



EIGHTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

04 August 2026

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MEDCO ALEX BHUJOHARRY SECONDARY SCHOOL – POST OF MANAGER – ASSISTANT SECRETARY

(No. B/1221) Ms J. Bérenger (First Member for Vacoas & Floreal) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resource whether, in regard to the MEDCO Alex Bhujoharry Secondary School, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to whether the post of Manager thereof is being held concurrently by an Assistant Secretary of his Ministry and, if so, indicate the reasons therefor.

Dr. Gungapersad: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to inform the House that the Mauritius Educational Development Company Limited, Medco Limited, is a state-owned company operating under the aegis of my Ministry since 1993. It is entrusted with the management of two institutions, namely Medco Alex Bhujoharry Secondary School and Medco Agalega Secondary School. The hon. Member wishes to know whether the post of manager of Medco Alex Bhujoharry Secondary School is currently being held by an officer of my Ministry as an interim measure. The answer is yes, as an interim measure.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am informed that the appointment is neither unusual nor irregular. It is fully in line with the long-established practice of the board of Medco Limited where one of its directors is designated to serve as manager of Medco school. This arrangement has been consistently adopted because the recruitment of a full-time manager would impose a significant financial burden on Medco Limited, having regard to its current financial conditions.

Accordingly, in February 2026, the board designated one of its directors, who also serves as an Assistant Secretary in my Ministry to perform the functions of manager of Medco Alex Bhujoharry Secondary School. The appointment was duly registered with the PSA in accordance with the established requirements.

In the past, two officers holding the grade of principal Assistant Secretary, now restyled Deputy Permanent Secretary, which is higher than the grade of Assistant Secretary, served as managers of Medco schools. One officer served as Manager of Medco Alex Bhujoharry Secondary School from 2010 to April 2012, while another served as Manager of Medco Trinity Secondary School from 2010 to 31 December 2015. There is therefore, nothing new or unusual in an officer serving as administrative grade at my Ministry.

In addition, the managerial grant allocated by the PSEA for the post amounts to Rs40,530 monthly. However, the manager of Medco Alex Secondary School is presently being paid only Rs11,730 monthly with the balance being utilised for other school-related works.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to make it absolutely clear that the present appointment is an interim administrative arrangement, intended to ensure continuity in leadership, sound governance and effective oversight pending the recruitment of a substantive administrative Manager of Medco Limited.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, far from being a nominal appointment, the present arrangement has already resulted in tangible and measurable improvements in the administration of MEDCO Alex Bhujoharry Secondary School. This is part of the second part of the question by the hon. Member.

First, the manager has facilitated inspections by the PSEA in relations to health and safety requirements with a view to improving the working and learning environment at school.

Second, greater emphasis has been placed on staff discipline and attendance. During a site visit undertaken some months ago, the manager observed that the few non-teaching employees who were required to report for duty at 7:30 a.m. were arriving between 8:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. Monitoring arrangements have since then been strengthened and an electronic attendance system is being introduced to further reinforce accountability and punctuality.

Third, the manager reviewed the duties performed by a chemistry educator drawing a monthly salary of Rs80,593. It was found that the officer was carrying out duties that were not corresponding with his...

The Deputy Speaker: I think, you have already answered the question. You are going outside the question in the reply. The question was clear whether...

Dr. Gungapersad: So, the second part, the reasons.

The Deputy Speaker:... it was held by the Assistant Secretary of the Ministry and state why. Thank you.

Ms J. Bérenger: Merci. Le problème étant, l'honorable ministre peut-il expliquer à la Chambre comment est-ce que concrètement dans la pratique le managing director peut répondre aux sollicitations des officiers de l'école dans les heures de travail alors qu'il est pendant ces heures-là au ministère en tant qu'Assistant Secretary.

Dr. Gungapersad: Thank you, hon. Member. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to inform the hon. Member, for managers in general, I am not talking about rector, deputy rector. Managers - this happens in private secondary schools also. It is not mandatory for the manager to be full-time on the site. As and when needed, requested by teaching and non-teaching staff, the manager can respond to the duties.

Ms J. Bérenger: Juste une dernière.

The Deputy Speaker: Okay.

Ms J. Bérenger: Est-ce que l'honorable ministre n'y voit-il pas un conflit d'intérêt ? Parce que s'il y a des doléances de la part des professeurs ou des officiers de l'école concernant la gestion de l'école, le managing director siège aussi sur le board de MEDCO, et donc, il serait juge et partie. Est-ce qu'il n'y voit pas un conflit d'intérêt ?

Dr. Gungapersad: For your information, hon. Member, any interim manager in the past has to be appointed from one has to be appointed from one of the Board members. And in this case, there is no conflict of interest. On the contrary, I was enumerating, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, how this person helped for better management of the school because we have only 101 students in that school for your information.