

DR/D01/P21/6
(Statements Cont'd)

**PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY -
RESUMPTION OF STUDIES**

The Minister of Education and Scientific Research (Mr S. Obeegadoo): Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish, with your kind permission, to make a statement in connection with the resumption of studies in the pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of education.

In the pre-primary sector, around 15,600 pupils have been admitted in January 2004, bringing the total school population in the pre-primary sector to 32,400 in about 1100 pre-primary schools of which 175 are pre-primary units of the Pre-school Trust Fund attached to State primary schools.

As regards the primary schooling sector, approximately 17,400 pupils have been admitted to Std I in January 2004 and to date, the primary school population stands at around 127,000 accommodated in 261 non-fee paying primary schools and 28 fee paying primary schools. 300 new trainee teachers for the primary sector are joining the Mauritius Institute of Education this year. It is worthy of note that for the first time, trainees are this year being recruited on the basis of enhanced entry requirements, that is, two "A" levels instead of the Cambridge School Certificate. It is also to be noted that the pupil/teacher ratio has progressed from 26:1 in 2000 to 23:1 this year.

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(4.30 p.m.)

(Statement) (Mr Obeegadoo):

In the secondary sector with the construction of new schools, 67 State secondary educational institutions are in operation in the year 2004 as compared to 34 only in the year 2000.

The total number of students admitted to Form I in the mainstream in the year 2004 is 16,300, out of which 7,200 were admitted to State secondary schools compared to 3,700 in the year 2000. As regards the pre-vocational stream, introduced by this Government, 3,400 students have been admitted to Year 1 in both State and private secondary schools. The gross enrolment rate for the 12-15 age group, which was 80.7% in the year 2000, has as a result reached 86.1% this year. The ratio of students to teachers in the secondary sector which was 19:1 in the year 2000 is now 17:1, and around 60% of the year 2004 teaching staff are now university graduates as compared to only 52% in year 2000.

Further, some 200 new Education Officers have been recruited for State secondary educational institutions this year.

Finally, in the tertiary sector, the number of students enrolled in the publicly funded institutions in 2003/2004 is 13,100 as compared to 9,000 in 2000/2001.

In terms of percentage, there has been a significant increase in the gross participation rate in the tertiary sector, which has now reached nearly 20% as compared to 13% in the year 2000.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the resumption of studies in all schools of Mauritius is as at to date practically completed and the statistics associated therewith are an eloquent testimony to the great leap forward achieved both in terms of access to education and to the quality of education offered.

Thank you, Sir.