

18.06.2019

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

B/435

The Honourable Third Member for Port Louis South and Port Louis Central
(Mr Osman Mahomed)

To ask the Honourable Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development –

Whether, in regard to drains, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Land Drainage Authority, information as to if (a) the Land Drainage Master Plan is ready and, if so, table copy thereof and (b) it is ensuring (i) co-ordination of the construction of drainage infrastructure by local authorities, National Development Unit, Road Development Authority and other stakeholders, if any, and (ii) that contractors of projects thereof, presently under implementation, possess the required competences and resources?

REPLY

Madam Speaker,

One of the objects of the Land Drainage Authority under section (4) of the Land Drainage Authority Act 2017 is the development and implementation of a Land Drainage Master Plan.

Since its setting up in 2017, the Authority has benefited from technical assistance from the 'Agence Française De Development' for the setting up and operationalization of the Land Drainage Authority and the development of a Land Drainage Master Plan.

Under the technical assistance, a vulnerability assessment and baseline assessment were carried out to identify pre-requisites for the

elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan. The pre-requisites identified are:

- (i) critical rainfall data;
- (ii) new Intensity Frequency Duration (IDF) curves;
- (iii) hydrological and flow data for rivers and water courses around the Island; and
- (iv) inventory of existing drains and inventory of flood prone areas.

The recommendations of the vulnerability and baseline assessments will be integrated in the Land Drainage Master Plan.

Madam Speaker,

Another pre-requisite to elaborate the Land Drainage Master Plan is the acquisition of a Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and an Aerial Imagery.

The Digital Elevation Model is a very important tool used to identify waterways including potential water accumulation and flood prone areas. It is also used in the inventory and mapping of drains and canals, and more importantly in the rehabilitation, upgrading and in the design and implementation of new drainage networks required to mitigate risks of flooding in flood prone areas, thereby enhancing resilience of property and lives at risks from flash floods. The Digital Elevation Model is expected to be delivered by the end of August 2019 which coincides with the planned mobilisation of the Consultant for the formulation of the Land Drainage Master Plan.

Madam Speaker,

The Terms of Reference for the elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan have been finalised in collaboration with the Agence Française de Développement and bids will be invited in the coming days. The expected duration of the assignment is 15 months. The Land Drainage Master Plan will also incorporate an action plan for the next 10 years to ensure there is an integrated catchment-based approach to mitigate flooding.

The elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan will comprise the following:

- (i) identification and mapping of flood prone areas for land drainage system and drainage infrastructures;
- (ii) hydrology study;
- (iii) assessment of the existing capacity of the drainage system;
- (iv) definition of achievable level of protection by modelling; and
- (v) elaboration of the Land Drainage Master Plan and its local application.

The Land Drainage Master Plan is expected to be ready by September 2020.

Madam Speaker

With regard to part(b) (i) of the Question, the Land Drainage Authority is indeed coordinating the construction of drainage infrastructure by the National Development Unit, the Local Authorities, the Road Development Unit, and any other relevant stakeholder in accordance with its mandate as stipulated under section 4(b) of the Land Drainage Authority Act 2017.

A Coordination and Maintenance Committee on drainage infrastructure has been set up at the Land Drainage Authority for this purpose since January 2018. The Committee normally meets on a monthly basis.

Madam Speaker

With regard to part (b) (ii) of the Question, the Land Drainage Authority is not an implementing body. In fact, it has the mandate to coordinate the construction of drainage infrastructure by the Local Authorities, the National Development Unit and the Road Development Authority and any other relevant stakeholder. It is up to these implementing agencies to ensure that Contractors of projects thereof have the required competencies and resources.