



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

EIGHTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2024

SEBASTOPOL MITD CENTRE – STUDENTS ACCESSIBILITY (SEBASTOPOL, MONT IDA & OLIVIA REGION)

(No. I B/58) Mr R. Sauntally (Third Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resource whether he will state if consideration will be given for the conversion of the Sebastopol MITD into a State Secondary School for the benefit of students in the regions of Sebastopol, Mont Ida and Olivia.

Dr. Gungapersad: Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that the issue of conversion of the Sebastopol MITD Centre into a State Secondary School does not arise.

The Sebastopol SSS is a full-fledged secondary school and the MITD Centre is situated within the compound of the Sebastopol SSS. In fact, the MITD Centre in Sebastopol exists only since the start of the academic year 2024.

Following the results of the NCE in 2023 whereby a high majority of the students of the Extended Programme did not meet the NCE pass criteria, the MITD implemented the NC2 Courses with Bright Up Programme to ensure the continuity of education to the students. The programme was meant to enable students to join the vocational sector, including the world of work, through National Certificate Level 2, and thereafter, leading to National Certificate Level 3.

In that context, the unused part of Sebastopol SSS was put at the disposal of the MITD to run NC2 Courses with Bright Up Programme for trainees in the eastern region, primarily from the Sebastopol, Mont Ida and Olivia regions. The area consisted of 10 ten classrooms, namely eight classrooms in the Block A, four on the first floor and four on the second floor, two classrooms from Block B, one classroom on the first floor and one classroom on the second floor, and two toilet blocks of Block A.

Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that the Sebastopol SSS is a low-intake secondary school located at the foot of Montagne Blanche Mountain and catering for boys in Zone 2 region, Beau Bassin-Rose Hill and East. It commenced its operation in the year 2000 and its building consists of five blocks,

A, B, C, D, E, with a total of 28 classrooms. Currently, only 18 classrooms, along with the administrative offices and Specialist Rooms, are in use by the staff and students of Sebastopol SSS.

For the Academic Year 2024, it had an overall total of 167 students enrolled in Grades 7 to 11, including students of the ex-Extended Programme.

I am also informed that the school population of Sebastopol SSS has been decreasing constantly over the past years. There is only one section of each grade and there has been no intake at Grade 12 level since 2019. For Academic Year 2025, requests for admissions stand at 19 comprising of only 11 students for Grade 7 and only 8 students for the first year Lower Secondary of the new Foundation Programme in Literacy, Numeracy and Skills.

Madam Speaker, I am also informed that the MITD invested some Rs2.47 m. in its centre at Sebastopol SSS in terms of upgrading works, procurement of training and IT equipment, and acquisition of furniture. The activities of the MITD and the Secondary School at the Sebastopol SSS building are well separated, including different break periods. All arrangements are in place so that there are no conflicting activities and both institutions operate in harmony.

Madam Speaker, the Sebastopol SSS will continue to remain a full-fledge secondary school to serve the academic needs of students in its surrounding areas and support equitable access to education for students in its vicinity, fulfilling the Government's mandate to provide quality education without discrimination based on foundational performance. The institution already has the required infrastructure including well-equipped laboratories, classrooms and other facilities to deliver academic training aligned with national educational goals.

However, the shared infrastructure with the MITD will continue to coexist to ensure learners in the neighbouring regions are given fair treatment in terms of access to vocational studies and training which is a fundamental pathway to education and skills development. I wish here to inform the House that similar arrangements already exist at La Gaulette SSS.

Madam Speaker, I also wish to inform the House that currently there are two State schools to cater for the need of education of girls at Secondary Level in zone 2, namely –

(i) Quartier Militaire SSS, and

(ii) Bel Air SSS.

Madam Speaker, my Ministry has the portfolios for education, human resource, training and skills development; there is a need for a holistic approach and better linkages and synergies among the various partners to provide a wide array of services to our diversified learners for them to grow into productive and resilient citizens.