

ENTERTAINMENT SECTOR – SALARY SCALE STRUCTURE (14/04/09)

(No. B/211) Mr E. Guimbeau (First Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources whether, in regard to the entertainment sector, he will state if Government will consider introducing entertainment laws and, if so –

- (a) when;
- (b) it is proposed to work out a salary scale structure for the sector.

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am aware of problems prevailing in the entertainment sector due to the absence of a legal framework. The quantum of pay to performing artists in the entertainment sector is a matter of great concern to me. In fact, it has come to my knowledge that there exists some sort of exploitation of artists going on in that sector.

I wish to inform the House that my Ministry with the assistance of UNESCO and the Mauritius Research Council is presently conducting a study on the Cultural Industry in Mauritius. The study comprises *inter alia* the status of our Cultural Industry including the entertainment sector and recommendations for improvement. The findings will enable us to introduce appropriate measures for the development of the sector.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am informed that the final report of the study will be ready by June this year. The recommendations of the study will be validated after consultations with all stakeholders.

I cannot at this point in time pre-empt the recommendations but what I can say is that when an emerging economic sector grows and reaches a certain level, it becomes imperative to have a legal framework to regulate it. This legal framework may also include the question of remuneration of artists and which can only be in line with the new philosophy of the new labour legislations.

Mr Guimbeau: Mr Speaker, Sir, can the hon. Minister tell the House whether he is in possession of any draft of the copyright law emanating from the stakeholders such as MASA, the Police and the Customs?

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes, we are working very actively on that.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister whether he will agree with me that there should be a contribution of the Ministry of Tourism because in many cases this is where the cultural industry thrives? As he rightly pointed out, there is a lot of exploitation. For example, many of those Sega dancers are getting up to Rs100 for the show, and there are even minors. Something can be done there. There is a lot of scope of what can be done in the cultural and tourism industry.

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr Speaker, Sir, I fully agree and, as I said, we are going to consult all stakeholders.

Mrs Perrier: Is the hon. Minister aware that children are often used for entertainment, especially in the tourism sector? Will the hon. Minister cater for this aspect also in the new regulation?

Dr. Bunwaree: Certainly, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Guimbeau: Mr Speaker, Sir, can the hon. Minister give us an idea when all of these measures are going to be in force?

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr Speaker, Sir, I said that we have to wait for the report, which I expect to get at the end of the month of June, and then we will have a meeting with the stakeholders. The hon. Member can rely upon me to go as quickly as possible.