



THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY ELECTION 2017 REPORT

CONSTITUENCY NO.18 - BELLE ROSE AND QUATRE BORNES



OFFICE OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

JANUARY 29, 2018

1.0 OVERVIEW

A National Assembly By-Election ¹was held in Constituency No. 18 – Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes, on 17 December 2017 following the resignation of Honourable Sudarshan Bhadain, also known as Roshi, as member of the National Assembly on 23 June 2017. This report provides information on the conduct of the said by-election.

The writ for the National Assembly By-Election was issued by Her Excellency, the President of the Republic of Mauritius on the 15 September 2017, appointing Mr Raj Seebaluck, Vice President of the Intermediate Court, as Returning Officer. The nomination day was fixed to 4 November 2017 and the polling day scheduled to 17 December 2017.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius provides that there shall be a Parliament for Mauritius, which shall consist of the President and a National Assembly. The term of Parliament is five years.

The President is elected by the National Assembly on a motion made by the Prime Minister and supported by the votes of a majority of all the members of the Assembly for a term of five years and is eligible for re-election. The President appoints the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Attorney-General and the other Ministers from among members of the Assembly. The Prime Minister is the Head of Cabinet.

The National Assembly consists of 70 members, out of which 62 are elected under the First Past the Post system. Eight (8) additional seats are allocated by the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC) under the ‘Best Loser System’ in order to ensure a fair and adequate representation of each community.

The Constitution of Mauritius has established three (3) independent institutions namely: The Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC); The Electoral Boundaries Commission (EBC) and The Office of the Electoral Commissioner (OEC) with regards to the electoral process.

- ✓ The OEC is mandated to register electors, organise and conduct elections.
- ✓ The ESC has the general responsibility for supervising the registration of electors and conduct of the elections
- ✓ The EBC is also mandated to review the boundaries of constituencies.

¹ The last National Assembly Election was held in December 2014.

3.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- ✓ The Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius 1968
- ✓ The Representation of the People Act 1958
- ✓ National Assembly Elections Regulations, 2014

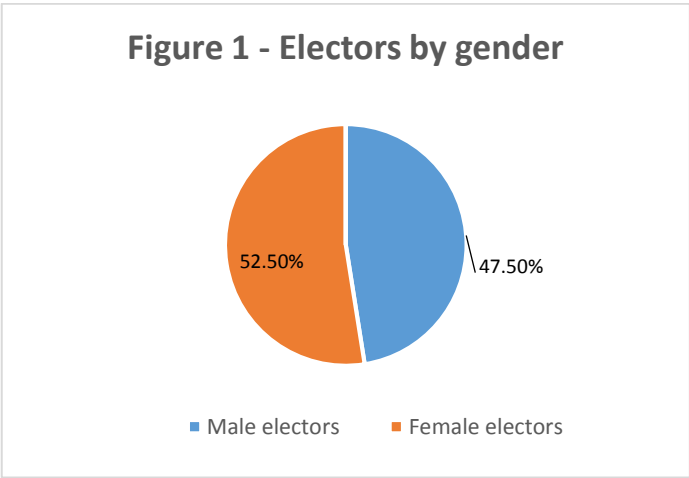
4.0 THE BY-ELECTION KEY DATES

Upon the issue of the writ, the Office of the Electoral Commissioner (OEC) elaborated a work plan and an election calendar² prepared with the following key dates:

1.	Nomination Day	4 November 2017
2.	Last date for withdrawal of candidature	7 November 2017 at 3pm
3.	Polling Day	17 December 2017
4.	Counting Day	18 December 2017

5.0 STATISTICS ON REGISTER OF ELECTORS

- Register in force - 2017
- Number of electors – 42,052
 - Male electors - 19,978 (47.5%)
 - Female electors - 22,074 (52.5%)



² Election Calendar (Annex I)

6.0 LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Electoral Supervisory Commission appointed 13 polling stations within the Constituency. Several meetings were held to coordinate the logistical arrangements, strategic planning and risk management issues with stakeholders including officers of the Police Department, the Electrical Services Division, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and the Government Printing Office.

Regular meetings were held with the Police Department to maintain law and order in the constituency during the electoral campaign and on polling day.

7.0 COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The OEC provided necessary information to all stakeholders, more especially, the electors and candidates. All notices and documents compiled throughout the electoral process, such as, Notice of Elections, list of polling of stations, a complete list of candidates contesting the elections, Notice of Polling day, amongst others, were published in the Government Gazette and in the local newspapers and could also be consulted by any stakeholder at the OEC. These documents were also available on the website of the OEC.

The media was also briefed extensively and at regular intervals with regard to the election process.

7.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

A Code of Conduct³ was elaborated by the Electoral Supervisory Commission with respect to the by-election. It is a non-binding document comprising of a set of principles to be adhered to by all candidates and to be upheld both in spirit and letter.

All candidates subscribed to the Code of Conduct on Nomination Day, thereby proclaiming their adherence to the principles and prescriptions contained therein and publicly committed themselves to adopt, promote and abide by the Code.

The main principles set out in the Code of Conduct were generally complied with by the candidates contesting the by-election.

³ A Code of Conduct was first elaborated by the Electoral Supervisory Commission in 2009 (*Quartier Militaire / Moka By-election*).

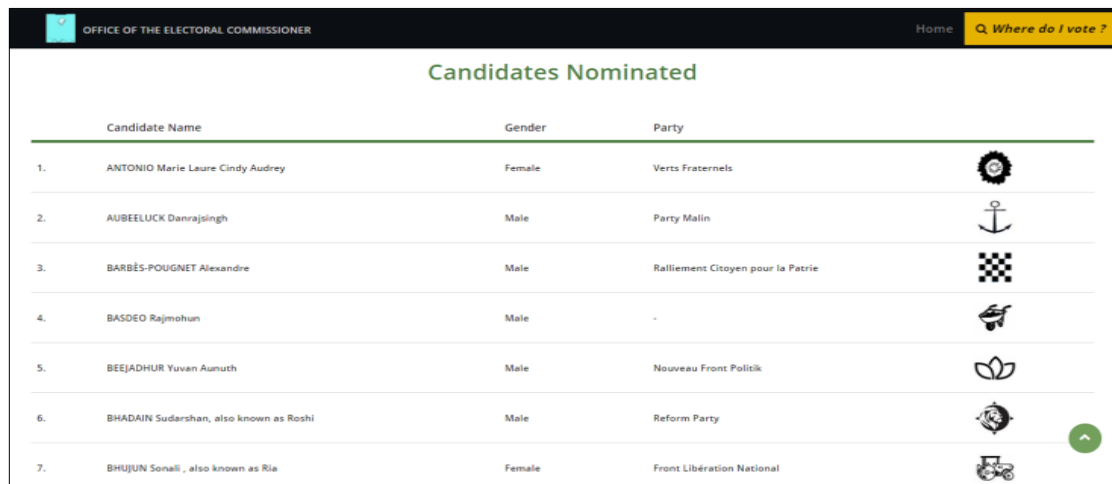
7.2 INNOVATIVE MEASURES

Mobile Applications

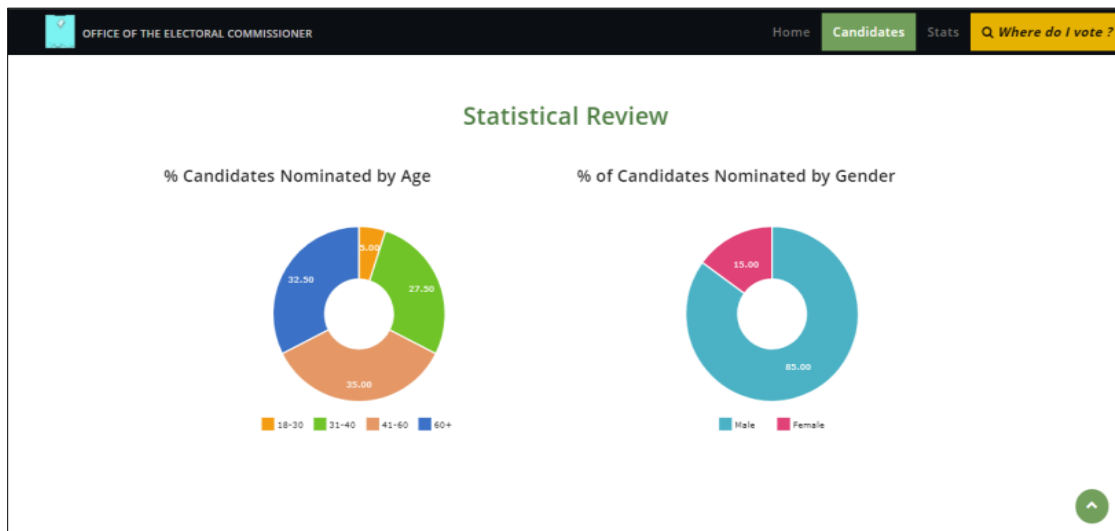
With a view to enhance the integrity and transparency of the electoral process, a new IT application was developed for the dissemination of information in real time on the nomination of candidates, participation rate on polling day on an hourly basis, partial and final results on counting day.

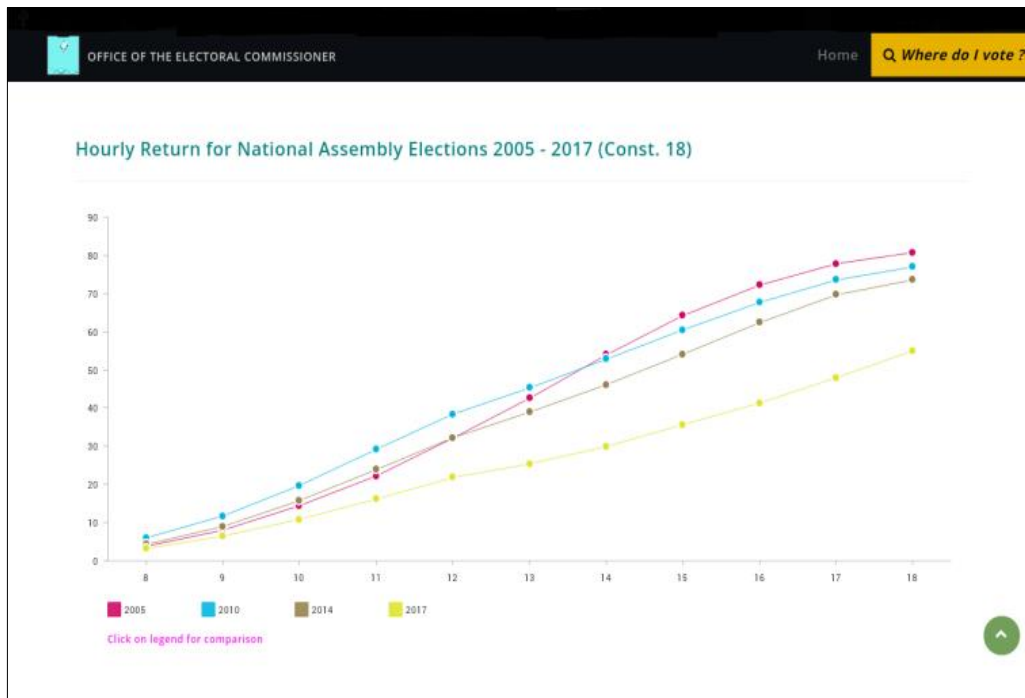
Statistical analysis and charts, including interactive charts, as shown below, were provided for in the application which was available on Google play and App Store for free download on smartphones and tablets.

The same information was also available on the website of the OEC.



	Candidate Name	Gender	Party	
1.	ANTONIO Marie Laure Cindy Audrey	Female	Verts Fraternels	
2.	AUBEELUCK Danrajsingh	Male	Party Malin	
3.	BARBÈS-POUGNET Alexandre	Male	Ralliement Citoyen pour la Patrie	
4.	BASDEO Rajmohun	Male	-	
5.	BEEJADHUR Yuvan Aunuth	Male	Nouveau Front Politik	
6.	BHADAIN Sudarshan, also known as Roshni	Male	Reform Party	
7.	BHUJUN Sonali, also known as Rila	Female	Front Libération National	





Outcome:

- The number of hits from nomination day up to polling day → 228,069
- The number of hits on counting day → 204,586
- The total number of hits through the link on our website → 432,655
- Users from 58 countries also visited the OEC website during that period.
- The mobile application was downloaded by 2189 users (Android 1859 and IOS 330)

7.3 VOTER INFORMATION AND MEDIA

An SMS facility was provided to enable prospective voters locate their respective polling station and voting room. Electors would type elec <space> followed by their National Identity Card Number and SMS to 789 for any mobile service provider. A message would instantly be generated providing the relevant information to the voter.

The above information could also be obtained through a search engine uploaded and activated on the OEC website.

The electoral campaign was a matter of national interest. The public broadcaster allocated equitable airtime to each candidate as per the guidelines set out by the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation Act.

The private media including the written press, private radio stations and online outlets also gave a wide coverage of the campaign, by posting pictures, raising issues, organising debates and conducting interviews with candidates; and interacting with the electorate.

8.0 NOMINATION DAY – 4 NOVEMBER 2017

Nomination Day was held on 4 November 2017 at the main centre, Sodnac S.S.S Girls, between the hours of 9.00 am and 3.00 pm. The Returning Officer, assisted by two Deputy Returning Officers and 20 Election Officials conducted the entire process under the supervision of the Electoral Supervisory Commission.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP – Section 33 of the Constitution

- To be eligible to stand as candidate as a member of the National Assembly, a candidate must be:
 - ✓ Commonwealth citizens of not less than 18 years of age;
 - ✓ resident in Mauritius for a period of, at least 2 years before nomination day for election and for 6 months immediately before that date; and
 - ✓ able to speak and read the English language with a degree of proficiency sufficient to enable them to take an active part in the proceedings of the National Assembly.

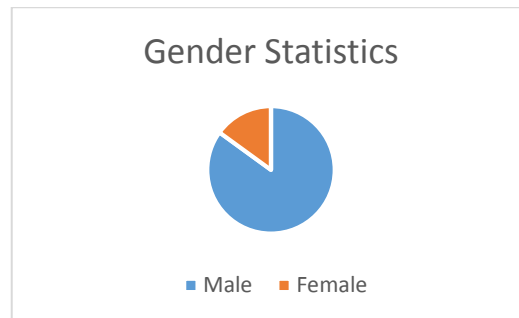
DISQUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP: Section 34 of the Constitution

- Disqualified are persons:-
 - ✓ owing allegiance to state outside the Commonwealth,
 - ✓ public officer or a local government officer,
 - ✓ undisclosed government contractors,
 - ✓ undischarged bankrupts,
 - ✓ adjudged to be of unsound mind or detained as a criminal lunatic,
 - ✓ under sentence of death or is serving a sentence of imprisonment exceeding 12 months or person guilty of electoral offences.

Candidates Nominated

Forty (40) candidates were nominated -

- 34 male
- 6 female



- Each nomination paper contained the name, gender, address and occupation of the candidate.
- Every nomination paper was accompanied by the required deposit of 1,500 rupees.

Withdrawal of candidature

At the expiry of the last day for withdrawal of candidatures, the list of candidates nominated remained unchanged.

9.0 BRIEFING OF ELECTION OFFICIALS

An extensive briefing, with 644 election officials appointed, was conducted with regard to the election procedures to be adopted on polling and counting day to for the said election on 21 November 2017 at Quatre Bornes S.S.S.

The following issues were also addressed:

- Punctuality
- Professionalism
- Impartiality and neutrality
- Courtesy to stakeholders
- Secrecy of the vote

10.0 MEETING WITH CANDIDATES & CAMPAIGN MANAGERS

An interactive meeting was held with all candidates contesting the elections and their campaign managers to address issues related to the by-election. The candidates were informed on the upcoming electoral events such as printing of ballot papers and procedures to be on polling and counting day.

Particular attention was paid to the environmental footprint of the campaigns by all stakeholders. In that regard an environmental friendly approach was adopted by banning the use of all plastic campaign materials. Additional billboards, in designated places, were provided for to affix posters and campaign materials.

11.0 BALLOT PAPERS

The ballot papers were printed by the Government Printing Office under strict police surveillance on a 24 hour basis to ensure the security of the ballot papers.

A total number of 42, 375 ordinary ballot papers and 450 tendered ballot papers were printed. The printed ballot papers were conveyed, under armed police escort to the OEC for verification and storage purposes. The ballot papers with other sensitive election materials were, thereafter, sealed in stationery boxes and kept in safe custody at the OEC under round the clock police supervision.

All the above information was communicated to the candidates during the meeting held with the candidates.

12.0 CONVEYANCE OF SEALED BOXES FROM OEC TO POLICE STATIONS

On 15 December 2017, i.e. 2 days prior to polling day the sealed stationery boxes were taken over by the Returning Officer for conveyance at two police stations in the constituency, where they were placed in safe custody, under lock and key, by the Returning Officer. The exercise took place in the presence of media and armed police officers. However, despite the fact that they were duly informed of the time and place of the said exercise no candidates were present.

13.0 EVE OF POLLING DAY – BRIEFING

A briefing was held by the Senior Presiding Officer of each polling station where election officials were apprised on their role and duties on polling and counting day. The classrooms in all the schools used as polling stations were converted into voting rooms. For sake of consistency, the set-up of all the ninety (90) voting rooms was carried out in accordance with established guidelines prepared by the OEC.

14.0 POLLING DAY - 17 DECEMBER 2017

Before the opening of the poll, the Senior Presiding Officers of each polling station took over their respective sealed stationery boxes from the Returning Officer. All election officers were required to report for duty and to confirm their attendance at latest by 6 am. All arrangements for the taking of the poll were completed by 6.45 am, by which time ballot boxes were sealed in presence of candidates and/or election agents. The voting process started at 7.00 am sharp.

14.1 SPECIAL NEEDS VOTING ROOM (SNVR)

A special needs voting room, equipped with facilities, was set up for voters requiring assistance to cast their votes. The legislation also provides for a voter to be assisted by a specified family member namely: either mother, father, spouse, brother, sister, son or daughter.

Voters with special needs, such as the elderly, pregnant women, persons on wheelchairs, or persons with disabilities, had priority access to the SNVR.

Features of a Special Needs Voting Room -

- close to the main entrance of the polling station, as far as practicable
- provisions for ramps
- provisions for chairs to voters with special needs waiting in the queue
- user friendly booths

One hundred and seventy and seven (177) disabled and voters with special needs had recourse to the SNVR. Every polling station was equipped with two wheelchairs to enable voters with special needs to cast their votes.

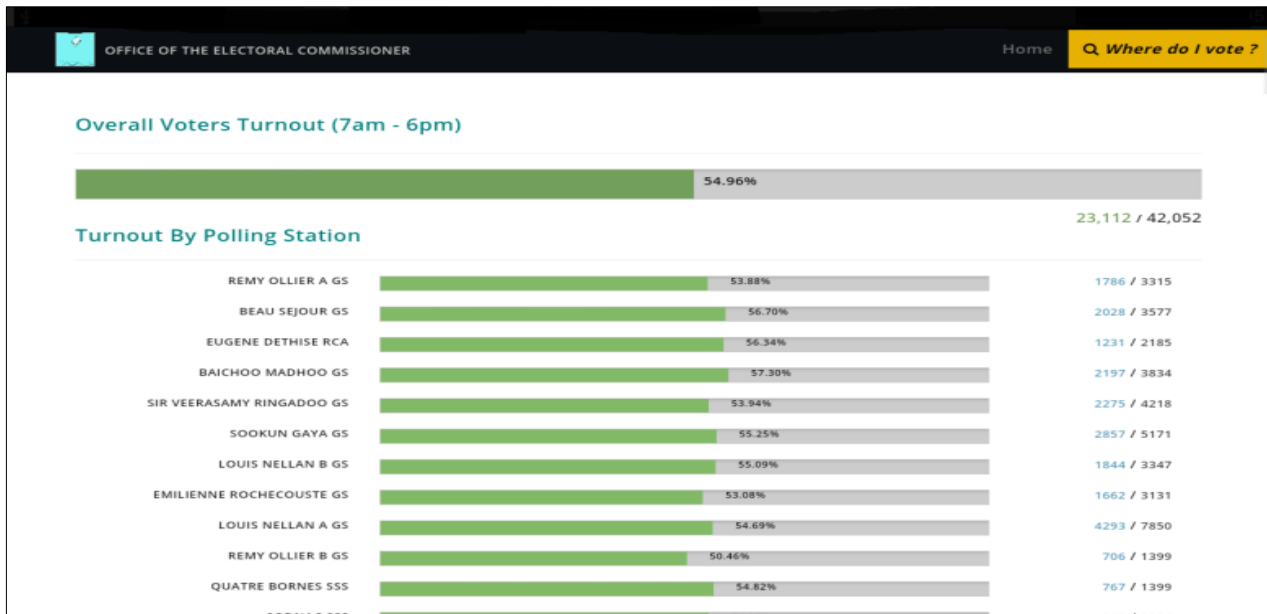
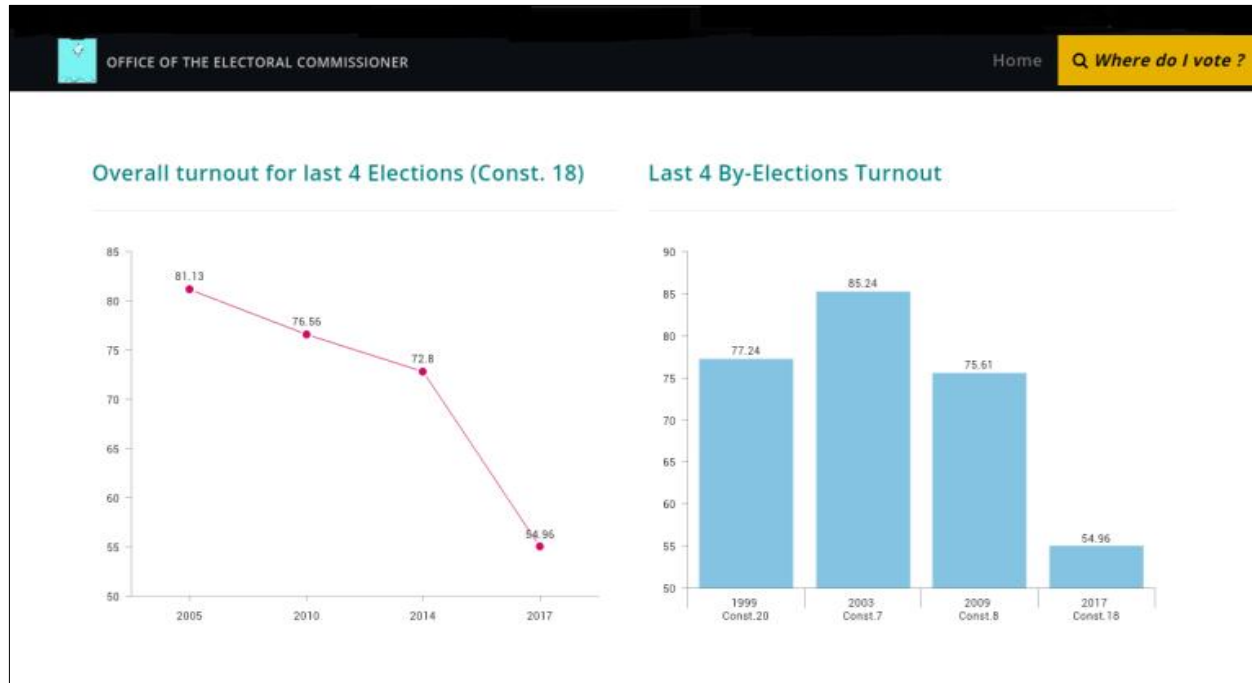


Voters with disabilities attending polling station to cast their votes

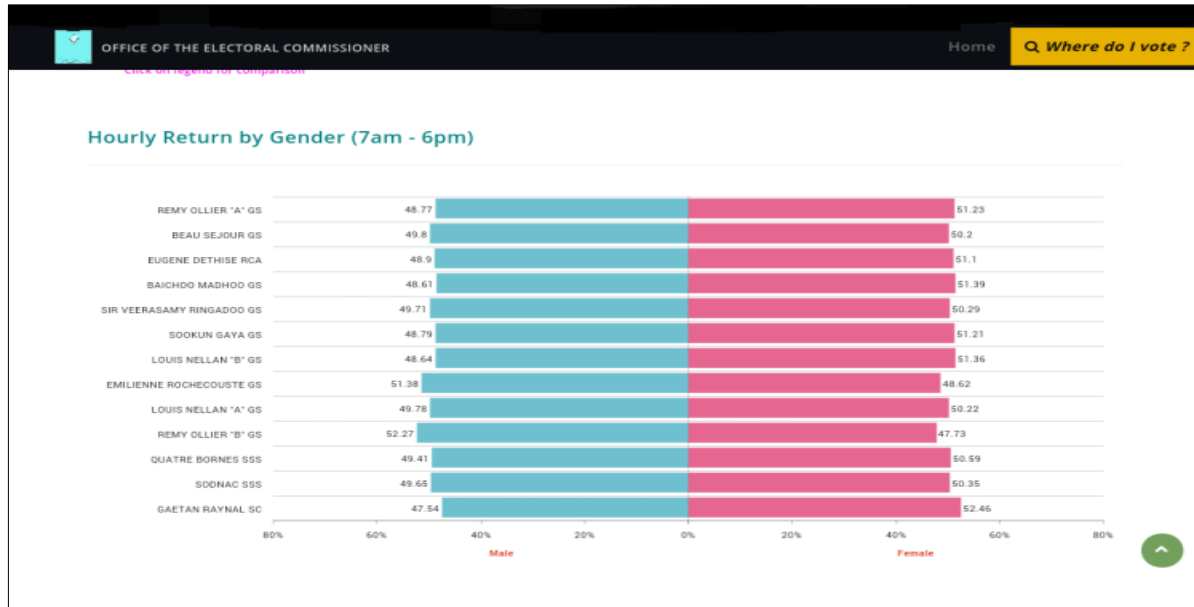
14.2 HOURLY RETURN AND GENDER STATISTICS

Statistics, in respect of, both voter turnout and gender, for the constituency were posted up for the information of the public at large, on an hourly basis.

The data, including figures compiled per polling station and constituency, was also updated on the specifically designed IT application every hour, as shown below:



Statistics: Gender-wise



15.0 CLOSE OF POLL

The polling exercise ended at 6 pm. Upon completion of all the administrative tasks, the sealed ballot boxes, containing ballot papers, were transported from the outlying polling stations to the main centre of the constituency under police escort. Accredited agents were allowed to travel in the vehicles transporting the said ballot boxes to the main centre.



Conveyance of ballot boxes from outlying polling station to the main centre

16.0 ‘GUARD ROOM’

All the sealed ballot boxes, from the 13 polling stations, were kept in a “guard room” at the main centre. The said guard room was sealed by the Returning Officer in presence of candidates and election agents. The Special Mobile Force took charge of the guard room and the main centre for the night.

Night agents, appointed by candidates, were allowed to stay within the precinct of the main centre to see to it that the ballot boxes stored in the guard room were not tampered with.

17.0 COUNTING DAY - 18 DECEMBER 2017

17.1 COUNTING PROCESS

The counting process started at 8.00 am. The seal of the guard room was broken in the presence of candidates and agents to ensure that the ballot boxes had not been tampered with. Counting agents were then, posted in all the counting units to observe the entire counting process. Candidates were entitled to observe the counting process.



The guardroom

17.2 PARTIAL RESULTS

Partial results were posted up periodically at the main centre, and was also uploaded on the IT application (Mobile/WEB).

Rejected Ballot Papers

Out of 23,112 ballot papers, 354 (1.5 %) were rejected by the Returning Officer under the following grounds:-

(a) Voting for more than one candidate	266
(b) Writing or mark by which a voter could be identified	22
(c) Unmarked	56
(d) Void for uncertainty	10
Total	354

18.0 PROCLAMATION OF RESULT

The final result⁴ was proclaimed at 15.00 hrs by the Returning Officer at the counting centre. Candidate BOOLELL Arvin polled the highest number of votes 7,990 representing 35.11% and was declared elected for the seat to be filled. The results were not contested by any other unreturned candidates.



The proclamation of results

⁴ Election Results – Annex III



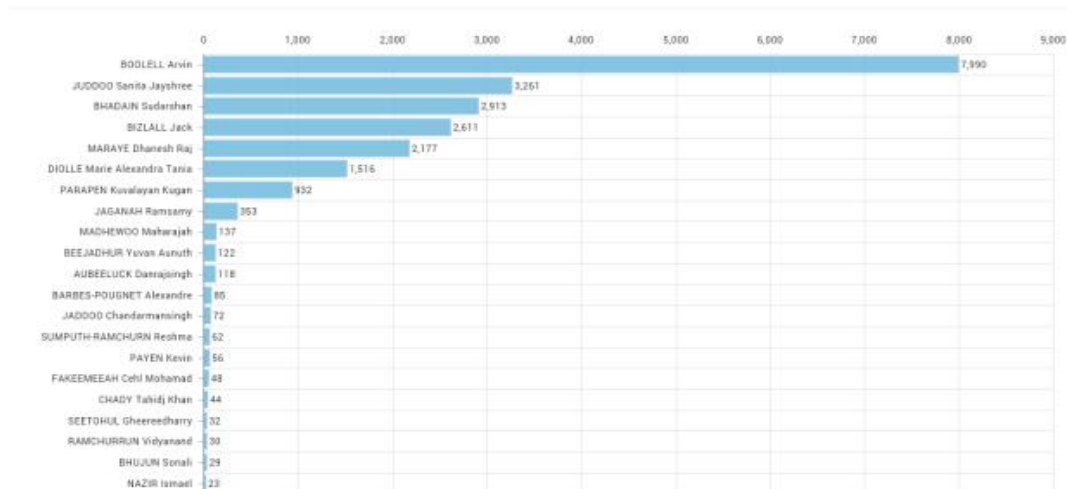
Result

	Candidate Name	Party	Votes	% Votes
1.	ANTONIO Marie Laure Cindy Audrey	Verts Fraternels	16	0.07
2.	AUBEELUCK Danrajsingh	Parti Malin	118	0.52
3.	BARBES-POUGNET Alexandre	Ralliement Citoyen pour la Patrie	85	0.37
4.	BASDEO Rajmohun	-	2	0.01
5.	BEEJADHUR Yuvan Aunuth	Nouveau Front Politik	122	0.54
6.	BHADAIN Sudarshan	Reform Party	2913	12.80
7.	BHUJUN Sonali	Front Liberation National	29	0.13
8.	BIZLALL Jack	Mouvement Premier Mai	2611	11.47
9.	BOOLELL Arvin	Mauritius Labour Party	7990	35.11
10.	CHADY Tahidj Khan	-	44	0.19
11.	DILLUM Ashwin Kumar	-	11	0.05
12.	DIOLLE Marie Alexandra Tania	Mouvement Patriotique	1516	6.66
13.	FAKEEMEEAH Cehi Mohamad	Front Solidarite Mauricien	48	0.21
14.	GHOORAHOO Subiraj	-	1	0.00
15.	GRAND-PORT Eric Desire	-	5	0.02



Statistical Review

Votes obtained by Candidates



Challenges on polling day

- 420 electors (1.8%) constituency-wise were unable to vote for the following reasons:
 - the persons have never been registered
 - some electors were residing elsewhere and registered thereat
 - some had moved from the constituency and did not register at their new address
 - some were abroad at the time of the registration of electors
 - some could not be met despite several attempts made during the House to House Inquiry
- Inappropriate and fake news posted on social media. Misuse of technology remains a constant threat.

19.0 SAFEGUARDING OF COUNTED BALLOT PAPERS

Immediately after the proclamation of results, all the counted ballot papers, counting sheets and all sensitive election related documents were sealed and transported to the Special Mobile Force Headquarters, in Vacoas, under the supervision of the Returning Officer and police escort. The sealed documents were placed in a strong room under lock and key by the Returning Officer, until their destruction as provided for by regulation 45(2)(b) of the National Assembly Elections Regulations 2014.

20.0 EXPENDITURE

The expenses incurred for the said by-election amounted to approximately 31 million rupees (*approx. 885,714 USD*). This includes printing of ballot papers, allowance for election officers and police, cost of publication of notices in the press.

21.0 FORFEITURE OF DEPOSIT

Regulation 46 of the National Assembly Elections Regulations 2014 provides that the amount deposited by a candidate shall be forfeited to the State if the number of votes polled by the him/her does not exceed one-tenth ($1/10^{\text{th}}$) of the total number of valid votes polled.

The election deposits made by 90 % of the candidates (36) were forfeited as the number of votes polled by them did not exceed one-tenth ($1/10^{\text{th}}$) of the total number of valid votes polled.

22.0 ELECTION EXPENSES

Section 56 (1) of the Representation of the People Act provides that “*Within 6 weeks after the day on which the candidate or candidates returned at an election is or are declared elected, the election agent of every candidate at such election shall make an election return to the returning officer for the electoral area in*

which he acted as an election agent”.

Section 51 of the said Act provides that the maximum amount of election expenses to be incurred by a candidate is 250,000 rupees.

All candidates who submitted their returns stated by way of affidavit that their election expenses were within the prescribed limit. The names of the candidates who had duly submitted their election returns were published in a daily newspaper; their returns were posted on the website of the OEC and were also available for inspection at the OEC.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY - ELECTION, 2017

ELECTION CALENDAR

	ACTIVITIES	DATE (2017)
1.	Issue of writ of election	15 September 2017
2.	Appointment of Returning Officer (RO)	
3.	Publication of Notice of Election	
4.	Introductory Meeting of RO	18 September 2017
5.	Signing of writ by RO	
6.	Affixing of Notice of Election at Nomination Centre	19 September 2017
7.	Appointment of Deputy Returning Officers (DRO's)	20 September 2017
8.	Appointment of polling stations by ESC (<i>Publication</i>)	
9.	Submission of lists of SPO's – PMO	27 September 2017
10.	Submission of Junior Staff lists	5 October 2017
11.	Approval of staff lists by ESC	6 October 2017
12.	Inspection of polling stations by RO's and DRO's	13 October 2017
13.	Briefing of RO & DRO's - RE: NOMINATION	31 October 2017
14.	NOMINATION DAY	4 November 2017
15.	Submission of RO's Reports of candidates nominated	6 November 2017
16.	Approval of symbols for candidates by ESC	7 November 2017 at 3 pm
17.	Last date for withdrawal of candidature	
18.	Submission of RO's Reports of candidates remaining nominated	7 November 2017 at 4 pm
19.	Collection & affixing of Notice of facsimili of symbols by RO	8 November 2017
20.	Collection & affixing of Notice of Polling Day by RO	

21.	Publication of Notice of Polling Day: Gazette + Daily	
22.	Printing of ballot papers	As from 8 November 2017 TBC (<i>after consultation with GP</i>)
23.	Briefing of SPO's	10 November 2017
24.	Briefing of RO's & DRO's - RE: GENERAL STAFF MEETING	17 November 2017
25.	General Staff Meeting (<i>Quatre Bornes</i> SSS)	21 November 2017
26.	Submission of lists of replacements	23 November 2017
27.	Staff meeting for replacements	29 November 2017
28.	Last day for submission of application for proxy (<i>regulation 34 NAE</i>)	1 December 2017
29.	Last date for submission of lists of polling & counting agents	12 December 2017
30.	Briefing of RO's & DRO's - RE: COUNTING & RESULTS	13 December 2017
31.	Collection of candidates' cards	As from 14 December 2017
32.	Conveyance of sealed boxes from ECO to Police Stations	15 December 2017 (<i>as from 9 am</i>)
33.	Taking over of polling stations from MPI	16 December 2017
34.	Preparation of polling stations	
35.	Return of election items to Office of Electoral Commissioner	
36.	POLLING DAY	17 December 2017
37.	COUNTING DAY	18 December 2017
38.	Submission of Certificate of Result of Poll and endorsement of writ by RO	19 December 2017
39.	Last date for submission of returns of election expenses	23 January 2018

ANNEX II

Constituency No. 18 – Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes

List of Polling Stations

S/N	Name of Polling Station	No. of electors
1.	Remy Ollier "A" Government School	3315
2.	Beau Sejour Government School	3577
3.	Eugene Dethise Roman Catholic Aided School	2185
4.	Baichoo Madhoo Government School	3834
5.	Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo Government School	4218
6.	Sookun Gaya Government School	5171
7.	Louis Nellan "B" Government School	3347
8.	Emilienne Rochecouste Government School	3131
9.	Louis Nellan "A" Government School	7850
10.	Remy Ollier "B" Government School	1399
11.	Quatre Bornes State Secondary School	1399
12.	Sodnac State Secondary School	1324
13.	Gaëtan Raynal State College	1302
Total		42052

The Constituency of BELLE ROSE AND QUATRE BORNES (No.18)

	<i>Name of candidates</i>	<i>Number of Votes Secured</i>
1	BOOLELL, Arvin (elected)	7,990
2	JUDDOO, Sanita Jayshree, also known as Nita	3,261
3	BHADAIN, Sudarshan, also known as Roshi	2,913
4	BIZLALL, Jack	2,611
5	MARAYE, Dhanesh Raj	2,177
6	DIOLLE, Marie Alexandra Tania	1,516
7	PARAPEN, Kuvalayan Kugan	932
8	JAGANAH, Ramsamy, also known as Nitish Joganah	353
9	MADHEWOO, Maharajah	137
10	BEEJADHUR, Yuvan Aunuth	122
11	AUBEELUCK, Danrajsingh	118
12	BARBES-POUGNET, Alexandre	85
13	JADDOO, Chandarmansingh, also known as Pramode	72
14	SUMPUTH-RAMCHURN, Reshma	62
15	PAYEN, Kevin	56
16	FAKEEMEEAH, Cehl Mohamad	48
17	CHADY, Tahidj Khan	44
18	SEETOHUL, Gheereedharry	32
19	RAMCHURRUN, Vidyanand	30
20	BHUIJUN, Sonali , also known as Ria	29
21	NAZIR, Ismael	23
22	PERSAND, Karandeo, also known as Ashiq Karan	19

23	ANTONIO, Marie Laure Cindy Audrey (exaequo)	16
24	KARUTHASAMI, Clivy Marino (exaequo)	16
25	LUTCHMAN, Prasram (exaequo)	16
26	JOSON, Louis Eddy, also known as Baby Joson	13
27	JOHNSON, Rodgers Desire Antonio	12
28	DILLUM, Ashwin Kumar (exaequo)	11
29	PURSUN, Vivay Kanum, also known as Vivek (exaequo)	11
30	VADAMOOTOO, Nathalia	9
31	RAMCHURN, Aman	6
32	GRAND-PORT, Eric Desire	5
33	GUNOORY, Dewanand (exaequo)	3
34	RAMKISSOON, Hemraj (exaequo)	3
35	BASDEO, Rajmohun (exaequo)	2
36	SARATHEE, Jayraj (exaequo)	2
37	GHOORAHOO, Subiraj (exaequo)	1
38	RUGHOONAUTH, Ravindrasingh (exaequo)	1
39	TAJOO, Varun Kumar Singh (exaequo)	1
40	YENKANAH, Nasanah	0

