

## PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

A/102 The Honourable First Member for Grand River North West and Port Louis West (**Mrs Navarre-Marie**)

*To ask the Honourable Attorney-General:-*

**Whether, in regard to the Certificate of Morality, he will state the reasons accounting for the delays before delivery thereof, indicating the remedial measures that will be taken in relation thereto?**

## REPLY

Mr. Speaker, Sir,

I am informed by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (“DPP”) that there is no delay at present in the delivery of certificates of morality. The normal period for the delivery of a certificate is one month and this timeframe is largely due to the fact that the number of applications has increased from 5,000 in 2005 to 46,039 in 2010.

2. Another recurring problem is the fact that a number of employers and/or authorities request new certificates of morality after a period of 3 months. As a result, previous certificates become obsolete quickly, thus requiring fresh applications.

3. I am also informed that complaints of delay are made by persons who leave their applications at the eleventh hour or submit incomplete applications or applications with missing documents. Although every effort is made by the Office of the DPP to deliver this service expeditiously, it is considered that some complaints of delay are unfounded.

4. I am also informed by the Commissioner of Police that, in certain instances (e.g. Ganga Asnan, Maha Shivaratee, end of year festivities

etc), due to the exigencies of the service, personnel from the CRO and Prosecutors' Offices who deal with certificates of morality are called upon to reinforce Divisions for a certain number of days, thus causing delay in their normal duties.

Mr. Speaker, Sir,

5. My Office is presently working on possible amendments to be brought to the Certificate of Morality Act. I have received certain proposals from the Office of the DPP. A few weeks ago, a meeting was also held with the representatives of the Commissioner of Police concerning the proposed amendments. I understand that there are important policy issues which need to be discussed and addressed.

6. I also wish to inform the House that, following a Cabinet decision, the Secretary to Cabinet has set up a committee to consider a number of measures with a view to improving the service. The committee has already met on two occasions and received the views of stakeholders.

7. I consider that it is very important to take time to examine the present system and identify where the problems lie. Any proposed amendments should have two objectives: firstly, to improve on the fairness of the system, and secondly, to reduce the lengthy processing delays.