

No. 9 of 2003

**RODRIGUES**

**FIRST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Debate No. 9 of 2003**

**Sitting of Tuesday 27 May 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 27 May 2003***

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**Mr Chairperson:** Respected Members, I have two announcements to make.

The first one relates to Questions. I have observed that amongst the questions submitted, a few were of unusual length. I have to draw your attention that even though our Standing Orders provide no guidelines on the length of questions, Standing Order No. 22 (1) of the National Assembly on the other hand, which is applicable here, provides in no uncertain terms, I quote -

“Mr Speaker shall have power to reject any question which he considers to be of excessive length”

I would, therefore, invite you to consider this provision while submitting your questions.

I would you also like to bring to your attention Standing Order No. 24 (1) of the National Assembly, Standing Orders and Rules which provides I quote -

“Notice may be handed to the Clerk at any time when the Assembly is sitting or may be sent or left at the Clerk’s office not later than 2 o’clock and not less than four days excluding Sundays and Public Holidays, before the sitting”.

There are so many rules governing the admissibility of questions embedded both in the Standing Orders and in practice that it is time consuming for both the Clerk, who has to examine and edit the questions, then for me to give the

final approval. I would, therefore, kindly request all the Members to submit their questions not later than two o'clock and not less than four working days before each sitting.

Secondly, you would recollect that during the workshop organised by the Regional Assembly in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, one of the interveners, Mr Klaus Peter Treydte, laid much emphasis on the system of checks and balances. The legal framework that exists here is to such an extent that this system is operative save and except in the relationship with the Judiciary.

This House, together with its committees, is separate from the Executive Organ of the Regional Assembly. They have distinct and separate roles, which operate as checks upon the work of the Executive Council. It should be clear to one and all that this House should not only act independently from the Central Administration and the Executive Council, but should be seen to be so acting. Members, excluding the Commissioners of course, may not liaise with the Central Administration as facilitator for any matter whatsoever, in the performance of their role, but with the Secretariat of the Assembly which would act as facilitator for both the House and its Committees.

I thank you for your attention.

## **ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

### **MONT LUBIN AND LA FERME HEALTH CENTRES – ECG SERVICES**

**(No. B/168) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Health, to state whether he intended to provide ECG services to Mont Lubin and La Ferme Health Centres.

**Mr Sooprayen:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, ECG services are in fact available in the two Area Health Centres of La Ferme and Mont Lubin. Unfortunately the two ECG machines of the Centres are presently defective at the same time. While the defective cable part in the ECG apparatus of La

Ferme centre will be replaced by a new one which is expected to arrive shortly, a new ECG machine has been shipped to Rodrigues and is expected to reach here by the present voyage of Mauritius Pride. By next week, Mont Lubin Area Health Centre will have an ECG machine.

As a short term measure, patients of the centres are being referred to the QEH for any electro cardiogram.

In addition, we have ordered three more ECG apparatuses and the procurement exercise has reached the advanced stage of technical evaluation. Once the three ECG machines are available in Rodrigues, we will have a sufficient number to cater for our present needs.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Commissioner inform the House as from when these ECG machines were defective at La Ferme and Mont Lubin Health Centres?

**Mr Sooprayen:** So far I can say they were defective a bit before cyclone Kalundé.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am sorry, when the Commissioner said before cyclone Kalundé, it means nothing to me. I want to know as from when.

**Mr Chairperson:** The Member wants the date and month.

**Mr Emilien:** I want the Commissioner to be more precise. Before cyclone Kalundé, it may be 2001.

**Mr Sooprayen:** I take notice of this question, Sir.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I would like to ask the Commissioner who is responsible for the maintenance of the medical equipment in use at the hospitals.

**Mr Chairperson:** You mean the ECG equipment.

**Mr Sooprayen:** Usually we have somebody from the company in Mauritius coming here for the servicing.

## **CORAIL AIRPORT/ GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL – STREET LIGHTING**

**(No. B/169) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether as regards lights from Corail Airport to Grand La Fouche Corail, he could –

- (a) state the number of units which had been damaged by cyclone Kalundé, and
- (b) inform the House of the measures he was taking to repair same.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have to inform this House that maintenance of street lighting is normally carried out by the Electrical Unit of the Public Infrastructure Division in collaboration with the Rodrigues Branch of the Central Electricity Board. Following the passage of cyclone Kalundé, the Central Electricity Board was giving priority to the rehabilitation of the electrical network all around the island and is presently carrying out the consolidation of the street lighting network.

I have been informed that, following a survey carried out after the consolidation of the street lighting network along the road during the last weekend, some 12 units were found not to be functioning properly. Action is being taken to replace those units.

Moreover, tenders have been launched for the supply of street lighting lanterns. The tenders are being evaluated and the contract will be awarded shortly. These lanterns will be used for both the lighting of new places as well as the replacement of existing damaged ones.

**Mr Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I want to know whether the same measures can be extended to Baie du Nord.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes, it will be extended all over the island.

## **CITRUS PLANTS – SALE TO PLANTERS**

**(No. B/170) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, to state whether he intended to increase the production of citrus plants for sale to planters who had been affected by cyclone Kalundé and to give a boost to agriculture at large.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have to inform this House that there are presently some seedlings and grafts of citrus fruits available at the Port Sud Est and Oyster Bay Agricultural Stations. Priority will be given to those planters who have been affected by cyclone Kalundé. The production of citrus plants will be increased in the forthcoming months. My Commission will be presenting shortly an action plan on the production of citrus fruits, especially Rodriguan lime.

**Mrs Meunier:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, does the Deputy Chief Commissioner consider the provision of these seedlings free of charge to planters?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** yes, presently there are about 700 seedlings of local lemons at Port Sud Est Agricultural Station and about 325 grafts of different citrus plants at Oyster Bay Agricultural Station. Information will be given on the radio and genuine planters will be given these seedlings and grafts.

## **PORT MATHURIN - PARKING FACILITIES**

**(No. B/171) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, to state whether he intended to make provision for more parking facilities in Port Mathurin because of the traffic jams due to the narrowness of the streets.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the problem of traffic jams in Port Mathurin is being the subject of a full study by the Public Infrastructure Division and the Road Safety Committee.

Several scenarios are being considered and are as follows -

- (1) The introduction of appropriate traffic signs and road markings to delimit parking zones and non-parking zones.
- (2) The creation of a parking zone at Camp Du Roi Stadium during weekdays.
- (3) A series of regulations to limit traffic through Port Mathurin as well as the creation of pedestrian roads.
- (4) The possibility for heavy vehicles to load and unload their goods at specific hours of the day.

### **BAIE TOPAZE -WATER SUPPLY AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT**

**(No. B/172) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether, with regard to the village of Baie Topaze, he will state -

- (a) If a water network will be provided to the group of families living in the area known as cite Perdue;
- (b) whether measures will be taken for the provision of mechanical equipment to the planters living in the vicinity, and
- (c) whether arrangements will be made for the linking of the water network from Citadelle to that of Camp Pintade Reservoir.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there are approximately 14 families living at a place called Cité Perdue in Baie Topaze. The 14 families have never been provided with individual water priseS and are confronting great difficulties to have water for domestic purposes. In November last, during the drought season, a fibre glass tank of 15 m<sup>3</sup> capacity was installed to alleviate the hardship of these villagers. Unfortunately, the distribution of water was not carried out fairly as the people living nearer to the tank could effect more trips and thus obtain the biggest share of the water. Same has resulted in frustration among the villagers.

Following a meeting and site visit I had with the village committee of Baie Topaze, I have instructed the Water Unit to take remedial measures to improve the water distribution at Cité Perdue. The following decisions were taken and will be implemented shortly -

- (i) the relocation of the fibre tank to a new site which is higher in altitude than the existing one as well as the provision of an additional tank of same capacity on a concrete base;
- (ii) the installation of a new water distribution network from the 2 fibre glass tank to feed the village with domestic water supply by gravity. This pipe network will enable each family to be equipped with an individual water prise, and
- (iii) the connection of the two fibre glass tanks on the pumping main from Reposoir to Camp Pintade to ensure a regular supply of water.

As regards part (b), the Agricultural Services are presently carrying out a survey in the village to identify all those planters that will require mechanical means to plough their lands. Access to the mechanical equipment will be provided upon completion of all formalities by the planters. Moreover, an excavator will be shortly undertaking the cleaning of all drains in the agricultural lands.

With regard to part (c) of the question, I am informed that the inter connection of Citadelle and Camp Pintade reservoir network will be completed on the 28 May 2003. Pipes and fittings have already been made available on site. Such a system will enable the village of Baie Topaze to have an additional source of water supply.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner has talked about the pulling down of the existing fibre glass tank to build a second one at Cité Perdue. Is it not wastage of money? Instead of pulling this down, why not install a second one at a more appropriate place and keep the existing one there?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the Member from the Minority has not understood my answer. I have said: relocation of the fibre to a new site higher in altitude than the existing one as well as the provision of an additional tank of same capacity on a concrete base; I have not said that it will be pulled down.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Can I know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner how is the famous fibre tank installed now?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I'll ask the Member to come with a substantive question.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I still can't understand how he will relocate the fibre tank without pulling the existing one. Could the Deputy Chief Commissioner please inform the House how this will be carried out?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please! Order! Can I have a clearer view from the Second Member for La Ferme. You mean pulling down of the glass fibre tank or removing it? Could you be more precise?

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Could the Deputy Chief Commissioner be more precise by telling the House how he is going to relocate this fibre tank and build a second one at the same time?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member has not been precise in saying "pulling down". We will not pull down the tank; we will perhaps pull down the concrete base.

*(Interruptions)*

There is no adherence between cement and plastic.

## **MORCELLEMENTS – ELECTRICITY SUPPLY**

**(No. B/173) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, to state whether arrangements would be made to electrify the existing morcellements.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, when the Executive Council presented the revised budget estimates in October last, a new item vote "Infrastructure to existing morcellements" was created and a provision of Rs3 m. was made.

Accordingly, following discussions with the Central Electricity Board, payment amounting to some Rs2.98 m. has been effected to the Central

Electricity Board for the provision of electricity to the following morcellements –

Roche Bon Dieu  
Songes  
Baie Malgache  
Citronelle  
Mte Cabris Est  
Batatrand  
Anse Goeland

I am informed that works are presently being carried out at Roche Bon Dieu morcellement and all works are scheduled to be completed by December 2003.

#### **CITRON DONIS COLLEGE - TEACHING LOGISTICS**

**(No. B/174) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Education, to state what measures were being taken to ensure that the specialist rooms at Citron Donis Form VI College were fully operational.

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I presume that the respected Member is referring to the laboratories as specialist rooms. At the outset, I would like to assure the House that my Commission is aware of the difficulties faced by the students of Citron Donis College.

Tenders for the supply of chemicals and other equipment for the three science laboratories have already been floated and will be awarded once these have been received.

On the other hand, furniture and fittings have already been received and will be installed once the works are completed by the contractor. The tenders for other requisites have already been awarded and delivery is being awaited from the suppliers. My Commission is monitoring the works and supply of equipment and other requisites so that students are not penalised.

**Miss Castel:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Commissioner for Education state what measures are being taken for students to do practical

work in the laboratory and secondly what is the role played by REDCO in this matter?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Arrangements are in place for the students needing laboratory practice to be ferried from Citron Donis to Le Chou College so that they do not miss out on their programme.

My answer to the second supplementary question is that the absence of REDCO on the educational scene is making itself very badly felt. There is no Manager and there is no correspondence between the Board of REDCO and the Commission.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like the House to note that my Commission is doing its utmost in the interest of the young people at Citron Donis to equip their laboratories as soon as it is physically possible.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner for Education has talked about the absence of the Manager for REDCO in Rodrigues. Could he please tell the House what measures he has been taking or intends to take to have the Manager just to monitor the work of REDCO in Rodrigues.

**Mr L. Roussety:** Unfortunately, Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have already said before, REDCO is a private limited company. When it suits the Ministry of Education to say so, it will hide behind the fact that REDCO is a private limited company. We have no say in the matter; we cannot order REDCO to appoint a Manager for Rodrigues in spite of the fact that during a recent meeting with the Minister of Education, I did raise the point in the presence of the Chairman of REDCO. Up to now nothing has been done. At the last visit of the Chairman of REDCO in Rodrigues last December, this question was raised and a name was intimated, but up to now no action has been taken. I would also like to let the House know that the Board is not operating as it should. The Chairman is assuming the role of Secretary as well as Manager a 650 kms distance.

**Mr J. Roussety:** On a point of order, Mr Chairperson, Sir. The Commissioner has said that REDCO is a private limited company and he is commenting on the internal management of REDCO. This should not be allowed.

REDCO is a private company, but the stakeholders of REDCO are the Ministry of Education, all Government parastatal bodies and the PSSA, etc. Since the setting up of the Regional Assembly and as far as secondary education is concerned in Rodrigues, can I ask the Commissioner what strategies have been put in place to see to it the students get what they need? REDCO existed before the setting up of the Regional Assembly; there has been a change of status; it is obvious that now the Commission for Education must have some say in the management of secondary schools in Rodrigues. What positive initiatives have the Commissioner, REDCO and the Ministry of Education taken?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I agree entirely with the Leader of the Minority. Overtures have already been made and a file has already been opened. But it is proving to be a very slow process. It is not acceptable that Rodrigues within an autonomous context should be deprived of the management of secondary education. We have made the request and we are awaiting further action from the Minister of Education himself.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, to which authority do all the colleges - Le Chou College: Grande Montagne College and Citron Donis College - and lands under the management of REDCO belong?

**Mr L. Roussety:** I would like to point out, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that all the infrastructures were built from the Budget of Rodrigues and, therefore, the infrastructures belong to us. That is why we think that we should have the management of the secondary schools and that the powers from REDCO should be devolved upon the Regional Assembly.

**Mr J. Roussety:** In this case, if I understand the Commissioner well, REDCO is just a *locataire*. Therefore, can I ask the Commissioner when all the problems with REDCO – management problems, industrial problems such as no chalk in the schools, no laboratory – will be solved? It is of the future of all the students who go to REDCO schools which is being *menacé*. When will the Commissioner take immediate measures? When will he come to the House with a statement saying that he has come to an understanding with REDCO? The second term is coming to an end; HSC students in Citron Donis do not have a laboratory. There is a Commissioner for Education; there is a Minister for Education; there is the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to which the whole responsibility for education has been assigned...

**Mr Chairperson:** You have to be precise when you talk about the vesting of the education sector. The administration only is vested in the Regional Assembly.

**Mr J. Roussety:** According to the Act. I know the Act very well.

**Mr Chairperson:** Yes, this is why I asked you to be precise.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Thank you for your precision. My questions is: when will the Commissioner come with an answer to say that we have no more such problems at REDCO?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the very pertinent question put by the Minority Leader should rather be addressed at the National Assembly, to the Minister of Education himself, because it is not in our competence since we do not have any ruling over REDCO. As I said earlier a file has been opened and according to the Minister of Education, it has been sent to the Ministry of Finance. Therefore, there is some progress in the matter and we hope, as you do, that the matter is going to be resolved in a fairly short time.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I must point out that there is not only the laboratory, there are also other specialist rooms. The ignorance of the Commissioner is *frappant*: he has been Manager and Commissioner; there are other specialist rooms such as the visual arts room, etc. I would like to ask under whose authority are the funds earmarked for equipping the laboratory, the specialist rooms at Citron Donis College presently and since when?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like the Minority Leader to repeat the latter part of the question.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Of course, may be the Commissioner does not understand the terminology. I would say the money which is going to be used to buy the equipment. The Commissioner has said that he has launched the tender, that money must come from Government source. From which source does that money come? Is it with the Regional Assembly or the Ministry of Education or with REDCO? Where is that money actually?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the money is included in our Budget and I am fully aware that there are other specialist rooms. I do know that we have, for example, the visual arts room and the Home Economics, etc. So, I am fully aware of the number of specialist rooms that have got to be fitted in the College. As I said, thanks God we are sticking our neck out to do something not for the benefit of REDCO, but for the benefit of young people who are at present studying at Citron Donis, because they are our young people and, therefore, they are our concern.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I understand that the funds earmarked for equipment, for buying chemicals, etc. are in the Budget. The Budget starts 1<sup>st</sup> June. From a personal conversation I had with somebody from REDCO, it appears that the funds have been with the Executive Council of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly since November 2002. We are now in the second term. This money has been kept; tenders have not been launched for laboratory equipment. Can I ask the Commissioner how he can explain this long delay? Money has been provided to equip the school which is not equipped. Now we hear that there are tenders. How can this delay be explained? Is it not a case of lack of seriousness as regards the education of our students?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to make it known to the Minority Leader that it is not the duty of the Commissioner for Education and his Commission to go and do all the works concerning the equipping of all the secondary schools under REDCO in Rodrigues. The Manager should be doing his work; he should be there to go and do the buying and we do the payment; that is all.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, if I understand well the financial practice at the Commission for Education is such that money is budgeted and if nobody asks it is not spent, *l'argent retourner*.

**Mr Chairperson:** You should try to restrict yourself to the main question. Proceed.

**Mr J. Roussety:** It is not serious to say that we must wait for REDCO. Rodrigues is very small; Citron Donis is 15 minutes from here. Can I ask the Commissioner whether there has been any protest on the part of the students, parents or teachers of Citron Donis College towards his Commission and what was his reaction?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the Minority Leader is turning round and round in circle. As I said the responsibility for all this rests with REDCO. There should have been a Manager on the spot to do all this work. We do not have the management of the College and I will make it clear to you that all this is part of the managerial work and responsibilities of REDCO and in the absence of a Manager on the spot, we are doing our best. As a matter of fact we could be told that we are poking our nose where it is not wanted.

### **OYSTER BAY RECLAIMED LAND - INDUSTRIAL ZONE**

**(No. B/175) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the proposed industrial zone to be set up on the reclaimed land at Oyster Bay, he would state -

- (a) how many persons/associations have applied for an industrial land lease;
- (b) how many such leases have been issued since then and the nature of the activities carried out thereon.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, with respect to part (a) of the question, I am informed that no application for industrial purposes has been received specifically for sites on the reclaimed land, but one hundred and ten (110) applications for industrial purpose have been received for sites in the region of Oyster Bay.

With regard to part (b), as at to date, ten leases have been finalised and letters of intent have been issued to another eight applicants.

A list of 18 lessees showing the purpose of their leases is being tabled.

Mr Chairperson Sir, it was noted that the existing parcellisation on the reclaimed land at Oyster Bay was not properly laid out and the advice of the Ministry of Housing and Lands was sought to review its layout. The new layout will provide for the relocation of the lessees as well as the creation of a marina. A team of experts from the Ministry of Environment are in Rodrigues to look into the creation of marinas.

To enable the Central Electricity Board to set up its new power station at Pointe L'Herbe, it was also decided to relocate the Mauritius Consumers Cooperative Federation, Total Mauritius and Allied Builders to the reclaimed land at Oyster Bay. The Government Mechanical Workshop and some offices of the Public Infrastructure Division will also be relocated at Oyster Bay.

I had a meeting with all the approved lessees to inform them of the decision and they were all agreeable to the proposal as they considered that the provision of basic facilities such as road, electricity and telephone service will be facilitated.

**Mr J. Roussety:** As regards any of the beneficiaries of these leases of the reclaimed land at Oyster Bay, has there at any time been question of canceling the leases?

**The Chief Commissioner:** No, Mr Chairperson, Sir. When I took the office of Chief Commissioner, I looked at the problem very seriously and we examined the reclaimed land at Oyster Bay; only 18 lessees have been considered. There was not the intention to cancel, but to relocate, because this parcellisation was badly made. This is why new decisions have been taken to have the marina. As I said in my reply, at Pointe L'Herbe the CEB is going to set up its plant there. That is why we are going to relocate those people who have asked for land at Point l'Herbe at Oyster Bay.

**Mr J. Roussety:** The answer is a bit ambiguous. I have a list with me. Will the first lease be cancelled and a second one drawn? What guarantee is there that these persons will receive their lease?

**The Chief Commissioner:** We are giving them the same area of land as was found in the parcellisation, but we are relocating them.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, unless I am wrong; this is drawn for a particular place on the reclaimed land. So, if we have to move a person to another place, the initial lease must be cancelled.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is not a question of cancelling the lease. We are giving them the same amount of land, but in another area.

*(Interruptions)*

It is the same lease.

**Mr J. Roussety:** It is said in the answer that the set-up and the development plan were wrongly made. Can I ask who first made the development plan, the set-up and the survey and who has allocated these leases which, according to him, are wrong?

**The Chief Commissioner:** It was done before the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002 and, according to the Town and Country Planning Division, this parcellisation was made without a planner; and we met those lessees, one of them told us that the land which has been allocated to him is under sea. Now we are going to have a marina there to relocate another owner there. So, we are going to have another land use plan of this area. I think this is good, because this marina is very important for yachts and fishing boats, offshore lagoons. The experts are here; perhaps this afternoon or tomorrow morning, they are going to visit the Oyster Bay reclaimed land so that we can work out a good land use plan there.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I understand that there is a big development coming in that region...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Can the Minority Leader put his question?

**Mr J. Roussety:** The Commissioner has been speaking of two things in the same region. Unfortunately, we could not get the answer as far as the power station at Pointe l'Herbe is concerned last time, because we walked out. Then there is the marina and the development at Oyster Bay. These areas were situated in the sea and they have been reclaimed. From my knowledge I don't know whether there is any retaining wall from the side of the sea, as there is here in Baie Lascars. Will there be an EIA to see whether

in the long term these developments will be sustainable? We are all aware that with global warming there is a high risk of rise in the sea level. There are rivers in this region; it is a flood prone area. Can I ask him whether a proper EIA is going to be done? There is also concern for all those people living along the coast. Development is made on the reclaimed land; what will happen when there is flooding and high tide? Are these elements going to be taken into consideration before launching projects of millions of rupees?

**The Chief Commissioner:** As I said in my reply, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is a team of consultants here; they are going to visit the place and they are going to make recommendations as to where we are going to have this marina and other places where lands will be relocated. Let the consultants who are here do their work. They have a meeting this morning with people from Oyster Bay; they are going to Baie du Nord also.

### **BRIDGES - CLEANING**

**(No. B/176) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether, with regard to the recent torrential rain in Rodrigues, he could say why the Oyster Bay bridge near the Chapel, the Fond Baie aux Huitres bridge leading to the breeding station and the Rivière Coco bridge near “boutik Clair” which were obstructed had not been cleaned up to then and who was the officer responsible for the exercise.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson Sir, with your permission I shall reply to this question. With regard to the bridges at Oyster Bay, I am informed that once the obstructions were observed by Enforcement Officers of the Solid Waste Management Unit on the 18 May 2003, instruction was given to Maxi Clean Ltd to clean the bridges and the cleaning exercise started on 22 May 2003 and is progressing satisfactorily.

Being given the delays noted in the cleaning exercise post cyclone Kalunde and after the recent torrential rains, the Executive Council, at its meeting of the 14 May, has decided that the cleaning of public places will be

carried out by Government employees after normal working hours and on Saturdays.

The exercise will start this week and places to be cleaned include the bridge near “Boutik Clair” at Rivière Coco.

The collection of solid waste falls under the responsibility of the Officer in charge of the Environment Division.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Commissioner please inform the House whether a survey has been carried out to see what other places – apart from the ones mentioned in the question - were obstructed during cyclone Kalundé and what measures have been taken to ensure that they are cleaned up also?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the necessary has been done. A survey has been done in the coastal region; that’s why we have decided on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May to have the workers of the Infrastructure Division and the Environment Division start cleaning those areas even after working hours. That’s the decision we have taken on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May.

**Mr J. Roussety:** What resources, manpower and equipment does the officer at the Environment Division have at his disposal to do that work?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, at the Environment Division, they have a contractor which is Maxi Clean and their duty is to see that the contractor performs its duty well. There are also the Enforcement Officers; they have their transport; they go everywhere they want. I must say that they are doing a good work; a lot of works stated in the contract and which have not been done by Maxi Clean are being done now. They are serving a lot of notices to Maxi Clean so that it does its work according to the contract.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner mentioned in his reply that on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2003 it was decided that work will be done even after working hours which will eventually incur the paying of overtime. Cyclone Kalundé visited Rodrigues on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March – some two and a half months ago. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House

why they have waited for so long and then to have overtime done for the cleaning of those bridges?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the works were supposed to be done according to the contract of Maxi Clean and we have tried to have Maxi Clean to do the works according to the contract, even cleaning of rivers. But we have seen that Maxi Clean was not performing its duties correctly. There was also the private sector which was doing a lot of work throughout the island and they have stopped the work. Now we are taking over with different divisions – Environment Division and Works Division – to clean the bridges. We have seen that there is a lot of work to be done; there was a lot of damage caused, especially along the coastal regions.

### **SPORTS COMPLEXES - REPAIRS**

**(No. B/177) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Commissioner for Youth & Sports, whether, as regards the Sports Complexes of Mangles and La Ferme which had been partly damaged during Cyclone Kalundé, he would state what measures were being taken to remedy the situation.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson Sir, tenders for the renovation of sports complexes at Mangles and La Ferme were launched on 08 April 2003. We are at present finalising the administrative procedures for the award of the contract to the best tenderers.

**Mr Grandcourt:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner give us more information about how these sports complexes have been damaged?

**Mr Chairperson:** I understand that this question takes into account partial damage. Unless the Commissioner would like to answer this question.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the damages caused by cyclone Kalundé refers to the paint, cracking of walls and the surface of the pitch.

### **LA FERME AREA HEALTH CENTRE - UPGRADING**

**(No. B/178) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Commissioner for Health, whether, in view of the unsatisfactory state of the La Ferme Area Health Centre, he would state what steps he intended to take to upgrade the infrastructure and the services there.

**Mr Sooprayen:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, my Commission has already completed a survey of the infrastructure situation of the main hospital, the two area Health Centres and all the Community Health Centres. We have concluded that Infrastructure, furniture and equipment in most of these centres require some upgrading. To start with, La Ferme Area Health Centre was in a very unsatisfactory state and the following activities have already been carried out over there –

- (a) washing and cleaning of the whole building and its painting. Moreover, specific duties have also been assigned to staff for cleaning of window panes, regular cleaning of the water tanks and I have obtained a report that the arrangements have proved to be satisfactory;
- (b) fixation of ceramic tiles in the floor of the whole buildings, and
- (c) The labour force attached to the maintenance section have been provided with all the necessary tools and equipment such as cutlass, garden shears, rubber hose, rubber boots, gloves, etc. to enable them improve the surroundings of the Centre and all the surrounding dispensaries.

### **ICAC - VISIT TO RODRIGUES, MAY 2003**

**(No. B/179) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety)** asked the Chief Commissioner, whether with regard to the recent visit of a delegation from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in Rodrigues, he would -

- (a) state whether the Rodrigues Administration had been informed of the visit and, if yes, when;
- (b) give the dates during which the visit was carried out;
- (c) list the authorities, persons, or groups whom the ICAC had met, and

(d) ascertain whether there had been any problem or incident regarding that visit and, if yes, the nature thereof.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson Sir, as regards part (a) the Rodrigues Administration was informed of the visit of a three-member delegation of ICAC on Friday 02 May 2003.

With regard to part (b), the delegation was scheduled to arrive in Rodrigues on Wednesday 07 May and leave Rodrigues on Thursday 08 May.

As to part (c), a programme of meetings was established between the Rodrigues Administration and ICAC as per annex (Appendix). The delegation held meetings with stakeholders on Wednesday 07 May only.

With regard to part (d), there was a problem of accommodation.

ICAC wrote on Monday 02 May requesting for accommodation at Cotton Bay Hotel. A letter of confirmation for three rooms was sent to Cotton Bay Hotel on Monday 05 May.

ICAC wrote on Tuesday 06 May requesting that the reservation of rooms at Cotton Bay Hotel be cancelled and instead reservation be made at Les Cocotiers Hotel. Rodrigues Administration was informed that there was no room available at Les Cocotiers Hotel and, therefore, did not cancel reservation at Cotton Bay Hotel.

When the ICAC delegation called at around 4.00 p.m., they were informed that no room was available for them. Apparently, Cotton Bay Hotel had sent a fax to Rodrigues Administration on Monday 05 May informing that no room was available; no such fax was received and seen by the officer in charge of the hotel reservation at the Administration.

The Island Chief Executive was informed by the Commissioner of ICAC, Mr N. Beekarry at about 4.00 p.m. of this problem; the Island Chief Executive immediately contacted the other hotels and three rooms were reserved at Escales Vacances Hotel for the delegation. Unfortunately, the ICAC delegation refused to check in at Escales Vacances Hotel and decided to return to Mauritius on the evening flight.

**Mr J. Roussety:** ICAC is concerned with corruption and it was their first *prise de contact* in Rodrigues. Did the Chief Commissioner or any Member of the Executive Council meet with people from the ICAC during their visit here?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I tabled a programme of the visit of ICAC and I said that they decided to go back to Mauritius on Wednesday 07 May. They were to meet representatives of the trade union non-Governmental organisations, the private sector, the Chairperson and Members of the Regional Assembly. It was scheduled to have a courtesy call on the Chief Commissioner on Thursday morning at 9 and a meeting with the Chief Commissioner and Members of the Executive Council on the next day.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I understand it is the fault of the Rodrigues Administration - those who are in power in Rodrigues. Will he envisage presenting his apologies to ICAC?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have presented the facts. The facts are that ICAC made reservations at Cotton Bay Hotel and after that they said they would not like to go there. Cotton Bay Hotel has sent a fax saying that there is no room available there. Then the Rodrigues Administration made did its best to reserve rooms at Les Cocotiers Hotel; there were no rooms available there also. But there were rooms at "Escales Vacances". But before that they had already decided to go back to Mauritius. Mr Wong So phoned Mr Ganoo, Secretary to Cabinet, to inform him about the facts.

**Mr J. Roussety:** When ICAC landed at the airport - if the information is available - can the Chief Commissioner tell us who welcomed them and who designed the programme? This Authority is very important and it is a shame for Rodrigues that they have been given such hospitality.

**The Chief Commissioner:** According to Mr Wong So, it is the person in charge to welcome people at the airport. We must say that ICAC is an independent body; they must not be welcomed by any Commissioner. I don't know whether Mr Wong So himself went to the airport. People coming to Rodrigues, Ministers in particular are welcomed by the

Commissioners. But other people coming to Rodrigues are welcomed by the Protocol Officer. ICAC is an independent body...

*(Interruptions)*

Why is the Minority Leader trying to mix issues?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** No more interruptions from a sitting position, please.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Have a look at the programme. It was scheduled that ICAC would have a meeting with the Commissioners of Rodrigues. They should have considered this instead of taking the decision to go back to Mauritius. There were rooms at “Escales Vacances”. Why did they not stay for one night or two?

### **MECHANICAL WORKSHOP – THEFT/LOSS OF EQUIPMENT**

**(No. B/180) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether there had been any case of theft or disappearance of equipment, spare parts or other government property at the Government Mechanical Workshop in Port Mathurin, Rodrigues, and if yes, to state the nature of the theft or disappearance and what measures have been taken.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner,** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there was a case of theft at the Mechanical Workshop on vehicle Minibus Toyota GMR 637 which was awaiting repairs. The disappearance was discovered on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2002. Immediately, a survey was carried out by the Officer in Charge, and it was found that the gearbox, propeller shaft, differential, four pistons with rings and the connecting rod were missing. The value of the missing equipment amounts to some one

hundred thousand rupees. The matter was immediately referred to the Police. I am informed that investigations are still under way.

Furthermore, I am informed that a departmental survey has been carried out and the matter is being dealt with in line with Regulations and procedures stated in the Financial Management Manual.

Following the incident, security measures have been reinforced at the Mechanical Workshop. All keys are now kept at the Police Station and the watchmen are now requested to monitor the entrance and exit of vehicles at the gate.

### **HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAMME**

**(No. B/181) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, the Executive Council had given approval of any sort to any Housing or Housing Rehabilitation Programme recently and, if yes, the name of the implementing agency, the total project value, the criteria which were being used for the choice of beneficiaries, and the evaluation mechanisms which would be used at the completion of the project to evaluate its impact and success.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson Sir, following the passage of cyclone Kalundé, the Trust Fund for Social Integration of Vulnerable Groups has agreed to finance the reconstruction of all damaged houses subject to the beneficiaries satisfying their criteria. A list of all damaged houses was handed to the Trust Fund for consideration and they subsequently, submitted a list of 67 beneficiaries that are eligible. The Executive Council has, at its meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2003, decided to approve the recommendation of the Trust Fund for Social Integration of Vulnerable Groups to reconstruct 67 completely damaged houses during the passage of cyclone Kalundé. The criteria for the choice of the beneficiaries are those of the Trust Fund for Social Integration of Vulnerable Group. The project will be financed by the Trust Fund on the same basis as the existing scheme, which consists of the provision of all construction materials to the beneficiaries. The evaluation mechanism will be the final product, that is, the completion of all 67 houses.

I am, further, pleased to inform this House that in order to alleviate the hardship of those families, the Executive Council has decided to accelerate the construction of those houses by providing the labour component mainly masons to those families and all expenses thereof will be met under both the Prime Minister's Relief Fund and Chief Commissioner's Relief Fund.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand there is a partnership between first the Executive Council and the Trust Fund. The Deputy Chief Commissioner has said that he is taking measures to accelerate the construction of houses by the Trust Fund. I understand it is Government labour. Is the Trust answerable in some sort to the Executive Council for the construction of these houses?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, the Executive Council has, at its meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2003 decided to approve the recommendation of the Trust Fund for Social Integration of Vulnerable Group to reconstruct 67 completely damaged houses. But in line with the philosophy of Section 27(3) of the RRA Act which says: "where the government or any public statutory authority delivers in Rodrigues services to the public, it shall, in so doing, give due consideration to the views of the Regional Assembly." The Trust Fund has informed the Executive Council; and approval means, in fact, that the Executive Council agrees that the Trust Fund would provide such services. But the Executive Council has no power nor is it agreeable to interfere with the work of the Trust Fund.

**Mr J. Roussety:** This is wrong policy, Mr Chairperson, Sir! The Executive Council is the supreme one after the Assembly. The Assembly is supreme; the Executive Council is the executive arm of the Assembly. So, they are going into partnership with the Trust Fund; it could be with any organisation. Land in Rodrigues is being used; they give their approval and then they come and say that they don't have anything to say in their work! What if the work is not completed, as is the case now? Houses have not been completed; there is a lack of blocks; *tôle pas conner cote été*. I want to know whether the Regional Assembly, from the action of the Executive Council with the Trust Fund – I am not concerned with the Trust Fund directly as it is an independent organisation with the Ministry of Finance; we know that very well; we know the provisions of the law also very well. So, when the Trust Fund is acting with the Executive Council – they are working

together, they are dealing with housing in Rodrigues and housing is part of our responsibility - is that matter questionable in this House?

**Mr Chairperson:** Do you mean to say that there is a partnership? You have to be precise. I insist on precision. You mean there is an extension of the activities of the Regional Assembly. Limit yourself to the answer for a further elucidation on this point.

**Mr J. Roussety:** As far as the partnership or the link, whatever it be, the Executive Council, elected by the people of this country, with the Trust Fund they are working together in a form of partnership, because the Deputy Chief Commissioner said that he is going to accelerate measures for the construction of these houses. They have given their approval. As far as all these approvals being given by the Executive Council are concerned, does he consider – I am not speaking of the Trust Fund, this is not my concern; I know that this House has no jurisdiction over the Trust Fund – he is answerable to the Assembly? Can we ask questions on the approvals, measures and results? An organisation is working with the Executive Council of the Regional Assembly, can we here in the House – and the House is concerned also – ask questions on the work? If the work is not done properly...

**Mr Chairperson:** Do you mean the Deputy Commissioner?

**Mr J. Roussety:** Yes. Does he consider, in the exercise of his duties...

**Mr Chairperson:** Address him properly, please.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Does the Deputy Chief Commissioner consider that we can question not the Trust Fund but the partnership or activities being done in the partnership with the Executive Council?

**Mr Chairperson:** I have to clear something. Do you mean the admissibility of the questions rests with the Commissioners themselves?

**Mr J. Roussety:** I am asking whether he is responsible for the partnership they are doing with the Trust Fund. Whether you want it or not, when you are in partnership with somebody...

**Mr Chairperson:** When you say “you”, whom are you referring to?

**Mr J. Roussety:** I say anybody. Addressing you, I would say “Mr Chairperson”.

**Mr Chairperson:** Of course.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Am I clear?

**Mr Chairperson:** Yes, on the last part. Has the Deputy Chief Commissioner been able to understand the question?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, *on a archi dit dans cette Assemblée* that the Trust Fund falls under the purview of the Ministry of Finance and questions concerning same should be asked in the National Assembly. *Mais là on est en train d'aider les gens après le cyclone Kalundé. Il y a des pauvres sans logement, c'est cela le partnership qu'on est en train de créer avec le Trust Fund pour accélérer le relogement de ces gens là. Il faut être humain dans la vie; il y a des gens qui sont en train de dormir dans la rue, chez des parents. Toutes les procédures du Trust Fund tombent sous la responsabilité du ministère des finances.* We are helping the people not the Trust Fund. We are helping to accelerate the rehousing of these people. But other questions pertaining to the Trust Fund should be asked in the National Assembly.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Questions pertaining directly to the Trust Fund should be asked in the National Assembly. That is O.K. I would like to ask one more question. The Executive Council gives its approval; they help the Trust Fund and then they don't know anything! This is what I understand. What is being done by the Trust Fund afterwards is not the concern of the Executive Council!

**Mr Chairperson:** Put your question.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I am asking the Commissioner whether he just gives his approval and then he has nothing to say. Is that the case?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Trust Fund has accepted to contribute – normally the Trust Fund gives materials to the beneficiaries and they construct their houses with their own means. Now

the Regional Assembly has accepted to help these people, to give them masons only because of the cyclone Kalundé. *On doit aider ces gens; il faut être humain.*

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards the 67 beneficiaires mentioned by the Deputy Chief Commissioner, will he please table the names of the beneficiaries, their addresses as soon as possible?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order! I am sorry, I am not allowing this question mainly because it is a selection made by the Trust Fund and it is for the Trust Fund to deliver such information under the aegis of the Ministry concerned.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, does it mean that the Executive Council has nothing to do, they don't even know who are these beneficiaries.

**Mr Chairperson:** There is a distinction between being informed and has the responsibility to select.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, whether they want it or not, but it is a clear case. You are a lawyer; you know it. The Deputy Chief Commissioner is limiting the power of the Executive Council and that of the Regional Assembly by saying that they can't go into the Trust Fund. They don't have anything to say on the Trust Fund, but they give their approval.

**Mr Pierre Louis:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order it is question time. The Minority Leader is making a statement.

**Mr Chairperson:** The point of order raised by the Member is very clear. I would like to draw the attention of Members to this point specifically. Can the Minority Leader finish now?

**Mr J. Roussety:** I want to be clear; I will insist because I know the sufferings of people in some parts of Rodrigues...

*(Interruptions)*

I want a clear answer, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I will repeat my question – it is not a speech; it is an introductory matter to the question. People who are poor who do not have a decent house and cyclone Kalundé victims are being helped by the Trust Fund on Government land in Rodrigues. The Executive Council is giving its approval; it is helping the Trust Fund; the Trust Fund is thus a financing agency, as we call it. But should not the responsibility of these programmes rest with the Regional Assembly? We are going to ask how the Trust Fund gets money and how it functions. We are asking questions concerning the activities of the Trust Fund in Rodrigues and this falls under the housing component of our responsibility. So, it is not correct to say that we can't ask what is going on, what is being made by the Trust Fund. Otherwise we say that the Trust Fund is a private company; we don't have to go into it. Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner tell the House whether his responsibility as regards the Trust Fund is zero or is there any responsibility? Because it is a serious matter. We have a Regional Assembly and on the other side of the House Commissioners don't want to look into what is going on as far as housing is concerned.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Minority Leader is making a speech.

**Mr Chairperson:** Would the Minority Leader put his question directly, please?

**Mr J. Roussety:** According to our Standing Orders, the attention of the Chairperson should be directed to a point of order. Which point of order is the Chief Commissioner talking of? I am introducing my question. How will I ask a question? It will be...

**Mr Chairperson:** Please wait. I have allowed you to make some remarks, but you should restrict yourself to the remarks made by the Leader of the House. If there is anything that is confusing, I'll have to refer you to Standing Order 18. This is question time and only questions are allowed. In fact, as I said on the last occasion, it is permissible to give an introduction to questions so that it makes it more intelligible and I said also that it should not, by any stretch of the imagination, be taken to be a speech on whatever subject it may be. You have to put your question directly and not make a speech.

**Mr J. Roussety:** As regards question B/181, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether he does a follow-up after having given approval or help of any sort to the Trust Fund as regards its housing programme. Or is his responsibility finished after he has given his approval?

**Mr Chairperson:** I can't find any link of this question with the main question. This question is not allowed.

**Mr Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, with reference to the RRA Act where it says "where Government or any statutory authority delivers in Rodrigues services to the public, it shall in so doing give due consideration". Does due consideration mean approval?

**Mr Chairperson:** This question is not allowed, because it is about the interpretation of the law. The Commissioner is obviously not competent to give you the correct interpretation. If you have a question on the subject, you can ask.

**Mr Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the law it is said "due consideration". That does not mean approval.

**Mr Chairperson:** This is something else. If you have a specific question, please put it by all means. I take it that there are no more supplementary questions.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I have one supplementary question, if you would allow me, Mr Chairperson, Sir. At Section 27 (3) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act...

**Mr Chairperson:** You are not commenting on the interpretation of the law. I am sorry to interrupt you.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Je ne suis pas, M. le président, habilité à faire cela.

**Mr Chairperson:** Thank you very much.

**Mr J. Roussety:** *J'ai une formation d'économiste, mais pas d'avocat.* It is said in the Act "where the government or any statutory body authority delivers in Rodrigues services to the public, it shall give due consideration to the views of the Regional Assembly". I would invite the Deputy Chief

Commissioner to tell the House what is his views regarding that part, because it is said “consideration to the views of the Regional Assembly” and he tells us that we can’t ask questions on the Trust Fund. Therefore, this is contradictory to the law, because if the majority of the Regional Assembly gives its views on Trust Fund, according to the law the Trust Fund is obliged to take the views of the majority; and we are not authorised to ask questions!

**Mr Chairperson:** This question is not allowed, because it goes to the root of the jurisdiction, I may say, the extent to what the Commissioners can answer or not. It is not something debatable in this House. You have to restrict yourself to matters of fact to which the Commissioners are responsible.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will address you regarding that matter.

**Mr Chairperson:** I don’t need any advice.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I am not asking for any advice.

**Mr Chairperson:** You have to be precise. I have given my ruling on this question; if you have any other questions, you can do so.

**Mr J. Roussety:** If I understand well, your ruling is that we can’t...

**Mr Chairperson:** My ruling is that the previous question is not allowed.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Yes, I understand that. But I am calling upon you to look into that matter to give another ruling as regards what the Deputy Chief Commissioner has said.

**Mr Chairperson:** My ruling is simple.

**Mr J. Roussety:** So, your ruling is that we can’t ask questions on the Trust Fund.

**Mr Chairperson:** No, that was not my ruling.

**Mr J. Roussety:** This is what I am trying to know.

**Mr Chairperson:** This was not your question; you have to remember what you said.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I have a new proposal, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Chairperson:** Put your question.

**Mr J. Roussety:** This is what I am trying to do.

**Mr Chairperson:** Yes, please do so.

**Mr J. Roussety:** My proposal to you, as Chairperson of the House...

**Mr Chairperson:** If it has any bearing on my previous ruling, of course it will be inappropriate.

**Mr J. Roussety:** No, it does not concern the previous question. I am asking you to look into whether, as regards partnership between the Trust Fund and the Executive Council, we can ask questions on these matters or not. I am asking you to think about it and to tell us what is your ruling on this matter.

**Mr Chairperson:** Thank you for this remark. You have just mentioned that actually there are questions about Trust Fund which are being asked in the National Assembly. I think you yourself have got the answer. To be more precise, I understand from the Deputy Chief Commissioner's answer that by operation of Section 27(3) the Trust Fund for Social Integration of Vulnerable Group has submitted to the views to the Executive Council. We know what the Executive Council did in return and we know also what the Trust Fund did. By just helping, I may say, the Trust Fund accelerating the construction of these houses, I cannot see in what way the Trust Fund has surrendered any of its powers or jurisdiction to the Regional Assembly. I still maintain that questions on Trust Fund cannot be asked in the Assembly, because it is pure and simple that the Commissioners are not responsible for Trust Fund.

**Mr J. Roussety:** It is obvious that they are not responsible for Trust Fund, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Chairperson:** Yes, but this is the end of the matter; this is my ruling. You still want me to consider it again.

**Mr J. Roussety:** No, you misunderstood, if I can tell you.

**Mr Chairperson:** Please take your seat. Does any Member have any other question which has a direct bearing on Question B/181?

**Mrs Meunier:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, if I understood the Deputy Chief Commissioner well it means that if the Trust Fund is misusing the land – we know that land falls under the responsibility of the Regional Assembly and they have to give authorisation for this – in the construction of houses, the Deputy Chief Commissioner does not have a say in this matter and he leaves it to the Trust Fund to use the land as they want.

**Mr Chairperson:** Is this your question?

**Mrs Meunier:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr Chairperson:** Unless the Deputy Chief Commissioner wants to answer that question. I think there is still some confusion about the Trust Fund. I understand the Member perfectly well, but the fact that the question cannot be asked in the Assembly is no way a hindrance to the question being put in the National Assembly, of course, for the simple reason that nobody will have the information here.

## **CYCLONE KALUNDE – COMPENSATION TO FARMERS AND PLANTERS**

**(No. B/182) The Minority Leader (Mr J. Roussety)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether as regards monetary compensations following the Kalundé cyclone that had been paid to farmers and planters as announced by the Right Honourable Prime Minister during his last visit to Rodrigues, he would –

- (a) state how the choice of beneficiaries had been made and by whom;
- (b) table the list of all applicants islandwise;

- (c) table the list of all beneficiaries, islandwise per category, region or village, together with the respective amounts paid to date per beneficiary;
- (d) state who personally delivered the cheques or how the payments have been made;
- (e) state whether there are cases where professional planters or farmers have not received any compensation at all, and
- (f) state the total budget originally earmarked for that programme and the total amount disbursed to date.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to inform the House that the choice of beneficiaries has been made following a survey carried out by five teams of officers of the Extension Unit of the Agricultural Services. All houses that have suffered losses were visited and the loss incurred registered by the officers.

The criteria used for the choice of the beneficiaries are as follows –

- (i) all planters relying solely on their plantation as a source of income are paid a full financial assistance of Rs3,000 per month for three months;
- (ii) those planters whose partner derives another source of income are being paid a sum of Rs1,000 monthly for 3 months.
- (iii) I wish, furthermore, to inform the House that this assistance is meant only to genuine planters who, after the passage of cyclone Kalundé had suffered losses, i.e. only those planters who were cultivating their land at that time that are eligible for same;
- (iv) professional planters whose lands were not under cultivation are not eligible to the financial assistance.

As regards part (b), the question of tabling the list of applicants does not arise, as no such list exists being given that Officers of the Agricultural Department carried out the survey and no applications were received.

I am tabling a list giving the number of planters surveyed and the number of cases found to be genuine as well as the number of full time and

part time planters involved. It is found premature for the time being to table the list of all beneficiaries, as the whole survey has not yet been completed.

The cheques were personally delivered by the Officers of the Finance Section accompanied by officers of the Agricultural Services. A handing over ceremony was carried out at each of the five centres in the presence of members of the Executive Council.

Complaints are being received from several persons who are claiming that they are planters and that they have not yet received any assistance. A complaint unit has been opened at both my Commission and Citronelle Agricultural Services to receive all grievances. All registered cases are being investigated by the officers of the Agricultural Services and any genuine cases that were not surveyed in the first survey will be dealt with favourably.

The total amount originally earmarked for that programme is ten million rupees and this amount includes also financial assistance to those farmers that have suffered from loss of their livestock as well as beekeepers. The quantum of financial assistance for farmers and beekeepers is being finalised.

### **PETITE BUTTE (EX CORAL QUARRY) – DUMPING SITE**

**(No. B/183) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the dumping of waste near the ex-coral quarry at Petite Butte, he could state the criteria that had been observed before converting the site into a dumping site.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson Sir, after cyclone Kalunde, emergency measures had to be taken to clean up the abundant green waste all over the island. It was considered that two temporary dump sites for green waste at Petite Butte and Baie Diamants would accelerate the clean-up operations; and the shredder from Securiclean sent to Rodrigues on instructions of the Ministry of Local Government and Rodrigues would convert the tree branches and leaves into re-cycled and re-usable organic waste. This was successfully carried out at Baie Diamants. The green waste

at Petite Butte could not be shredded as planned and the Executive Council has now taken the decision to clean up the site at Petite Butte which was meant to be a temporary dumping site.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Could the Chief Commissioner please inform the House when will the clean-up exercise be carried out? Has it already been done or will it be done soon?

**The Chief Commissioner:** The decision has been taken at a meeting of the Executive Council and instructions have been given to the Environment Division.

**Mr Grandcourt:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, would the Chief Commissioner agree with me that the temporary dumping site is found near a site still visited by tourists?

**The Chief Commissioner:** We know that, Mr Chairperson, Sir. That is why the shredded operation has not taken place; it was supposed to take place at Petite Butte and it has been decided to remove the waste from Petite Butte.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Chief Commissioner inform the House why the exercise of converting branches and whatever waste into organic waste could not be done at Petite Butte? Can he give specific reasons as to why this could not be done?

**The Chief Commissioner:** It was a question of time; the operator said that he had to go back to Mauritius. It was also said that there was not much green waste there; that's why they did not go there.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, although the decision to dump these branches and so on at Petite Butte was meant to be on a temporary basis, could the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether there has been any negative impact on tourism for the short period that this dumping has been done there?

**The Chief Commissioner:** The site is not a place visited by tourists. But we have taken the decision, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to remove the green waste; and this will be done.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner is saying that the waste will be removed, can he inform the House whether dumping is not being done right now at Petite Butte?

**The Chief Commissioner:** No, it is not allowed to dump waste there. We will send the officer in charge there or the enforcement officers to have a look at the site and to report back.

**Mr Emilien:** Could the Chief Commissioner inform of the House of the exact date when dumping stopped? Because very recently it was still being used as a dumping ground.

**The Chief Commissioner:** It was used only for green waste after cyclone Kalundé. We will send the environment officer to have a look there and report back.

## **PISTACHES - FISH LANDING STATION**

**(No. B/184) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, for the benefit of the House, he could consider the construction of a fish landing station at Pistaches to alleviate the problem faced by fishermen in that area.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson Sir, the need for a fish landing station at Baie Pistaches has been considered and it was found not to be justified because there are -

- (a) only two families residing at Baie Pistaches,
- (b) only twenty two fishermen in the region, and
- (c) no proper road access to the place.

As a matter of fact at the beginning of the year, some fishermen of Montagne Croupier and Pistaches submitted a request for a fish landing station at Baie Pistaches and they were informed that their request could not be entertained for the reasons I just mentioned.

These fishermen are landing their catches at Baie du Nord fish landing Station and Pointe Mathurin fish landing station.

## **BAIE DU NORD – FISHERMEN - COMPENSATION**

**(No. B/185) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to recent bad weather conditions that had damaged fishing boats at Baie du Nord, the Chief Commissioner could state –

- (a) how many fishermen were due to obtain an allowance to repair their boats, and
- (b) if the allowance was given to all the fishermen concerned.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson Sir,

- (a) As indicated in my statement of the 18 February 2003, fifteen fishing boats belonging to registered fishermen were partly damaged by the rough sea condition which occurred on the 13 February and it was decided that all of them be provided with financial assistance for the repairs of their boats. They were requested to repair their boats and to submit their claims for refund.
- (b) Payment of the financial assistance started on 07 May 2003 and to date, 14 fishermen have already been paid for a total amount of Rs27,500. The last fisherman will receive Rs3,500.

## **SAND EXTRACTORS - BAD WEATHER ALLOWANCE**

**(No. B/186) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to bad weather conditions preventing sand extractors from working, he could consider granting them a bad weather allowance.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the question of payment of bad weather allowance to sand extractors has never been discussed at the Executive Council.

No such policy existed in Mauritius for the sand extractors before Government decided to ban sand extraction from the lagoon.

Sand extractors work on a part-time basis and are employed on a casual basis by sand dealers.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given the difficult nature of the work done by the sand extractors, would the Chief Commissioner not agree that the possibility of finding a sort of assistance to them arises?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the sand dealers are businessmen. Whenever there is bad weather, the sand extractors should be looked after by the sand dealers, because they extract sand from the lagoon and sell. That's why I say that sand dealers should find how they can help the sand extractors. This could be done by a sort of assurance. But what I can say is that there is a great difference between fishermen and sand extractors who are employed by sand dealers.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> DIVISION FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT- FOOTBALL GROUNDS**

**(No. B/187) Mr J. A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Marechal)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports, whether, as regards the current 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Football Tournament, he could state –

- (a) the list of football grounds in use for the tournament, and
- (b) whether any football match has been cancelled and, if yes, the reasons thereof and the steps taken, if any, to avoid the recurrence of such a situation.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a) of the question, the football grounds being used for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division League are Oyster Bay, Marechal and Grande Montagne.

With regard to part (b), I have been informed that the football match scheduled to be played at Marechal ground on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May was postponed but not cancelled as a result of problems related to the marking of the pitch. It would appear that this problem arose due to a confusion between

the Regional Football Committee and the Sport coaches. An inquiry has been initiated to find out the causes of the problem. However, in the meantime and in order to avoid such a situation from happening again, my Commission and the Rodrigues Regional Football Committee have already set up a subcommittee in each region which will be responsible for the smooth running of the competition.

Regarding the teams who made the displacement on the day of the match, I would like also to add, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that my Commission will provide transport facilities to the teams for the replay of the match.

### **FISHERMEN – RECORD OF ATTENDANCE**

**(No. B/188) Mr J. A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Marechal)** asked the Chief Commissioner, whether as regards the daily attendance of fishermen, he could inform the House –

- (a) at what time the daily attendance of fishermen was taken;
- (b) whether the fisheries guards were available throughout working hours at fish landing stations and, if not, what arrangements had been made to record the attendance of fishermen who were back from fishing when the guards had left for their offices.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson Sir, I am informed that the attendance of fishermen is recorded from 8.00 hrs to 11.00 hrs and from noon to 15.15 hours during weekdays and from 8.00 hrs to 10.45 hrs on Saturdays. Attendance of large net fishermen is recorded at their respective fishing post between 8.00 hrs and 18.00 hrs by afloat personnel of the Fisheries Protection Services.

Attendances are not recorded on Sundays and Public Holidays.

As regards part (b), yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, Fisheries Assistants are posted throughout working hours to fish landing stations. However, they are given a one-hour lunch time between 11.00 hrs and noon.

When it rains, the officers have to look for a shelter and to remedy this situation, my office has already given instructions to the Commission

for Public Infrastructure to work out an appropriate design for the construction of shelters on all fish landing stations.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, may be the Chief Commissioner does not know what is happening in this island, especially as far as fisheries are concerned. Fishermen throughout the island encounter difficulties to have their attendance recorded. Some Fisheries Officers pretend that they have to work up to 10.45 daily, whereas fishermen do not work according to time; but they work according to tide. This is a very big problem for them. Whenever bad weather allowance is paid, many fishermen do not receive this allowance, because they do not have the required amount of attendance.

**Mr Chairperson:** What is your question?

**Mr Emilien:** The Chief Commissioner said that he would ask officers to look into the matter. I would like to ask him whether he considers this as being a serious problem for these poor fishermen around the island.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, we must identify the different categories of fishermen. Problems are encountered with net fishing fishermen and the problem is that sometimes these fishermen come back to land before 6.00 p.m. That's why we said that afloat personnel are there to take their attendance. I also said that attendance is recorded from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and from noon to 15.15 hrs in the afternoon. Is there any category of fishermen coming after 15.15 hrs? This we have to work out. As we are going to see with the Commissioner responsible for agriculture we are looking about flexitime. This has been discussed with the PRB a few days ago as to whether we can apply a flexitime, because the planters are in the field in the afternoon and the Agricultural Assistant or the Technical Assistant finishes work at three. We are looking as to whether flexitime can also be applicable to Fisheries guards; this is being discussed.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, I know it is question time. But allow me to make a proposal to the Chief Commissioner.

**Mr Chairperson:** You can come at adjournment time.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** I just wanted to inform him that...

**Mr Chairperson:** If it is short you may proceed.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir. When the Chief Commissioner said attendance is recorded from noon to 15.15 hrs, I'll ask him to look into the matter, because such is not the case.

**The Chief Commissioner:** I'll look into the matter.

### **STREET LIGHTING NETWORK – REHABILITATION**

**(No. B/189) Mr J. A. L. Emilien ( First Local Region Member for Marechal)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether as regards street lighting, he would state in which localities streetlights had been damaged during cyclone Kalundé, the number thereof and when same would be required.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed that before cyclone Kalundé, there were some 760 units street lighting lanterns, which were in operation all over the island, and approximately some 50 units have been completely damaged following cyclone Kalundé.

Repairs are currently under way at Oyster Bay, La Ferme, La Fouche Mangues, Saint Gabriel, Rivière Coco, La Fouche Corail and Malabar. At Port Mathurin and its outskirts, most lanterns have been replaced.

The Central Electricity Board is currently carrying out the consolidation of its network all over the island and this includes the rehabilitation of street lighting network.

It is expected that the whole street lighting network and lanterns will be back to normal in August 2003. As stated in my previous reply to question B/169, tenders for the supply of street lighting lanterns are being finalised.

## **CITRON DONIS RESEVOIR/ UPPER PART OF RIVIERE COCO WATER DISTRIBUTION**

**(No. B/190) Mr J. A. L. Emilien ( First Local Region Member for Marechal)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether in so far as water distribution from Citron Donis to the upper part of Rivière Coco is concerned, whether he would inform the House, when applicants, who have already paid for connections to their houses since the beginning of March 2003, would be attended to.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed that the water distribution network from Citron Donis reservoir to the upper part of Rivière Coco village has to be extended over a distance of 250 m in order to enable the applicants under reference to be equipped with a water prise. The request for the procurement of pipes 63 mm is in progress and these will be made available by mid June 2003. The network will be laid and all the water prises connected.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner if he finds it fair to have somebody paying since 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2003 for water rent and waiting up to now.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** The attention of these applicants has been drawn to the fact that their request will be entertained as soon as the lateral main will be installed. They were informed, but they insisted to complete all formalities regarding payment for water prise and their requests have been approved accordingly.

## **PORT MATHURIN - STAGNANT WATERS**

**(No. B/191) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether, as regards stagnant water in certain places in Port Mathurin, he would say what sanitary measures were being taken to ensure the proper health of people living there.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed by the Commission for Health that regular larviciding destined at

controlling the proliferation of mosquitoes as well as regular disinfections to control any threat to public health are being carried out by the Public Health Department.

Meanwhile, the Environment Unit has been informed to see to it that all drains are being cleaned up by the Contractor.

The collaboration of the Fire Services is also being sought on a regular basis to have the stagnant waters pumped out thereby reducing all potential risks.

### **CORE HOUSING UNITS - CONSTRUCTION**

**(No. B/192) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the construction of 108 core housing units currently being built –

- (a) he would state, according to the plan, the area of and the number of rooms in a single unit;
- (b) how many persons would be decently accommodated therein, and
- (c) what would be the procedure to obtain such, a unit and on what terms and conditions.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed that, with regard to the 108 core housing units currently being built, the surface area of each house is about 30 square metre each and comprises a small corridor, one toilet/bathroom, one large room accommodating a living area, a kitchenette and a porch.

The number of persons that can be accommodated therein is three to four persons. It is to be noted that the structure of the building caters for both horizontal and vertical expansion. I have effected a site visit to those currently being built at Citron Donis and have instructed my Commission to look at the possibility of increasing the surface area to cater for one additional bedroom.

The criteria for obtaining such units are presently being worked out by my Commission and will be made public upon finalisation.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, are the 108 core housing units being built under contract financed by the Regional Assembly or are they considered as an urgency?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** They are being built under the budget of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

**Mr J. Roussety:** There are no urgencies, NHDC, etc?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the Minority Leader that this project was initiated by the Ministry for Rodrigues and we have inherited the project as it is. This is why my Commission is looking at the possibility of extending the building to cater for one additional room. The NHDC is responsible for the construction of these houses and we are responsible for the payment. And PADCO has been awarded the contract.

**Mr J. Roussety:** If I understand well, the Deputy Chief Commissioner is answerable for these houses that are being constructed by the NHDC. Is the Deputy Chief Commissioner answerable to the House – to people in Rodrigues through us, elected Members of the House – as regards the construction of these houses?

**Mr Chairperson:** Can we put the question like this: if the Commissioner...

**Mr J. Roussety:** You would like to ask the question for me?

**Mr Chairperson:** No, no. Otherwise I would have to disallow your question. Your question should be: would the Commissioner be competent to answer any questions which fall under his responsibility? And then if the construction of these core houses will fall under his areas of responsibility. These will be the appropriate questions.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I'll rephrase my question, if you will allow me. His first answer was the Regional Assembly, then he came with NHDC. So, it is a partnership between NHDC and the Regional Assembly. Who is responsible? The NHDC only or both the Regional Assembly and the NHDC or the Regional Assembly only?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have said the project was initiated by the Ministry for Rodrigues, but they had taken the NHDC as the consultant for the project. The sum for constructing these core houses is budgeted under the Regional assembly. I am answerable to questions pertaining to the budget under my Commission.

**Mrs Prosper:** The Chief Commissioner said that these houses would be provided with facilities. At present the houses which have been completed have only two rooms. According to the Deputy Chief Commissioner, what will be the functions of these two rooms?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** The house has only one room. Moi aussi j'ai trouvé cela abérrant. That's why my Commission is discussing with the consultant. It is the Ministry for Rodrigues which has initiated this project. We have inherited *la caze zétoile, la caze dans genou* even if they are concrete houses. I don't want this inheritance. This is why I am working with another proposal redefining the plan so that another bedroom can be added to the existing houses.

**Mrs Prosper:** The houses are close to one another, how is the Deputy Chief Commissioner going to add another room?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the house is in the form of an "L"; we will add the other room so that the house has a rectangular form. There is space to add another room.

**Mrs Prosper:** Has a study been done before constructing these houses?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes, we are making a study...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, we have begun the construction of the houses at Citron Donis and now my Commission has frozen the project, because we want to cater for another additional bedroom. We are in discussion with the consultant to know what will be the additional cost and we will come with the new plan in the near future.

## **PORT SUD EST/MOUROUK – PROFESSIONAL PLANTERS - GRANT**

**(No. B/193) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in connection with the passage of cyclone Kalundé, he would state –

- (a) the number of professional planters, in the village of Port Sud Est/Mourouk and whether all of them have benefited from the grant/aid promised by the Prime Minister during his recent visit and, if not, why, and
- (b) state what measures he intends to take to ensure that those, who have not received the aid they deserve, do so at the earliest.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there are about 219 planters in the village of Port Sud Est/Mourouk. Not all of them have received the financial aid, as some of them were not eligible. The criteria for the granting of the financial assistance are as spelt out in my answer to question B/182.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, how can the Deputy Chief Commissioner say that there are so many planters and that some have not received the aid, because they are not eligible?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** **Mr Chairperson, Sir, this has been done according to criteria which have been spelt out in my answer to question B/182. Many of the planters were not planting at that time; many of them are professional fishermen; there were no crops under cultivation. This is why they were not considered as genuine.**

**Mrs Prosper:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, for your information, I know a person whose husband is an Inspector of Police; she has a shop. Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner explain how she has benefited from the grant?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have to rely on the professional integrity of the Officers of the Agricultural Services. I understand from the remark of the respected Member that the Officers have not carried out their work in a professional manner and that she is attacking the integrity of all the Officers. Should you have any doubt about any

Officer, please feel free to make a formal complaint to the responsible Officer.

**Mrs Meunier:** Would the Deputy Chief Commissioner, Mr Chairperson, Sir, consider making an enquiry to see whether all these planters who have received this grant are eligible or, if not, to set up a body to do same, because it is a very serious matter? There are many planters who have complained about receiving this grant.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** As I have said complaints have been received to the effect that certain persons were not genuine planters and have received financial assistance. All these cases are being investigated. There are payments to be done again and an adjustment will be made.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner has said that payments have been made to non-genuine planters – people who are not planters...

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Complaints have been received.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Yes, there are complaints and investigations are being made. In case these allegations are true, will the money which has been granted be recouped?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes, all the cases are being investigated and if need be action will be taken to claim back the money paid.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please!

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to add that before the setting up of the RRA, there has been a Ministry of Agriculture in Mauritius which has formulated policies and strategies to recognise genuine planters and farmers from the said planters and farmers. After a cyclone survey it has always been difficult to do the task. My Commission has thought about the problem and we are working on a strategic planning on agriculture in Rodrigues. We are working on specific criteria that should be considered for genuine planters and farmers so that

cards can be given to them in the near future. I hope that if by miracle the Minority is in power, the work would have already been done for them and after a cyclone it would be easier for them to give financial assistance to professional farmers and planters.

**BAIE DU NORD AND BAIE AUX HUITRES –  
PROFESSIONAL PLANTERS**

**(No. B/194) Mr D. L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to plantations completely destroyed during cyclone Kalundé, he would state –

- (a) how many professional planters at Baie du Nord and Baie aux Huitres had been certified by the Agricultural Services to have suffered substantial losses;
- (b) the names of those who had received the aid referred to by the Prime Minister during his recent visit;
- (c) the criteria for the payment of such aid, and
- (d)** what action, if any, he intended to take to compensate those, who although eligible, had not received any aid.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the number of professional planters at Baie du Nord and Oyster Bay, who have been certified by the Agricultural Services to have suffered substantial losses, are as follows –

Baie du Nord

Full time - 3      part-time - 1

Oyster Bay

Full time - 1      part time - 6

As regards parts (b), (c) and (d), I would refer the respected Member to my reply to question B/182.

The criteria for payment of such aid are also as per my reply to question B/182.

## **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL - LEGAL ADVISERS**

**(No. B/195) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the employment of Legal Advisers by the Executive Council, he would state -

- (a) what were the procedures followed for the recruitment of such advisers;
- (b) the date on which any legal advisers had been recruited and their names;
- (c) the qualification and experience of any legal advisers who had been recruited on contract or otherwise; and the terms and conditions of service?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a) of the question, the State Law Office advised the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in December 2002 to have a legal adviser of its own who is totally independent of the Government and the State Law Office. Section (70) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001 prescribes that the Executive Council may appoint on contract such persons as it thinks fit.

The approval of the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Civil Service Affairs had to be sought before making an official offer to any person to be employed on contract by Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

With regard to part (b), the Executive Council considered two candidates for the post of Legal Adviser and during its meeting held on 12 February 2003, the Executive Council approved the nomination of Me. V. Baloomoody of Collendavelloo Chambers as Legal Adviser of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

As for part (c), Me. V. Baloomoody is an experienced lawyer working with Collendavelloo Chambers. The terms and conditions of employment are as follows -

- Me. Baloomoody will give legal advice on all requests from Executive Council or Commissions through the Island Chief Executive's Office.

- A retainer fee of Rs15,000 (rupees fifteen thousand only) will be paid on monthly basis. This fee includes professional time whenever Me Baloomoody or any other representative of Collendavelloo Chambers has to travel to Rodrigues for his contacts/interviews. RRA will be responsible for air tickets, hotel accommodation and inland transport for such visits.
- Additional fee will be charged for drafting specific bills to be presented to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and for appearance(s) in Court. This will be subject to discussion on an ad-hoc basis as and when required.
- The contract of employment took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003.
- The contract shall be for one year renewal subject to agreement by both parties.

**Mr Emilien:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner mentioned that a fee will be paid to Me. Baloomoody or any representative of Collendavelloo Chambers. Is Me. Baloomoody the Legal Adviser of the Regional Assembly or any lawyer from Collendavelloo Chambers?

**The Chief Commissioner:** In fact, it is the cabinet of Collendavelloo Chambers which is responsible as Legal Adviser. As the cabinet of lawyers is not registered as Chambers, that's why we have to take the name of one person from the Chambers. Me. Baloomoody is the person, but another person can be delegated by the Chambers to advise the Executive Council.

**Mr J. Roussety:** The person who has been appointed, that is, Me. Baloomoody of the MMM, is he Adviser of the Regional Assembly which would include the House or is he the adviser to the Executive Council?

**The Chief Commissioner:** He is the Adviser to the Executive Council.

**Mr. J. Roussety:** So, he is the Adviser to the Executive Council not to the Regional Assembly. This must be said.

**The Chief Commissioner:** I said that.

**Mr J. Roussety:** The Chief Commissioner said that he is the Adviser to the Regional Assembly. I understand that Me. Baloomoody is paid as Legal Adviser, but he is not obliged to be in Rodrigues. Is that included in the terms of the contract? Because at any time the Executive Council may need legal advice.

*(Interruptions)*

If he has to go in court, he goes by phone! Me. Baloomoody is not physically present here, but he is based in Mauritius.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Any communication is being made by the Island Chief Executive to the Adviser through fax communication and he is also invited to come to Rodrigues to have discussions with members of the public; we are preparing the Rodrigues Children Council. So, he is invited. Perhaps in the future - that depends on the Council – we should have one, two or three Legal Advisers; this has to be decided. For the time being, he is not staying in Rodrigues permanently, but he is receiving communications from the Executive Council by fax or telephone; everything is being done by correspondence. This is the principle we are adopting.

**Mr Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as far as I know, the State Law Office is the Legal Adviser of the National Assembly. At Section 64 (5) of the RRA Act, no provision is made and it says: “the practice of the National Assembly shall be followed”. Is the Executive Council adopting it?

**Mr Chairperson:** I have not understood the question. Can you be clearer?

**Mr Agathe:** The State Law Office is the Legal Adviser of the National Assembly. At Section 64 (5) of the RRA Act (as amended)...

**Mr Chairperson:** Can you cite the particular provision you would like to refer to?

**Mr Agathe:** It is said “subject to part 5 the practice of the National Assembly shall be followed where Standing Orders and Rules made under subsections 1 and 4 do not make provision for any matter arising in the Regional Assembly”. Is the Executive Council adopting the same policy?

**Mr Chairperson:** Your question concerns Standing Orders.

**Mr Agathe:** No, it concerns the recruitment of the Legal Adviser.

**Mr Chairperson:** Do you mean Standing Order 64 or Section 64?

**Mr Agathe:** Section 64 of the Act.

**Mr Chairperson:** If you refer to Section 64 of the Act, it pertains totally to the rules and Orders of this House.

**Mr Agathe:** It is about the practice.

**Mr Chairperson:** You mean Parliamentary practice in the House?

**Mr Agathe:** You can have a look.

**Mr Chairperson:** I know it by heart, but I fail to see how this Section is related to the main question. You have to correct me. You are referring to Section 64 of the Act not the Standing Orders.

**Mr Agathe:** Yes.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Commissioner inform the House whether there has been any advertisement before the Legal Adviser was recruited?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Whenever someone is employed on contract, there is no advertisement made; this is being done in Mauritius as well as in the Municipal Council. The Municipality itself chooses its Legal Adviser. It is on a contract basis; you can choose. It is not appropriate to advertise for Legal Advisers.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I understand, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that Hon. Baloomoody is a Member of the National Assembly. We discuss matters here in the Regional Assembly which are approved and then sent to the National Assembly. Would it not be a conflict of interest that hon. Baloomoody is first the Legal Adviser of the Executive Council and then Member of the National Assembly? From the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, nobody can appear in front of the National Assembly –

even our Regional Assembly – as an Attorney. I don't say he is going to do it, but it may be interpreted as such, because he is paid by the Executive Council to act on its behalf as far as advice on legal matters is concerned. So, is there not a risk of conflict of interest between the functions of the nominee as Member of the National Assembly and Adviser to the Executive Council?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think we should dissociate the profession of Mr Baloomoody and Member of Parliament. We must say that the approval of the Prime Minister's Office and that of the Ministry for Public Service Affairs had to be sought before making an official offer to any person to be employed on contract by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The Prime Minister's Office would have refused by examining aspects of responsibilities of Mr Baloomoody. But we have made our best to have the approval of the Prime Minister before employing Mr Baloomoody. I think it is not a question of *conflit d'intérêt*. As Legal Adviser, he is responsible to the Executive Council, and it is the Island Chief Executive who sends all communications to the Legal Adviser; and it is the Island Chief Executive who sends the different Bills prepared here to the State Law Office to be vetted by the State Law Office before their introduction to the National Assembly. This question of Legal Adviser is only a question of profession. Mr Baloomoody is a lawyer; it is in that capacity that he is the Legal Adviser to the Executive Council.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, there could be conflict of interest, but the Prime Minister's Office has given its approval. I have a supplementary question. I was in court recently as a witness. I was surprised to see first of all the Chief Commissioner. I understand also that Mr Baloomoody is the lawyer of the Chief Commissioner, Mr Louis Serge Clair, who has recruited Mr Baloomoody as Legal Adviser to the Executive Council. So, I understand that Hon. Baloomoody is first Adviser to the Executive Council and secondly personal lawyer of Mr Clair. Is there not conflict of interest, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, Mr Baloomoody is a professional and he is the Legal Adviser to the Executive Council of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. We have lawyers in Mauritius who are Legal Advisers to different Municipalities and they have cases in Court. Mr Baloomoody has the duty to defend the cases of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in court. As a lawyer anybody can hire his services. We see that

the Minority Leader is mixing issues. I don't see the conflict of interest. The duties are quite different - Legal Adviser and defending someone in court. These are principles that we must accept, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are referring a lot to the Act. Section 63 – of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act disability because of interest...

**Mr Chairperson:** Put your question.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Does he consider that he is disabled to answer this question? Section 63 says: “A Member of the Regional assembly, including the Chairperson of the Assembly, has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any contract or other matter...”

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please! Please wait. I am sorry I have to stop you on this question, because there is one element for this Section to operate which is at a meeting of the Assembly and I don't remember anything that was debated in the Assembly concerning the Legal Adviser. So, if you want to put your question anew, it is all right.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, a meeting could be a debate or any matter; it could be a question. Is he going to declare his interest with Collendavelloo Chambers?

**Mr Chairperson:** Please read this Section carefully. It should be a contract which is being debated in the Assembly.

**Mr J. Roussety:** But it is.

**Mr Chairperson:** The contract is no more. I don't remember of any contract with any Legal Adviser being debated in this Assembly. It is not with the Assembly. It has been with the Executive Council.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Being given that the Council chose Collendavelloo Chambers despite the fact that it is not a registered one, according to the Chief Commissioner, firstly are there not other Chambers in Mauritius which are registered and have fully legal powers to act as Legal Adviser to

the Regional Assembly? And, secondly what criteria have been observed in choosing Collendavelloo Chambers?

**The Chief Commissioner:** I think all Chambers in Mauritius are not registered. So, we are going to find out. The criteria are that he is a legal man, he is a lawyer.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Has the opportunity been given to Rodriguan lawyers, whether they are in Mauritius...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Please wait. I understand that the Minority Leader was on his feet. But can he at least be allowed to put his question, please?

**Mr J. Roussety:** Has the opportunity been given to Rodriguans, whether in Mauritius or Rodrigues, to apply as Legal Advisers to the Regional Assembly?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is a question of contract. The Executive Council looked for someone and it was no use advertising the post as it is on a contract basis. If the Prime Minister's Office were not agreeable to what we were doing, the Prime Minister's Office would have asked us to advertise the post.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, we all know that nobody can prevent a citizen from choosing any lawyer to defend him in a court of justice. But we are talking of conflict of interest as far as Mr Baloomoody is concerned for cases of the Chief Commissioner, Mr Louis Serge Clair. I would like to ask him whether it does not seem logical to him that in the public opinion, people may think that the money to be paid to Mr Baloomoody is being paid from the budget of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

**Mr Chairperson:** This question is not allowed.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, people know about the matters which are discussed here. The electorate knows very well that Mr Baloomoody is the Adviser to the Chief Commissioner, the Deputy Chief Commissioner and Members of the Regional Assembly, the Executive

Council. This must be pointed out, because we form part - 18 Members - of the Regional Assembly, including the officials, that is, the Chairperson, the Clerk, etc. As my friend said, a Member of the Executive Council is remunerating the Consultant...

**Mr Chairperson:** Please wait. I have allowed many supplementary questions on this topic, but you would agree with me that you have to be very relevant as far as the main question is concerned. If your question pertains to the main question, please do so; otherwise other questions will not be allowed.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Yes, it pertains to the appointment of Legal Advisers. My question is: would there not be confusion in the eyes of the public...

**Mr Chairperson:** You start your question with “in the eyes of the public”. Well, it is not for the Commissioner to answer the question, it should be the public. Please be precise.

**Mr J. Roussety:** From a legal point of view, from an ethical point of view, I would say, would it not be confusing to have a consultant working for the Executive Council of the Regional Assembly and then working personally for a Member?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please! Order! This question is not allowed. Next question, please.

## **JUDO - STEERING COMMITTEE**

**(No. B/196) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports whether with regard to Judo, he would state the Commissioner of Sports state -

- (a) if there was a steering committee other than the Rodrigues Regional Committee dealing with Judo to that date; and, if yes, state -

- (i) when it was instituted and the number of members therein;
  - (ii) the names and the clubs they belonged to and their respective functions in the committee; and
  - (iii) table the documents received from the Mauritius Judo Federation or others regarding the setting up of the said committee;
  - (iv) what was the agenda of its last meeting.
- (b) if Rodrigues had been invited to participate in any tournament recently in Mauritius and, if yes,
- (i) state the name of the competition;
  - (ii) table the correspondence regarding the participation of same with the Mauritius Judo Federation;
  - (iii) give the number of persons who had attended same and their position;
  - (iv) give the day and date of the departure and arrival of the judo expert.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir,

- (a) Yes, there is a steering committee
  - (i) The steering committee was instituted on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April and 11 members
  - (ii) The members of the steering committee are -
 

Eddy André and André Cupidon, Malabar Judo Club  
 Quenette Mercure and Joseph Gragile Felicité,  
 Port Mathurin Judo Club  
 John Milazar and Hardy Bégué, Mangues Judo club  
 Laval Perrine, Allée Tamarin Ecole de Judo,  
 Jean Marcellino Bégué and Jean Maurice Edouard La Ferme Judo Club

Jean Francois Dassise Clair, Songes Ecole de Judo, Jean Paul Azie, Grande Montagne Ecole de Judo.

(iii) The respective functions of the members.

|                         |   |                   |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Eddy André              | - | Chairman          |
| André Cupidon           | - | Vice Chairman     |
| John Milazar            | - | Secretary         |
| Joseph Gragile Felicité | - | Vice Secretary    |
| Laval Perrine           | - | Licensing Officer |
| Jean Paul Azie          | - | Treasurer         |

(iv) The agenda of its last meeting was as follows -

- (1) Reading and Approval of the note of meeting of the previous committee meeting
- (2) Restructure of clubs
- (3) Judo gathering on 1<sup>st</sup> June at Mourouk
- (4) Preparation in the context of Indian Ocean Island Games
- (5) A.O.B

- (b) (i) Rodrigues was invited to participate in the *Tournoi International de Maurice* from 10<sup>th</sup> May to 11<sup>th</sup> may 2003;
- (ii) the answer is being tabled;
- (iii) eleven persons attended the competition, that is, nine judokas and two referees;
- (iv) The Judo Expert Sensei Hassene Iklef arrived in Mauritius on 07 May and his date of departure was 17 May. Mr El. Jamali arrived in Mauritius on 07 May and his date of departure was 12 May.

**Mr Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I want to know what is the real objective of the Steering Committee.

**Mr Lisette:** There are two main objectives of the Steering Committee, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Firstly, to encourage clubs to regularise their situation so that they can participate in an eventual election of the

Regional Judo Committee. The second objective of the Steering committee is to ensure the smooth running of the competition at local level.

**Mr Agathe:** According to the Sports Act, it is said that no one who is actively involved in politics can sit on a Steering Committee. But I see that a political agent is sitting on that Committee.

**Mr Chairperson:** This is a serious allegation which goes to the root. Have you made a formal complaint to the Police or whatever?

**Mr J. Roussety:** Should we complain to the Police if somebody is a political agent?

**Mr Chairperson:** No, I say if it is illegal.

**Mr J. Roussety:** It is the Member's opinion, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

*(Interruptions)*

The House is being respected.

**Mr Chairperson:** You should understand that allegations cannot be made in the Chamber without the person having the opportunity to rebut same.

*(Interruptions)*

If you have proof, you may put your question. Please wait; I am on my feet. Of course you may put your question, if you have proof. But I can ask you whether you have made any complaint.

**Mr Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is now that the Commissioner has given the names. According to Section 10 (2) of the Sports Act 2001 it is said that "a club not later than six months can apply for enrolment". Is La Ferme Judo Club registered?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Can the Member be allowed to put his question?

**Mr Agathe:** Is La Ferme Judo Club affiliated with the Rodrigues Regional Judo Committee?

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the respected Member of this Assembly is mixing issues. The Steering Committee has nothing to do with the Sports Act. The objective of setting up the Committee, as I have said in my reply, is for day to day administration of judo in Rodrigues. We all know in this House that there is a problem relating to judo in Rodrigues.

*(Interruptions)*

I am informing you now that there is a problem. As a Commissioner responsible for sports....

**Mr Chairperson:** Can the Commissioner be given time to answer the question?

**Mr Lisette:** ...if I see that any discipline regarding sports is on the decline it is my duty to give a boost to that discipline. This is the reason why I have set up the Steering Committee to compensate for the job which the Rodrigues Regional Judo Committee is not doing.

**Mr Agathe:** Has the Commissioner got the consent of the Federation or the Minister?

**Mr Lisette:** I don't have to get the consent of any Federation, because I am an autonomous Commission, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I would like to refer to a letter which has been sent to my Commission by the Judo Federation which states –

“Following a press conference held by John Milazar, we understand that there are many problems in judo in Rodrigues. In this case, we are going to stop all activities with the Regional Committee till settlement of this problem.”

So, if the Federation is not dealing with the Regional Judo Federation, it is my duty to see that judo is not on the decline. This is the reason for the setting up of this Steering Committee.

**Mr Agathe:** With reference to the agenda of the Steering Committee, it seems that the Committee is doing the job of the Regional Committee. What will be the role of the Regional Judo Committee in the preparation of the Indian Ocean Islands Games?

**Mr Chairperson:** You mean “it seems” or...

**Mr Agathe:** It is a fact, because it is on the agenda.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is clear from the letter that the Judo Federation is no longer dealing with the Regional Committee. We have the Indian Ocean Games which are coming; who is going to prepare these games? The Steering Committee will deal with the matter regarding the Indian Ocean Games. This is why the Steering Committee has been set up. I have said that the objective is to see that matters pertaining to the Indian Ocean Games are dealt with by the Steering Committee.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr John Milazar who was working here has been transferred on our complaints. You would recall, Mr Chairperson, Sir - the Clerk also is aware of that - that he was seen in a political rally last year at Mangues; and I have read a report in the press to the effect that Mr Milazar stood as a candidate for the election of a Member to sit in the National Assembly; there were several candidates; they had to choose one; I don't know how they proceeded, it is not my concern. But I read that he stood as candidate, but he was not elected – we understand why.

**Mr Chairperson:** Are you basing yourself on what you learnt or are you stating it as a fact?

**Mr J. Roussety:** It is a fact and I can table it. Is the Commissioner aware that Mr Milazar is being politically active in a party in Rodrigues? Can you ask the Clerk, who is the administrator of the House, why Mr Milazar was transferred? Is the Commissioner aware?

**Mr Chairperson:** This question is not allowed, because I fail to see how it fits in with the main question. I can't see the link between the main question and the question you have just asked.

**Mr J. Roussety:** I will ask another question if you would allow me.

**Mr Chairperson:** Of course.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Will he take into consideration the fact that the Sports Act says that no person who is actively engaged in political activities should be allowed to sit on Committees dealing with sports, etc? Will he take into consideration the fact that Mr Milazar is engaged in political activities?

**Mr Chairperson:** Well, again you are asking the same question that I have ruled out. The question is practically the same, unless the Commissioner would like to add something.

**Mr J. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I don't see why my question cannot be asked. Mr Milazar has been appointed secretary. He is involved in political activities. The Commissioner said that his Commission is fully autonomous! He should take his responsibilities. There are politicians sitting on these Committees.

**Mr Chairperson:** This is addressed to you, Minority Leader. The fact that I disallowed the question does not mean that the question cannot be asked. It is pure and simple that I disallowed it as a supplementary question. Of course, you may come with notice next time. So, we move on to the next question.

### **GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL GOVERNMENT SCHOOL - CLASSROOMS**

**(No. B/197) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal)** asked the Commissioner for Education whether, with regard to Grand La Fouche Corail Government school, the Commissioner for Education would state –

- (a) if the classrooms set up are in accordance with the Education Act and, if not what remedial measures he intends to take;
- (b) the last date the primary school inspector visited the school
- (c) the last date sanitary inspection was carried out;
- (d) when water tanks were last cleaned and if the water was certified potable by the Health and sanitary division and, if the answer is positive, table the findings;

- (e) if GN 72 of 1986 was complied with regarding the school playground and if not, what remedial measures he intends to take.

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the classrooms at Grand La Fouche Corail Government school have been designed and built according to the norms in accordance with the Education Act. However, being given that the school is nearly twenty years old now, some difficulties have cropped up and these are being addressed.

The measures taken at the school for the replacement of windows and nacos, which have gone rusty are merely temporary. Tenders for the supply of windows have already been floated to this effect.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am informed that the school was visited by the Departmental Head and the Acting Senior Primary School Inspector on the 8<sup>th</sup> April and 23 May 2003 respectively.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I will reply to parts (c) and (d) of the question concurrently.

I am informed that all the water tanks were cleaned during the Easter holidays this year. I am also informed that the last sanitary inspection was carried out last year in March 2002 and samples had been taken for analysis. The results are not communicated unless discrepancies are noted.

Regarding part (e) of the question, my Commission is aware of the state of the playground. However, the House will appreciate that we have been in office only since last year and the problems at the school date back to some years now. We will undertake the upgrading of the premises during the next financial year.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner for Education said that temporary measures are being taken for the replacement. Can we know what measures are taken to replace the nacos and the pains?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is known that wooden panels have been used to cover some of the broken windows pending the replacement of these windows which are rusty and need to be replaced.

Meanwhile, short-term works had to be done in order to allow classes to carry on. The wooden panels would not last for very long. For the information of the House, I'll also add that everything humanly possible is being done. Grand La Fouche Corail is not the only school that has been affected by the cyclone; there are eight government schools which come under the responsibility of my Commission. Everything humanly possible is being done; we have moved heaven and earth to find the means to get the works done. We have now appointed to the Commission an Assistant Inspector with a team of workers. Instead of going through tender, we are now able to have contractors to come and quote; we use quotations up to a maximum of Rs20,000 to have small works executed. You must believe me that everything is being done for the sake of the children who study in those eight government schools, not only at Grand La Fouche Corail.

**Mr Jabeemissar:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Commissioner please tell the House whether there has been any representation made by pupils and parents of the above-mentioned schools concerning the problem of wooden windows?

**Mr L. Roussety:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, there have been some representations made, but I assure you that it is not because of the representations made that my Commission had acted. My Commission had acted well before that to get these works done. So, we are not moving as a packet on a swing in that particular case, I can assure you.

**Mr Chairperson:** When there was the issue about the Trust Fund, I ordered the minority Leader to take his seat. I was reluctant, but unfortunately I had to do that. You would agree that if everybody conforms to the rules and Standing Orders of the Assembly, this would be conducive to good parliamentary atmosphere. I have to refer to Standing Order 22 which says: "Supplementary questions shall be subject to the ruling of the Chairperson both as to relevance and number". This brings back to Standing Order 18 (3) which states that "when a question has been refused or amended and the Member concerned wishes to make representations to the Chairperson on the matter, these shall be made privately to the Chairperson and not raised by way of point of order in the Assembly". I think I don't need to interpret this Standing Order more as it is clear in itself. Can we move on to the next item on the Order Paper?

## **STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS**

### **RIVIERE BANANE – TV RECEPTION**

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson Sir, with your permission, I would like to make a statement with respect to the reply I made to Question B/137 addressed to me by the Fourth Island Region Member (Mr Pierre Louis) at the sitting of Tuesday 06 May 2003.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the MBC has been informed by Multi Carrier (Mauritius) Ltd, which is now in charge of transmission, that TV reception is poor in the region of Riviere Banane and it appears that this problem is prevalent since February 2003.

The transmitter antenna has been further damaged and MCML is looking into the possibility of having it repaired or replaced. The relay station concerned is situated at Sygangué.

Thank you, Sir.

### **SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS)**

**The Commissioner for Health (Mr S. Sooprayen):** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I said on May 6<sup>th</sup> instant that I would make a statement at the next sitting concerning SARS, I would like to say the following -

- (1) SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), an atypical pneumonia caused by a virus of the Corona group, was first recognised at the end of February 2003. SARS was first identified in Vietnam on 28 February, when Dr. Carlo Urbani, an epidemiologist from the WHO office in Hanoi, examined a patient with a severe form of pneumonia with no known cause. He later died of the same disease while in service to humanity. By 11 March, at least 20 hospital workers in Hanoi's private French Hospital, and 23 at a hospital in Hong Kong, were ill with a similar acute respiratory syndrome.
- (2) My Commission was aware and conscious of the gravity of the disease and reports from the Internet were downloaded and

circulated to relevant divisions. The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life issued a communiqué on 18 March informing the public of the detection of the disease in China, Indonesia and other countries and issued another communiqué on 28 March 2003 advising the public to refrain from travelling to high risk countries as defined by the World Health Organisation unless there was an absolute necessity to do so. The public were also requested to visit the web site of the World Health Organisation for update of the SARS situation in the world. The WHO is in fact co-coordinating the international investigation with the assistance of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network and is working closely with health authorities in the affected countries to provide epidemiological, clinical and logistical support as required.

- (3) In Mauritius the Health Inspectors at health counter screen all passengers, irrespective of port of embarkation to enquire whether they have travelled to any SARS affected country and whether they have signs or symptoms of SARS. Those who have symptoms are referred to the medical officer at the SSR airport for immediate transfer to the nearest hospital. Therefore, all passengers reaching Rodrigues from abroad would have been screened at the SSR airport.
- (4) To date not a single case of SARS disease has been identified within the whole Republic. All yachts coming into Port Mathurin are also subject to sanitary inspection. In other words, even a yacht is in the vicinity of the island, no authorization would be given to berth until a close check and inspection is made by the sanitary team.
- (5) On 17 April 2003, an official meeting was also held at Queen Elizabeth Hospital under the chairmanship of the Health Director where representatives from the Police, Health Services, Air Mauritius, Civil Aviation Section, Customs Department and Nursing Officers, serving at the port and airport, were convened and apprised of the situation and measures to be taken. The recommendations of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life are already being implemented at all levels. The recommendations in fact contain all aspects of the disease from

definition of the disease to hospital infection control guidelines and management of SARS. Both Medical and Paramedical personnel are by now fully acquainted with the signs and symptoms of the disease. Any suspected case will be dealt with according to WHO recommendations as well as those of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Mauritius.

- (6) However, any suspected case will have to be isolated in the medical wards at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH). We have four (4) special rooms where these patients could be isolated. Two of them are in the male ward and the other two in the female ward. Presently, all cases of SARS in Mauritius will be referred to the Jawaharlall Nehru Hospital and, most probably, any case in Rodrigues will also be referred there in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.
- (7) According to the 65<sup>th</sup> update on SARS by the WHO as at Sunday 25 May 2003, a cumulative total of 8141 probable cases with 696 deaths have been reported from 28 countries. New deaths have recently occurred in China, Hong Kong SAR and Taiwan. Taiwan has today reported 55 new cases, bringing the cumulative total to 538 cases and 60 deaths. China alone had 5309 cases and 308 deaths.
- (8) Mr Chairperson, Sir, the latest report, that is, last night, of the World Health Organisation discourages travellers to consider postponing all but essential travel to only two countries that is some part of China and Taiwan. Restrictions to travel to other SARS affected countries have now been removed. This is a clear indication that the situation is under control.

To conclude may we pray that the Almighty spares our country from this disease.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

### **CYCLONE KALUNDE - VICTIMS – DISTRIBUTION OF DONATIONS**

**The Commissioner for Social Security (Mr R. Mercure):** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to make a brief statement as supplementary information further to my reply to question B/145 of the last session of this Assembly and in response to a supplementary question related to the date on which the distribution of donations to beneficiary victims of cyclone Kalundé was effected.

I am pleased to inform the distinguished members of this Assembly that all the consignments received as donations as outlined previously in my reply were donated to the beneficiaries at the three Social Security Centres, that is at La Ferme, Malabar and Port Mathurin on Wednesday 02 April, Saturday 12 April and Saturday 03 May 2003. The distributions were effected on three different occasions as the donations were not received at the same time.

Once more I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the coordinating Committee that was responsible for the organization of the distribution programme, the Commission responsible for Public Infrastructure, staff of the Social Security Division and members of NGOs for their precious collaboration and support during these distribution exercises.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**The Chief Commissioner:** Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 17 June 2003 at 10.30 a.m.

**The Deputy Chairperson rose and seconded.**

*Question put and agreed.*

## **CYCLONE KALUNDE – DONATIONS BY LIVESTOCK FEED LTD**

**Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Marechal:** Permettez moi de remercier chaleureusement tous ceux qui nous ont aidé d'une manière ou d'une autre après le passage du cyclone Kalundé, surtout

ceux qui ont une pensée spéciale pour les planteurs et les éleveurs. J'ai en tête la compagnie Livestock Feed Ltd. qui a fait un grand geste en envoyant une quantité conséquente de nourriture pour nos éleveurs. A Citronelle, on appelle cela *manzer* Kalundé.

M. le président, à l'heure où je vous parle, aucun éleveur n'a reçu le moindre miligramme de ces dons. Mais par contre, le stock a été réduit drastiquement car la section de l'agriculture puise de ce stock pour amener à St. Gabriel et Baie Topaze Livestock Breeding Station.

M. le président, avec votre permission, je suggère qu'une enquête soit faite aujourd'hui pour en faire un constat.

Merci, M. le président.

*At 13,45 hrs, the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 17 June 2003 at 10.30 a.m.*