animals have contracted the Foot and Mouth disease. It has accordingly been decided to cull the three animals as well as 39 other animals which were in contact with them.

Since the outbreak of the Foot and Mouth Disease, 644 animals have been culled as at 16 August in Mauritius. With regard to analysis of specimens of sera and epithelial tissue taken from sick animals in Mauritius by two reference laboratories, namely the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute of South Africa and ANSES laboratory of France, different results have been obtained regarding the serotype of the virus.

In view of this situation, the vaccines initially imported from Botswana based on results first obtained from South Africa laboratory have been found to be not suitable and the vaccination programme scheduled to start on Saturday 13 August has been postponed.

I had a meeting on Sunday 14 August with the Veterinary staff of my Ministry and the FAREI in the presence of two experts, namely Dr. Harena, Veterinary Epidemiologist attached to the Indian Ocean Commission and Dr. Mokganedi, Epidemiologist from Botswana Vaccine Institute to take stock of the situation.

At that meeting, it was agreed that the results from the French Laboratory would be accepted subject to a test from a third party namely the Botswana Vaccine Institute being carried out on fresh samples from Rodrigues to reconfirm the results from the laboratory in France.

It was further decided that appropriate vaccines would be imported from Botswana for use in both Mauritius and Rodrigues. An order of 30,000 doses of vaccine which is the minimum quantity normally supplied by Botswana Vaccine Institute, will be placed and is expected to reach Mauritius during the week-end. 15,000 of the 30,000 doses will be sent to Rodrigues. The Botswana Veterinary Institute has, in principle, agreed to take back the first consignment of the unutilised vaccines.

My Ministry has already worked out the quantum of compensation payable to local importers and breeders of animals which have been culled. Arrangements will be made shortly for the payment of the compensation.

Madam Speaker, I proceeded to Rodrigues on 12 August 2016 to take stock of the situation in the island.

On 13 August 2016, I had a working session with the Crisis Committee set up under the aegis of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The whole island of Rodrigues has been affected by the FMD and declared as a quarantine zone, except the following regions -

- (i) Delo Vert, which constitutes on its own around 40% of the local livestock population;
- (ii) the Livestock Production Units of St. Gabriel;
- (iii) Baie Topaze, and
- (iv) Ile aux Crabes.

The following measures have been taken by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly -

- (i) sensitisation on biosecurity measures at farm level through the Veterinary Services and extension services via farmers' meetings, radio and TV broadcasts;
- (ii) restriction of movement of animals, vehicles and people through road blocks, amongst others, and restriction of public gatherings;
- (iii) placement of foot dip at the airport and other public areas where there are constant movements of people;
- (iv) protection of uninfected regions and increased surveillance to protect these regions by the Commission for Agriculture, Forestry Department and Police Services and the community of breeders themselves among others, and
- (v) placement of protective fencing around the uninfected regions.

At the same meeting, I have proposed to the Crisis Committee that arrangements be made for Dr. Mokganedi to visit Rodrigues to take samples from infected animals for analysis at the Botswana Vaccine Institute.

Dr. Mokganedi proceeded to Rodrigues on Sunday afternoon, and the samples taken have been despatched to Botswana on 16 August. The test results are expected by Friday,

following which, on confirmation of the results obtained from the laboratory in France, the batch of 30,000 doses of vaccines will be delivered by this Sunday.

According to latest information, 1,903 animals have been culled in Rodrigues as at 16 August.

Madam Speaker, thank you.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms!

(5.15 p.m.)

HERITAGE CITY PROJECT

The Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms (Mr S. Bhadain): Madam Speaker, with regard to the Heritage City Project, I wish to inform the House of the procurement of the professional services of STREE, the designated entity of a foreign State, as master planner and designer for the Heritage City Project, in accordance with Section 3 of the Public Procurement Act; and also the total amount of money which has been spent by Heritage City Co. Ltd since its incorporation to date.

Madam Speaker, on Monday 22 February and Tuesday 23 February 2016, the High Powered Committee set up under section 3(1C) of the Act, consisting of the Secretary to Cabinet, the Solicitor General and the Financial Secretary met to consider the procurement of professional services of STREE for the Heritage City project.

The High-Powered Committee stated that -

- (a) STREE has unparalleled expertise in creating unique landmark and iconic projects;
- (b) Mauritius stands to benefit from such expertise for (i) the detailed Master Plan and Engineering Design and (ii) the Government Offices Schematic Design, of the Heritage City Project;
- (c) the figures and data submitted by STREE are well within the international benchmarks for such a project; and
- (d) it was satisfied that the services of STREE represent 'value for money' for an amount not exceeding USD4.34 million, which is 1.1% of the total project

cost of USD375 million with regard to the two abovementioned components of the Heritage City Project.

The High Powered Committee recommended as per the provisions of Section 3(1B) (b) (ii)(A) of the Public Procurement Act, that Cabinet approves the procurement of the professional services of STREE.

At a Special Cabinet meeting held on 02 March 2016, Cabinet considered the recommendations of the High Powered Committee, and agreed to the procurement of the professional services of STREE for the detailed Master Plan, Engineering Design for infrastructure works, and the Government Offices Schematic Designs of the Heritage City Project on a G to G basis with the Government of Dubai.

On 08 March 2016, the Heritage City Co Ltd implemented Government's decision by issuing a 'Letter of Award' to STREE for the 2 components and on 17 April 2016, the contract to procure services for a total lump sum of USD4.34 million for the two abovementioned components was signed by both designated entities.

Madam Speaker, since its incorporation to date, Heritage City Company Ltd has been allocated an amount of Rs55 m. and has spent the sum of Rs47.1 m., as follows -

- STREE has been paid USD1.1m., i.e. Rs39.7 m. and has substantially completed its services under the first two components;
- Luxconsult has been paid an amount of Rs3.4 m. as part-payment as Consultant for the design and construction supervision of offsite road and infrastructure works to serve the Heritage City including preparation of the Strategic Environment Impact Assessment report, the Traffic Impact Assessment report and the Urban Transportation and Connectivity proposals amongst others;
- Water Research Co. Ltd has been paid Rs2.5 m. for Geo-Technical Investigations;
- Land surveying costs of Rs570,000 has been refunded to SLDC;
- Board member's fees of Rs803,250 was paid from January to June 2016;
- Payment to MRA and bank charges amounted to Rs136,505; and
- Payment for Publications of adverts in newspapers amounted to Rs106,421.

In June 2016, STREE submitted its deliverables for infrastructure detailed design and infrastructure engineering design and on Monday 01 August 2016, STREE submitted further

deliverables as regards the draft detailed Master Plan and architectural concept design report for Government offices. On the same day, a two-hour presentation was made to Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

On Tuesday 02 August 2016, the Consultants of STREE made their presentation to Cabinet Ministers at the Prime Minister's Office of their deliverables and the choice of Parliamentary and Government offices buildings designs was unanimously agreed.

On Thursday 04 August 2016, the HPC met to consider the proposal of STREE to proceed with the last two components of their work, i.e components 3 and 4 for the Schematic Design and Design Development of the Parliament Building; Prime Minister's Office and the Detailed Landscape and Streetscape Design.

The HPC was chaired by the Acting Secretary to Cabinet and Head of Civil Service and consisted of the Financial Secretary and the Acting Solicitor General. During its deliberations, the HPC was assisted by three experts, namely the Director (Architecture), the Director (Civil Engineering) and the Deputy Director (Quantity Surveying) of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport.

The HPC considered that the total cost payable to STREE for all components, i.e. 1, 2, 3 and 4 would amount to USD9.55 million, which was 2.55% of the total project cost of USD 375 million. The HPC report also states that the international benchmark for such design is in the range of 6% to 8% of the project cost and recommended under Section 3(1B)(b)(ii)(A) of the Public Procurement Act for Cabinet to approve the procurement for the final components 3 and 4.

Madam Speaker, on Friday 05 August 2016, Cabinet decided to stall the project. All outstanding payments to STREE with regard to the contract signed for and other creditors of Heritage City Co. Ltd will now be subject to discussions between the relevant parties.

I thank you for your attention.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

Vote 16-1 Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security was called.

The Chairperson: Page 281!

Mr Uteem: On page 281, item *21110.004, Allowances*. There is an increase from Rs2.6 m. to Rs4.2 m.. Can I know what the increase relates to?

Mr Seeruttun: This represents allowances paid for responsibility allowances, cashiers allowances, meal allowances and *ad-hoc* allowances that are being provided for and increased per PRB report.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 281, item *21110.010, Service to Mauritius Programme*. Here again, we find that there was Rs4.4 m. This year there is only Rs36,000 and then no sum allocated for the subsequent years. Is the Ministry doing away with that Programme, which was announced in the Budget Speech as a big programme?

Mr Seeruttun: In fact, the Rs36,000 provided for 2016/2017 represents the contract of officers that were employed for some time and whose contracts of employment have expired in April 2016.

Mr Baloomoody: Are they on that scheme of Service to Mauritius Programme where we were supposed to assist young graduates, young recruits? They are not workers; they are not employed. Because there is no provision for the next budget and the sum has drastically been reduced.

Mr Seeruttun: In fact, the Rs36,000 which is estimated for the year 2016/2017 represents the amount for those who were already on that scheme for which their contracts have expired in April 2016. I have been told that the contract is for three years and has expired in April 2016.

With regard to new ones, I don't think that we have made any provision.

Mr Bhagwan: Under two items, *22130.001 - Studies*, Rs3.5 m. and *22130.002, Surveys*, Rs8 m. respectively. Can we have some details because there is a considerable increase compared to last year?

Mr Seeruttun: With regard to studies and surveys, the Rs3.5 m. provision made is, firstly, to carry out study for the reopening of the Livestock Feed Factory, given that there have been complaints from breeders that there is a need to reopen that factory. So, we have provided funds to carry out that study and also we have made provision to carry out study for the introduction of endemic birds at Vallée d'Osterlog by the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation.

Mr Uteem: On page 282, under *item 22120 – Fees*. There is a substantial increase in the fees. It is in respect of what?

Mr Seeruttun: The increase is mainly due for capacity-building for young graduates whom we want to get interested in the farming sector. So, we have provided for the capacity-building of these graduates and also we have provided Rs2 m. for training.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 282, under *item 311132.401 - e-Government Projects (e-Agro Industry)*. May we know exactly what this is because financially it is progressing very little? Is it an urgent project because the total sum is Rs57 m.?

Mr Seeruttun: In fact, the total cost of the project is Rs57 m. And it is a national project. And what concerns our Ministry, the amount is provided for the year 2016/2017 is Rs5 m. to kick-start the project and then it is going to be on-going until the final completion of the project.

The Chairperson: Last question on this, hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Again, on the e-Government Project, I just want to know when is the project going to be finalised and who is the supplier?

Mr Seeruttun: I believe the project is being piloted by the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation under the responsibility of the Central Informatics Bureau. It was decided in December 2015 to go ahead with that Project. It is going to be over a three-year period. For the year 2016/2017, Rs5 m.; 2017/2018, Rs15 m. and 2018/19, Rs25 m. have been earmarked for. The contract has not yet been awarded. It is going to be finalised in December 2016.

Mr Baloomoody: Coming to that e-Government project, because we have seen that...

The Chairperson: We are on page 283 now!

Mr Baloomoody: We have not finished on page 282.

The Chairperson: No, no! We have to move forward, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: The project is important because we have seen in many e-Government projects...

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody, excuse me! We have got so many pages for Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security. We have got an allotted time. I can't go beyond the allotted time each time. We won't finish!

Mr Baloomoody: Can I have one last question?

The Chairperson: We will never finish! Page 283! We will move forward! Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: On page 283, item 28223.001 - *Accompanying Measures for Sugar Sector Derocking of Small Sugarcane Planters' Land (incl. FORIP and Fair Trade projects)*, Rs402 m.. Can we know from the hon. Minister how many cooperatives of planters, individually, are engaged in the Derocking Scheme and for the coming year how many of them will benefit from this vote?

Mr Seeruttun: With regard to the FORIP scheme which also comprises the derocking of small planters' fields, some 12,000 hectares of land were meant to be prepared.

The Chairperson: Be brief in your answer, hon. Minister! The hon. Member has just asked for the number of planters who are benefitting.

Mr Seeruttun: As at to date, 10,253 hectares of lands have been completed under that scheme. We intend for this coming year to carry out another 1,000 hectares of land under that scheme.

Mr Uteem: Item 28212.034, *SIFB: Compensation for Insurance Premium to Small Planters*. There is an amount of Rs50 m. earmarked for next year. May we know what does that relate to and why is it a one-off?

Mr Seeruttun: With regard to the Sugarcane planters, the price of sugar has gone down, as we all know. And to provide financial support to them, we have decided to fund the insurance premium, that is, the amount that they have to pay to cover their sugarcane plantations.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 26323.028, *Irrigation Authority!* We have given an extra capital grant for a project of Rs125,200,000. A sum of Rs15 m. is being allocated for this year. May we know for what specific project it is?

Mr Seeruttun: This is with regard to the rehabilitation of the *pivot*.

The Chairperson: Pages 285, 286? Page 287! Yes, hon. Jhuboo!

Mr Jhuboo: Under item 22900.099 (ii) *Climate Change Adaptation Programme!* There is a provision of Rs19 m. Could the hon. Minister give some details on that provision, please?

Mr Seeruttun: With regard to this Climate Change Adaption Programme, it is a scheme being funded by the EU whereby funds are transferred to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. But we are those who are implementing those projects. The objective of the project is to increase the resilience of vulnerable non-sugar small holders and offer key stakeholders to climate change, thus increasing their capacity to develop and sustain climate-smart agriculture and there are different schemes that are to be funded out of that project with regard to soil and water conservation, rain water harvesting, innovative irrigation techniques, develop sustainable mixed farming practices for crop production to reduce vulnerability of farms, promote rain sheltered farming and disaster risk reduction measures related to mangroves.

The Chairperson: I remind hon. Ministers also if their reply is long, they can always circulate the reply. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: On page 287, item 25210.005 – *Freight Rebate Scheme*, there is a provision of Rs25 m. Can the hon. Minister inform us about the different schemes, whether it is for fruits or vegetables and how many persons are involved and would be benefitting from the scheme?

Mr Seeruttun: In fact, it was announced in the Budget Speech that we are increasing the percentage of the cost incurred by exporters of different crops and fruits and we have also extended those eligible exporters for those who are exporting flowers and other products like moringa, colocasia, bittergourd, lady finger and ridge gourd. So, we've extended the scheme to other exporters so that it would be eligible now to get this kind of subsidy.

Mr Fowdar: Item 25210.007 – *Freight Rebate Scheme*, can we have some more details about it.

The Chairperson: The Minister has just given the details, hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: The same?

The Chairperson: Just same details. Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: On item 25210.009 – *Fruit Growers (Litchi, Banana)*, the sum has gone up from Rs8 m. to Rs16 m. May we know why there is such an increase?

Mr Seeruttun: Well, in fact, as you are probably aware, we were hit by a disease for the banana growers, freckle disease and to be able to protect the bananas, we proposed, what we call, 'banana bagging scheme' to protect the bananas when they are still in the field. So,

we are subsidising 50% of the cost of the purchase of the plastic bags for them to protect their bananas. So, that's one reason why we have seen an increase in the amount being provided for.

With regard to the litchis, we are providing the bird net to protect litchi growers.

Mr Uteem: Item 22130.002 – *Surveys (incl. Reimbursable Technical Assistance – IFAD)*. In relation to surveys, there is an amount of Rs8.5 m. So, may we know it is in relation to what survey?

Mr Seeruttun: Regarding surveys, we have a contract with the IFAD for service to come up with the Seeds Act and regulations.

As regards the cost for the consultants, we have made provision for Rs8.5 m.

With regard to the surveys that we are going to carry out, provision of Rs8.5 m. has been made for that as well.

The Chairperson: Page 288! Hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: With regard to item 28215.008 - *Accompanying Measures – Non Sugar Activities (Bee Keeping)*, Rs7 m., which is announced in the Budget. Can we know on what criteria this will be disbursed?

Mr Seeruttun: Again, this is an amount that has been announced in the Budget Speech. The purpose of that is that the bee sector was hit by a disease, Varoa disease, in the last two years, and the production went down by 30%. To re-boost that sector, we have made provision to assist the beekeepers so that they can improve in their techniques of producing honey and also to create new reserves for places where we can have more melliferous plants for bees to produce more honey.

Mr Bhagwan: Under item 28225.006 (a) *Land preparation and Agricultural Infrastructure Development Projects*, there is a sum of Rs18.8 m. Will that project be implemented by the Ministry or grants will be given to the farmers, either for sugar cane or for vegetables?

Mr Seeruttun: The Land Preparation and Agricultural Infrastructure Development Projects, the sum of Rs7.2 m. was earmarked for the Belle Mare Irrigation Project and Rs10 m. for the land infrastructure at Plaine Sophie. From what I can see here, this includes the construction of wheel tracks at Plaine Sophie and also Glen Park and other regions. It also includes irrigation projects at Rouge Terre, Plaisance and other regions.

Mr Uteem: Item 28215.004 – *Food Crop Insurance Scheme*. May I know what is eligibility criteria to benefit from that insurance?

Mr Seeruttun: This concerns planters, farmers of non-sugar crops and breeding who are registered with the Small Farmers Welfare Fund who adhere to that scheme. They have to adhere to the scheme to be able to have an insurance cover. What we are doing is we are trying to improve that cover so that more and more planters are well covered and in case of calamities, they are protected in terms of their losses incurred.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 26323.0019 – *Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute*. With regard to the FAREI, the *Specialised Bio-Farm Unit*, may we know where matters stand?

Mr Seeruttun: Again, as you all know, we are promoting bio-farming in Mauritius and we have set up a unit at the level of the FAREI and also at the level of the Ministry to coordinate all the activities to get farmers to really be conscious about the advantages of bio-farming and also to promote this new way of doing agriculture.

The Chairperson: Page 289! Hon. Fowdar!

Mr Fowdar: Under item 804 – *Acquisition of Laboratory Equipment*, Rs25 m., is there any special equipment we are buying?

Mr Seeruttun: Again, we have a Food Tech Lab at Réduit and to make it more effective, we need to have hi-tech equipment to be able to carry out more analysis of our crops that we are producing. We all know that we are faced with problems. At times, we are told that we use too much of pesticides. So, we need to make analysis to make sure that farmers don't abuse of pesticides. So, we are buying those equipment to carry out those tests.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 289, item 31112.022 – *Construction of a National Wholesale Market*. Can we know exactly where this market will be, where matters stand and whether the contract has already been allocated?

Mr Seeruttun: The project had been announced last year. We have already started to look for consultants to assist in the implementation of that project. We had launched an expression of interest in January 2016. Bids were open in March 2016. A technical report from Bids Committee was submitted on 12 of April 2016. We are still at the stage of selecting the consultants.

(Interruptions)

It is going to be in Wootun.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem, last question!

Mr Uteem: Under item 31112.040 *Construction of a Multipurpose Containment Facility (Plant)*, where will the plant be located?

Mr Seeruttun: At Réduit.

Mr Jhuboo: Capital Expenditure 28225.007 - *Capital Transfers (Livestock) (a) Cattle Breeders Scheme (Mauritius); (c) Goat Multiplier Farms Scheme; (e) Upgrading of Livestock Farm/Poultry Scheme and (f) Reproduction Farm Cattle/Goat...*

Mr Baloomoody: I have questions on page 291

The Chairperson: I did ask. There was no question.

(Interruptions)

No, no, no. I had already asked, there was no question.

(Interruptions)

Now I went to page 292, I did ask. Hon. Baloomoody, you go and see the records. I had asked, there was no question. I cannot wait for you when you are concentrating on which question to ask. I had asked on each page. I went through each page you can go and verify the records if you want. Yes, hon. Jhuboo!

Mr Jhuboo: Thank you, Madam. In the light of the FMD outbreak in Rodrigues and the commitment that Government took towards the Rodriguans and local breeders, will the Minister move for additional budgetary provisions in that respect?

Mr Seeruttun: Well, as we all know, this outbreak came after the Budget was presented. We will see how things evolve and we will take the necessary measures to address that problem.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No cross-talking please! You are disrupting the work. Hon. Rutnah please! Yes, hon. Baloomoody.

Mr Baloomoody: So, we are on page 292?

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody, please ask your question? No provocative remarks please! Yes.

Mr Baloomoody: There was supposed to be the construction of a model dairy farm at Melrose, may we know where matters stand? This was announced years ago. It is at page 292. I hope you are still on page 292.

Mr Seeruttun: Yes. The model heifer farm is going to be at Melrose.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody, please you cannot be ironical to the Chair. You know that.

Mr Baloomoody: You have asked me which page.

Mr Seeruttun: Yes. The model farm has been earmarked to be set up at Melrose. Now that funds have been made available, we will start the setting up of that farm.

Mr Uteem: Item *31112.045 Construction of New Slaughter House*, may I know where matters stand.

Mr Seeruttun: Again we have launched expressions of interest to have consultants. In the first instance, we did not get the right candidate, we have re-launched it and we are in the process of selecting the right consultant...

(Interruptions)

And it is to be located at Wootun.

The Chairperson: Page 295. Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Under item *31410.401 Rehabilitation, Upgrading of Nature Reserves & Parks*, has a survey been carried out? Where exactly are we going to spend this Rs607 m. Is there a priority list as far as the parks and reserves are concerned?

Mr Seeruttun: Well, the parks identified are Powder Mills, Mont Vert, Plaine Sophie, Pointe d'Esny, Ramsar site and other places like Père Nature Reserve, Coastal Native Forest, Surinam, Souillac, Coin du Diable, a bit all over the places.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item *31111.001 Dwellings - construction of quarters and barracks*, may we know where matters stand. It is a project of Rs11 m. Only Rs2 m. has been allocated for this year. Can we know exactly where it will be, where the project stands?

Mr Seeruttun: These are for Mont Vert Forest Office, toilets at Forest Side, some renovation works at Eau Bouillie Forest Office, mess room etc. The project has already started.

Mr Jhuboo: Under item 22 *Goods and Services, 22090 Security*, there is a provision of Rs4 m. Can the hon. Minister enlighten the House on that provision?

Mr Seeruttun: The services are contracted with Le Ravin Transport Limited and the Director is Mr Aubeeluck from Castel.

Mr Uteem: Item 26313.129 *Vallée d'Osterlog Endemic Garden Foundation*, may I know what this foundation relates to? What is it about?

Mr Seeruttun: It is an endemic garden that was created some years back and that is the cost of running that endemic garden.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22120 *Fees*, last year there was a contribution to UNDP for Rs225,000; this year it is Rs2,432; may we know the reason for this substantial increase?

Mr Seeruttun: Fees to consultants under the PAN project which is a protected area network project. The provision will include payment to EcoAfrica Environmental Consultants and Cread & Co Ltd. They are the ones that are providing the services for this project.

Mr Jhuboo: Concerning Vallée d'Osterlog again, there is a provision of Rs18 m. as capital expenditure and grants. Can the hon. Minister enlighten the House on that additional provision of Rs18 m.?

Mr Seeruttun: For the setting up of a biking trail at Vallée d'Osterlog.

Mr Bhagwan: I have a few questions. Can the hon. Minister inform the House about this Gerard Durrell Wildlife Sanctuary? Where is it situated? We are being asked to vote the sum. Secondly, under item 31410.401 (d) *Implementation of an islet management plan*, who has prepared the plan? Can we be given a list of the islets which are to be managed? The project of Round Island also, whether work has started and what is the target date? Under item 31410 *Saving the Endemic Endangered Reptiles*, - I know there are a few here - Rs480 m. has been earmarked. Can we have some details?

Mr Seeruttun: I will circulate the answer.

Mr Uteem: In relation to item 31410 (g) *Saving the Endemic Endangered Reptiles*, there is no amount budgeted for next year. Is there any reason why? Has all the reptiles been preserved now?

The Chairperson: A last question in the meantime!

Mr Seeruttun: There were some activities carried out in the years 2015/2016. So, I believe that no fund has been allocated for the year 2016/2017, we did make a request for Rs5 m., but we did not get it, unfortunately.

The Chairperson: Last question, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under *item 31410 Removal of Invasive Alien Species (UNDP/GEF)*, there has been an increase from Rs4 m. to Rs11 m. May we know why?

Mr Seeruttun: In fact, the increase represents work in Round Island, for the conservation of keel-scaled boa and also for the maintenance and monitoring of seven endemic reptiles population on Islets including translocation on gunner's Quoin, Ilot Marianne, Ilot Gabriel and île au Phare.

Vote 16-1 Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security (Rs2,611,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 17-1 Ministry of Arts and Culture was called.

Mr Baloomoody: May we know whether the post of the Assistant Manager for Procurement and Supply has been filled, and if not, why not?

Mr Baboo: It has not been filled yet.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr Baboo: Because we have created a new post to cadre for the increase in workload.

Mr Ramano: Sous l'item 21111 *Other Staff Costs*, est-ce que je peux savoir du ministre la liste des *advisers* attachés au ministre et aussi les différentes rémunérations pour ces différents *advisers* ?

Mr Baboo: Well, it is too long. I will circulate it.

Mr Uteem: On page 304, under item 26313.102 *Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund*, may I know from the hon. Minister the composition of the Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund and in particular whether the representatives of Rabita has been appointed to the Board?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, on this side of the House, can I ask you to give the exercise its seriousness!

Mr Baboo: Well, regarding, the Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund, the Chairperson is Prof. Hussein Soobratty and the members, we have Mr Aslam Bagan, Mrs Bilkiss ...

(Interruptions)

Okay, I will circulate the list.

Mr Uteem: My question is whether a representative of Rabita has been appointed to the Board as required under the law.

Mr Baboo: Yes, it has been appointed.

Dr. Joomaye: On page 304, under item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, can we have more details about the two projects (b) '*Stade Musical*' Project and (c) *National Centre for Performing Arts Project* for which Rs2 m. has been voted?

Mr Baboo: For the '*Stade Musical*' Project, we have got Rs2 m. in the Budget in order to widen the range for the public to attend concert of local and international standards. We have not yet finalised the land.

Mr Quirin: Page 304, under item 26313.036 *Mauritius Film Development Corporation*, an amount of Rs13 m. has been budgeted for 2016/2017. Can the hon. Minister inform us how this amount is going to be spent?

Mr Baboo: To import and export exhibits, produce films, promote the holding of films, show festivals and to cater for the cultural and linguistic needs of the people of Mauritius.

Mr Ramano: Madame la présidente, en ce qui concerne l'item 22090 *Security*, le budget passe de R 1,252 million à R 1,900 million. Je peux en connaitre la raison du ministre et aussi est-ce que je peux connaitre le nom de la compagnie qui assure la sécurité ?

Mr Baboo: I do not have it, I will circulate it.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22120 *Fees*, we see that there is an increase of nearly of Rs2 m. for fees. May we know for what purpose?

Mr Baboo: It is fees for the Chairman and members of the Board of Committee such as Departmental Bid Committee, Bid Evaluation Committee, Film Classification Board and Censor Board.

Mr Bhagwan: *J'ai deux questions, Madame la présidente.* For the Mauritius Film Development Corporation, we are being asked to vote Rs13 m. Can the Minister inform us how much is paid out of the grant to the Chairperson, can we have his name and whether he is on bail for corruption charges? On the last line, *Centres de Lecture Publique et d'Animation Culturelle (CELPAC)*, can the hon. Minister inform us how many of these centres are operational and whether in the vote for next year, there are new centres which would be operational?

Mr Baboo: Well, regarding the MFDC it is Mr Dick Ng Sui Wa. Well, the salary is Rs25,800.

Mr Uteem: With respect to item 22030, *Rent*, there is a substantive increase from Rs12 m. to Rs16 m. May we know why there is an increase?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, on this side!

Mr Baboo: It is an additional amount required due to increase in activities of the Ministries in terms of organisation of events. Around 200-250 events organised yearly.

Dr. Joomaye: Item 26313.116, *Grants, Extra Budgetary Unit, Speaking Unions.* There is an increase of Rs2.1 m. being voted. Can we know about this extra budget of Rs2.1 m.? Can we have the breakdown about how this will be distributed among the different Speaking Unions?

The Chairperson: If your answer is long, then you can circulate it!

Mr Baboo: Regarding the question of hon. Bhagwan, Centre de lecture, provision is made to cater for the purchase of reading materials, administrative costs, general expenses of 17 CLACs around the island. Regarding the question of hon. Dr. Joomaye, I will circulate the list.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 26313.044, *Grants, Extra-Budgetary Unit, Rights Management Society.* May we know out of the Rs1.8 m., how much is being given to the local artists? When was the last payment effected to the local artists?

Mr Baboo: It goes according to the distribution of the royalties.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 305, the scheme for the concerts, we are being asked to vote another Rs2 m. Can the hon. Minister circulate a list of those concerts which the hon.

Minister has sponsored during this financial year which is ending and what are the criteria for the Ministries to sponsor these concerts?

Mr Baboo: I will circulate the list.

Mr Quirin: On page 305, item 31112.420, *Upgrading of Theatres – Serge Constantin Theatre*, can the hon. Minister give us some details regarding the upgrading works to be carried out at Serge Constantin Theatre?

The Chairperson: Well, we can ask hon. Dr. Joomaye for his next question in the meantime! Okay, you have it!

Mr Baboo: The scope of work is for the replacement of the CIS roof, replacement of damaged timber, replacement of gutters, restructuring of frames and replacement of false ceiling which were damaged in front office and theatre hall including any electrical works, painting of front office and repairs of aluminium openings.

Dr. Joomaye: Page 305 under item *Grants, 26323.036, Mauritius Film Development Corporation*, a one-off budget of Rs10 m. is being voted. Can we know about the purpose of this Rs10 m. for the MFDC?

Mr Baboo: The sum of Rs10 m. is for the purchase of equipment for the MFDC.

Mr Uteem: Can the hon. Minister give us a list of all socio-cultural organisations which have benefitted or will benefit from the Rs2 m. grant under item 28211?

Mr Baboo: I will circulate the list.

Mr Ramano: Item 28212.014 (d) *International Development Grant Scheme for Performing Artists*. Est-ce que je peux savoir du ministre sur quelle base se fait la sélection pour les artistes afin qu'ils puissent *perform* à l'étranger et s'il est d'accord pour soumettre la liste?

Mr Baboo: The provision is made for financial assistance.

Mr Quirin: Madam Chairperson, item 28212.014 (e) *Other support to Artists*, Rs3 m. is earmarked. Can we have some details regarding this item?

Mr Baboo: Provision is made to assist artists up to a maximum of Rs30,000 for the production of CDs formats.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 31122.999 *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*. We have learnt that there will be equipment for other departments be it the Film Industry and

all the institutions. Now, it is Rs205,000 and it has gone up to Rs5,150,000. So, may we know why there is such a large increase and this equipment will go to which department or institution?

Mr Baboo: Provision is made for the purchase of new materials, instruments such as *tablas*, harmoniums, guitars, violin and modern sound system for dance classes for the Centres de formations artistiques to replace old ones.

Mr Uteem: On page 306, item 21110, may I know from the hon. Minister why there is no amount budgeted for the appointment of a Director?

Mr Baboo: The Scheme of Service is being finalised.

Mr Jhuboo: Item 22130.001, *Studies and preliminary project preparation (a) Intercontinental Slavery Museum (b) Maroonage Museum*. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether the consultant has already been appointed, and if yes, can the hon. Minister give the name of the consultant?

Mr Baboo: The consultant has not yet been appointed.

Dr. Joomaye: Under same item, do we understand that there would be two museums intercontinental slavery and maroonage?

Mr Baboo: Yes, there will be two museums. The slavery museums will be found in the compound of Military hospital and the maroonage at Le Morne.

Mr Ramano: Sous l'item 22090, *Security Services*, le budget passe de R377,000 à R710,000. Je peux connaître la raison du ministre.

Mr Baboo: The increase is due to additional provision made for the disaster preparedness plan for the National Archives Department as recommended by the Health and Safety Officer and the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms.

Mr Baloomoody: Item 22900.099, *Miscellaneous Expenses - Conservation and Preservation of Records*. May we know more about this project? Who will handle that project? Which department?

Mr Baboo: It's a new item created for the purchase of equipment and materials to preserve and conserve records for special treatment.

Mr Ramful: With regard to item 26323.39 (d), *Peopling of Mauritius Museum at Pointe Canon*. We are being asked to vote Rs1.5 m. Can we know what is this about?

Mr Baboo: Provision is made for the complete rehabilitation of the roof of the Peopling of Mauritius Museum at Pointe Canon. Technical specifications and drawings are being worked out. Tender will be launched soon.

Mr Uteem: Page 308, *item 31112.101 – Construction of the National Archives and National Library*. May I know from the hon. Minister where matters stand with respect to the construction of the National Archives? Have we finalised the site?

Mr Baboo: Well, a provision of Rs105,000,000 is made to kick-start the construction of the building, to have the National Archives Department and the National Library at Ebène Triangle.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, *item 311132.401 – Digitisation of Archives*. May we know again where matters stand, whether there has been any progress?

Mr Baboo: Provision is made the digitisation of around 1.8 million pages for Phases 2, 3 and 4 of the project. This is an ongoing project, which has already started since 2009. 530,000 pages, representing 10% of the collection of the National Archives Department, have already been scanned and digitised.

Mr Ramano: Toujours sous l'*item 31112.101 – Construction of National Archives and National Library*. Pour les *Estimates* 2016/17, 2017/18, les sommes qui sont prévues sont seulement pour le *design* ou éventuellement pour la construction et aussi pour la gestion ?

Mr Baboo: For construction.

Mr Jhuboo: *Item 31112 – Upgrading of Cultural Complex/Buildings*. Could the hon. Minister please circulate the list?

Mr Baboo: Provision is made for the restoration and conservation of the Trianon Indentured Labourers Barracks and the *Batterie de l'Harmonie* in Black River.

Vote 17-1 Ministry of Arts and Culture (Rs588,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

(Interruptions)

Order, please! Order!

(Interruptions)

Order, hon. Bhagwan!

Vote 18-1 Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection was called.

The Chairperson: Page 314! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Page 314, *item 22120, Fees*. There is an exceptional item, *Regional Interim Economic Partnership Agreement – Mauritius Standards Bureau*. May we know from the hon. Minister what this agreement relates to?

Mr Gungah: It is a programme by the European Union, financed by the European Union, and it is for upgrading of the Metrology lab.

Mr Uteem: *Item 26313.134, Enterprise Mauritius (c) Freight Rebate Scheme for Africa*. The amount is being increased from Rs12 m. to Rs20 m. May I know what products qualify for this rebate scheme to Africa?

Mr Gungah: I can circulate the list. There are many products that are concerned.

Mr Baloomoody: Under *Capital Expenditure, item 26323.011, Fashion and Design Institute*. May we know that contribution of Rs4 m. is for what?

Mr Gungah: It is for the purchase of equipment for the institute.

Vote 18-1 Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Rs459,200,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 19-1 Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody! Page 321.

Mr Baloomoody: No, I am on page 322, *item Research Officer*. May I know whether we have recruited that Research Officer at the Ministry's level and also whether there is a Documentalist?

Mrs Perraud: For the post of Research Officer, provision is made for payment of salaries to Research Officer and for the post of Documentalist, it is a new grade.

Mr Uteem: What about the Internal Control Officer? Is that going to be filled this year?

Mrs Perraud: It is at the level of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

Mr Bhagwan: *Item 22120, Fees.* Can we have some details to whom these fees are being paid? And also, on page 323, *item 22130, Studies and Surveys*, can the hon. Minister give us a breakdown of these studies and surveys which would be carried out, and in which field?

Mrs Perraud: For *Fees*, it's provision for payment of fees to members of the Departmental Bid Committee and training of staff. For item *Studies and Surveys*, provision is made for the development of a comprehensive strategy on street children.

Mr Uteem: On page 324, with regard to Grants under items 26313.006 - *National Women Entrepreneur Council* and 26313.067 - *National Women Council* respectively. Could the hon. Minister circulate the composition of the two councils?

Mrs Perraud: Yes, I will circulate.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 324, under item 28211.051 - *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions - Women's Associations*. Can the hon. Minister circulate the list of the Women's Association which are benefiting from that item?

Also under item 28211.059 - *S.O.S Femmes!* We see that Rs1 m. has been targeted each year and there has been no increase, when we know that they are doing an excellent job and they are in financial difficulties. May we know why that sum has remained constant with only Rs1 m.?

Mrs Perraud: Indeed, we acknowledge the work that S.O.S Femmes is doing. We have talked a lot about this subject during the amendments to PDVA and we are helping this NGO.

Mr Uteem: On page 324, under item 31111 - *Dwellings, Construction of Integrated Services Centre (Design)*. The project cost was Rs60 m. We see that there is only Rs1 m. budgeted. Do I take it that the project has been completed?

Mrs Perraud: I am informed that the estimated cost of the project is Rs60 m. and a sum of Rs1 m. has been earmarked at this stage for the design phase only.

Mr Uteem: Page 325, under item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services, Running Expenses of Shelters for Children*. Mr Vellien, in his report, was very critical and asked for

an increase in the number of shelters. So, is provision being made in the Budget for increasing the number of staff employed in shelters for children?

Mrs Perraud: Yes, it is.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, under the last item 26313.053 - *National Children's Council, Support to Child Day Care Centres Scheme*. May we know a bit more about that Day Care Centre Scheme, for which we are voting Rs5 m.?

Mrs Perraud: Provision for one-off grant of Rs200,000 to Child Day Care Centres for upgrading to be registered, an amount of Rs464,931 has been disbursed by the National Children's Council to 9 Child Day Care Centres during the last financial year.

Mr Uteem: Item 22900 - *running expenses of Drop-in-Centre*, I suppose that is the drop-in-centre at GRNW. May I know from the hon. Minister whether this drop-in-centre is now operational, how many staff it has and how many children are there?

Mrs Perraud: Yes, it is operational.

Mr Bhagwan: On page, under item 28211. 004 - *Charitable Institutions*, where we are being asked to vote Rs46 m. Can the hon. Minister give us a list of the charitable institutions which would be benefitting from Government's generosity and the criteria which has been set up by the Ministry for such grants?

Mrs Perraud: I will circulate the paper.

Mr Baloomoody: Under Capital Expenditure with regard to the construction of the Drop-In-Centre in Grande Rivière! This project has been on for quite a long time and there is no provision made for this year and the subsequent years. Are we going ahead with that project?

Mrs Perraud: For the question asked before, there are 27 minors at the Oasis Shelter which is already operational.

Mr Uteem: At page 326, under item 27210.011 - *Social Assistance Benefits - Foster Care*. The budgeted amount is being increased from Rs1.1 to Rs6.2 m. May I know from the hon. Minister what is the estimated number of families who are going to benefit from this foster care allowance?

Mrs Perraud: As at date, 57 children have been placed in 48 foster families and from March to June 8 placements have been made in 7 foster families.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 327, under item 22900.908 – *Women & Children's Solidarity Programme, (b) Gender-Based Violence Command Centre* where Rs5 m. is earmarked. May we know more about this centre?

Mrs Perraud: Madam Chairperson, the answer is quite long, so I will circulate it.

Mr Quirin: On page 327, under item 22900.919 - *Special Collaborative Programme for Support to Families in Distress* where an amount of Rs24 m. is earmarked for 2016/2017. Can we have some details regarding this item, please?

Mrs Perraud: I will have to circulate this one also.

Mr Uteem: Under item 22900 - *Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence?* As from next year, there is an amount of Rs3 m. budgeted. So, may we know from the hon. Minister what kind of assistance it will be? Will it be in cash assistance, help to NGOs or what?

Mrs Perraud: The assistance will be in different forms, so I will circulate the paper.

Vote 19-1 Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare (Rs451,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 20-1 Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms was called.

Mr Bhagwan: I will take page 328, the Strategic Note - The Mission Statement of the Ministry and the Minister, which is –

to provide guidance and support for the enforcement of good governance, promote financial services and re-engineer public sector bodies to eradicate fraud, corruption, malpractices and irregularities in all aspects of public life and restore the national values of the country.

This is the Mission Statement of the hon. Minister.

On this side of the House, Madam Chairperson, we consider that the hon. Minister has failed in his duty and instead he should have resigned after *qu'il a été désavoué par le projet* Heritage City. So, we won't ask any question to the hon. Minister who should have resigned instead.

(Interruptions)

Vote 20-1 Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms (Rs529,100,000) was agreed to.

Vote 21-1 Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: On page 338, I do not know if there is anything before that.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please! I cannot follow now! You are making too much noise!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Bhagwan!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Bhadain, please!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Bhagwan, can we please continue? No provocative remarks, I say, hon. Bhadain! Right!

Hon. Bhagwan, please, let us proceed with our work!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Rutnah, we did not ask you for your comments, please!

Mr Uteem: On page 338, item 22900 *Other Goods and Services*, the increased amount is Rs5 m. So, may I know from the hon. Minister what the increased amount relates to?

Mr Bholah: This is in regard to management fee to DBM, Rs500,000 for ex-Mauritius Business Growth (MBG) loans.

The Chairperson: Page 339! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, sub-item 22130.002 *SME Master Plan*, an amount of Rs5 m. has been earmarked. Can I know from the hon. Minister when is the SME Master Plan going to be ready?

Mr Bholah: It is expected to be ready by September next.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 26313.083 *Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) (c) Pre-market Test and Certification Scheme*, may we know more about the scheme where an amount of Rs5 m. is being allocated?

Mr Bholah: This Rs5 m. has been provided for the refund to Small and Medium Enterprises in respect of cost incurred for certification of products.

Mr Uteem: On the same item 26313.083 *Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) (b) Refund to SMEs for Participation in International Fairs*, may I know from the hon. Minister what is the criteria for refund in those international fairs?

Mr Bholah: First of all, they participate in selected fairs with a view to seeking new markets and also to learn about new technologies for their products.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, under *Sub-Head 21-103: Cooperatives Development*, can I know from the hon. Minister whether there is a Registrar of Cooperative Societies now, if not, when are we going to recruit one?

Mr Bholah: Well, the vacancy notice was in the press until recently. In fact, yesterday was the closing date and we expect the guy to be in very soon.

Mr Bhagwan: Under *Sub-Head 21-103: Cooperatives Development*, Madam Chairperson, can I know from the hon. Minister whether he has received representations for grants for the La Chaumière, St Martin Cooperative Society to alleviate the problems which they had raised some time back with the Minister, for additional land also?

Mr Bholah: Personally, I have not received any representation or request. The only request we had received regarding the exemption from income tax for agricultural products and this has been given in this budget.

The Chairperson: Page 340! Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: There are quite a lot of vacancies or posts which have not been filled: Chief Technical Officer, Principal Cooperative Auditor, Senior Cooperative Auditor and Cooperative Auditor. May we know what will happen to these posts and whether they have been abolished?

Mr Bholah: This will be filled in very soon.

The Chairperson: Page 341! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under Capital Expenditure 31112.442 *Upgrading of Buildings (NICE)*, may we know where this building is?

Mr Bholah: This building is at Bois Marchand. In fact, there is a building over there and what we are proposing is to refurbish, to modify and to upgrade it which will eventually house the National Cooperative College.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 341, the last item 31132.106 *Cooperatives Division e-Registration Project (CDeRP)*, there is a project value of Rs19 m. which seems to be a new project. May we have some details on this item?

Mr Bholah: In fact, the office of the Registrar will be computerised, so that we may go for online applications for Cooperative Societies, online registration, online payment, online submission of financial statements and all that.

Mr Uteem: Under item 28211 *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*, there are transfers to various Cooperatives. May I know from the hon. Minister what is the criteria used to allocate the funds to those Cooperatives?

Mr Bholah: These are used to pay for the Board members and it has been there for years now.

Vote 21-1 Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives (Rs318,300,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 22-1 Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions was called.

The Chairperson: Page 345!

Mr Uteem: On page 345, there are a number of posts which are not filled yet: Director, Quality and Assurance, Senior, Quality and Assurance, Procurement and no amount has been budgeted. May I know the reason for that?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: If there is no budget, I take it that it will not be filled.

Mr Uteem: Other Ministers have said, for example, that the post has not been filled because they did not get applications, others have stated that the criteria are still being worked. So, we want to know why are we having these items and it is not filled.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Well, the Scheme of Service has not yet been worked out.

The Chairperson: Pages 346, 347, 348! Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 348, item 22900 *Other Goods and Services*, there is an amount of Rs17,600,000 budgeted. May we have the details of this amount?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: It is not for you to reply; you are not the Minister!

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Well, it concerns provisions made for the payment of uniform allowance, accommodation costs, passage costs, catering services, entertainment expenses, swimming courses for elderly and disabled persons and lastly services charges.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under item 22120 *Fees*.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Which page?

Mr Ramful: Page 348. A sum of Rs75 m. has been earmarked. Can we know what is the composition of the Medical Board?

(Interruptions)

Under item 22120 *Fees*, can we know the composition of the Board and can we have details of how the fees have been spent?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: The Medical Board is composed of two generalists. Doctor's fee to attend the Medical Board is Rs1,155 and Rs610 per visit in the event the visit is effected at the patient's residence. We effected payment to Occupational Therapist, Psychotherapist and nurses too.

Mr Baloomoody: May we know whether we have a Social Security Officer now? It is an important post in the Ministry, and if not, why not?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: I presume we have.

Mr Uteem: In relation to item 22120, *Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of doctors who sit on these Boards and carry out these domiciliary visits, and the criteria for choosing those doctors?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: We have presently 34 doctors who deal with the domiciliary visits. They have been appointed on a sessional basis.

Mr Ramful: With regard to the item 22030 - *Rent*, can we know why there has been an increase from Rs9 m. to Rs14 m.?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Provisions made for rental of buildings; Social Security Office at Rose Hill; Astor Court Office; local offices including four new offices; an elderly

day care centre at St Pierre; an elderly Day Care centre at Floreal; rental of parking slots; rental of vehicles; rental of facilities for events.

Mr Uteem: Under item 26313.093 - *Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board*, previously in a PQ, the hon. Minister said that there was an Officer-in-Charge. So, may I know from the hon. Minister whether now the position of the Manager has been filled?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Not yet. It will be filled. As I said in the PNQ and in the PQ addressed to me recently, we are revisiting the whole Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board. So, we are setting up a new database. We are looking at new skill development programmes, reconstitution of the Hearing Committee, and the committee of employees.

Mr Quirin: Item 28211.004 - *Charitable Institutions*. Can the hon. Minister table a list of these institutions?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Sure, it will be done.

Mr Quirin: As well as the amounts donated to each?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Yes, sure.

Mr Bhagwan: On same page, Madam Chairperson, item 28212.013 - *Gifts to Centanarians*. Allow me to thank the hon. Minister for inviting us, Members of the Opposition, unlike before, for the ceremony. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether she is contemplating to review the gifts being given by the Ministry and the organisation apart from the money? There are other types of gifts which I think our centenarians need. It is always du *déjà-vu* every time: cake, bottles of wine.

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: Well, it has already been reviewed. The gifts are purchased according to the wish and requirements of the centenarians, but within the ceiling.

Mr Uteem: Item 27220 - *Social Assistance Benefits in Kind*, there is Social Aid and then there is Assistance to Parents of Disabled Children, Rs400,000. May I know what to these benefits in kind relate to?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: The Respite Care Programme meant for children with high support needs will be extended to persons with disabilities not attending any Day Care Centres.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 351, item 22120.001 – *Fees for Medical Board and Domiciliary Visits*, Rs14 m., I would like to ask the hon. Minister on page 348, we also have same thing, Fees for Medical Board and Domiciliary Visits, Rs75 m. So, why these two votes allocation?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: This provision is with regard to invalidity pension and carer's allowance.

Mr Baloomoody: Under the *Sub-Head 22-104: Reforms Institutions and Rehabilitation*, may we know whether there is a Commissioner of Probation and After Care and, if so, when was he recruited?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: We have presently an acting Commissioner.

Mr Baloomoody: Are we going to have one full-time Commissioner?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: I hope so.

Mr Uteem: Under item 22120 - *Fees to Mauritius Post Ltd*, I suppose that this relates to the donation each time a child is born. What are these fees for?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: It concerns provisions made for fees to Mauritius Post Ltd for payment of the basic pensions in post offices. Some people do not want to open a bank account. So, they still want to cash their pensions from the post offices. This is the amount we pay to post offices.

Mr Uteem: On page 353, under item 28211 - *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*, 28211.049, *Probation Home for Girls* and 28211.050 *Probation Home for Boys*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether there is any reason why the amount is still the same for each of these two?

Mrs Jeewa-Daureeawoo: I presume there are not too many girls and boys at the Probation Home. We have an average of 8 to 9 girls and boys every year.

Vote 22-1 Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions (Rs21,235,000) was called and agreed to.

Vote 23-1 Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands was called.

Mr Uteem: On page 360, item 26323.040, *Mauritius Oceanography Institute*, there is a project amount of Rs194,500,000 for the *Construction of*

Administrative/Research/Laboratory Complex, may I know from the hon. Minister where matters stand; whether the contract has already been awarded; whether the site has already been identified?

Mr Koonjoo: May I know the item number, please!

Mr Uteem: Item 26323.040

Mr Koonjoo: The project started in October, 2011, construction started in July, 2014 and the project will be completed in October, 2015. The defects, liability period ending October, 2016 and the project value is about Rs172 m.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 26323.070 *Outer Islands Development Corporation*, the grant has gone from Rs8 m. to Rs235 m. for a project of Rs750 m. May we know the status of this project, whether contract has been allocated and if it has been allocated, to whom?

Mr Koonjoo: This is for the upgrading of the sea and air transportation in Agaléga. The project is being followed up by the Indian consultants and we are starting next year after the DPR is ready.

Mr Uteem: Under the same item, there are two projects, one is the airstrip and the other one is the port. May I know from the hon. Minister whether, at the very least, we have finalised the tender documents for the contract or has the contract also not been launched?

Mr Koonjoo: Tender documents have not yet been ready. We are waiting for the final DPR to be given to us from the Indian consultants.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 362, item 28213 *Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd*, an amount of Rs75 m. is being budgeted. May we have details of this?

Mr Koonjoo: The reply is quite lengthy, Madam Chairperson, I will circulate the answer.

Mr Uteem: Under the capital expenditure, item 31122.999 *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, there is an amount of Rs27 m. earmarked for Ballast Water Management Project. Can I know from the hon. Minister what this project is about and where it is located?

Mr Koonjoo: *The acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment, (a) Ballast Water Management Project*, for the port biological baseline survey, awareness campaign at Rodrigues in connection with the Ballast water project is on.

Mr Uteem: On page 363, there are a number of positions which have not been filled and some relates to the workshops, may I know from the hon. Minister why these positions are not filled yet and will they be filled this year?

Mr Koonjoo: Which page, please?

Mr Uteem: On page 363, 16 new positions are being created. My question is will all these positions be filled in the coming year?

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Chairperson, it will be done.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 363, item 31122.999 *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, may we know about what machinery and equipment we are talking? Is it for the Mauritian Marine Training Academy which does not have any Director?

Mr Koonjoo: Other machinery means equipment regarding training and workshops practices.

Vote 23-1 Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Shipping and Outer Islands (Rs671,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 23-2 Fisheries was called.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 365, may we know whether the post for the fishing boat inspector (Nautical) Technical and Mechanical Officer (New Grade) has been filled and if not, why not?

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, it will be filled.

Mr Baloomoody: Why it has not been filled?

Mr Koonjoo: It will be filled, it is not yet filled.

Mr Baloomoody: Can we know why it is not yet filled? There is no qualified person for that?

Mr Koonjoo: After voting the Budget, we will fill the vacancy.

Mr Ameer Meea: Under item 365004 *Allowances*, there is an amount of Rs11.5 m. May we have details for this amount?

Mr Koonjoo: These are seagoing allowances, diving allowances to officers carrying out underwater exercises.

The Chairperson: You are not allowed to talk from a sitting position, hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Koonjoo: And also for ongoing monitoring purpose of ecosystems, surveys for casual development and ad hoc underwater surveys.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, under item .005 - *Extra Assistance*, we are budgeting a sum of Rs1 m. May we know for what purpose?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Chairperson, this is the payment for two contract officers as Skipper and Deckhand/Fisherman.

Mr Baloomoody: Page 366, under item 22120 *Fees*, there is a tremendous increase in fees from Rs613,000 to nearly Rs5.5 m. may we know for what purpose?

Mr Koonjoo: For Fees a sum of Rs6.1 m. was budgeted in 2015-2016 for the recruitment of consultants which has not materialised, unfortunately, due to non-responsiveness of the bids. It is also for training of aqua culturists, skippers and others. For consultation services for crab culture, terms of reference have been modified and it is expected to be launched very soon. It is also for the laboratory test and, ultimately, for Mauritius Standard Bureau.

Mr Ramful: Item 28212.002 *Compensation to Net Fishermen*, I see that no provision has been made for this budgetary year. Do I take it that there will be no compensation for the net fishermen? And also, under item 28212.016 *Compensation to Heirs of Fishermen*, can we know how much does one family get in case of accident at sea?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Chairperson, I will circulate the reply. Rs105,000 per family.

Mr Uteem: Item 22900.926 - *Marine Ranching Project*, a sum of Rs12,500,000 earmarked for this year. So, may I know what project is concerned with this Rs12.5 m.?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Chairperson, they are meant for uniforms and Marine Ranching Project.

The Chairperson: Yes, but this is the question.

Mr Koonjoo: I will circulate the answer!

(Interruptions)

I don't have the figures!

Mr Ameer Meea: Item 22060 – *Maintenance*, there has been an increase of almost Rs4 m. to reach the sum of Rs9.9 m. may we know the reason for such an increase and also the details of this amount?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No comments, please! Allow the hon. Minister to find his reply!

Mr Koonjoo: The budget is for plant and equipment for a gas pool and septic tank, the contractor, Mr Seeven ...

(Interruptions)

I have got so many details, Madam Chairperson, I think I will circulate the answer.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, we have moved from Rs60,000 to Rs3.3m. May we know for what purpose?

Mr Koonjoo: The budget is for training of aqua culturists, skippers and others and the surveys naturally are cruise surveys for alternative mode of fishing on the banks. For example, training of 35 bank fishermen and this will be in connection with bank fisheries and also for fishing trials. We have got training of 35 bank fishermen.

Mr Uteem: Page 367, first item 28225 – *Transfer to Private Enterprises, Scheme for Purchase of Semi-Industrial Fishing Boat*, there is an amount of Rs12 m. earmarked for next year so, may I know from the hon. Minister what are the eligibility criteria for this scheme for purchase of semi-industrial fishing boat?

Mr Koonjoo: This is for the purchase of canottte for the off lagoon fishing scheme and the canotte is financed 50 per cent by the European Union that is about Rs200,000 and for the remaining Rs200,000 the fishermen will have to get a loan from the DBM.

Mr Ramful: Under item 31113.012, *Dredging of Boat Passage*. A budget is being voted for Remy Ollier, Le Morne, Souillac, Mare Chicose and Pointe-aux-Sables, but the budget has been extended over a period of three years. Will it take three years for the dredging work to be completed?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Chairperson, the dredging of boat passage will take place in Mahebourg, Remy Ollier, Le Morne, Souillac, Mare Chicose and Pointe-aux-Sables.

Mr Uteem: Page 368, *item 21, Compensation of Employees – Head, Competent Authority (New Grade), Senior Technical Officer and Technical Officer*. May I know from the hon. Minister why these posts are not being filled?

Mr Koonjoo: It is to meet payment of salary of 12 funded positions under *item 21110.001*.

Mr Uteem: The question was why some of these posts are not being filled.

Mr Koonjoo: The schemes of duties are being prepared.

Madam Chairperson: Page 369!

(Interruptions)

We have exceeded the time allocation already by 15 minutes. Page 369! Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under *item 22120.028, Fees for laboratory Test*. There is an amount of Rs6 m. earmarked for next year. May I know from the hon. Minister who conducts the laboratory tests; whether it is performed in Mauritius or outside of Mauritius, privately or within his Ministry?

Mr Koonjoo: The tests are carried out by the competent authority in Mauritius and they are sent outside to SGS lab and also in Italy lab for confirmation.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same *item 22120.008, Fees to Consultant*, it goes from Rs159,000 to Rs1 m. May we know who are these consultants and for which projects?

Mr Koonjoo: This is an expert for drafting of seafood regulations and for elaboration of an implementation plan for bio-security.

Vote 23-2 Fisheries (Rs330,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 24-1 Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms was called.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 373, *item 21110.001*, may we know from the hon. Minister when will the posts of *Director (Planning)*, *Assistant Director (Planning)*, *Analyst (Management and Human Resources)* and *Internal Control Officer* be filled?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The Ministry is actually working on the provisions that will be made for the Scheme of Service. The posts have to be replaced by the Public Sector Re-engineering Bureau.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 373, *item 21110.005, Extra Assistance*. The cost has almost doubled. May we have the details of this item?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: They are meant for extra assistance.

Mr Ameer Meea: May we have the details of this amount?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The provisions are made to meet the payment of salaries and allowances to advisers employed on contract. We have actually three advisers.

Madam Chairperson: You can circulate the list, hon. Minister!

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: I will circulate.

Mr Uteem: On page 374, *Capital Expenditure, item 31132.401, Upgrading of ICT Infrastructure (Integrated Human Resource Management Information System)*. That was a project worth Rs413 m., and for next year, the earmarked amount is Rs70 m. So, may I know from the hon. Minister where matters stand as far as the implementation of this project is concerned? Are they on track? Are they delayed? Where matters stand in regard to the implementation of that ICT project?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The provision is to meet the cost of implementation service for the HR and payroll modules as well as those for the self-service, learning management and performance management modules. The amount also includes the renewable of technical support service for the five modules as well as cost for the maintenance of the HRMIS, hardware equipment, training expenses. The project value is Rs413.5 m., and Rs250.1 m. has been spent as at 30.06.2016.

Mr Uteem: My question was not what this project is about. My question was about the implementation. Are we on course for implementation or are there delays in the implementation phase?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: It is on course.

Mr Baloomoody: I see there is a new *item 22900.950, Improvement of Counter Services*, and there is an amount of Rs4.3 m. It says 'improvement of counter services.' Was there a counter services before?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: There were a counter, but we always have new counters. This is the policy of the Ministry and all the Ministries to renew them.

Mr Baloomoody: What is counter services?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: When you come in an area where you have to meet people. This is what we call a counter.

Mr Uteem: Under *item 22120 Fees*, there is an increase from less than Rs1 m. to Rs8 m. next year. So, can we have the details of what those fees relate to?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: There are fees to assessors, and provision is made to meet payment to Mauritius Standard Bureau in connection with ISO certification of Ministries and Departments. Five units in different Ministries and Departments were ISO certified in financial year 2015/2016, and ten other projects are ongoing.

The Chairperson: Hon Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 376, under item 221120 – *Fees*. Last year, it was Rs4 m., now it is budgeted Rs20 m. May we have the details of these fees and if it is a long list, the hon. Minister could circulate it?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: In fact, it is a long list. I'll have it circulated.

The Chairperson: Page 376!

Mr Uteem: At page 376, item 28213.008 *Civil Service College*, where an amount of Rs5 m. is budgeted for next year. Can we know from the hon. Minister where matters stand? Is the College fully operational now?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The College has been operational since 16 November 2015, and there are quite a few thousands of officers who have already been trained. So, it is ongoing.

Mr Baloomoody: Same item, Civil Service College! May I know how many officers who, 'behind the counter', have followed courses at the Civil Service College?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Some 2,100 officers, since November.

Mr Ramful: At page 377, Capital Expenditure, under item 31122.802 *Acquisition of IT Equipment for Electronic Attendance System*. The project value is Rs25,800,000. Can we know where matters stand as regards this project? And will it be extended to other Ministries?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: It is quite a long answer. If you don't mind, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Page 378! Yes, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item 22900.934 – *Enhancement of Work Environment in the Civil Service*. May I have some details about this enhancement of work environment in the Civil Service?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: It is for the enhancement of environment of work. There are various projects that are ongoing. For example, we are doing a response service for the Civil Service; there is a gym, and other items also.

Mr Baloomoody: We have only one Director in the Health & Safety Unit. May we know why the post of Assistant Director for Health & Safety has not been filled?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The post of Director itself is a new post. There will be an Assistant who will work with him.

Vote 24-1 Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (Rs654,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 25-1 Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management was called.

The Chairperson: Page 382! Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Under item 21110.001 – *Basic Salary, Minister*. For June 2016, I see no Minister. Can the hon. Minister tell us why in the column ‘Funded’ it is blank? Is it that there was no Minister?

(Interruptions)

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: You know, I already have a salary for one Ministry. I don’t take a second salary.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Page 383! Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: Under Capital Expenditure, item 28222.006 – *Solar Water Heater Scheme*. Can we have a rough idea of how many families have benefitted from that scheme?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The Solar Water Heater Scheme is part of the Government renewable strategy. To date, some 70,000 householders have benefitted a grant to purchase a solar water heater. Government will continue to provide a grant to some 7,770 remaining households’ applicants earning less than Rs25,000 and some 1,500 NHDC new houses.

7,770 householders at Rs10,000 each is equivalent to Rs77.7 m. DBM management fee at Rs600 per coupon, which is equivalent to Rs4.7 m.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, you are giving answers to questions which have not been asked! The hon. Member wanted to know only the number. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: On the same item, the Solar Water Heater Scheme, may I know from the hon. Minister why is it that the sum has been reduced to Rs90 m. and no sum is budgeted after 2017?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: I believe the scheme for the beneficiaries is over.

Mr Ameer Meea: Under item 31131.107 – *Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)*, there is an amount of Rs3 m. budgeted. May we have some details on this EIA?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: There is a Licensing Project which will take on board the digitalisation of the EIA process in order to expedite all the licensing system and help to curtail delays.

Mr Baloomoody: At page 383, under item 28221.012 - *Rainwater Harvesting scheme*. There was a sum of R7,819,000 last year and Rs7,200,000 for this year. So, how many people have benefitted from that Scheme?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: I will circulate this answer because it is quite long.

Mr Bhagwan: Same page 382, under item 28225.011 – *Composting Scheme*, where Rs11,328,000 is earmarked. Can the hon. Minister inform the House how many persons have benefitted from this scheme, whether schools also are in the programme and the criteria for the allocation for same?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: It is on the basis of a First come First serve. There are 2,989 households and 2,513 planters who have benefitted in 2016.

The Chairperson: Page 384? Yes, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item 22120.007 with respect to *Fees (v)Global Fuel Economy Initiative (Phase 2)*. There is Rs5 m. earmarked. Can I know what this Global Fuel Economy Initiative (Phase 2) is about?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Mauritius has secured a grant of USD265,000 from the UN Environment Programme and to implement the Global Fuel Economy Initiative relating to promoting cleaner and more energy efficient vehicles strategy in Mauritius and the Southern

African region. The donor agencies are the EU and Global Environment Facility. The project started in April 2015 and will last until June 2017.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22120.007 (b) (iii) *Climate Change Adaptation Programme*, there is a sum of Rs3.5 m. May we know where matters stand with regard to this programme?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: You want to know how much it is.

Mr Baloomoody: There is a provision of Rs3.5 m. It is for what purpose, fees paid to whom?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: It is quite a large plan. It is really large. Before coming I looked at that. I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Last question on this, hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: On the last item, 22900 *Other Goods and Services*, the amount has gone from Rs12 m. to Rs21 m. May we know the reason of such an increase and also the details of this increase?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: This is provision to meet the cost of uniforms for Office Care Attendants, Office Auxiliaries, Drivers, Store Attendants, Procurement and Supplies cadre and other protective clothing and equipment.

Provision for catering for events and miscellaneous expenses for the proper implementation of projects funded by grants received from international organisations.

Provision is also included for funding for the Awareness Campaign, World Environment Day and other events.

The Chairperson: Page 385! Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Under item 31410.402 (a) *Rehabilitation of Beaches*, can the hon. Minister give us a list of the beaches which have to be rehabilitated?

(Interruptions)

Under items 31410.402 (b) *Coastal Rehabilitation – Climate Change Adaptation Programme* and (c) *Beach Reprofilling Programme*, there is a long list. Can the Minister circulate all the

lists? I would like to know whether he has identified the priorities for the beach reprofiling and the rehabilitation of other beaches.

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Thank you. I will circulate, as you mentioned.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item 31122.999 *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment, (a) equipment i.c.w. Contingency Plan and Disaster Preparedness in case of Oil Spill*, the amount budgeted is only Rs1 m. Like it just happened to MV Benita - can I know what will this Rs1 m. be used for?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: These are for the procurement of bombs. And also we have grants from other countries which help us to provide for these equipment.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Under item 31410.402 *Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Beaches*, there is a sub-item (b) *Coastal Rehabilitation – Climate Change Adaptation Programme*. It is a project value of Rs239 m. with an estimate of next year's budget, Rs90 m. Can we have some details of this project?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: I will circulate the information for the whole item.

The Chairperson: Page 386! Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22060.010 *Maintenance of grounds*, there is a provision of Rs8 m. and rivers and canals Rs2 m. Will the hon. Minister circulate the list of the grounds and canals which have been maintained?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Thank you for allowing me to circulate it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: May I know from the Minister whether priority would be given to the flood-prone areas and rivers?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Yes, I'll do.

The Chairperson: Page 387! Yes, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item 314190.402 *Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of rivers and mountains*, can I know from the hon. Minister whether any amount out of the Rs13.2 m. has been earmarked to rehabilitate Signal Mountain?

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: There is a long list. For Signal Mountain, I can't say.

Mr Baloomoody: The last item on capital expenditure *31410.403 Improvement, Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Public and Other Sites*, there is a sum of Rs20 m. Last year, it was Rs12 m. Will the hon. Minister circulate a list of the public and other sites?

(Interruptions)

Mr Baloomoody: Circulate it!

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Thank you very much.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Under item *31113.425 Embellishment of Infrastructural Works*, there is an amount of Rs15 m. already expensed and Rs18 m. budgeted. May we know whether this amount is expensed in-house or is it being outsourced? Can we have a list of where those works have been done?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Provisions for upgrading embellishment of infrastructural works and landscaping works for socio-cultural organisations throughout the island. Most of them are done in-house and there are some which are done on contracts. They are both.

The Chairperson: Page 389! 390! Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Under item *22070 Cleaning Services*, there is a huge budget of Rs521 m. Can the Minister inform the House whether all the procedures will be followed concerning the allocation of contract because we have been reading in the press so many cases going to Court and challenge? So, can the Minister inform the House whether when his officers would be preparing the documents, there won't be cases ending in Court and to the ICAC? Can the Minister give us a list of the beaches?

I will take another item *22070.003 Operation of Landfill Sites*. Can we know which are the landfill sites?

Under item *22070 Operation of Transfer Stations*, there is a sum of Rs210 m. Can we know what is the lifespan remaining for the Mare Chicose Landfill?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: I'll make sure that all procedures are being followed. The lifespan is two years.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item *22130 Studies and Surveys*, may I know whether the contract for the studies has already been awarded and, if so, to whom?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Provisions are made for the conduct of studies and preliminary projects. The preparations are as follows – waste recycling and resources for various strategies. The Ministry is in the process of implementing, the contract is not yet awarded.

Mr Ramful: The last item at page 389 Capital Expenditure - *28222.021 Compensation for the Relocation of Inhabitants of Mare Chicose*, may I know where matters stand. Have all the inhabitants been relocated or not?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: There is still one person who is still claiming and the rest has already been relocated.

The Chairperson: Page 390. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: At page 390, I am a bit worried. Under item *31113.009 (b) Hazardous Waste Storage Facility at La Chaumiere*, La Chaumiere is in two Constituencies - 19 and 20, a bit in 14. It is becoming the dirty area of Mauritius. It has been recommended by consultants I know, but can the Minister inform the House, with regard to the hazardous waste facility, we will be having another health storage facility. Can the Minister inform the House whether there is now an assessment being done through the Budget to review the whole area of La Chaumiere which is a dirty area defined by Government. Even we, when we were in Government, identified the site. Can, at least, a reassessment be done with regard to the safety of the health of the population surrounding the site?

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, you know fully well that this is a policy matter.

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: We are doing the most of it.

Mr Baloomoody: At page 391, under item *31132.105 Multi-Hazard Early Warning, Emergency Alert and Advisories System*, Rs15 m. Can the hon. Minister enlighten us on this?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The Multi-Hazard Early Warning, Emergency Alert and Advisories System is a reliable high performance system towards the necessary infrastructure to disseminate warnings and alerts to a maximum number of people and stakeholders in the Republic of Mauritius within an acceptable timeframe.

Mr Uteem: Under item 22030 *Rent*, as from next year, there would be an amount of Rs5 m. budgeted whereas last year it was zero. May I know which premises are being rented for Rs5 m.?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: Provision required for renting of office space at the NDRRMC and renting is at a negotiation stage.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: I wanted to make a point. Since this morning we have been listening, rightly perhaps, to Ministers who will be circulating the information. We are reaching the last Ministry. Can I appeal to you that it will be on record that the Ministers responsible will take the appropriate time to circulate, at least, all they promised to circulate.

The Chairperson: Hon. Member, I can give you the guarantee that this is on record and since it is on record, it will have to be circulated. Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services*, from Rs883,000 to Rs4.8 m., can the hon. Minister circulate a list of the other goods and services? Can he tell us who are the beneficiaries and the contractors who are providing the service?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: The provision is made to meet payments of the following items: the uniforms Rs200,000; catering Rs175,000; hospitality and ceremonies Rs30,000.

The Chairperson: Who are the contractors?

Mr Wong Yen Cheong: I am waiting for the answer. I will circulate the answer as soon as I get it. Thank you.

Vote 25-1 Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management (Rs1,536,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 26-1 Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training was called

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Under Main Achievements for FY 2015/16, there were 1,432 inspections carried out by labour Inspectorate; may we know how many contraventions there have been following these inspections?

Mr Callichurn: I don't have the figure with me right now but I can circulate it ultimately.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister, when he will circulate the document? Can he also circulate the number of cases lodged at the Industrial Court and how many have been dealt with within that year?

The Chairperson: If you have got the information you can circulate it.

Mr Callichurn: The paper is with me. I will have it circulated.

Mr Baloomoody: At page 396, can I ask the hon. Minister whether we have now a Deputy Director with regard to labour and industrial relations, and, if not, why not? Is there a Deputy Director, Occupational Safety & Health? These are two important posts. No provision has been made for these two posts.

Mr Callichurn: Well, they are new grade posts created by PRB. The scheme of service is under preparation.

Mr Uteem: Under item *31132.401 Computerisation of Registry of Associations* - may I know from the hon. Minister where matters stand with regard to the computerisation of the registry of associations?

Mr Callichurn: Well, the system is ready to go live; however, there is an issue with the Orico licence. The Orico standard Edition I licence initially proposed by the supplier is no longer orderable and same has been replaced by Orico standard Edition II which is threefold more expensive.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item *31132 Modernisation of work permit system*, may we know where matters stand?

Mr Callichurn: A project is being implemented by the Government in line with the e-Government strategy, an electronic platform for which companies, employers and other stakeholders can conduct transactions electronically to reduce time taken in processing the delivery of permits and licences. Well, tenders were launched in March, 2013 and awarded to Trutech Stormedge Co. Ltd in September, 2013. It is a contract of Rs14.5 m. Maintenance agreement will be signed for the period of March 2017 to February 2018 with the local representatives of Trutech Stormedge Co. Ltd after the warranty period.

Mr Uteem: Under item *22900.003 – Passage Costs (Repatriation of Expatriates)*, last year there was Rs76,000 and this year, Rs1 m. is being budgeted. May I know from the hon. Minister the reason for this increase and isn't it still a condition of work permit that they have to deposit the price of the return ticket, so why are we budgeting this amount?

Mr Callichurn: Previously, there was a policy that the employees should keep a bank guarantee, but there was a change in policy and they are no longer required to give this bank guarantee. However, this is a problem because the repatriation cost is borne by the Government and we will have to find ways how to curtail this situation. My Ministry is in the process of reviewing the policy and what I will be proposing is that companies henceforth buy open return tickets. So, the problem will be a thing of the past.

Vote 26-1 Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training (Rs 613,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 27-1 Centrally Managed Expenses of Government was called.

Mr Jugnauth: May I, Madam Chairperson, move for amendments to the Vote 28-1 - Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government under item 32155058 “Heritage City Co Ltd.”

“Under column 2016/17 Estimates,

To delete “1,500,000”

And

To insert “0”

Under column 2017/18 planned,

To delete “700,000”

And

To insert “0”

Under column 2018/19 planned,

To delete “500,000”

And

To insert “0”

And under item 32155061 “Special Purpose Vehicle icw Metro Express -

“Under column 2016/17 Estimates,

To delete “800,000”

And

To insert “2,300,000”

Under column 2017/18 Planned,

To delete “800,000”

And

To insert “1,500,000”

Under column 2018/19 Planned,

To delete “1,200,000”

And

To insert “1,700,000”

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: A very important item, Madam Chairperson, at page 402, item 22180 *Mission Expenses (Ministers, Delegates and Officials)*, there is a decrease from Rs191,788 to Rs150,000 and the hon. Minister should be commended for that. He heard *la voix du peuple* and we know all these *pigeons voyageurs*. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether a definite criteria will be set up for all those concerned with regard to all the items concerning missions and *per diem* and whether he has issued directives already to Ministries?

Mr Jugnauth: Madam Chairperson, with a view to making judicious use of the funds allocated for missions abroad, the following actions have been taken -

1. *Per diem* payable to officials, including Ministers and Members of Parliament proceeding on missions abroad has been reviewed and rationalised and for certain categories, the rates of *per diem* have been revised downward.
2. The rates of entertainment allowance payable have also been reduced by some 20%, and
3. Supervising officers have been requested to prepare an annual mission plan, keep the number of delegates to strict minimum, have recourse to our representatives in overseas Embassies and High Commissions who are attending those international events, conferences and meetings where possible and also make maximum use of teleconferencing and other modern telecommunication facilities.

Now, there is also a table which has been drawn with regard to *per diem* and entertainment allowance for mission overseas as from 01 July, 2016 and this has been circulated to all Ministries.

Mr Uteem: Under item 28217 *Compensation arising out of Government Liability*, may I know from the hon. Minister of Finance what contingent liabilities are being envisaged here?

Mr Jugnauth: Compensation arising out of Government liability. These are provisions that are required for payment of compensation to third parties in respect of -

1. Court cases
2. Accidents involving Government vehicles
3. Injury on duty and medical negligence.

The actual expenditure for 2015/2016 is as follows –

Court cases	Rs10.2 m.
Accidents involving Government vehicles (there are 29 cases)	Rs1.8 m.
Injury on duty and medical negligence	Rs2.2 m.

There is a list of all the cases which I can circulate.

Vote 27-1 Centrally Managed Expenses of Government (Rs1,643,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 28-1 Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government was called.

Mr Uteem: With respect to the last item on page 403, *Air Mauritius Ltd - Contributions icw Africa/Asia Air Corridor Project*, an amount of Rs100 m. is budgeted. This subsidy relates to what purpose? Is it subsidy on tickets or on promotion?

Mr Jugnauth: Well, I have to find it. But I know it is a subsidy which is given to Air Mauritius with regard to the newly operated flights to Dar es Salaam and Maputo.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 21120.001 – *Medical Insurance Scheme*, provision is made for Rs10 m. Can I ask the hon. Minister where matters stand?

Mr Jugnauth: Provision is being made for the implementation of the Government Medical Insurance Scheme for public officers. I understand that a committee will be set up comprising of different stakeholders to work out the details and the guidelines of the scheme. This scheme is expected to be operational in 2017. That is why there has been no provision for the last year and Rs10 m. for the coming year.

Mr Uteem: Under item 25120 – *Financial Public Corporations, Interest Subsidy on Loans to Development Bank and SME Development Bank*, do I take it that this amount

represents the difference between the market rate and the preferential rate of interest that is going to be offered on loans to SMEs?

Mr Jugnauth: Exactly.

Vote 28-1 Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government (Rs4,386,100,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 29-1 Contingencies and Reserves (Rs600,000,000) was called and agreed to.

THE APPROPRIATION (2016-2017) BILL 2016

(NO. XVII of 2016)

The Schedule was agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and agreed to.

The title and the enacting clause were agreed to.

The Bill was agreed to.

On the Assembly resuming with Madam Speaker in the Chair, Madam Speaker reported accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I move for the adjournment of the House to Friday 19 August 2016 at 3.00 p.m.

The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

MATTER RAISED

(8.05 p.m.)

ROSE-HILL - ROBBERY CASES

Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière): If you bear with me, I have an urgent matter for the Rt. hon. Prime Minister concerning the Police. These days in Rose-Hill, especially in the centre of Rose Hill, since two or three weeks, there have been lot of robberies *par des personnes portant des cagoules*. I can state within the compound where I stay, there is a big compound at Clos Verger area where there are more

than hundred families. I have contacted the Police myself and we have started a sort of own surveillance since yesterday.

Can I appeal to the Rt. hon. Prime Minister to direct the Commissioner of Police, at least, to talk to his officers of the Western Division, the CID Section of Rose Hill, to look actively into this situation because it is causing a problem for the security and people are really worried about that.

The Prime Minister: I will mention it to the Commissioner of Police and I am sure he will take the right steps.

(Interruptions)

They are not taking. Unfortunately, I can't direct!

At 8.06 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Friday 19 August 2016 at 3.00 p.m.