

10.02.2015

MAURITIUS/RODRIGUES – MV MAURITIUS PRIDE

(No. B/33) Mr J. Leopold (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Mauritius/Rodrigues route, he will state where matters stand as to the operation and to the proposed replacement of the MV Mauritius Pride.

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, with regard to the first part of the question the MV Mauritius Pride, a 25-year old vessel, stopped all operations in February 2014 for technical reasons.

According to information received from the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd, the vessel had already undergone dry docking and thorough repair works in 2013 at a total cost of some Rs70 m. and, in 2014, an additional Rs100 m. of new repairs to maintain its seaworthiness as well as its compliance with the mandatory Conventions of the International Maritime Organisation.

The Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd. sold the ship in September 2014 for the sum of USD 1,080,000, (i.e. some Rs30 m). The House may wish to note that the purchase price of the vessel was around Rs200 m.

In order to fulfil the transport requirements of the Rodrigues People, Mauritius Trochetia has stopped its services to Reunion and Tamatave and is currently focusing its services only to Rodrigues and Agalega to ensure that there is no disruption of service.

Operations of Mauritius Trochetia to Reunion and Tamatave are expected to resume with the arrival of a new container vessel.

As regards the proposed replacement of MV Mauritius Pride, the previous Government took the decision to replace the vessel by a container vessel of 350 to 500 container capacity as a back-up for Mauritius Trochetia. In this perspective, following an expression of interest, an international shipbroker, Howe Robinson, has been appointed to advise and recommend on the purchase of second hand container vessel as a back-up for Mauritius Trochetia. I understand that the ship broker has, since 27 November 2014, already submitted its proposal to the Central Procurement Board for consideration. The Central Procurement Board has shortlisted a number of vessels, but given the specificities and the operational constraint of the port of Port Mathurin, none of these shortlisted vessels meet all the criteria and technical requirements to guarantee a

safe and risk free berthing at Port Mathurin. In this regard, further investigation and diligence is being carried out to find out whether some of the shortlisted vessels could still berth at Port Mathurin with a minimum acceptable level of risk.

Subject to the above outlined limitations and the timely approval of the Central Procurement Board and the availability of funds, the replacement vessel could be finalised around April 2015.

Mr Leopold: Given the fact that the Mauritius Trochetia is the only vessel which is deserving Rodrigues to make the liaison within the islands of Rodrigues and Mauritius and the Mauritius Trochetia is going to dry dock for maintenance, can I ask the hon. Minister what are the dispositions he has taken so as to ensure liaison between the two islands and whether the hon. Minister is contemplating lowering the airfare so as to allow people to move freely from Mauritius to Rodrigues?

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as far as the airfare is concerned, I am unable to answer this question but, so far, the replacement of Trochetia if in case something happens, we are taking precautions and in case we get the money from the Ministry of Finance we are thinking of either to buy a new vessel or to charter a vessel. We are looking forward to it; arrangements have been made in case anything happens to charter a vessel.

Mr Jhugroo: Can I ask the hon. Minister what procedures have been used before selling Mauritius Pride and who purchased it?

Mr Koonjoo: The Mauritius Pride was sold in September 2014 to RJ Maritime Consultancy Limited for USD 1,080,000, as I said, plus an additional of approximately USD 72,000 for its remaining bunker on board, that is, a total of approximately Rs36 m. net of anybrokerage commission.

Mr Bérenger: Clearly there is danger being given that we are relying on only one vessel, Le Trochetia, which is not a new vessel. I heard the hon. Minister say that in case - he seems to have thought about it - Le Trochetia is not available, runs into trouble, he will have to charter a vessel. Can I know whether the advance work has been done, that a list of possible chartered vessels that can be chartered has been identified? Because the hon. Minister, himself, pointed out that Port Mathurin is a difficult harbour, not any chartered vessel will be able to come in and out. Do we a list of possible chartered vessels?

Mr Koonjoo: We are looking upon that, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. But, I can guarantee the hon. Leader of the Opposition that everything will be done so as no problem arises between now and 15th of April.

The Deputy Speaker: Next question!

24.02.2015

SAINT BRANDON ARCHIPELAGO - WRECKSHIP FV KHA YANG

(No. B/95) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne& Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the wreckship FV Kha Yang, presently grounded on the shores of the Saint Brandon Archipelago, he will state -

- (a) the ecological consequences of the oil spill and irreversible damages caused to the reef barrier resulting thereof;
- (b) the measures taken, if any, for the removal thereof and the timeframe set therefor;
- (c) if it held the required authorization to fish around the Archipelago, and
- (d) if Government will consider introducing legislation to protect this last pristine piece of the Mauritian territory.

(Withdrawn)

03.03.2015

FISHERMEN – REGISTRATION CARD

(No. B/126) Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand' Baie& Poudre d'Or) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishermen, he will –

- (a) give a list thereof holding a Fisherman's Registration Card, indicating the measures he proposes to take against holders thereof who are no longer involved in fishing activities;
- (b) liaise with the Beach Authority to ensure that a specific and adequate space is earmarked for the regular maintenance of their boats, and
- (c) state if he proposes to recruit additional officers to combat illegal fishing at sea and to take other remedial measures in relation thereto.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, with your permission I am tabling a list of 2,070 fishers who hold a Fisherman's Registration Card.

The measures taken by my Ministry to trace out fishermen who are no longer involved in fishing activities are as follows -

- (i) The activities of fishermen are being constantly monitored by Officers of the Fisheries Protection Service of my Ministry at the fish landing stations and during patrols at sea. Whenever a fisherman is found no longer involved in fishing activities for a consecutive period of six months, his fisherman card is automatically cancelled;
- (ii) All reported cases of alleged inactive fishermen are fully investigated and upon confirmation that the fisherman is not involved in fishing, his fishermen card is cancelled;
- (iii) The collaboration of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, is solicited when the need arises. In fact, my Ministry provides to the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions a detailed list of registered fishermen and requests that Ministry to submit information on any case of contribution to the National Pension Fund made by an employer other than my Ministry in respect of any registered fisherman. On obtaining information from the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, any doubtful case is fully investigated where there is a justifiable ground to do so.

With regard to part (b) of the question, my Ministry has already agreed to the proposal of the Beach Authority for fishermen to use some beaches for repairs of boats. Eight sites have already been agreed with the Beach Authority. We are informing the fishers, accordingly.

As regards part (c) of the question, my Ministry is in the process of recruiting additional Fisheries Protection Officers with a view to strengthening action to combat illegal fishing in our lagoon.

Other remedial measures being implemented by this Ministry to combat illegal fishing include the following -

- (a) the strengthening of collaboration between the officers of my Ministry and the officers of the National Coast Guard so as to provide a 24-hour surveillance service at sea;
- (b) increasing the number of flying squad from 5 to 8 units and equipping them with appropriate facilities so that they can intervene promptly in order to deter illegal fishing.

I would also wish to inform the House that my Ministry is presently preparing a new Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill and provision is being made under this new piece of legislation to better equip officers of the Fisheries Protection Service so that they would be able to combat illegal fishing more efficiently.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Rughoobur!

Mr Rughoobur: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Minister if his Ministry is envisaging issuing registration cards to fishermen in the near future, because I know that as from 2010 it is Government's policy not to issue any further fisherman registration card. I would like to know whether he is envisaging changing that policy and, at least, to replace those cards that have been taken back from those fishermen who have abandoned the profession?

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker, we are actually trying to review, because there is a huge demand from the fishermen section. Since 2010, there was a stop put for issuing new cards. The problem is that we have got some people who are no more there and their cards are still there.

The second thing is that there are a good number of people, almost 504, if I am not mistaken, who have requested for new cards. We are studying the problem and maybe in the

future we will see to it that new cards are issued. There is also a demand by the fishermen in a committee which I met twice in the last couple of months. They are agreeable to the proposition that those who are not using or who are unable to use, their cards should be taken and given to other people. We are working upon that, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ramful!

Mr Ramful: May I ask the hon. Minister what are the criteria that the Ministry look at when registering new applications?

Mr Koonjoo: I don't have the criteria as such, but, as usual, the Ministry has been operating like that since many years and if there is anything new, we will have to look into that.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Rughoobur!

Mr Rughoobur: The fishermen are nowadays really facing big difficulties when they have to maintain their boats. So, I would request the hon. Minister to liaise with the Beach Authority so that they can accelerate on procedures and find a place for them so that they can maintain their boats. This is first.

Secondly, if the hon. Minister can liaise with the National Coast Guard so that they be more flexible because there are lots of contraventions these days. They don't have a place to maintain their boats. So, I would request the hon. Minister to please look into that.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I just replied that it has already been done. There are eight beaches which were identified with the Ministries concerned and we have agreed to allow these places where the fishermen can safely repair their boats or keep them there in bad season.

Madam Speaker: Last question on this issue!

Mr Rughoobur: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just a last question! I just wanted to clarify from the hon. Minister, you have got a batch of fishermen, there was a course running last year for off lagoon fishing and I am made to understand that for off lagoon fishing, you have got a special registration card for fishermen. I know that part of the course has been completed, but they need to do the practical.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Rughoobur, please ask your question!

Mr Rughoobur: I would just ask the hon. Minister to please look into this off lagoon fishing course that was conducted and if he could try to ensure that they complete their course at least, the practical part, and they get their card soon. Thank you.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I will definitely do it. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Okay. Next question, hon. Rughoobur!

10.03.2015

AGALEGA - - PROJECTS EARMARKED

(No. B/163) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to Agalega, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Outer Islands Development Corporation, information as to where matters stand in relation to each of the six projects earmarked in the Programme Based Budget 2012 for implementation.

MrKoonjoo: Madam Speaker, regarding the six projects referred to by the hon. Second Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East for implementation by the Outer Islands Development Corporation, I am informed by the Outer Islands Development Corporation that the status of the projects is as follows –

(i) **Refugee Centre Project**

This project relates to the construction of a Refugee Centre on South Island at Agalega. Initially, the project value was Rs11 m. and started in October 2012 and the expected date of completion was scheduled by the end of 2015. The project consists of two phases. As per the Engineer report, only 67% of Phase has been completed and Phase II

has not yet started. The amount already disbursed for that project represents 48% of the project value, i.e. Rs1.9 m. out of Rs4.1 m.

(ii) **Rehabilitation of Airstrip**

Tenders were launched in December 2011 for the rehabilitation of the airstrip, but the amount tendered was in the range of Rs318-350 m. against Rs120

m. which was the amount earmarked for the project in 2012. The Corporation did not go ahead with the project.

(iii) **Rehabilitation of Coconut Plantation**

Under this project, at the cost of Rs0.6 m., the Corporation purchased two dehusking machines for dehusking of coconuts. In the past, such activities were carried out manually.

(iv) **Fire Fighting Project**

I understand that a fire fighting vehicle was purchased in July 2013 at the cost of Rs15.7 m. I am advised by the Corporation that the vehicle is still awaiting shipment to Agalega. Apparently, the Corporation is having transportation problems as the vehicle cannot be dismantled for shipment. The vehicle is still lying at Coromandel Fire Station and I learnt that the warranty on the vehicle will expire in July 2015.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, allow the hon. Minister to reply, please!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Jhugroo, I am on my feet!

MrKoonjoo:

(v) **Construction of Houses**

The houses are meant for the inhabitants of Agalega. The project value is Rs2.9 m. Two duplex type quarters have already been constructed and are currently being occupied by four families comprising of eight members. Each duplex comprises two housing units.

(vi) **Installation of Solar Panel**

The project has never been implemented. The amount of Rs1.5 m. earmarked for the installation of solar panel has been reallocated for the renovation of two houses. The two houses are occupied by the Officer-in-Charge of South Island and the other one by the daughter of the Officer-in-Charge with her family.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Madam Speaker. All these projects have been announced since several years, but nothing has been done.

(Interruptions)

In every Budget, every year it is announced and nothing has been done. I know the hon. Minister just assumed office, but can I ask him if he can give a time frame for all these projects to be implemented urgently as the situation there is chaotic?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I can't give a time frame when these projects will start and when they will be completed, but I can assure the hon. Member that I have gone through the files of the Outer Islands and I have contacted the Rt. hon. Prime Minister and also the hon. Minister of Good Governance and I have asked to carry out a forensic audit to find out..

(Interruptions)

...what are the situations financially in the outer islands?

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Regarding this specific fire service lorry which cannot be transported to Agalega, can the hon. Minister consider to open an inquiry and, if need be, refer this case to the Police?

Mr Koonjoo: I just answered, Madam Speaker.

Mr Ameer Meea: Madam Speaker, I think the hon. Minister will agree with me that there is an urgent need of action there. Can I ask the hon. Minister if he is planning to visit Agalega in the meantime?

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Order, please! Order!

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No cross talking, please! Allow the hon. Minister to reply!

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker.

(Interruptions)

I will definitely do so after the Budget and I will ask the hon. Member to accompany me.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea, did you get the reply of the hon. Minister.

Mr Ameer Meea: Yes. A last question! Concerning the lorry for the Fire Station, since it has now been established that the vehicle won't be able to travel to Agalega, can I ask the hon. Minister it would be simple to redeploy such vehicle to a local station, here, in Mauritius because it is a waste of public funds.

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: I will look into it, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I suspend the sitting for one and a half hours for lunch.

At 1.00 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.39 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Quirin!

31.03.2015

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

AGALEGA – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr P. Bérenger)*(by Private Notice)* asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the Agreement for the development of Agalega which was recently signed between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of India, he will -

- (a) give details thereof, indicating if it includes -
 - (i) any form of a Lease Agreement and;
 - (ii) the setting up of a Coastal Surveillance Radar Station on Agalega and entails Mauritius joining India's Regional Radar Network or (joining) the trilateral India-Sri Lanka-Maldives Regional Security Cooperation set-up, and

(b) lay copy thereof.

The Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands (Mr P. Koonjoo): Madam Speaker, with your permission I shall reply to the PNQ addressed to the hon. Prime Minister.

As the House is aware, Agalega has for too long been neglected in matter of socio-economic development, particularly regarding infrastructural development.

The existing jetty which is only 60m long was constructed in 1985. The jetty is in a very bad condition and it is most imperative that a proper quay be constructed. It is to be noted that repairs were effected to the jetty in 1992, 2003 and 2013 after the passage of cyclone Dumele.

This is the only facility available for loading and unloading of cargo and embarking and disembarking of passengers. M/V 'Mauritius Trochetia' lays in anchor at some 400m away from the jetty at the St. James anchorage, located at the reef-free area, where the depth is only 60m. However, during certain past voyages, M/V 'Mauritius Pride' and M/V 'Mauritius Trochetia' could not anchor and had to be kept on the drive for both disembarking and embarking of goods and passengers in the high seas due to bad weather conditions.

Another major shortcoming in Agalega relates to the airstrip which badly needs upgrading. Presently, only small aircrafts like the Dornier can land in Agalega.

Madam Speaker, it is comforting to note that in line with the longstanding Indo-Mauritius relations, the Republic of India has graciously signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Mauritius during the recent visit of H.E. Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India. The MoU precisely addresses the infrastructural problems faced by Agaleans. The components of the MoU are -

- (a) construction of a jetty for berthing of ships;
- (b) rehabilitation and repaving of the runway over a maximum length of 4,000 feet, an apron for two aircrafts of size (ATR 42 type) and a taxiway;
- (c) installation of a power generation facility of approximately 300 KW;
- (d) setting up of a water desalination plant of capacity of approximately 60 tonnes a day;
- (e) construction of a National Coast Guard Post, including basic repair facilities, and
- (f) any other facility related to the project.

Under the MoU, the Government of India shall finance the projects to the tune of USD 18 m. in the form of financial grant and will also provide suitable personnel with necessary expertise and experience to assist in the implementation of the projects.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) (i) of the question, I would like to point out that the MoU between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of India does not include any Lease Agreement in whatsoever form.

With regard to part (a) (ii) of the question, the reply is in the negative.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) of the question, in line with government policy of transparency and good governance, I am laying a copy of the MoU on the Table of the National Assembly.

Mr Bérenger: Before I put some questions, of course, my PNQ was addressed to the hon. Prime Minister, but, at least, the situation is clear as far as any lease agreement is concerned. There has been a lot of talk, at least, that is clear. But is there any reason why the Minister has avoided replying to part (a) (ii), that is, whether the agreement between India and Mauritius includes the setting up of a Coastal Surveillance Radar Station on Agalega and entails Mauritius joining India's Regional Radar Network or the trilateral India-Sri Lanka-Maldives Regional Security Cooperation set-up?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, with regard to the separate agreement, Article 3 of the MoU provides the possibility of drawing up and entering into other supplementary arrangements as may be required for the fulfilment of the pursuance of obligations of both parties. In this respect, India did suggest a separate agreement; first, use of facilities being developed and to prevent use of facilities by party with interest initiated to the party. I must, here, point out in no uncertain terms that any agreement to be considered would have necessarily to satisfy the following conditions -

- it is of mutual benefits, and
- it will be in strict compliance with the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr Bérenger: Well, if I heard the hon. Minister correctly, he said that the Indian side - we have very good friends - has suggested a separate agreement. Is there a separate agreement? Has there been any other agreement signed or circulated?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, as far as I know, I don't think I have seen any agreement of that sort in the MoU.

Mr Bérenger: I don't want to think about things like that! My question was addressed to the hon. Prime Minister. Has, at least, the hon. Minister - because he has chosen to reply; the hon. Prime Minister has asked him to reply - seen with the hon. Prime Minister whether there is this radar system dimension or even more because I'll quote from what both Prime Minister Modi and the Foreign Minister of India have stated recently which entails also suggestions that we should join this security arrangement for that tripartite Sri Lanka-Maldives-Seychelles already in existence?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I repeat again, the answer is no.

Mr Bérenger: The whole point - of course, Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. Prime Minister can understand that - is to clear the air completely. We have excellent relations with India and there has been a lot of rumours, a lot of *procèsd'intention*, a lot of talk of loss of sovereignty and so on. So, the whole point was to give the opportunity to the hon. Prime Minister to clear the air completely and say where we stand exactly. So, can I ask again the hon. Prime Minister, is there going...

Madam Speaker: Not the hon. Prime Minister, you should ask the Minister who replied the question.

Mr Bérenger: Unfortunately!

(Interruptions)

Or fortunately for the country!

Can I ask the hon. Minister, therefore, to be more precise? Has the Indian side suggested a separate agreement that would bear on such matters: radar systems and security matters?

Mr Koonjoo: There is no request for that, Madam Speaker, as far as I know.

Mr Bérenger: As far as he knows! Has he talked to the hon. Prime Minister before taking the responsibility of replying to a PNQ that deals also with radar installations and security issues?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, so far as security issues are concerned, I believe the Prime Minister's Office...

Mr Bérenger: That's why the question was addressed to him.

Mr Koonjoo: They are aware about that; I am not aware about that.

Mr Bérenger: I find that very sad. This was an opportunity to clear the air completely and to strengthen still further our excellent relations with India and we are missing it, Madam Speaker. I put the question clearly: Is there in the agreement or in the proposed agreement, the setting-up of a radar system in Agalega?

Madam Speaker: You have the reply, hon. Minister?

Mr Koonjoo: I said, Madam Speaker, that, as far as I know, I don't know whether there is a radar system.

(Interruptions)

I don't know.

Mr Bérenger: I don't think it is worth...

(Interruptions)

It's an awful shame!

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I said that there is no radar. I don't know. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition has got any information, would he tell the House?

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Leader of the Opposition, do you have any other questions?

(Interruptions)

Hon. Leader of the Opposition, I understand that you don't have any further question.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Leader of the Opposition, I am addressing you. Hon. Leader of the Opposition, I understand you don't have any other supplementary questions?

(Interruptions)

I am sorry, can you please stand up and tell me whether you have any other supplementary questions or you don't have?

Mr Bérenger: I have already said that there is no use according to me to pursue the matter further and that, therefore, I am not going to put any question, wasting the time of this House with the Minister who does not know anything about the matter raised in my question.

Madam Speaker: Now I understand because from a sitting position, I can't take your statement. Thank you.

So, on Prime Minister's Question Time, hon. Members, the Table has been advised that Parliamentary Questions No. B/219 addressed to the hon. Minister of Public Infrastructure and

Land Transport, B/239 and B/240 addressed to the hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Development will now be replied by the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, time permitting. Yes, hon. Rutnah!

31.03.15

**PORT LOUIS HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT – FISHERS –
ACCOMPANYING MEASURES**

(No. B/234) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the ongoing Port Louis Harbour Development Project, he will state the accompanying measures being taken, if any, to help the fishers of –

- (a) Bain des Dames;
- (b) Les Salines;
- (c) Grand River North West;
- (d) Sable Noir ;
- (e) Pointe aux Sables;
- (f) Roche Bois, and
- (g) Tombeau Bay.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Director General of the Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA) that it is enhancing its infrastructure in line with its objective to transform the port into a regional hub and to respond to the growing needs of the shipping lines and other stakeholders.

It is currently implementing a project for the extension of the quay by 240 metres and strengthening of the existing quay of 560 metres at the Mauritius Container Terminal at Mer Rouge to enable larger container vessels to call at Port Louis Harbour and to accommodate the increase in cargo traffic. This project which involves construction of bunds, marine and civil works and dredging works is expected to be completed by end of 2016.

In regard to parts (a) to (g) of the question, I am further informed that there are 278 registered fishers under the six landing stations within the port limits, namely –

- (i) Bain des Dames / *Fort William*;
- (ii) *Grande Rivière Nord Ouest*
- (iii) Pointe aux Sables I;
- (iv) Pointe aux Sables II;
- (v) Roche Bois, and
- (vi) Tombeau Bay.

At the start of the project, these persons have claimed compensation from the MPA. They are stating that the decrease in amount of fish catch due to affected water quality, is forcing them to move further away to obtain the same catch they were getting prior to works being carried out.

The MPA in a spirit of goodwill opened negotiations with the fishers and it was agreed to move for a mediation process, in the first instance, as a means to resolve the dispute between the two parties. A Mediator/Arbitrator was appointed with the concurrence of all the parties and a Mediation/Arbitration Agreement was signed on 07 July 2014 to examine and determine whether the works have caused or are likely to cause an impact on the fishing activities of the registered fishers, determine the compensation, if any, and the terms of relocation of the 15 fishers operating temporarily at *Fort William*. Several proposals have been examined and I am informed that no agreement has been reached between the two parties and the dispute will now be resolved in arbitration proceedings.

Madam Speaker, I am further informed that, following the start of the works, the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands has provided baits to the fishers in 2013. It has also extended the fishing areas for live baits beyond the district of

Port Louis, namely to Black River, Pamplemousses and Rivière du Rempart on a thrice weekly basis and limited to 5 fishers per day. Normally, bait year license is restricted to a particular district only.

MrBarbier: Madam Speaker, as the hon. Deputy Prime Minister just stated, it is now maybe for more than one year that negotiation has started on a mediation basis where the fishers today are at court level with the preceding to establish what is the impact, as the Minister of port development and the impact that it will have on the fishers' activities. There is a feeling, Madam Speaker, that they are not being considered in all this development that is going on in the Port Louis Harbour area.

Madam Speaker: What is the hon. Member's question?

MrBarbier: May I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether he will make it a duty for him as Minister responsible for port development to see to it that all fishers from the region of Grande Rivière to Tombeau Bay, including all the other fish landing stations, be given the due consideration while we are considering developing the ports area.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I must say that the MPA has taken this quite seriously and, in fact, no less a person than the ex-Chief justice was appointed as mediator, and now, as arbitrator on this issue. So, it has been given the importance as it deserves. Nevertheless, I take the point of the hon. Member concerning current and future developments and how this will affect the livelihood of everyone, especially when we talk about the prospective substantial port development. Certainly, we will look at some sort of mechanism so that dialogue can take place. But, also, Madam Speaker, there is a need for everyone to be reasonable and for everyone to understand that things have got to happen within reasonable parameters.

MrBarbier: May I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister just to insist on a time frame so that the fishers may not feel as if they have been abandoned while we are developing the port area?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I understand now that we are going to arbitration and that the ex-Chief Justice wishes for the works to stop so that he can now fully assess what has been the loss incurred by the fishermen. I think this will be towards the end of the year that this will happen. That is for the current works being carried out. As far as the future works are, let me look into it and I will come back. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Barbier!

07.04.2015

FISHERS – PROFESSIONAL CARDS - ISSUE

(No. B/275)Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishers, he will –

- (a) give a list thereof registered as such over the past five years for mainland Mauritius and Rodrigues respectively
- (b) state the number of application for the issue of a professional fisher card received, since January 2015 to date ,and
- (c) state Government policy in relation to the issue of fisher professional cards.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, with your permission I am tabling a list of registered fishers year wise since 2011 for mainland Mauritius.

I am informed that with regard to registered fishers in Rodrigues, the list is still being compiled by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and will be tabled in due course.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that since January 2015 to date, 20 applications have been received in my Ministry for the issue of professional fisher cards.

With regard to part (c) of the question, the policy of the previous Government since 2010 had been not to issue any new fisher card. However, I have reconsidered the issue and I have already set up a committee with the following objectives –

- (i) to assess whether each and every registered fisher is a *bona fide* fisher;
- (ii) to deregister *mala fide* fishers;
- (iii) to monitor closely the activities of each applicant for a fisher card over a period of six months, and
- (iv) to consider any new applications to fisher card for only off lagoon fishing.

Mr Barbier: I think the hon. Minister is on the right track and is doing the right things. But may I know whether there is a change in number over the past five years, that is, the number of fishers we had five years back is not the same today? The hon. Minister just tabled the list, but what about the movement from year to year, does he have this information so that we may base on that to know how many new cards can be issued to those who are waiting for so long?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, for the information of the hon. Member, in 2011, there were 2,214 fishers; in 2012: 2,160 fishers; in 2013: 2,136 fishers; in 2014: 2,082 fishers and in 2015, at at now, it is 2,065. There is an outstanding demand for 148 fishers at present and we are working on that to distribute the cards, but we have to see that the fishers make their applications and they have certain conditions to satisfy before they are registered.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, do you have a question on fishers?

Mr Jhugroo: Can I ask the hon Minister whether he can see to it if he can do something for the fishermen of Constituency No. 12 because since several years they are looking for fisher cards?

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker, that will be done in the same exercise.

Mr Ganoo: I heard the hon. Ministry replying that at his Ministry the number of applicants for a new fisherman card is only 148. Therefore, can I ask him why is it that the fisherman card will be granted only for offshore lagoon fishing?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, we are working on that, because people who go outside lagoon are despatched with special boats. Those who are fishing inside the lagoon can go with small boats and all other devices. So, we are looking into that. We will see to it that people who are willing to go off lagoon and in lagoon are both supported with the same facilities.

Mr Ganoo: Can I ask the hon. Minister, therefore, to consider this possibility that when the cards will be distributed to the fishermen the Ministry considers also giving them the possibility of fishing inside the lagoon because for years now the number of lagoon fishermen has been dwindling? 10 years ago, there used to be 4,000 fishermen and now we just heard that the figure has been reduced by about 100% and has come down to only 2,000. The Ministry has implemented a policy of replenishing the lagoons during the past 10 years, therefore why not consider the possibility of allowing the fishermen to fish inside the lagoons when the new cards will be distributed to fishers?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, my Ministry is looking into all these factors and I want to give a new impulsive to the fishing sector. I have got it in mind, we are working upon that and in the future we want to make the fishing sector a very attractive sector where more jobs will be created. Not only that, we are also looking forward to put some restrictions on the issue of licences to foreign fishing vessels. We have got an area of more than 2.3 million kilometres of ocean, in our ocean we have plenty of fish and in spite of that Mauritius is suffering from the consumption of fish. I want to make Mauritius a healthy country where people will have more fish to eat which is good for health. We are working upon that at my Ministry and definitely we will come forward with a serious plan after this Budget.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No, no, I think we should pass on to the next question. Hon. Barbier, next question! We have canvassed the issue!

28.04.2015

FISHERMEN INVESTMENT TRUST - SHAREHOLDING

(No. B/346) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Fishermen Investment Trust, he will for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to where matters stand in respect of -

- (a) the shareholding thereof;
- (b) the amount invested therein;
- (c) how the interests accrued are distributed, and
- (d) the mechanism put in place in regard to the shares of the fishers who have passed away.

(Withdrawn)

MAURITIAN EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE – FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS

(No. B/347) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Mauritian Exclusive Economic Zone, he will state the number and types of foreign fishing vessels which have been exploiting same, over the past five years, indicating in each case, the -

- (a) size thereof, and
- (b) fees paid to the Republic of Mauritius in respect thereof.

(Withdrawn)

28.04.2015

MAHEBOURG - AQUACULTURE PROJECT

(No. B/348) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Aquaculture Project of Pointe aux Feuilles, in Mahebourg, he will state the quantity of fish produced, over the past five years, indicating the –

- (a) quantity thereof sold on the local and on the foreign markets, respectively, and
- (b) approximate amount of income generated in connection therewith.

(Withdrawn)

28.04.2015

ST BRANDON – HELIPAD

(No. B/314) Mr S. Rutnah (Third Member for Piton & Rivière du Rempart) asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the helipad in St Brandon, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Outer Island Development Corporation, information as to –

- (a) if a tender exercise was carried out at national or international level for the construction thereof;
- (b) the name of the contractor thereof;
- (c) the start and completion dates thereof;
- (d) the construction cost thereof, and
- (e) the date when a helicopter last landed and took off thereat.

The Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands (Mr P. Koonjoo): Madam Speaker, with your permission, I will reply to this question.

The Outer Islands Development Corporation has nothing to do with the helipad at Saint Brandon. A representative from the Outer Islands Development Corporation formed part of the committee on the helipad. The client was the Police, and the Consultant was the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport.

I have been informed by the Commissioner of Police that a helipad has been constructed at St. Brandon, so that search and rescue operation can be carried out effectively in the region.

As regards part (a) of the question, the tender exercise, through open advertised bidding, was carried out nationally and not internationally, and contractors were invited to submit their bids during period 05 July 2012 and 22 August 2012.

As regards part (b) of the question, on 24 October 2012, the Bid Evaluation Committee awarded the contract to Vasant Enterprise Ltd represented by Mr. C. Rambarran, Managing Director.

As far as part (c) is concerned, the construction of the helipad started on Monday 08 July 2013 and was completed on 16 May 2014. On the same day, it was handed over to the National

Coast Guard, St. Brandon.

As regards part (d) of the question, the construction cost of the helipad amounted to Rs22,384,462.50.

As regards part (e) of the question, only one helicopter went there once. It was helicopter Chetak of Indian Naval Ship Sukanya, which landed there on 17 November 2014, and it took off on the same day.

Mr Rutnah: I am grateful to the hon. Minister for the reply, as now we know that the Ministry of Public Infrastructure was responsible. Can the hon. Minister state, with regard to Vasant Enterprise Ltd., which is owned by Mr Rambarran, whether he is from a locality called Ecroignard in the East of the country?

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Rutnah, I don't think the hon. Minister will be able to reply to this question.

Mr Koonjoo: I don't have the answer.

Mr Rutnah: Madam Speaker, in relation to...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No cross talking, please!

(Interruptions)

Allow the hon. Member to ask his question!

Mr Collendavelloo: The hon. Leader of the Opposition cannot call the hon. Member a 'til'esprit'! And we know what he means when he says 'til'esprit'! We know what is the meaning of this!

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, did you say that?

(Interruptions)

Hon. Leader of the Opposition, did you say that? Are you prepared...

(Interruptions)

The hon. Member does not mind!

(Interruptions)

He doesn't mind!

Mr Rutnah: Can the hon. Minister state if the helicopter Dhruv, in a state of emergency, happens to land on that helipad, whether it will be able to come back to Mauritius with, for example, an injured soldier or an injured police officer?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I am sorry, I can't reply to this question. I am not a pilot. I am not an engineer. It is difficult for me to answer this question.

(Interruptions)

Mr Rutnah: Is the hon. Minister aware that there is no provision for refuelling at that helipad?

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker, that's true.

Mr Rutnah: Can the hon. Minister state whether, when the bid was allocated, there a committee set up to ascertain the competence of that company, if they have the ability to construct helipad or tarmac, for example?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I am sorry, I don't have the information, but I will look into it definitely.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Dr.Joomaye!

(Interruptions)

No, there was no question, hon. Koonjoo!

(Interruptions)

Please! Hon. Koonjoo, there was no question, please sit down! We have passed on to the next question.

28.04.2015

SEA CUCUMBER - EXPLOITATION

(No. B/349) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the sea cucumber, he will state where matters stand as to the exploitation thereof, respectively, in

- (a) mainland Mauritius;
- (b) Rodrigues, and
- (c) Agalega.

(Withdrawn)

01.09.2015

FISHERMEN INVESTMENT TRUST - SHAREHOLDING

(No. B/403) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Fishermen Investment Trust, he will for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to where matters stand in respect of –

- (a) the shareholding thereof;
- (b) the amount invested therein;
- (c) how the interests accrued are distributed and
- (d) the mechanism put in place in regard to the shares of the fishers who have passed away.

Reply: With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the authorised share capital of the Fishermen Investment Trust (FIT) is Rupees 65 Million, made up of 6.5 million shares of 10 rupees each as follows -

- 1.5 million shares fully subscribed by Government; and
- 5 million shares to be subscribed at such time, in such manner and by such persons as the Board may determine.

The Government had subscribed 1,500,000 shares in the Fishermen Investment Trust (FIT) on 27 June 2007 at a par value of Rs10.00 per share for an amount of Rupees Fifteen Million. In line with Government's decision, the Board of the FIT at a meeting held on 18 December 2007 decided to allocate 300 shares freely to each registered fisherman of Mauritius and Rodrigues. The effective date of the allocation was 31 January 2006. As at date, a total of 4,461 fishermen from Mauritius and Rodrigues have been allocated their shares, for a total value of Rs13,383,000.

With regard to part (b) of the question, an amount of Rs15 m. was allocated to FIT in 2007. An additional amount of Rs2 m. was injected in 2011.

With regard to part (c) of the question, owing to losses incurred by FIT, no interest and/or dividend has been distributed to its shareholders.

With regard to part (d) of the question, section 11(3)(b) of the Fishermen Investment Trust Act 2006 provides for the transfer of shares by way of succession on the death of a shareholder.

**MAURITIAN EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE - FOREIGN FISHING
VESSELS**

(No. B/404) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Mauritian Exclusive Economic Zone, he will state the number and types of foreign fishing vessels which have been exploiting same over the past five years, indicating in each case, the –

- (a) size of the vessel, and
- (b) fees paid to the Mauritian Government in respect thereof.

Reply: I am tabling the information on the number, types and size of foreign fishing vessels that have been fishing in the Mauritian Exclusive Economic Zone for the past five years as well as the fees that have been paid to the Mauritian Government in respect thereof.

MAHEBOURG - AQUACULTURE PROJECT

(No. B/405) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Aquaculture Project of Pointe aux Feuilles, in Mahebourg, he will state the quantity of fish produced over the past five years, indicating the -

- (a) quantity thereof sold on the local and on the foreign markets, respectively, and
- (b) approximate amount of income generated in connection therewith.

Reply: I am tabling the information in respect of the Aquaculture Project of Pointe aux Feuilles in Mahebourg.

SEA CUCUMBER - EXPLOITATION

(No. B/406) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether in regard to the sea cucumber, he will state where matters stand as to the exploitation thereof respectively in –

- (a) mainland Mauritius;
- (b) Rodrigues, and
- (c) Agalega.

Reply: The exploitation of sea cucumber in Mauritius, Rodrigues and Agalega has been banned since 01 October 2009 up to 29 February 2016 in order to allow for the replenishment of the stock.

An assessment of the stock of sea cucumber will be carried out in October 2015 with a view to enabling my Ministry to take a decision as to whether to maintain or lift the ban.

In parallel, my Ministry in its strategy to develop aquaculture, is encouraging promoters to engage in farming or the culture of sea cucumbers.

08.09.15

PORT LOUIS & ROCHE BOIS - FISHERMEN - MARINE POLLUTION

(No. B/437) Mr A. Ameer Meea(Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishermen of the Port Louis and Roche Bois regions, he will state if he has been informed of the inconveniences they are facing due to marine pollution being caused by the port development works and, if so, indicate if consideration will be given for the setting up of a ministerial committee to look thereinto with a view to finding solutions thereto and, if not, why not.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA) that it is fully complying with the EIA Licence for the extension and strengthening of the Mauritius Container Terminal Quay Project. Furthermore, MPA is not in the presence of any complaint lodged by any fisherman on any pollution caused to the environment by the port development activities.

However, during the execution of the port development project, the fishermen have made representations that their fishing activities are being affected. In this respect, discussions were held between the MPA and the fishermen and it was agreed that their representations would be referred to a mediation/arbitration process. The former Chief Justice Mr B. Sik Yuen was appointed as Mediator/Arbitrator and a Mediation/Arbitration Agreement was duly signed between the parties on 07 July 2014. Mediation was not successful and it was therefore agreed to proceed for arbitration which was scheduled for November 2015.

However, around June 2015 some 220 fishermen out of the 278 registered fishermen who had signed the Mediation/Arbitration Agreement signified their intention to quit the arbitration process.

The fishermen contacted me. At their request, I chaired a meeting with the *Association des Pêcheurs* on 14 May 2015 in the presence of representatives of the MPA, Ministry of

Tourism and External Communications and also the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and Beach Management.

In the light of discussions, I was informed by the *Association des Pêcheurs* about a petition signed by some 250 fishermen to withdraw from the arbitration.

My Ministry held a further meeting with the *Association des Pêcheurs* on 29 July 2015. During that meeting, the fishermen requested for a speedy settlement of the issues involved.

Further discussions were held with the representatives of the fishermen and an agreement was reached between the MPA and the fishermen. Discussions are still going on and I learned even today that they have almost arrived at a conclusion, at an agreement, and maybe in a couple of days they will be given a substantial compensation.

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In my question, I asked the hon. Minister whether he is aware of the marine pollution caused by the port development and, whether consideration will be given for the setting up of a ministerial committee. I did not receive any answer through this specific question.

Madam Speaker: If the hon. Minister has answered...

(Interruptions)

He has answered.

Mr Ameer Meea: Madam Speaker, my question is specific to the issue of marine pollution. EIA is something different.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Minister, maybe you can repeat what you have just said about marine pollution.

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker. For the information of the hon. Member - I repeat - I said that MPA is not in the presence of any complaint lodged by any fisherman on any pollution caused by the environment.

(Interruptions)

Mr Ameer Meea: The hon. Minister said that he received representations.

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, I met the fishermen. I discussed with them.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister, the negotiations now is between only those who are registered fishermen. There are around 29 fishermen, people who are earning their living by fishing and they have produced certain evidence to show that they are fishermen but,

unfortunately, they are not registered. The mediation is not on because the terms of reference of that mediation were only for those who were registered. Now that there is direct negotiation between the fishermen and the Ministry, can I ask the hon. Minister whether he is prepared to, at least, listen to these 29 people who were earning their living by fishing, but are not registered, so that they can have a compensation?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the negotiations have been going for more than one year.

Ultimately, the fishermen themselves have agreed on this agreement for a compensation. I said just now that they have already agreed and, maybe, in a couple of days they are getting the money. The hon. Member is asking me to see the persons who are not registered as fishermen; I don't have any problem to see them.

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

Mr Bérenger: Just on a point of clarification! I heard the hon. Minister refer to *l'Association des Pêcheurs* as representing the fishermen. Now, the organisation existing and claiming to represent them is *le Syndicat des Pêcheurs*. Are we talking about the same thing? Because, the official name is *Syndicat des Pêcheurs* and the hon. Minister has mentioned *l'Association des Pêcheurs*. Is it the same organisation and is the hon. Minister giving the wrong name?

Mr Koonjoo: I presume it is the same association, Madam Speaker.

Mr Ameer Meea: The hon. Minister stated that an agreement is being reached; may we know the quantum, the amount that would be paid to each fisherman?

Mr Koonjoo: To answer to the question of the hon. Member, there will be a substantial compensation.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Barbier!

Mr Barbier: The hon. Minister mentioned that 278 fishers are concerned with the problem. May I know from the hon. Minister whether it includes fishers from Tombeau Bay, Roche Bois, Les Salines, Sable Noir, Grande Rivière and Pointe aux Sables or only parts of these regions? Because all these regions are concerned with the port development actually. Furthermore, I have a question which I don't think we will have time...

Madam Speaker: Hon. Barbier...

Mr Barbier: May I ask the hon. Minister, at least, to clarify out of these 278, which regions are concerned with the compensation?

Madam Speaker: You will note that the question is in regard to fishermen of Port Louis and Roche Bois regions.

Mr Koonjoo: I need notice of this question, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Uteem!

08.09.15

FISHERMEN – OFF LAGOON FISHING

(No. B/470) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the developments in the port, he will state the medium and long term policies Government proposes to adopt to support the fishers of the regions of Tombeau Bay, Roche Bois, Les Salines, Bain des Dames, Sables Noir, Grand River North West and Pointe aux Sables, indicating if he will consider the possibility of giving a substantial compensation to those who would opt to quit the business.

Reply: It is the policy of my Ministry to encourage and empower fishermen to operate off lagoon. In this context, my Ministry has embarked on a programme to assist fishermen to take advantage of a scheme whereby 50% grant up to a maximum of Rs200,000 is given to fishermen for the purchase of canotte (fishing boat) which would allow them to go fishing off lagoon.

Furthermore, my Ministry has set 7 Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) in the regions between Trou aux Biches and Albion to enable fishermen to increase their catch.

Most of the Fishermen from Baie du Tombeau to Pointe aux sables have been trained in new fishing techniques to enable them to engage in off lagoon fishing.

With regard to compensation to those who would opt to quit the business, there is no scheme to compensate fishermen who opt to relinquish their fishermen cards, except for net fishers.

I wish to inform the House that since 2006 to date, some 510 fishermen have surrendered their fishermen cards without any compensation.

06.10.15

BLUE ECONOMY - JOB CREATION

(No. B/651) Mr G. Lesjongard(Second Member for Savanne& Black River)asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, MarineResources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the blue economy, he will state if a Blue Growth Study has been conducted to -

- (a) assess the impact thereof on growth and job creation potential and the dynamics for research and development to deliver technology improvements and innovations, and
- (b) identify marine and maritime resources and the potential of each activity thereof.

(Withdrawn)

13.10.15

MARITIME LABOUR CONVENTION 2006 - RATIFICATION

(No. B/683) Mr S. Mohamed(First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East)asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, MarineResources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 which was ratified by the

Republic of Mauritius on 30 May 2014, he will state where matters stand as to the implementation thereof.

Reply: I am informed that a gap analysis covering the requirements under the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 had been prepared and finalised in April 2014.

On 16 April 2014, Mr G. Seegobin, former Superintendent of Shipping, was appointed Consultant to draft the Maritime Labour Convention Bill.

Subsequently, a National Tripartite Workshop on the ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 was organised with the International Labour Organisation from 12-14 May 2014.

Furthermore, during the period of April to June 2014, seven meetings were held with representatives of relevant Ministries and the Consultant to discuss the first draft.

A second draft was submitted by the Consultant on 14 January 2015 which was examined by my Ministry and circulated to relevant Ministries for their views and comments.

A meeting was held on 05 April 2015 between officers of my Ministry and the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate of the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations Employment and Training to discuss issues related to the Occupational Safety and Health and Accident Prevention which had been included in the draft Bill.

The Consultant submitted a third draft on 23 September 2015 and a meeting under the aegis of my Ministry with Consultant and Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Institutional Reforms was conducted on 28 September 2015 to finalise the section relating to Social Security.

Technicians of my Ministry attended two meetings of the Advisory Council for Occupational Safety and Health at the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations Employment and Training on 20 April and 05 October 2015. The objective of the meetings were to discuss and give clarifications to members on the occupational safety and health part of the proposed legislation.

Once the third draft has been thoroughly examined by all the relevant stakeholders, it will be submitted to the State Law Office for final vetting before the end of the year.

MARITIME TRAINING ACADEMY - TRAINERS/INSTRUCTORS

(No. B/684) Mr S. Mohamed (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer

Islands whether, in regard to the Maritime Training Academy of Mauritius, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the number of –

- (a) trainers/instructors posted thereat;
- (b) persons trained thereat in 2015 in the field of safety, and
- (c) persons trained to work on cruise ships, over the period January 2015 to date.

Reply: The Economic Mission Statement of the Rt. hon. Prime Minister has highlighted the creation of 25, 000 jobs in the Ocean Economy over the next 5 years, out of which, it is estimated that some 20,000 jobs will come from the Maritime Sector.

The Maritime Sector is very promising in terms of job creation. According to information gathered from stakeholders, there is a potential yearly demand for some 5,000 job seekers to work onboard fishing vessels, cargo vessels, tankers and cruise/passenger vessels.

In the course of my intervention on Budget 2015-2016, I announced two major policy decisions in order to maximise employment opportunities in the Maritime Sector, namely -

- a. the training capacity of the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy, presently the sole provider of training of seafarers, will be increased from 200 to 2000 yearly, that is, by ten-fold, and
- b. opening up the market of training of seafarers to allow private institutions to dispense approved courses so as to fill the training gap of 3,000 trainees yearly.

Regarding part (a) of the question, I am informed that the number of trainers dispensing courses at the MMTA stands at 19 as at date, compared to 11 in 2014, that is, an increase of 72 percent.

Regarding part (b) and part (c) of the question, I would like to clarify for the benefit of the House that any person who would like to work on board cruise/passenger vessels would have to follow these courses -

- (a) Basic Safety Training;
- (b) Crowd Management;
- (c) Crisis Management and Human Behaviour Training, and
- (d) Proficiency in Security Awareness.

The MMTA has, from January 2015 to date trained 524 persons in these courses, which includes 426 in Basic Safety.

The 426 persons who have followed the Basic Safety Training have also completed the other three courses, which now make them eligible to serve on cruise/passenger vessels.

13.10.15

FISHERS - COMPENSATION

(No. B/704) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishers of Baie du Tombeau, Roche Bois, Bain des Dames, Sables Noir, Grand River North West and Pointe aux Sables affected by the developments in the Port Louis Harbour, he will give a list of those who are eligible for compensation, indicating –

- (a) the sum payable to each one of them;
- (b) those in respect of whom the payment thereof has already been effected, and
- (c) whether, as was the case in the north, those who are regular and active but not possessing the fisherman professional card will also be taken into consideration for the payment thereof.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, with your permission, I shall reply to this question.

With regard to parts (a) and (b) of the question, I am tabling the information requested by the hon. Member.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (c) of the question, I am informed by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands that the case in the north relates to a particular incident whereby vessel MV Angel was grounded off at Poudre d'Or on 08 August 2011. The insurance company of the vessel, Skuld Insurance Company, paid the relevant compensation.

I am informed by the Director General, Mauritius Ports Authority that the only fishermen have made representations in connection with the MCT Extension Works. A Joint Technical Committee comprising representatives of the MPA, the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands and the legal representative of the fisher-people has had several meetings since October 2013. The Committee has agreed that only registered fishermen shall be considered in the dispute between MPA and the fisher-people.

Subsequently, the MPA and the fisher-people have agreed that a mediator/ arbitrator be appointed to resolve the dispute.

Accordingly, on 07 July 2014, a mediation/arbitration Agreement was signed between the parties and the former Chief Justice.

However, as a mediation/arbitration process was not successful, the MPA and the fisher-people agreed to holding fresh negotiation. An agreement, in September 2014, was reached on the amount of compensation to be paid.

Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the House that when the MPA effected the dredging works of the English Channel in 2006, only the fisher-people were compensated. The same principle has again been adopted.

Mr Barbier: This is why I am making a plea in favour of those fishers who do not have their professional cards and they are in waiting for years, but they are doing their job, they are having their living out of fishing. Unfortunately, they are not considered for compensation when all these mediations and discussions have been going on. So, may I ask the hon. Ag. Prime Minister - now we have a new Government, we have a Minister today who understands the problem of the fishers – whether he will consider the possibility of considering the *grievs* of these fishermen not having professional card also for compensation?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, this matter has already been dealt with. Some 270 people have been paid about Rs40 m. - quite a high number. I must say that nearly all of them obtained a sum of Rs150,000 each, which is much more than the amount that was paid in 2006, as I am sure the hon. Member knows. Now, this has been finalised; but I know also that there are 80 fishermen who are being assessed at the moment with a view to receiving their professional fisherman card. If they do receive this card, obviously then, for any other future compensation for further works or whatever else is done with the development in the Port, they will be included.

MrBarbier: The Ag. Prime Minister is talking about 'further' compensation, not the ongoing one. My plea is for the ongoing one. So, may I have a clear-cut answer, whether they are going to be considered or not?

The Deputy Prime Minister: In fact, there is no ongoing one. The previous fishermen have just been paid, it is being finalised. Payments have been made to 270 or so fishermen. Only about 10 or 15 have not accepted the amount of money, but that has been paid and it is quite a high sum, Madam Speaker. What I am saying is, this is finished, let us look now to the future and any further work that will be done and on how all the people can be compensated, if need be.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Barbier !

20.10.15

OCTOPUS FISHING SEASON - YIELDING

(No. B/717) Mr J. Leopold (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, following the closure of the Octopus Fishing Season 2015 in part of mainland Mauritius, he will state the outcome thereof in terms of the yielding of octopus.

MrKoonjoo: Madam Speaker, I am informed that a two-month voluntary closure of the octopus fishery on a pilot basis was launched on 10 August 2015. The closure applied only to Le Morne and Souillac regions.

The pilot project was initiated by the Indian Ocean Commission through its SmartFish and Biodiversity Projects with the assistance of the European Union and in collaboration with the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society and officers of my Ministry.

The closure of the octopus fishery was implemented after the carrying out of an awareness campaign by the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society with the fishers of the abovementioned regions.

The closure was lifted on 10 October 2015. According to records, the five-day period from 10 to 14 October 2015, a total of about 400 Kg of octopus was captured in Le Morne, Baie du Cap and Riambel, compared to about 60 Kg for the month of June 2015 and about 90 Kg for the month of July 2015 in these same regions.

In view of the very encouraging results obtained during the pilot project, my Ministry has decided to introduce legislation to provide for a close season for octopus fishery from August to October as from next year. In this connection, I have given instructions to officers of the Fisheries Protection Services of my Ministry to carry out an awareness campaign among fishers islandwide.

This is being done in the interest of both the fisher community and the population at large.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Leopold!

Mr Leopold: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the hon. Minister for coming up with a legislation. In Rodrigues, we have been doing the closing season for four years now and it is ruled by a regulation so, if the hon. Minister comes with a regulation and we have a regulation in Rodrigues, will they not conflict with each other? Is the hon. Minister going to consult the Local Authorities of Rodrigues so that there is no conflict between the two laws as we are in the same Republic?

MrKoonjoo: Obviously yes, Madam.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo!

MrJhugroo: Madam Speaker, being given that this has been a success for the past four years in Rodrigues and the same has been tried here on a pilot basis, and the Minister is coming with a legislation, can I ask the hon. Minister whether the same will be applied for Agalega and the outer islands?

MrKoonjoo: Naturally yes, Madam.

MrGanoo: The hon. Minister mentioned only two localities and he just praised the results that have been obtained. Does he intend to extend that ban on octopus to other areas in Mauritius also or will he restrict himself to the two localities?

MrKoonjoo: I just said, Madam, that it will be taken everywhere in Mauritius.

Mr Leopold: So, during the closing season in Mauritius, were there any fraudulent operations that were done and, if yes, is the hon. Minister thinking of involving the National Coast Guard in the surveillance of this fishing activity?

MrKoonjoo: Madam Speaker, as far as I know, I don't think that there has been any fraudulent exercise in Mauritius. I don't know much about Rodrigues, but if there is anything like that, naturally it will concern both places to take care of.

MrJhuboo: Since the hon. Minister will come with a piece of legislation, has he thought of a compensation for the local fishermen during the closure period?

MrKoonjoo: I don't think this has been done in Rodrigues; fishers in Rodrigues are *picker ourites* and they are done...

(Interruptions)

They are done there by the ladies, fisherwomen in Rodrigues. Unfortunately, we don't have *picker ourites* in Mauritius, but I presume that ...

(Interruptions)

I presume that we will take everything into consideration before putting forward a legislation.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ganoo!

Mr Ganoo: From a report of the COI, I can see that “*la lutte contre le braconnage a été un défi majeur des éditions précédentes* » and the authorities in Rodrigues decided « *d’impliquer 200 pêcheurs pour rejoindre l’équipe de surveillance locale.* » So, can I ask the hon. Minister also – I do not blame him for that, he cannot say whether there has been *braconnage* in Mauritius – to see to it that we can involve the local fishermen as part of the *surveillance* when the ban will be operational?

MrKoonjoo: Yes, Madam, I will see to it.

Madam Speaker: I suspend the sitting for one and a half hours.

03.11.15

ST BRANDON ISLANDS - FISHING LICENCES

(No. B/769) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne& Black River)asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the St Brandon Islands, he will state the -

- (a) number of fishing licences granted therefor, indicating the names of the companies granted therewith;
- (b) status of the fish reserves thereat, and
- (c) policy of Government in relation to the fragile eco-system prevailing thereat, indicating the measures taken for the preservation thereof, if any.

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, as regard to part (a) of the question, as at date 13 licenses have been issued to 7 companies, namely -

- i. Raphael Fishing Co Ltd;
- ii. Djasazee;
- iii. Babul and Sons Fishing Co Ltd;
- iv. HassenTaherSeafoods Ltd;
- v. Med Fishing Cooperative Society Ltd;
- vi. Sea Lord Fishing Company, and
- vii. Ocean Catch Ltd.

With respect to part (b), there is, at present, no fishing reserve or fish reserve in the waters of St. Brandon.

With regard to part (c), the policy of this Government is the sustainable management of the fisheries resources and associated ecosystems.

In this context, the following measures are being adopted in St. Brandon -

- i. limited entry and licensing system are in place for all fishing operations;
- ii. allocation of catch quota to companies;
- iii. all fishing boats and vessels report to the Fisheries Monitoring Centre and the National Coast Guard through the Vessel Monitoring System;

- iv. all safety and security measures are undertaken by the vessel operator;
- v. use of selected gear for fishing activities in the inshore waters of St. Brandon, and
- vi. regular inspections are carried out by enforcement officers to ensure that all conditions specified in the fishing licence are adhered to.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, a new Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill is being finalised, which will provide for better management of the ecosystem in the Maritime Zone of Mauritius including St. Brandon.

Furthermore, catching of marine turtles, mammals and berried lobsters in the waters of St. Brandon are not authorized. Besides, a ban on fishing of sea cucumbers is in place since 2009 and will be in operation till February 2016.

Additionally, visits to St. Brandon are restricted. A quota of 200 persons per year has been imposed in respect of foreign nationals, subject to clearance from the Prime Minister's Office.

Moreover, a set of conditions applies for pleasure craft operators and tourists in order to ensure least disruption of the ecosystem of the Island. These conditions, inter-alia, include -

- a. avoidance of spillage of fuel and oil, and
- b. prevention of damage to the plants and animals species found on the island.

Mr Bérenger: The question relates to St Brandon. Can I ask the hon. Minister, there was a problem concerning the lease, the present leaseholders had argued in Court that their lease was eternal, there was a dispute. Has this lease issue been settled?

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this has been amicably settled between the Government of Mauritius and the people who are asking for the lease.

Mr Bérenger: As far as sea cucumbers are concerned, can I know whether – because I am given to understand at one point that it had been completely exploited and therefore a ban was put by the previous Government - the ban has been enforced? Is it still enforced and what is the situation? Has there been an improvement in the population of sea cucumbers?

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is a ban on the sea cucumbers and I said it will last till February next year. The ban was imposed and the Leader of the Opposition is perfectly right to say that there was some *pillage* de sea cucumbers (barbaras) in those regions. The ban has been staying there. We are working on whether to lift up the ban completely or to lift up partially because there is a big demand for the sea cucumbers not only in Mauritius but all around the world. Its price is very high and it is very good for certain people –*sa pa putoisa, puNavinsa!*

(Interruptions)

Yes, we are working upon that and we will come soon with whether we are going to lift completely the ban or partially. There was an abuse, but, for the time being, I can assure the House that everything is in order and perfect.

Mr Jhuboo: Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. The Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Bill was adopted a few weeks ago and mention was made that special reserves - an islet of utmost ecological importance would be created, protected and preserved. Does the hon. Minister think that it is high time that we come with a proper legislation to declare the archipelago of St Brandon as a Marine Protected Sanctuary?

Mr Koonjoo: I know there is some problem there Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and I have got news that there are places where the environment is very bad because of the mischief of some fishermen working there. I am planning, perhaps in a couple of weeks, to go there and see visually, as I went to Agaléga, how things stand and I can assure...

(Interruptions)

I am not taking the sea cucumbers as such!

We will see for ourselves how things stand and come back, and naturally we will take proper actions.

10.11.15

BLUE ECONOMY - JOB CREATION

(No. B/848) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Savanne& Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Blue Economy, he will state if a Blue Growth Study has been conducted to -

(a) assess the impact thereof on growth and job creation potential and the dynamics for research and development to deliver technology improvements and innovations, and

(b) identify marine and maritime resources and the potential of each activity thereof.

Reply: This Government is fully aware of the vast potential of our Maritime Zone of 2.3 million square kilometres. In this connection, Government, in its Programme 2015-2019, commits itself to -

“making the ocean economy an important industry to sustain economic diversification, job creation and wealth generation”.

My Ministry was set up only in December 2014. However, several sectoral studies and surveys have previously been carried out in the areas of ocean economy, *inter-alia*, by the Mauritius Research Council, the Board of Investment and the University of Mauritius.

These studies show that our Maritime Zone abounds in marine resources and offers considerable opportunities for Mauritius to develop its ocean economy.

Along this line, Government has pooled all ocean activities under one roof and further in June 2015, set up the National Ocean Council, which is the main driving force for identifying and realising ocean-related projects of this Ministry.

Furthermore, within the National Ocean Council 7 distinct clusters have been created namely -

- (a) Business Facilitation;
- (b) Port & Shipping Development;
- (c) Regulatory Framework and Institution Building;
- (d) Fisheries & Aquaculture;

(e) Seabed Exploration, DOWA, Minerals, Renewable Energy, Marine Research;

(f) Capacity Building, Employment and Training Development, and

(g) Environment Protection, Governance & Sustainable Development.

Within the next 6 months, each cluster will carry out a SWOT analysis '*afin de faire un constat de la presente situation*'; to identify, recommend projects and action plans and oversee their implementation to promote national wealth and employment creation.

Side by side, my Ministry is exploring possibilities of technical assistance and cooperation from friendly countries like India, UK, Germany, Australia and China.

I am confident that with the current initiatives underway, considerable progress will be made in the next few years towards meeting the stated objectives of this Government as announced in the Government Programme 2015-2019 and the Economic Mission Statement.

17.11.15

MAURITIUS PRIDE - SALE

(No. B/889) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg&PlaineMagnien) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Mauritius Pride, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited, information as to the -

- (a) date of purchase and purchase price thereof;
- (b) number of times it underwent repairs, indicating in each case -
 - (i) which entity/contractor carried out the repair works, and
 - (ii) the total cost of repairs, and
- (c) date of sale thereof, indicating the -
 - (i) mode of sale thereof, and
 - (ii) selling price thereof.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, regarding part (a) of the question, I have been informed by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited that the M/V Mauritius Pride was purchased by the Government of Mauritius on 19 July 1990 at the price of Rs309 m.

Regarding part (b) of the question, the M/V Mauritius Pride underwent the dry-docking and major repairs every two years to renew its passenger certificate and other surveys to ensure its compliance with IMO, that is, International Maritime Organisation rules and regulations. Since 1990, the M/V Mauritius Pride underwent dry-docking and major repairs for 11 times and the different contractors were Taylor Smith, Elgin Brown & Hamer (Pty) Ltd, Chantier Naval de l’Ocean Indien (CNOI) and Dormac (Pty) Ltd.

As per MSCL available records, the total cost of dry-docking and major repairs incurred and the awarded contractors since 2004 onwards were as follows –

Year	Contractor	Total dry-docking and Major repairs (Rs)
2004	Chantier Naval de l’Ocean Indien (CNOI)	13.6 m.
2006	Elgin Brown & Hamer (Pty) Ltd (South Africa)	25.2 m.
2008	Elgin Brown & Hamer (Pty) Ltd	34.5 m.
2010	Dormac (Pty) Ltd (South Africa)	36.1 m.
2012	Elgin Brown & Hamer (Pty) Ltd	55.2 m. paid out of the invoice figure of 70.2 m.

Information regarding cost of repairs prior to 2004 is not available at the MSCL.

Mr Koonjoo: As far as part (c) of the question is concerned, a sale notice of MV Mauritius Pride was issued on 09 July 2014 and was published in four local newspapers including Consulates/Embassies through the Parent Ministry and the deadline for submission of offers was fixed on 11 August 2014.

The MSCL Board at its special meeting held on 13 August 2014 approved the sale of M/V Mauritius Pride to RJ Maritime Consultancy Limited being the highest bidder at the quoted price of USD 1,080,000. net of any brokerage commission and the transaction was effected on 01 September 2014.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether he is satisfied with the course of action taken by his Ministry regarding the sale of MV Mauritius Pride?

Mr Koonjoo: Not at all Madam.

Mr Leopold: I would like to ask the hon. Minister where matters stand with the replacement of Mauritius Pride and, as he may know, the contract for MV Anna is over now. How is he coping with that?

Mr Koonjoo: As far as MV Anna is concerned, Madam Speaker, the contract has been renewed for another three months and the last date was 12.

Madam Speaker: No cross-talking please. Address the Chair.

Mr Koonjoo: So, we have three months and, in the meantime, we are planning to find another vessel.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Dr.Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: The hon. Minister has given a list where the Mauritius Pride was dry dock. Is the hon. Minister aware that the Mauritius Pride was dry dock in Singapore? Can he look into it because there was no tender? I did ask a question two years ago and there was some wrong doing at that time. Will the hon. Minister see to it what happened when it went to dry dock in Singapore?

Mr Koonjoo: I will definitely look into it, Madam Speaker.

Mr Jhugroo: Being given that the Minister, in his reply, said that he is not satisfied with the sale of MV Mauritius Pride, will he consider sending this request to the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms to carry a Financial Audit with regard to the sales?

Mr Koonjoo: Yes. Madam Speaker, the request has already been made in the past and we are waiting for a reaction from the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Jhugroo!

MAURITIUS SHIPPING CORPORATION - RECRUITMENT

(No. B/890) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg&PlaineMagnien) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited, he will, for the benefit of the

House, obtain therefrom, a list of the employees recruited thereat over the period July 2005 to December 2014, indicating in each case the –

- (a) post occupied;
- (b) mode of recruitment;
- (c) qualifications held and;
- (d) terms and conditions of employment, including the -
 - (i) salary and other benefits drawn, and
 - (ii) if the employment is on contractual or permanent basis.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited is a State Owned Private Limited Company. It is governed by the Companies Act of 2001 and has a board of Directors comprising 10 Directors including a Chairman appointed by the shareholders. I wish to inform the House that the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited is currently undergoing a restructuring exercise and that the release of confidential and sensitive information may jeopardise the exercise. Although cautions related to internal affairs of the State owned companies should not be answered in a spirit of transparency and for the benefit of the House, I am nevertheless providing the following information submitted by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited -

- (a) Since July 2005, 31 recruitments have been carried out by the Company;
- (b) Recruitments have been as follows –
 - (i) three officers at Senior Technical Positions have been recruited through head hunting due to scarcity areas;
 - (ii) sea drivers living in the vicinity of the former Chairpersons whose contracts have not been renewed;
 - (iii) nine posts have been filled either through advertisement or list of employees provided by the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training, and
 - (iv) 16 persons have been recruited for minor grade post on a casual basis and thereafter confirm on a permanent basis.

As regards part (c) and (d) of the question, information is being compiled and will be tabled in the National Assembly as soon as practically possible.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister confirm to the House whether most of the recruits come from the Constituency of the former Minister?

Mr Koonjoo: This is a fact, Madam Speaker, and I have already mentioned this in Parliament some time back.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister confirm to the House whether most of the recruits have not the required qualifications and, if so, can the hon. Minister consider sending this to the Minister of Good Governance for enquiry.

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: This is another truth, Madam Speaker. Most of the people employed don't even have a CPE and it is shocking to know that the people without any certificate are drawing a salary of about more than Rs20,000 and some people who simply won SC Certificates are drawing a salary of about Rs75,000 to Rs100,000. So, I am looking forward when the restructuring will be done and we will definitely look into it. As I have said, we have already sent the file to my good friend the hon. Minister of Good Governance, we let him finish with the big problems first of all and we will take our turn.

Madam Speaker: Last question, hon. Jhugroo!

(Interruptions)

Order please!

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister confirm whether one Mr D. K. the Chief Manager of MSC who is the brother in law of the former Minister has got five automatic promotions since his recruitment despite his frequent absences from his office?

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker. I think that was the trend in the last Government.

MAURITIUS SHIPPING CORPORATION - MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS - CONTRACT

(No. B/891) Mr P. Jhugroo(Second Member for Mahebourg&PlaineMagnien) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited, he will, for the benefit of the

House, obtain therefrom, a list of the medical practitioners whose services have been retained thereat, indicating in each case the –

- (a) mode of selection thereof;
- (b) date of retention of services;
- (c) duration thereof, and
- (d) total amount of money paid out thereto, giving a breakdown thereof.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Limited that it keeps a pool of Medical Practitioners and Sea Farers for which they are selected for short term contracts on a needs basis. Their monthly salaries range from Rs35,000 to Rs55,000 per month depending on experience and availability. Prior to the year 2014, hiring of Medical Practitioners and sea farers was outsourced to *RenaissanceMaritimeLtée*.

I am making arrangement for a copy of the list of Medical Practitioners with relevant details to be tabled.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister inform the House what criterion is being used for the recruitment of these doctors?

Mr Koonjoo: I have just replied Madam Speaker. As such I don't see that there was any advertisement for recruitment of these medical practitioners.

Mr Jhugroo: Being given that we have many qualified doctors who are unemployed, can the hon. Minister give the chance to the doctors who are unemployed to be recruited by MSCL?

Mr Koonjoo: I will look into that matter, Madam Speaker.

29.03.16

LES SALINES - AUCTION FISH MARKET - OPERATION

(No. B/49) **Mr J. Leopold (Second Member for Rodrigues)** asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Auction Fish Market located at Fort Williams, Les Salines, in Port Louis, he will state where matters stand as to the operation thereof, indicating if the premises housing same is being used for the original purpose for which it was built and, if not, indicate the reasons therefor.

(Withdrawn)

29.03.16

BAIN DES DAMES – FISH MORTALITY

(No. B/76) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the thousands of dead fish recently found on the shores at Bain des Dames and in the vicinity thereof, he will state if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto, and if so, indicate the outcome thereof.

Reply: Following the report of dead fish on 17 January 2016 in the region of Bain des Dames, officers of my Ministry carried out a site visit in the area.

Fish mortality was noted within an area enclosed by a bund constructed by the Mauritius Port Authority. About 5 000 dead fish comprising different sizes and species including juveniles were found ashore over a stretch of about 800m.

On the same day of fish mortality, a communiqué was issued on the media prohibiting the public to collect and sell dead fish from the area. Officers of the Fisheries Protection Service (FPS) were on site to prevent members of the public to collect fish for consumption or sale.

Seawater samples were collected and analysed for physico-chemical parameters by officers of the Albion Fisheries Research Centre to look into the cause of fish mortality. The Food Technology Laboratory analysed the dead fish specimen to detect the presence of any pesticide residue.

The collection and the disposal of dead fish were attended to on site by the Mauritius Ports Authority.

The analyses conducted on the seawater samples and observations made indicate that the fish mortality occurred as a consequence of the combined effects of the following factors-

- (i) no flushing of the seawater in that confined area of the harbour;
- (ii) a rise in seawater temperature by 4⁰C above the ambient temperature, which led to a decrease in the level of dissolved oxygen in the seawater;

- (iii) increase in the salinity of sea water by seven (7) Practical Salinity Units, and
- (iv) algal bloom as a result of higher levels of nutrients and their decay which consumed the dissolved oxygen.

However, no pesticide residue was detected in the fish sample.

Monitoring of seawater quality was continued for a period of two weeks after the fish mortality incident. The results of the seawater analyses showed improvement of physico-chemical parameters to normal levels.

LAGOON - FISHING ACTIVITIES

(No. B/77) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to fishing activities in the lagoon, he will state if the abolition thereof is being envisaged and, if so, indicate the reasons therefor.

Reply: With regard to fishing activities in the lagoon, my Ministry is not envisaging in the immediate term the abolition thereof. However, conscious of the fact that the lagoon is being depleted through illegal fishing of juvenile fish, my Ministry is currently implementing a number of measures to encourage the fishermen to operate in the off lagoon areas.

05.04.2016

FISHERS - FISHING CARD

(No. B/134) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishers, he will state the number thereof who are -

- (a) in possession of a valid fishing card, and
- (b) not professionally active.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, with your permission, I am tabling a list of 1,994 fishers who hold a valid fisherman's card, out of which 78 are not professionally active. For those 78, I

can give the breakdown. 32 fishers are on sick leave and receiving social aid. Their fisherman's cards have been retained and they are not receiving bad weather allowance. Three fishers are in jail. Their fisherman's cards have been retained and they are not receiving bad weather allowance.

Eight fishers have been lost at sea, awaiting Police report to delete their names from register. One fisher is untraceable. The fisherman's card is not being stamped and the fisher is not receiving bad weather allowance. The fisherman's card will be cancelled after six months if the fisher does not report to the respective fisheries posts.

Two fishers have proceeded abroad. The fisherman's card is not being stamped and the fisher is not receiving bad weather allowance. The fisherman's card will be cancelled after six months if the fishers do not report to their respective fisheries posts and last, 32 fishers are not fishing. Their cases are being closely monitored with a view to withdrawing their fisherman's card.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Barbier!

Mr Barbier: Madam Speaker, adding to what the hon. Minister just said, there are lots of fishermen who have the fisherman's card but they are not active anymore, they are doing other things. This is the case in my Constituency and I will take only one example at Bain des Dames where we have, maybe, one-third of those who have the fisherman's card who are actually professionally active. While we have other new fishermen who are active - the hon. Minister has got a list - and they are asking for a fisherman's card but, unfortunately, they are waiting for years now. Being given all these information we just have, is it not high time now for the Ministry to act upon it and make justice to those who are actually waiting for a fisherman's card for so long?

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No comments, please!

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, this question was raised last year and I said that we have got about 150 fisherman's cards with the Ministry and that we have started an exercise. A monitoring exercise is on-going for the issue of new fisherman's card for off lagoon fishing. The monitoring exercise is expected to be completed by mid-April, this month. Those who are found

to be eligible for a fisherman's card will have to undergo a medical examination and, thereafter, if found medically fit to fish, follow a training course to be dispensed by my Ministry.

12.04.2016

AGALEGA ISLAND – AIRPORT & JETTY – CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/166) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Agalega Island, he will state –

- (a) where matters stand as to the proposed construction of a new airport and jetty facilities thereat, as announced in the last budget speech, and
- (b) if he will accede to the request of the hon. Member for his Ministry to organize a visit thereto of the elected members of the National Assembly of the constituency of which it is part thereof.

The Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training (Mr S. Callichurn): Madam Speaker, with regard to the proposed construction of a new airport and jetty facilities at Agalega Island, a team of three experts carried out a preliminary visit to Agalega Island and submitted their Initial Assessment Report to the Joint Project Monitoring Committee chaired by the substantive Minister which recommended the appointment of a consultant for detailed site investigations and preparation of a Draft Report Project.

The Joint Project Managing Committee (JPMC) met on 29 February 2016 and the way ahead presented by the Implementing Agency was to carry out detailed site investigations, preparation of DPR and the implementation of plan was ratified by the JPMC during that meeting.

The JPMC further directed the Implementing Agency to formulate Terms of Reference for appointment of a consultant for detailed site and investigation and preparation of Detailed Project Report.

The Draft Terms of Reference was formulated in accordance with the directives of the JPMC and vetted by the Implementing Agency on 16 February 2016.

The modalities of appointment of the consultant who would be undertaking detailed site investigations and formulation of the DPR is underway and this activity is expected to commence as early as possible.

The Ministry, in collaboration with the Outer Island Development Corporation (OICD), is closely monitoring and steering each stage of progress to ensure timely and successful completion of the project. This project will ensure safe and all-round connectivity between mainland Mauritius and Agaléga and will also improve the facilities provided to the people of Agaléga many fold. It would also present new opportunities for further economic and social development of Agaléga Island and the Republic of Mauritius.

As regards part (b) of the question, I very much appreciate and warmly welcome the proposal of the hon. Member to visit Agaléga.

However, I wish to inform all hon. Members of this House that Agaléga Island, being part of the Republic of Mauritius, any Mauritian citizen is free to travel to Agaléga, subject to the availability of passenger seats on board of M/S Mauritius Trochetia travelling to and from Agaléga.

The House may also wish to note that currently, the Dornier flies to Agaléga in case of emergencies, in view of the current state of the airstrip. The Dornier can take only two persons on the Mauritius-Agaléga leg and three to four persons on the Agaléga-Mauritius leg. The recommendable means to go to Agaléga for the time being is by ship. A voyage of M/S Mauritius Trochetia to Agaléga is tentatively scheduled for 28 May 2016.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know the hon. Minister is not the substantive Minister for Agaléga and outer islands, but the development of Agaléga will go directly through the upgrade of its airstrip and its jetty and this has been very long on the cards. Since ten years, we have been debating this in the House. May I ask the hon. Minister to convey to his colleague who is not here to really speed up matters and see to it that at least the tenders are launched so that these people can be relieved? Because if there is no jetty, no airstrip, there will be no development in Agaléga.

Mr Callichurn: I do understand the concern of the hon. Member. I will surely pass on the message.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know the jetty well because as Government Engineer I have been there twice to repair the jetty following tidal waves. Hon. Jhugroo was the Chairman of the OIDC, but in those days, the Development Works Corporation could intervene rapidly so that goods could be unloaded so as to feed the population of Agaléga. I know the hon. Minister is not the substantive Minister, but what kind of arrangement is available right now should there be a damage to the jetty so that vital services could be provided to the population there?

Mr Callichurn: For the jetty, I don't have the information the hon. Member sought for at the moment, but I will pass on the message.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister - I know he is not the substantive Minister - confirm to the House whether there has been any consultancy done with regard to the jetty or any port development that had taken place years back, I think in year 2003?

Madam Speaker: He is not the substantive Minister!

Mr Callichurn: I am not aware.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: In the answer that the hon. Minister just gave in relation to Members of Parliament visiting Agaléga, I just have to tell the hon. Minister that this has not been the practice during the last mandate. As the hon. Minister is aware, because Agaléga forms part of Constituency No.3., I have made an official request last time, and the then Prime Minister acceded to my request, and I did visit Agaléga by Dornier together with hon. Mohamed. I don't see why now this is so different! So, I would ask my hon. friend to convey the message to the substantive Minister to make an effort so that we, as Members of Parliament, go and visit our constituents there. I mean really to make an effort instead of making efforts elsewhere like the rearing of *Barbara*, where we have seen what has happened recently.

(Interruptions)

So, can the hon. Minister convey the right message to the substantive Minister? Thank you.

Mr Callichurn: From the little I know, if a request is made to that effect, it will be acceded to.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Sesungkur!

12.04.2016

LAGOON – FISHING - REGULATIONS

(No. B/187) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne& Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the project for the prohibition of fishing in the lagoon, he will state if consideration will be given for a review of the regulations in relation thereto.

(Withdrawn)

19.04.2016

BARACHOIS - LEASES

(No. B/227) Mr S. Mohamed (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer

Islands whether, in regard to the *Barachois*, he will state the number of leases thereof granted or renewed since January 2015 to date, indicating in the case of Mauricoast Ltd., the date of -

(a) application for the grant of a lease therefor, and

(b) issue of the lease therefor.

MrKoonjoo: Madam Speaker, with your permission, I am replying to PQ B/227 and B/250 altogether.

With regard to part (a) of PQ B/227, I wish to inform the House that since January 2015, no lease has been granted or renewed by my Ministry in respect of any promoter. However, authorisation to carry out aquaculture activities has been given to four promoters at four *barachois* on the merits of project.

Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that, as such no lease or concession has been granted to Mauricoast Ltd. for the use of the existing *barachois* at Poudre D'Or. However authorisation to carry out aquaculture farming was given to Mauricoast Ltd. on 17 September 2015.

With regard to part (a) of PQ B/250, the application from Mauricoast Ltd. was received at my Ministry on 22 June 2015.

Regarding part (b) of PQ B/250, the *barachois* covers a total area of 52 hectares, including land area of six hectares.

Concerning part (c) of PQ B/250, Mauricoast Ltd. will carry out the culture of valuable aquaculture marine species, namely sea cucumber, oyster and crabs. The promoter has hired the services of a consultant, namely Dr. DevVaitilingon, Director of AADCO Projects Malaysia, to assist in the implementation of the project. Furthermore, the project will be closely monitored by officers of my Ministry.

With regard to part (c)(i) of PQ B/250, the project was discussed at the level of my Ministry, after which, Government was apprised of same.

Regarding part (c)(ii), Mauricoast Ltd. was authorised by my Ministry on 17 September 2015 to implement the project.

With regard to part (d), a set of conditions is attached to the authorisation as follows –

- i. the proposed project shall be carried out in the Grand Barachois (BassinHumbert) at Poudre d'Or of an area of approximately 52 ha;
- ii. the project shall be undertaken on a pilot basis for an initial period of five years and may be renewed on mutual consent;
- iii. the Company shall apply to this Ministry for collection of oysters spats for the project;
- iv. the Company shall submit to this Ministry data on physico-chemical parameters and production on a monthly basis;
- v. the Company shall not make use of any chemicals for the culture;
- vi. the Company shall provide its own security services;
- vii. officers of the Ministry shall be given easy access to the facilities at sea or on land as and when required for monitoring the project;
- viii. the Company shall comply with directives that may be issued by the Ministry to safeguard and protect the marine environment, prior to and during the implementation of the project;
- ix. the Company shall comply to the Fisheries & Marine Resources Act 2007 (amended)
- x. the Company shall have its own quarantine facilities for imported oyster spats;
- xi. the above conditions may be amended and new conditions may be added at any time should a need arise;
- xii. the *barachois* shall remain the property of the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands, and
- xiii. Mauricoast Ltd. would have to seek all necessary clearances from relevant authorities.

Furthermore I wish to inform the House that since the project would be carried on a pilot basis, the *barachois* shall remain the property of my Ministry and there is no lease or concession involved and, as such, payment of fees does not arise.

Mr Mohamed: Initially, could the hon. Minister explain at what stage did his Ministry consider it appropriate or not to inform the business community or interested parties in Mauritius of the availability of that plot of ocean and land for concession purposes on a pilot basis, so that others also could have made proposals to his Ministry in order to be able to avail themselves of

the possibility and the opportunity of carrying out such a trade? If he did not follow me, did he ever inform the members of the public?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the *Barachois* are the property of the Government and we don't make publicity for that. Anybody interested in going in the aquaculture for any product is welcome.

Mr Rutnah: Madam Speaker, can the hon. Minister enlighten the House as to the number of employment this project is likely to generate and the amount of foreign investment that this project is anticipating to bring into our country?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the Mauricoast project is supposed to be financing about Rs100 m. and, naturally, exactly we can't say how many jobs will be created, but it should be more than 20 jobs.

Moreover, I want to mention, for the benefit of the House, that we have got other promoters, even foreign promoters, who came recently and we signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a project sponsored by a South African company, and they are going to invest Rs1.4 billion, which will definitely create lots of jobs.

Apart from that, we have another company which is also interested and we are supposed to sign another MoU with the foreign country. They are supposed to invest more than Rs200 m. Apart from foreign countries we also have local companies such as Mauricoast Ltd and other companies from Mauritius, which are interested to launch into aquaculture. Many of them are waiting for clearances to be given by the Ministry.

Mr Bhagwan: I will come back to the question put by hon. Mohamed, when he asked the hon. Minister about the question of making known to the public that these *barachois* are there and whoever is interested, they can come with a project. I would like to know why, in that particular case, it has been left to anybody who is interested to come with a project. I think it should have been the duty of the Ministry to say where we have such and such types of *barachois* and if anybody wants to come with a project, as it is done as an Expression of Interest. Why such procedure has not been adopted?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the companies I mentioned, are investing lots of money. It does not mean that we have closed the practice of aquaculture to other people, especially the fishermen. This is open for them also and I am negotiating with a bank so that we can get a blue loan also for this kind of activity.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Don't ask questions from a sitting position, please!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Jhuboo!

Mr Jhuboo: Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister mentioned that the promoter is prepared to invest over Rs100 m., up to Rs1.5 billion. Can the hon. Minister re-confirm to the House that the visibility of the project is only on a five-year basis so that the promoter is prepared to invest over Rs1 billion with a visibility of only five years?

Mr Koonjoo: I just mentioned, Madam Speaker, that it is initially for five years and can be renewed if all conditions are met.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The hon. Minister just stated that the company is investing Rs100 m. and it has been given 52 hectares of water and land. Is it the practice at his Ministry that for such an investment and for five-year period, no fee is being charged by his Ministry for such a project? Because the company is investing Rs100 m., is surely expecting a return on this investment which should be in million. So, is it normal practice for his Ministry not to charge any fees on such a project?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the practice, as at now, is what I said. In future, we might look as to whether people, especially foreigners, can be charged a sum of money. But I don't think we can make it equally for the small people, for the fishermen in Mauritius or any other person.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Picking up from the question of hon. Jhuboo, is the project 100% equity financed or is there any debt involved which will entail using the land, which I do understand is not leased as yet, as collateral?

Mr Koonjoo: As at now, I can't reply this question whether it is equity-based or anything like that, but if a company is coming and showing good faith and they have got money, we check and we give the permission for them to carry out their projects.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Dr.Sorefan!

Dr.Sorefan: Yes. The hon. Minister mentioned Rs100 m. as investment, has there been a financial due diligence on that company with assets to take a loan from bank (proof of funds) or at the end of five years ...

(Interruptions)

- the same company has benefitted Rs20 m. or Rs25 m. and then close the shop and go, and it is the bank which loses the money?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, when five years are over, we will definitely look into that.

Madam Speaker: Last question, hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

Mr Mohamed: The decision has been taken already to give something which the hon. Minister said 'is not a lease, but that can be renewed'. That is something which I fail to understand. But, however, can the hon. Minister tell us that prior to giving this - whatever it is called - land for free, this ocean for free to some members who are connected to his party and his constituency, could he explain that committee that studied the project under the application, did they, at any stage, look at a document which is called a proof of funds that comes to establish and prove that the Rs100 m. that they say they will invest, exists, and if he did look at that document, can he table this document now?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I believe that my officers, when they look at a project like this, they definitely make a due diligence to see whether the person has got money or not. It is a project which is creating employment, which is bringing...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Don't make comments, I said, from a sitting position! If you have got a question, you stand up and ask the question!

(Interruptions)

But he is already replying to your question. Allow him to reply!

Mr Koonjoo: As I said, Madam Speaker, we are here to provide jobs, to create investment and to attract foreign investment as well as local investment. I don't think that we are going to find out anysoft or any false pretext not to accept promoters coming to invest in Mauritius.

Madam Speaker: Do you have a question, hon. Bhagwan? Last question!

Mr Bhagwan: From what we have heard that this company has received a red carpet treatment,...

(Interruptions)

...can the hon. Minister confirm to the country, to the nation and to the taxpayers that this company has received such a treatment, *barachois* free of charge and other facilities because the promoter is a very close relative of one of the Members of Government, who is a PPS?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, there is no red carpet in my office to receive promoters either from Mauritius or from foreign countries.

(Interruptions)

I don't know whether the hon. Members have got red carpet reception or they have been receiving in the past.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Don't make comments, please!

Mr Koonjoo: I don't know about that. The hon. Member in front of me was a Minister, I don't know whether he was giving red carpet to foreign people or I don't know what.

(Interruptions)

As at now....

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo!

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: Every person....

(Interruptions)

I have said no cross talking, please!

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Order! Hon. Bhagwan, order please! Order!

(Interruptions)

Allow the hon. Minister to reply!

(Interruptions)

Would you continue with your comments or would you allow the hon. Minister to reply? Hon. Shakeel Mohamed, I am talking to you!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Rutnah, you will start now!

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker. We are determined to move ahead with our projects and I don't believe that we have got anything about Mr...

(Interruptions)

the person who was...

Madam Speaker: Hon. Shakeel Mohamed, it seems you do not take any heed to what I have said.

Mr Koonjoo: The person is Mr Boygah, not *madame*Boygah. Alright! And Mr Boygah has all the rights in this country to invest and create employment.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Jhugroo!

19.04.2016

LES SALINES - AUCTION FISH MARKET

(No. B/235) Mr J. Leopold(Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, MarineResources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the auction fish market located at Fort Williams, Les Salines, in Port Louis, he will state where matters stand as to the operation thereof, indicating if the premises housing same are being used for the original purpose for which they were built and, if not, indicate the reasons therefor.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the Fish Auction Market, which was constructed in June 2011 and aimed to serve as a platform for the auctioning of fish and fish products, could not be operationalised despite two Expression of Interest (EOI) exercises launched by the then Ministry of Fisheries at both local and international levels in November 2011 and in May 2012 respectively.

In view of the lack of interest by operators to use the Fish Auction Market for its original purpose, and taking into consideration the repeated criticisms of the Director of Audit, last year my Ministry invited Requests for Proposals from operators for the lease of the building of the Fish Auction Market on an 'as is where is' basis to carry out activities related to the seafood sector.

Following an evaluation exercise, one of the four proposals received at my Ministry has been selected. The contract between my Ministry and the selected operator is being finalised at the level of the State Law Office.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Leopold!

Mr Leopold: May I ask the hon. Minister whether with the promotion of Ocean Economy such structure will be needed in the Republic of Mauritius?

Mr Koonjoo: Necessarily, yes, Madam Speaker, we will need such auction market and maybe more than that.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Leopold!

19.04.16

FISHERMEN INVESTMENT TRUST – BOARD MEETING

(No. B/253) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Fishermen Investment Trust, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the –

- (a) composition of the Board thereof;
- (b) date of the last Board Meeting thereof, and
- (c) total assets thereof.

Reply: The Fishermen Investment Trust Act provides for a Board constituted of 11 members. The current Board of the FIT, however, is composed of only five members for the following reasons -

- (a) the term of office of the three fishermen' representatives - two representatives from Mauritius and one from Rodrigues - who are elected for a term of two years on the board of the FIT expired in April, 2014 and the precarious financial situation of the FIT did not permit the organisation of fresh elections due to the high costs involved;
- (b) the Chairman resigned on 22 December, 2014;

- (c) the representative of the Outer Islands Development Corporation left his employment and has not been replaced on the Board, and
- (d) one of the members who was nominated for his experience in financial matters, passed away in July 2015.

The five Board members of the FIT are -

- (a) one representative from my Ministry responsible for the subject of fisheries;
- (b) one representative from my Ministry responsible for the subject of shipping;
- (c) one representative from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, and
- (d) two other members who have been nominated for their experience in administrative, economic, financial or commercial matters or in matters relating to the fishing industry.

For the information of the House, I would like to highlight that the FIT has been facing severe financial difficulties since 2014. A new business plan is currently being worked out for the FIT and a decision will be taken on its future in the context of the forthcoming budget preparations. Action will be taken for the reconstitution of the FIT Board accordingly.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the last meeting of the FIT Board was held on 17 October, 2014.

As regards the total assets of the FIT, these comprise of six floating fish cages at Grand River South East, two fishing boats, office furniture and fittings and other assets used for fish processing, the total estimated net book value of which amounts to around Rs5 million.

I am tabling the names of the members of the FIT Board and the details of the assets of the FIT.

FISHERY ADVISORY BOARD

(No. B/254) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Fishery Advisory Board, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the –

- (a) composition thereof, and
- (b) date of the last meeting thereof, indicating the decisions taken thereat.

Reply: I am informed that there is no such Board operating under the purview of my Ministry

19.04.2016

MAURICOAST LTD – EX-BARACHOIS - LEASE

(No. B/250) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to Mauricoast Ltd. represented by one Mr Y. B., he will state if a lease or concession has been granted thereto for the use of an *ex-Barachois*at Poudre d'Or and, if so, indicate -

- (a) when the application therefor was received at his Ministry;
- (b) the extent of land concerned therewith;
- (c) the description of the project to be implemented thereat, indicating
 - (i) if same was discussed at the level of Government, and
 - (ii) when approval therefor was obtained, and
- (d) the terms and conditions of the lease/concession agreement, including the amount payable to Government.

(Vide reply to PQ No. B/227)

26.04.2016

DEEP OCEAN WATER APPLICATION PROJECT - IMPLEMENTATION

(No. B/293) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Deep Ocean Water Application Project, he will state where matters stand as to the implementation thereof -

- (a) listing the buildings that will be connected thereto, and
- (b) indicating the -
 - (i) cost thereof;
 - (ii) name of the company implementing same, and

(iii) expected date of coming into operation thereof.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that a Deed of Concession between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and Urban Cooling Ltd was signed on the 23 December 2015, for the implementation of the Deep Ocean Water Application Project, which entails pumping deep cold sea water for air conditioning of residential, commercial and industrial facilities in Port Louis region, including the area stretching from Baie du Tombeau to Pointe aux Sables, through networks of insulated pipes.

I am informed that Urban Cooling Ltd is currently in the process of obtaining an Environmental Impact Assessment Licence, in compliance with section 21 (b) of the Maritime Zones Act.

Madam Speaker, in regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that Urban Cooling Ltd has given its written commitment to the effect that any agreement with Government for the provision of the conditioning of buildings would be valid only as long as Government would occupy the respective buildings.

Madam Speaker, concerning part (b) of the question, I am further informed that Urban Cooling Ltd has already been notified that Government buildings, under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office, Ministries and Departments, will connect to the Deep Ocean Water Application Project on the condition that this will represent a saving to the Government.

The list of the Government buildings to be connected to the DOWA system has not yet been finalised.

Madam Speaker, in regard to part (b) (iii) of the question, I am informed that DOWA system is expected to be operational in March 2018.

Mr Ameer Meea: Madam Speaker, in the question there is mention made to: indicating the cost thereof, (b)(i). I did not hear the hon. Minister give any answer to this specific one.

Mr Koonjoo: Regarding the cost of the project, a cost estimate on air conditioning incurred by the Government buildings in the region of Port Louis will be carried out by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport. UCL Ltd shall provide necessary technical details and expertise to the Ministry and obtain its approval for the connection to DOWA air conditioning system with the existing air conditioning system of Government buildings. It is

understood that for buildings already equipped with a chiller system of air conditioning no additional cost will be incurred for connection to DOWA since the two systems are compatible. MPI can be contacted for more details. This is what I have got.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Osman Mahomed!

Mr Mahomed: Thank you. The DOWA project dates back to 2013. In fact, it is part of the Maurice Ile Durable Policy, Strategy and Action Plan, paragraph 6.5.4. Now, in January 2014, a DOWA Advisory Council was set up; several meetings took place and a list of buildings was finalised. At that time...

Madam Speaker: No. The hon. Member should come with his question! Now that the hon. Member has explained, he should ask his question!

Mr Mahomed: Yes. At that time the project was sized at 44 megawatts worth of cooling and last year it dropped to...

Madam Speaker: Ask your question!

Mr Mahomed: I am coming to the question, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Yes, but I have given the hon. Member sufficient leeway, he should ask his question!

Mr Mahomed: ...to 35 megawatts. How much is it today? In the face of several buildings are being moved out of Port Louis, Governmental buildings to the Heritage City, how much is it today? What is the amount of cold that you are working on?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I don't have the information. If the hon. Member comes with a substantive question, I can give all the details, please.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition!

Mr Bérenger: The question about the cost - we know what we are talking about: you go and pick this water deep down there, the pipe costs a fortune, it is a lot of money. So, the question was roughly what will be the cost of building all that system to bring that cold water to Port Louis, the rest will vary with the different buildings - but the cost of setting up the system to go and pump, carry it up to Port Louis?

Mr Koonjoo: I am sorry, Madam Speaker, but I don't have the exact cost of the project as such.

Mr Bérenger: Since the hon. Minister does not have a rough estimate of cost, do we know where the money, the funding thereof is going to come from at least?

Mr Koonjoo: This is a private company, Madam Speaker, so I don't have the details.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Madam Speaker, I have specified clearly in the question about the cost. The hon. Minister has been given advance notice; he should have done his homework before coming here. He stated that, for further information we should contact the MPI, may we have a contact number, please?

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea, please, don't be ironical! No! Don't be ironical! For the good order of the work in the National Assembly here, please, don't be ironical. We are losing the time of the House. Hon. Dr. Joomaye!

(Interruptions)

Mr Koonjoo: The hon. Member can put questions to MPI, yes.

Dr. Joomaye: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Minister if the specialists for the protection of coral reefs of the Mauritius Oceanography Institute have been consulted before allocating this contract?

Mr Koonjoo: Yes, Madam Speaker. They have been consulted.

Mr Jhuboo: Madam Speaker, being given that the promoter has clearly indicated that a project would go ahead since Government buildings, public buildings would be connected, and now we know that part of these buildings are moving to Heritage City, can we assume that this project is not going ahead?

Mr Koonjoo: I said in my answer, Madam Speaker, that we will see to it that Government is making a profit, not a loss.

Mr Ameer Meea: The hon. Minister mentioned about Government buildings that already have chillers, these will be easily connected. But according to my information, there is only one Government building that has chiller air-conditioner and more so, it is not working. So, how the

hon. Minister wants us to believe that this project would be worthy to the Government as there is only one chiller that is being used and even it is not working?

Mr Koonjoo: I don't have that answer, Madam Speaker. But I can say one thing to the House that the project has been taken up by this cooling company and I believe that they have done enough research and they have done the cost benefit analysis before coming to the Government to ask for the implementation of the project.

Mr Uteem: Madam Speaker, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the promoters have been granted an EIA licence to see the impact on the water resources, but also on the inhabitants of Port Louis? Because I don't even know where they are going to put their pump, whether there will be noise pollution and any impact on the environment? So, have they been provided with an EIA licence?

Mr Koonjoo: I just said, Madam Speaker, and I can give some more information to the House. According to the UCL Limited, the next phase of the project is the following –

- (i) the conduct of a marine survey in the Port by September 2016, UCL informed that as ADB has now approved its loan for the offshore survey;
- (ii) application of the EIA licence, as requested by the hon. Member, by November 2016, and
- (iii) they will start construction working in the first quarter of 2017 and the operation of DOWA by March 2018.

Mr Ganoo: The hon. Minister has told us that this is a private investment, a private project, but does the hon. Minister have any idea - because his Ministry must have contacted the company – about the total project value of this project? What is the amount which the company will be investing in order to realise this project?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I just answered that I don't have the exact sum that they are putting in this project, but I can assure the House one thing, that this project has been laying there for more than ten years. More than ten years with the last Government! And this Government within one year, we have been able to give all the clearances from our side and they are starting the project very soon.

26.04.2016

FISHERMEN – CARDS – ISSUE & STAMPING

(No. B/328) Mrs D. Selvon (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishermen of Port Louis, he will state -

- (a) the number of fishermen's permits issued, region-wise, since December 2014 to date, indicating the number of requests therefor which have been turned down, indicating in each case, the reasons therefor, and
- (b) if he is aware of their complaints to the effect that officers of his Ministry are often not in post to stamp their cards when they return from fishing expeditions and, if so, if remedial measures will be taken in relation thereto.

Reply: Regarding part (a) of the question, I am informed that no fishermen permits, commonly known as fisherman cards, have been issued to fishermen in Port Louis since December 2014. There are 41 applications from Bain des Dames, Grand River North West and Roche Bois as at date and no request has been turned down.

Regarding part (b) of the question, I am aware of the problems faced by fishermen concerning the stamping of their cards at Fisheries Posts. In order to eliminate undue hardships on fishermen who would call at the Fisheries Posts to stamp their cards, a decision has been taken by my Ministry last to allow fishermen cards to be stamped and signed after sunset at Pointe aux Sables.

The problem of stamping of cards was further compounded by shortage of staff in Fisheries Posts. Staff shortages in Fisheries Posts have been a persistent problem.

However, with a view to alleviating the problem, my Ministry has, in 2015, recruited 15 Fisheries Protection Service officers to serve in Fisheries Posts. Some 26 additional such officers would be recruited this year.

LAGOONS - FISHING PROHIBITION

(No. B/380) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the project for the prohibition of fishing in the lagoons, he will state if consideration will be given for a review of the regulations made in relation thereto.

(Withdrawn)

EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE - TUNA FISHING

(No. B/391) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether in regard to tuna fishing in our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), he will state –

- (a) the number of licensees who are presently operating, indicating the number of local vessels carrying out the said activity thereat;
- (b) the average annual catch, and
- (c) if he is aware of any action undertaken by Green Peace to stop overfishing of tuna in our EEZ.

Reply: With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that 105 fishing licences were issued to foreign fishing vessels to fish for tuna in our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as at date.

The number of licences issued to local fishing vessels is 10.

With regard to part (b), the average annual catch of tuna caught in our EEZ for the last five years stood at 5345.48 tonnes.

Regarding part (c), I am informed that presently Greenpeace is conducting a campaign in the Indian Ocean to collect information with respect to tuna fishing and to track down any use of unauthorised fishing gears. It has reported having found one such fishing gear that has been used for fishing.

LAGOONS – FISHING

(No. B/437) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the project for the prohibition of fishing in the lagoons, he will state if consideration will be given for a review of the regulations made in relation thereto.

Reply: My Ministry has no project in the immediate term for the prohibition of fishing in the lagoon.

Therefore, the question of reviewing regulations does not arise

24.05.2016

AGALEGA ISLAND – JETTY & AIRSTRIP

(No. B/473) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Agalega Island, he will state –

- (a) if any port development project is being envisaged to prevent the risks associated with the disembarkation of goods and of passengers thereat, and
- (b) where matters stand as to the implementation of the Airstrip Project thereat.

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as regards part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government of Mauritius and the Government of India, by virtue of which the Government of India would assist the Government of Mauritius through a financial grant of USD 18 million to, *inter alia*, undertake the construction of a new jetty for berthing of ships to ensure safe embarkation and disembarkation of goods and passengers. Development of port is not envisaged at this stage.

As regards the Airstrip Project, the status is as follows –

- (i) in January 2016, the Government of India has deputed a team of three experts to be part of the Implementation Agency as per the MoU;
- (ii) the team visited Agalega Island soon after they arrived and, in the light of consultations with various stakeholders, has advised that the investigations be carried out and a detailed project report be prepared.

The draft terms of reference have already been prepared. The procedure for the appointment of a consultant is under way and is due to start in the coming weeks. The project is expected to be completed by December 2018.

My Ministry, in collaboration with the Outer Islands Development Corporation (OIDC), is closely monitoring each phase to ensure timely and successful project implementation. This project will drastically change the socioeconomic landscape of Agalega island, enhancing connectivity between mainland Mauritius and Agalega and thus offering new opportunities for a better quality of life to the inhabitants of the island.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition!

Mr Bérenger: I am sure the Minister is aware that, for more than 10 years, the Government of India has stood ready to help us. For more than 10 years we know that this airstrip cannot be used normally, only in emergencies. At least, we are being told that it is expected that works will finish in December 2018, but can't things be activated?

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we all know that and I am sure that the hon. Leader of the Opposition knows better than anybody else that things are not easy there in Agalega. First of all, we don't have the construction material in Mauritius, we have to take them there. All these things we have taken into consideration and we are doing our best. It is almost one year that we are in power and...

(Interruptions)

Okay!

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Let the hon. Minister answer!

Mr Koonjoo: 15 months, is the hon. Member happy?

(Interruptions)

We are doing our utmost best, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and be assured that this Government will not leave any stone unturned to fulfil our mission.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Are you aware hon. Minister that between year 2000 and 2005 and precisely before year 2003 there had been two consultancies done with regard to port development and airstrip of Agalega and, as just mentioned, there will be no port development? Can I know from the hon. Minister whether he has got a time frame with regard to the jetty project? When this will start because the condition of disembarkation is very dangerous for those people going to Agalega?

Mr Koonjoo: The jetty project is together with the airstrip project. So, we are working on both of them and, as I told the House, it will take by the end of 2018 to complete both projects, but, side by side, we are doing other jobs also.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: This project had been announced in the last Budget and an amount of more than Rs300 m. had been budgeted. Now we just heard from the hon. Minister that a MoU has been signed with the Government of India for 18 million USD. Can I ask the hon. Minister does this USD18 million include the jetty and the airstrip or is it only for the jetty, and also now we just heard that the project will be terminated by end of 2018, that is, in two and a half years and the hon. Minister said that things are difficult there but, at least, tenders should be launched so that things are activated quickly.

The Deputy Speaker: Don't state your opinion!

Mr Koonjoo: It is good for the information of the House that I give the following information. I said that we are monitoring the project. There is a Joint Project Management Commission with India and Mauritius together. This Commission is being monitored by myself and there is another Implementation Agency which is a Committee chaired by the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry. We are following everything to make things happen quickly but, my good friend will understand that, at times, we have got problem of the rough seas and he should know that, at times, when our ship goes there it has to wait for weeks or days before embarking and disembarking cargo. This is one thing. We are doing our best. Alright! I must recall the hon. Member that the grant that India has given is meant for the jetty as well as for the airstrip.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mohamed!

Mr Mohamed: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. The hon. Minister keeps on telling us, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, about the bad weather there, about the rough seas, about the difficulty in accessing the island. That is the whole point. That is the whole point of the need for the construction of the jetty and the airport. Since he has stated that there is a Joint Working Committee, that he is monitoring all of this, could he, therefore, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, tell us, if many consultant has been appointed, has the design been approved, and if so, by whom and when is the work about to start? Simple question: when will it start?

Mr Koonjoo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I said we are following all procedures. We are waiting for the DPR report to be out and for the information of the House, we are waiting for one consultant to come and help the three members already in Mauritius.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, a last supplementary!

Mr Jhugroo: With the upgrading of the jetty, will the hon. Minister confirm whether there has been any provision made with regard to disembarkation of goods in containers there?

Mr Koonjoo: I just said that at times it is difficult to embark and disembark cargo. Unfortunately, at times we have to wait and I am sure the hon. Member knows that because he has been in Agalega, he has been Manager there, he should know the problem in Agalega.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Minister, you have already answered this in the previous supplementary questions. I think you have made your point.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Fowdar!

07.06.2016

NATIONAL OCEAN COUNCIL – SETTING UP

(No. B/544) Mr K. Ramano (Third Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the development of the Ocean Economy as announced in the 2015-2016 Budget Speech, he will state where matters stand as to the proposed –

- (a) introduction of a Petroleum Bill in the House, and
- (b) setting up of a -
 - (i) National Ocean Council, and
 - (ii) new Faculty of Ocean Studies.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, as regards part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Prime Minister's Office that Government has on 21 August 2015, agreed to the elaboration of a regulatory framework for the exploration and exploitation of natural resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Mauritius and the Extended Continental Shelf, except that part under the joint jurisdiction of and jointly managed by Mauritius and Seychelles.

In this respect, the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat was sought by the Prime Minister's Office for the drafting of an offshore Petroleum Bill for Mauritius. The

Commonwealth Secretariat has already submitted a first draft of the Bill and drafting instructions have been given to the Attorney General's Office for the finalisation of the draft Petroleum Bill.

I am further informed by the Prime Minister's Office that a Technical Committee chaired by the Director-General, Department of Continental Shelf, Maritime Zones Administration and Exploration is provided technical inputs to the Attorney General's Office for the timely finalisation of the legislation.

Madam Speaker, regarding part (b) (i) of the question, the National Ocean Council (NOC) has been administratively set up on 26 June 2015 with the following main objectives -

- (i) to co-ordinate technical cooperation and assistance between Government and international institutions and foreign experts;
- (ii) to set up and drive a Government-private sector working group to assess and promote economic activities, capacity building and good governance in all sectors of the Ocean Economy, and
- (iii) to assess the provision of a modern logistics infrastructure and services for the development of the maritime and shipping industry.

The Council has already set up seven working Groups, namely –

- (i) Business Facilitation in the Ocean Industry;
- (ii) Regulatory Institution;
- (iii) Fisheries and Aquaculture Development;
- (iv) Port and Shipping Development;
- (v) Marine Research and Seabed Explorations;
- (vi) Training, Employment Generation and capacity building, and
- (vii) Environment Protection, Governance and Sustainable Development.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (b) (ii) of the question, I am informed that in 2014 the University of Mauritius has established a new Faculty dedicated to build capacity and undertake research in the field of ocean and ocean-related areas.

The Faculty of Ocean Studies consists of three Departments, namely -

- (i) Department of Marine and Ocean Science, Fisheries & Mariculture;
- (ii) Department of Ocean Engineering and ICT, and

(iii) Department of Marine Trade and Finance.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ramano!

Mr Ramano: Madame la présidente, en ce qui concerne la partie (i), est-ce que je peux savoir du ministre si le pays est en présence d'une demande d'un pays ami pour l'exploration des fonds marins dans notre *Exclusive Economic Zone*?

Mr Koonjoo: I am afraid, Madam Speaker, I don't have the information.

Madam Speaker: The Table has been advised that PQ No. B/547 has been withdrawn. Next question, hon. Ganoo!

14.06.2016

**POINTE-AUX-SABLES - FISHERIES TRAINING AND EXTENSION CENTRE –
TRAINING COURSES**

(No. B/596) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the hon. Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Fisheries Training and Extension Centre at Pointe-aux-Sables, he will state –

- (a) when it will become operational, and
- (b) the eligibility criteria to benefit from training thereat.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the Fisheries Training and Extension Centre (FITEC) at Pointe-aux-Sables is operational since 2004.

With regard to part (b) of the question, different eligibility criteria are applied depending on the type of training course.

FITEC has been dispensing training courses to fishermen and other stakeholders in the following areas -

- (a) General Course for Fishers;
- (b) Fish Aggregating Devices Training Courses;
- (c) Training in the Fish Handling, Preservation and Marketing;

- (d) In-house training - Training of Fisheries Protection Service Officers, and
- (e) Training of Skippers for boats less than 12 metres in length.

For the General Course for Fishers, applicants should be between 18 to 50 years old. They should be medically fit to work in the open sea and should have applied for the registration as fishermen and have been fishing for the past 6 months. They should not hold any Trade Licence.

For the Fish Aggregating Devices Fishery courses, applicants should be holder of a Fisherman Registration Card and should be medically fit to work in the open sea.

As for the training of the Fish Handling, Preservation and Marketing, applicants should be holder of a Fishmonger's Licence.

The criterion for training of FPS officers is seniority ranking.

For the training of skippers, the criterion is that the applicant should be a registered artisanal fisherman.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister when was the last intake of students in that institution?

Mr Koonjoo: The last intake was in 2016.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I know how many students were admitted?

Mr Koonjoo: For 2016, for general courses, we have targetted 50 applicants; for FAD, we have another 50, and for the target of fishmongers, we have got 100. So, it is 200.

Madam Speaker: Next question, hon. Baloomoody!

FISH LANDING STATIONS - UPGRADING

(No. B/598) **Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fish landing stations, he will give a list thereof which have been upgraded, if any, during the last financial year.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, I am informed that during the last financial year, no upgrading works were carried out in any fish landing station.

However, as soon as I assume office, I requested...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Baloomoody, please don't interrupt! Please, go on!

Mr Koonjoo: ...for the commissioning of a survey to identify all fish landing stations requiring upgrading and renovation works.

I am informed that, during this financial year, minor upgrading works like painting and others have been carried out at La Gaulette fish landing station at a total cost of around Rs6,600.

I am further informed that clearance has been obtained from the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport for upgrading the following fish landing stations –

- (a) Poudre d'Or Village at Rs367,000;
- (b) Pointe-aux-Piments at Rs365,000;
- (c) La Preneuse at Rs107,785;
- (d) Trou aux Biches at Rs251,000;
- (e) Le Morne at Rs258,077, and
- (f) Trou d'Eau Douce at Rs248,017.

The contracts would be awarded to the District contractor by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport. The works are expected to start by July 2016 and would be completed within a period of 6 months.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Barbier!

Mr Barbier: Thank you, Madam Speaker. May I know from the hon. Minister whether tender is already flaunted for these upgrading works?

Mr Koonjoo: As I replied, Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport will give the contract. They will deal with that. It is less than Rs500,000., no bidding.

Madam Speaker: The Table has been advised that PQ B/604 and B/605 have been withdrawn. Time is over!

28.06.2016

MV BENITA – RISKS ASSESSMENT

(No. B/663) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the ship MV Benita, he will state if his Ministry has carried out a study to assess the risks that may be caused to the fish and to the natural resources thereat, indicating if he has met the fishermen operating thereat and, if so, indicate the-

- (a) quantum of compensation that will be paid thereto, and
- (b) number of fishermen who will benefit therefrom.

Reply: With regard to the first part of the question, I wish to inform the House that sampling of sea water has already been undertaken by my Ministry and the National Environment Laboratory which will be referred to the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd for analysis by an appropriate laboratory.

Furthermore, I am informed by the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management that an ecological survey to assess the environmental damage would be carried out by the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd in collaboration with my Ministry, the Mauritius Oceanography Institute and the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management.

The outcome of these surveys would enable my Ministry to assess the impact of the wreckage on the marine ecosystem including the risks that may be caused to the fish and natural resources at Le Bouchon.

I also wish to inform the House that I have already met the fishermen community of Le Bouchon.

With regard to part (a) of the second part of the question, I wish to inform the House that the quantum of compensation which would be paid to fishermen will be based on the recommendations of the Committee on 'Grounding of MV Benita' for the salvage of wrecked vessel. The quantum has not been determined yet. This exercise will be done in consultation with the fishermen.

With regard to part (b) of the question, it is to be noted that there are 11 registered fishermen at Le Bouchon Fish Landing Station.

05.07.2016

BAMBOUS VIRIEUX - FISHERMEN - GRIEVANCES

(No. B/701) Dr. Z. Joomaye (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishermen of Bambous Virieux, he will state if he is aware of the grievances thereof claiming that the activities of the Ferme Marine de Mahebourg have negatively impacted on the marine ecosystem and on the issue/renewal of fishing cards thereto and, if so, indicate the actions taken by his Ministry, if any, in relation thereto.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, with regard to the first part of the question, yes, I am aware of the grievances of the fishermen of Bambous Virieux. In fact, the *Regroupman Pêcheur* Bambous Virieux has made complaints to my Ministry in November 2015 to the fact that the activities related to the expansion of *Ferme Marine de Mahebourg* were having negative impacts on the marine ecosystem.

However, I wish to inform the House that the fish farming sites operated by the *Ferme Marine de Mahebourg* are monitored on a monthly basis by officers of my Ministry for water quality and marine ecosystem. I have to assure the House that, as at date, no adverse impacts have been observed.

Regarding the issuing or renewal of fishermen's cards, I am further informed that insofar as the *Ferme Marine de Mahebourg* is concerned, there is no problem regarding fishermen cards.

I also wish to inform the House that fishermen's cards that have already been issued need not be renewed. However, the fishermen have to report to the nearest Fisheries Post between the 01st and 08th of every month for signing and stamping of the same in order to benefit from the bad weather allowance.

Dr. Joomaye: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the representatives of the fishermen have claimed any compensation for loss of business.

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, as far as I know, I don't think that any fisherman has received any compensation for loss of business in Bambous Virieux.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Mohamed!

Mr Mohamed: Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister has said that regularly the water around the fish farm is tested. Could he tell us what are the standards by which those tests are carried out, whether those standards are provided for by any regulation or approved by any other international organisation and whether he could table the results of those tests, let us say for the past one year?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, the samples are taken to Albion Research Centre where they are tested by officers who are working according to international norms, and this is done every month. I said there is no adverse report so far the water and the eco-system are concerned.

Mr Ramful: I will go along the same line as hon. Mohamed. Has there been any research or any survey that has been carried out recently as regards the impact of the operation of the *Ferme Marine* and, if so, would the hon. Minister table a copy of the report?

Mr Koonjoo: Madam Speaker, *Ferme Marine* has got its license after the EIA Report has been given to that company, and as far as I know, there is no adverse report insofar the water and the eco-system are concerned. I know that people are complaining, they are looking for compensation, but the *Ferme Marine de Mahebourg* is working and we are looking after everything so that people don't suffer, especially the fishermen. It is my constituency, I am concerned about it, I give my word to the House that everything is done perfectly in transparency.

Mr Mohamed: My good friend hon. Ramful and myself have both asked, on two separate occasions now, to table the report or to table the test results. The hon. Minister has managed to swim around that particular part of the issues that we are trying to reach at. Could he, therefore, address his mind to this particular issue, Madam Speaker, whether he will consider, yes or no, to table those test results, as he says they are carried out monthly, and the report referred to by hon. Ramful?

Mr Koonjoo: I have no problem on that, Madam.

SOUTH WEST COAST - PROTECTED MARINE AREA PROJECT

(No. B/707) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the proposed Protected Marine Area Project proposed for implementation on the west coast by the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society, he will state the outcome of the feasibility study carried out in connection therewith.

Reply: I am informed that a feasibility study for the setting up of a Marine Protected Area in the South West Coast of Mauritius was carried out for the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society by an independent consultant from Reunion Island in 2010.

The study aimed at providing recommendations on the creation of the Marine Protected Area.

The outcome of the study showed that it was feasible to create the Marine Protected Area in the South West Coast of Mauritius.

However, the implementation of the project will have to be carefully looked into after taking into account the various possible implications in terms of social and economic impacts of the project on the coastal users, tourist operators, fishermen community and other stakeholders of the region.

Moreover, within this area of the south west coast, there are prescribed fish farming zones/sites for Aquaculture development under the Aquaculture Master Plan.

GRSE, GRAND GAUBE AND TROU D'EAU DOUCE - MARINE RANCHING PROGRAMME

(No. B/708) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Marine Ranching Programme in Grande Rivière Sud Est, Grand Gaube and Trou d'Eau Douce, he will state the commercial success or failure thereof.

Reply: I am informed that the Marine Ranching Programme refers to the enhancement of fish stocks in the lagoon through the release of fingerlings or juveniles of different commercial species of fish with a view to increasing fish production.

My Ministry is successfully implementing this project and each year some one million fingerlings of *gueule pavée* and *cordonnier* are released at selected sites in the lagoon, including Grand Gaube, Trou d'Eau Douce, Grand River South East and Quatre Soeurs regions.

Moreover, with respect to aquaculture in floating cages, I wish to inform the House that floating fish cages were placed at Grand Gaube, Trou d'Eau Douce and Grand River South East and Quatre Soeurs regions on a pilot basis.

At Grand River South East and Quatre Soeurs, seven fish cages were placed and managed by fishermen cooperative societies whereby about 1.2 tonnes of fish have been harvested during the last two years and sold to members of the public at a low price.

At Grand Gaube and Trou d'Eau Douce, one floating fish cage was placed at each of the sites. However, after the first harvest of fish, the two fishermen cooperative societies ceased their operations and my Ministry has re-allocated both the floating cages to two other fishermen cooperative societies.

12.07.2016

SHIP MV BENITA – SALVAGE OPERATION - EXPENDITURE

(No. B/715) Mr O. Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the ship MV Benita, he will state the costs incurred by Government as at to date, giving a breakdown thereof following the reported engine breakdown thereof, the loss of the two anchors thereof and that it had gone off Le Bouchon.

Reply (Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands): The costs incurred to date in regard to the ship MV Benita is approximately Rs13 m., sum which will be passed over to London P & I Club.

Mr Ian Carter, Claims Executive from the London P & I Club, who was in Mauritius from 07 to 10 July 2016 has informed that his organisation is committed to the refloating operation of M/V Benita and to the pollution clean-up operations.

The main expenditure incurred in the salvage operation is for the Police Helicopter Squadron for providing helicopter services. Here is some of the current expenditure incurred by the different stakeholders as at date.

The details of expenditure incurred to-date by the relevant stakeholders in regard to MV/Benita are approximately as follows -

(i) Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands -

● **Fisheries Division**

Staff and Administrative Costs: Rs92,000

● **Shipping Division**

Staff and Administrative Costs: Rs340,000

(ii) Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and Beach Management -

Staff and Administrative Costs: Rs308,000

(iii) Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA):

Provision of 300 mts of boom: Rs2m.

(iv) Mauritius Revenue Authority -

(Customs)

Staff and Administrative Costs: Rs344,000

(v) Mauritius Oceanography Institute -

- **Fieldworks (Offshore Current Pattern Survey and Sediment Sampling)**
- **The field work performed so far by MOI staff icw the grounding of MV Benita amounts to Rs65,000 approximately.**

(vi) Meteorological Services -

Staff and Administrative Costs: Rs15,000

(vii) Police Helicopter Squadron -

Human Resources/Equipment/Logistics: Rs8.5 m.

(viii) National Coast Guard -

Human Resources/Equipment/Logistics: Rs1.2 m

Gross Total estimated costs incurred as at to date Rs13 m.

ST BRANDON ISLAND - REVENUE

(No. B/757) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the St Brandon Island, he will state the total amount of revenue derived therefrom in terms of tax, and fishing rights, since January 2015 to date.

(Withdrawn)

19.07.2016

MAURITIUS MARITIME TRAINING ACADEMY - BASIC SAFETY COURSES

(No. B/823) Mrs M. C. Monty (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Basic Safety Courses run by the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the said Academy, information as to the –

- (a) various components thereof
- (b) number of trainers thereof, indicating in each case, the qualifications held, and
- (c) number of students having benefitted therefrom since the opening of the Academy to date.

(Withdrawn)

09.08.2016

MAURITIUS MARITIME TRAINING ACADEMY - BASIC SAFETY COURSES

(No.B/865) Mrs M. C. Monty (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Basic Safety Courses run by the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the said Academy, information as to the –

- (a) various components thereof;
- (b) number of trainers thereof, indicating in each case, the qualifications held, and

- (c) number of students having benefitted therefrom since the opening of the Academy to date.

Reply: With regard to part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that the various components of the Basic Safety Courses are -

- (i) Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities.
- (ii) Elementary First Aid.
- (iii) Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting.
- (iv) Personal Survival Techniques.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that there are 16 trainers that are affiliated with the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy out of which 13 are employed on a part time basis whilst the remaining three work at the MMTA on a full time basis.

I am tabling the qualifications of the 16 trainers for the benefit of the House.

With regard to part (c) of the question, I wish to inform the House that there are 2894 students who have been trained at the MMTA since the opening of the MMTA in 2007 to date.

LE BOUCHON – FISHERMEN - COMPENSATION

(No. B/878) Mr P. Jhugroo(Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishermen operating at Le Bouchon and in the vicinity thereof who were financially affected following the wreckage of the MV Benita vessel, he will state if the quantum of the compensation payable thereto has now been determined, indicating if consideration will be given for the benefit thereof to be extended to the non-registered fishermen and, if not, why not.

Reply: I wish to inform the House that following the grounding of MV Benita at Le Bouchon on 17 June 2016, my Ministry has received several representations from registered fishers at Le Bouchon and from fishers of the surrounding regions to the effect that the resulting oil spill has caused considerable pollution at Le Bouchon and in the surrounding area, such that they are not able to go out fishing and collect algae for small-cage fishing.

Furthermore, for the salvage operations of the cargo ship, the National Coast Guard established a restricted perimeter which was preventing fishers from carrying out fishing activities.

As regards the quantum of compensation, I wish to inform the House that the same formula which was used for the payment of compensation to fishers following the wreck of MV Angel 1 near the coast of Poudre D'Or in 2011, would apply, that is, on the basis of the rate of bad weather allowance payable during days when fishers are unable to fish.

The exact number of days will be determined as soon as the cleaning process would be completed at Le Bouchon after which fishers would be authorised to undertake fishing activities.

All claims for compensation will have to be submitted to the insurance company of MV Benita, namely P & I Club, for payment.

Regarding the extension of the payment of compensation to non-registered fishermen at Le Bouchon, as at date, no such representation has been received at my Ministry.

In case my Ministry receives claims from non-registered fishers, the matter would be referred to the insurance company of MV Benita for consideration at their level.

AQUACULTURE PROJECTS - IMPLEMENTATION

(No. B/928) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the proposed 1.7 billion rupees worth investment in the aquaculture sector, as announced in the last budget speech, and the 33 sites that have been identified in respect thereof, he will give a list of the projects earmarked for implementation thereat, indicating the respective location thereof.

(Withdrawn)

22.11.2016

DEEP OCEAN WATER APPLICATION PROJECT - IMPLEMENTATION

(No. B/992) Mr B. Jahangeer (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the contract awarded to Messrs Sotravic for the Deep Ocean Water Application (DOWA) Project, he will state where matters stand as to the implementation thereof.

Reply: I am informed that the Deed of Concession between the Government of Mauritius and Urban Cooling for the implementation of the Deep Ocean Water Application (DOWA) Project which is estimated to be to the tune Rs2.1 Billion was signed on 23 December 2015.

Urban cooling has started the survey of private and public buildings in Port Louis to gather technical details for the onshore component of the project. The survey with regards to public buildings is being carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport. These Surveys will last up to January 2017.

Parallel to the onshore Surveys being undertaken, Urban Cooling Ltd is undertaking a marine survey in the Port Area for the purpose of designing the offshore component of the project including pipe layout since 21 October 2016. The marine survey will be completed by the end of this month. It would be worth mentioning that this component of the project, ie, marine survey has been wholly financed by the African Development Bank to the tune of USD 1 Million.

The implementation of the DOWA project will enable the implementation of downstream activities including bottling of desalinated water, aquaculture, thalasso therapy etc., while taking advantage of the pumped seawater.

According to the promoter Urban Cooling, the next phases of the project will be -

- (i) Application of an EIA Licence by end of 2016;
- (ii) Start construction working by end of 2017;
- (iii) Operate DOWA by end of 2018.

To ensure the successful implementation of the project, a fast track committee has been set up at the level of the Prime Minister's Office.

22.11.2016

FISHERMEN INVESTMENT TRUST - PROJECTS

(No. B/1003) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Fishermen Investment Trust, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to, since March 2016 to date, the –

- (a) number of
 - (i) projects finalized, and

(ii) fishing boats constructed, indicating the name of the beneficiaries thereof and

(b) composition of the Board thereof, indicating the number of meetings held.

Reply: In my reply to PQ B/253 of 19 April 2016, I informed the House of the precarious financial situation which the Fishermen Investment Trust (FIT) has been facing since 2014. As a consequence of a lack of financial resources the FIT could not embark on any project since then.

I am informed that the Board of the FIT at its last meeting held on 07 October 2016 approved a Business Plan comprising three projects. The Business Plan will be submitted to my Ministry and to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for funding purposes.

With regard to part (a) (ii) of the question, the FIT has not allocated any contract for the construction of new fishing boats since March 2016 to date.

As regards part (b) of the question, the board of the FIT is presently constituted of 6 members, as follows -

- one representative from my Ministry responsible for the subject of fisheries;
- one representative from my Ministry responsible for the subject of shipping;
- one representative from my Ministry delegated by the Outer Islands Development Corporation;
- one representative from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, and
- two other persons having experience in administrative, economic, financial or commercial matters or in matters relating to the fishing industry

Concerning the last part of the question, the Board of the FIT has met only once, on the 7th of October 2016, since March 2016.

FISHING AGGREGATE DEVICES – SET UP

(No. B/1004) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Fishing Aggregate Devices, he will state the number thereof –

- (a) in service over the past five financial years and
- (b) repaired over the past two years.

Reply: The Fish Aggregate Devices (FADs) have been set up at 28 selected sites around Mauritius.

FADs are subject to wear and tear due to the dynamic sea environment particularly during rough sea conditions coupled with intense fishing activities. Consequently, regular repairs and maintenance have to be undertaken. Lost FADs are reset in the same location.

The number of FADs in service over the last five financial years are as follows-

Year	Number of FADs in service
2012	21
2013	20
2014	18
2015	21
2016 (to date)	18

With regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the number of FADs that were repaired over the past two years, i.e. year 2014 and 2015 are -

Year	Number of FADs Repaired/Reset
2014	22
2015	23

29.11.2016

MV BENITA – SHIPWRECK - COMPENSATION

(No. B/1085) Mr D. Ramful (Third Member for Mahebourg&Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the shipwreck MV Benita, he will state the amount of compensation, if any –

- (a) claimed and obtained from the insurer, and
- (b) granted to the fishermen who have been affected therewith.

(Vide reply to P.Q. No. B/1058)

06.12.2016

SOUILLAC – FISHERMEN CARD

(No. B/1146) Mr M. Gobin (First Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishermen residing in the village of Souillac, he will state –

- (a) where matters stand as to the issue thereto of the Fisherman Card, and
 - (b) if consideration is being given for the –
 - (i) repair/replacement of the Fishing Aggregate Device situated thereat and, if so, when, and
 - (ii) installation thereat of a Fisheries Post and, if so, when and, if not, why not.

Reply: Regarding part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that there are 33 registered fishermen who report their catch at the Souillac Fish Landing Station, situated at Le Batelage.

I am informed that 18 new applications for fishermen card have been received in respect of the village of Souillac.

As part of the process for the registration of a professional artisanal fisherman, my Ministry, in collaboration with fishermen associations, has undertaken a due diligence exercise in order to ascertain the genuineness of the applications.

I am further informed that none of the 18 applicants at Souillac have met the eligibility criteria for the issuance of a fishermen registration card.

Regarding part (b) (i) of the question, I wish to inform the House that the Fish Aggregating Device located off-lagoon at Souillac was replaced on 01 November 2016.

Regarding part (b) (ii) of the question, the installation of a new Fisheries Post at Souillac is not justified at this stage because there is already a Fisheries Post at Riambel, which is less than 2 kms from Souillac, and caters for fishermen in the region of Riambel, St. Felix and Souillac Fish Landing Stations.

14.12.2016

MATTERS RAISED

LE BOUCHON - FISHERMEN - COMPENSATION

Mr D. Ramful (Third Member for Mahebourg&PlaineMagnien): Madam Speaker, I have an issue concerning the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries,

Shipping and Outer Islands. It concerns the compensation that are payable to the fishermen who have been affected by the Benita shipwreck. They all come from the village of Le Bouchon and the vicinity, and they are from my constituency.

In fact, from a PQ that was answered by the Minister, it would appear that Government has claimed from the insurer a sum of Rs34,219,654. Apparently, up till now, a total sum of Rs12,543,000 has been recovered, and only Rs236,000 approximately have been paid to those fishermen - there are about 12 fishermen - and this amounts to approximately Rs19,000 only for one fisherman. They have been in unemployment since about six months now and this sum is a very meager sum, and they are very dissatisfied and disappointed with the compensation that is being offered to them.

May I request the hon. Minister to kindly see to it if he can review his decision?

Thank you.

The Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands (Mr P. Koonjoo): Madam Speaker, I met the fishermen of le Bouchon twice and I told them that the money will be credited by the Accountant General and they were asked to give their account number so that we can process. But the sum that the hon. Member has talked about is not correct. It is exactly about Rs200,000 to be divided among 11 fishermen who have got their card. It is not about Rs4 m.; it is not accurate. Anyway, I will try to look into it.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Ramano!

04.04.2017

EEZ - FISHING LICENCES

(No. B/135) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fourth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping whether, in regard to our economic zone, he will state –

- (a) over the past two years, the names of the local and foreign vessels which have been issued with fishing licences for the exploitation thereof, indicating –

- (i) in each case, the terms and conditions attached thereto;
- (ii) if any fishing license has been revoked, and
- (iii) the total revenue collected from foreign vessels in terms of license fees,
and

(b) if consideration will be given to stop the issue of fishing licences to foreign vessels.

Reply: In regard to parts (a) (i) (ii) and (iii) of the question, the grant of fishing licenses to local and foreign fishing vessels is governed by Sections 34 to 38 of the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 2007.

57 fishing licence have been delivered for vessels owned by 20 local vessel owners in 2015 and 88 fishing licences were delivered in 2016.

Regarding foreign vessel owners, 239 fishing licences were issued in 2015 and 277 for 2016.

The information relating to the details of the beneficiaries as well as the terms and conditions is being laid in the Library.

No fishing licence has been revoked during the past five years.

The total revenue on licence fees paid by foreign vessel owners for the year 2015 is USD 1,254,000 and EURO 140,700. and for 2016 is USD 1,532,000 and EURO 132,720.

In regard to part (b) of the question, foreign fishing licences are issued to fish tuna and tuna like species which are highly migratory. The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) is the regional fisheries management organization responsible for the management of tuna resources in the Indian Ocean region. As a party to the IOTC, Mauritius strictly abides to its resolutions. So far, there is no resolution requiring member states to stop giving fishing licences to foreign vessels.

I wish also to point out that in accordance with the provisions of Article 62 of the United Nations Convention of the law of the sea (UNCLOS) to which Mauritius is a party, Coastal

States which do not have the capacity to harvest the entire allowable catch, shall enter into agreement or other arrangement with other States to access to the surplus of the allowable catch.

As Mauritius does not have a national fleet, it has therefore granted licences to foreign vessels to operate in our EEZ. However, with a view to building our national fleet my Ministry is encouraging operators in the sector to register fishing vessels in Mauritius to harness our fishing resources. One operator has already registered 7 vessels and is proposing to increase its fleet to 20. In addition a Scheme has been put in place for the purchase of semi-industrial fishing boats whereby a grant of 50% up to Rs4 m. is being provided to fishermen Cooperatives.

LAGOONS - AQUACULTURE

(No. B/136) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fourth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping whether, in regard to the carrying out of aquaculture in our lagoons, he will state –

- (a) if he has received any adverse report or advice in relation thereto, and
- (b) consideration will be given for the requirement of an Environment Impact Assessment licence prior to the carrying out of any project therefor.

Reply: In regard to part (a) of the question, my Ministry has not received any adverse report nor adverse advice regarding aquaculture activities in our lagoons.

In regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that in accordance with Section 15(2) of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 2002, fish farms in the Fish Farming Zones listed in Section 8A of the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act require an Environmental Impact Assessment licence. The list of the Fish Farming Zones is being laid in the Library.

Consequently, any promoter of aquaculture projects falling in the Fish Farming Zones would require an EIA licence to operate.

GRNW & PORT LOUIS WEST – FISHING PERMITS & ASSISTANCE

(No. B/144) Mrs D. Selvon (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping whether, in regard to Constituency No. 1, Grand River North West and Port Louis West, he will state –

(a) the number of inhabitants thereof –

(i) who are holders of fishing permits;

(ii) whose applications for the issue thereto of a fishing permit are pending, and

(b) if the fishermen thereof are being provided with training, indicating the other facilities being provided thereto and to the families thereof, if any, to face the increased environmental challenges to their activities, like climate change in the coming years.

Reply: Regarding part (a) (i) of the question, I am informed that there are actually 130 registered holders of fishing permits commonly known as fishermen cards for the constituency No. 1 Grand River North West and Port Louis West.

In regard to part (a) (ii) of the question, my Ministry has received 128 applications for fishermen card from Constituency No. 1 since 2010. Unfortunately these were not processed.

It is only in 2015 that my Ministry has set up a committee to look into the issue of fishermen's cards. A monitoring exercise was carried out to ensure that the applicants were continuously engaged in fishing activities for a period of 6 months. Following the monitoring exercise a short list of potential fishermen was drawn and recommend to the Fisheries Training and Extension Centre (FiTEC) at Pointe aux Sables for training.

Regarding part (b) of the question, my Ministry has established a list of 24 applicants who are eligible to be registered as fishermen from applications received around the island. Among the 24 applicants, 5 are from Pointe aux Sables and 1 from Bain des Dames. They are presently undergoing medical test by the Occupational Health Unit of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. Subject to their being medically fit to work at sea, they will be enrolled to follow the 6-week General Course for Fisher at the Fisheries Training and Extension Centre (FiTEC), Pointe aux Sables. A fisherman card will be issued thereafter.

My Ministry has placed Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) at 28 sites to encourage fishers to fish off lagoon and which will eventually give the opportunity to these fishers to improve their livelihood and that of their families. The estimated cost of the FADs is around Rs4.2 million. Around 300 fishers are benefitting from these FADs.

Another project which the government is laying emphasis is floating cage fishery where fishers are encouraged to group in co-operative societies. This Financial year an amount Rs12 millions has been provided for the project. 10 sites have been identified for setting up floating cages and 8 have already been allocated. The cost of one cage is around Rs1M.

My Ministry is also providing fishermen assistance to purchase 'canotte' to fish off lagoon, and a grant of 50% up to Rs200,000 is offered to each applicant on the fisheries sectoral support programme under partenariat with the EU.

To improve the fishers' lot, my Ministry is encouraging semi-industrial fishing for fishermen grouped in co-operative societies through a grant to the tune of 50% of the cost of a semi industrial fishing vessel up to an amount of Rs4 million. This financial year an amount of Rs12M. was provided and 3 beneficiaries are being selected after an expression of interest.

My Ministry is also involved in sensitization to foster awareness among fishermen on the need for sustainable fishing. In this respect, I am pleased to announce that the close period for octopus from 15 August to 15 October 2016 was a success. The fishers were convinced of the benefits of the measure and in fact octopus of bigger size was obtained.

Furthermore, my Ministry issues safety equipment to fishers including lifesaving jackets, life buoys among others. The registered fishermen are also entitled to -

- BAD weather allowance
- Compensation for accidental death
- Financial Assistance for Accidentally Damaged Boats and Engines
- Sick Allowance
- Winter Allowance
- Maternity Allowance

- Funeral Grant
- Financial Assistance for the purchase of materials for building of Baskets traps