

14.05.2019

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

B/330

The Honourable Third Member for Curepipe and Midlands
(Ms Sewocksingh)

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 the proposed introduction of an account-based betting together with a player card programme/system as announced at paragraph 313 of the Budget Speech 2017-2018, he will state where matters stand?

REPLY

Madam Speaker,

Following my announcement on the introduction of account based betting together with a player card system in the Budget Speech 2017-2018, necessary amendments have been brought to the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act through the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act of 2017.

I must, however point out that the introduction of the account based betting /player account system requires the elaboration of a proper and robust operational and legislative framework so that the system, once implemented, achieves the intended objectives which are to increase audit trail on betting activities and to facilitate the tracking of offences related to money laundering through gambling activities.

To that end, Madam Speaker, expert advice had to be sought. Accordingly, the Gambling Regulatory Authority invited expressions of interest with respect to the consultancy services on 10 August 2018, but the exercise was unsuccessful. Following invitation for a second expression of interest on 19 September 2018, the Gambling Regulatory Authority succeeded in hiring the services of a consultant to work on the required framework which includes the design and modalities of the system. The Consultant started her assignment in February 2019. She had working sessions with different stakeholders including the Bank of Mauritius, the Financial Services Commission, the Financial Intelligence Unit, the Mauritius Revenue Authority, the Mauritius Turf Club and some of the Bookmakers.

A proof on concept has been proposed and the Consultant has recommended a trial on a pilot basis before finalisation of the Report. The proof on concept is expected to be put to test in June 2019.

Subsequently, Madam Speaker, based on the results of the proof on concept and taking into account the recommendations from the Consultant in her final report, relevant regulations would be made after necessary consultations so that account based betting together with a player card system will serve its purposes effectively.