

TERTIARY

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS - DENTAL COLLEGE

YEAR 2022

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR D. J., VICE CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS – PRE-RETIREMENT PACKAGE

(17.05.2022)

(No. B/647) Dr. F. Aumeer (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology whether, in regard to the early voluntary retirement of Mr D. J. as Vice Chancellor of the University of Mauritius, she will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the University of Mauritius, information as to the pre-retirement package thereof, including, any benefits to which he is eligible.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology (Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun): Mr Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the University of Mauritius that Professor D. J. retired in accordance with paragraph 13.29(1) of the 2021 Pay Research Bureau Report on 9 March 2022 after having served as Vice Chancellor for a period of five years.

I am also informed that the retiring benefits of Professor D. J. have been computed on the basis of the pensionable emoluments of the post of Vice Chancellor.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in accordance with the various provisions of the PRB Report, Professor D. J. was also eligible for the refund of accumulated sick leaves, vacation leaves and his passage benefits.

Dr. Aumeer: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. Professor D. J. was technically an employee as at 24 March, enjoying salaries and benefits as the Professor of Faculty of Science despite being on an approved vacation leave. Does the hon. Minister have any information as to why his retirement and benefits have been computed and backdated to 9 March while at his own request he demanded that his leave be approved at 28 February?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Speaker, Sir, Professor D. J. had, in fact, written a letter to the Council, informing the Council that he intended to retire as from 28 February 2022. His request was submitted to the University's Council and he was asked to wait for a reply. The Vice Chancellor did not go back to work and if ever there was an overpayment made it was recut by the Council of the University.

Dr. Aumeer: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. I quote, 'as per PRB Report, a retired officer gets the benefits at the post he was holding on the previous day.' Can I ask the hon. Minister whether the representative of her Ministry was agreeable to that exceptional backdate which led to an extra payment of Rs733,000 combined sick leave and vacation leave and it was, at that time, computed as if he was still the Vice Chancellor?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to stress on one particular fact. The Vice Chancellor was appointed as Vice Chancellor and had retired as Vice Chancellor. The Council wanted some time to figure out what are his benefits and they requested advice from the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms and, in fact, there was a High Powered Committee that had figured out and had decided that he could, in fact, retire as Vice Chancellor because he was appointed Vice Chancellor, he was not even acting as one. He was appointed as Vice Chancellor as from 2017.

Mr Speaker: Last supplementary!

Dr. Aumeer: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. Can I ask the hon. Minister, in the request of his early voluntary retirement there is also the issue of having inquiries of two internal cases and two external cases which had been levied against him, whether her Ministry would ensure that the University of Mauritius pursues all investigations and if there were to be any criminal offence, would the matter be reported to the authorities concerned and appropriate actions taken?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Speaker, Sir, the University of Mauritius will operate as per its statute and will have to carry out any investigation if ever required.