

FLACQ - TAXI OWNERS - COMPLAINTS

Debate no 11 of

9/10/05

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(No. I B/320) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the difficulties faced by the taxi owners of the eastern region, he will state if he recently had any meeting with them or their representatives, and if so, will he state the outcome thereof.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping (Dr. R. Beebeejaun): Sir, a delegation of taxi owners from Flacq called at my Ministry on 12 September 2005 and at my request was received by the Permanent Secretary. A second meeting chaired by me took place on 10 October 2005.

The main problems faced by the taxi operators, which were discussed at the meetings were as follows -

- (a) the unlawful competition faced by them from private vans and cars;
- (a) the need to rationalise the operation of taxi cars which have been licensed to ply from regions located in the immediate vicinity of Central Flacq;

- (a) the need for the National Transport Authority to speed up the process of disciplinary actions against taxi licence holders who are keeping their cars for personal use;
- (a) outside based taxis which, with the blessing of tour operators, poach at the hotels for trips which would normally have been performed by the taxis operating from the hotels, and
- (a) the adverse impact which the free travel scheme for students is having on the income of taxi owners operating at separate fares.

The representatives of the taxi owners have made a number of proposals to address their difficulties, which are being studied by my Ministry.

Mr Guinness: Mr Speaker, Sir, it seems that there is unfair price-cut by bus operators in that route. As we know ...

Mr Speaker: I am sorry, this does not arise out of the question.

Mr Guinness: Mr Speaker, Sir, I will put my question differently. The taxi owners are getting difficulties as a result of an unfair price-cut by bus owners. Can I know whether the inspectors of the NTA have gone on site and, if yes, what action has been taken?

Dr. Beebeejaun: This is one of their complaints. An inquiry is being carried out by the NTA.

Mr Guinness: Is it true that at a meeting with the NTA, one of the officers told them that no decision was being taken because there is no Board and no Board members as such?

Dr. Beebeejaun: The Chairman has yet to be appointed, but Mr Nabeebaccus is chairing the meetings.
