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ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**PETIT PRINCE PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL – CLOSURE**

(No. B/633) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner of Education whether, as regards the closure of the “Petit Prince Pre- Primary” School, the Commissioner could inform the House of the measures he intends to take to absorb the sixty odd children who are being displaced in January, 2005 due to the sale of the premises.

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform this Assembly that my Commission was apprised, some time in October 2004, of the imminent closing down of the “Petit Prince Pre-Primary School” at Port Mathurin as from January 2005, due to the owner’s intention to sell the said premises. As some seventy pre-primary school’s kids are going to be penalised by this unforeseen circumstance, my Commission has decided to put up two additional classrooms of 20 x 20 sq ft each on the premises of the Basile Allas Port Mathurin Government School.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the premises of the Basile Allas Port Mathurin Government School have, since the Second World War, accommodated some army barracks. However, this remaining prototype is to date in a derelict state. Approval of the Executive Council has been obtained to rehabilitate this ancient army barrack which qualifies for protection as a historical building to make room for the two additional pre-primary classrooms that could accommodate the pupils from the “ex-Petit Prince” Pre-Primary School.

The Commission for Public Infrastructure has been approached to liaise with the consultancy firm working for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly with a view to preparing the tender for the construction of the two pre-primary additional classrooms. It is hoped that the works will be completed by mid-January 2005 in time for the beginning of the new school year.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, taking into consideration that the Petit Prince Pre-Primary School is a private pre-primary school, will the Commissioner consider the possibility of posting the teachers also to Basile Allas Port Mathurin Government School?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as my colleague on the Minority bench just said, Le Petit Prince is a private school. We are assuming fully our responsibilities to see that these children find a place in a school. But I will remind the Assembly that the pre-primary classes housed in primary schools are managed by the Pre-Primary School Trust Fund and the teachers at the Petit Prince are, of course, in the private sector. It will depend on the qualifications of the staff concerned and they will have to apply to get the job.

HIV/AIDS – STRATEGIC PLAN 2004-2007

(No. B/634) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner for Health whether as regards HIV/AIDS in Rodrigues, the Commissioner could give a detailed account of the proposed strategic Plan 2004-2007 taking into consideration the objectives, strategies, the time frame, all the collaborating bodies and a breakdown of the proposed budget for the implementation of such a plan.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling an HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2004-2007 to the Regional Assembly and I am also tabling the costing and the budgeting of the Plan.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the treatment of the HIV patients within Rodrigues is included in the Plan?

Mr Sooprayen: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, concernant la prévention du sida qui est une maladie sexuellement transmissible, nous aurions voulu savoir ce qui est prévu dans ce plan pour prévenir la transmission du sida à Rodrigues.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is why I have submitted the Strategic Action Plan. Everything is explained in the Plan.

Mr Grandcourt: M. le président....

Mr Chairperson: One minute, please. This is, unfortunately, the problem when you table or circulate an answer. It takes time for the Members, of course, to find out the information. But if the Commissioner can, for the sake of time consuming, at least, make a brief account of what is contained in the Plan.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the objectives identified in the Strategic Plan, amongst others, are especially to reduce the vulnerability among youth, women, girls, children and the business sector; to provide quality care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS, reduce the burden sexually transmitted infections on health services, prevent accidental transmission of HIV, sustain blood transfusion safety from others.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, strategies with time frame and collaborating bodies have been proposed in the Plan in order to achieve each of the objectives. These strategies include sensitisation of various sectors of the population, empowerment of NGOs and other organisations; training of health personnel, teachers and other social workers on HIV/AIDS issues; counseling, ensuring availability of laboratory facilities, treatment and drugs, monitoring and evaluation of all activities of HIV/AIDS prevention.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are two cases of HIV in Rodrigues and I know that these two persons are right now in Mauritius. Can I ask the Commissioner whether he is intending to bring in the future these two persons back to Rodrigues so that they can have their family with them and other facilities?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, of course, if they want to come back.

GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL GOVERNMENT SCHOOL – RENOVATION WORKS

(No. B/635) Mr L. P. Francois (First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner of Education whether, as regards Grand La Fouche Corail Government Primary School, the Commissioner could inform the House about the progress of work carried out there for the upgrading of the school buildings, the toilet blocks and the yard.

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in respect of Grand La Fouche Corail Government School, I am informed as follows –

(i) Upgrading of School Building

There is no doubt that this primary school needed some attention. However, my Commission took appropriate measures to make the school building more conducive to the teaching and learning environment. All the old “naco” window frames have been replaced by metal ones and they are more resistant to draughty

and rainy weather conditions. Fresh coats of paint have been applied inside and outside the building as well as the waterproofing of leakages from the roof top.

(ii) Toilet Blocks

Owing to the unhealthy plight of the toilet blocks at the said school, my Commission decided that renovation works were warranted which comprise the following -

Removal of Asiatic and European type toilet pans, partition doors, and concrete urinals;

Renewal works will entail the following –

- Supply and fitting of new Asiatic and European type toilet pans complete with flush tanks;
- Supply and fixing of stainless steel urinals complete with flush tanks;
- Construction of manholes for maintenance of the main sewer line;
- Construction of new wash bays;
- Manufacture and fixing of new toilet doors;
- Supply and fixing of floor and wall tiles;
- Renewal of all paint work, and of
- All plumbing units and associated fittings.

(iii) School Yard

The upgrading of the school yard at the Grand La Fouche Corail Government School has already been completed. The works were carried out in the following stages –

- (a) asphalting of the school yard;
- (b) construction of the entrance lane, and
- (c) levelling and landscaping of the ground in the forecourt of the school on either side of the entrance lane.

Mr Agathe: Could the Commissioner state whether the work undertaken at Grand La Fouche Corail Government School is being carried out by a private contractor, and if yes, what is the name of that contractor?

Mr L. Roussety: The asphalting of the yard was carried out by A. J. Maurel and the other works were carried out by contractors. The replacing of the window panes and the painting were done partly on a voluntary basis by those concerned. If

the Second Member for Maréchal wishes to have more details, I would suggest, Sir, that he comes back with another question, for I do not have information available.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, first of all, allow me to thank the Commissioner for having paid attention to our many previous requests on this issue. However, I would like to ask him prior to the renovation works that have been carried out there, there used to be amongst other sports facilities, a football playground. Can the Commissioner inform the House whether, in the present situation, the playground has been kept or completely discarded and, if so, why?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is my pleasure to answer that the playground has been kept and we intend to rehabilitate and renew that area so that children could practice football and other games.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think I have not received the reply for my question. I would like to know if works at Grand La Fouche Corail Government School carried out by private contractors have been tendered?

Mr Chairperson: Please, wait, your question has been partly answered because I have heard some of the names of contractors. But this is completely another question.

Mr. L. Roussety: As I said earlier, Mr Chairperson, the respected Member from the Minority bench wishes to know the names of contractors and as I do not have them in mind, I would kindly ask him to come with a new question, and I should be very pleased to furnish the details.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that the painting work was done partly on voluntary basis. I think it was done partly by the parents, but I would like to ask him who painted the other part of the buildings?

Mr L. Roussety: Yes, it was done partly by the parents and, then, of course, the other part by the domestic staff of the school. It is the practice that during school holidays caretakers renew the paintwork around the school buildings.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I know that Grand La Fouche Corail Government School is sponsored by the Ministry of Environment. I have also noticed the presence of many employees from Welcome Industry. Can I ask the Commissioner to state the amount of money earmarked by the Ministry of Education, Welcome Industry and his Commission for that project?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is entirely a new question.

Mr Chairperson: Yes. The Member may come with a substantive question.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, maybe I did not hear the whole answer from the Commissioner, but he has talked of better environment conducive to better learning for the children. He has also talked about many renovation works. I know that the furniture in that school were in very bad state. Could the Commissioner state, concerning the renovation works, whether this includes also the renewal of old furniture?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, works have been carried out in stages and I think we will then look at the school furniture and we will cross the bridge when we come to it.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, may I refer to the question about the progress of work carried out in that school? Can I ask the Commissioner how, before he comes to the Assembly, he has been apprised of the progress of the work at the school?

Mr L. Roussety: The works obviously have been completed. The asphalting of the yard was completed on 18 October. The replacement windows had been fitted a few months before; the paintwork is completed and I can attest it, having visited the places myself.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, my question was - how has he as Commissioner, been officially apprised of the progress of work at Grand La Fouche Corail Government School before coming to this Assembly to give his answer? How has he been apprised?

Mr Chairperson: Does the Member mean the rest of the work to be completed?

Mr J. Roussety: No. How does he know about the work being carried out there? First, he said he made a site visit. I want to know if he has been apprised of the progress of the work by other sources.

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, a report has been submitted to say that the works have been completed. It is as simple as that.

Mr Chairperson: You mean that all the works have been completed.

Mr L. Roussety: With the exception of the toilets. We are waiting for the tendering exercise of the toilets.

Mr J. Roussety: The Commissioner told us that a report has been submitted. Could we know by whom?

Mr L. Roussety: The report is submitted by the schoolmistress. It is a report, which let us know in which field renovation works have been completed. I went to the school and I have not received any written report on the paintwork of the school. As far as the asphaltting work is concerned, the contractor has informed that work has been completed.

Mr J. Roussety: The schoolmistress who is an educator from the academic staff has submitted a report. The contractor has also submitted his report, but the Commissioner does not know who the contractor is. So, the schoolmistress has submitted her report and obviously she should have mentioned who has done the work. The Commissioner just said that the contractor too has submitted a report, but he does not know who the contractor is. How is it possible that the Commissioner has based his answer on the report of the contractor, but he does not know who he is?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think I have mentioned the name of A. J. Maurel at least three times.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have heard my friend, the Second Local Region Member from Maréchal, asking for the name of the contractor.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Your question, please.

Mr J. Roussety: My friend asked for the name and the Commissioner did not give him the name. Now he is giving the name

Mr Chairperson: I mentioned last time that this is the sort of answer that a Member may get if he puts a question, which is far from the original one. Will the Commissioner for Education respond to the question?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I honestly believe that I have supplied the answers, but I do not readily have the details which the Member from Maréchal wants, but which can be supplied at a later date.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, one thing I do not understand in the reply of the Commissioner concerns the report submitted by the Head Mistress. I cannot understand why the report has been submitted by a third person in the name of the Head Mistress and not by the contractors who are responsible of the work undertaken? Is it the normal practice?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is an appreciation in the form of a report that has been submitted by the Headmistress. There are also supervisors from the Ministry of Public Infrastructure who supervise the work and make report when work is completed.

Mr Chairperson: Can we move now to the next question?

RIVER VALLEY, PORT SUD EST – WATER SUPPLY

(No. B/636) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the river valley of Port Sud Est the Commissioner could inform the House of the measures he is contemplating to provide water for both irrigation and domestic purposes to the planters and inhabitants of the locality.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the river valley of Port Sud Est, I would like to inform the House that the construction of a “*retenue collinaire*” at Port Sud Est has just been completed. The feeding canal is now operational and is filling the reservoir. Moreover, action has been initiated for the procurement of a water treatment plant so as to treat the water for domestic purposes. The reservoir storage is of the order of some 8000 m³ and is expected to store water for more than three (3) months demand for the valley. Connection to the existing irrigation main and domestic main will be carried out shortly.

(No. B/637) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Industrial Relations whether the Commissioner could inform the house if there is a Health and Safety Consultant for each hotel in Rodrigues and, if yes, give their names and scope of their work.

Mr Mercure: Mr Chairperson, Sir, section 12 of the Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare Act makes provision for every employer of more than 100 persons at any place to appoint a Safety and Health Officer.

I am informed that the Pointe Coton Resort Co. Ltd is the only hotel employing more than 100 persons and Mr Claude Wong So is the Health and Safety Consultant and he participates in the health and site inspections once every month or every two months as required by law.

I am also informed that the Groupe Mauritours do have a Health and Safety Consultant, Mr Nicolin, for all their hotels in Rodrigues namely –

- Résidence Le Tamaris
- Résidence Hotelière Les Cocotiers
- Hotel Pointe Venus

Mourouk Ebony Hotel employs only 92 workers, 52 male and 40 female and it has no Health and Safety Consultant.

MONTAGNE CABRIS WEST, PETITE BUTTE, CORAIL, POINTE VINGT TOURS, CITE PATATE – WATER SUPPLY

(No. B/638) Mr A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner with respect to water distribution in the western part of Rodrigues, namely through the network of Montagne Cabris West to part of Petite Butte, Corail, Pointe Vingt Tours, Cité Patate and the neighbouring villages, could the Deputy Chief Commissioner –

- (a) state the frequency (with dates) of water distribution for the various regions for period 1st January 2004 to date;
- (b) state the date and duration of the last breakdown of the water pump of Maréchal which feeds the reservoir of Montagne Cabris West;

- (c) say on what date the breakdown was reported to the Water Unit Workshop and by whom;
- (d) say on what date mechanics from the workshop were sent to Maréchal for necessary repair works;
- (e) state the dates the two fibre glass reservoirs of Maréchal Citron) at the back of Mr. Azie's Cabinet Making Workshop and that near the house of Mr. Bernardin Azie also called Batane at Citron were installed, and
- (f) say when these two reservoirs were last filled with water.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, before putting my question, I would kindly request the Deputy Chief Commissioner to give the reply in a audible way because at times we do not hear at all.

Mr Chairperson: The Member has to rise simultaneously and we have to check whether the microphone is working.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the water distribution in the western part of Rodrigues, namely through the network of Montagne Cabris West to part of Petite Butte, Corail

(Interruptions)

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order, every time the Deputy Chief Commissioner stands to speak, we must tend our ears to listen to what he is saying. At times, we do not hear at all. *A la fin, cela devient ennuyant. Il est payé des fonds publics pour informer cette Chambre et ce serait bien qu'il articule quand il parle. Je crois que c'est élémentaire. Nous ne le comprenons pas très souvent. Nous vous comprenons, nous comprenons les autres Commissaires et il est le seul que nous n'arrivons pas à comprendre.*

Mr Chairperson: On this point of order, I suppose you do not expect any ruling from me. Of course, an answer should be audible in the Assembly, particularly, the Member who asks the question should properly hear the answer. Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the water distribution in the western part of Rodrigues, namely through the network of Montagne Cabris West to part of Petite Butte, Corail, Pointe Vingt Tours, Cité Patate and the neighbouring villages, I have to point out that the abovenamed villages are in fact supplied with water from Grand La Fouche Corail reservoir via Reservoir Agner and Anse Quitor Reservoir and not from the Montagne Cabris West network. Being given that there is no source of water in the vicinity, water from Mont Lubin borehole and Petit Brulée Reservoir is feeding the two reservoirs via Grand La Fouche Corail reservoir.

- (a) I am tabling the dates of water distribution in those regions for the period of 01 January 2004 up to 10 November 2004.
- (b) The pump of Maréchal borehole broke down on 30.09.04 and repairs have been completed on 04.10.04. The delay was due to the ordering of spare part from Mauritius as same was not available in stock.
- (c) The breakdown of the pump was reported to the Water Unit workshop on 30.09.04 by the Inspector of Water Unit responsible for the Southern Section.
- (d) Pump Mechanics responded to the complaint on the same day. However, after diagnosing the fault, the repair could not be effected due to non-availability of appropriate spare parts.
- (e) The two fibreglass reservoirs of Maréchal have been installed in April 2003 by the villagers.

The two reservoirs have never been filled with water. One of the tanks could not be filled due to damage caused by act of vandalism on its outlet. The water connection to the other has not yet been carried out.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, I move for a suspension of five minutes in order to allow me to take cognizance of the dates.

Mr Chairperson: This is not a good reason to stop all the proceedings of the Assembly. I will give the Member some time, of course, but he has to understand.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the meantime, I would like to ask a supplementary question. The Deputy Chief Commissioner has talked about the non-availability of spare parts. I think this is a current practice in the Water Unit. People have faced this problem for days, and even for months. Can I ask him what he contemplates to do to remedy this situation so that in the future such problem does not arise?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally when a pump is bought, spare parts are bought at the same time. However, sometimes we do ask for spare parts both in Rodrigues and Mauritius, but these spare parts are not available on the market because these pumps are manufactured abroad and we have to wait for the supplier to provide us with the appropriate spare parts. Moreover, when we buy a pump, it is difficult for us to buy all the spare parts associated with the pump. Some of them must be bought because they can be defective after one or two months, but some of them have a lifespan of more than six months and sometimes we do not know when these spare parts will be effective. Normally, we do ask the supplier for these spare parts, but sometimes due to their non-availability on the market, we have to wait till it is commissioned from abroad.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand the Deputy Chief Commissioner concerning the difficulties of having these spare parts. But can't he have one or two of these spare parts? Because it is very frequent that these pumps have a breakdown and we cannot wait to have these spare parts. We can find ways of having these spare parts and this will solve the problem much better. Can he look into the possibility of having these spare parts in Rodrigues?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally we do have three to four spare parts from the Commission of Human Resources. But we have taken about four days to get these spare parts to be able to repair the pumps of Maréchal borehold. We have thought that it would not be necessary for us to replace the pumps, because sometimes to replace a pump takes more time than to replace a spare part.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning the reservoir of Citron, the Deputy Chief Commissioner just said that since the installation on 18 April 2003, the reservoir could not be filled due to defaults or acts of vandalism. Can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner when these defaults were detected?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not have the dates when these defaults were detected, but I know that just after the installation of fibre glass tank, there was act of vandalism on the outlet of the tank. It is not only in that region that vandalism has occurred, but in many other regions and villages. Sometimes we come and install water fittings on these tanks and next day there is an act of vandalism, all the fittings have disappeared. But I would like to inform the House that these tanks were commissioned prior to the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, and the location of these water tanks was decided by villagers themselves. However, the policy of our Regional Government is to

provide each housing unit with a water prise. Since 2003, many demands concerning hardship cases, even for those who do not possess a land lease have been approved and regularised by the Executive Council. However, my Commission has carried out a survey islandwise to assess whether these fibreglasses have been properly sited or not. Some of the tanks have already been relocated and interconnected to difficult areas where the need is of utmost priority, like Cité Perdue, for example. Moreover, my Commission is working on another area where the need is of utmost importance and same will be done. We would like, in some regions of the island, to move these fibreglass tanks and relocate them in regions where there is water crisis, to relocate them in clusters, interconnected them so as they can be used to distribute water to the villages in period of water crisis.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is very good to hear that the policy of the Deputy Chief Commissioner is to provide each family with a water prise, but I would just like to remind him that in Rivière Coco, people paid and waited for more than six months for a water prise.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Chief Commissioner, Mr Chairperson, Sir, just said that – I use his own words - after the installation of these reservoirs there were acts of vandalism, a very short time after, in April 2003. Knowing all the water problems there is in this island, for more than one year, defaults and acts of vandalism have been detected on these reservoirs and nothing has been done up to now. Can I know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner what is the time frame he is contemplating to provide water in these reservoirs?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have just said, the policy of my Commission is – we have made a survey - to group these fibre water tanks into clusters so that they can be used to distribute water in regions where there is a shortage of water. Now that we have carried out a survey, which has already been tabled, we are having regular meetings with workers all around the island. As we have begun with Cité Perdue, other regions are in the pipeline to be connected with these fibreglass tanks. In some regions, these fibreglass tanks are so far away from the main water network, but we will take a decision on Citron about the two fibreglass tanks. I will come again with the outcome of the decision taken in the Regional Assembly.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning the survey which the Deputy Chief Commissioner tabled a few minutes earlier, I would like to ask

him how come that Petite Butte received water on the 17 and 20 January, Corail Petite Butte on the 13, 14 and 17 January, that is, three days in the same month, whereas Vingt Tours received water on the 12 of February and 23 March, that is, more than one month later.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the question has been answered with respect to water distribution in the western part. These dates correspond not only to one water network, but to different water networks in the village. It does not imply only one water network. In a village, sometimes there are different water networks and on the day that we distribute water, not all water networks are full with water and not all villages are provided with water. In many villages a different network has to be supplied with water on different dates, due to the level of water and the volume of water in different reservoirs.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I acknowledge the fact that in a village there are different, what we call, 'lines' serving different parts of the village, but it seems to me very difficult to understand that in a village they get water on 13, 14 and 17 in the same month and the next day on the 03 February, that is, less than half a month, whereas in another village they get water after more than one month. This is what I cannot understand. Could the Deputy Chief Commissioner enlighten me on this?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, Rodrigues is a country where there is water shortage and with the setting up of the Regional Assembly and, at the same time, the Commission for Water Resources, we have invested massively in the water sector. It is not only to have a network of pipes to distribute water throughout all the island, but the key solution is to look first at the production of water, so as we can store water during rainy periods to be distributed during dry season and this is our policy. Work is being carried out concerning this matter and I think that the outcome will give good solution to this type of problem.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, la corruption est arrivée concernant la distribution d'eau à Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson: This is not allowed.

Mr Grandcourt: I will come with evidence.

Mr Chairperson: You give evidence, and if it is allowed, then you can continue.

Mr Grandcourt: I'll come with evidence.

Mr Chairperson: You cannot say something and then come with evidence. If it is allowed at this point in time, you set the evidence and then you conclude. If it is allowed, but this is Question Time.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, If you take, for example, 01 January 2004 to date, it makes you 221 days, which is almost equal to 46 weeks. Corail Petite Butte receives water 40 times, that is, every week, compared to other villages, which receive water once every three weeks. Mr Chairperson, Sir, the reason is because the gangmen who are working on Montage Cabris Reservoir live at Corail Petite Butte, Mr Chairperson, Sir. This is why there is corruption in the distribution of water in that region.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, but is it a statement or a question?

Mr Grandcourt: It is a question.

Mr Chairperson: If it is a question, at least, let the Deputy Chief Commissioner answer.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered the question.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we all know, as the Deputy Chief Commissioner just said, that we have water problems in Rodrigues and right now we know that it is not rainy season, unless we have cyclones. We are in what we call dry season. Can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner if he sees this normal that in some regions water is being supplied every three days, for example, at Camp du Roi, Montagne Fanale and in other villages every three weeks and at times every six weeks? Is this normal?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning water production, we cannot mingle all the regions as a whole region. It depends on the availability of water sources in that region as it is said in my answer. We cannot compare the eastern region with the western region. It is difficult for us to compare the northern region with the western region. But, as I have said, work is being done so that we can tackle this problem.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we all know that in Rodrigues our main source of water supply is found in Mourouk for many years. Water from Mourouk was pumped to Petit Brulé and distributed to the rest of Rodrigues. How

come that the Deputy Chief Commissioner answers that it depends on the availability of water in a region, which means that if in the western region there is no river, no sources, the people will not get any water. It is not correct.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are making every effort possible. Water from Mourouk borehole is being conducted to Rivière Coco. We took that decision, last week, so that water from borehole of Mont Lubin is being conducted to Quatre Vent Réservoir to be distributed to the southern region of the island. We are monitoring the whole problem; we are doing so because we are in the dry season, some regions in the upper part .

FOREST RESERVES – SURFACE AREAS, APPLICANTS, ETC.

(No. B/639) Mr A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether he could, with regard to forest reserves in Rodrigues,

- (a) name all forest reserves in Rodrigues, stating their respective surface areas;
- (b) say if there has been any application to exploit any of these forest reserves and whether any one of these has been favourably attended to and, if yes, state names of applicants and types of business to be carried out, and
- (c) say, whether any application has been turned down and, if yes, give reasons thereof,

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly that the Forests and Reserves Act of 1984 makes no mention of the term ‘forest reserves’ and, therefore, it does not exist on a legal point of view.

I presume that the question relates to fenced sylvo pastoral perimeters and forest areas. I will reply accordingly.

- (a) I am tabling as Table 1 and 2 information on locality and respective surface areas of these sylvo pastoral perimeters and forest areas.
- (b) Up to now we have received two applications for industrial leases for hotel projects at Pointe Source and Pointe Roche/ Montagne Cabris East.

As explained in my reply to PQ No. B/612, the hotel project at Pointe Source is being proposed by Mr Alain O'Reilly who first applied for a lease in December 2001 and renewed in March 2003. Mr O'Reilly proposes to

construct an hotel de charmes of 25 rooms. His application is being favourably considered after recommendations of the Rodrigues Tourism Committee on ground of his good reputation and success in the field of ecotourism at Domaine du Chasseur in Mauritius.

The promoter has also proposed to undertake an integrated development of the area in close collaboration with the Forestry Services, the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation and the local people to enhance the ecological and environmental values of the site.

- (c) The hotel project at Roches Noires/Montagne Cabris East is being proposed by Lehigh and Co. Ltd. in an application dated June 2002. The company is represented by Mrs Denise Wong Sun Wai of "Escapes Vacances". This project consists of the construction of 30 bungalows and other amenities. The Rodrigues Tourism Committee has not recommended this project as the proposed site is a sylvo-pastoral perimeter and that the project does not make consideration of the integration of the local communities along the ecological and environmental enhancement of the forest area.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are two projects, one at Pointe Roches and the other one at Pointe Source, where there is a reserve. Can we know on which basis they are going ahead with granting part of the fenced area sylvo pastoral reserves to Mr O'Reilly whereas at Pointe Roches, this is not being done?

The Chief Commissioner: Comme je vous dis, M le président, c'est le comité du tourisme qui examine les projets de fond en comble. Le comité du tourisme a recommandé le projet de M. O'Reilly et a rejeté celui de Lehigh Co. Ltd parce que cela se trouve dans un endroit qui fait face à la mer et qui ne serait pas propice justement, selon le comité, à développer d'une manière écologique. Le comité a aussi tenu compte des promoteurs et M Oreilly est une personne connue. Je dois dire que dans ce comité il y a des représentants du ministère du tourisme et c'est ce comité qui a proposé un et rejeté l'autre. En ce qui concerne, d'autres informations que le *leader* de la minorité aimerait avoir d'autres informations, il peut venir avec des questions sur les décisions du comité du tourisme et ils seront prêts à les lui donner.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, The Tourism Act mentions, at section 19, that the Chief Commissioner is the Chairman of the Rodrigues Tourism Committee. Being given the state of our environment, the historical damage which has been caused to lands and forests in Rodrigues and the great effort which he

himself has made, when he was Minister, with FED and later on with the European Union, to fence all these areas at Baie Malgache and other places in Rodrigues which has led to the renewal of the forests and which together with the organisation like the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation in Mauritius constitute an asset for the future, can I ask him from a policy point of view whether it is appropriate to guard these reserves for tourists projects or other projects?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, l'Assemblée Nationale vient de voter une loi concernant le partenariat entre le secteur privé et le secteur public. Je ne prends aucune décision. Il est vrai que je préside un comité, mais ce n'est pas moi qui décide.

(Interruptions)

Ce sont les différents membres qui discutent et décident. Il est sûr et certain que le FED a financé des périmètres boisés, mais dans le cas de ce partenariat, si le secteur privé peut contribuer à travailler en étroite collaboration avec le secteur public, pour améliorer justement un périmètre boisé et lui donner un autre visage en essayant de l'entretenir par ses moyens avec le conseil des bois et forêts et du Mauritius Wildlife Foundation, je pense que nous allons dans la direction, non pas d'une séparation, mais dans une coopération et une collaboration, entre le secteur public et le secteur privé. Le secteur privé doit se dire qu'il a sa contribution à apporter dans l'amélioration d'un site comme cela se fait un peu partout aujourd'hui. Et c'est dans cette optique - et d'ailleurs peut-être que nous avons pris le devant par rapport à cette loi votée à l'Assemblée Nationale - si vous voulez que nous allons rehausser cette région entre Rivière Banane et Montagne Goyave qui est une région extraordinaire, encore sauvage, pour permettre justement à ce promoteur de rehausser la qualité.

M. le président, personnellement, je pense que nous nous avons besoin de l'expertise du secteur privé dans pas mal de domaines. A Maurice, le secteur privé apporte sa contribution dans l'amélioration de l'environnement. Prenons, par exemple, Port Louis et le rondpoint de Phoenix. Et pourquoi pas aussi pour l'amélioration de l'environnement écologique? Je pense que nous allons dans cette direction, le fait même que les promoteurs ont proposé d'améliorer cet endroit qui sera fréquenté par les Rodriguais qui pourront venir se promener et pique-niquer à l'avenir.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, le Chef Commissaire est en train de tomber dans le piège des entreprises, que je dirais, sont là pour avoir les belles plages et les plus beaux terrains de notre île. Je trouve cela grave parce qu'il a dit que les réserves naturelles et les plages de Rodrigues sont des endroits extraordinaires et qu'il va confier cela à un promoteur privé, c'est-à-dire que l'héritage de tous les Rodriguais sera confié à un promoteur privé. C'est un héritage naturel. Je voudrais donc lui demander comment en *leasing these lands to the promoter* cela bénéficierait la population rodriguaise, parce que rien ne garantit que la population aura un accès gratuit à ces endroits comme c'est le cas actuellement. This question is not a question of public/private partnership.. The question is a question of the preservation and conservation of our natural resources. Et je pense qu'il n'est ...

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I think that the Minority Leader is seeking a pretext to make a very long statement and he is commenting and giving, at the same time, the answer to his question. Thank you.

Mr Chairperson: I agree with the Commissioner. I'll ask the Minority Leader to be brief in his question.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, je voudrais demander au Chef Commissaire s'il a pris les décisions nécessaires pour 'déclassifier' ces réserves. Ce sont des réserves naturelles qui ont été établies par le ministère de Rodrigues à l'époque. Beaucoup d'argent ont été investis dans ce projet. Des consultants sont venus. Le Chef Commissaire et son équipe sont en train d'allouer ces réserves à des promoteurs privés. Je voudrais savoir quels sont les garde-fous qu'il est en train de mettre en place pour préserver le patrimoine du peuple rodriguais?

Mr Chairperson: This has been a rather long supplementary question and I take it that it is longer than the main question. Of course, we should refrain from doing this in the future.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, j'ai l'impression que le *leader* de la minorité n'a pas compris la réponse que j'avais donnée la fois dernière.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please! Take your seat, please.

I understand that some Members from the Opposition side are now taking the habit of interrupting the Member who is on his feet, in a sort of way igniting the atmosphere of this Assembly. As respected Members of this House, I believe that you are the first and foremost persons to keep the decorum in this House. There is a limit to what you can do. Thank you.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, d'après ce qu'a dit le *Minority Leader* concernant les colonnes électriques c'est comme si tout le périmètre reboisé va être donné aux promoteurs. Ce n'est pas le cas, M. le président. Permettez-moi d'expliquer. Le promoteur aura ses quelques arpents pour son hôtel, mais ensuite une partie de la propriété sous la responsabilité du département des forêts et le Mauritius Wildlife Foundation qui travaillent en étroite collaboration. Le promoteur va donner un coup de main dans l'aménagement de cet endroit dont le public rodriguais aura accès gratuitement, et quelq'un qui va dans cet hôtel, aura accès lui aussi comme dans n'importe quel hôtel de ce pays. Je vois qu'il y a une confusion. Il y aura la terre qui va être allouée au promoteur et ensuite la majorité des terres de cet endroit reboisé et clôturé continuera à être entre les mains du département des forêts; ensuite le promoteur va apporter sa contribution pour l'améliorer et lui rendre beaucoup plus agréable en construisant des petits kiosques. Ce sera un endroit extraordinaire où on pourra aussi faire de la randonnée. Je suis heureux de ce partenariat entre le secteur public et le secteur privé.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, je n'ai pas compris une chose. Le Chef Commissaire a mentionné les colonnes électriques. *Could he enlighten us on this?* Il a parlé des choses vues sur une colonne électrique. Que veut-il dire exactement?

Mr Chairperson: Any answer to this question? No answer?

Mr J. Roussety: Comme toujours, M. le président, ..

Mr Chairperson: No comment. Please, put your question. Do not make an abuse.

Mr J. Roussety: Comme toujours, M. le président, en ce qui concerne l'allocation des terres, cela se passe dans le flou. Le Chef Commissaire admet qu'il y a une confusion. Il est difficile pour nous de le comprendre. Il y a un projet, dont un terrain sera clôturé et une section sera utilisée pour la construction de 40 chambres de l'hôtel et il y aura une autre section qui sera gérée par le département des forêts et le Mauritius Wildlife Foundation. *On behalf of our people*, je

voudrais savoir si le *Letter of Intent* concerne la partie pour l'infrastructure de l'hôtel et cela englobe tout le périmètre.

The Chief Commissioner: C'est ce que je viens justement de dire, M. le président. Le promoteur aura ces quelques arpents de terre pour son hôtel. Il n'est pas spécifié dans le bail que l'autre partie sera sous sa responsabilité. Ce qui est en dehors de son bail restera sous la supervision et la responsabilité du département des forêts. Le promoteur a proposé de travailler avec le département des forêts et le Mauritius Wildlife Foundation pour améliorer l'endroit qui est clôturé et il y a une dizaine d'arpents. C'est clair et net. Le bail ne va pas s'étendre sur 100 arpents. C'est seulement quelques arpents qui seront alloués à l'hôtel, comme à Mourouk, Cotton Bay, Fumier ou ailleurs. Quelle est la personne qui va payer 100 arpents de terre? Cela coûterait trop cher. Dans ce cas là, il ne faudra pas construire d'hôtel. Il y aura simplement une partie de terre qui lui sera allouée, et le reste sera la terre de l'Etat et qui sera sous la responsabilité du département des forêts. S'il est mentionné dans le bail que le promoteur aura neuf arpents, cela sera respecté et il aura que ces neuf arpents.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, le Chef Commissaire a parlé de 'quelques arpents' alors que je viens d'entendre 'neuf arpents'. Premièrement, est-ce-que je peux savoir exactement combien d'arpents le conseil exécutif pense allouer au promoteur et, deuxièmement, est-ce qu'une partie de la terre mentionnée dans le bail tombera sous les réserves ou *fenced areas*?

The Chief Commissioner: *It is within the fenced area.* Dans le périmètre boisé il y a quelques arpents de terre pour l'hôtel et le reste restera sous la responsabilité du département des forêts et du RRA. En ce qui concerne le nombre de mètres carrés exacts de terre allouée, je ne peux le savoir maintenant, mais je viendrai plus tard avec un *statement*.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether the Tourism Committee has envisaged the possibility of advising that promoter that he would be given another plot of land apart from the reserves. If he wants to go ahead with the ecotourism project, he can then plant trees in collaboration with the Forests Department and the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation. He will have his own reserves. Why giving reserves to someone?

The Chief Commissioner: M.le président, ce ne sont pas des réserves.

(Interruptions)

Les réserves means 'nature reserves'.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order now, please!

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, d'habitude quand un promoteur cherche un endroit, il a ses raisons. Il faudrait savoir aussi ce qu'il veut faire avec cet endroit et comment il veut orienter sa promotion touristique à Rodrigues. C'est ce qui est important. Nous ne pouvons pas imposer nos conditions. C'est au comité du tourisme de voir toutes les conditions et si ce comité voit que c'est un projet qui va rehausser le niveau de notre environnement, de notre écologie, il l'approuvera et le recommandera.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, at the beginning of his reply, the Chief Commissioner referred to the Forests and Reserves Act of 1984. I do not know if the Forests and Reserves Act of 1983 has been completely repealed or amended, because in this Act, it is said –

"Any Area declared...."

Mr Chairperson: Is the Member quoting from the 1983 Act?

Mr Emilien: Yes, Sir.

Mr Chairperson: Of course, we have to know whether it is repealed or not, otherwise the whole purport will be void.

(Interruptions)

Is it still in action? Maybe the Commissioner may enlighten us about this Act, whether it has been repealed?

The Chief Commissioner: I do not know.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, we do not know whether this Act has been repealed or amended....

Mr Chairperson: So, would you even like to put the question?

Mr Emilien: Yes, Sir, if you will allow me.

Mr Chairperson: From my experience, once an Act is being proclaimed with the same name, then the previous one is normally either expressly repealed or impliedly repealed if, of course, the new Act bears the same name. If it is the same name then you can take it that it has been repealed, but if the name is different, then you can say it may have been repealed or not.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it may have been repealed or not...

Mr Chairperson: It is the same name. I am sure it has been repealed.

Mr J. Roussety: I believe the Member just wished to refer to what is in the 1983 Act, not meaning that it is applicable or not. Do you understand?

Mr Chairperson: I got your point.

Mr J. Roussety: The Member wants only to refer to a clause which was in the 1983 Act and we don't know here whether it has been repealed or not.

Mr Chairperson: Something, which is done away?

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, Sir.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, the Member has still this possibility, if he wants to.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I quote from the 1983 Act -

"Any Area declared to be a national forest shall be inalienable and shall not be devoted to any use other than as forest land."

I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner if it is the case now.

Mr Chairperson: I won't allow this question unless the Member states that it is still in force. He cannot expect the Commissioner to comment on something which is no more in the Statute Book. Unless he says it is still effective, then the question is allowed, because it is not a question, which he is referring or comparing, he is making a direct question on the Act. Does the Member get my point?

Mr J. Roussety: *Mr Chairperson, Sir, what the Member wants to say is that the policy of the Act in 1983 was that forest zones are inalienable and should not be touched* et je crois que c'est la même chose au niveau international. Les forêts mondiales diminuent d'année en année et ici, sur cette petite île, la loi dit que les forêts *should not be touched*, ne doivent pas être détruites. Je voudrais reposer la même question - comment se fait-il que le Chef Commissaire, qui est aussi le *Chairman du Tourism Committee*, ait pu, dans la perspective actuelle, avec tout le fonds mondial et local pour la préservation de l'environnement, donner une lettre d'intention pour implanter un hôtel dans une zone à préserver, M. le président? Je voudrais que le Chef Commissaire justifie devant cette chambre son intention de donner à un étranger un bail au coeur de cette zone alors que cela a été refusé aux Rodriguais. Je voudrais qu'il justifie clairement son acceptation d'un projet touristique au coeur d'une réserve naturelle qu'on a préservée pendant toutes ces années.

The Chief Commissioner: M le président, le *Minority Leader* parle de réserves naturelles. Nous avons quatre réserves naturelles - Grande Montagne, Anse Quitor, l'île aux Cocos et Cascade Pigeons. Il faut maintenant savoir ce que la loi, the Forests and Reserves Act, dit en ce qui concerne les forêts de Rodrigues. Il y a aussi ce qu'on appelle les 'périmètres reboisés', ce sont des endroits qui ont été reboisés. Est-ce-qu'on peut dire que ce sont des forêts?

(Interruptions)

Je suis en train de voir ...

(Interruptions)

M. le président, je suis incapable de répondre aux questions concernant les 'périmètres boisés' et d'insinuer que ce sont des réserves naturelles, et qu'on est en train aussi de détruire l'environnement alors que justement ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

The Chief Commissionaire: Alors que justement nous sommes en train, avec le secteur privé, comme le Mauritius Wildlife Foundation and Friends of

Wildlife, d'améliorer l'environnement. Nous ne voudrions pas que cela soit l'affaire du secteur public, mais aussi du secteur privé. Nous sommes appelés à faire respecter la protection de l'environnement. En ce qui concerne les réserves, etc., *I need notice of the question.*

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, à Pointe Source, entre Baladirou et Rivière Banane il y a une réserve qu'on a clôturée. Est-ce-que le Chef Commissaire, par les déclarations qu'il vient de faire, veut admettre que cette zone clôturée n'a aucune importance au niveau écologique et de l'environnement?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, nous sommes maintenant en train de revoir les lois mauriciennes par rapport à Rodrigues et il nous faudra arriver à définir ces zones. Il y a déjà un plan sur les pas géométriques, etc et le travail est en train de se faire. Dans le passé, il y avait des rivières de Rodrigues qui ne figuraient pas dans les textes de loi et cela a été ensuite corrigé pour permettre justement qu'on puisse préserver les sources et les rivières. Concernant la préservation de l'environnement, je reviens pour dire que la préservation de l'environnement n'est pas seulement l'affaire du gouvernement, c'est l'affaire de tout le monde, que ce soit du secteur privé ou public. Je ne sais pas si le Domaine du Chasseur est un domaine privé ou gouvernemental, j'essairai de ...

(Interruptions)

A Maurice. ...

(Interruptions)

Le membre pose des questions sur les forêts et les réserves et ainsi de suite ..

(Interruptions)

Mr J. Roussety: C'est privé. Est-ce-que vous croyez que tout le monde peut y entrer? Est-ce-que vous pensez que je peux aller au Domaine du Chasseur à Maurice?

The Chief Commissioner: Bien sûr, tout le monde y va au Domaine du Chasseur.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: Je ne paie pas, personne ne paie. On ne paie pas pour aller marcher.

(Interruptions)

M. le président, j'ai l'impression qu'il y a encore cette confusion entre la terre qui sera allouée aux promoteurs et la terre qui continuera à être sous la responsabilité de département des Forêts. J'ai répondu cent fois à cette question. Il y a encore une grande confusion à ce sujet. Ils croient qu'en dehors de la terre qui sera allouée aux promoteurs, les Rodriguais n'auront plus accès à cet endroit. Mais, bien sûr, c'est la terre de l'Etat.

(Interruptions)

Les Rodriguais qui voudront faire de la randonnée auront accès à ces endroits. N'ont-ils pas l'habitude d'en faire à Cascade Pigeons? Est-ce-qu'ils paient pour faire de la randonnée à Cascade Pigeons?

(Interruptions)

M. le président, il faut que les membres de l'opposition le comprennent. Ils mélangent les pédales. Ils veulent faire croire des choses et ils reviennent toujours sur la même chose.

(Interruptions)

Ils comprennent, mais ils font semblant de ne pas comprendre.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr J. Roussety: We wish to understand, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Chairperson: This will be the last question.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, on voudrait comprendre comment aujourd'hui, à Rodrigues, on ait pu donner un bail au coeur d'une réserve. Le Chef Commissaire a aussi dit que toute la zone '*will be fenced*'.

(Interruptions)

Donc, il a dit qu'une partie de la zone sera sous la responsabilité du département des forêts et une autre sous la responsabilité du promoteur. What will be the *modus operandi* of all this? Est-ce-qu'il y a eu un *agreement*? Est-ce-qu'un *Memorandum of Understanding* has been signed will all these parties yet for the management of the site which falls outside the lease? Who will finance the rehabilitation, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the embellishment of the other parts of the site? It is obvious that it is the promoter. And when he will finance, do you think that he will allow anybody to go there?

They have been speaking about rearing of deer. Where will they rear the deers? Will it be in the rooms of the hotel or at the backyard of the hotel where the tourists will take care of them?

Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is clear that Members from the other side of the House are still jeopardizing the development of this country. I would like to ask, Mr Chairperson, Sir, whether the Chief Commissioner will enlighten the House concerning Pointe Source? We want to know clearly what is going to happen at this place and we want also, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to know whether he will review the decision concerning a lease at the heart of a fenced protected area. Mr Chairperson, Sir, if they do not do it, we will contact these financing agencies telling them about what is happening on this island, that a fenced protected reserve financed by the EU funds is being given to private promoters.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, il est entendu qu'il y aura un MoU qui va être signé entre le promoteur, le RRA, le département des forêts et la Mauritius Wildlife Foundation. Je reviendrais encore pour dire ce que nous comprenons par les termes 'forêt, réserves' et tout cela doit être bien étudié pour savoir ce que veut dire exactement les mots 'forêt, Réserve, fenced sylvo pastoral'. Je reviendrais au moment voulu avec une déclaration sur ce projet.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

Mr Grandcourt: A last supplementary question, Mr Chairperson, Sir. As is the case in Mauritius, there is a Nature Reserves Board which advises the Minister on all issues concerning nature reserves. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, firstly, if there is such a Board here in Rodrigues and, if not, if he is contemplating to set up a Board and, secondly, from the papers tabled, Pointe

Source is mentioned, but no surface area has been noted. I would like to know why there is no surface area for the fenced area at Pointe Source.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, nous organisons régulièrement des rencontres avec le département des forêts et tout ce qui concerne environnement et tourisme tombent sous ce département. En ce qui concerne Pointe Source, je n'ai pas l'information, mais je vais voir pourquoi les chiffres ne figurent pas dans les papiers que j'ai déposés sur la table de l'Assemblée.

Mr Grandcourt: I am sorry, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have not got the reply about whether there is a Nature Reserves Board in Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: There is a Board. Il y a le département des forêts et le comité de l'environnement qui suivent à la lettre la législation et tout ce qui concerne les questions sur les forêts, les réserves naturelles, l'environnement, les espèces et on propose même de venir avec des règlements pour déclarer certaines forêts "réserves naturelles" et toute la question du patrimoine a aussi été discutée. Car il faut aussi arriver à déclarer dans des règlements ou des lois toute notre patrimoine rodriguais. On fera cela au fur et à mesure car tout cela est à l'étude par des groupes de personnes qu'on a mis en place pour étudier tout cela.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the other part of the question was about whether he is contemplating the setting up of this Board? The Chief Commissioner has not replied to that part of the question.

The Chief Commissioner: I will liaise with the Committee of Environment whether it is possible to do it.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

CAMP DU ROI STADIUM/POINTE MONIER - NEW ROADS

(No. B/640) Mr A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards the road alongside Camp du Roi Stadium and that of Pointe Monier (from Mr. Elysee's shop to Camp du Roi) could the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House what

measures his Commission has taken or is contemplating in terms of new roads in these places as the present ones represent a threat to the inhabitants nearby and to all users thereof.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the road alongside Camp du Roi Stadium and that of Pointe Monier (from Mr Elysée's Shop to Camp du Roi), I have to inform the House that construction of new roads is being carried out according to a priority list and subject to availability of funds.

Meanwhile my Commission has thought that it would be better to convert both roads in a one-way road so as to minimize the risk of accidents. Before implementing same, consultation will be carried out between the villagers and the Road Safety Committee on the direction of which the one-way system will be implemented. Moreover the road has been restricted to light vehicles only.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Deputy Chief Commissioner of the danger which this road represents. The retaining wall of this road is going away. I do not know if the Deputy Chief Commissioner has gone there, but I would suggest that he pays a site visit for it is a threat. I would also like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner if this road is within his priority list and, if not, when is he contemplating to at least reinforce the retaining wall?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said we are converting that road to a one-way system and we have taken the decision to restrict that road to light vehicles only. Road signs have already been fixed, but we have a dynamic Road Rehabilitation Programme and we will look into the matter.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have always heard about that mystical priority list. If there is an emergency case, for example, heavy rain or a fire outbreak, it will be impossible for vehicles or ambulances to drive in or out this road. It represents an imminent danger not only for the vehicles, but also for the people living in the vicinity. It is a threat to public safety. Can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner when immediate action will be taken to, at least, reduce the extent of the danger? Je crois que la Commission des infrastructures publiques doit prendre ses responsabilités et venir avec des mesures concrètes. Et s'il n'y a pas le fonds nécessaire pour reconstruire une nouvelle route, mais je pense qu'il faut venir, au moins, avec les mesures nécessaires pour sécuriser cette route, puisqu'il y va de la vie de ces personnes.

Mr Chairperson: This question is based purely and simply on a case which is very hypothethical. But I can understand you that you want a policy of the Deputy Chief Commissioner. Yes, I will allow the question.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, we have taken the decision to restrict the road to light vehicles only and we are having consultations with the villagers to convert that road into a one-way road. In the light of consultations with the villagers, we will see if upgrading of the retaining wall can be made at the earliest. But, I would like to inform the House that the Consultants have been directed to make a preliminary study on the enlargement and upgrading of Camp du Roi - Hauteur Accacia Road. The above-named roads, mentioned in the question, also form part of the study because they are adjacent linked roads. However, discussion reveals that the study will need deeper investigation to build up new roads in that area because of lack of space. There are many houses built on both sides of the road and the geotechnical aspects of the base of the roads needs to be looked into. However, I can say that the two road segments are still.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is it the normal practice for this Commission to consult villagers or to see to it with technicians or qualified personnel? What is the procedure?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this road is being used on both directions by the villagers. We have a Road Safety Committee; and before taking such type of decision, we think that a *consultation populaire* is needful before implementing same, because perhaps some of the villagers will be sacrificed against others. This is why the Road Safety Committee will like to consult the villagers to know whether arrangements for a one-way road can be envisaged.

ROUSSETY, MR MARC - PLOT OF LAND

(No. B/641) Mr A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member of Marechal) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards the small orchard exploited since long by Mr Marc Roussety near the Oyster Bay Government School, whether he will inform the House if this plot of land is being taken over by the Regional Assembly, and if yes, for what purpose.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the land in question was porposed by the Parents Teachers' Association of the Oyster Bay Government School and recommended by the Commission for Education for the construction of a new tiolet block following percolation of waste water that has arisen from the

existing school toilet due to landslide problem. This issue has been attended in the past by officers of the Environment Unit and public Health and was viewed as a serious health hazard to the school population.

The plot of land identified by the Commission for Education has been approved as it is the most suitable site for the construction of a new toilet block. It measures 1476m² and adjoins the school compound. There is no other alternative and unfortunately Mr Marc Roussety who illegally occupies the land for foodcrop cultivation has been requested to vacate the site in a letter dated 13 October 2004 by the Cadastral Office.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is a fact, from a legal point of view, that Mr Marc Roussety, has been occupying this land illegally just as it is a fact that many Rodriguans have been occupying State lands illegally for lifetime either for residential, agricultural or foodcrop purposes, and nothing has been done against them. Some of them have occupied these lands for agricultural purposes for a very long time, thirty or fifty years. It is an established practice for these persons to work and produce on the lands. It is the policy of the Executive Council to encourage people to plant, to produce fruits, to engage in foodcrop production. They have said it here in this House: "*Produisons, consommons Rodriguais*". *Mr Marc Roussety qui habite cet endroit depuis ...*

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of Order, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Could the Member put his question, please?

Mr Chairperson: Yes, this is the second time a point of order is taken against a Member. Unfortunately, I will have to press on you to put your question and abide by the rules.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, he wants me to put my question, so I will put it. *Je voudrais savoir combien de temps M. Marc Roussety a occupé ce terrain illégalement?*

The Chief Commissioner: Je dois aller chercher les informations.

(Interruptions)

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, il y a l'aspect sociologique, psychologique et humain dans cette affaire. Le Chef Commissaire n'a pas cherché à savoir combien de temps M. Marc Roussety a occupé ce terrain. Je peux mettre la Chambre au courant que M. Marc Roussety occupe ce terrain depuis plus de

trente ans. M. le président, est-ce- que le Chef Commissaire est au courant de la structure géotechnique de cette terre?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, quand on envoie une lettre à une personne qui occupe une terre illégalement c'est pour simplement lui dire que cette terre appartient à l'Etat et que demain on peut la reprendre. Quant à M. Marc Roussety qui occupe cette terre depuis trente ans il me semblerait que, selon les témoignages, dans le passé, on lui aurait dit qu'il peut planter sur cette terre et il paraît qu'il aurait lui même dit que: "si on pou reprend la terre là, nous pour redonne ou la terre là." Il n'y a pas eu de contrat fait dans le passé et je pense qu'il n'y a pas de contrats pour ce genre de chose.

Le problème, M. le président, est que M. Marc Roussety était un employé du Gouvernement et on lui a fait savoir que cette terre allait être utilisée pour construire des toilettes. Il semblerait que M. Marc Roussety conteste la construction des toilettes à la proximité de sa maison. On a discuté de ce projet bien avant qu'on pose la question. On aurait voulu savoir comment utiliser ce morceau de terrain puisqu'on voudrait que les écoles puissent avoir des jardins scolaires. Il y a aussi un terrain de jeux où il y a un passage qu'il faudrait revoir pour permettre aux gens de passer d'un bout à l'autre. Donc, on a demandé à l'arpenteur de faire un plan de ce terrain. Il faudrait voir aussi - car l'école de Baie aux Huitres est en pente - si on peut trouver un autre endroit pour faire des toilettes pour que cela ne gêne pas, à l'avenir, la santé des enfants, car il est question de la santé des enfants. La question n'est pas de rependre ce terrain de M. Marc Roussety. Le Parents/Teachers Association est préoccupé de la santé de leurs enfants. A cause de ces toilettes qui fuient, qui dégagent des odeurs, les enfants peuvent être affectés par une épidémie. Je pense que M. Roussety aurait dû, en son âme et conscience et de bon coeur, le proposer pour la santé des enfants.

(Interruptions)

Si M. Roussety a des enfants ou des petits-enfants, il aurait dû, quand même connaître le problème de l'école. La Commission des infrastructures publiques est en train d'examiner la possibilité de construire les toilettes. La Commission est en train de voir si on peut bouger la cantine à l'intérieur de l'école. Ce sont des choses qu'il faudrait voir sur le terrain. Il est du devoir du cadastre d'aménager ce terrain. M. Marc Roussety serait heureux si demain ce morceau de terrain est mis entre les mains de l'école pour un jardin scolaire et, en même temps, il aidera ces enfants à avoir une meilleure santé. Les lettres que M. Marc Roussety a reçues parlent justement de ce projet.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Nothing personal, please.

(Interruptions)

The Minority Leader knows how it is personal. Please, proceed.

(Interruptions)

Do not say it then.

(Interruptions)

Please, wait! Take your seat, Chief Commissioner.

(Interruptions)

I think enough is enough. I have been flexible all the time and in a sort of way, the Minority Leader is starting to cause trouble.

(Interruptions)

You do not give me orders!

(Interruptions)

Enough is enough. I am warning you. Next time, you interrupt the proceedings of the Assembly and despite my warning, you flout it, I will take the necessary decisions.

The Chief Commissioner: Comme je disais, M. le président, M. Marc Roussety aurait dû de son plein coeur connaître le problème et discuter cela avec le Parents/Teachers Association. On va essayer de proposer cela autour d'une table ronde qui comprendrait le Parents/Teachers Association, la Commission de l'éducation, le cadastre et M. Marc Roussety pour résoudre ce problème d'une manière amicale et consensuelle.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, je voudrais demander au Chef Commissaire si l'endroit proposé pour construire une toilette a été bien étudié.

The Chief Commissioner: Comme je le disais, M le président, c'est un cas urgent parce qu'il y va de la santé des enfants qui fréquentent cette école. A

Maurice, M. le président, on a dû fermer une usine qui répandait une odeur de gaz et qui incommodait les élèves d'une école du voisinage. Donc, je ne voudrais pas que ce genre de chose arrive à Rodrigues. C'est pourquoi je dis qu'on peut discuter ce problème avec M. Marc Roussety. S'il était un vrai citoyen, connaissant les problèmes de ces enfants, je pense qu'il aurait dû discuter cela avec le Parents/Teachers Association pour trouver une solution à ce problème. Cela demande tout un ensemble de consultations.

Mr Chairperson: No more questions. We have taken a little less than two third of the time and we are still with probably less than a quarter of the number of questions. So, I will suspend the Assembly now for lunch and we will resume at 1.00 p.m

At 12.18 the Assembly was suspended.

On resuming at 1.00 p.m with Mr Chairperson in the Chair.

MONT LUBIN & LA FERME HEALTH CENTRES – PHARMACISTS – WORKING HOURS

(No. B/642) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether he could inform the House of the number of pharmacists working at Mont Lubin and La Ferme Health Centers and their normal working hours

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, referring to the wording of the question, there is no pharmacists posted at Mont Lubin or La Ferme Health Centres.

Mr Emilien: Why are there no pharmacists posted at Mont Lubin and La Ferme Health Centres?

Mr Sooprayen: There is no post of pharmacists in the health services of Rodrigues. However, the work is being done by Dispensers.

Mrs Prosper: Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Commissioner for Health tell the House what is the work of a Pharmacist and a Dispenser?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, a Pharmacist is a degree holder in Pharmacy and a Dispenser is quite different.

(Interruptions)

As I just said, the work is being done by Dispensers.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner for Health objectively does not know as we say in creole “*Missié pharmacien*”?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please! Order! Minority Leader, your question, please!

(Interruptions)

Mrs Prosper: Mr Chairperson, Sir, je voudrais savoir du commissaire si les personnes responsables de distribuer les médicaments sont présentes la nuit pour les patients qui viennent à l'hôpital le soir.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please, do not get interrupted, please.

(Interruptions)

Order, please! Order! Minority Leader, please!

Mr Sooprayen: I have given my answer.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please! Order, please!

(Interruptions)

Order, please! No more interruptions from both sides of the House, please.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, drugs are dispensed in at Mont Lubin and La Ferme Area Health Centres by Senior Dispensers and Dispensers. At Mont Lubin Area Health Centre there is a Senior Dispenser who works from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m on weekdays and from 8.00 a.m to noon on Saturdays, Sundays

and Public Holidays. Because of the heavy workload a Dispenser is also available at Mont Lubin three times a week, that is, on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 9.00 a.m and 5.00 p.m. Two Dispensers are on call on a roster basis from 5.00 p.m and 8.00 a.m the next day. The Dispensers on call attend the Health Centre outside normal working hours if and when required.

An Acting Senior Dispenser is posted at La Ferme Area Health Centre. He works from 8.00 a.m to 4.00 p.m on weekdays and from 8.00 a.m to noon on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays. An additional Dispenser is available on Saturdays from 8.00 a.m to noon. After normal working hours, the Nursing Officers in the Accident and Emergency Department keep a small stock of some of the commonly used drugs to dispense to patients attending La Ferme Health Centre.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is something strange about La Ferme and Mont Lubin. There is a Dispenser at La Ferme who is attending for Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and there is no one at La Ferme. I would like to know why.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have just said, after normal working hours, there is a stock of medicine dispensed by Nursing Officers and if there is an urgent need of medicine, then someone from Mont Lubin will come to La Ferme immediately. But, anyway, there has never been any shortage of medicine.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, does the Commissioner for Health mean that the keys of the pharmacy at La Ferme is kept with the Dispenser of Mont Lubin whenever an emergency arises? The Commissioner stated that the Dispenser will come "immediately"?

Mr Sooprayen: I have said so.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Commissioner for Health say why the same procedure for the posting of Dispensers at Mont Lubin is not applicable to La Ferme? Why is it that the same procedure is not being applied for both Health Centres?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, a study has been carried out and it has been found that there is no need to have a Dispenser at night for the moment.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner reveal to the House the nature of the study? What does the study say which does not entitle La Ferme to have a Dispenser?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will come with a Statement if need be, for I do not know the answers now,

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairman, Sir, could he tell us what is the name of the study and when was it made?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have just said, I'll come with a Statement if needs be.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is astonishing. A Commissioner comes here, makes mention of a study that has been carried out and says that the findings of the study is that La Ferme does not need a Dispenser on a permanent basis. But he does not know the name of the study and when the study has been carried out, but he knows what are the findings. Is that normal, Mr Chairperson, Sir? I get the impression that they just answer questions in a very broad manner. Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will insist. What is the name of the study and who has carried it out and when?

Mr Chairperson: Take your seat, Commissioner for Health. If we have a look at the original question which is very straightforward and very short, it is about pharmacists and normal working hours. Of course, supplementary questions are put to have a further elucidation of the answer given according to the Standing Orders. Of course, the Commissioner mentioned a study ...

(Interruptions)

Please, wait, I am talking!

Of course, it is legitimate that the Member asks for further clarifications, but it is no a way of opening the door for another question. There is a limit to supplementary questions. Those who deliberately want to ask questions of which notice has not been given should understand that they may get answer that may be incomplete. I will allow a last question on this because the Minority Leader, I understand, wants to insist on his question. Yes, Mr Commissioner for Health.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have just said, I will come with a Statement.

Mr Chairperson: A last question on this.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner of Health admits that he has been giving information to this House about the findings of a study, but he admits that first he is not aware of the study; second, when it was made, and third, who made it.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I can't say exactly what is in the study. I read it and it is technical. I said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that I will come with a Statement.

Mr Chairperson: A last supplementary from the Member who asked the question.

Mrs Prosper: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner of Health said that there is no need to have a permanent dispensary at La Ferme Health Centre, but why is there a doctor permanently there?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the doctor needs to be there, at any time on a 24-hour basis.

PUBLIC OFFICERS - TRANSFER - OCTOBER 2004

(No. B/643) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether he could state the number and names of public officers who have been transferred since the assumption of office of the new Island Chief Executive in October 2004 and the reason therefor.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling a list of five officers who have been transferred for administrative convenience since 24 October 2004, date of assumption of duty of Mr J. C. Pierre Louis as Island Chief Executive. The list specifies the names, grade of the officers, their previous and new posting as well as the reason for the change in posting.

- (i) GRANDE MONTAGNE - NOTICE BOARD**
- (ii) MONT LUBIN - BUS SHELTER**

(No. B/644) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner with regard to the Notice Board at Grande Montagne and the bus shelter recently built at Mont Lubin could the Commissioner state –

- (a) the name of the contractor to whom the contracts have been allocated and the amount of money agreed upon for each as per the contract document, and
- (b) whether public officers have been involved in the works and, if yes, give details of the work performed by them.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that no contracts have been allocated by my Commission with respect to the construction of a Notice Board at Grande Montagne and a bus shelter at Mont Lubin.

The workers of my Commission have been involved in the works and the details of the works performed by them are as follows -

Grande Montagne Notice Board

construction of masonry walls
 wooden frame of notice board
 cleaning of yard

Mont Lubin Bus Shelter

all carpentry works
 placing of iron sheets
 timber decorations
 general cleaning

It is to be noted that the masonry walls and stone works were donated by the Company Ireko Design Construction Ltd whereas materials for the construction of the carpentry works were jointly financed by the Rotary Club of Rodrigues and my Commission. I seize this opportunity to place on records our appreciation of this co-partnership between the NGO Rotary Club, the private firm Ireko Design Construction Ltd and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mrs Prosper: Mr Chairperson, Sir, could the Deputy Chief Commissioner say why the work has taken so long to finish?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this work was a copartnership between the NGOs, the private firm, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and my Commission, the Commission of Public Infrastructure. For example, the Grande Montagne Notice Board was built firstly on a voluntary basis by the community, the villagers and then we have taken over. There was delay in

the procurement of some materials, like rocks to be removed from the different places. This is why there have been some delays in the work.

CAMP DU ROI - BRIDGE – *MAIN COURANTE* & STREET LIGHTING

(No. B/645) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the state of the bridge situated at Camp du Roi near the Commissioner for Arts and Culture's residence, he could say if a "*main courante*" will be installed shortly for the safety of all users of the bridge and if his Commission is envisaging to provide street lighting as well in this region.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that with regard to the state of the bridge situated at Camp du Roi, that handrailing exists on one side only. My Commission has already initiated action to provide street lighting islandwise and every village is on our scope of work.

As regards Camp du Roi village, a site visit was made by members of the Executive Council and other officers of the RRA on the 20 September 2004 regarding construction of an access road to the upper part of the village, street lightning and digging of drains.

However, I would like to inform the House that provision of lightning in villages is a dynamic task. The first street lighting at the entrance of Camp du Roi was installed on 28 August 2004. But it was difficult to proceed along the road inside the village because there was no electric pole alongside the road. After that, my Commission has then negotiated for three poles with Mauritius Telecom and we obtain same on 09 November 2004. The three poles have already been erected since last week and the lanterns will be fixed after supply of electricity by the Central Electricity Board. Quotations for handrails have already been launched. The repair of the handrail will be taken up in our annual maintenance programme of repairs.

ROCK QUARRIES - EXPLOITATION

(No. B/646) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether there are any rock quarries in Rodrigues and, if yes, state where they are situated and whether any of them are being exploited and, if yes, by whom.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are presently two stone quarries in Rodrigues. One is situated at Montagne Plate and is exploited by Welcome Industries. The second one is situated at Rivière Banane and is being exploited by the Kan John Society.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Welcome Industries and Kan John Society have obtained their Environment Impact Assessment Licence from the Ministry of Environment dated 02 August 1995 and 22 February 2001 respectively for the exploitation of these stone quarries.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, when I say rock quarries I have in mind what we call '*roches plates*'.

Mr Chairperson: You could have specified. Put your question.

Mr Agathe: Could the Commissioner enlighten the Assembly about what we call '*roches plates*'?

The Chief Commissioner: The third site at Ile callinière, Pistache is being used for the removal of surfaced flat stones only for Government projects. For the time being Allied Builders Ltd has been authorised to remove the flat stones under close monitoring of the Environment Unit and the Forestry Services. These stones are required for the construction of the swimming pool at Maréchal.

Mr Agathe: Since we have one at Rivière Pistache, are the Government employees going to exploit the site?

The Chief Commissioner: No Government employee is going to extract these stones. It is the employees of the Contractor who will do so, but under the supervision of the Environment Unit and the Forestry Services.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether the contract which has been awarded to Allied Builders Ltd for the removal of these flat stones is on a permanent basis or for the purpose of using it for the contract which is now under way? Can the Chief Commissioner enlighten us on that?

The Chief Commissioner: As I said, it is for the construction of the swimming pool. It is only for Government projects. We are not allowing people

to remove flat stones for their personal use. We must be very careful, this is a sort of *promontoir* and we have to take care of the environment of this place. The contract awarded to Allied Builders Ltd. is not on a permanent basis. They are given a permit for the removal of only for certain tons of stones, nor more than that.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner say whether members of the public have removed these stones? Because there are places where people have used these stones to construct walls or to build their houses, etc. How they did they get these stones, I do not know. But if members of the public need to have these stones, what are the procedures to follow and where should they get them?

The Chief Commissioner: These were done formerly, but we have taken the decision not to allow the public to take these stones from there, because this is not a big quarry; it is a place near the seaside. We have to be very careful. As you know, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the coral quarry at Petite Butte has stopped because of environment problem. This decision has been taken only where projects have been mentioned in the Plan. It is only for Government projects and not for the public.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, since the Chief Commissioner inform the House that the contractor is allowed to remove these flat stones under the supervision of Government officers, has there be a study to justify the quantity of rocks mentioned can be removed there?

The Chief Commissioner: That depends on the work to be done. Certain hotels have asked for these flat stones, but we have refused them. As for the swimming pool, it will require a small amount of these flat stones. We have, for example, refused Mauritours, which was asking about 200 tons of those flat stones. So, we cannot allow a big number of flat stones to be removed from Ile callinière. This is being monitored by the Environment Unit, and if we are asked to stop removing these flat stops, we are going to follow suit.

HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD - MEMBERS, ALLOWANCES, ETC.

(No. B/647) **Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether, with regard to the Health Advisory Board in Rodrigues, he would state –

- (a) the names of the members thereof;

- (b) the emoluments/allowances paid to them individually, if any, and the quantum thereof, and
- (c) whether, by virtue of their membership of this board, any is required to travel to the mainland and, if yes, why.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a), the names of the members of the Health Advisory Board in Rodrigues are as follows -

Mr Simon Pierre Roussety	-	Chairman
Dr. C. Sookram	-	Health Director
Dr. S. Ramdoyal	-	Gynaecologist/Obstretician
Mr Ismael Valimamode	-	Nursing administrator
Mrs Marthiana Perrine	-	Action Familiale
Mr Jean Noel Samois	-	Representative Crac
Mr Emberman Samois	-	Gangman, QEH Representative of the minor grade
Mrs Sergine Roussety	-	Ag. HEO., QEH Secretary

With regard to part (b), in accordance with approval obtained by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, the members are remunerated as the five Chairmen in Mauritius as follows -

Chairman - Rs12,750 per month
 Member - Rs500 per sitting
 Secretary - Rs720 per sitting

Concerning part (c), two members of the Board, namely the Chairman and the Health Director, are invited to attend the management meeting held in Mauritius once a month under the chairmanship of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life on invitation of the same Ministry. The cost of air tickets and subsistence allowance is met by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can we know what is the procedure to be followed to be appointed Chairman of this Board? Is it by appointment, by advertisement or is it according to particular professional qualifications or involvement in a special work?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally it is the Minister who decides to have the Board here and it is chosen from members doing social work, NGOs, nursing officers and doctors.

Mr J. Roussety: I believe, Mr Chairman, Sir, that the Chairman must be very versatile and very well accustomed to health issues. Is it the case for the actual Chairman, Mr S. Roussety, Mr Chairperson, Sir, and, if yes, can we know from the Commissioner what has been his involvement in the health sector?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the actual Chairman was a very good social worker in Oyster Bay and he is still a member of the Regional Committee. We have got six Health Regional Committees here.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, est ce que le président de ce comité est autorisé à pratiquer une autre activité professionnelle?

Mr Sooprayen: Could the Minority Leader please repeat the question?

Mr Chairperson: Yes, I, myself, have not understood the question.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, est-ce-que le *chairmanship* est compatible avec la pratique d'une autre activité professionnelle?

Mr Sooprayen: Oui, c'est compatible; c'est un *social worker* et il représente une communauté. Il n'est pas nécessaire d'être un médecin pour être le président de ce comité.

GOVERNMENT QUARTERS/MOROIL - STATE LAND

(No. B/648) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the portion of State land in front of the Indian Ocean International Bank, presently occupied by four government quarters and Moroil, he could state -

- (a) the surface area of the plot, and
- (b) if same has been identified for any project and, if yes, give details thereof.

he Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning part (a) the surface area of the portion of land in front of the Indian Ocean International Bank presently occupied by four Government quarters is 1,599.27 m².

The portion of land occupied by Moroil is a privately owned land measuring 0.21 acres according to its title deed.

With regard to part (b), the plot of land occupied by the four quarters, there is a proposal to lease part of it to the State Commercial Bank for the construction of their Head Quarters. The proposal is still under consideration.

RIVIERE COCO ROAD/CEMETERY ROAD - CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/649) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, it is proposed to go ahead this financial year with the construction of the Rivière Coco Road from the coast to the Cemetery Road and, if not, why.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is proposed to go ahead with the construction of Rivière coco Road from the coast to the Cemetery Road...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please, wait until the Commissioner has answered his question.

(Interruptions)

Please, wait! Is the microphone working? Deputy Chief Commissioner, let the microphone free when you talk, please.

I am sorry, can you start your answer again?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, yes, it is proposed to go ahead, this financial year, with the construction of Rivière coco Road from the coast to the Cemetery Road.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is another road next to the school which goes to Rivière Coco and which is in a very bad state. I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether this part of the road is also included in the construction of the Cemetery Road.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is another question. It is specified in the main question "from the coast to the Cemetery Road".

Mr Chairperson: I agree with you, but if you have the information, perhaps you can give it.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I asked this question because this road also leads to the Cemetery.

Mr Chairperson: The Member can come with a notice if he so wishes. Let us move to the next question.

IFAD - COMMUNITY DEVELOPEMNT PROJECTS

(No. B/650) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Community Development whether she can give the number and details of community development projects approved under the IFAD Programme during the last quarter.

Mrs Perrine-Begu : Mr Chairperson, Sir, not less than fifteen (15) Community Development Projects costing Rs5 m. have been approved in the last quarter.

These projects include –

- the construction of 3,315 metres of track road and 100 metres of footpath
- the construction of 5 community centres
- the extension and renovation of 2 other community centres
- the construction of 2 pre-primary schools
- the fencing of agricultural land, football grounds and pre-primary schools

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, regarding the IFAD programme, could the Commissioner tell us about its implementation with the community? Does IFAD pay for the works itself or is the money allocated to the village communities, who then pay for the materials? I mean what is the mode of execution of these projects especially as regards disbursements of funds and purchase of supply.

Mr Chairperson: The Commissioner does not even look at the Chair. Is she not happy with the Chair?

(Interruptions)

Mr J. Roussety: She likes to look at us!

Mr Chairperson: At you!

Mr J. Roussety: Maybe.

Regarding the IFAD programme 'Implementation with the community', can the Commissioner say whether IFAD pays for the works or is the money allocated to the village communities which then pay for the materials, etc.? I mean what is the mode of execution of these projects, especially as regards disbursements of funds and purchase of supplies?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in fact, we have installed a system through the bank whereby the disbursement is being cosigned by the Project Manager of IFAD and the representatives of the community wherever the project is being implemented.

Mr J. Roussety: What does the Commissioner mean by 'cosigned' Mr Chairperson, Sir?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: The documents are signed by the President or a delegated representative of the village and also by the Project Manager whenever disbursement is needed. The Project Manager is asked according to the Convention that is signed with IFAD project, he or she must first of all ensure that the project is ongoing, that there is really a need. So, there is a constant monitoring before the disbursement is made by steps.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, does the Commissioner mean that each village community which has benefiting from IFAD projects has a joint account with IFAD Manager? I understand that that for each project in every village there is a joint account signed by IFAD and the president or village communities.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not understand the qualms of the Member, because really this is the practice. In fact, we have installed this practice well before the autonomy; the project had started, but there were at least two defaulties, that is, in the paper before the frequent reviews, IFAD was supposed to give the money directly, by stages, to the community. But, unfortunately, sometimes there are people who are not honest and in, at least, two cases we did not even have the required staff. So, the monitoring was not done as regularly as it should have been done; and it was presumed that the villagers were doing the job collectively; they were holding their meeting and giving the green light to the representative to take the money and finance the project. It has not been done in at least two projects. So, along with the experts of the IFAD and the Ministry of Finance and my Commission, a new system has been installed to have more control.

Mr J. Roussety: I want to know, for each village community in which the development projects have been approved by IFAD, whether there is a joint account IFAD/village community. Would she confirm that there is a joint account IFAD/village community for each village? Is there a joint account for each village with the IFAD, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Yes, for each project that we approve, Mr Chairperson, Sir, since at least one and a half year, we have installed this practice, that is, we open a temporary account and as soon as the project is finished, then the account is closed.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, why is it necessary to have separate accounts when it is known that all village communities have their treasurers, their executive committees and their bank accounts?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, but where is the control of Government in this project? Because this is a loaned money and the Regional Government is working this project on behalf of the Central Government. It is our duty to make sure that the money is well used. We are answerable for that money and that is why, even if there will be a multiplicity of accounts, we prefer that since the banks are not refusing to do it, because we cannot go and put the money on existing bank accounts. As you know, some of them are registered with the Registrar of Association and others not. In cases where they are registered with the Registrar of Association, they have their own financial practices and the Project Manager of IFAD cannot go into that. On the other hand, where these associations are not registered, then they can do whatever they want with the money and they are not even answerable. So, we cannot go into that.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, .

Mr Chairperson: Yes, wait a minute. Please, take your seat. We are left with roughly 30 minutes and we are left with 16 questions. I won't stop supplementary questions, but you should bear in mind that in case you wish to have so many supplementary questions, unfortunately, I will have to stop at certain point in time.

I will allow one last supplementary on this question.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that in at least two cases there have been misuse of funds allocated to the communities. Can the Commissioner inform the House whether there has been any action taken to recover the money that has been misused?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are under process. We know that these persons are poor and we cannot keep on pestering them all the time. But we have written two letters; and the steering committee, at a point in time, had asked two members to go and question these women. In fact, there have been cases in women's project. Therefore, we have gone and asked these women what has happened and if a way could be given to them to refund the money slowly.

RIVIERE COCO - CLAC

(No. B/651) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Library Services if she can -

- (a) give an account of the new development which has been carried out at the CLAC of Rivière Coco, and
- (b) will this improvement concern the two other CLACs (*Centres de lecture et d'Animation Culturelle*) in Rodrigues.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a), since the establishment of the various CLACs in Rodrigues in 1997, only books were being issued on loan to subscribers. With the new developments proposed, our CLACs will be raised according to the international norms as stipulated in the Convention signed between the Central Government and the *Agence Inter-gouvernementale de la Francophonie*.

In fact, apart from lending of books and reading activities, the CLACs are expected to operate as exchange forum and training as a supporting agency to education and cultural development in rural areas specifically, in subjects covering a wide spectrum such as literacy, health, agriculture, technology, literature, etc.

The CLAC of Rivière Coco has been completely renovated and is the first to meet all these criteria. The new operational programme was officially launched on 29 October 2004 and, apart from lending of books, all activities of the CLAC will be carried out jointly by the Commission and the community represented by a "*Comité de Soutien*" consisting of a cross-section of the inhabitants of the villagers around.

With regard to part (b), this improvement will be extended to the other CLACs, i.e, those of Malabar and Grande Montagne as soon as the "*Comité de Soutien*" will be set up in the course of this month in these regions.

ANCESTORS, VICTIMS OF SLAVERY - MEMORIAL

(No. B/652) Miss M. L. Castel (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts & Culture whether she can state what measures are being taken by her Commission in memory of the ancestors, victims of slavery.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Regional Government has decided that *l'Union* becomes a "*Lieu de Mémoire*" in remembrance of our ancestors and our history.

The Maragon's tombs are being refurbished. However, although history has it that some slaves have been buried close to their masters, yet none of these is visible. Consequently, to set history right, a Memorial to Slaves will be erected next to the Maragon's tombs.

The next phase of the project will be the creation of a Park and a Museum on this history of slavery in Rodrigues. The project aimed at terms to be a historical heritage, therefore, highly cultural and also a touristic site.

The landscaping design has been prepared by the Architects and a Competition has been launched recently for the design of the "*Monument aux Esclaves*"

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner contemplating to work jointly with the international organisation like, for example, to have *compensation pour les descendants des esclaves*?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is the talk of the town actually. But we, in the Regional Government, have not discussed this issue since it is at Central level; and we know that the Central Government has said that our country, be it Rodrigues, Mauritius, all the other regions in our territory, will align to any measure that will be taken at international level.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have also the problem of family tree...

Mr Chairperson: That is too far. Let us go to the next Question.

RODRIGUAN KREOL LANGUAGE - STUDY

(No. B/653) Mr L. P. François (First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture whether she can state the specificity of the Rodriguan Kreol language is being taken into consideration in the study now under way in Mauritius on the harmonization of the "*Kreol graphie*".

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, well before the study on the subject was entrusted to Professor Hookoomsing, Rodrigues, in the context of the Festival Kreol 2003, that is, one year earlier, had already pondered over the matter. Consultations were held with various segments of the population, that is, the youth, the elderly and other stakeholders with the assistance of experts from different countries of the Indian Ocean.

A set of the recommendations made by the three different groups of participants was forwarded to Professor Hookoomsing for consideration in his study. My Commission had invited him to come to Rodrigues before the handing over of his interim report. Unfortunately, this has not been possible. However, upon my Commission's second invitation, Professor Hookoomsing will be in Rodrigues - that is what he has said to us recently - in the context of the Festival Kreol on 06 December next to participate in a public consultative workshop on Rodriguan kreol language and graphy in the context of the second phase of his study on an "harmonised graphy for the kreol language."

LA FERME - ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING - PAINTING

(No. B/654) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the

different types of paints used for the painting of the administrative building at La Ferme he could -

- (a) give the name/s of the suppliers/s,
- (b) state the different colours used giving the quantity used for each,
- (c) the total amount of money spent for each colour used giving their unit price.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the different types of paints used for the painting of the administrative building at La Ferme, I am informed that -

- (a) The name of the supplier is Joy Sim Ltd, and
- (b) The different colours used and the quantities and cost of each are as follows

-

Egg Shell white	-	20 pails at Rs1,255 per pail
Pale green	-	23 pails at Rs1,255 per pail
Magnolia	-	6 pails at Rs1,300 per pail

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, last week the building was painted pale green and this week it is painted magnolia. Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner explain to this House why is this difference in colour?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the construction of the building at La Ferme falls under the responsibility of my Commission. As you know, work is progressing satisfactorily; and it is my Commission, which decides which type of has to be applied to the wall and the manner in which it should be applied. Normally, we should apply two coats; we have a *maquette de couleurs* present at my Commission and the first coat was green and the second coat will be magnolia. We have decided that to be like that and it will be like that!

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, nevertheless this side of the House, wishes to understand why green colour was used as a first coat, and then the second coat of green was covered with another coat of magnolia. What is the reason, Mr Chairperson, Sir, of painting a public building green first and a week later changing the colour into magnolia, thereby wasting public funds?

(Interruptions)

Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we admit that it was the first coat.

(Interruptions)

If the final colour was to be magnolia, why then, Mr Chairperson, Sir, green colour was used as a first coat? Unless Mr Chairperson, Sir, they start to get mad at this Commission! It is a waste of money, of public funds. It is ridicule to use green colour as first coat to paint a public building and then change it into magnolia as a second coat! Objectively green is not the based colour for magnolia.

Mr Chairperson: I suppose it is not white.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is no rule which says that the first coat must be of the same colour as the second coat. It has been stated that if magnolia were applied for the first and second coats, it would have cost much higher than applying the first coat as green and the second coat as magnolia. Because a pail of green paint is at Rs1,255 whereas a pail of magnolia paint is Rs1,300. Normally, these paints are bought under the item Vote - Public Building; and when quotations are made for paint, it is not meant for the building at La Ferme only. There are other buildings, public quarters and public infrastructures, which fall under this item. Sometimes, these paints that have been commissioned are used progressively for the maintenance of those public buildings. We, at the Commission, buy paints progressively on the demand of my Commission to maintain these public infrastructures.

PAS GEOMETRIQUES – RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL LEASE – SURVEY

(No. B/655) **Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member of La Ferme)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether with regard to the “*Pas Geometriques*” in Rodrigues, he could state –

- (a) the regions, in Rodrigues where the “*Pas Geometriques*” has been surveyed;
- (b) the number of lease, either residential or commercial, allocated within the “*Pas Geometriques*” –

- (i) before, and
- (ii) after October 2002,

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a), ‘*Pas Géométriques*’ is delimited under the ‘*Pas Géométriques*’ Act of 1982 as being the reserved land from the line of the seashores which is reached by high water at spring tide and shall never be less than 81 metres and 21 cm.

I am informed that there has not been any survey carried out in the past with respect to such delimitation in any regions of Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, since October 2002, one of the priority policies of the Regional Government is to develop and implement a land planning scheme in order to ensure a sustainable development of Rodrigues. In line with this priority, several policies and measures with respect to land use and development are being implemented. In addition, we are also implementing the National Development Strategy for Rodrigues. In this context, the "*Pas Géométriques*" will be surveyed in due course in view of developing an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the island.

As regards part (b), information on the number of residential or commercial leases allocated within the "*Pas Géométriques*" in Rodrigues is being compiled at the Cadastral Office and will be circulated.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think this should be made clear in Rodrigues because sometimes the officers tell us that the *Pas Géométriques* Act is not applied to Rodrigues. I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner whether this is the case?

The Chief Commissioner: All national laws are applied to Rodrigues and according to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001 it is said that we can make laws and regulations which are specific to Rodrigues, but we are not allowed to alter any clauses in the national laws. All laws are applied to Rodrigues, but for certain reasons, in Rodrigues this survey has not been done in the past. With the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the island we have to survey the whole *Pas Geometriques* issue in Rodrigues.

MANIQUE - PUBLIC TAP

(No. B/656) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether he could give reasons as to why the public tap at Manique, next to the groundwater pump, has been cancelled.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the water prise was recently cancelled due to the fact that the inhabitants were using the water in an abusive manner. The stop valve was frequently damaged resulting in the wastage of water and causing a decrease in the water production at Manique Reservoir. Moreover, laundry was being carried out next to the borehole without paying attention to the risk of polluting the underground water. Water distribution network has now been extended to the vicinity and the Water Unit will gladly entertain any request for an individual water prise.

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY - FINANCE CADRE

(No. B/657) Mr J. Roussety (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards the establishment of a Finance Cadre for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly could he state whether any invitation to apply has been made or circular issued in relation to posts of Finance Officers, and if yes, when, stating the number and identity of those officers who applied together with the number of vacancies available and give the number and identity of those officers working as Finance Officers at present and ascertain where do matters stand as regards the recruitment process of Rodrigues-based staff.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, a circular letter was issued on 08 September 2004 inviting Executive Officers who are interested to join the Finance Cadre as Finance Officer to submit the periods during which they have worked in the Finance section and to give details of the financial duties performed during the period of four years. These information cannot be disclosed as same are being compiled for eventual submission to the Public Service Commission which is responsible for the promotion and appointment of public officers.

One Chief Finance Officer, three Senior Finance Officers and three Finance Officers from Mauritius are posted to Rodrigues on a tour of service. Their names together with information about the status of their tour of service are being circulated. Arrangements are being made with the Head of the Finance Cadre for replacement of those whose tour of service will expire shortly. Mrs Mandarun, Chief Finance Officer, who is presently in Mauritius is coming back today and she will hand over to the incoming replacing Officer when the latter will assume duty in Rodrigues at a date not later than the end of next month.

I am also tabing the names of officers who have been assigned the duties of Finance Officer and Assistant Finance Officer in the Finance Section of the Central Administration Office.

Vacancies in the grade of Assistant Finance Officer have been advertised on 21 September 2004 for selection among officers in the grade of Clerk. Applicants will sit for a competitive examination on Saturday 11 December 2004 for the filing of the 15 existing vacancies in the grade.

A decision regarding the filling of vacancies in the grade of Finance Officer will be taken in the light of the recruitment at the level of Assistant Finance Officer and arrangement made by the Ministry of Finance for the replacement of Finance Officers who are leaving at the end of their tour of service. The whole issue is

beign discussed with the Head of Finance Cadre from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development who is presently on mission in Rodrigues.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand that those Finance Officers from Mauritius and higher officers in the Finance Cadre are leaving soon and will need to be replaced. Will the Office of the Chief Commissioner go ahead with the nomination of new Rodriguan Finance Officers or allow once more, at the cost of the Budget of Rodrigues, for Mauritian Finance Officers to come here?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, les commissaires et les *department Heads* se sont rencontrés pour étudier à quel moment ces promotions vont être faites pour que les commissions ne soient pas déséquilibrés. Nous avons, en ce moment ci, des clerks qui vont être promus Assistant Finance Officers. C'est à partir de là que nous allons essayer de faire les autres recrutements et il y aura aussi des clerks qui vont être promus pour remplacer les *Assistant Finance Officers*. D'autres promotions viendront ensuite, des clerks qui deviendront *Executive Officers*. Il y aura plusieurs promotions qui vont être faites et il faudra savoir gérer cela pour que les commissions ne soient pas handicapées dans leur travail. C'est pourquoi nous allons commencer par les *Assistant Finance Officers* pour venir ensuite à la sélection d'*Executive Officers*. Les *Executive Officers* seront promus ensuite comme Finance Officers par la PSC. Entretemps, comme certains Finance Officers partiront à la fin de Novembre et pour que les commissions puissent bien fonctionner, il nous faudra - nous sommes obligés de le faire - faire venir des Finance Officers de Maurice en attendant que les *Executive Officers* deviennent des *Finance Officers*.

Mr Chairperson: I would like to draw the attention of the House that we are left with nine questions and ten minutes, which means that we won't reach the end, even without supplementary questions. So, I make an appeal to both sides of the House that I will not allow more than one supplementary question for each question. I suppose all supplementary questions come from the Minority Bench because most of the questions asked are in fact from the Minority Bench. I will allow one supplementary for each question. So, let us have the last one.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under the Scheme of Service prepared by the Public Service Commission Regulations, they were inviting on 07 April 2004 Assistant Finance Officers who reckon at least two years experience in a substantive capacity - and among them there are Rodriguans - to apply for the post of Finance Officers. It said that consideration will be given to them though they do not possess the qualifications at the level of accounting, ACCA, etc. The ex-Island Chief Executive has initiated procedures for the recruitment of Finance Officers in a circular dated 15 September 2003. Officers who reckoned more than two years

experience in finance have applied; they are prepared, as requested, to go ahead with further training. The PSC has agreed that they have the experience. Why is the Chief Commissioner not given them the chance to become Finance Officers instead of calling officers from Mauritius where we have to provide them with quarters, pay disturbance allowance and other facilities?

The Chief Commissioner: M le président, ce n'est pas la question de faire des gens d'avoir des promotions, il y a toute une question que je viens de citer. Il est question d'organisation des commissions. Nous avons une réunion avec le *ex-Island Chief Executive for the timing*. Nous ne pouvons pas bouleverser les choses comme cela. Les commissions ne pourront pas fonctionner si on prend les *Executive Officers* pour devenir tout de suite des *Finances Officers*

(Interruptions)

No. The Member does not know. It is Executive Officers to become Finance Officers.

(Interruptions)

It is what is said -

Note 1 - for the first intake consideration will be given to Executive Officers, reckoning at least four years experience in financial duties in the finance division although they do not possess one of the qualifications mentioned above.

Note 2 - those Finance Officers recruited under Note 1 will be required to study on their own to obtain their qualifications ...etc

(Interruptions)

We are not talking about Assistant Finance Officers...

(Interruptions)

En ce qui concerne les Assistant Finance Officers, il y a eu un exercice qui a été fait à travers différents départements. Ils sont en train de suivre un cours et doivent prendre part à un examen. Ils vont être interviewés par la PSC. They start at the level with Assistant Finance Officer. C'est ce que je viens de dire.

(Interruptions)

They have to sit for an examination and they will be interviewed by the PSC. We have to follow procedures.

(Interruptions)

I am also circulating the names of officers who have been assigned the duties of Finance Officers and Assistant Finance Officers in the Finance section of the Central Office. Vacancies in the grade of Assistant Finance Officers have been advertised on 21 September 2004 for selection among officers in the grade of Clerk. Applicants will sit for a competitive examination on Saturday 11 December 2004 for the filling of the 15 existing vacancies in the same grade.

(Interruptions)

Non, M. le président, nous n'allons pas mettre les bâtons dans les roues. Nous sommes là pour *empower the Rodriguans*, mais nous nous sommes réunis et nous nous sommes dit qu'il faut bien faire les choses bien, parce que sinon les Commissions vont être *depleted by clerks, by Executive Assistants, by Finance Officers* and so on.

(Interruptions)

Oui, c'est ce que nous sommes en train de faire...

(Interruptions)

M. le président, il faut suivre la procédure du PSC. The Executive Officers are going to be appointed or promoted to Finance Officers. The list of those candidates must go to the PSC for appointment.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: How many minutes are we left for questions?

The Clerk: Ten minutes.

Mr Chairperson: We move to the next question, please.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given that we are left with only 10 minutes for questions...

Mr Chairperson: We don't have time.

Mr Jabeemissar: Then I move that my questions be put on the Order Paper of the next sitting.

Mr Chairperson: No, this can't be done. You will get written answers to your questions. This is the procedure of the Assembly.

(Interruptions)

You always appeal to me to allow your supplementary questions. I understand your point, but this is the result. We are left with roughly ten minutes more.

BAIE AUX HUITRES & ANSE AUX ANGLAIS – EMPTY CONTAINERS

(No. B/658) Mr J. Roussety (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards the placing of empty containers (as used for the shipment of goods on sea going vessels) on the coast/beach/fish landing stations at Baie aux Huitres and Anse aux Anglais and other parts of Rodrigues, whether he will state who has installed same, for what purpose, which other locations are being considered, and being given that they constitute an environmental eyesore, whether he will arrange for their removal.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in line with provision made in the 2004/2005 Budget Estimates, the Fisheries Division of my Commission has installed three empty containers at the Fish Landing Stations at English Bay, Oyster Bay and Rivière Cocos.

The purpose of these empty containers is to provide appropriate office and other facilities to officers who are posted on these Fish Landing Stations and to the Fishermen. Tender has already been awarded for the conversion work of these containers to accommodate the offices. Provision has been made in the tender to provide an appropriate architecture, which is in harmony with the natural environment. In this perspective, the containers will be painted by Government labour force after the conversion works have been completed.

In addition, two other offices of concrete type will be constructed at Tamarin and Grand-Baie Fish Landing Stations, with appropriate amenities such as toilets and open shelters for the sale of fish by the fishermen. Procedure is being finalised for the floating of tender in this connection.

I must say, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that those containers found, especially those at Oyster Bay, are temporary until we have the tenders. I think we should find another place. Procedure is being finalised for the floating of tender in this connection to build two concrete type at Tamarin and Grand Baie. There are 23 Fish Landing Stations and their upgrading will continue subject to availability of fund. The names of these 23 Fish Landing Stations have already been circulated in my reply to PQ No. B/451.

Mr Chairperson: I inform Members that Question Time is over. Can we move to the next item, please.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 14 December 2004 at 10.30 a.m

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

At 2.13 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 14 December 2004 at 10.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**PIERRE LOUIS, MR JEAN CLAUDE - ISLAND CHIEF EXECUTIVE -
REMUNERATION PACKAGE, FRINGE BENEFITS, ETC**

(No. B/659) **Mr J. Roussety (The Minority Leader)** asked the Commissioner for Arts and Culture as regards the appointment of Mr Jean Claude Pierre Louis as Island Chief Executive on contract, whether he will inform the House of the details of the contract indicating the remuneration package, the fringe benefits and other pecuniary and non-pecuniary advantages, and all the other terms and conditions.

Reply: Mr Jean Claude Pierre Louis has not been appointed on contract but has been assigned the duties of Island Chief Executive for two years as from 24 October 2004 by the Public Service Commission, in exercise of the power vested in it by Section 89 of the Constitution.

During the period of the assignment, Mr Pierre Louis is eligible to an allowance representing the difference between the salary of the post of Island Chief Executive which is Rs52,000 and the salary of his substantive post of Senior Agricultural Officer. He is also eligible to a gratuity equivalent to 25% of the allowance.

The other terms and conditions including all benefits of the assignment of duties are recommended by the PRB in its 2003 Report and its Errors, Omissions and Clarifications Report 2004 with respect to the post of Island Chief Executive.

**PIERRE LOUIS, MR JEAN CLAUDE - DEPARTMENTAL HEAD &
CHAIRMAN OF THE STATE LANDS COMMITTEE**

(No. B/660) **Mr J. Roussety (The Minority Leader)** asked the Chief Commissioner as regards the period during which Mr Jean Claude Pierre Louis has been Departmental Head and Chairman of the State Lands Committee, whether he will give a breakdown -

- (a) of all leases and letters of intent signed by him for commercial and industrial purposes, indicating name of lessee, extent of land leased and location, and date of application, and
- (b) of all letters issued to warn persons about illegal occupation/use of state lands by the former Departmental Head and the number signed by other officers.

Reply: Concerning part (a), the leases signed by the Departmental Head Mr J. C. Pierre Louis who was assisting me with respect to my responsibility for State land are being tabled. All these cases were approved either by the Minister of Housing and Lands prior to autonomy or by me as Commissioner responsible for State land.

Other letters of intent for commercial and industrial purposes of small projects are normally signed by the Principal Surveyor on behalf of the Departmental Head. A list of beneficiaries of these letters is also being circulated (Annex 1(b)).

As regards part (b), Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Departmental Head, Mr J. C. Pierre Louis did not sign any notice of eviction to squatters. However, twelve notices to squatter have been issued by officers of the Cadastral Office. The list is being circulated (Annex III).

In addition, fifty-eight (58) notices were issued by officers of the Land Squad as follows -

- (i) Sixteen (16) notices for illegal occupation of land.
- (ii) Forty-two (42) for building without environmental clearances.

DRAINS AND RIVERS - OBSTRUCTION

(No. B/661) Mr G. Jabeemissar (The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the accumulation of debris of all kinds along river banks and mouths in many places causing obstruction of drains, he intends to take necessary actions to counteract the environmental effects caused by such a situation.

Reply: I would like to inform the Assembly that the Cyclone Committee has met on the 27 October 2004 under my Chairmanship to discuss on precautionary measures to be implemented in view of the forthcoming cyclonic season.

Amongst other measures, it was decided to clear all drains and rivers with a view to avoiding any flooding problems that may arise in the main agglomerations of the coastal areas of the Island.

A team of General Workers of the environment Unit has been mobilised since July 2004 for this purpose. I am informed that cleaning works have been undertaken at Rivière Coco, Accacia, Fond La Digue, Baie Lascars and will be continued at Camp du Roi, Oyster Bay and English Bay as identified by the Cyclone Committee.

As regards the cleaning of drains along roadsides, a programme for their maintenance has started since July 2004 by the Commission of Public Infrastructure. In addition, the allocation of the new contract on refuse collection which has taken effect as from 01 November 2004 made provision for the cleaning of road drains in the region of Port Mathurin, Mont Lubin, Grand La Fouche Corail and La Ferme at least once monthly. The state of these drains are being closely monitored by the Environment Unit.

**POLICE CELL - DETAINEE (UNDER 16 YEARS) –
NAME, DETENTION, ETC.**

(No. B/662) Mr G. Jabeemissar (The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for women and Children Affairs to seek information as to whether there is any detainee under the age of 16 in Police cell, and if yes -

- (a) give the name of the detainee and the reasons for his/her detention;
- (b) whether the detention has been prolonged and give the reasons therefor, and
- (c) when will the case be heard in Court.

Reply: I am informed that there is a boy under the age of 16 who is detained at Port Mathurin Police Station –

- (a)** he is detained in connection with a series of cases of larceny of mobile telephones committed jointly with adults.
- (b)** the detention has been prolonged because Police inquiry has not yet been completed, some suspected parties beign still on the run.

COURT - CHILDREN UNDER 16

(No. B/663) Mr G. Jabeemissar (The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for women and Children Affairs whether she would seek information if there are cases involving children under 16 now in court and to give the grounds under which they are being charged.

Reply: I am informed that the case of minor François is the only one involving a child under 16 now in Court and he is being charged with larceny on 13 counts.

DAWOODKHAN DR. – DEPARTURE FROM RODRIGUES

(No. B/664) Mr G. Jabeemissar (The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Health since the departure of the physician, Dr. Dawoodkhan –

- (a)** who now examines his patients and the other new patients, and
- (b)** how often are the patients being examined.

Reply: As regards part (a) Dr. Dawoodkhan left Rodrigues at the end of August 2004. Since then the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has been sending Medical Specialists to Rodrigues every month.

Concerning part (b), all medical cases continue to be seen as often as deemed necessary by the Specialist.

STATE TRADING CORPORATION – CASUAL UNLOADERS – PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

(No. B/665) Mr D. L.Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Labour as regards “Casual and loaders” who worked for the State Trading Corporation (STC) could he ascertain –

- (a)** how many persons worked as casual unloaders for the STC and state their names;
- (b)** whether these workers received shoes and uniform on a yearly basis, and

(c) if these workers are working in accordance to Labour legislation and, if not, why.

Reply: As regards part (a) of the question, I am informed that the State Trading Corporation (STC) enlists the services of 82 casual unloaders in Rodrigues and their names are being circulated.

Concerning part (b), I am also informed that protective equipment are provided to the casual unloaders as follows -

- 1 pair of metal cap shoes every 2 years
- helmets
- woolen gloves and
- disposable masks

However, they are not being provided with uniforms. It is noted that the Corporation's Health and Safety Officer visited Rodrigues last week and carry out an assessment of the Health and Safety condition of these workers.

As far as part (c) is concerned, the 82 casual unloaders are employed by the State Trading Corporation occasionally, on an "as and when required basis". They are constituted in 2 teams of 44 casual unloaders for the unloading operations in Rodrigues, i.e of vessels of rice, flour, sugar and cement and the unstuffing of containers for the Corporation. They work, on average for a maximum, of 3 to 4 days monthly. The services of the casual unloaders is resorted to only occasionally or periodically and this implies that their work is of an "accessory" nature in relation to the Corporation's business and cannot be treated as an integral part thereof. In view of the above, the Corporation has been advised by the State Law Office, that these casual unloaders are not viewed as "a worker" as defined under the Labour Act.

RODRIGUES - UNEMPLOYMENT

(No. B/666) The Third Island Region Member (Mr. GUILLAUME) to ask *the Commissioner responsible for Employment as regards the problem of unemployment in the island could he state*

- (a) how many workers worked for the A.J. Maurel Construction Company, Allied Builders, Padco Ltd and Maxiclean for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004;

- (b) if all these workers have retained their jobs or whether there has been laying off as a result of redundancy, and, if yes;
- (c) what actions are being taken to solve the problem of unemployment in the Island.

Reply: As regards parts (a) & (b) the number of workers employed by the various agencies during period 2002 to 2004, I am informed as follows -

(i) A & J. Maurel Construction Ltée

Year	Number of workers
2002	113
2003	111
2004	49

All the workers were employed on employment contracts of determinate duration. However, these employment contracts were not renewed upon completion of different projects. Todate, the labour force at A & J. Maurel Construction Ltée is about 49 employees, mostly on fixed duration employment contracts, which means that more than 50% of the employees had been laid off.

(ii) Allied Builders Ltd

Year	Number of workers	Rodriguans Expatriates
2002	226	12
2003	385	11
2004	253	16

The number of employees who have left or been laid off in 2004 are as follows –

Rodriguans

Expatriates

(iii) Maxi Clean

Year	Number of Employees
2002	55
2003	56
2004	60

It is reported that all the workers were laid off in October 2004 as a result of the non-obtention of new contracts by the said agency in Rodrigues.

(iv) PADCO Ltd

I have learnt that the Company was not operational in Rodrigues in 2002. In the year 2003, PADCO Ltd enlisted the services of eight local subcontractors mainly for construction works. Each subcontractor used to employ some 6 to 10 workers. However, in November 2003, the labour force of the Company stood as follows -

- (a) 60 Rodriguan employees
- (b) 25 expatriates (Chinese)

In 2004, and due to the fact that the contracts awarded in addition to projects being implemented by PADCO Ltd are nearing completion, the labour force has been reduced as follows -

- (a) 25 Rodriguan employees;
- (b) 10 expatriates (Chinese)

The Company also employs some ten staff from Mauritius.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, however, I have been made to understand that all workers are expected to be laid off by the end of November, 2004, due to the imminent completion of all construction works assigned to PADCO Ltd.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (c), I wish to inform this Assembly that the number of registered unemployed decreased from 2830 in December 2002 to 2782 in 2003. However, my Commission is doing its utmost to redress the situation by providing training to the Rodriguan youths and to school leavers to enable them to embark on a career of their choice in various fields of activities and

specialisations. A culture of entrepreneurship is being inculcated among the rising youths. Various recruiting agencies, both in Rodrigues and on mainland Mauritius are being contacted on a regular basis with a view of exploring the possibilities of recruiting Rodriguan unemployed. Construction Companies, Bakeries, Security Services, banks and big shops located in Rodrigues as well are among potential employers. Many unemployed are being so referred for possible employment. Some 1005 unemployed were referred to public and private sectors and 11 have been placed. Training courses are being organized by the Human Resource Development Unit of my Commission to facilitate the professional integration of young people on the labour market.

TABLE A

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DATES OF WATER DISTRIBUTION**Corail**

10 January, 13 January, 2 February, 3 February, 2 February, 9 March,
1 April, 15 April, 28 April, 13 May, 2 June, 11 June, 26 June, 7 July,
23 July, 7 August, 1 September, 11 October, 26 October.

Corail Petite Butte

13 January, 14 January, 17 January, 3 February, 4 February, 7 February,
9 February, 22 February, 24 February, 27 February, 8 March, 9 March,
2 April, 3 April, 4 April, 16 April, 17 April, 3 May, 4 May, 6 May, 8 May, 27
May, 28 May, 12 June, 14 June, 28 June, 23 July, 24 July, 12 August,
20 August, 21 August, 2 September, 3 September, 20 September,
29 September, 15 October, 26 October, 27 October, 1 November,
9 November.

Petite Butte

17 January, 25 January, 9 February, 12 February, 11 March, 20 March,
4 April, 6 April, 17 April, 20 April, 21 April, 31 May, 14 June, 15 June,
30 June, 17 July, 26 July, 5 August, 21 August, 6 September, 17 September, 1
October, 12 October, 16 October, 1 November, 2 November, 9 November, 10
November.

Vingt Tours

29 January, 12 February, 23 March, 15 April, 30 April, 2 June, 23 June,
24 June, 7 July, 18 July, 7 August, 17 September, 16 October

Cite Patate

30 January, 14 February, 23 March, 15 April, 30 April, 19 May, 4 June,
25 June, 18 July, 5 August, 9 August, 7 September, 18 September, 13 October .