

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION B/1263

B/1263 The Honourable Fifth Member for La Caverne and Phoenix (**Mr Soodhun**)

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

Whether, in regard to the sugar reform, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Sugar Authority, information as to whether it has designed any scheme in favour of the small planters, indicating (a) the funds earmarked and (b) the projects implemented as at todate?

REPLY (on 04.12.07)

Mr Speaker, Sir,

I am advised by the Mauritius Sugar Authority (MSA) that in the context of the sugar reform and the Multi Annual Adaptation Strategy, a project termed as "Field Operations and Regrouping Project", has been designed to improve the cost competitiveness by increasing yields and reducing production costs of the culture sector to ensure the sustainable and viable supply of cane by small planters through regrouping.

This project, monitored by the Project Implementation Committee (also known as PIC), has several components which are site specific. These components are:

- (i) derocking to render mechanisation possible,
- (ii) irrigation,
- (iii) land preparation,
- (iv) planting i.e. cane setts, fertilizer, cement, scum and labour, and
- (v) two post planting herbicide applications for weed control.

Site management and detailed cadastral and topographical survey are equally important components to the tune of Rs 30,000 per hectare. These are being provided free of charge by the Mauritius Sugar Producers Association.

The components mentioned above are being provided to the small planters out of a government guaranteed loan of Rs 500 million.

Regarding part (b), details of projects so far implemented under Phase I, have been tabled on 20 November 2007 in reply to PQ B/1130.

I would like to inform the House that implementation of Phase II has already started.