

NATIONAL LIBRARY - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS & PUBLICATIONS
(15/11/16)

(No. B/937) Mrs D. Selvon (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Arts and Culture whether, in regard to the precious historical documents and publications being damaged, many beyond repair, found at the National Library and at other public historical and cultural databanks, he will state if measures are being taken for the safeguard thereof and, if so, give details thereof and if not, why not.

Reply: I am informed that as at today, there has been no damage to any precious historical documents and publications, found both at the National Library and at the National Archives, except for some newspapers.

As regards measures being taken for the safeguards of historical documents at the National Library and the National Archives, I am informed that the following actions are being undertaken -

1. Ongoing digitization process;
2. Environmental control to slow down any process of deterioration by controlling the temperature, humidity and light;
3. Regular dusting and insect control ;
4. Binding for preservation and conservation;
5. Encouraging appropriate handling of fragile documents by users and providing gloves to handle brittle documents, and
6. Capacity building for our technicians in the restoration of documents with friendly countries under our Cultural Exchange Programmes.

Furthermore, during the visit of the Director and Chairman of the National Library in China in August 2016, a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed with the National Library of China for cooperation and sharing of expertise. The National Library of China has also been approached to extend its help to provide the service of digitisation to the National Library.