

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO B/396

B/396 **The Honourable Fifth Member for La Caverne and Phoenix**
(06.05.08) **(Mr Soodhun)**

To ask Dr the Honourable Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries:-

Whether, in regard to the region of Belle Mare, he will state if any portion of the land under onion cultivation has been released for the construction of hotels and other non-agricultural projects and if so, indicate the extent thereof?

REPLY

Mr. Speaker, Sir,

The Belle Mare Small Scale Irrigation Scheme in the region of Belle Mare implemented by the Irrigation Authority became operational in 1996 and comprises a total extent of 500 arpents. Some 290 arpents under sandy soils are planted mainly with local onion varieties and are irrigated. The remaining 210 arpents of land partly irrigated are rocky and are planted with sugarcane and other foodcrops.

2. I am informed that 25A65 of land previously leased to 61 planters of Belle Mare Water Users Cooperative Society for local onion production have been earmarked for the extension project of two existing hotels and a tourist village.

3. I wish to refer the Hon Member to my reply to PQ B/153 on 17 April 2007 wherein I indicated that the Ministry of Housing and Lands has already issued a letter of reservation to one promoter for a hotel project of an extent of

approximately 20 arpents concerning 51 planters. I am now informed by the Ministry of Housing and Lands that an industrial lease has been granted to the promoter on 29 March 2008 over an extent of 24A95 and the land retrieved from the land settlement is of an extent of 22A65p.

Subsequently, one arpent (3 planters) has been earmarked for the Tourist Village, 2 arpents (7 planters) to a promoter for the extension of an existing hotel which is being processed by the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

4. The planters concerned have voluntarily relinquished their rights on their leases of State Land which they were occupying, against payment of compensation by the promoters.