

RODRIGUES

FIRST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 10 of 2003

Sitting of Tuesday 17 June 2003

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Mathurin at 10.30. a.m.

(Mr Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2003

CONTENTS

QUESTIONS (Oral)

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

ADJOURNMENT

QUESTION (written)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADJOURNMENT

QUESTIONS (*Oral*)

(No. B/198) Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Health Director

(No. B/199) Gynaecological Treatment

(No. B/200) Women (Pregnant) - H.B. Pricks

(No. B/214) Hospitals - Shortage of Doctors

(No. B/215) Port Mathurin hawkers

(No. B/216) Reconstruction of roof at Don Bosco RCA

(No. B/217) Water for Domestic purposes

(No. B/218) Community Health Centres - improvement

(No. B/219) Camp du Roi and its Outskirts – road network

(No. B/220) Malabar Gymnasium – improvement

(No. B/221) Papayes Reservoir – construction

QUESTIONS (*Written*)

(No. B/201) Morcellement Baie Malgache – access road

(No.B/202) Camp du Roi Stadium - canteens

(No.B/203) Riviere Coco Cemetery

(No.B/204) Quatre Vents Volley Ball ground

- (No.B/205) JIOI Games – pre-selected athletes – incentives
- (No.B/206) La Ferme Market place
- (No.B/207) Reposoir Reservoirs - Water Supply
- (No.B/208) Housing projects – Low income groups
- (No.B/209) Corail Petite Butte Community Centre – improvement project
- (No.B/210) Rehabilitation Programme Loan Scheme
- (No.B/211) Camp du Roi Stadium – field events - accident
- (No.B/212) Desalination plants - construction
- (No.B/213) Baie Topaze Area – pesticides, herbicides etc
- (No.B/222) Telbert Dam - rehabilitation
- (No.B/223) Fishmongers - number
- (No.B/224) Plaine Corail Road – upgrading and resurfacing
- (No.B/225) Agricultural Department - sprayermen
- (No.B/226) Baie du Nord/Grand La Focuhe Corail Road – resurfacing – cost, length, etc.
- (No.B/227) Piment/Reposoir Village - environment project
- (No.B/228) Reservoirs - repairs
- (No.B/229) Cemeteries - fencing
- (No.B/230) Dans Dugomier – access road
- (No.B/231) Legal Adviser - fees
- (No.B/232) La Ferme Water Unit – Government vehicles
- (No.B/233) Riviere Coco/Port Mathurin – bus service

- (No.B.234) Baie du Nord/Pointe la Gueule & Grande Montagne/Pointe Coton – road repairs
- (No.B/235) L’Ile aux COCOS & Ile au Sable – anti-erosion measures
- (No.B/236) Petit Gabriel/Grand La Fouche Corail – dust problem

Chapter 2 STATEMENT BY CHIEF COMMISSIONER

- (a) Artists – Assistance Scheme
- (b) Education Sector – reforms
- (c) The National Development Strategy Report – final Report and Executive summary

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL – HEALTH DIRECTOR

(No. B/198) Mrs M. T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Health whether, he would, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) who is the Health Director at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and
- (b) if that officer is presently occupying another post at the same hospital and, if yes, whether he intends to appoint a new Health Director.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir,

- (a) At present we do not have a Health Director, but we have an acting Health Director by the name of Dr. S. Ramdoyal;
- (b) Yes, the officer is presently occupying the post of Gynaecologist too.

As regards the 2nd part of the question, it no longer stands as the Public Service Commission has advertised the post of Health Director since 9th June instant.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner for Health when Dr. Ramdoyal was appointed as Ag. Health Director.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, when Dr. Abdool left, immediately after, that is, in March Dr Ramdoyal took over as Ag. Health Director.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairman, Sir, being given that Dr. Ramdoyal is a gynaecologist, does the Commissioner not think that a Health Director should be recruited as soon as possible? Because this may cause a problem at the hospital.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is a matter for the Public Service Commission. Anyway, the Ag. Health Director is looking over all technical matters, whilst the Departmental Head is catering for other

activities so as to ensure that drugs, stores, appliances, provisions, etc. are available besides supervising the implementation of development programmes, such as upgrading of health institution.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner, as a result of Dr. Ramdoyal, a gynaecologist, acting as Health Director, what has been the impact on gynaecology services at the hospital?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have just said, services are running normally, because the Ag. Health Director is doing both work.

GYNAECOLOGICAL TREATMENT

(No. B/199) Mrs M. T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Health whether he would state –

- (a)** how many gynaecologists are presently working in Rodrigues;
- (b)** the number of patients having undergone gynaecological treatment for the period October 2002 – April 2003;
- (c)** if he intends to increase the number of gynaecologists on the island.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir,

- (a)** Presently, there is one gynaecologist posted in Rodrigues.
- (b)** The number of patients having attended the hospital and Area Health Centres for gynaecological treatment for the period October, 2002 to April, 2003 stood at 2,902.
- (c)** The White Paper on Health Sector Reforms proposes the creation of an additional post for Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Rodrigues.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in his answer to question B/198, the Commissioner said that there is only one gynaecologist working in Rodrigues. Has the gynaecologist examined these 2,902 patients? That would be an item for the Guinness Book of Records! I would like to know whether it is the same Dr. Ramdoyal who is at the same time doing administrative work.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, definitely no. Let me inform the House that simple gynaecological problems are handled by a medical officer and complicated cases are referred to a specialist.

Mr J. Roussety: Can the Commissioner tell us what he means by “simple gynaecological problems”, which are, according to him, being treated by a medical officer?

Mr Sooprayen: When I said “simple gynaecological problems”, this means that these cases are not complicated ones; they are being referred to a medical officer. *Par exemple, si une femme a fait un retard concernant ses règles, ce genre de cas est référé au medical officer. Des cas qui sont compliqués sont référés au spécialiste.*

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner for Health whether the service is extended to dispensaries as well?

Mr Chairperson: When you say “the service” can you be more precise, please?

Mr Grandcourt: Gynaecological services.

Mr Sooprayen: To area health centres.

Mr Chairperson: I have not understood the answer.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, gynaecological services are given at area health centres, but not at dispensaries.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, I want to know when exactly will the second gynaecologist be recruited.

Mr Chairperson: I understand that this question has been answered. Would the Commissioner be agreeable to repeat the answer?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have just said that the White Paper on Health Reforms proposes the creation of this post.

Mr Chairperson: The question was: when exactly?

Mr Sooprayen: I can't say exactly when.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am much surprised by the large number of patients and the number of specialists attending to these patients. I don't know whether the Commissioner has the information. I

would like to ask him what measures he is going to take in the near future to see to it that there is a correct doctor/patient ratio, which, I believe, is now excessive, so that pregnant women have access to decent medical services? Because we all know that pre-natal care is one of the main conditions determining the health of babies, that is, future adults who are going to form the nation. So, I want to know what immediate measures he is going to take to see to it that more gynaecologists, more specialists are made available in Rodrigues

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, every measure is in the White Paper. So, we have to wait for some time.

WOMEN (PREGNANT) - H.B. PRICKS

(No. B/200) Mrs M. T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Health whether he would, as regards H.B. pricks for women undergoing pre-natal treatment -

- (a) state why women being treated at the Health Centres of the Island, have to come to Queen Elizabeth Hospital for their HB pricks, and
- (b) if he could consider alternative means for collecting HB samples of these patients to spare them the painstaking trip and the long hours waiting for only a blood sample to be taken.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a) of the question, women attending Health Centres for treatment have to come to Queen Elizabeth Hospital for estimation of Haemoglobin level, because such facilities do not exist at the Health Centres. There is only one Central Laboratory at Queen Elizabeth Hospital which performs all necessary investigations.

With regard to part (b), estimating the HB level by performing an HB prick is a very simple method which does not involve many procedures. Had the estimation been done otherwise, it would involve the following activities -

- (i) collecting blood in separate tubes;
- (ii) involving Health personnel for taking the blood samples;
- (iii) transporting the specimens to the Central Laboratory; and
- (iv) using sophisticated apparatus and reagents to perform the test. The collection of blood sample for eventual testing is not a cost-effective alternative. It is, therefore, recommended to maintain the system for the time being.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, however, it is the policy of the Rodrigues Regional Government to upgrade the two Area Health Centres in the near future and thereby provide each of them with a laboratory.

Mr J. Roussety: I understand from the answer that pregnant women undergoing pre-natal treatment have to travel to Queen Elizabeth Hospital to have HB pricks. Women are pregnant for nine months until the birth of the child. Until which stage of pregnancy does a pregnant woman have to travel to Queen Elizabeth – I understand from every part of Rodrigues – to have this test?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this question is a technical one. A medical officer would be able to tell you.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner for Health stated in his reply that the service for HB pricks is not extended to dispensaries and area health centres. But according to my information, blood collection samples for analysis are done at area health centres. Why is it that the service for HB pricks is not extended to area health centres as well?

Mr Sooprayen: I have just said that we should have sophisticated apparatus and reagents to perform the test. We are not well equipped.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we need sophisticated apparatus to do the test. I understand my colleague, the Second Island Region Member, is expecting and she is having these problems; I would like to thank her for bringing these problems to the House on behalf of all pregnant women in Rodrigues. First of all I am disappointed by the answer given by the Commissioner. He said that he is not aware and that it is a technical/medical problem. *Ce n'est pas digne d'un commissaire à la santé de ne pas savoir cela.*

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, Mr Chairperson, Sir. The Minority Leader should withdraw the words that he has just used. He has imputed motives to the Commissioner for Health.

Mr Chairperson: This point of order is clear and explicit. I agree with the Chief Commissioner that the Minority Leader and any Member of the Assembly should not impute any motive to anybody in this House. So, I'll ask the Minority Leader to withdraw these words.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir...

Mr Chairperson: I have ruled that you withdraw these words.

(Interruptions)

Please wait. I have ruled that the Minority Leader should withdraw the words that he has just used.

(Interruptions)

I'll ask the Minority leader for the last time to withdraw the words that he has used.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, without any willingness to show disrespect to you, I would like to ask you which words I have to withdraw.

Mr Chairperson: So, you don't remember what you have said.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I don't remember what I have said wrong which may have been offensive to the Commissioner.

Mr Chairperson: It is not a question of...

Mr J. Roussety: If you would allow me...

Mr Chairperson: I am not going to argue; the ruling is simply to withdraw these words which impute motives to the Commissioner.

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I agree to withdraw the words if you or any Member would please tell me which words I should withdraw. Can the Commissioner say which words...

Mr Chairperson: Please take your seat.

The Chief Commissioner: The Minority Leader was attacking the competence of the Commissioner for Health saying that he does not know his work. The question of the Minority Leader required a technical answer. So, I don't think that the Minority Leader should impute motives, questioning the competence of the Commissioner.

Mr Chairperson: The words used are ...

The Chief Commissioner: He was attacking the Commissioner's competence concerning the technical aspect of the question. The Commissioner said that he would need notice of the question.

Mr Chairperson: Is this clear to the Minority Leader?

Mr J. Roussety: It is not clear.

Mr Chairperson: So, if the Minority Leader has forgotten what he said, he will have to withdraw that part which relates to the ignorance of the Commissioner.

Mr J. Roussety: I can't remove what he has not understood, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Chairperson: You are not going to argue with me.

Mr J. Roussety: I am not; I am defending myself; it is my right.

Mr Chairperson: If you are not going to withdraw these words...

Mr J. Roussety: Which words, Mr Chairperson, Sir? I agree to withdraw the words, but I want to know which words. I remember what I said very well, because I am not a fool. Maybe he has heard words which I have not said.

Mr Chairperson: Can you repeat what you have said?

Mr J. Roussety: I have said that *le commissaire ne connaît pas son domaine et il a fait une erreur et ce n'est pas bien.*

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président il a dit que le commissaire ne connaît pas son domaine, donc il a fait une erreur. Il ne connaît pas le domaine technique. Pourquoi l'accuser d'avoir fait une erreur? Il n'est pas un technicien, donc on ne peut pas l'accuser d'avoir fait une erreur. *He needs notice of the question* et plus tard il viendra avec les réponses.

Mr J. Roussety: I am accusing nobody.

Mr Chairperson: I maintain my ruling. Would the Minority Leader withdraw the words that he has just said? I take it that you are not withdrawing these words – the words that you have just repeated.

Mr J. Roussety: I don't know which words I have to withdraw, Mr Chairperson, Sir, because these words, according to me, were not meant to attack the reputation of the Commissioner. By putting this

question, I wanted to say that may be he has not studied this question very well. He said that he does not know the technical aspect. I understand that because he is not a medical practitioner.

Mr Chairperson: Will you withdraw the words?

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is not clear which words I have to withdraw. I am expressing myself as a Member of Parliament. If I say that inflation is too high in Rodrigues, employment is too high, will they say that I am attacking their reputation? Would I have to remove? Mr Chairperson, Sir, I can't remove the words, because *mo pas fine zourer, ma pas fine faire mal élevé ici. Mo fine juste dire mo pensée.*

Mr Chairperson: I will not accept any explanation. Your attention is invited to Section 36 and I have ruled on this matter. The point is whether you would withdraw these words or not.

(Interruptions)

No interruptions from a sitting position. I take it that you are not withdrawing these words.

Mr J. Roussety: I'll answer you, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am not removing my words.

Mr Chairperson: Therefore, I consider that you have not complied with the ruling of the Chairperson and by so doing, you have shown disrespect to the Chair. I'll ask you to withdraw from this House.

At this stage the Members of the Minority left the Chamber

HOSPITALS - SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS

(No. B/214) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health, whether there was any shortage of doctors in our hospitals and, if yes, what measures he was taking to remedy the situation.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, at present, there is no shortage of doctors in Rodrigues except for the Health Director whose duties are being carried out by Dr. S. Ramdoyal, Consultant (Gynaecology/ Obstetrics)

PORT MATHURIN - HAWKERS

(No. B/215) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Trade whether he could state the measures he was taking to accommodate hawkers and fruit sellers operating in the streets of Port Mathurin.

The Deputy Chairperson, Mr Chairperson Sir, tenders for the construction of stands were launched in April 2003 and the contract is the process of allocation. The stands built will be placed under the shelter at the bus station and the facilities will be placed for the benefit of the hawkers and fruit sellers at rates which are to be determined at a later stage.

RECONSTRUCTION OF ROOF AT DON BOSCO RCA

(No. B/216) The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr. J. PIERRE LOUIS) asked the Commissioner responsible for Education whether, as regards the reconstruction of the roof of the building which has been blown off at Don Bosco R.C.A. by Cyclone Kalunde, the Commissioner would state the measures that are being taken to accommodate the children thereby affected.

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, following cyclone Kalundé, visits were effected by the Inspectorate of my Commission together with the Engineer and staff of the Commission for Infrastructure. It was noted that in addition to damages caused to the windows and other openings, the roof of one of the buildings has been blown off, thus rendering five classrooms inoperable. So as not to penalise the pupils and allow them to pursue their studies in an atmosphere conducive to learning, my Commission, after discussions with the parent/teacher association, the teachers themselves, the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research and REDCO, arranged for these pupils to be temporarily relocated at Citron Donis form VI college. At present five classes from Don Bosco are accommodated at Citron Donis and these pupils are pursuing their studies properly.

These arrangements will continue as long as the repairs to Don Bosco School's roof have not been completed.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to assure this House that my Commission is conscious of the situation and is fully committed to providing quality education to our youth.

Mr Pierre Louis: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner for Education inform the House when the reconstruction of the roof of that building will start?

Mr L. Roussety: Demolition works have already started over a week ago and the works are scheduled to proceed accordingly.

Mr Chairperson: The question was: when the building will start?

Mr L. Roussety: The demolition works have started. It has to be demolished first, Mr Chairperson, Sir, in order to rebuild. The reconstruction will follow in due course.

WATER FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES

(No. B/217) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether he could state the measures he was taking to improve the quality of water for domestic purposes.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have to inform this House that the following measures are being taken to improve the water quality for domestic purposes –

- (i) new filter plants will be constructed to replace old plants;
- (ii) catchment areas will be protected against stray animals;
- (iii) a mini laboratory is being set up at the Malabar Office to maintain both the chemical and bacterial quality of the water supplied.

Pour l'instant les échantillons sont envoyés au CWA pour les tests chimiques et biologiques. Depuis le 12 octobre, on voit que la Commission qui s'occupe de l'eau à Rodrigues et qui a la vision de faire le secteur eau plus productif travaille sur un plan pour assurer que la qualité de nos produits soit *pollution-free in the near future as it is now*.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES - IMPROVEMENT

(No. B/218) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health, whether he could state what measures were being taken to improve the existing Community Health Centres and their immediate environments.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, our vision for a better health comprises adequately equipped Community Health Centres in a better

environment so that pressure in the Area Health Centres and Queen Elizabeth Hospital is reduced. The following measures are being taken –

- (a) painting of the Health Centres;
- (b) improvement of the surroundings by planting decorative plants and flowers;
- (c) provision of furniture and basic medical equipment;
- (d) the labour force is being re-organised and redistributed in order to get a better output in terms of care and cleanliness.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, may I inform the House that together with my Departmental Head I visited Malartic Health Centre some time ago. Personally I was not satisfied with the state of the Centre. I immediately recommended having a new refrigerator, chairs for staff and fans to improve the centre and its surroundings. Similar interventions will be ongoing in other Community Health Centres.

CAMP DU ROI AND ITS OUTSKIRTS - ROAD NETWORK

(No. B/219) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the village of Camp du Roi, he would state –

- (a) If an access road with lighting facilities would be provided to the people living at Fond Camp du Roi, also known as “Dans Cité”; and
- (b) If a footbridge could be built near Roussety Cold Storage linking Camp du Roi to Port Mathurin as a shortcut.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that given the topography of the region, my Commission is proposing a concrete track road 436 metres long to be constructed. After consultation with the villagers, a request has been made to the IFAD Steering Committee which is looking into the possibility of financing the said track road.

As regards part (b) I am informed that the design for the small footbridge linking Camp du Roi to Port Mathurin is being finalised by the Public Infrastructure Division. The construction of the bridge is expected to start at about mid July and will be completed in about two months' time.

MALABAR GYMNASIUM - IMPROVEMENT

(No. B/220) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner of Youth & Sports whether, as regards the Malabar Gymnasium where Judo competition would be held for the forthcoming Indian Ocean Games, he would state-

- (a) what measures he is taking to improve same, and
- (b)** what is being done to upgrade the premises to provide for parking facilities.

Mr N. LISETTE: Mr Chairperson Sir, as regards part (a) of the question my Commission is conscious of the golden opportunity offered to Rodrigues with regards to the organisation of Judo Team Competition at Malabar Gymnasium in the context of the Indian Ocean Island Games. The complete renovation of the gymnasium is scheduled to start on 1st of July and is expected to be completed in six weeks' time. The following works will be carried out –

- (i) the complete replacement of the sport flooring. It is to be noted here that the sport flooring is already under lock at the gymnasium;
- (ii) the covering of the flooring of the different offices with ceramic tiles;
- (iii) the improvement of the yard by planting ornamental trees;
- (iv) the installation of metal fender to prevent entry of birds in the gymnasium;
- (v) The complete repainting in and out of the gymnasium;

As regards part (b), the road from Malabar to Le Chou via Human Resource Centre is at present undergoing construction in order to give a fresh look to the external site of the gymnasium. A provision of more than 60 parking facilities will be considered. Moreover, my Commission will also liaise with the Police to see that on the day of the competition, entry for cars along the above road is given only to VIPs, officials and judokas who are to take part in the competition. A special pass will be provided to any other vehicles which will be dealing with the game such as catering and ambulances.

PAPAYES RESERVOIR – CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/221) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the Papayes Reservoir, which was blown down by cyclone Kalundé, he would state when a new one would be constructed.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have to inform that following discussion the Executive Council had with the Head of Delegation of the European Union, the latter has agreed to finance the construction of a new reservoir at Papayes to the tune of Rs10 millions. The Papayes reservoir was destroyed by cyclone Kalundé.

My Commission has already undertaken all the necessary measures so as to optimise the use of that Fund.

A draft tender document for the construction of 1000 m³ reservoir at Papayes was prepared and sent to the Central Water Authority for vetting.

The tender documents have now been finalised and have been submitted to the European Union for vetting and approval. The tender will be launched as soon as the approval of the European Union is obtained. The works are expected to start by the end of August, 2003.

Mr Francois: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner say if the same type of reservoir will be constructed?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The reservoir which was destroyed by cyclone Kalundé was in iron sheet (*tôle durci*). This reservoir will be of a concrete type. It will resist cyclone even as disastrous as Kalundé.

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – FINAL REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have pleasure to submit to this Assembly one copy of the Final Report and Executive Summary of the National Development Strategy for Rodrigues.

This National Development Strategy Report for Rodrigues will be of vital importance in the future development projects for Rodrigues.

The views and comments of Members of the Regional Assembly will be most welcome at my office.

Additional copies of the reports have been sought and will be made available to members in due course.

ARTISTS – ASSISTANCE SCHEME

The Commissioner for Arts & Culture (Mrs A. Perrine-Bégué):
Mr Chairperson Sir, it is with much pleasure that I have to inform the house that at its last meeting on Wednesday, the Executive Council has approved the introduction of an Assistance Scheme for Artists in Rodrigues.

Up to now there has existed a National Scheme for Artists in Mauritius whereby any artist can apply for financial assistance to the Ministry of Arts and Culture for projects such as the production of audio cassette and CD, publication of book, art exhibition, drama and other activities as approved by a technical committee. The ceiling is Rs15,000 payable directly to suppliers and service providers. In addition to the grant, artists are also eligible for a soft loan from the DBM up to a ceiling of Rs25,000. So far artists in Rodrigues have encountered many difficulties to benefit from the scheme, so much so that as at date, not a single Rodriguan artist has obtained the grant at National level. That is why, my Commission is coming forward with a specific scheme for our local artists. You will recall that I mentioned the project during debates on draft-budget estimates 2003/2004. Funds have been provided under recurrent item “Promotion of Arts and Culture” accordingly, and the scheme is now operational.

A document showing the criteria of eligibility under the scheme, the types of projects which will be considered, as well as the conditions and procedures of the scheme is being tabled for the information of respected Members.

A Technical Committee is being set up to process and approve requests of assistance from artists. The Committee which will be chaired by an Officer of my Commission will comprise a Rector of a secondary school, a well-known musician and singer and a Finance Officer.

Mr Chairperson Sir, artists will be informed of the introduction of the scheme shortly and it is hoped that they will seize the opportunity to create good quality materials pertaining to art and culture and that this initiative will contribute to tangible development in the cultural production in Rodrigues.

Thank you.

EDUCATION SECTOR - REFORMS

The Commissioner for Education (Mr L. Roussety):
Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to make the following statement.

Since I assumed office as Commissioner for Education and Training in October last year, my main objectives have been to foster the betterment of the Rodriguan students and people at large.

As the House is aware, major reforms are being undertaken in the education sector in Mauritius. These reforms which are also being undertaken in Rodrigues will affect the present education system from the pre-primary to the tertiary sectors.

For the benefit of the House, Mr Chairperson, Sir, allow me to mention the major changes being proposed.

The present functioning of the pre-primary schools will be reviewed to make them more efficient. Norms and standards will be set for these schools. These standards are presently being finalised and will be discussed before being implemented in a very near future.

For the primary sector, in line with the National Policy and legal requirements to offer oriental languages and Arabic to Students willing to study these subjects, the introduction of these subjects will be undertaken during the third term this year. I would like to inform the House that following a sensitization campaign carried out by my Commission during April this year 818 students have opted to follow oriental languages and Arabic. Necessary arrangements are being made to implement this National Policy. It would be worth mentioning here that in the year 2004, those who will take these languages as a subject at CPE will be find them counted towards their result.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, which is the foundation on which further learning can be built will be introduced in the coming months. This project aims at broadening the basic literacy and numeracy skills of the pupils leaving schools to enable them to cope with the exigencies of the modern world.

The Zone d'Education Prioritaire (ZEP) Project which aims at caring for the deprived students will be undertaken at the Ste Therese de L'Enfant Jesus RCA school in Rivière Coco. This project which will be

undertaken by the third term this year will also cater for food supplements and follow up pupils on their developments.

On the other hand with a view to decreasing the number of drop outs at the Primary Sector, a pilot project will be undertaken with the assistance of the Seychelles Authorities for the introduction of creole as a teaching medium. This project is being envisaged taking into consideration the specificities of Rodrigues. Assistance will be sought from UNESCO to this effect.

In addition, the introduction of new subjects such as ICT, Citizenship education at the primary level which is being undertaken in Mauritius in the context of the Curriculum Renewal project will also be extended to Rodrigues. These new areas go along the policy for capacity building as from the primary level.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, at the secondary level, new projects are underway. We believe that education must be a continued process, and for our children to be able to face the challenges ahead, we must provide them with continued education.

In this context, a new secondary school will be constructed at Songes to the tune of Rs145 m. This new institution with all modern amenities will also cater for after school facilities. By this I mean, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that we want the school to continue living after school hours. So, we want to open the premises to the local communities for activities.

On the other hand, major upgrading works will be undertaken at the existing schools. New toilet blocks and repairs to the existing facilities will be undertaken at Le Chou. Repairs will also be undertaken at Grand Montagne secondary school. Major structural works will be undertaken at this school following the damages caused by cyclone Kalundé.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is aware of the present difficulties being faced by the students at Citron Donis secondary school. But, let me again assure this House and the students of this institution in particular that this situation will soon become something of the past in the coming weeks. New furniture and equipment are being commissioned and the installation is being undertaken. The contract for the supply of laboratory equipment is being awarded and will be provided in the coming weeks.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, we also believe that education alone will not be enough to attend to the needs of the unemployed. Equipping them

with the essential tools is of utmost importance. We have also to think of the demands of Rodrigues. Unfortunately, we do not have a University but have to find the means of achieving this objective.

To be able to identify the development needs of our country, a Committee on Education and Training has been set up at the level of my Commission. The objectives of this Committee will be to assess the present situation, identify the future needs and propose solutions.

At the same time, the present role of the Human Resource Centre will be reviewed to enable this institution to play a more prominent role.

At the same time, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am very pleased to inform this House that following discussions, which my Commission had with the Ministry of Education & Scientific Research, two scholarships will be awarded to Rodriguan students to follow medicine at the SSR Medical School at Belle Rive in Mauritius.

In addition, the Ministry is considering the possibility of increasing the number of scholarships awarded to Rodriguan students as from next year. As the House will realise such incentives will boost the tertiary sector.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, again, I would like to reassure this House that despite the various constraints faced by my Commission, (this Commission is the only one which had five changes at Departmental Head level since October last year) we are fully committed towards achieving excellence and to this end and we will spare no efforts.

With these words, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 01 July 2003, at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

At 11.30 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 01 July 2003 at 10.30 a.m..

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTION

MORCELLEMENT BAIE MALGACHE - ACCESS ROAD

(No. B/201) (Mrs. MEUNIER) The Second Island Region Member asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether he would, for the benefit of the House –

(a) say if he is aware of the conditions of the access road serving the people living in Morcellement Baie Malgache namely Mr. Patrick Nanette, Mr. Espiegle, Mr. Cathley Jean, Mr. Ong Tone and Mr. Ng Sid;

(b) give an account of the conditions of that access road, and

(c) state what measures he intends to take to improve same.

Reply: I am informed that the access road serving the people living in Morcellement Baie Malgache is not presently tarred and is in a poor condition whenever it rains or just after any heavy rains.

I would like to inform this house that the Executive Council is giving priority to the tarring of main roads linking villages. Moreover, a new item/vote named *“Infrastructural works to morcellement”* has been created during the last budget review exercise and a provision of Rs 3,000,000 has been provided both during financial year 2002/2003 and 2003/2004. The road construction works will start at Roche Bon Dieu Morcellement during financial year 2003/2004 and will be extended to the other morcellements. Meanwhile my Commission will take remedial action to maintain the access road at Baie Malgache to an acceptable state. The villagers if they so wish may apply for funding under the IFAD project for the construction of track roads under a participatory approach.

CAMP DU ROI STADIUM - CANTEENS

(No. B/202) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal) asked the Commissioner of Youth and Sports whether, with regard to Camp du Roi Stadium, he would state –

- (a) the number of canteens therein; who financed that project;
- (b) the name of licensees of these canteens;

- (c) the number of times theft have been reported from these canteens and the names of the licences who were the victims thereof;
- (d) the number of watchmen attached to the premises and whether, on the occurrence of each theft, the matter was reported to the police by the watchmen;
- (e) what action, if any, has been taken to ensure the security of those canteens.

Reply: There are two canteens at Camp du Roi Stadium –

- (a) the canteens are allocated to Mr Samuel Roussety of Camp du Roi and Mrs. Laval Clair of Songes;
- (b) I have been informed that theft occurred twice and both the licensees were victims. These happen just after cyclone Kalundé when the gates were blown down and the opening of the canteens were damaged. The matters were reported to the police by the licensees themselves;
- (c) At present, there are three watchmen on a roster basis attached to the premises;
- (d) My Commission has ensured the rapid reparation of the gate. Right now tenders are under preparation for complete renovation of the stadium and emphasis will be given for the complete lighting of the stadium during the night and for increasing the height of the walls with fencing at some places where it is low.

RIVIERE COCO CEMETERY

(No. B/203) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether, with regard to Rivière Coco Cemetery, he would state -

- (a) the date when it was opened;
- (b) the number of workers posted there and their grade;
- (c) where their tools are kept;
- (d) the last date the grass has been mowed or sprayed with herbicide;
- (e) why graves some four feet deep have been left open, and
- (f) whether this state of things does not represent a danger to visitors;

Reply: I am informed, with regard to question B/203 that -

- (a) the Rivière Coco cemetery was opened on the 23rd November 2000;
- (b) two cemetery labourers are presently posted on roster basis at the cemetery;
- (c) the tools are being kept with the Labourers pending the construction of a small shelter;
- (d) the last dates the grass was mowed was on the 29th and 30th May, 2003.

As regards part (e) of the question, I am further informed that, according to regulations in force, in each cemetery “there shall be a certain number of graves that shall be kept already dug to cater for any emergency”. This state of affairs does not constitute a danger so long that the visitors constrained themselves to the space around already occupied graves.

QUATRE VENTS VOLLEYBALL GROUND

(No. B/204) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal) asked the Commissioner of Youth and Sports whether, with regard to Quatre Vents volleyball ground, he would state -

- (a) who financed that project;
- (b) the amount of money which was initially spent thereon;
- (c) if the surface area was according to the norms of a playing field, and
- (d) if necessary could be done so that it could be fenced and enlarged to include a handball pitch.

Reply: The project was financed by the Trust Fund for the Vulnerable Groups, as regards parts (b), (c) and (d), my Commission is not aware of any information about this project as it does not fall under its purview.

- (a) The project was financed by the Trust Fund for Vulnerable Groups and executed by the Quatre Vents Village Committee.
- (b) No information has been received as regards the amount of money initially spent as it is a project by the Trust Fund.
- (c) The playing field is a 30 m x 15 m one and is according to the dimension of a volleyball playing field. However, the surface of the field is very rough and is almost not practicable.
- (d) It is not possible to enlarge the pitch as it is surrounded by private land on one side and by agricultural land on the other side.

JIOI GAMES - PRE-SELECTED ATHLETES - INCENTIVES

(No. B/205) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth and Sports whether with regard to Judo in Rodrigues, he would, in the context of the forthcoming JIOI games, state what his Commission is doing -

- (a) to encourage pre-selected and, ultimately, selected Rodriguan players; and
- (b) arouse the interest of Rodriguans generally in the games.

Reply: The answer is as follows –

As regards part (a), a series of incentives and measures have been extended to pre-selected athletes. These include –

- i. Provisions of meals for morning training sessions;
- ii. A stipend of Rs500 is being given to each selected judoka monthly;
- iii. Transport facilities are provided to the judokas after their evening training sessions –
- iv. Time-off facilities are given to those judokas who are in the government service;
- v. My Commission, in association with the Judo Federation, will be sending three of the pre-selected athletes to South Africa by the end of June for a stage so that they can acquire more fighting techniques and skills;
- vi. My Commission has also made provision in budget 2003/2004 for rewarding medalists of the games

As regards part (b) of the question, I would refer the respected member to the answer tabled in this assembly to question B/129

LA FERME MARKET PLACE

(B/206) Mr. Jabeemissar (The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, as regards the La Ferme Market place, could the Commissioner say whether

- (a) he intends to enlarge the existing structures to provide more space and better shelter for customers and sellers; and
- (b) whether regular sanitary inspections are being carried out there to ensure that the meat and vegetables sold are fit for human consumption

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission I would like to answer this question

- (a) It is not proposed to enlarge the existing structures in the short term but some renovation will take place instead. However, should a need be felt in future, extension would be carried out after duly considering the land use of the area.
- (b) Regular sanitary visits and inspections are carried out on each per day and Saturdays so as to ensure that meat and vegetables offered for sale are fit for human consumption.

REPOSOIR RESERVOIR - WATER SUPPLY

(No. B/207) Mr Jabeemissar The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards water at Reposoir Reservoir, he could say –

- (a) how many homes are supplied with water from this reservoir and in what villages they are found;
- (b) whether the water supplied for domestic use satisfies the established norms; and

- (c) what measures are being taken to ensure that the water is safe for human consumption.

Reply: As regards part (a), I am informed that about 65 families situated in the village of Camp Pintade and Baie Topaze are being provided from Reposoir dam.

With regard to part (b), the water which is now being pumped to the above villages is filtered and chlorinated. Following the recent commissioning of the pumps, sample of the water is sent for testing to the Central Water Authority Laboratory, Mauritius. The plant was last repaired on the 21st May 2003. Moreover the activated carbon filter which aims at reducing any odour problem has sustained a breakdown since Friday last and is being replaced .

As for part (c), moreover, the Water Unit is accelerating procedures for the commissioning of a mini laboratory to ensure that all testing are carried out in Rodrigues so as to ensure that any problem in quality in the water is dealt with immediately.

HOUSING PROJECTS – LOW INCOME GROUPS

(No. B/208) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether as regards the Housing Projects earmarked in the 2002/2003 budget to help low income earners to build a concrete house, he could say –

- (a) how this project is being implemented in Rodrigues;
- (b) what are the criteria and procedure used in allocating grants to beneficiaries;
- (c) how many persons have benefited from grants under the project and the amount disbursed so far; and
- (d) whether there are persons still awaiting a grant and, if yes, when all the applications will be settled?

Reply: I have to inform that the Commissioning for Housing in association with National Housing Development Corporation is responsible for the implementation of the housing schemes in Rodrigues namely -

- (i) grant for casting of slab, and
- (ii) purchase of building materials.

With regard to part (b), the criteria in allocating such grants are –

- (1) the applicant should not be owner of a housing unit;
- (2) beneficiaries of the grant under the scheme for purchase of building materials will not qualify for the grant for the casting of roof slab for the same housing unit;
- (3) the grant for the purchase of building materials is payable once foundation works are completed and the block work laid to a minimum height of 1m above plinth level whereas the grant for casting of slab is payable once the housing unit has reached beam level;
- (4) the maximum grant of Rs40,000 applies to an area of 100 m² and areas less than 100 m² are paid on a pro-rata basis;
- (5) the housing unit should be built in concrete at least up to the beam level; the monthly household income (husband and wife) should not exceed Rs4000 for the schemes for purchase of building material whereas for the grant for casting of slab, the monthly household income shall not exceed Rs7,500.
- (6) the applicant should not have benefited from a government sponsored housing loan from the Mauritius Housing Corporation.
- (7) grant for casting of slab is also applicable for the construction of a second housing unit for another member of the same family

The procedures to be followed are as follows -

- (i) the applicant should file his application together with the following documents:-
 - (a) land lease or title deed;
 - (b) building permit;
 - (c) plan of building;
 - (d) birth and marriage certificates; and

- (e) salary slip.
- (ii) a technical committee comprising officers of National Housing Development Corporation and the Commission of Public Infrastructure process the application and approve same.
- (iii) The measurements of the building is made by the technical committee and all the measurements referred to the Desk Officer of National Housing Development Corporation in Mauritius for processing of payment;
- (iv) Payments are then effected to the applicants.

As regards part (c), as at 1st June 2003, 57 persons had benefited from the grant for purchase of building materials for an amount of Rs1,525,600 and 702 persons have benefited from the grant for casting of slabs for a total amount of Rs16,952,761.00;

As for part (d), presently, there are 12 cases for grant for purchase of materials and 58 cases for the grant for casting of slab that are being processed. I am presently in consultation with the relevant authorities in Mauritius to look at ways and means of reducing the time between which applications are made and the disbursement of funds to the beneficiaries.

CORAIL PETITE BUTTE COMMUNITY CENTRE - IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

(No. B/209) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Community Development (Mrs Perrine-Bégué) whether, as regards Corail Petite Butte Community Centre, the Commissioner could say if there had been any construction or improvement project earmarked in the 2002/2003 budget and could give a short statement to the House in this connection.

Reply: There is no provision in the budget for this financial year for any construction or improvement project concerning Corail Petite Butte Community Centre.

However, as far as Community Development is concerned we dispose of an amount of Rs41 million under the IFAD Programme and I am pleased to inform the House that in December last we approved a project for the village of Corail Petite Butte which includes -

- (i) an extension to the Community Centre;
- (ii) purchase of furniture, indoor games and equipment for

Community Centre and Women's Association;

- (iii) construction of a playground;
- (iii) fencing of the Community Centre, and
- (iv) extension of the pre-primary school.

The extension will consist of a workshop and a kitchen of an aggregate floor area of 40 square metres (m²) for the Women's Association as well as an open veranda of 17 square metres (m²).

The total cost of the project will be Rs335,000 and Rs268,000 will be provided by IFAD Community Development Programme and the beneficiaries will contribute Rs67,000. Fund will be disbursed soon.

REHABILITATION PROGRAMME LOAN SCHEME

(No. B/210) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety) asked the Chief Commissioner whether there had been any government sponsored loan programme implemented through the Development Bank of Mauritius for planters and farmers in the cyclone Kalundé rehabilitation programme and, if yes,

- (a) state the total amount earmarked initially for that programme;
- (b) the criteria that must be met to qualify for the loan;
- (c) the number of persons who have applied for and the number of applicants who have obtained the loan; and
- (d) state whether there has been any modification since its inception and if yes, the reasons thereof.

Reply: Government requested Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM) to institute a special concessionary Rehabilitation Loan Scheme with a view to providing immediate financial relief to the agricultural community. The terms and conditions of the loan scheme are shown at the Annex.

We do not have any additional information on how the loan scheme is being run by Development Bank of Mauritius.

CAMP DU ROI STADIUM – FIELD EVENTS - ACCIDENT

(No. B/211) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety) asked the Commissioner responsible for Sports whether there had been any accident related to field events resulting in injury during qualifying heats

for secondary school students at the Camp du Roi Stadium recently and if yes, the nature of the accident, whether it has been caused by absence of appropriate infrastructure and what were the measures taken to prevent same in the future.

Reply: I have been informed that an accident happened causing a jaw fracture of a secondary school teacher during the rehearsal held on the 16th May. I have further been informed that the said accident did not occur due to lack of appropriate infrastructure but rather due to a lack of human organisation.

DESALINATION PLANTS - CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/212) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether as regards the proposed setting up of desalination plants in Rodrigues, he would –

- (a) state what activities or tasks had been completed to date;
- (b) ascertain whether appropriate analysis had been carried out to examine their feasibility especially as regards environment risks and costs and, if yes, by whom, and
- (c) give a gross preliminary indication of what would be the initial investment and the recurrent operational costs afterwards.

Reply: I have to inform this House that the Ministry for Local Government and Rodrigues launched tenders in July 2001 for the construction of two 2000 m³ capacity Desalination Plants at Mourouk and Rivière Coco or both at Riviere Coco and Mourouk. The closing date for receipt of tenders was 21st November 2001. The terms of reference were prepared by the Ministry and a Consultant namely Fichtner Co. Ltd was then appointed in March 2002 for the evaluation of tender and supervision of the works.

After the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the project was handed over to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for a policy decision at our end as to whether the RRA will proceed ahead or not with the project.

A committee comprising the Chief Commissioner, Deputy Chief Commissioner, Island Chief Executive and Departmental Head (Water Resources) was eventually set up to review the project and to look at the

implications of the project. The following main shortfalls were found in the Terms of Reference and the files -

no feasibility study had been made regarding the costs involved;

- (1) no Environment impact Assessment had been undertaken prior to the launching of tenders;
- (2) the methodology for brine rejection had been left open to the tenderers.

The Committee subsequently held a meeting with the Consultants and the following decision was then taken –

- (a) the Central Tender Board would be requested to abort the existing tender exercise;
- (b) new proper technical specifications would be prepared by the Consultant after carrying out all required survey and studies;
- (c) an Environment Impact Assessment would be carried out prior to launching of the tender;
- (d) a 2000 m³ plant will be built in a first instance with the possibility of increasing the capacity to 4000 m³ in the future.

This House will be kept informed of developments.

BAIE TOPAZE AREA – PESTICIDES, HERBICIDES, ETC.

(No. B/213) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety) asked the Chief Commissioner whether he could obtain information from the *Police de L'Environnement* as to whether there has been any complaint recently regarding abusive or harmful use of agricultural pesticide, herbicide or other chemicals in the Baie Topaze area and, if yes,

- (a) state the nature of the complaint and whether the wrongdoer was in breach of the law as regards land use; and
- (b) say what measures have been taken to solve that problem in the interest of public health.

Reply: (a) No complaint has been received regarding abusive or harmful use of agricultural pesticide, herbicide or other chemicals in the Baie Topaze area.

The *Police de L'Environnement* did however receive a complaint from a resident of Piments in November 2002.

TELBERT DAM - REHABILITATION

(No. B/222) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the rehabilitation of the Telbert Dam, situated at Grand La Fouche Mangues he could state –

- (a) when the first rehabilitation works started; and
- (b) if the dam is now fully operational.

Reply: I have been informed that the desilting of the dam was done in April, 1999 and the gabion work were executed in January, 2002 and completed a few weeks back. The completion of the spillway is underway and will be completed by end of June 2003.

The dam will be operational once the pipeline is completed. The water will be used for irrigation of agricultural plots situated in the vicinity.

FISHMONGERS - NUMBER

(No. B/223) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the fishmongers (Banyans) in Rodrigues, he could state –

- (a) the number who are registered; and
- (b) if he intends to grant them a bad weather allowance.

Reply: I am informed that there are 90 licensed fishmongers.

With regard to part (b), there is no policy for the payment of bad weather allowance to fishmongers. Moreover, most fishmongers also perform other income earning activities, in addition to the selling of fish.

PLAINE CORAIL ROAD - UPGRADING AND RESURFACING

(No. B/224) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether, he could upgrade and resurface the access road starting from the main road at

Plaine Corail and leading to the place where sand is deposited in that village.

Reply: As stated in my previous reply, roads are upgraded and resurfaced accordingly to a priority lists and funds made available. The road construction programme for next financial year has been spelt out in my budget speech recently. The road up to the Terminal Building will be tarred by the Airport of Rodrigues Ltd and following requests by my Commission the remaining stretch will be levelled. The possibility of upgrading and resurfacing the road leading to the bad landing station area will be considered in financial year 2004-2005 subject to availability of funds. Meanwhile the road will be maintained regularly.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT - SPRAYERMEN

(No. B/225) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the sprayermen working in the agricultural department, he could state –

- (a) if any transfer of sprayermen from one agricultural station to another has been done recently;
- (b) if yes, name the station from where they were transferred.

Reply: I have been informed that to enable the Pest Control Unit to perform in a more efficient and diligent manner during the present peak cultivation period of bean, garlic, onion and potato, the Sprayerman attached to La Ferme and Marechal stations have been transferred and grouped together at the Agricultural Main Office at Citronelle. This regrouping of sprayermen has been made in the interest of the planters so as to ensure a prompt and efficient service from the Pest Control Unit. This will in turn prevent economic loss by the planters and farmers due to reduction in pest and disease outspread. Two Sprayermen were transferred from La Ferme and two other from Marechal were also transferred to Citronelle.

BAIE DU NORD/GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL ROAD – RESURFACING – COST, LENGTH, ETC

(No. B/226) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether regarding the road linking Baie du Nord to Grand La Fouche Corail, he could –

- (a) state the cost of the work:

- (b) the length of road upgraded and resurfaced;
- (c) the specifications of the road pavement; and
- (d) whether core holes samples of the pavement had been sent for test, if yes, table the results, and, if not, state why; and
- (e) table the tender documents concerning the above works?

Reply: I am informed that the cost of the road of Grand La Fouché Corail – Baie du Nod road is Rs17,960,096.18 cs. The length of the road resurfaced is 3.4 kms. The specification of the road pavement are as per plan that I am tabling.

No coreholes samples of the pavement have been taken as no such facilities exist. However I have been informed that other tests have been carried out such as deflection tests, density using gamma densometer, marshall tests and other tests.

I am tabling the tender documents as well as other documents for the above works.

PIMENT/REPOSOIR VILLAGE – ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

(No. B/227) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards Piment/Reposoir Village Community Development, he could say, if there has been any environment project earmarked for financial year 2002 – 2003, if yes, give a brief statement of the project, if not, the reason therefor.

Reply: No funds have been earmarked for environment project at Piment/Reposoir in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Budget for Financial Year 2002-2003. During the visit of the Minister of Environment to Rodrigues in August 2002, the Village Committee of Piment/Reposoir made a request to him for a landscaping project in their village.

The Minister visited the project and was favourable. Consequently, the estimated cost of the project was worked out by the Environment Unit and submitted to the Ministry of Environment for funding. The Minister of Environment was scheduled to visit Rodrigues from 27 to 28 May 2003 and he expressed the wish to meet the villagers of Piment/Reposoir.

Unfortunately, the visit was cancelled at the last moment due to the accident which occurred at Albion in Mauritius where chlorine gas was released from a cylinder being cut resulting in one fatality.

The Rodrigues Environment Committee will, henceforth, look into such small community environment projects.

RESERVOIRS - REPAIRS

(No. B/228) Mrs J. PROSPER (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether as regards our storage reservoirs in Rodrigues, he could –

- (a) say how many of them had had their roofs damaged by cyclone Kalundé, and
- (b) state the name of reservoirs which were not covered before cyclone Kalundé and what remedial action he intended to take.

Reply: I am informed that all service reservoirs in Rodrigues are provided with a cover either in concrete or in corrugated iron sheet. During the passage of cyclone Kalundé the following service reservoirs had got their roof damaged –

- (a) Fond La Digue;
- (b) Anse Quitor (Agner);
- (c) Rivière Coco;
- (d) Citadelle;
- (e) Mte du Sable Reservoir;
- (f) Mourouk; and
- (g) Papayes.

Action is being initiated for the procurement of materials and repairs are being effected on all reservoirs including those which are in a bad state even not damaged by cyclone Kalundé.

CEMETERIES - FENCING

(No. B/229) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards cemeteries in

Rodrigues, what measures he intended to take to fence them given that they were often invaded by stray animals.

Reply: There are presently six cemeteries around the island of Rodrigues out of which one belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, situated as follows –

- (1) Anse aux Anglais;
- (2) Baie Lascar;
- (3) St. Gabriel;
- (4) La Ferme;
- (5) Riviere Coco, and
- (6) Muslim Centre at Anse aux Anglais.

Presently, the small retaining wall at English Bay is being rehabilitated as well as the fencing at the back. Two small gates will be provided soon.

As regards the other cemeteries, provision has been made under the maintenance of building, plant and equipment item/vote of Financial Year 2003/2004 to complete the fencing/construction of low boundary walls at the other cemeteries as per Executive Council decision.

DANS DUGOMIER – ACCESS ROAD

(No. B/230) Mr J. A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Marechal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the access road to the place commonly known as Dans Dugomier, in the region of La Ferme, he intended to extend the existing track road to alleviate problems encountered by the inhabitants there during and after rainy weather, and, if yes, whether any action has been taken in this connection, and, if not, give reasons therefor.

Reply: I am informed that the existing track road was being traced out by villagers on a voluntary basis. Action has been taken by Agricultural Services under the funding of the Anti Erosion Programme to complete same. I have been informed that there is a problem of a portion of private land that needs to be acquired so as to complete the track road. The matter is being referred to the Cadastral Office for necessary action. Meanwhile the possibility of constructing a track road on the existing earth roads at the back of Development Bank of Mauritius Industrial Block and to connect same to the existing track is being looked into.

LEGAL ADVISER - FEES

(No. B/231) Mr J. A. L. emilien (First Local Region Member for Marechal) asked the Chief Commissioner, last time the Chief Commissioner did say that the Legal Adviser of the Executive Council was paid a retaineer fee of some fifteen thousand rupees (Rs15,000.-) and over and above this, on a case by case basis, could he say whether, the Legal Adviser is also paid for advice tendered other than in Court proceedings and, if yes, how much has been paid so far in this respect.

Reply: The Legal Adviser is paid a retaineer fee of Rs15,000 monthly and he is supposed to provide legal advice on any matter raised by the Executive Council, the Island Chief Executive and the Departmental Heads. If he is required to attend working sessions in Rodrigues, he is not paid additional professional fees, but his air ticket, hotel accommodation and inland transport are provided by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Additional fees are payable whenever the Legal Adviser is requested to prepare draft Bills for new legislation or attend Court on behalf of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

As at today, the Legal Adviser has worked on one draft Regulations concerning licences and appeared in Court in Mauritius in one case. No claim for consultancy fees has been received to-date for the above extra assignments.

LA FERME WATER UNIT – GOVERNMENT VEHICLES

(No. B/232) Mr J. A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Marechal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards government vehicles in use at the sub-office of the Water Unit Division of La Ferme, he could state the number of cases of misuse of those vehicles reported to him for period January 2003 to date and action taken or envisaged, if any.

Reply: I am informed that all government vehicles which have been allocated to the Water Unit, La Ferme have properly been used to serve all water consumers in that sector, especially the water tankers. A pick up van is being used to convey employees to effect repairs throughout the whole section. My Commission has been made aware of one case where one vehicle has supposedly been found to be performing an unauthorised trip in the vicinity of Quatre Vents on Saturday 6th June, 2003 at about 11.00 a.m. An internal inquiry is under way and

disciplinary action, if need be, will be taken in the light of the outcome of the inquiry and in line with existing established procedures.

RIVIERE COCO/PORT MATHURIN – BUS SERVICE

(No. B/233) Mr A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Marechal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards, public transport problems encountered by school children who attend Rodrigues College on route No. 209, that is, Rivière Coco to Port Mathurin, the Commissioner could state whether he envisages the introduction of a special bus trip for students of Rivière Coco and neighbouring villages as follows -

- (a) depart from Rivière Coco between 6.45 and 7.00 hours, and
- (b) return from Port Mathurin between 14.30 and 15.00 hours.

Reply: I am informed that Route 209, that is Port Mathurin to Riviere Cocos via Mourouk is being served by 10 buses and an average of 75 to 90% buses are in operation everyday and that no complaints have been reported to the office of the National Transport Authority regarding this route up to now. In case of lack of buses due to breakdown, buses of other routes are rerouted to solve the problems.

I am requesting the National Transport Authority to carry out a survey and look at the possibility of introducing a school bus from Rivière Cocos to Port Mathurin and back. This House will be kept informed accordingly.

BAIE DU NORD/POINTE LA GUEULE & GRANDE MONTAGANE/POINTE COTON – ROAD REPAIRS

(No. B/234) Mr D. L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to difficulties faced by drivers because of the presence of big holes and damaged “bornes” along the road from Baie du Nord to Pointe La Gueule and from Grande Montagne to Pointe Coton via Roche Bon Dieu, he would state –

- (a) what temporary measures are being taken to remedy the situation;
- (b) what is the present breadth of these two roads;
- (c) how many fatal accidents have occurred on the road from Baie du Nord to Pte La Gueule and the names of the victims; and
- (d) if he, intends to upgrade these roads in the near future.

Reply: I am informed that both roads have been patched at damaged areas along the road from Baie du Nord to Pointe La Gueule and from Pointe Coton to Grande Montagne and action is being taken to replace all damaged guard stones along those two roads.

The present breadth of the road is 6 metres.

I have been informed by Police that four fatal road accidents have occurred on the road from Baie du Nord to Pointe La Gueule for the past 8 years. I am tabling the date, locality, vehicles involved and type of vehicles .

Date	LOCALITY	VEHICLES	NAME OF VICTIMS
30.10.1997	Baie Malgache (near radier)	Motorcycle	Mr. Fabien GRANDCOURT
25.7.1998	Baie du Nord	Motorcycle	Mr. Fernand ROSE
28.6.2002	Baie Malgache (near radier)	Motorcycle	Mr. Jean Noel BRASSE
5.3.2000	Pointe La Gueule	Motorcycle	Mr. Jean Eric HORTENSE

Both roads are on the list of roads that will be upgraded in the near future.

L'ILE AUX COCO AND L'ILE AU SABLE – ANTI-EROSION MEASURES

(No. B/235) Mr D. L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the erosion at L'Ile aux Coco and L'Ile au sable, caused by strong waves, he would state what remedial measures are being or will be taken.

Reply: After cyclone Kalundé, it was observed that serious damages had been caused to Ile aux Cocos and Ile aux Sables by strong waves. The sand bags and used tyres installed in the past by the Environment Unit did not withstand the cyclonic conditions.

At the request of the Rodrigues Environment Committee, a team of local and foreign Consultants from the Ministry of Environment were in Rodrigues from 27th to 29th May in order to, *inter alia*, assess the damages caused to the beaches and above islets and propose remedial

action. The consultants visited Iles aux Cocos and Iles aux Sables, have studied the erosion problem there and will submit their recommendations shortly.

It should also be noted that Mrs Virginie Case, Associate Professor from Reunion Island, is also currently conducting a scientific study on the vulnerability of all beaches in Rodrigues as well as on Ile aux Cocos and Ile aux Sables, sponsored by the Commission de L'Océan Indien.

As we are aware, sandy beaches and islets are dynamic systems and, therefore, any protective measure should be carefully examined.

The Rodrigues Environment Committee will take a decision on the remedial measures at Ile aux Cocos and Ile aux Sables in the light of the recommendations that would be made by the Consultants.

PETIT GABRIEL/GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL -DUST PROBLEM

(No. B/236) Mr D. L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the dust problem along the road under construction from Petit Gabriel to Grand La Fouche Corail via Marechal, he would state -

- (a) if precautionary measures for the health of workers and villagers are being taken in accordance with the Environment Act;
- (b) what action will be taken to remedy the situation.

Reply: The answer is as follows -

- (a) The officers of the Environment Unit and the *Police de L'Environnement* have intervened on 22 January and 26 May 2003 at Petit Gabriel and Marechal respectively following complaints filed by villagers about dust nuisance from ongoing road construction works.

At both localities, the contractor was requested to sprinkle water so that the dust problem could be abated. However, in certain places, this measure was not found practicable as the road became slippery. This was confirmed during a test carried out at Marechal on the 28 May last.

- (b) The *Police de L'environnement* has introduced speed limits to reduce dust nuisance from movement of heavy vehicles.