

MALCOM DE CHAZAL TRUST FUND – BOARD COMPOSITION & MEETINGS (23/06/09)

(No. B/599) **Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas & Floreal)** asked the Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources whether, in regard to the Malcom De Chazal Trust Fund, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Fund, information as to the –

- (a) composition of the Board, and
- (b) number of meetings held by the Board, since July 2005 to date.

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr Speaker, Sir, the Malcolm de Chazal Trust Fund Board has not been reconstituted since July 2005.

When the new Government assumed Office in 2005, it was decided to review the constitution, functioning and operation of the Cultural Centres and other cultural institutions and this was contained in the Government Programme.

In this context, a Ministerial Committee was set up to look into the matter and advise Government.

As regards Cultural Centres, as we know, an interim decision has been taken. As regards other centres, such as the Malcolm de Chazal and the Basdeo Bissoondoyal Trust Fund Boards, my Ministry is actually working on a repertory of all renowned Mauritians who have marked the arts and culture space in Mauritius with a view to finding ways and means to perpetuate their memories, philosophy and works for future generations and will come up with an appropriate framework for that purpose.

The reconstitution of the Malcolm de Chazal Trust Fund Board and the Basdeo Bissoondoyal Trust Fund will be considered in the same wake.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am a bit surprised to hear this answer and the ease with which it is said. It is through an Act of Parliament that we have got the Malcom De Chazal Trust Fund as well as the Basdeo Bissoondoyal Trust Fund. It is nearly four years now and nothing has been done and there are people who are attached to this Trust Fund. They don't know where they are going. There are grants – I suppose – from Government which are being given to these Funds. Are we interested to know what is happening with these Funds?

Dr. Bunwaree: I understand the hon. Member. As I have said, it was in our Programme.

There are other Mauritians who also have to be honoured. This is why I am waiting for the repertory to come and then we will see.

(Interruptions)

This is the decision we have taken. To be fair to the hon. Member, of course, this should not prevent Mauritians in any way, even my Ministry, to honour Malcom De Chazal in various other means. But, a decision would be taken very soon. Since I have taken Office, I have asked at least for that repertory to be carried out. Work is being done on that. It is nearing completion; I am waiting for that and then we will come forward. If there is the need to do as we have done for the cultural centres to appoint the Board, and if I see that there is no other way for them to perform actively, I'll do it. But then, I want to get this repertory to know how many such Mauritians should also be honoured in the same way.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Speaker, Sir, must I take it from the hon. Minister that since he has not completed the list of those he thinks have to be honoured, namely people such as Malcom De Chazal or Prof. Basdeo Bissoondoyal, we have to keep what has been decided concerning these people aside, until the Ministry has completed his list? It is as if those two persons do not deserve, until the list concerning others is being completed.

Dr. Bunwaree: No, this is the question of constituting the Board. But, we don't let the work be affected. The Ministry is seriously looking into that. In fact, we can organize all the functions that are supposed to be taken care by the Board and this can continue, and should.

Mrs Labelle: I am sorry, one last question, Mr Speaker, Sir. I was just looking again at this Malcom De Chazal Trust Fund Act. There is nothing that we can do without the Board and the hon. Minister is fully aware, because there were letters from his Ministry. Since 2003 and 2006, every action that was asked, it was replied, ok, please wait until the Board is constituted.

And now, the hon. Minister is telling me that something can be done. There is nothing that can be done without the Board and the Minister is fully aware. Is he aware of these letters?

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: Let the hon. Minister answer! Does he agree with this?

Dr. Bunwaree: What I have said is that my Ministry can allow activities and the functions of the Board to be carried out.

At 1.00 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.30 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

The Deputy Speaker: The Table has been advised that Parliamentary Question Nos. B/600, B/601, B/612, B/629 and B/634 have been withdrawn.