

**KOMITÉ VANS LÉKOL – CHAMP DE MARS – PROTEST  
(15/07/08)**

**(No. B/881) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether he is aware that the *Komité Vans Lékol* staged a protest at the Champ de Mars, on Tuesday 08 July 2008 and, if so, the reasons therefor.

**The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping (Dr. R. Beebeejaun):** Mr Speaker, Sir, a group of school bus operators involved in the conveyance of school children staged a protest at Champ de Mars on 08 July 2008. I understand that their main contention concerns the enforcement of the Road Traffic Regulations of 2002 requiring the employment of a helper in contract vehicles licensed to carry school children.

In February 2008, following accidents which involved children travelling in school vans and representations from parents, owners of contract buses licensed to convey school children were informed by the National Transport Authority that the regulations would be enforced and that they should submit documents to register helpers by 30 of April 2008, subsequently extended to 30 June 2008.

The Association has equally made a number of other requests, which I am circulating (**Appendix I**). A meeting has been convened on Wednesday 16 July 2008 at the National Transport Authority to discuss these requests.

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Mr Speaker, Sir, as we all know the owners of these *vans lékol* are self-employed people. Actually they take their spouse or one adult child to assist and help them. Government is now saying that they must employ another person. We all know that they are facing many problems. The costs are rising, for example, fuel, NTA licence and so on. Will the hon. Deputy Prime Minister see to it that this decision be reviewed by Government because they are already being assisted by their spouse or an adult child?

**Dr. Beebeejaun:** There is no problem if they already have an assistant; they have to register him. We are not asking for two assistants, but only one.