

TERTIARY

SATYAM/IT

YEAR 2021

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR V.P., PERMANENT SECRETARY – HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION & BOARDS OF UNIVERSITIES - BOARD MEMBER

(11.05.2021)

(No. B/325) **Dr. M. Gungapersad (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology whether, in regard to Mr V. P., Permanent Secretary attached to her Ministry, she will state if the latter is a board member of the –

- (a) Higher Education Commission;
- (b) University of Mauritius;
- (c) University of Technology Mauritius, and
- (d) University of Mascareignes and, if so, table information as to the benefits and emoluments drawn in each case.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology (Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to inform the House that Mr V. P., Permanent Secretary at my Ministry is a Board member of the Higher Education Commission, the University of Mauritius, University of Technology Mauritius, and *l'Université des Mascareignes*.

With regard to the second part of the question, I am tabling the relevant information as to the benefits and emoluments drawn in each case.

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, hon. Minister. You will concur that for whomsoever, be it a PS or not, sitting in a regulatory body like the Higher Education Commission and sitting on councils or boards of so many public universities does not seem to be in accordance to good practices for obvious reasons. Doesn't the hon. Minister

consider that there is a possibility of an overt conflict of interest and, if yes, what does the Minister plan to do to dispel the possibilities of conflict of interest?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Speaker, Sir, it was brought to my attention that the Permanent Secretary was also on the board of the Higher Education Commission. In fact, the Ministry has already started work on the redressing the situation. Although, there might not be a direct conflict of interest, but ethically, I believe that he cannot be on the Higher Education Commission as well as the boards of the universities, so we are taking necessary steps for that.

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, hon. Minister.