STUDENT BILLY JOE TROUSQUIN - DEATH AT LYCÉE POLYTECHNIQUE SIR GUY FORGET

The Minister of Education & Scientific Research (Mr S. Obeegadoo): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I propose to make two statements. My first statement concerns the death of student Billy Joe Trousequin at Lycée Polytechnique Sir Guy Forget, Flacq.

On Monday 25 June 2001, student Billy Joe Trousequin, who was reading for his third year in Fabrication Mécanique at the Lycée Polytechnique Sir Guy Forget in Flacq was in the electrical workshop. The practical work he was doing involved the connection of a three-phase electrical motor. At around 11.00 a.m., the student suddenly fell backwards from his work post. The teacher and the other students who were in the workshop ran to help him. He was conveyed to Flacq Hospital where the medical staff found out that student Trousequin had already passed away.

As a token of its support to the parents of the deceased, the Technical School Management Trust Fund handed over to the bereaved family a cheque to meet the funeral expenses. The family has also been assured of our total support concerning the matters in relation to on the funeral.

Meetings have been held with all the parties concerned, namely officers of my Ministry, representatives of the Students Council, representatives of the Teachers' Union, representatives of the Technical School Management Trust Fund and the Manager of the Lycée Polytechnique to discuss the circumstances of the tragic incident, the state of affairs at the Lycée Polytechnique and measures for the future.
After discussion, it has been agreed that:

(i) My Ministry would make available the services of a psychologist to the students who have been affected by the accident. Necessary arrangements have been made and the psychologist has already started counselling services.

(ii) The interruption of classes as a sign of respect for the deceased and the holding of a funeral service - which was held in Flacq on Monday last - and pending the completion of a security audit, all classes have been stopped and the school time-table has been rearranged accordingly.

(iii) Finally, and most importantly, Mr Deputy Speaker, my Ministry is commissioning an independent security audit to carry out an assessment of the present state of affairs and evaluate the security measures in force, and make recommendations as appropriate to guarantee the safety of all concerned, that is, students and staff.