

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION**

**B/572** The Honourable Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue (Mr. Lesjongard)

*To ask Dr the Honourable Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries*

**Whether, in regard to the proposed construction of a fish auction market and a fishing port in Port-Louis, he will state where matters stand?**

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**REPLY**

**Mr Speaker, Sir**

On 28 February 2007, the Government of the Republic of Greece has provided a grant amounting to EUR 611,072 (Rs25,000,000) to my Ministry for the setting up of a fish auction market. In this regard, my Ministry approached the Mauritius Ports Authority on 30 October 2007 to lease a plot of land to the extent of 1350m<sup>2</sup> at the Trou Fanfaron Fishing Port, adjacent to the Agricultural Marketing Board Cold Storage, for the construction of the fish auction market of this project.

2. The identified site has been surveyed and the preliminary drawings of the building for the Fish Auction Market have already been worked out on January 2008 by the Mauritius Ports Authority and the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping respectively.

3. Taking into account that the site identified in the Trou Fanfaron Fishing Port falls in the Buffer Zone I of the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, the Ministry of Arts and Culture has

requested that the Fish Auction Market Project be submitted to UNESCO for clearance prior to its implementation.

4. According to the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention the major role of the Buffer Zone for the Conservation of a site is defined as follows:

“For the purpose of effective protection of the nominated property, a buffer zone is an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the property. This should include the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection. The area constituting the buffer zone should be determined in each case through appropriate mechanisms. Details on the size, characteristics and authorized uses of a buffer zone, as well as a map indicating the precise boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, should be provided in the nomination.”

5. However, being given that it might take long to get the necessary clearances and subsequently the project being delayed further for its implementation, my Ministry is on the look out for alternative sites:-

- (a) A request has been made on 19 May 2008 to the Mauritius Ports Authority to identify an alternative site within the port area for the fish auction market;

- (b) I am given to understand that a site **along** the shoreline with quay facilities is not available. However, on 21 May 2008, a site was identified **close** to the shoreline, but this site has been allocated to a fishing company, Hung Ming Shipping Co. Ltd since 1999 and the MPA is presently taking legal action against the company to recover the site being given that the latter has not developed the site as at date. It is to be pointed out that development of the fish auction market on this particular site would involve significant investment which would exceed by far funds secured from the Hellenic Republic; and
- (c) Attempts to house the Fish Auction Market in the existing facilities of Froid des Mascareignes have also been explored but the space available does not appear appropriate.

6. As regards the fishing port in Port Louis, I am advised by the Mauritius Ports Authority that a Port Master Plan Study has been carried out. The consultants in their preliminary report have concluded that the forecast traffic for the horizon up to 2030 will be in the order of 230,000 metric tonnes i.e. an additional of 100,000 metric tonnes. In this respect, they advised that a dedicated fishing port at Bain des Dames is not financially viable.

7. Concerning the berth requirement for fishing vessels, the Consultants assessed that some 270 metres of additional berth will be adequate to cater for the increased traffic. Accordingly, they recommend that further development in the fishing sector be concentrated at the Trou Fanfaron Fishing Port. The only

space available is of 5 hectares owned by the private sector, namely the United Docks.

8. The House may wish to be informed that, the Consultants recruited by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development for the Feasibility Study for the Improvement of the Tuna Industry have examined the recommendations of the Port Master Plan Study and are of the view that the construction of a Fishing Port at Trou Fanfaron Fishing Port would be a viable operation.

9. Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping and the Fisheries Division of my Ministry recommended to the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to carry out the feasibility study for the development of port infrastructure at Trou Fanfaron Fishing Port. The final report has been submitted on Monday 26 May 2008. The Ministry of Finance & Economic Development will explore funding possibilities from Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development for the implementation of the project.