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RODRIGUES

FIRST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 05 of 2004

Sitting of Monday 05 April 2004

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

(Mr Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Recurrent and Capital Budget 2004/2005

MOTION

Order for resuming adjourned debate on the Recurrent and Capital Budget 2004-05

Question again proposed.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, before making my budget speech, I would like to react on some points raised by the Minority side. Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to comment on the unrealistic, theoretical, economic analysis of the Minority Leader. From his speech last week, the Minority Leader qualified the present draft budget as cosmetic. But on the contrary I find the contents of his speech rather unreal and hypothetical.

M. le président, quand on lit un discours du budget, il faut le lire d'une façon professionnelle. Normalement, il faut lire tous les chapitres, il faut savoir lire entre les lignes aussi et faire la liaison avec les exercices budgétaires passés, présents et futurs, déceler le fil conducteur et faire un dessin philosophique du budget. Si on le lit d'une façon cosmétique, c'est sûr qu'on va dire que le budget est cosmétique. Dans ce budget il y a un fil conducteur qui sont les hommes et les femmes de Rodrigues. Il y a un courant pour les activer. Ce sont les moyens qu'on va mettre à leur disposition et leur droit à la participation et en un réseau, c'est-à-dire les différents développements sur un support solide qui est notre île Rodrigues autonome.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, let me quote Hugon -

“le développement économique peut se définir comme un processus de changement structurel, accompagnant l'accroissement de la productivité du travail sur une longue période .”

C'est pourquoi, après notre lutte pour l'autonomie, c'est un budget qui consolide les réformes institutionnelles en cours pour soutenir le développement social, culturel et économique de Rodrigues et pour affronter les défis auxquels l'île aura à faire face.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, improving economic performance need not only come from increasing government spending as the Minority Leader understood as a measure for productivity. We believe, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that improvement in productivity can come from action as simple as removing bottlenecks that affect the day-to-day lives of the low-costs and devising low-cost ways to do so, as we are doing and are planning to do.

Other improvement in productivity comes from a careful cost –benefit analysis of every development project in the plan to ensure that those projects and programmes that will add value to the economy are given priority and that's the way it is going ahead.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is worth noting that there is real avenue for improving Rodrigues's economy via the mainland Mauritius through trade protocol agreements such as the South African Development Community trade protocol, African Growth and Opportunities Act of the USA, the (Cotonou) agreement between the European Union and the African Carribean and Pacific Countries (ACP).

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Minority Leader has talked about employment growth, and when procedures are accelerated to give industrial leases to potential investors in the field of, for example, hotels with a *cachet social*, he argues negatively. Which is which, Mr Chairperson, Sir? How can one increase employment growth if he is reluctant to accelerate the procedures of generating same?

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards the *gîte* and *chambre d'hôtes*, we are for the release of leases of the owners who comply with norms and standards. We want to deliver a hospitality of quality. We cannot allow tourists to come to Rodrigues and to live in places where security norms are not respected. If there is an accident, it's the whole country which will be blamed. The Minority Leader, in his economic theory, compares Rodrigues to Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore and mentions - we don't want to have "*petites choses*" in Rodrigues. It's an aberration, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the Minority Leader to ask whether the tourists will be interested in our *petits piments*, *limons confits*, *aigre-doux* and handicraft products. Let me inform the House that Rodrigues is marketed internationally as "*une île autrement*" that includes all our people, our food, our culture and our environment.

However, it is sad to note that one of his colleagues concluded with “*petits Rodriguais, petits piments*”. Perhaps he has understood and he has adopted our motto: “*beaucoup ti dimounes capave faire beaucoup ti quique choses dans beaucoup ti l’endroit*”. It’s clear Mr Chairperson, Sir, that there is no synergy and coherence in this Minority side - contradictions, confusion and misunderstanding. It is a total chaos from my point of view and the Minority side is talking about our government to be incompetent and mismanaging public funds.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in as far as employment is concerned, our vision portrays more rigorous employment creation in the private sector to accompany growth. That also is a challenge we have to confront. However, our vision to sustain SMEs and training define it all as elaborated by the Chief Commissioner and all my colleagues. It is a direction that we are looking ahead. Mr Chairperson, Sir, within the context of a strong macro-economic and fiscal framework, we have to streamline the operation of the economy and encourage investment and address barriers to business development.

Our government is seriously working on the key macro-economic reform process, e.g improving the efficiency of communication and transport flows including road and port, easing the regulatory burden for small businesses. And it is an aberration to hear the Minority Leader discrediting our Government in saying that we are freezing the small industries. Facilitating access to financial services through financial institutions such as the Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM), and consolidating colleges, expanding training and skills development opportunities, regulation of public utilities like water supply.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the problem of unemployment cannot be tackled single-handed. It requires joint responsibility of our government, employers and community. Concerning the report of audit, I would like to point out that most of the projects implemented by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and supervised by the Global Consultancy Services have not been pointed out. I would like to inform the House that the Mont Lubin secondary school was supervised by the Ministry for Public Infrastructure.

As regards Fishing, I would like to point out that Mauritius has just celebrated its 36th anniversary of independence and it is now that this island

is on the point to be proclaimed as a seafood hub of the region which will be piloted by the private sector.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, lots of things have been done and are being done to alleviate poverty, but poverty cannot be eradicated at 100%. As announced, the Regional Government will be a facilitator by providing several means for capacity building to help poor people. *Mais quand même, M. le président, c'est regrettable de dire qu'il y a des gens qui abusent sur la pauvreté de certains pour les faire plonger dans l'ignorance pour qu'ils soient toujours pessimistes sur le développement et la réalité du pays.* Even

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please! Too many interruptions!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Even in developed countries like France, USA, England and other countries where the famous Samuelson was born, there are still many people who live in more difficult conditions than in Rodrigues. As regards the Anti-Erosion Programme, I'd like to inform that the project is being closed on 30 June 2004. However, the project accounts will be closed at the end of 30 December 2004. The revised Rs20 m. will be used for project activities and payments of salaries and gratuities to 187 workers working under the project. The one million for 2004/2005 will be used for adjustment purpose in connection with commitment to be paid after 30 June 2004.

May I inform the House that the European Union has provided additional funds for the irrigation reservoir at Cascade Victoire and Grenade Dam over and above the present Anti-Erosion Programme of about Rs30 m. The report of audit refers to the situation as at 30 June 2003 but thereafter the spending capacity of the programme in specific viable projects has been increased. Concerning phytosanitary control, I would like to inform the House that a staff from the Ministry of Agriculture is ensuring phytosanitary control at the airport to control *vers blanc* from Réunion Island since there is an international flight between Reunion and Rodrigues.

Concerning bad weather allowance, apart from fishermen in Mauritius and Rodrigues, I have not heard of bad weather allowance to other types of producers. Of course, after calamities, assistance is extended for reconstruction, rehabilitation and re-start of activities in all stricken sectors.

Fishermen will not be allowed to have end of year bonus, because by law they are paid an allowance. Those who are paid an allowance cannot obtain a bonus at the end of the year. Only workers who have a fixed pay can obtain a bonus at the end of the year.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Minority Leader criticised heavily the present situation of import and export ratio of goods in our economy. From the hypothetical analysis, he fails again to understand that Rodrigues is a microscopic economy in this highly competitive and innovative regional and global market within the process of globalisation and free open world market. Mr Chairperson, sir, there is global pressure impacting on us either directly or indirectly from everywhere and it is a real challenge on us from all fronts. Let's bear in mind that in a simple and realistic way, at present there is no immediate short-term avenue to create equilibrium between import and export in Rodrigues. From a production-based economy, there is insoluble constraints and limits on our island; equilibrium will be possible, Mr Chairperson, Sir, down the road of success of our autonomy to remind the Minority Leader of a true and real solution.

M. le président, nous travaillons sur une approche stratégique, avec une vision à long terme qui doit intégrer globalisant et tissant des liens entre les différents processus de développement pour être durable. Nous avons la vision à long terme, possible à moyen terme et l'action à court terme. The Chief Commissioner's priorities for this draft budget acknowledge it all and I am certain that through an economic point of view the central Government will also acknowledge this visionary budget.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is with a great sense of pride that I am commenting on this 2004-2005 draft estimates. Allow me, first of all, to express my deep appreciation to the people of Rodrigues who have fully understood the philosophy of its contents and vision. Indeed, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this budget should not be read in isolation. This budget should be read in conjunction with the two former budgets presented to this Assembly by this governing Executive Council. It is evident from the reading of these budgets that our strategies and visions are being clearly implemented in a well-planned and co-ordinated manner. I would like to remind the Rodriguan people that the vision of the OPR is rooted in upholding and advancing the human dignity of every individual irrespective of gender, culture and religion.

Such dignity, Mr Chairperson, Sir, must be based on self-reliance and self-help and the confidence in the ability of the individual to promote their own development and that of their communities and the nation at large. This budget can be resumed in four words: “Our people, our priorities”. For us, Mr Chairperson, Sir, making our people our priority means eliminating poverty, providing adequate facilities for our youths, senior citizens and the less fortunate, establish standards of transparency, accountability and governance to ensure that the country’s resources are employed efficiently for the benefit and welfare of all Rodriguans and nurturing our core values of equality, tolerance, simplicity and mutual respect.

M. le président, au nom du gouvernement regional, ce budget rend hommage à tous ces hommes et femmes qui inlassablement sont venus de l’avant avec des propositions, avec une disponibilité de leur temps, de leur intelligence dans la longue lutte pour l’autonomie, pour se mettre au service de l’île Rodrigues. La mise en place de ce gouvernement regional, c’est leur victoire d’abord parcequ’avant tout, de par ce budget, ce gouvernement est à l’écoute des besoins prioritaires de ce peuple.

Making our people our priorities is a strongly held belief of this regional Government that development is about people and improvement in the quality of their lives and the potential for children to enjoy a higher standard of living than their parents.

My Commission is ready and fully committed to the achievements of the priorities as set out by the Chief Commissioner in his budget speech and in particular to the following priorities -

- (i) the construction of a network of dams and reservoirs to harvest and store water for domestic and irrigation purposes;
- (ii) second, the development of agriculture and agro-processing to provide employment opportunities.
- (iii) third, the continued improvement of the public and social infrastructures to enhance the living conditions of the population.

- (iv) *la lutte contre la pauvreté en mettant à la disposition des personnes défavorisées les moyens pour qu'ils puissent se prendre en charge.*

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I shall now review the progress in the implementation of the 2003-2004 budget pertaining to my Commission as well as the proposals for 2004-2005.

Agriculture

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the agricultural sector constitutes a vital pillar of our economy. The importance of this sector is derived primarily from its contribution to employment, good nutrition, domestic food security and the creation of value-added products from manufacturing and its linkages to tourism. We are committed to bring along a revolution in that sector, changing its social function into an economic one. Last year, in my budget speech, I made a very bleak picture of the agricultural sector and the necessity to revisit the agricultural sector in Rodrigues so as to give it a new boost to that sector. I am pleased to inform this House that pieces of this huge puzzle are being assembled as this can also be translated by the increase in the area and the cultivation right now by crops like maize, groundnuts and other vegetables.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, allow me to expand on some of the priority sectors that were identified. There were, among others, the cultivation of local products of high economic and cultural values. These include value addition of *lemons, petit piments, oignons toupies*, dried local red beans *connus*. Moreover, it was found that availability of water was also a major deterrent to the development of that sector. However, I am pleased to inform the House of the major achievements in that field that have been carried out in that sector during financial year 2003-2004. I shall now turn to some of the achievements in the agricultural sector during this financial year.

Extension Services

The farmers are being followed by the Extension Service of the Agricultural Service, and on site and indoor meetings as well as training sessions are regularly delivered to them. From July 2003 to February 2004, some 255 talks have been delivered to some 501 planters whereas some 583 planters have been visited by the Extension Services. Training sessions have

been organised on onion picking as well as harvesting techniques of lemons. A series of technical pamphlets are being published on several topics such as poultry and pig rearing and other crops cultivation.

Livestock Production Unit

The Agricultural Services presently operate three livestock stations as follows -

- Sheep production on Crab island
- Cattle production at St Gabriel
- Piglets production at Baie Topaze.

Tremendous efforts have been made to upgrade the standard of these stations, the stocks have been replaced to ensure increase in the number of animals for rearing; the number of small animals sold at these stations have increased several fold compared to 2002-2003.

Crop Production

In order to increase the production of seeds, the Agricultural Service is now operating a greenhouse. The advantage conferred by this greenhouse is that plant environment is controlled and important production parameters such as water, temperature, etc are controlled in such a way that productivity is increased. Another greenhouse will be operational soon at Grand La Fouch Corail where Rodriguan chilly production will be tested. Three Rodriguan farmers carried out a study tour in Spain to study culture under greenhouse. I am pleased to inform this House that these 3 persons will benefit from partial funding from the Anti-Erosion Programme to set up 3 pilot greenhouses.

Infrastructure

Knowing that water is a major impediment to the agricultural sector, most of the efforts of my Commission have been put towards that issue. In that respect, I am pleased to announce the completion and start of the following projects -

- (a) The construction of three *retenue collinaire* at Nassola, Papayes and Rivière Bananes. I am further, pleased to note that planters to be served by the three reservoirs have agreed to constitute a water-user association to manage and operate the system by themselves.
- (b) The construction of a major *retenue collinaire* of some 8000 m³ at Cascade Victoire is scheduled to start in a few weeks' time. The approval of the Central Tender Board has been obtained for the award of the contract. The water will be used for irrigating the bottom valleys of Port Sud Est and part of Mourouk.
- (c) The launching of the tender for the construction of a dam at Grenade of a capacity of some 7500 m³. The contract is expected to be awarded by the end of April and construction will be completed by June 2005. The water from the dam will be used for the irrigation of Riviere Banane catchment area.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, this same effort will be pursued relentlessly during the next financial year. The inventory of all agricultural lands as well as the survey aiming at establishing a list of genuine planters will be completed by the end of May 2004. These data will be fed into the geographical information system so as to enable a proper management of more agricultural lands. Moreover, this will provide the basis for the new trust in the agricultural land development programme which will target the genuine planters and the young Rodriguans wishing to make a career in agriculture and agro-processing. Mr Chairperson, Sir, as from now on, we will no longer consider agriculture and agro-processing separately. We will be talking of both of them and under the same umbrella of agri-business. In that respect, we will target mainly the professional farmers as well as ex-IVTB students i.e those who want to do business in agriculture. I am planning to have a meeting with the ex-IVTB students who have successfully completed this course in agriculture with a view to finalising the Young Farmers Entrepreneurs Scheme.

M. le président, pour construire les bases solides d'une Ile Rodrigues autonome, mention est faite dans notre programme électoral de notre vision pour l'éradication de la pauvreté en mettant à la disposition des défavorisés les moyens d'acquérir les ressources afin d'abandonner la mentalité d'assité

pour entrer dans une mentalité productrice. La réforme agraire prendra en compte ces gens en les assistant à mettre sur place tous les moyens afin que la terre et la transformation de ces produits puissent leur apporter des revenus.

Incentives will be given to professional farmers and those willing to be professional farmers to -

- (i) adopt new technologies as culture and greenhouse;
- (ii) to turn towards agro-processing;
- (iii) to promote the cultivation of local products.

These will include subsidy on fertilizers, mechanisation, training, market, feasibility study, bonus on production, etc. This also will include subsidy on irrigation scheme and availability of land.

Public Infrastructure

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I recognise that a well-developed economic infrastructure is necessary to promote domestic economic activity as well as the enhancement of the living conditions of Rodriguans. Over the past two years, this OPR Regional Government has laid a solid foundation with an unprecedented level of investment in the physical infrastructure of this country. During this financial year, more than Rs130 m. have been invested in the construction and upgrading of roads. Some 22 kms of roads would have been upgraded and asphalted by June 2004, namely, Port Mathurin – Grand La Fouche Corail, La Ferme Quatre Vents, Tammes, Montagne Cheri. Moreover, construction of two other roads leading from Palissade Ternel to Montagne Malgache and from Anse Quitor to Dans Coco and Cascade Jean Louis are scheduled to start shortly.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, my Commission has been facing an acute shortage of technical staff to ensure the execution of building and civil engineering projects of my Commission and that of other Commissions. The appointment of a team of consultants under the Global Management Consultancy Service has greatly facilitated the preparation and execution of some 18 projects of a total project value of some Rs360 m. Some ten new projects are in the pipeline for implementation. The renovation of 'La

Résidence' has been completed and is now housing the seat of the Executive Council of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Tenders for the construction of a new office block in Port Mathurin have been received and the contract will be awarded shortly after having the approval of the Central Tender Board. The construction of several track roads has been possible, thanks to the kind collaboration of funding agencies just as IFAD, *Anou Diboute Ensam* and the Trust Fund for the Social Integration of Vulnerable groups and many others. The whole area of Malabar has been upgraded with the provision of new parking facilities as well as the embellishment of the whole compound. A bridge is being constructed at Port Sud Est and is scheduled to be completed by mid June 2004. A contract was awarded to CEB for the provision of electricity to existing morcellement. Electrification of Roche Bon Dieu, Songes, Baie Malgache and Citronelle morcellements has been completed whereas electrifications of Montagne Cabris Est, Anse Goëland, Corail Petite Butte and Batatrand is due to be completed shortly.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are determined to continue on this tract. I am pleased to note that a provision of more than Rs60 m. has been made for the asphaltting of the following roads -

- (a) Riviere Coco coast, Riviere Coco cemetery, Co-operative St. Gabriel – Malabar, Grand La Fouche, Mangues – Cité Grand La Fouche, Mangues as well as the completion of Palissade Ternel – Montagne Malgache and Cascade Jean Louis – Dans Coco via Anse Quitor road.
- (b) The upgrading of the Mont Lubin – Pte Coton road – St Francois road is of vital importance due to its social and economic importance.

The design and preparation of tender documents will be finalised so that works could start in mid 2005.

For the safety of the road users, my Commission has purchased a road-making machine to accelerate the pace of road marking. Moreover, traffic signs in line with international norms are being purchased for a new installation as well as replacement of old ones. A Memorandum of Understanding will be signed shortly with the National Transport Authority so as to render the Rodrigues branch of the National Transport Authority

more autonomous. Road Inspectors will be recruited so as to monitor the public transport services more regularly.

Water Resources

In my last year's speech, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I enumerated a list of projects that will be undertaken by my Commission during this financial year and the coming years and I would like to comment on each of the actions raised.

Pistaches Dam

The studies are under way and the final report is due to be submitted in June this year. The consultant has completed the geo-technical aspect of the study and is now working on the hydrological and economic aspect. This will determine the volume of water that can be abstracted from the dam on a daily basis.

Anse Raffin Dam

The dam is scheduled to be completed in July this year. The treatment plant has been ordered and will be ready by July this year.

Water Network

Last year, I announced a series of pipeline to be constructed so as to enable the quick and efficient delivery of water from reservoir to reservoir. In that respect, I am pleased to inform this Assembly as follows -

- (i) The laying of the 150 mm pipeline to carry water from Papayes to Grand La Fouche Corail has been completed.
- (ii) The Montagne Cabri – Anse Quito Bangelic pipeline is under construction and will be completed by end of May 2004.
- (iii) The Grand La Fouche Corail - Reservoir - Camp Pintade and Grand La Fouche corail and Citadelle pipeline has just started.

The contract for Papayes – Manique via Mangues and Montagne du Sable pipeline has just been awarded and works are scheduled to start in a few weeks' time.

Water meters

The installation of water meters at household level has started in several villages. I once more re-iterate the fact that these meters are essential to ensure that water distribution is being effected in a correct and equitable manner.

The Desalination Project

The Executive Council has approved a variation in the contract of the present consultant, namely, Fichere & Mega Design so as to review the project. The consultant has been requested to carry out in the first instance a feasibility study on the project which will include oceanographic surveys, selection of the most appropriate method of brine disposal in accordance with the Environment Protection Act as well as the preparation of the tender documents so as to enable competitive bids to be received.

Papaye Reservoir

The tender for Papaye reservoir is being awarded and it is expected that the new reservoir will be operational by the end of 2004. Numerous secondary networks have been upgraded in more than 30 villages. The same facilities will be extended to other villages such as Anse Femie, Saponnaire Montagne Longue. Three reservoirs have been rehabilitated, namely, Petit Brulé, Petit Gabriel and Bigarade. The provision of Rs150 m. for financial year 2004-2005 will be used to improve the water supply in Rodrigues. The implementation of the following projects will be carried out -

- (a) the construction of Grenade Dam as well as Cascade Victoire reservoir to cater for a total storage capacity of some 83,000 m³;
- (b) the construction of a new dam at Pavé Labonté of a forecast capacity of some 80,000 m³. The whole tender document will be ready by the end of August 2004 and construction is

expected to start early in 2005. This dam will provide water to the northern parts of Rodrigues;

- (c) the construction of a new service reservoir at L'Union to cater for water distribution in the village of L'Union, Jardin Mamzelle, Soupir, Upper Montagne Fanal and Montagne Charlot;
- (d) the implementation of a new water system for Accacia, including the construction of a new reservoir and the upgrading of the existing treatment plant which will cater for the enlargement of the geographic area presently being served by Fond Accacia, and
- (e) the laying of a new pipeline to link Petit Brulé reservoir to the other reservoirs in the east areas such as Roche Bon Dieu, Grenade, Montagne Cabri and Coromandel. Consultancy costs with regard to the preliminary design works up to the preparation of tender documents for desalination project.

Housing

Every single family deserves the right to own a decent dwelling. It is a fundamental requisite for upholding and consolidating the dignity of families and improving the quality of life in Rodrigues. There are still families living in abject conditions in overcrowded dwellings. We cannot turn a blind eye to their sufferings. Mr Chairperson, Sir, the construction of 108 low cost housing was identified prior to October 2002. However, the four housing units was based on the concept design of NHDC houses in Mauritius without the provision of proper sanitary facilities and only one large room was provided. My Commission has reworked the design and reduced the number of houses to 83. The savings made are used to provide the following additional facilities -

- provision of a bedroom
- provision of proper toilet and bathroom
- provision of septic tank, and

- provision of internal *crépissage* which was not provided for in the contract.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, we will completely revisit the housing project. We will rework out the design for the construction of new low cost houses to blend with our local topography, identity and Creole architecture. A set of 50 houses is being envisaged for start of construction during the next financial year.

Mr Chairperson, Sir let me now thank all the people who have contributed to the formulation of this budget, including the staff of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, namely the Island Chief Executive, the Departmental Heads, the Chief Finance Officer and the other Finance Officers and the private sectors, organisations and individuals who have provided valuable suggestions and advice during budgetary consultations by the different Commissions.

Moreover, I place on record my gratitude and appreciation to the Chief Commissioner for his guidance and advice in the preparation of this budget. I also pay tribute to my colleague Commissioners and other members of this Regional Government for their understanding and support. This Regional Government also profoundly appreciates the efforts of the Central Government and the people of Rodrigues to help strengthen the union of our two islands, Rodrigues and Mauritius, for effective co-operation, collaboration, dialogue, discussion and consensus building. This process is essential for enhancing the link between our two islands and to extend and enrich the opportunities for genuine social and economic advancement for all the citizens of our Republic.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the people have spoken and this Government has listened and will continue to listen. The Chief Commissioner's Budget has demonstrated that the foremost priority that this Regional Government attaches to is putting people first in the process of the country's development. This Budget catalyses the promotion of economic and social development through people participation. Mr Chairperson, Sir, this Regional Government fundamentally believes that development is the process of improving the quality of life of our people. This process includes higher income, better education, better health care, less poverty, a cleaner environment, and more quality of opportunity, greater individual freedom and a rich cultural life. Moreover, with this development philosophy in

mind, we should not forget that Rodrigues is only 104 kilometers square and it is of primordial importance that the fiscal resources, mainly land are used judiciously.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, where there is a will, there is a way. The way has already been traced for our people and as we go forwards to implement this budget, this will lead us towards the right path of “*La réussite de l’autonomie*” where all our objectives will be attained. Together we aspire, together we shall achieve.

With these works, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank your for your attention.

Mr Chairperson: Yes

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with you permission, I have a point of personal explanation.

Mr Chairperson: On which matter, please?

Mr J. Roussety: On the speech that has just been made by the Deputy Chief Commissioner. He was referring on many occasions on a number of issues from my speech.

Mr Chairperson: One minute, please. There is a point of order.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, whenever, there is a debate on the budget, they ask for explanations. If the member has already made his speech, he should not be allowed to make another speech or give any explanations whatsoever.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, Chief Commissioner, I understand your point. There is a slight difference between the debate pertaining to the Appropriation Bill in Mauritius and our debate that is presently taking place. Ours is strictly on the basis of a motion presented to this Assembly. And, of course, during a debate on a motion, any member who feels that part of his speech has been wrongly interpreted in anyway whatsoever he can come forward, of course, with leave of the Chairperson, and explain what could have been misunderstood ambiguously. But no controversial matter shall be put forward and the member should not, on the other hand, seize the

opportunity to make speech anew or to rebut what has been said. But I will allow the member to proceed.

Mr J. Roussety: Thank you.

Mr Chairperson: But leave is given to you but, of course, we abide by our Standing Orders. No controversial matter should be introduced.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I'll be short and analytical also. I have four points on which I believe my speech has been misunderstood; there is misconception, maybe because the Deputy Chief Commissioner is not well exposed to economic ideas.

First, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner has imputed that I said that Government expenditure leads to economic growth. I have never said this and, of course, I am against this idea. In a mixed economy, the role of the private sector, together with government, is to foster economic growth. It is not Government expenditure that will lead to economic growth. This is not desirable. If this happens we shall be having a crowding out effect, that is, Government replacing the private sector. This is my first point.

My second point is that the Deputy Chief Commissioner said that I made apparently a correlation between land lease and employment creation. I never said that granting of land lease automatically leads to employment creation.

My third point, Mr Chairperson, Sir, is that he criticizes severely the fact that I compare our economy with that of higher economies, more developed economies like Japan, Singapore. The comparison was mainly on the vulnerability of natural resources. I wanted to show that despite the fact that these countries do not have very big natural resources, they have managed to become leaders in the world.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the fourth thing is that he imputed to me as if I was saying that there should be equilibrium in the balance of payment. This is ignorance of what the balance of payment equilibrium means, because Mr Chairperson, Sir, what I was speaking about is convergence of balance of payment equilibrium. We don't have an accounting equation which says that exports and imports must be equal to have balance of payment

equilibrium. Balance of payment also is not only imports and exports. It is also an item of capital accounts. So, if you would wish, I'll tell him that balance of payment exists when we have three things, that is, over a short period of time, surpluses outweigh the deficits that exist over that period of time and there is no tendency for the exchange rate to vary. So, I did not mean that the Executive Council should work for equilibrium in imports and exports. I was saying that there should be convergence for us to produce more to export. So, this part has been misunderstood also.

With your permission, I should like to cite Keynes who said "a man who thinks alone is bound to think about silly things".

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, sir.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, I understand that all members from the Minority side have intervened. So, do we have any member from the majority side? The floor is for you, Chief Commissioner.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le Président, je remercie tous les membres de L'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues qui ont pris part aux débats sur le budget 2004-2005 proposé pour être voté à l'Assemblée Nationale. Il est entendu que la première partie du budget que nous avons présenté ici concerne d'abord ce que nous avons pu dépenser jusqu'à fin janvier et qu'il y a encore des engagements à dépenser jusqu'à la fin de juin. Je voudrais inclure cela dans le discours du budget parcequ'il semblerait que du côté de la minorité, on n'a pas tenu compte justement que nous avons présenté un budget de dépenses jusqu'à fin janvier et qu'il nous reste encore quelques mois à dépenser l'argent que ce soit au niveau du budget dépense ou courant.

Le budget que nous avons proposé renferme trois éléments. Le premier élément est un budget au service de la population. Cela concerne la santé, l'éducation, l'eau et ainsi de suite. C'est le budget de dépenses. Le deuxième élément est celui du développement pour créer des meilleures conditions de vie pour la population et augmenter la qualité de la vie. Le troisième élément de ce budget, que la minorité a mentionné, n'est pas un budget politique ou cosmétique. M. le Président, le point qui a toujours prévalu depuis le budget 2003-2004 est à savoir un budget qui donne des orientations pour que la population crée la richesse en participant au développement. C'est un aspect très important dans le développement d'un

pays ou d'un peuple. La population doit savoir qu'elle a une part active au développement de ce pays en créant la richesse. Nous n'avons pas de grandes théories, nous n'appliquons pas de grandes theories des économistes.

Et même le planteur de pistaches, le planteur de légumes participe aujourd'hui à l'économie de ce pays. Il faudrait que ceux qui sont déjà dans cette économie puissent amener d'autres et que d'autres aussi puissent prendre conscience qu'il faut participer à cette économie. Ce ne sont pas de grandes choses, mais il y a quand même un désir de travailler, de sortir de la pauvreté et de créer une économie, même plus petite qu'elle soit, mais qui tout doucement va augmenter. Je vais arriver, tout à l'heure, sur la question des investisseurs, de l'industrialisation et les avantages mis à la disposition de toutes ces personnes.

M. le président, il faut en finir avec une politique qui ne fait qu'accroître la dépendance de la population et plus particulièrement d'être favorisé détruisant en eux tout sens du risque, de l'initiative et du travail. Nous avons toujours dit que la dépendance est un mal. L'autonomie veut dire pour nous, être de plus en plus indépendants économiquement par rapport à l'île Maurice.

Je me souviens que quand j'étais ministre, il y avait un ministre des finances, quand il prononçait son discours sur le budget, il disait toujours que Rodrigues doit être de moins en moins économiquement dépendant de l'île Maurice. Et c'est cela justement cette mentalité, ce changement d'esprit que nous voudrions inculquer dans la population. Il est tout à fait normal, ce n'est pas seulement Rodrigues, mais d'autres pays, d'autres pays pauvres, pas mal de pays d'Afrique où nous avons justement ce qu'on appelle l'économie informelle et que les dirigeants de ces pays sont en train de reconnaître justement que l'économie informelle très souvent apporte beaucoup plus d'emplois et apporte beaucoup plus à l'économie formelle...

(Interruptions)

M. le président, je ne voudrais pas être interrompu pendant que je parle!

Mr Chairperson: Yes, when a member is addressing the Chair, it is unparliamentary and out of order for any member, except on a point of order, to interrupt the member. I have allowed some interruptions from a

sitting position which are very calm, but as the Chief Commissioner pointed out he should not be interrupted so that he can speak freely. Thank you very much.

The Chief Commissioner: Donc, M. le président nous faisons confiance à l'homme et à la femme Rodriguais; nous pensons qu'ils ont les capacités; ils ont toutes les possibilités, mais il faut dire que le développement de Rodrigues n'a pas été parallèlement développé, a été avancé parallèlement avec celui de Maurice. Il faut savoir que dans le passé, même s'il y avait un ministère de Rodrigues, c'était les différents ministres vers qui on devait aller pour pouvoir justement dire "apporter des lois et des règlements, etc". Je me souviens de la question de *label*, que Rodrigues ait un *label*. Il a fallu aller au ministère de l'industrie et du commerce. Pendant ce temps là, ça dort! L'autonomie justement ne nous rend plus dépendants de ces différents ministères. C'est ce qui est important et aujourd'hui nous sommes responsables de notre politique, de notre vision et de la mise en place des structures pour pouvoir nous faire avancer pour un développement social, culturel et économique.

Donc, comme je le disais, M. le président, il est de notre politique, de notre vision - je suppose que de l'autre côté aussi, il doit y avoir quelques traces de cela - qu'il ne faut plus que cette population passe son temps à dépendre du gouvernement régional, se croiser les bras, car nous avons beaucoup de compétences, il y a beaucoup de travail qui a été fait. Au niveau de la femme, c'est extraordinaire comment les femmes d'aujourd'hui découvrent, après une formation, une rencontre, qu'elles doivent se lancer dans quelque chose, de fabriquer, de transformer. Il y a beaucoup d'exemples mais que, malheureusement, Madame la commissaire n'a pas donnés.

M. le président, quand nous parlons de 104 km², on nous envoie de ce côté-ci la théorie de Samuelson, la fatalité. M. le président, la fatalité c'est entretenir la dépendance, c'est croire que la terre ne rapporte pas des revenus, ce n'est plus croire dans sa capacité de créer la richesse, ce n'est plus croire en soi-même et passer son temps à attendre. La fatalité, M. le président - je suis obligé de le dire - se trouve aussi dans notre système d'éducation qui, au lieu de créer des hommes, de leur donner une ouverture pour les libérer des préjugés, mais c'est une éducation où il n'y a aucune conscientisation, où nous sommes obligés de suivre les réformes imposées

par l'éducation nationale. Nous aurons l'intention prochainement de voir avec le ministre de l'éducation s'il ne faut pas donner beaucoup plus d'autonomie à Rodrigues afin que nous puissions avoir un autre type d'éducation. On n'est pas du même niveau que Maurice. Nous sommes un pays en développement. Il ne faut pas nous imposer un système d'éducation d'un pays développé.

M. le président, on a souvent parlé ici du budget de l'année dernière (2003-2004). On a dit que c'est un bon budget et que beaucoup de bonnes choses n'ont pas été réalisées et pourtant on n'a pas voté ce budget!

(Interruptions)

Just at the beginning we said no! Aujourd'hui vous dites qu'il y a de bonnes choses, mais en 2003/2004 vous disiez que c'était un mauvais budget.

M. le président, il faut savoir que cela prend parfois du temps pour mettre en place certaines structures.

(Interruptions)

Ils sont à l'extérieur, quant on est à l'extérieur on peut lancer des pierres, ils sont les spectateurs! Mais quand on entre à l'intérieur, les choses sont différentes.

(Interruptions)

Je ne me plains pas, c'est à vous de vous plaindre. Quand vous n'êtes pas à l'intérieur, vous passez votre temps à dire "les fonctionnaires sont ceci, cela" Moi, je le dis, M. le président, je tire mon chapeau aujourd'hui devant ces fonctionnaires qui ont géré ce budget et que d'ici juin 2004 tout l'argent budget prévu pour 2003-2004 va être dépensé. Et c'est grâce justement à des fonctionnaires qui sont entrés dans ce processus d'autonomie et nous avons toujours parlé de la bonne gouvernance.

M. le président, pour ce budget on nous a dit que nous avons mis ceci et cela. Prenons par exemple ce que nous avons vu au niveau de l'agence de développement commercial. D'abord, il faut créer un certain départ au niveau de l'économie. Nous avons eu un rapport qui a été commandité par l'Union Européenne concernant le *marketing* des produits rodriguais . Il y a

beaucoup de recommandations et c'est pourquoi nous parlons de *label*. On ne peut pas exporter des produits qui ne sont pas contrôlés. Il faudra mettre en place une unité du Mauritius Standards Bureau (MSB) pour contrôler ces produits. Et à ce moment là, quand le *label* rodriguais est prêt, quand on aura donné la formation à ceux qui vont transformer des produits qui peuvent être exportés sur Maurice et la Réunion, il nous faudra nous assurer que ces produits ont été contrôlés. Il ne faut pas que les touristes achètent un produit et quand ils arrivent chez eux, ils trouvent que c'est fermenté. On a vu cela, je l'ai vu personnellement chez un ami en France qui a acheté un produit ici dans des bouteilles ou des pots en plastique, c'était fermenté. Donc, il nous faudra le faire. Il ne faut pas exporter comme cela! C'est pourquoi il faudrait commencer par ce *label* rodriguais, donner de la formation à toutes ces personnes et c'est pourquoi nous allons - comme je le dis dans mon discours du budget - faire une étude sur les différents produits - à part de ceux qu'on a mentionnés dans le rapport - qu'on peut fabriquer, *process* à Rodrigues et exporter. Donc il nous faudra savoir le nom et la qualité - aujourd'hui à Rodrigues, quand quelqu'un plante des pommes d'amour, tout le monde plante des pommes d'amour. Même au niveau des plantations, il faudrait qu'il y ait une diversification. Au niveau des fruits, j'ai demandé à mon collègue le Chef Commissaire adjoint d'avoir des pépinières d'arbres fruitiers. Il y a même des hôteliers qui ont compris cela et qui vont essayer d'avoir des terres pour essayer d'arriver à planter des arbres fruitiers bien spécifiques à Rodrigues. Donc, il y a une diversification dans notre agriculture et notre économie.

C'est pourquoi, M. le président, l'agence de développement commercial, le *Planters and Farmers Association Welfare Fund*, le projet de loi est là en préparation et en discussion. Je voudrais faire savoir à la minorité que d'après la loi, nous ne pouvons présenter des lois, à l'Assemblée Régionale, qui vont à l'encontre des lois nationales. C'est pourquoi certaines lois demandent des amendements dans la loi nationale, par exemple le *Rodrigues Children's Council*, le Conseil Economique et Social, etc. Toutes ces lois votées à Maurice n'ont pas fait mention qu'en ce qui concerne Rodrigues ces lois ne s'appliquent pas, à Rodrigues or, la loi votée à l'Assemblée Nationale s'applique sur tout le territoire national.

C'est pourquoi il faudrait amender ces lois avant de les faire voter à l'Assemblée Régionale. Et c'est là justement que le travail est en train d'être fait au niveau des différents ministères pour qu'ils amendent la loi mère pour que nous puissions venir avec nos lois et nos règlements. Je dois

dire que c'est un processus qu'il faudra accélérer. De ce côté là, il est absolument nécessaire d'attirer l'attention des différents ministères à Maurice sur l'urgence d'amender ces lois.

M. le Président, le *Minority Leader* a parlé du gel de l'attribution de terrain à bail aux gens. Comment peut-il y avoir de gel alors que l'année dernière 732 baux ont été signés; de janvier à février de cette année-ci il y a eu 144 baux et l'année dernière 518 permis de construction. M. le Président, il n'y a pas de gel, c'est un processus; c'est là où il faut faire attention. Nous avons entre les mains un rapport, "*National Development Strategy*". C'est un rapport spécifique pour Rodrigues, approuvé par le conseil des ministres l'année dernière.

M. le Président si aujourd'hui nous voulons qu'il y ait une discipline dans l'octroi des terres, c'est pour que demain et après demain, les choses aillent mieux. La question de '*freeze*' ne se pose pas. Aussi il n'est pas vrai de dire que les femmes n'ont pas droit à un bail, M. le président. Je me rappelle que lorsque j'étais ministre, beaucoup de femmes travaillant dans l'agriculture, avec deux ou trois enfants, avaient eu droit à un terrain à bail pour construire leurs maisons. Il n'y a jamais eu de discrimination dans ce sens.

M. le président, il faut quand même souligner qu'il y a un problème à ce niveau là. Il est un fait qu'aujourd'hui, lorsque deux personnes se marient, l'épouse obtient un bail aussi bien que l'époux et cela pose problème. C'est là où justement nous avons établi des priorités.

(Interruptions)

Il faut voir si c'est le « Comité de Terre » qui a défini ces priorités...

(Interruptions)

M. le président, je défends l'unité de la famille. Il ne faut pas que, demain, dans cette petite île, la famille soit demantelée. Je pense que le papa et la maman, dont la fille a un enfant, devraient pouvoir continuer à être entourés par la famille.

(Interruptions)

Oui, je suis d'accord! M. le président, à un certain moment, il faut quand même que ce membre de la famille soit soutenu par ses parents en attendant qu'il soit indépendant.

Il y a aussi le fait que depuis les années 2000 à 2002, des morcellements ont été faits sur les terres de l'État - non pas des terres privées - sans tenir compte des infrastructures, telles que l'électricité, route, eau, etc. Il faut qu'on soit sérieux. Il y a même des morcellements qui ont été faits devant la porte d'un hôtel. C'est pourquoi dès que nous avons pris le pouvoir en l'an 2002, nous avons investi de l'argent afin que ces morcellements soient pourvus en électricité, eau et route. Nous ne pouvons donner une terre à quelqu'un s'il n'y a pas ces facilités. Dans les morcellements privés, on doit d'abord faire les routes, donner l'électricité et l'eau avant de vendre une portion de terre.

Deuxièmement, M. le président, le *National Development Strategy* dit en premier lieu que la terre est pour l'économie du pays. C'est pourquoi nous demandons aux gens de ne pas construire à tort et à travers afin de permettre à l'urbaniste du Cadastre de revoir le *outline scheme*, le plan d'aménagement qui avait été travaillé par le ministère des terres et de logement. Il faudrait une fois pour toutes, M. le président, que nous puissions définir ces zones d'habitation – *human settlement* - les zones de plantation, les zones de paturage et les zones forestières.

(Interruptions)

Oui, tout ce que vous voulez, que ce soit l'hôtel, l'industrie, etc. Nous ne pouvons pas avancer sans mettre de l'ordre dans tout cela. Il faut que la population puisse comprendre tout cela. Il faut non seulement une vision à court terme mais aussi une à long terme afin qu'à l'avenir une personne puisse avoir facilement un morceau de terre. Nous voulons que la terre agricole soit vraiment cette terre qui peut faire vivre quelqu'un; c'est possible.

M. le président, nous allons investir de l'argent au Cadastre, car le travail avait été discontinué; il fallait répondre aux demandeurs de terre, donner la terre pour ceci ou cela. Nous voulons voir s'il y a la possibilité de donner cette terre et nous voulons faire bien attention avant de la donner. Il faut que ce soit fait sous contrat et là c'est le travail du Cadastre. Et, c'est cela, M. le président, la solution. Demain, si le travail est déjà fait au

Cadastre, et que quelqu'un demande un morceau de terrain, on saura si c'est disponible. Comme j'ai dit, le Cadastre est en train de travailler dans le cadre du *human settlement*, de l'agriculture, etc. Une fois le travail terminé, le demandeur pourra avoir son bail après un mois.

(Interruptions)

Oui, aussitôt que le Cadastre termine le travail. On a investi une somme de R 3 millions. Il y a quand même des implications légales dont il faut tenir compte. On a soulevé la question lors de nos discussions. On nous a même dit qu'il y a des implications légales. Il faut voir les lois. Faut-il donner le travail du Cadastre sous contrat à des privés? Il faut tenir compte de tout cela.

Aujourd'hui, M. le président, le *Consultancy Services* permet justement au projet d'aller très vite. La contribution du secteur privé est très importante car elle aide le gouvernement d'aller très vite dans son développement. Je me souviens que lorsque j'étais ministre et quand il fallait construire un bâtiment ici, il fallait d'abord aller au Ministère des Infrastructures Publiques. Ensuite il faut lancer les appels d'offres. C'est pour vous dire que tout cela prend du temps. Après s'être rendu làbas, il fallait revenir ici pour superviser tous les mois.

M. le président, en ce qui concerne les terres, nous travaillons d'après le *National Development Strategy*, c'est-à-dire, l'économie, l'environnement et le progrès social. Je dois dire que c'est sur la bonne voie. Le *Minority Leader* a parlé de menace. Je pense que ce sont des formules qu'on envoie habituellement aux gens pour les informer. Il faut que les gens sachent qu'on ne dirige pas un pays dans le désordre. Il y a des informations à faire passer. Il y a une discipline qu'il faut observer. Pour gérer une petite île comme Rodrigues, il faut aller dans la discipline, que ce soit au niveau de la surveillance sur la mer, la construction des maisons, etc. Il faut que les gens soient avertis. Il ne faut pas que les gens soient récalcitrants; il faut respecter la loi.

(Interruptions)

Les gens croient que nous sommes en train d'inventer ces lois, mais ces lois existent déjà.

M. le président, il y a aussi des terres qui sont allouées pour les entreprises. Nous avons inclu dans le budget un *one stop-shop*; l'*industrial* évolue sous le *Chief Commissioner*, parceque la plupart du temps c'est une question de terre qui se pose car pour qu'une entreprise puisse se développer il y a une demande de terre forcément. Donc, nous demandons à ces personnes de présenter un projet. Il faut que ces personnes là aient une connaissance, une expérience ou une formation sur le projet qu'il va lancer.

M. le président, nous sommes en train de faire l'inventaire des terres qui ont été allouées à Camp du Roi. Depuis dix ans ces gens étaient tout le temps rappelés de "commencer votre entreprise". Jusqu'à maintenant il y a quelques uns qui n'ont pas commencé encore. Il y a même certains qui, au lieu de commencer leurs entreprises ont demandé de reconverter leur bail en commerce ou autre.

(Interruptions)

Il y a des gens à qui on a donné un morceau de terre pour le besoin de l'artisanat, mais au lieu de cela, ils louent cette terre.

(Interruptions)

Bref, je ne vais pas revenir dessus. M. le président, je suis très content de recevoir beaucoup d'encouragement de la part de la population. Il y a même des gens qui nous disent de faire bien attention car il y a des gens qui construisent sur des terres agricoles. Nous avons vu ce qu'on a fait d'un terrain où on plantait autrefois de la pistache. Nous importons des pistaches, '*dix ti la grain dans ène ti sac pou R 3 ou R 4*'. Et, aujourd'hui, on met une maison au milieu d'un terrain agricole, là où on plantait autrefois de la pistache. M. le président, la terre doit être bien utilisée. C'est ce qu'on appelle en anglais "*good management of land*".

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je viens sur un autre thème assez important, le tourisme. Nous avons fait un choix. Le tourisme doit être le moteur du développement de Rodrigues. Il faudra faire bien attention. Nous ne voulons pas un développement touristique à la manière

des Seychelles, de la Reunion ou de Maurice. Nous voulons de petits hôtels avec un maximum de 60 chambres. Même l'architecture est revue et discutée. J'ai même dit que le tourisme doit exister, mais il faut revoir le type de bâtiment qu'on va construire. J'ai même demandé aux promoteurs d'aller à la recherche de la culture des logements des Rodriguais autrefois et de reproduire cette architecture d'une manière beaucoup plus simple. Nous voulons que le Rodriguais participe à ce développement touristique. C'est là où nous encourageons les gîtes, les chambres et tables d'hôtes.

M. le président, comme l'a dit mon collègue le Chef Commissaire adjoint, il faudrait qu'aujourd'hui on ait un comité du tourisme et que nous essayons d'appliquer les normes et les règlements concernant les gîtes et les chambres d'hôtes, pour qu'ils soient vraiment des établissements d'accueil. Le concept du tourisme "Chambre d'hôte" n'est pas le même qu'un hôtel tel le Cotton Bay ou ailleurs. C'est un autre concept, un concept de tourisme chez l'habitant que beaucoup aujourd'hui aiment, surtout dans une île Rodrigues isolée, loin des bruits. Les gens sont à la recherche de la simplicité et aussi de quelque chose qu'ils peuvent manger en discutant avec la famille. C'est pourquoi il est tout à fait normal, M. le président, qu'on demande aux personnes qui accueillent ces touristes de recevoir une formation, que leurs établissements soient accueillants, qu'il y ait un certain confort et cela, ce n'est pas difficile. C'est pourquoi il y a une association de gîtes qui a soumis quelques applications. Une équipe technique leur a rendu visite et elle va leur faire des recommandations pour qu'il y ait des améliorations avant qu'un permis leur soit alloué pour changer la destination du bail à caractère résidentiel à un bail commercial. Donc, il y a cette exigence au niveau du tourisme. Il faudrait faire bien attention. Il y a beaucoup de gens qui quittent un pays pour un autre. Ceux qui ont l'habitude de voyager disent que ce n'est plus pareil. Et c'est ça qu'il nous faut chercher, un tourisme qui dure dans le temps. C'est pourquoi nous mettons l'accent sur l'environnement. Nous demandons à la population d'être très attentive aux problèmes de l'environnement. C'est pourquoi dans les écoles primaires et secondaires, les jeunes doivent être conscientisés.

Il ne faut pas attendre "la journée du tourisme" pour aller parler à la radio. Tout le long de l'année, l'environnement doit être au service de ces valeurs du pays. Le tourisme, M. le président, sera un secteur de création d'emplois directs et indirects. C'est de là que d'autres entreprises vont naître, que ce soit au niveau de l'agriculture, de l'artisanat, de la pêche, de la charcuterie, même du textile fabriqué à Rodrigues - je ne dis pas une usine

de textile, mais avec un modèle typiquement rodriguais. Donc, le tourisme sera le moteur et je pense que les quelques projets qui avaient déjà été approuvés par le comité dirigé par Monsieur Bérenger, alors vice Premier ministre et ministre des finances, et que ces projets vont aller de l'avant et nous avons cru bon de les recontacter. Ils vont de l'avant. Cette année-ci, on va y avoir deux ou trois hôtels qui vont démarrer. L'année prochaine, en 2005, deux ou trois hôtels encore plus ...

(Interruptions)

Ou dire bizin créer l'emploi. Si les promoteurs d'hôtels veulent construire, cela veut dire qu'ils savent comment ils vont remplir ces hôtels. Ils connaissent.

(Interruptions)

M. le président, je viens sur un point important et je vais terminer par là. La réforme du service civil, l'éducation et la formation. J'ai parlé un peu de l'éducation, mais la formation, M. le président, est importante à tous les niveaux. Le service agricole est en train de mettre sur pied une série de formations pour les planteurs. La ministre de la femme et des enfants a commencé à mettre sur pied une série de formations pour les femmes. C'est cela la base pour créer cet esprit de productivité, cet esprit d'initiative, se libérer de tout préjugé. De l'autre côté, il y aura la formation des jeunes, il y a même des personnes qui sont venues de Maurice, des consultants, qui veulent faire la formation de l'école à l'emploi. Il faut que dès l'école les jeunes puissent être ouverts à une grande possibilité d'emploi, pas nécessairement dans la fonction publique. La fonction publique va continuer à recruter des personnes, mais aussi dans le secteur privé; et c'est cela la base de la future économie de Rodrigues, *the capacity building of this population*. Au niveau de la réforme du service civil, il y a tout un travail qui a été fait au niveau de la formation. Le *Human Resource Centre* est en train d'accomplir son rôle d'université populaire avec des cours sur le *management*, le SMIDO et dans tous les domaines. Nous voudrions que le *Human Resource Centre* devienne cette université populaire où les jeunes étudiants et entrepreneurs vont recevoir une formation. Mais il faut vouloir. Des fois on a vu qu'il y avait des personnes qu'on invite et qui ne venaient pas aux cours de formation qu'on leur offrait. Mais sans la formation, on ne pourra pas avancer.

Autre chose, M. le président. Nous avons contacté, l'année dernière Messieurs Poncini et Treebohun pour demander l'assistance du *National Productivity and Competitiveness Council* pour que nous puissions être un service civil et une population qui se lance dans la productivité. Nous allons commencer avec des *gangmen*, supervisors, les techniciens et ainsi de suite sur la question de la productivité et le contrôle du travail. Il faut que la personne qui vient ici puisse produire et il faut qu'elle sache aussi qu'elle est au service de ce pays et qu'elle fait partie de ce pays.

Et pour terminer, M. le président, c'est pour vous dire que l'économie rodriguaise fait partie intégrante de l'économie nationale. Il y a une possibilité de co-opération que ce soit avec les Seychelles, que ce soit avec la Réunion ou d'autres pays pour qu'à l'avenir nos produits aillent vers ces pays. Mais avant cela il y a un gros travail à faire.

M. le président, aujourd'hui je tiens à vous dire dans le cadre de l'économie nationale que dans le passé le gouvernement central a donné pas mal d'*incentives* et d'encouragement aux jeunes qui veulent se lancer dans les Petites et Moyennes Entreprises. Nous allons, peut-être à une prochaine séance de l'Assemblée, déposer sur la Table de l'Assemblée, les *incentives* donnés aux entrepreneurs de Maurice pour s'installer ici, que ce soit eux-mêmes, soit en partenariat. Ces *incentives* existent et sont absolument extraordinaires dans le cadre du développement de Rodrigues. Je dois vous dire que le service civil a créé 27 nouveaux postes et le nombre de postes additionnels, c'est 203.

Pour terminer, je voudrais annoncer ici dans le cadre de ce budget, une disposition que nous avons prise, dans ce budget concernant les membres de l'Assemblée ici, c'est qu'au niveau des facilités de téléphone et aussi au passage aller-retour époux/épouse, Rodrigues – Maurice, Maurice – Rodrigues.

(Applause)

Ce sont des choses que nous aurions peut-être dû annoncer dans le budget. Et nous sommes en train aussi de travailler sur le système de pension pour les élus. Il y a un comité qui a été institué à Maurice et qui travaille là-dessus. Nous souhaitons que les résultats soient positifs, parceque les membres de l'Assemblée reçoivent les mêmes privilèges que les membres

de l'Assemblée Nationale. Nous voudrions qu'en terme de pension aussi, ils reçoivent les mêmes privilèges.

M. le président, je vous remercie de nous avoir écouté et nous irons sur l'étude du budget dans quelques instants. Je pense que ce budget 2004/2005 va apporter plus de dynamisme dans la population et plus de discipline, plus d'amour pour cette île. Et, à mon avis, il faut ensemble, coude à coude, travailler pour que ce pays arrive à un niveau où pour le Rodriguais, il n'y aura plus de pauvreté et où tout le monde se sent partie intégrante dans l'avenir de ce pays.

Merci beaucoup, M. le président.

(Applause)

At 12.10 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

COMMITTEE STAGE
(Mr Chairperson in the Chair)

Item Recurrent Revenue:

Mr Chairperson: Today, upon the approval subsequent to the motion made by the Chief Commissioner to that effect, we are now in the Draft Estimates' Committee in consequence of the Report of the Standing Orders Committee constituted approved by this Assembly that the Draft Estimates Committee be had for discussions of the various items included in the Draft Recurrent Budget and Draft Capital Budget. This is a new procedure. The procedure has been since Parliament existed in Mauritius. In Mauritius the Budget Estimates are normally introduced by way of an Appropriation Bill and after the second reading the Bill stands committed to the Committee of Supply. Even our procedure is different, we have nonetheless adopted the same procedure or more particularly procedure on the same lines that is obtained in Mauritius. But in view of section 44 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, both Draft Revenue and the Draft Expenditure, Capital or Recurrent, are to be submitted for approval in this Regional Assembly. So, unlike Mauritius, the Assembly will be called also to approve that part of the estimates which, in fact, covers the revenue side. But, of course, discussions on the revenue, because of its nature, will be restricted in a sense and differ from discussions that we are going to have on the Recurrent Expenditure.

and Capital Expenditure. In a nutshell, I will state the guidelines that we are going to observe during this Committee. We already had debates on Friday and this morning which were restricted on the general policy of the Regional Government or the Executive Council. In the Draft Estimates Committee, discussions will be conducted on the details of the various items. Of course, this is the appropriate time where various amendments are going to be proposed, discussed and voted for. Now, we shall proceed first with the Draft Recurrent Budget. We shall proceed itemwise or votewise and any member may wish to intervene so as to ask for details, suggestions, motives or the purport of the different items; and once an item has been dealt with earlier, we are not going to return back and propose any amendment on an item that has previously been disposed of or discuss on an item that has already been discussed about. This being said, we now proceed to examine the Draft Recurrent Budget.

REVENUE

Revenue was called

Mr J. Roussety: Under vote 26 - Rental of Government Property; for State Land Commercial, the forecast for 2004/2005 is only Rs109,699. This amount is a bit small. Could we have more details on it?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, it is usually for what we call shops and commercial land leases. The Member will see there is a big difference between State land Industrial, State Land Tourism and State Land Agricultural. This is a forecast on the number of existing leases, which exist already and which has been computerised. I think it is according to the number of leases and the rates of these leases.

Revenue (Rs807,438,321) was, on question put, agreed to.

RECURRENT EXPENDITURE

Vote 01.101 – Rodrigues Regional Assembly was called

The Chief Commissioner: There is one amendment which I wish to bring to this amount on Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr Chairperson: The Chief Commissioner has intimated to me that he would move for various amendments on this vote. Same has been circulated to members. We are going to proceed with the different items up to item 01-101.062. Unless you have any question on the previous votes, we can move to the motion for amendment.

The Chief Commissioner: Under item *01-101.062 – Luncheons*, the provision in the estimates has been amended from Rs62,000 to Rs 140,000. It is the provision required.

Amendment agreed to.

Vote 01-1001 Rodrigues Regional Assembly, as amended, (Rs8,488,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 02-101 Central Administration was called.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I'd like to move an amendment to *item 02-101.055 - Maintenance of buildings, grounds, plant and equipment*. I move that the figure Rs290,000 be amended and substituted to Rs500,000.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, *item 02-101.113 - Security Services* where a sum of Rs2,080,000 is earmarked. Can we have more details on this item?

The Chief Commissioner: A contract has been given to the private security services for the Administration, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the two area hospitals at La Ferme and Mont Lubin and also for the Human Resource Centre.

Mr J. Roussety: At page 25, under *items 02-111.001(1) - Port Manager* and *02-111.001(2) - Quay Superintendent* respectively. Why is it that we have abolished the post of Quay Superintendent? It seems so, because there is no provision this year, but I see that there is an item for a Port Manager. I don't know whether the Port Manager is replacing the Quay Superintendent, but it seems that it is a new figure; it is at least three times the previous post. Can we have more details on these 2 items?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we noted that the salary of the Port Supervisor was higher than that of the Quay Superintendent and the person in charge of the Port was receiving less than the Quay Supervisor. That's why we have created a new post of Port Manager. This was suggested by the Mauritius Port Authority. He was a Quay Superintendent and he received less than a Quay Supervisor. So, his salary is increased and the qualifications required taken into account.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, will the Quay Superintendent be upgraded to Port Manager automatically or will there be new recruitment procedures?

The Chief Commissioner: The post of Quay Superintendent will be abolished.

Mr J. Roussety: I understand that the post will be advertised and that anybody can apply.

The Chief Commissioner: The post will be advertised and the Public Service Commission will deal with this just as all posts in the public service. The Public Service Commission will recruit the person.

Mr Chairperson: Can we now move to page 26 - *Cadastral Division*?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I move for an amendment under *item 02-112-001(6) - Development Control Officer*. Here provision is made for only one post for the financial year 2004-2005.

Mr Chairperson: Your motion, please.

The Chief Commissioner: No provision was made for the post in 2004-2005. My motion is to put the figure "1" in the column 2004-2005 for the post of Development Control Officer.

Mr Chairperson: The figure "1" is to be inserted in the column *Establishment 2004-2005* under *item 02-112-001(6)*?

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the amendment is for Development Officer, and here we have Development Control Officer. Should it be the same?

Mr Chairperson: I have addressed my attention to it. But now the Chief Commissioner has made his motion directly. Yes, it will be the same. With respect to the notice of amendment, it says Development Officer. But in this Committee, the Chief Commissioner has moved to add this figure next to this post. So, we forego what was said in the notice. It should be Development Control Officer.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr Jabeemissar: Sir, I need an explanation on item 02-112.001 (13) – *Trainee Cartographer*. Why is it that in the estimates for 2004-2005 there is a provision for Rs87,900 and I don't see any provision next to it. Last year there was one provided, but this year it is a blank.

The Chief Commissioner: I think a Trainee Cartographer has been enlisted in the Budget of 2003-2004. That's why we have not reproduced the one here. This means that there is only one post. We are going to recruit one more Cartographer.

Mr Chairperson: The sum has been increased. Can we have a confirmation about the post of Trainee Cartographer from the Heads of Department and Chief Commissioner?

The Chief Commissioner: Insofar as the trainee grade is concerned, no post is to be mentioned. There is recruitment for a trainee and it is reflected in the post of "Cartographer". We need one more Cartographer.

Mr J. Roussety: This matter needs to be cleared. They are proposing a sum of Rs87,900 for this vote and it is going to be added in the total budget for recurrent expenditure whereas when we look at the column for Establishment, there is nothing. We don't know how many persons are going to be recruited, but the provision is there. There is some sort of confusion. Either we leave the Establishment nil and we put Trainee Cartographer – 10, because we cannot over inflate our budget just for the sake of inflating it. We would have a further Rs87,900. Why? *Moi, je*

propose soit on met "1" dans la colonne establishment 2004-2005, soit on met 10 as a token vote.

The Chief Commissioner: La somme qui est prévue ici n'est pas nécessairement pour une année. Dans tous les postes on n'a pas mis la somme complète parceque justement quand on va les employer, ce n'est qu'après deux, trois ou quatre mois que la personne va être payée. Nous avons prévu de faire le recrutement dans deux ou trois mois et ce sera la somme qui lui sera payée.

The Trainee Cartographer will be promoted Cartographer during the next financial year. We have made provision for the next financial year.

(Interruptions)

Mr J. Roussety: You can't provide funds for next financial in this financial year, because this financial year is completely separate from this one.

The Chief Commissioner: We are making provision for the next financial year.

Mr Chairperson: Which year, please?

The Chief Commissioner: For financial year 2004-2005. The Trainee Cartographer will be promoted Cartographer during the next financial year. We need another Trainee for the next financial year so that we can have two Cartographers.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are still confused. If the Trainee Cartographer falls within the 2003-2004 Estimates, provision is made in estimates 2004-2005 for the same. It is logical that the amount is increased because he will be promoted. But, now as the Chief Commissioner says there is provision for another Trainee for the next financial year; that is, in the establishment for 2004-2005, it cannot be blank, there need to be a figure inserted there

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is paradoxical, because we have just had an amendment to propose "1" for the Development Control Officer under item 02-112.001 (6) – *Development Control Officer*. We

proposed the insertion of figure “1” in the column 2004-2005 Establishment. Now under item Trainee Cartographer, we don’t have anything. The same principle should apply unless the Chief Commissioner wants to break and have consultation with his officers.

Mr Chairperson: We can wait for him to receive some notes or for consultation.

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: Usually, the trainee grade is not enlisted on the Establishment. Usually provision is being made to meet the salary of a trainee until such time that he is promoted during the next financial year. It is only when the person is promoted and is put on the Establishment.

Mr Agathe: So, the establishment for Cartographer should have been increased by one. It should have been “3” instead of “2”.

Mr J. Roussety: It seems that when we have “trainee” they don’t put it on the Establishment. It is as if the person is working, but he is not counted among the 44 and they list only those who are employed.

Vote 2 – Services under the general control of the Chief Commissioner (Rs199,232,010), as amended, was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 03-1 – Deputy Chief Commissioner’s Office was called.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item 03-101.001(58) *Motor Diesel Mechanic* and item 03-101.001 (62) *welders*, we had five for the years 2003/2004 and now provision is not made for such post. It is the same thing for the post of Motor Diesel Mechanic. May we know if there has been any retirement or the abolition of the post itself?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Motor Diesel Mechanic has been transferred to the Mechanical workshop; and it is the case for the five welders also.

Mrs Meunier: I refer to Items 03-102.001(42) *Panel Beater* and item 03-102.001(4) *Administrative Officer*. May I know why no provision is being provided as regards these items.

Mr Chairperson: The question of the Member concerns items 03-102.001(4) and 03-102.001(42). So, let's take them *seriatim*.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As far as item 03-102.001(4) is concerned, the Administrative Officer has been transferred to the Central Administration. The other question concerns which item, please?

Mrs Meunier: *Item 03-102.001(42) Panel Beater.*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The post was under the Mechanical Workshop and one employee from the Mechanical Workshop has been transferred and is working at Citronelle.

Mr J. Roussety: Can we have more details as regards item 03-102.340 *Incentive for agricultural livestock and food production?*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: This is an incentive for which provision has been made for the agricultural reform that my Commission intends to boost up. Provision has been made for incentives such as subsidies, feed, assistance to land cultivation, bonus on production that will be given to the farmers and the young who want to come in the agricultural sector.

Mr J. Roussety: I refer to item 03-103.001(6) *Plumber and Pipe Fitter*. First of all, I have a question of a general nature. For the estimates 2004-2005, under the column Establishment, there are 24 Plumbers and Pipe Fitters. Do we have actually 24 Plumbers and Pipe Fitters in employment or less?

Mr Chairperson: Is the question clear to the Deputy Chief Commissioner? The hon. Member is asking whether the number of posts under the column – Establishment 2004-2005 reflects really the number of persons employed actually.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Well, it is the number of persons in post and those that will be filled.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is a serious matter. We should know how many are there? I have a proposal to make.

Mr Chairperson: Members have to be specific and say on which item they are speaking.

Mr J. Roussety: It was general. I want to know how many people are actually being employed. For example, under Water Resources Unit, there are 413 posts. Out of these, how many are employed actually? Does the Deputy Chief Commissioner have the information? If it is less than 413, it means that some posts are vacant. We need to know how many jobs are vacant. I believe there should be a column to tell us this.

Mr Chairperson: Are there any questions on page 36?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: But normally, Mr Chairperson, Sir, these figures are not given at Committee of Supply. They must come with a substantive question.

Mr Chairperson: The Deputy Chief Commissioner has replied. Does the Minority Leader want to add anything?

Mr J. Roussety: I would propose that in the next Budget, we do the same as the National Assembly. I know that in the Estimates at the National Assembly, there is the number of posts and the number of people really employed. It may be 63 on paper here, but it is not 63 there! We are artificially over budgeting, if they do not recruit during the year. I will study this and then make proposals.

I refer to item 03-103.001(7) *Senior Valve Operator*. There are 63 Valve Operators and only one Senior Valve Operator. Would it not be more appropriate to have more Senior Valve Operators? Out of these 63 Valve Operators, I know there are long service civil servants. I think it is time to be, not generous, but *reconnaisants envers eux*. 63: 1 is quite a very low ratio. Could the Deputy Chief Commissioner consider increasing the number of Senior Valve Operators?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the gangmen are actually performing the work. With the upgrading of the water system, there is no need for Senior Valve Operator.

Vote 03-1 Commission for Public Infrastructure, Agriculture, Water Resources Unit, Mechanical Workshop and National Transport Authority (Rs188,938,500) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 04-1 Commission for Arts & Culture, Women's Affairs, Community Development, Cultural & Leisure Centre and Library Services (Rs16,448,420) was called and agreed to.

Vote 05-1 Commission for Education, Human Resource Centre, Employment and Postal Services was called.

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

Mr Chairperson: Which item, please?

Mr J. Roussety: It concerns incentive allowance. There is no reference for it. A sum of Rs1,100,000 is being provided. Can we have more information about it, please?

Mr L. Roussety: It is for ICT teachers. The sum is provided for the payment of allowance to teachers carrying out numeracy and literacy programmes from 3.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m., i.e 25 minutes teaching per day. The total sum is Rs87,150 per month.

Mr J. Roussety: I have not understood what the Commissioner has said.

Mr Chairperson: Probably there is a problem with the microphone. Will the Commissioner repeat his answer, please?

Mr L. Roussety: It is for the payment of 10 ICT teachers giving extra assistance in primary schools and who are on a four-year contract. In government schools we have ten teachers. In RCA schools, we have six teachers and payments are included in the block grant. Does that answer the question of the Minority Leader?

Mr Jabeemissar: I refer to item 05-101.422 *RRA Medical Scholarship*. A sum of Rs1,500,000 is being provided. Could the Commissioner give more information as to the number of scholarships?

Mr L. Roussety: This is a provision for two medical students at the SSR Medical School for five years. We pay in advance and by doing so, we make a saving of 40% of the fees.

Mr J. Roussety: If my memory serves me right, Mr Chairperson, Sir, from the information that we had in this House recently, two scholarships were granted for 2003-2004. Do we have an additional of two scholarships this year? The sum of Rs1,500,000 is only for two students.

Mr L. Roussety: Last year, the money was approved by Cabinet on 30 May. It was to be met from the Rodrigues Consolidated Fund. But it was too late for the students to attend courses at the college. So, we are in a position to make provision for the next financial year 2004-2005.

Vote 05-1 Commission for Education, Human Resource Centre, Employment and Postal Services (Rs82,482,240) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 06-1 Commission for Health, Cooperatives, Prisons, Reform Institutions and Fire Services (Rs151,070,620) was called and agreed to.

Vote 07-1 Commission for Youth & Sports, Consumer Protection, Handicraft and Trade, Commerce & Licensing was called.

Mr Grandcourt: Concerning *item 07-101-001 Gratuity*, a sum of Rs162,260 is provided. Can we have more information on this figure?

Mr Lisette: This is for the Departmental Head and the workers who are working on contract at my Commission.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, *item 07-101-001(32) Coach (Swimming)*, we all know that there are many regional committees regarding many sports in Rodrigues, but for swimming there is none. I would like to know what is the reason for a coach swimming since we don't have a regional committee that is caring for it.

Mr Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a new *école de natation* is going to be set up soon in Rodrigues. So, it is very important to have a swimming coach, because we are going to have a swimming pool constructed at the end of this year.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at page 63, *Item 07-101-001 (13) Lorry Loader*, last year there was no lorry loader. This year they are providing four lorry drivers. Can we know what is the purpose of having lorry drivers at the Commission? Does his Commission have lorries? And second what is the purpose of this? This should have been for the Commissioner for Public Infrastructure.

Mr Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, formerly these lorry loaders were bus attendants working at the Central Administration. These drivers have been transferred to my Commission. So, as per the rule every minibus or bus should have an attendant. This is why there are four lorry loaders.

Mr J. Roussety: I don't understand Mr Chairperson, Sir, we call bus attendants, lorry loaders. Should we guess or are we putting lorry loaders in buses?

(Interruptions)

This is something serious. A lorry loader loads lorries. A bus attendant is in a bus. So, we should be more serious on this matter. I believe in the budget, they say "*on met l'homme et la femme au centre, c'est bien, mais là on appelle des bus attendants des lorry loaders, c'est dégradant*". So, could he correct this?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the name that appears here is in relation to the PRB Report. So, this is the name given to such attendant.

Mr J. Roussety: In this case, Mr Chairperson, Sir, it should be amended. We should use the proper term. I believe the salary scale is not the same. These persons deserve recognition for what they are doing. They are working with young persons, our youth and I don't know how we are going to call them. I beg to disagree, we should call them by their proper name.

Mr Chairperson: So, you want to move for the amendment?

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, I would like to move for an amendment with the help of the technical staff present here.

Mr Chairperson: Take some time Minority Leader and then move your motion.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't really know what is the proper ...

Mr Chairperson: You just move to delete or to substitute ...

Mr J. Roussety: I would be re-inventing a post in the Public Service. I would suggest the Commissioner with the help of his Departmental Head or any member of the Public Service who is here, to give us the proper appellation. I am just the Minority Leader and you will understand my position. I would move to substitute the proper name to reflect the work these persons are doing in the place of lorry loader.

Mr Chairperson: It is not a motion. Can the Commissioner respond to it?

Mr Lisette: I am been informed that there is no post of bus attendant in the C.E.O, that's why probably the appellation of lorry loader.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, sir, we have not understood

Mr Chairperson: Is the microphone working? Yes, please can you repeat your answer a little louder, please?

Mr Lisette: I said there is no appellation for bus attendant in the Civil Establishment Order, this is why it is written lorry loaders here.

Mr J. Roussety: For it to be clear, probably they could put "bus attendants posted in buses."

Mr Chairperson: Can we move to page 64? May I proceed by items, please so that you can have time?

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to have more details on *item 07-101.050 (147) Promotion of youth activities*.

Mr Lisette: Yes, Sir, the amount earmarked is meant for training of young entrepreneurs, training courses in youth centres, leadership and club

management and youth promotion activities such as "Village on the move", colonies de vacances, "Special Vacances," Youth Exchange and Publications, newspapers to be provided to youth centres.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I also wish to have details on *item 07-101.50.154, Promotion of sports activities.*

Mr Lisette: The money is meant for equipment, *centre de formation*, grant-in-aid to the different sports regional committees, sports equipment and for organising competitions, exchanges with other islands in the region and tickets for movement to and from Mauritius.

Mr Agathe: The Member just mentioned grants-in-aid to sports clubs. I want to know about feminine sports.

Mr Lisette: I did not refer to sports clubs but to Regional Sports Committees.

Mr Chairperson: We go to page 65.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, *item 07-102.001, Disturbance allowance*, the amount earmarked is Rs 150,000. I'd like to have more information on this.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally we do have Consumer Protection Officers from Mauritius. These persons are paid an allowance known as disturbance allowance.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, *Item 07-102.001 (1) Consumer Protection Officer*, four posts for Rs 429,600, i.e about Rs110,000 per year. I believe this is a post that requires form V or form VI certificate. How is it that we need people from Mauritius for this?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally for consumer protection we should have a Senior Consumer Protection Officer. The thing is that we have only two persons who are in post in Rodrigues. Whenever we have the idea of having more posts, provision should be made in the budget for those persons. This is clear.

(Interruptions)

The Consumer Protection Officers are normally, a grade higher than the Consumer Protection Officer.

Mr J. Roussety: He has not answered the question, Mr Chairperson. Now, he is saying there are two. We don't know how many are really employed. He says that there are two. The amount is Rs429,600 plus disturbance allowance of Rs150,000 for two officers. I'd like to know whether these two are already there. Are these officers from Mauritius? Why is the disturbance allowance so high? I am of the opinion that a number of figures are being overestimated.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, your question, please?

Mr J. Roussety: My question is: how is it that we have Rs429,600? He says there are two. They have provision for four, 1 can understand. But if we divide Rs150,000 by 2 we get Rs75,000. This is exaggerated. I know disturbance allowance is around 25% unless in the case of professionals, PRB recommends 50%.

Mr Chairperson: 45% .

Mr J. Roussety: No. 45% for scarce.

Mr Chairperson: Let the member complete his question.

Mr J. Roussety: He has understood the question.

Mr Lisette: I have just been informed that for the present financial year we have not been able to recruit any Consumer Protection Officer because of the problem with the CEO. But I have been informed that now the disturbance allowance that has been earmarked here may be deleted, as Consumer Protection Officer will be recruited from Rodrigues itself.

Mr J. Roussety: So, Mr Chairperson, Sir, if they are going to be recruited, there is no need for specific disturbance allowance this year. We say there is unemployment here. These posts are vacant and money has been appropriated. Why do they not recruit? We'll have to make a "*relevé*" of all posts in the public service and come forward with Parliamentary Questions to know what is the exact workforce in the Public Service.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the item disturbance allowance Rs150,000 may be deleted.

Mr J. Roussety: So, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would move that *Vote 07-102-001 – Disturbance Allowance* be deleted.

On question put, amendment agreed to.

Mr Chairperson: So, we move down the page.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I refer to item *07-102.010 - Staff Welfare*. Could the Commissioner enlighten us? Last year provision for staff welfare was Rs3,000 now it becomes Rs500. How is it?

Mr Lisette: Normally the sum of Rs500 earmarked is for the number of staff under this department. So, the sum of Rs500 has been earmarked for the staff working at the Consumer Protection Unit. This has been decreased. A provision of Rs100 is normally made in my Commission for staff welfare in every department.

Mr Chairperson: Can we move to page 66 - Trade, Commerce & Licensing.

Mr Grandcourt: Yes, *07-103.052 - Rent* – Rs180,000. Can we have more information on this figure?

Mr Lisette: For better services to the public, Mr Chairperson, Sir. We are now having a department for Trade, Commerce & Licensing. We are renting a building of the MFPA just behind the Police Station. This is for the payment of the MFPA rent of that building.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, let us move down the page. Contribution and Benefits. Page 67, Handicraft, Personal Emoluments.

Mr J. Roussety: Sir, we have saved Rs150,000 under item *Disturbance Allowance*. Let me propose first, that an item be added for support activities to Handicraft. We could put Rs150,000 that we have saved. The budget would remain the same. There will be zero increase. We have just cut there and paste here. Support activities to Handicraft, for example, to help them in training, organisation of seminars, promotion of labels etc. I propose the Chief Commissioner to come forward with a proposal to place these Rs150,000 under an item: Support activities to Handicraft or any new denomination – to help in handicraft activities. The budget will be the same and it is the same Commission.

Mr Chairperson: This is a sensible proposal. Do you need some time to reflect upon it?

The Chief Commissioner: They want the sum of Rs150,000 which has been removed from Disturbance Allowance be added to Handicraft. We are going to the Executive Council before sending the budget.

Mr Chairperson: You won't be able to do that once it is approved.

The Chief Commissioner: Can this money be re-allocated? I don't know. Can this be done?

Mr Chairperson: Once the Budget has been approved with amendments in the Regional Assembly - I do not want to anticipate - it may be irregular to amend it and send to the Cabinet for approval. I understand we need to give a certificate that it has passed the Assembly. So, do you want some time to consider this matter?

The Chief Commissioner: There are two solutions. One is that we put a token vote or we allocate the sum for social activities.

Mr Chairperson: If you want to insert a token vote, it will be Rs10.

The Chief Commissioner: We have to work out again.

Mr Chairperson: Do you need a short break now?

Mr J. Roussety: We have agreed that the sum of Rs150,000 was not needed for the item *Disturbance Allowance*. So, we have deleted it. The Assembly has voted for it. It would not be good for us to lose it and to reduce the total amount of the Budget. We can put it somewhere, I don't know. It is the Chief Commissioner who has the sole power to propose amendments for increases. I can't do it. If I could do it, I would have already proposed the increase as we need money in this island. So, if they want to take time, I agree.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, we agree instead of losing this money otherwise, we are going to work out again the total sum. What are we going to do now? Are we going to vote the sum of Rs150,000? So, we have to deduct Rs150,000 from the sum. What we could do is have a break

for five to ten minutes to speak to our officers. And then the Chairperson can refer some sort of certification for re-allocation.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, if you come forward with an increase somewhere in the budget on any item and then it is voted by the Assembly, the draft estimates will be amended and confirmed by our Clerk here and sent to you for onward transmission to the Cabinet. So, there won't be any problem provided the Assembly approves it.

Mr J. Roussety: I am not following the film now.

Mr Chairperson: You are not following what?

Mr J. Roussety: A sort of film going on.

Mr Chairperson: No, it is not a film.

Mr J. Roussety: I mean the procedure. Could we leave the sum of Rs150,000 floating and then vote for the Budget.

Mr Chairperson: If you vote the budget, there won't be any floating.

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, it should be there. We can go until late; we are prepared to work, we are paid for that. So, please see where you can place it.

Mr Chairperson: Can I suspend the Assembly for 20 minutes?

At 2.50 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 3.15 p.m. with Mr Chairperson in the Chair.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would wish your permission to go back to a former item.

Mr Chairperson: I alluded before that, in Mauritius, the Committee of Supply is, in fact, a Committee of the whole House. It is termed the Committee of Supply after the second reading of the Appropriation Bill. True it is that for administrative purposes in this House, and in this Committee, I have ruled that we have to go seriatim. I cannot act contrary to

what I stated as a note of guidance to you, unless the Assembly approves that I go back to a previous item. This will be my ruling.

In furtherance to my ruling, I understand that the Chief Commissioner has moved that we go back to a previous item. So, we deal with this motion first and then we wait for the outcome. Does the Chief Commissioner wish to respond? If you deem it so, you may move your motion again.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we just want to respond to the wish of the Minority Leader. We can make use of the sum of Rs150,000 and reallocate it somewhere else. So, we move forward with the motion and go back to *item 07-102-001(2) - Disturbance Allowance*.

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

Mr Chairperson: Actually, there is a motion which the Committee has to debate now, unless you want to address this motion first.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know whether this motion is receivable first, according to parliamentary practice, to Erskine May, to our Standing Orders or to yourself? You have enumerated some guidelines at the beginning. I'd like to know whether this motion is receivable. You, yourself, enumerated the procedure in practice - which we all accepted - and then you allow a motion. But then, it would be a bit doubtful.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I suggest that the Chief Commissioner accepts that the money be put somewhere else where he thinks proper and we go forward – if you so wish.

(Interruptions)

We have to make concessions in this Assembly and it won't hurt anybody if we do so. It is not proper that we go backward in all our achievements on the national and international scenes.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I'd like to know whether this motion is receivable from a general point of view. I know the Assembly can decide to go back on certain items. We can vote, but in this case everything will be questionable. Every time we take a decision we encounter a problem and we have to go back. *C'est un peu bananière*.

Mr Chairperson: Mr Chief Commissioner, do you still insist on your motion?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir. In the National Assembly, even if an item has been voted, it can be recommitted to another vote; it is a practice in the National Assembly.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, true it is that it is within the purview of the Commissioners, *a fortiori* the Chief Commissioner, to propose an amendment on any item in this Budget or even to move for an increase in any item. The Standing Orders do not mention specifically what will be the mode of procedure as far as the consideration of the draft estimates in the committee is concerned.

Standing Order 31 relating to amendment to motions, states, I quote -

“Amendments shall be moved in the order of the words of the Bill or motion to which they relate and when an amendment or any part of a question has been proposed from the Chair, an earlier part cannot be amended, unless the amendments so proposed have been withdrawn.”

This Order really pertains to the wording of the motion as it stands on the Order Paper. What is included in the Budget falls outside the purview of that Order.

Standing Order 62, which states “a Committee of the whole Assembly” and subsection 3 states, I quote –

“The rules as to the procedure in the Assembly shall apply to procedure in a Committee of the whole Assembly except that a motion shall not require notice. A motion need not be seconded and a Member may speak more than once to the same question.”

It would not offend the Standing Order if a motion is received by this House and as it is presently worded by the Chief Commissioner. So, the motion is receivable and I state that it is before this Assembly for debate. Is there anybody who wishes to address this House on the motion presented by the Chief Commissioner?

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand your ruling. We have spent so much time on the previous items and we still have a lot to do. Maybe for the forthcoming items we might come across similar shortcomings that will again turn us back to the same problem again.

We, in the minority group, are not in favour of this practice as we think that it will create a precedent. It will open a door to such other problems.

Mr Chairperson: I will have to put the question again then. Yes, Mr Chief Commissioner?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I propose that we go back to *item 007-102-001 (2) – Disturbance Allowance*. In fact, we go back from pages 67 to 65.

Mr Chairperson: Will it be before or after that item?

The Chief Commissioner: No, before that item. I'd like to come with a motion to include Rs150,000 in item 07-102-001.

Mr Chairperson: In fact, you want to return to *item 07-102-001 - Disturbance Allowance*?

The Chief Commissioner: I beg to ask leave of the House that item 07-102-001 – *Disturbance Allowance* be recommitted.

Question put and agreed to.

The Chief Commissioner: Under *item 07-102-001 (Disturbance Allowance)* I move that the figure 150,000 be deleted and be replaced by Rs10 and the difference of Rs149,990 be added to provision 07-102-001 (1) from Rs429,600 to Rs579,590 under Consumer Protection Officers. Usually we have two Consumer Protection Officers. With the additional amount, we can recruit one more. Usually Consumer Protection Officers pay visits to shops and so on. As we have only two, the office remains unattended. That's why we think that this sum could be increased to allow for the recruitment of one more Protection Officer.

Mr Chairperson: One minute, please! In fact, you want to amend two items. Would you please move for the first item and then we'll deal with the second one? What I understand is that you want to substitute the figure of Rs579,590 for the figure of Rs429,600 at item Consumer Protection Officer 07-102-001 (1). Can we move again, please?

The Chief Commissioner: I move that the sum of Rs579,590 be substituted for the amount of Rs429,600 at item 07-102.001(1) Consumer Protection Officer.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

Mr J. Roussety: Je vais devoir revenir là-dessus. Les R 150,000 de *Disturbance Allowance* ont déjà été “*deleted*” tout à l’heure. So, *there is no need for any motion, it has already been deleted.*

Mr Chairperson: Yes, the hon. Member is right.

The Chief Commissioner: I said the item *Disturbance Allowance* changes from Rs150,000 to Rs10, a token vote.

Mr Chairperson: This will be in the next motion.

Mr J. Roussety: It can't be in the next motion, because we have already deleted it.

Mr Chairperson: True, it is! You are right!

Mr J. Roussety: We can't delete Rs150,000 when it does not exist.

Mr Chairperson: No, the Chief Commissioner has the power to increase or create any item and even if it has been completely deleted, he can still move to insert a figure there. This is what I understand.

Amendment agreed to.

Can we proceed with the next item?

The Chief Commissioner: Sir, I move that figure 10 be substituted for 0 in the column Estimates 2004/2005 under item *Disturbance Allowance*.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr Chairperson: Can we go back to page 67?

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think there is something incomplete. I don't want to do the work of anybody. But the 4 is still 4. You said one additional post. It must be amended to make it 5.

The Chief Commissioner: The amount provided is only for 2 officers who are in office. We have 4 posts, but only 2 are filled. That's why we would like to fill one more post.

Mr J. Roussety: But then, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have 4 for Rs429,600. Now, we add Rs150,000. Do we leave it at 4?

The Chief Commissioner: The sum earmarked here is for 2 posts, but there are 4 posts on the establishment. Two posts are filled. We are going to fill one more and we shall have 3 posts out of 4 on our establishment. We'll need one more; perhaps in the next Budget we will have four posts.

(Interruptions)

We'll make provision for same in our next budget. We have provision for 4 posts and only two are being filled. We can fill the four posts. We have appropriated money for one post. We shall have 3 out of 4.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if we look at ex ante and ex post situation, we have 4 posts. The provision of Rs429,600 is for 4 posts. This is what is written here. We don't know how many are employed. We understand that the provision of Rs429,600 is for 4 posts.

(Interruptions)

We don't know if there are less posts. How are we going to guess? And now we add Rs150,000 to it and it remains 4. We can't see unwritten figures. It is not clear. So, I have the impression that figures are hidden. Must we read 4 or 2? Rs429,600 are for four posts, now we have Rs150,000

more. So, it must be increased. This is logic. We are proposing a budget which is an “*enfantillage*”.

The Chief Commissioner: Je me souviens, qu'à l'hôpital il y avait trente postes de *Charge Nurse*. Il n'y avait pas la somme pour trente postes de *Charge Nurse*. Mais nous avons l'*establishment authorisation for thirty posts*. But we put provisions for, let's us say, 20, 30 or 15. It is the same here.

On a mis la provision pour 2 postes qui sont déjà là. Ces personnes sont déjà en poste. Mais demain si nous pouvons mettre la provision pour employer d'autres personnes, ce qui va devenir quatre, à ce moment on va augmenter. Et c'est ce qu'on a fait maintenant. On a augmenté à trois parmi ces quatre postes. On va remplir un troisième poste. Donc, il y avait 2 postes pour lesquels on n'avait pas prévu de l'argent. *It is a common practice*. Alors, pourquoi vous continuez?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please! Order, please! We are now at page 67. Can we proceed? In the light of the new provision of the Standing Orders, if this Assembly would wish to sit beyond 7.00 p.m., then the motion has to be made before 4.00 p.m. Now, we are 15 minutes to 4. We have not completed the Revenue. We need to go to page 67.

(Interruptions)

If you think that everything will be completed by 7.00 p.m, it is yours. I am only drawing your attention. So, we are back at page 67.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, je m'excuse, mais c'est comme ça. On n'a pas fini *because we would have Rs10 more on the Budget*.

Commission for Youth & Sports, Consumer Protection, Trade, Commerce & Licensing, Industrial Development & Handicraft (Rs20,911,610) was, on question put, agreed to.

Commission for Social Security, Labour and Industrial Relations and Consumer Protection was called.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item *08-101-001(9), Higher Social Security Officer*, can I have some more information on the significant increase in the amount earmarked for 2004-2005? It has more than doubled.

Mr Mercure: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have 4 Mauritian officers and then two from Rodrigues. There are six in post for the time being. This is in accordance with the PRB Report.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, last year there was a provision of Rs459,360. Now, we have Rs1,098,300 for seven officers. Has the PRB more than doubled the salary? Because Rs1,098,300 and Rs4,459,360, it is more than doubled. I have not seen this in my salary! Was this increase specific for Higher Social Security Officer? And it does not include disturbance allowance, because we have provision for disturbance allowance which is Rs390,000. How can we have such a spectacular increase?

Mr Mercure: Mr Chairperson, Sir, last year, 4 Officers were paid by the Ministry of Social Security. Now, provision is being made under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Budget.

Mr Chairperson: Can we move to page 69?

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item *08-101-053 - maintenance and running of vehicles*. Almost every year there is only a token vote for this item. Can we have more information on that?

Mr Mercure: Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the time being our vehicles are being sent to the Mechanical Workshop under the Commission for Public Infrastructure for maintenance.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is for running. These vehicles will run with what - diesel or super? There is no provision?

Mr Mercure: This provision is under vehicles – Central Administration.

Mr J. Roussety: That is good. But, in this case, Mr Chairperson, Sir, as far as this practice is concerned, would it not be appropriate for the Public Accounts Committee to have a better control on how each Commission uses

its own funds? Some Commissions may be using more funds than others. Would it not be appropriate to have each item Commissionwise? What is the purpose of having this each time? And then, it is Rs10 and this remains at the level of Central Administration. Each Commission, I believe, should have its own item for proper control. A Commission is like a cost centre so the money should be there. Probably the Commissioners for Finance and Social Security could enlighten us.

Mr Chairperson: Any response from the Chief Commissioner or the Commissioner for Social Security?

Mr J. Roussety: There is a provision of Rs6 m., Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item - *maintenance and running of vehicles*. First of all, is it sufficient? Why is it that the Rs6 m. are not apportioned among the Commissions? At the level of the Assembly we need to know as far as possible, what are the specific expenditure? This is a principle of management that, as far as possible, all expenditures of any Commission or Ministry rests within that Commission or Ministry unless it concerns costs which cannot be apportioned. What will be the role of the PAC then? How will we know how much each Commission has consumed, especially in the context of political decentralisation, autonomy, whereas we see that uniforms, security services, electricity, publications are apportioned and the same applies for postage and stamps. Why is this? Should we not do it now? In this situation, *on aurait un gonflement du budget sous la responsabilité de l'administration centrale par rapport au budget de chaque Commission. Il faudrait que chaque Commission puisse avoir son propre budget pour ses dépenses de maintenance et de gestion de véhicules, d'essence, de diesel et de gaz.*

Mr Mercure: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the details of the expenditure by each vehicle are available as there is an officer at the filling station who monitors it. We have a system to establish expenditure on the computer. Maybe this can be considered later.

Mr Agathe: Under item 08-101.403 – *Contribution to the National Pension Fund* we don't want to have another Rojoa here.

Mr Chairperson: No insinuation please

Mr Agathe: The contribution was Rs112 m. Why has there been a decrease?

Mr Mercure: This is the contribution for Basic Retirement Pension, Basic Widow's Pension, Basic Invalidity Pension and Basic Orphan Pension. It is according to the trends that prevail. The amount depends on the number of persons who are entitled to such pensions.

Vote 08-1 – Commission for Social Security, Consumer Protection and Industrial Relations (Rs139,809,600) was, on question put, agreed to.

CAPITAL REVENUE 2004/2005

Vote 50 - Grants was called

Mr J. Roussety: *Under item 50-101.002.....*

Mr Chairperson: We are still under *item 50-101.001*. There is no total, so we proceed by item.

Mr J. Roussety: Under *item 50-101.001*, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether, during his preliminary meetings with the Ministry of Finance, this item has been agreed or is it only an indicative item which means that it can be increased or decreased?

The Chief Commissioner: Usually it is the Cabinet of Ministers who decides on the quantum. But during our discussions with the officers of the Ministry of Finance and the Minister, himself, we have expressed our wish concerning the budget of Rodrigues. This figure has been worked out with the Finance Cadre and it seems that this is the sum, which can be approved by Cabinet. Nevertheless, this sum can be increased. That is why we have our Budget prior to 30 March and this will be presented to the Cabinet of Ministers in April, and if the Cabinet of Ministers sees that the amount can be increased, we will have to work out our Budget. I think usually it is a sum, which is agreed upon by the Ministry of Finance.

Mr J. Roussety: Under *item 50-101.002 - European Development Fund (EDF/NAU/EPU)*, I would like to know why there is a token vote of

Rs10 when the Central Government has financing agreements and, grossly - I don't say exactly - according to projects which are under way or which are going to be completed, we do have an estimate of how much EDF will contribute. If EDF effectively contributes afterwards, our Budget will remain at Rs427 m., but the contribution from Central Government will fall; it will be less by that amount of EDF contribution. I would like to know why we don't have estimates for this, because in the National Budget we do have such estimates of contribution. I believe it is high time. Why is it like this?

The Chief Commissioner: Usually what is mentioned in our Budget is Government's contribution, because the loans are not sent directly to the Ministry or the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The loans are being sent to the Ministry of Economic Planning and the money sent to Rodrigues does not therefore appear on the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Budget. What is being mentioned in our Budget is the contribution of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in this project.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, how can it be contribution when we are examining revenue? Contribution should be under item expenditure. Here, it is the amount that the EDF would contribute to our Capital Budget, for example, formerly it was through the FED Project and Anti Erosion Programme. So, my point is - if the EDF contributes and then we have a budget of Rs427 m, our budget will remain at Rs427 m, but the effective contribution from Government would be less. Would we add the Rs427 m. to whatever contribution we have? Is it possible for the Commissioner of Finance to have an estimate - this is the job of a Commissioner of Finance - of revenue and expenditure for the coming financial year? It is too easy to come to the Assembly with token votes of Rs10. This is not serious. Would the Commissioner of Finance have estimates of EDF Contribution? We have financing agreements with them. We know how much they will contribute. From an accounting point of view, for the sake of clarity it should be there. The same applies to IFAD, which has an ongoing project.

The Chief Commissioner: The EDF Funding is not in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The EDF Funding is a grant, which is over and above the Rs427 m. In the next financial year we are negotiating to continue with the Anti-Erosion Programme - soil and water conservation; and this programme has not yet been signed, but we say that this is a grant which is over and above. It will not be decreased. But it will be mentioned later on

in the budget 2004-2005 for the future projects. This is a grant over and above the Rs427 m.

Mr J. Roussety: But Mr Chairperson, Sir, if it is over and above the Regional Assembly Budget, why is it in the Capital Budget? If it is over and above, that is, it is outside our Budget. It would be very helpful if we could have a copy of the Budget for Mauritius for ease of reference.

Mr Chairperson: Minority, are you still intervening on that item or I'll put the question?

Mr J. Roussety: Yes.

Mr Chairperson: Are you awaiting the reply from the Commissioner of Finance?

The Chief Commissioner: As I said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this grant is being given through the Ministry of Economic Planning. This money is not being managed by us. We don't administer this grant. It is administered by consultants chosen by the EDF to run the project here. But then we signed the Protocol; it is said that there will be a contribution on the part of Government and that is why this is always mentioned in the Budget as Contribution from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. This is a grant which is not administered by us, but by the project manager who has been selected on contract and the consultants also.

Mr J. Roussety: It is not true Mr Chairperson, Sir, to say that it is not administered by us, because, for example, for the Anti-Erosion Programme, we have a National Authorising Officer (NAO). There is a Steering Committee for these projects with representatives from Government and the Funding Agency - the European Union. No expenditure can be made unless there is an authorisation from the NAO and the Funding Agency and these are clear expenditure under the capital item in Rodrigues, for example, for construction of dams. I understand it is difficult to have a clear estimates. At least, estimates which are correct would be most welcome. I remember I saw in the Capital Budget from Mauritius that these contributions from foreign Governments are listed in the Budget of the Ministry of Finance. Here, we are speaking of autonomy; just as the bus/lorry loaders we should, as far as possible, be descriptive of what is being done. If I bring this Budget in my H.S.C class or I put it in a library in any college, which must

be done, the students will ask: “You pay EDF only Rs10!” This is misleading *et ce n’est pas bien en plus envers le Funding Agency qui place beaucoup d’argent dans le pays. Je ne vous dis pas de surestimer. On sait quels sont les projets qui vont venir. On sait statisquement qu’avec l’Union Européenne, il y a un trend; on a eu R 10, 12 ou 14 millions en telle année. C’est arrivé à R 20 millions. Cela a augmenté par 2 millions par an. On ne va pas mettre R 2 millions. On met un million en plus. Donc, c’est cela le job du Commissaire des Finances. Et cela s’est fait dans le Capital Budget à Maurice.*

Mr Chairperson: I have understood what you have said. Is there any response?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this EDF project is with the Government of Mauritius through the Minister of Economic Planning; the officer there, is the National Authorising Officer and he is the Director of Economic Planning and not a Rodrigues Regional Assembly staff. Authorisation to incur expenditure comes from Mauritius to take the loans/grants into account. We cannot commit future funds in Rodrigues Regional Assembly Budget. This, as I explained, is a question that we don’t deal directly with the European Union. We do it through the Ministry of Economic Planning and the Head of the Steering Committee, usually, is the Director of Economic Planning. In the Protocol *d’accord - La Convention - il y a plusieurs aspects de cette convention. Tout comme à Maurice, les différents ministères apportent leurs contributions au niveau de chaque projet, à Rodrigues aussi, la Commission des Travaux, de la Fonction Publique, de l’Agriculture, des Forêts, de l’Environnement et autres apportent aussi leurs contributions. Donc, pour l’instant, on n’a pas encore signé le prochain projet. Il s’agit du projet 2004-2005. Nous attendons voir. Et à ce moment là, nous ne pouvons prendre un engagement concernant le futur projet de l’Union Européenne à Rodrigues. C’est pourquoi il y a une somme de Rs10.*

Vote 50 – Grants (Rs10) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 51 – Loans was called

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to speak on 51-102.001. I understand this is for the IFAD. As regards this IFAD item, is it actually a loan or is it a grant - the IFAD project in Rodrigues? We are

speaking of loans to the Regional Assembly. Is it loan and is it for the Regional Assembly or the Central Government? Is it loan or grant i.e is it refundable, the money which is spent on the IFAD project? And Second, is it with us or should it not be with those who have undertaken the loans - the Central Government?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: It is a loan to the Government and offered to Rodrigues by way of grant.

Mr J. Roussety: But, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we cannot mix up things. Here under our Regional Assembly in the Capital Budget we have an item vote as token, but we know they cannot put an estimate of expenditure. We have an item of grants and which is under loans. It is not refundable! Why is it under loans when it is not refundable? Moreover, it is not a loan to the Regional Assembly. Is it a loan to the Regional Assembly? It is here, this means it is refundable, whereas a grant is not. *Le problème est là si ce n'est pas un loan. Pour un loan, le principe est que c'est remboursable avec intérêt. Si vous ne remboursez pas, vous aurez des problèmes; tandis qu'un grant ce n'est pas remboursable. Donc, est-ce que c'est bien de mettre IFAD, qui n'est pas un loan, sous loans? On nous a dit que c'est un grant.*

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we form part of the Central Government and the IFAD is a loan, it is not a grant; and I think that the interest rate is about 3 to 4%. That is why the Government says it is loan money and there are some projects. That is why Government wants projects of a productive nature or community projects or micro projects. That is why this money is being borrowed to people for micro projects. This is a loan to the Central Government, not to us.

Mr J. Roussety: Not to us?

The Chief Commissioner: No, not to us. You should know that we put the International Fund for Agricultural Development Rural Diversification Project, because there is an item in the Capital Budget for that. There is a contribution in this project, in this loan.

Mr J. Roussety: The Commissioner for Arts and Culture is saying it is a grant and the Chief Commissioner is saying it is a loan. What is happening to our finances? They are making a mockery of our finances. One is saying "x", the other is saying "y". And our budget, Mr

Chairperson, Sir, is completely different from that of the National Assembly. Our vote for expenditure is one item. Rodrigues does not have to refund these loans and we can't keep here, we shall have a burden on ourselves. This item is not a loan item and should not appear there.

The principle is there, it is not a loan, it should not be under the item – loans; it could be there only if it is refundable, but here it is not refundable. This is misleading and against the public financial principles. It should be under grants for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the Chief Commissioner said it is included in the budget, it is in the Rs427,000 which Government has received and has given us. So, why is it not specific for the European Development Fund?

Nous ne pouvons accepter des trucs pareils, M. le président. Si quelqu'un regarde cet item, il va dire qu'il y a des sources extérieures des loans avec lesquels le budget va être financé, alors que ce n'est pas le cas. Donc, fondamentalement, je pense que cet item serait mieux placé en haut - grants. And I don't know whether I am authorised to move for a motion for this? This is not an increase, it is not a new addition, it is only to move an item.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, you can try.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we said it is a loan to the Central Government, that the Central Government gives a grant to Rodrigues. As you know in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, we can borrow money from any financial institution.

(Interruptions)

We have not yet borrowed any money, that's why the loans are here. If in the future, we can borrow money from any financial institution, we can do it. Concerning this Rodrigues Regional Assembly Diversification Project, it is a grant from the Central Government to Rodrigues and the IFAD project has many components – community, it is a grant. Then you have micro projects – you reimburse the money. So, we have 2 kinds of attributions of IFAD money to Rodrigues. Those who borrow money from IFAD have to reimburse the money with interest. Here, it is a question of the participation of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in this money which is being granted to Rodrigues.

Vote 50 – Grants was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 51 – Loans (Rs10) was called and agreed to.

Vote 52 – Return from Investment was called.

Mr Jabeemissar: Sir, can we have some explanations about the form of investment, which is involved here?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: You have put a question, don't you want to have an answer?

Mr Jabeemissar: I am waiting for the answer and I come with a second question.

Mr Chairperson: No, this is premature.

The Chief Commissioner: It is also said in the law that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly can invest in any activities or companies; this is the right of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is why when we invest in a budget, we must be able to foresee how much we are going to get from investment and how much we are going to invest. That's why we don't agree with the token votes that appear everywhere.

Vote 52 – Return from investments (Rs10) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 53 – Miscellaneous (Rs10) was called and agreed to.

Mr Chairperson: We move to services under the control of the Chief Commissioner.

Mr J. Roussety: Sir, under item 30-101.010 – *Promotion of Tourism*, concerning the provision of Rs1 m. proposed, can we know what is that intended for? What is, first, the strategy for these Rs1 m. and why is it that

last year we had appropriated Rs1 m.? Why is it that they are proposing to spend only Rs300,000. This year they will spend Rs300,000, they have not been able to spend the Rs1 m. They are putting Rs1 m. again. This is not good budgeting, because budgeting should be on the last year's expenditure which will amount to Rs300,000. What is the purpose of putting Rs1 m. again if next year they will come back with Rs300,000?

So, first, what is the Rs1 m. destined to? And second why is it that they have had such a low outcome when we know that tourism is called upon to be the backbone of the economy?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is meant for the promotion of tourism. It is sometimes to help ARTO in its initiative to promote Rodrigues as a tourist destination. There is still money to be spent on the *Association des gîtes et des chambres d'hôtes* which we will have in Rodrigues, *le Salon de la gastronomie et aussi pour la participation des groupes culturels dans d'autres pays, par exemple, nous aurons un groupe culturel qui va participer en France au festival de Gros le Roi et aussi d'autres activités de promotion touristique.*

Mr J. Roussety: *Je crois que la somme d'un million de roupies est insuffisant pour la promotion du tourisme. Peut-être parcequ'ils n'ont pas de stratégie pour promouvoir le tourisme vraiment.* There were savings of Rs700,000 last year; would he consider increasing the promotion of tourism? We are having more hotels; they are re-organising tourism *d'une façon un peu douteuse. Est-ce qu'il va considérer la possibilité de mettre, par exemple, R 2 m. ou R 2.5 m. pour le tourisme?*

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, Il y a aussi la participation de ces associations. Mais je pense que demain si nous aurons un bureau du tourisme, on va faire appel à des candidatures pour tout un personnel, un bureau du tourisme à Rodrigues – Le comité du tourisme. A ce moment là on pourra augmenter la somme mais pour l'instant cette somme est gérée par le comité du tourisme à Rodrigues et à travers les différentes associations, par exemple, il y a eu L'ARTO qui a été pour la promotion des vols directs Réunion – Rodrigues. Donc, une partie de cet argent a été utilisée pour financer le déplacement des groupes à la Réunion. Si demain il y a un bureau du tourisme qui est ouvert à Rodrigues, il y aura une plus grosse somme d'argent qui pourra être allouée sur cet item. En plus

de cela les hôtels, par exemple, L'ARTO et d'autres hôtels font eux-mêmes leurs propres promotions à l'extérieur en collaboration avec la MTPA.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I refer to item 30-101.013 *Marine Protected Area*. We see that this year only Rs2 m. have been earmarked compared to Rs5,000,000 in last year's budget. But money has not been disbursed and works have not yet started. I would like to have more information on this item.

The Chief Commissioner: The document for the Marine Protected Area Project has been signed. The first instalment of Rs5 m. representing the share of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has been transferred to the project account under the control of the UNDP. The project staff will now be recruited to implement the project. The project site is the lagoon between Ilot Combranie and La Passe Longain, as well as the coastal zone bordering the corresponding shore line, including the water shed.

Mr J. Roussety: I support this project strongly. I remember that in my first speech I made an appeal for marine reserves. But one aspect in the setting up of marine reserves is the compensation to fishermen and fisherwomen. Does the sum of Rs2 m. include compensation to be paid to fishermen and, if no, whether they are going to get compensation? Because they have a right to compensation. It is an aspect of setting up a marine reserve. In the Carribbean, in St. Lucie where there have been the setting up of marine reserves, fishermen had been compensated for the loss of income, because they would not be allowed to fish in the marine protected area.

The Chief Commissioner: This project does not include compensation to fishermen. But proposals have been made to the Ministry of Finance to compensate not only for this project, but the fishermen at large so that they can relinquish their fishermen cards and get themselves involved in other economic activities. This has been proposed to the Ministry of Fisheries. I have been told that a paper will be presented to the Cabinet of Ministers in the near future. But the fishermen will also participate in the project. Some will be employed in the project not as Fisheries Guards, but rangers and women also can be employed. But you know in this protected area there will be fishing, but not any kind of fishing. I think this will be very beneficial for these fishermen in the protection area if they are engaged in a special kind of fishing in the Marine Protected Area. They might earn

more. As regards compensation, this is another problem, which is being dealt with by the Ministry of Fisheries.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have heard the Chief Commissioner talking about tourist activities. Will the tourism activities be within the marine protected area or somewhere else?

The Chief Commissioner: If the Member could come with a substantive question, I will give the information.

Mr Grandcourt: The Chief Commissioner has talked about tourism activities as proposals. We want to have more information about these proposals. Will they be within the protected area or somewhere else?

Mr Chairperson: I do understand that the Chief Commissioner said that there will be specific types of fishing within these protected areas. Is this what the Member meant by tourism activities?

(Interruptions)

If the Member has said tourism activities, maybe he should be more specific.

The Chief Commissioner: Some fishing activities can be done. But I can't say what types of fishing activities. These will appear in the project itself. It will specify these kinds of activities. I cannot say now what kind of activities. The project will define what kind of activities are going to be done in this marine protected area.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, il y a tout une conscientisation à faire concernant la mise en place de ce *marine protected area*. Comment va-t-on procéder? Est-ce qu'on mettra des bouées autour du *marine protected area*? Est-ce qu'il y aura une législation spécifique? Ce n'est pas clair ce projet-là. Nous représentons *l'alternative* immediate, *in the near future, most probably. The next elections are due in 2007 and it could be before that. Mr Sooprayen is saying in 20 years.* Dans 20 ans, on aura peut-être le buste de M. Sooprayen, je ne sais pas.

The Chief Commissioner: C'est un projet échelonné sur cinq ans. Il y aura tout un personnel comprenant des techniciens, des consultants. C'est

un projet de R 70 millions sur 5 ans. Donc, je ne peux dire aujourd'hui quels types d'activités auront lieu dans cette zone. Il appartiendra à ces consultants de définir. C'est pourquoi on a commencé à lancer des appels de candidature pour recruter les personnes nécessaires. C'est un projet de haut niveau qui étudiera l'aspect à terre. Il y aura une certaine superficie qui va être protégée à terre pour empêcher l'érosion dans cette partie de la mer. C'est au cours de la mise en pratique du projet que les experts vont dire quels types d'activités il y aura. Et il y aura tout un travail d'éducation, d'information auprès de la communauté de pêcheurs ainsi que les hôteliers. Cela aussi est très important. Des pêcheurs disent qu'il y a des problèmes dans cette zone avec les activités touristiques telles que *kite surfing*. C'est cette équipe qui va travailler avec les *stakeholders*. Une décision sera prise après consultation avec tous les pêcheurs, les personnes de la région et tous ceux qui sont concernés. Ce n'est pas un projet qu'on impose sur les gens, mais on les met dans le coup. Et cela est très important. Je ne peux rien dire pour le moment. Il faut que cette équipe qui aura la responsabilité de ce projet se met en place. C'est un projet de R 70 millions sur cinq ans et comme j'ai dit, tout à l'heure, le *Rodrigues Regional Assembly* doit participer autour de R 35 millions. Nous avons déjà contribué R 5 millions dans le fonds d' UNDP et nous allons contribuer encore R 2 millions. Nous sommes déjà en retard. Le projet aurait dû commencer depuis l'année dernière. Mais il y a eu toute la question de la paperasse et ainsi de suite.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner tell us at this stage, what preliminary work has been done concerning the project?

The Chief Commissioner: Je l'ai dit, M. le président, le document a été préparé et signé. Bientôt, nous allons lancer l'appel de candidature pour le Project Manager comme on a fait pour le *Integrated Sustainable Integrated Development Plan* qu'on va commencer cette année-ci. Donc, nous sommes à un stade où le projet a été signé, un accord entre le RRA et le UNDP à travers le ministère du développement économique. Nous allons lancer l'appel de candidature, le recrutement du personnel et ainsi de suite. On va identifier le siège du projet et la construction du bâtiment.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I refer to item 30-101.014 *Lagoon Regeneration Project (dredging works)*. Out of a sum of Rs 5 m., only Rs387,300 have been used for this project. This year a sum of Rs2 m.

has been earmarked. May we have more information as to why only Rs387,300 have been used up to now?

The Chief Commissioner: This item is meant to dredge the new fishing port and also the passes around Rodrigues Island. Our problem is that we thought that the Mauritius Port Authority could have the necessary equipment for this dredging, but, unfortunately, they don't have it. They have only a pontoon, a barge. They have to buy a pontoon for Rs10 m. That is why all the money could not be spent. But these funds will be made available for other projects.

Mr J. Rousseety: M. le président, je me permets de me référer au budget de l'année dernière 2003-2004. Concernant cet item, on nous dit l'année dernière que '*almost all the Rodrigues' lagoons have been filled with important erosion materials and corals*'. Il n'y a pas mention de *dredging of fishing port* à Pte Monier cette année aussi.

(Interruption)

J'avais dit comme mon discours qu'ils ont une faible capacité à mettre en oeuvre des projets. C'est aberrant qu'on ait mis R 5 millions l'année dernière. On a mis cet item simplement comme une mesure électorale. On ne dépense pas l'argent et le lagon de Rodrigues est très *silted*. Et cette année on fait provision seulement de R 2 millions. Pourquoi est-ce qu'on n'a pas remis les R 5 millions? L'année dernière, le RRA avait fait provision d'une somme de R 5 millions, mais les travaux n'ont pas été effectués. Maintenant au lieu d'augmenter le budget, ils le réduisent.

(Interruption)

Ils acceptent qu'ils ont surestimé la somme l'année dernière et qu'ils ont fait une erreur. Et cela n'est pas sérieux! Les ressources financières sont limitées dans le pays. On aurait pu mettre R 400,000 l'année dernière et avec la somme de Rs 4.5 millions, on aurait pu construire des écoles maternelles. C'est de l'argent qui est perdu à cause de l'incompétence et de l'incapacité à gérer des projets. Je vais demander pourquoi on avait mis R 5 millions l'année et cette année on a mis que R 2 millions. Est-ce que ce projet n'est plus une priorité?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, quand on met un item dans le budget, c'est avec l'intention de faire le travail. Mais, en cours de route, on vous dit qu'il n'y pas d'équipements. Cet argent n'est pas perdu. Il est ré-alloué à d'autres projets concernant l'éducation, la route ou l'eau. On étudie la question avec la *Mauritius Port Authority* pour voir si les équipements seront disponibles cette année et on a fait une provision de R 2 millions pour commencer le travail et se servir de l'argent pour mettre en chantier d'autres projets. Nous sommes en constante communication avec la *Mauritius Port Authority* parcequ'il n'y a qu'eux qui possèdent ce type d'équipements. Ils ont déjà leur chaland. Il faudrait voir s'ils pourront acquérir tous ces équipements pour commencer le travail.

Mr Grandcourt : M. le président, le Chef Commissaire vient de nous faire savoir qu'il y a eu un problème d'équipement en cours de route. Mais si on se réfère à la question B/397, notre collègue, M Allan Ladd Emilien, aujourd'hui absent, avait demandé où on était avec le projet et de quels outils on se servait. Le Chef Commissaire avait répondu qu'on le faisait, "*manually*" and now he is saying that there is a problem of equipment. Là on ne comprend vraiment pas! On aurait bien pu faire avancer ce projet en se servant de pioches et de pelles.

Peut-être qu'ils ne savent pas combien l'environnement marin est important pour Rodrigues! Ils nous font attendre en disant qu'il y a un manque d'équipements, M. le Président, cela nous fait poser beaucoup de questions.

The Chief Commissioner: *Il faut faire une différence entre maintenance of sea passes which is being done manually and lagoon regeneration project which is dredging and which is a bigger work. There are some passes that need to be dug with machines as was done in the past. I do not know whether we remember how the marine services here in the past had pontoons and they could go up to Oyster Bay to dig the passes and this work can last for many, many years instead of having people digging passes. This can be done in places where there is low tide. In other places where there is high tide, the passes need to be widened up to 10 meters, this cannot be done manually. It is only the small passes that can be done manually and not the big ones.*

Mr Grandcourt: Je comprends, M. le Président. Pourquoi, par exemple, dans le projet on n'a pas fait la passe allant jusqu'à l'île aux Cocos? On ne peut pas me dire qu'on a besoin d'une dizaine de mètres de passe pour y aller. Pourquoi cela n'a pas été inclus dans le projet? Et il a ensuite dit qu'il faut faire la différence entre *maintenance of sea passes and lagoon regeneration project*. Je ne comprends pas.

Mr Chairperson: This question is far from the original one. Remember we are at committee stage to discuss the draft estimates. Can you rephrase your question? We go back to where we had reached, to page 2. Is there any comment on the Environment Unit?

Mr Grandcourt: *Item 015 -Protection of the environment*, can the Chief Commissioner explain why only Rs141,770 have been used up to February, 2004. Can we have more information?

The Chief Commissioner: Is the Member talking about the item where Rs5 m. have been earmarked?

Mr Chairperson: Yes, during most part of the debate we are referring to the past Budget. I have given latitude. What is before this Committee?

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we see that for Budget 2003/2004, only Rs141,770 have been used in the last Budget. The Chief Commissioner has earmarked for this year Rs5 m. I would like to ask him whether he would be able to use all that money because out of R5 m. only Rs141,770 were spent.

The Chief Commissioner: Rs5 m. are funds required for -

- (i) the creation of a proper waste disposal site at Grenade in replacement of Roche Bon Dieu dumping site which will become saturated soon. The tender documents with detailed terms of reference for the feasibility/EIA studies are being finalised by the Commission for Public Infrastructure, and
- (ii) the upgrading of public beaches of St. François and Pointe Coton in line with the plan under preparation by the Consultants employed under the global Mananagement Consultancy Services. To date funds have been used for embellishment, landscaping and the fencing of beaches at St.

François and Mourouk to prevent vehicular traffic from spoiling the natural environment. An amount of Rs470,670 has been earmarked for embellishment projects and remaining funds will be utilised by the end of this financial year.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, *Item 016 Control of Soil Erosion*, when we look at the figures estimated for 2003/2004, we see that there was a very good intention, namely Rs20 m. were earmarked although by February half of the amount was spent. But can we get more information from the Chief Commissioner for the Estimates 2004/2005. Why has this sum decreased considerably up to R1 m.?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, this project of control soil erosion for 2003/2004 is for the payment of salaries to the 187 contract workers.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order. We are examining capital projects and they are speaking of salaries. This is not correct to grossly misleading the House. This is Capital budget. We can't speak of salaries. The salaries are already provided in the Budget.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

The Chief Commissioner: Ce sont des travailleurs qui sont sous contrat. C'est la contribution, comme nous l'avons dit tout à l'heure, du RRA dans le cadre de ce projet de l'Union Européenne. Si vous n'aimez pas le mot 'salaire' on peut dire 'allocation'. Ce sont des allocations.

As regards the Anti-Erosion Programme, I'd like to inform that the project is being closed on 30 June 2004. However, the project accounts will be closed at the end 30 December 2004. The revised Rs20 m. will be used for project activities and payment of salaries and gratuities to the 187 workers under the project. The R1m. for year 2004/2005 will be used for adjustment purpose in connection with commitments to be paid after 30 June 2004.

Mr Jabeemissar: Therefore, Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to the reply of the Chief Commissioner, no money has been earmarked for projects to combat soil erosion. A major issue has not been given due consideration. Money has just be used for payments. But what money has been earmarked to protect the environment?

The Chief Commissioner: This is shown on the EDF Project. EDF is doing the work. L'Union Européenne est en train de faire le travail. C'est cela la contribution de RRA dans ce projet. Maintenant le prochain projet n'a pas été discuté encore. Et entretemps, il y a de l'argent là et on va essayer de travailler avec.

(Interruptions)

Non, quand un projet FED termine, il y a toujours un temps avant que le projet ne se réalise. Moi, je connais des projets FED qui sont venus après un an, deux ans. On ne peut pas prendre un *commitment* pour dire que le projet FED va continuer. Donc, Il y a des négociations qui sont en cours. Quand le projet va commencer, ça va prendre du temps avant de le mettre en route du fait qu'il y a des consultants et ainsi de suite.

(Interruptions)

Oui, il y aura un autre programme qui peut-être va suivre. Et c'est pourquoi on a prévu un item, qu'on n'a pas encore mis. Donc, on ne peut pas prévoir ce qui va arriver. On ne peut prendre un *commitment* vis à vis de l'Union Européenne ni du gouvernement central aussi. Il faudrait qu'il y ait d'abord des discussions sur le prochain projet FED, après que celui ci prenne fin.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mais, M. le Président, Il y a quelque chose qui n'est pas trop clair. Le Chef Commissaire a parlé de "*commitments*". Est-ce qu'il y a un projet défini par le conseil exécutif concernant la protection de l'environnement ou bien c'est le FED qui décide de la politique en matière de protection. Est-ce-que c'est lui qui vient avec le projet ou c'est le conseil exécutif qui a déjà identifié le projet et qui attend l'aide du FED?

The Chief Commissioner: C'est le *Steering Committee* qui est présidé par M. Guy Wong So, le Directeur du Ministère du plan, et qui est maintenant aux finances. Ce *Steering Committee* est composé des fonctionnaires du RRA, de l'Union Européenne et les fonctionnaires du ministère du plan. Ce *Steering Committee* se rencontre régulièrement et très souvent les fonctionnaires de la Commission de l'Union Européenne viennent pour discuter le type de projet. Il y a aussi les techniciens du service de l'agriculture, des forêts, des travaux, qui sont là et qui donnent leurs opinions. C'est bien de savoir que les techniciens de l'agriculture

donnent leurs opinions sur certains aspects du développement de Rodrigues concernant l'anti érosion.

Mr Grandcourt: M. le président, il s'agit de notre environnement. On ne peut attendre. Vous avez dit que les projets des fois démarrent après deux ans. Admettons que le projet démarre après un an. Je crois personnellement qu'on aurait dû prévoir une somme d'argent, un minimum d'argent, pour parer à toute éventualité si jamais le projet ne vient pas.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le Président, il y a quand même les employés des forêts, de l'agriculture qui continuent leur travail. Ils sont employés pour protéger l'environnement. Ils continuent à faire les canalisations, les terrasses et ainsi de suite. Ce travail continue. Il faut faire la différence entre les gens qui sont dans le projet FED. Il y a les forêts et il y a les travailleurs de l'agriculture qui travaillent dans le projet FED. Depuis quatre ans, il y a eu l'emploi de ces 187 pour venir aider justement. Il y a aussi ce projet FED où on donnait des contrats à des personnes. Les planteurs eux même payaient des gens pour réhabiliter les terrasses. Donc, il y a toujours un travail de suivi qui est fait par les travailleurs du service agricole, des forêts et de l'environnement.

The Chairperson: Yes, next item, Civil Aviation.

The Minority Leader: Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning the item Civil Aviation, I would like to have a clarification. The actual expenditure from July 2002 to February 2004 is Rs328,970 and the revised provision would be Rs300,000, which is short of Rs28,970. If the expenditure has been done up to Rs328,970 which is now going to be Rs300,000, I would like to know how is this possible, Mr Chairperson?

Mr Chief Commissioner: Yes, I think, it is a typing error. It should be Rs 800,000.

The Chairperson: Yes, if it is a typing error, what will be the remedy?

The Chief Commissioner: I propose that we do not vote for the revised column. It should be corrected.

Mr J. Roussety: We have had expenditure up to February 2004, which is Rs328,970. The revised amount cannot be less. It could be the same or more.

Mr Chairperson: I understand the Chief Commissioner to say that what we are presently discussing is the details of the estimates for the year 2004-2005 and this is the only part which is subject to the approval of the Assembly.

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, unless he wants to leave errors to stay. One explanation that I can give is that maybe there could have been an overpayment and that there would be a refund of Rs28,970. So, do they want the budget to go with errors? Mr Chairperson, Sir, they want to leave it as it is.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, any response? The question from the Minority Leader is whether the budget will stand as it is and approved by the Assembly with this typing error or whether there will be any amendment to it?

The Chief Commissioner: I move that the amount of Rs800,000 be substituted for the amount of Rs300,000 at item .020 - New Terminal Building.

Question put and agreed to.

Vote 30-101.020 New Terminal Building.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item 30-101.020 - New Terminal Building concerning the sum of Rs400,000 for this year, in the memorandum it is earmarked for Government buildings in the New Passenger Terminal. Are these Government buildings rented from the Airports of Rodrigues?

Mr Chairperson: Which item are you referring to, please? I am sorry.

Mr J. Roussety: The same item, the estimates for the next financial year.

The Chief Commissioner: The sum of Rs400,000 is provided to complete the infrastructural works for offices which shall remain under the care of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly – the Control Tower, the Meteorological Office and the Customs Office; the Air Traffic Control

Tower is not meant to be rented to the RAM. An amount of Rs328,970 has been spent up to date from the provision of this financial year.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item 30-101.021 *Fisheries Development*. In 2003-2004 Budget the sum of Rs1 m was earmarked. Up to now nothing has been spent though for the next financial year an amount of Rs1.7 m has been earmarked. When we look at the memorandum it is said that it is for the purchase of equipment and construction of offices and so on. Unless more details are given, we cannot see how this sum of Rs1.7 m will be spent.

The Chief Commissioner: The provision of Rs1.7 m is required to repair fishing vessel François Leguat, to assist Diego Rodriguez in training operations at sea, for the purchase of laboratory equipment and materials for the Fisheries Protection Service and for the construction of fish landing stations. The sum of Rs124,278 has been spent under the provision for the current financial year and savings will be utilised by the end of this year to construct about 3 or 4 more fish landing stations, small ones, for fishermen with shelters and for the fishers' cards.

Mr Jabeemissar: Have the sites for these fish landing stations already been identified?

The Chief Commissioner: This falls under the responsibility of the Fisheries Department. I can't say exactly, but if the Member would come with a substantive question at the next sitting, I will give the information.

Vote 30-101 Services under the control of the Chief Commissioner (Rs46,900,020) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 30-102 Services under the control of the Deputy Chief Commissioner was called.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item 30-102.002 *Buildings*, we see that a sum of Rs15 m has been earmarked. Is this for the construction of new buildings or for the completion of works? Because we see buildings which are being constructed for years in this country. Are these included under this Rs1.5 m?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the sum provides for the completion and renovation of *La Résidence* and the purchase of its furniture and fittings for 2003-2004, the completion of the office blocks at La Ferme, the renovation of stores at Port Mathurin Bus Terminal and the payment of consultancy fee for the construction of a new office block, library in Port Mathurin. For the financial year 2004/2005, provision has been made to complete the construction of the new office/library complex at Port Mathurin and the whole budget is for that project.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, under item 30-102.004 – *Water Distribution for Irrigation*, the total amount budgeted for 2004/2005 is Rs2.8 m and according to the memorandum, this includes consultancy fee and so on. As regards the implementation of the Irrigation Project at Grand Var, I would like to know at what stage is the project now and where will water be available for that project and what will be its expected outcome?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under item Water Distribution for Irrigation, we have made provision for the Grand Var Irrigation Project. Where things stand, I shall ask the Member to come with a substantive question.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, about the sum of Rs2.8 m, according to the memorandum, we see that provision has been made for the payment of Consultancy fee for Grenade Dam and Cascade Victoire. We already have dams in Rodrigues like Telbert Dam which have been desilted and which is actually full of water. No provision has been made in this budget. This water has not been used ...

Mr Chairperson: But this is a matter of policy outside the scope of this committee.

Mr Grandcourt: Can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner why no provision has been made here?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have made a statement in this Assembly on Telbert Dam. I shall request the Member to refer to this statement.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, but I have disallowed this question. This relates to policy.

Vote 30-102 Services under the control of the Deputy Chief Commissioner (Rs205,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 30-103 Services under the Control of the Commissioner for Arts & Culture was called.

Mr J Roussety: Yes, Sir, the first item. The Commissioner for Arts & Culture intends to set up a Regional Cultural and Leisure Centre at Lataniers. This year, a sum of Rs 12 m. is earmarked while last year it was only Rs9 m. and from this sum only Rs 500,000 will be spent. May we know from the Commissioner what he proposes to do in order that proper implementation is made of the sum earmarked in the Budget? Because, Mr Speaker, Sir, last year more than Rs8,500,000 were not spent on that project and this year we have a sum of Rs12 m.

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I said during my intervention on the budget, this project has already undergone all the preliminary procedures and is now at the final tender stage. Tenders will be opened next Wednesday, that is, in two days' time. The contract will be awarded by 22 April and works are expected to start by the end of the same month. So, right from the beginning, we will have to effect payments for April (mobilisation fee: about Rs1.6 m.). By May there will be another Rs1 m. which we are bound to pay and by the end of June a third payment of Rs1 m will be effected.

Contingency fees will amount to about Rs500, 000. There is an advance payment of Rs1 m. by May and a final payment is expected to be made by the end of the financial year. Some Rs4.1 m. will be used out of the sum budgeted for the year 2003/2004.

Mrs Meunier: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under items 30-103.001 and 30-103.002, only Rs426,900 were used up to February and a further sum of Rs 800,000 is expected to be used. Under the Estimates 2004/2005 a sum of Rs17 m. is earmarked for these two items. Can the Commissioner give more details about the project, especially the Integrated Centre for Women?

Mrs Perrine-Begué: I think I've already given the first part of the information as regards the Regional Cultural and Leisure Centre where we expect to spend some Rs4.1 m. As regards the Integrated Centre for Women, we have already started the procedures. We have had some negotiations with regard to the site on which the building will be constructed. The money earmarked in the revised Estimates 2003/2004 for the Integrated Centre for Women is for architectural fees for design and drawings. Negotiations are held presently with the owner of the land so that we might be able to take over after the Government Valuer has done the necessary valuation.

Vote 30-103 - Services under the control of Commissioner for Arts & Culture (Rs17,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 30-104 - services under the Control of Commissioner for Education, etc. was called.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under *item 30-104.001 - Construction/Extension of Secondary Schools*. I don't see anything in the memorandum. Can we have some enlightenment insofar as the Rs55 m. earmarked?

Mr Chairperson: The relevant information can be found at page 18 of the Capital Budget.

Mr J. Roussety: Thank you. May we have a breakdown of this amount? Because it is quite a big sum for secondary schools.

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this amount concerns payments effected for works done. There was retention money at Marechal College, at Mont Lubin and Citron Donis. Payments were made for the provision of furniture at Le Chou and Marechal; I am afraid I don't have a breakdown of the figure for this, because the upgrading of Grande Montagne College was also included in that amount. Insofar as Grande Montagne College is concerned, the infrastructure does not come up to standard in comparison to the other secondary schools. Grande Montagne College has only one science laboratory, with no workshops or computer rooms. So, we've earmarked some money to carry out a survey so as to improve the infrastructure of the school. We'll probably see this in the financial year

2005/2006. We will probably kick off the works in order to upgrade the college itself. Does that answer the question of the Minority Leader?

Mr J. Roussety: Je suis bien surpris de constater, M. le président, que sur un budget de R 65.5 millions, une somme de R 55 millions est prévue pour la construction ou l'extension des écoles pré-primaires et collèges secondaires et que lui-même, en tant que Commissaire, il ignore le *breakdown figure* pour un tel projet. C'est vrai qu'il y aura des améliorations aux Maréchal College, Mont Lubin SSS et Citron Donis. etc. On aimerait avoir plus de détails sur le montant dépensé pour chacun de ces collèges? Nous avons un budget régional maintenant et il faut que ce soit détaillé autant que possible. Tel n'est pas le cas ici. C'est une très grosse lacune de venir ici nous présenter R 55 millions vaguement pour un projet de construction/extension et l'achat de meubles pour des écoles. M. le président, Rodrigues est une petite île.

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I agree that I have not given the detailed figures. I am afraid the figures cannot be really defined here, but we have carried out the whole estimate of the projects in hand. But then, of course, if a question is put, I should be able to come up with the necessary figures.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, under *item 30-104.005 - Contribution for Renovation of RCA Primary School*. If I am not mistaken provision is already made for that in the Capital Budget. I think it is something around Rs25 m. Now, we have this item again. May we know for what use this sum of Rs500,000 is intended?

Mr L. Roussety: Insofar as contribution for the renovation of schools is concerned, this is recurrent, particularly for repairs to the existing buildings and the furniture as well.

Mr J. Roussety: The RCA has five schools. Will the sum earmarked be sufficient when we know the state of some of the RCA schools? According to the Commissioner, it will be an average of Rs 100,000 per school.

Mr L. Roussety: No, it is not really on a *pro rata* basis. I would wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that, for example, after cyclone Kalundé a sum of Rs500,000 was allotted to Don Bosco as part of the sum

allocated to rebuild the wing that was destroyed by the cyclone. So, we give priority to the most affected schools.

Vote 30-104 - Services under the control of the Commissioner of Education (Rs65,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 30-105 Services under the control of Commissioner for Health, etc. was called.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, *item 30-105.004 – Youth Rehabilitation – Building at Marechal ...*

Mr Sooprayen: where teenagers will be. It is an old Government Quarters.

Vote 30-105 – Services under the Control of the Commissioner of Health (Rs14,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

30-106 Services under the control of Commissioner for Youth and Sports, etc. was called.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, *item 30-106.001 – Youth Centres.* I would like to ask the Commissioner to clarify what equipment is going to be bought for the Youth Centres?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, my Commission intends to buy computers and maybe some equipment like table tennis to equip youth centres so that the youth can use them in the afternoon.

Mr Agathe: As we know Malabar is a *centre d'accueil* where there is dormitory, can we know of the equipment that is going to be put at Malabar?

Mr Lisette: The provision of Rs1 m. is also meant for upgrading the *centre d'accueil* at Malabar, because we know that many athletes from Mauritius and from abroad do use that centre whenever they come to Rodrigues. One of our priorities is to see that this *centre d'accueil* be upgraded.

Mr Grandcourt: Regarding the youth centres, it is mentioned also that there will be maintenance and upgrading. What problems exist there and what does the Commissioner intend to do?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, actually we are proceeding with the renovation of La Ferme Youth Centre. After that we are going to proceed to Petit Gabriel Youth Centre. Normally, for maintenance works, we do repainting; if the fencing is damaged, we do the repairs of same, etc.

Mrs Meunier: *Item 30-106.004 – Infrastructure, Equipment and Furniture...*

Mr Chairperson: Is there any Member who wants to intervene on items before the one mentioned by Mrs Meunier?

Mr Agathe: Yes, *item 30-106.002 – Sports Complexes*. We know that there are two sports complexes at La Ferme and Manges respectively which are under construction. Therefore, Rs3 m. have been earmarked. Now I see that there are Rs15 m. earmarked. May we know for what sports complexes they are earmarked?

Mr Lisette: In the last Budget we did say that there will be renovation of la Ferme and Manges. For La Ferme, we have already paid for the contract works. For Manges, up to now we have not paid a single cent. We are going to wait for the complete renovation of Manges, then we are going to take funds from the Rs3 m.

As for the remaining amount, the money is going to be used for starting work at Oyster Bay. The sum of Rs15 m. that is earmarked for 2004/05, it is meant for ongoing project of Oyster Bay and also of Grande Montagne gymnasium, because we feel that the evaluation of tender is completed by the end of this financial year, we are going to start with the Grande Montagne gymnasium.

Mr Agathe: I have heard the Commissioner talk about sport de masse. Can I know whether the maintenance at La Ferme is over?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, whenever a contract is awarded, when the work is completed we do have a period of guarantee. For the time

being, I should say that La Ferme Sports Complex is still under guarantee. Before this period is over we will see to it that everything is completed.

Mr J. Roussety: Would the Commissioner confirm that the Rs15 m. are meant for other projects and then if money is left then he would consider Oyster Bay Sports Complex?

Mr Lisette: When we would have paid for the renovation of La Ferme and Mangue, I know that about Rs1 m. will be left. This money will be used for the starting work at Oyster Bay. As the work is going to overlap over the next financial year, we have earmarked money in the Rs15 m. which is going to be used for completion of works.

Mr Chairperson: Tennis Court as well.

Mr Lisette: Yes.

Mr J. Roussety: Again, Mr Chairperson, Sir, regarding Oyster Bay Sports Complex, they seem not to know what is the capital amount, the project value for it. They say they will take Rs1 m. from there and will put here and then some money from the next financial year. This is not clear.

M. le président, quel est le coût du projet à Baie aux Huîtres? Les gens veulent savoir R 1 million va rester, on va dire qu'on va garder la somme pour cette année. L'année dernière, on a dit que Baie aux Huîtres avait accueilli la décision avec pétarade. Quelle pétarade! Qu'est-ce qu'il y a cette année? On aurait dû faire l'inauguration. Je n'ai pas fini.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: No interruptions, please! Yes, proceed.

(Interruptions)

Order, please! Don't get distracted, please! Proceed!

Mr J. Roussety: *What is the cost of the project at Oyster Bay?* Où est la logique de venir dire qu'on va construire un stade à Baie aux Huîtres. Les gens de Baie aux Huîtres attendent. M. le président, maintenant on nous dit que R 1 million va rester là-bas. On va prendre R 1 million de l'année

dernière et on va mettre ici et puis s'il reste de l'argent dans les R 15 millions, on va mettre dans le projet de Baie aux Huîtres. Mais quel est le coût du projet de Baie aux Huîtres dans ce budget, M. le président? Je viens ici, je dis *colleges* R 55 millions, *dredging* R 5 millions, *youth centres* R 15 millions sans aucune...

Mr Chairperson: May I interrupt you? I understand you had one point and then you are making a speech. So, put it clearly.

(Interruptions)

The Member should put his question.

(Interruptions)

Order! Order, please!

Mr J. Roussety: Quel est le coût du projet? Est-ce qu'on va dire qu'il reste R 5 millions ici, qu'il reste 50 sous ici qu'on va mettre dans le projet de Baie aux Huîtres?

Mr Chairperson: There is a point of order.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this person is making us waste our time. He has put this question, at least, four times.

Mr Chairperson: I agree there is a repetition, but he just finished now.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: So, he must put the question and we answer.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner should address me as "Minority Leader" – this is my title – and not as "this person".

Mr Chairperson: You are correct on this. So, what is the answer?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, for financial year 2003/2004, we have earmarked a sum of Rs3 m. for sports complexes. I know very well that most of the money will be used for La Ferme and Mount and out of the Rs3 m. which were earmarked, part of the funds will not be utilised. So, we

have started with all the procedures with regard to launching of tenders and now the project is at the Central Tender Board stage. On our side, we were expecting the project to cost about Rs10 m. But when the contractors made their bids, they were above Rs10 m. So, as per the procedures, we have had to go to the Central Tender Board. For the time being, we are awaiting the evaluation report of the Central Tender Board. If it comes during the coming weeks, we can use the remaining Rs1 m. which is not going to be utilised to start the project. The Rs15 m. earmarked for next year is meant for gymnasium or Oyster Bay football ground. This means that we have an amount earmarked for next financial year to be used for that particular project. I don't see why the Minority Leader is not understanding that.

(Interruptions)

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, on nous a dit qu'ils ont lancé les appels d'offres et c'est après les appels d'offres, qu'ils trouvent qu'ils doivent aller au *Central Tender Board*. Mais où est le *planning*? M. le président, cela veut dire qu'on se laisse diriger par les contracteurs.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order! Order, please!

Mr J. Roussety: You put the project and then the contractor puts a price.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, while the Minority Leader is talking, the other side of the House is disturbing him. I would wish to have your ruling, please!

Mr Chairperson: You want my ruling on this point?

Mr J. Roussety: Je crois que c'est clair, M. le président. On nous dit qu'on aura un projet – un stade à Baie aux Huîtres et puis on lance des appels d'offres. Mais quand il y a des travaux, ils ne savent pas dans quelle fourchette ces travaux vont être? Si le contracteur met R 200 millions, ils

vont mettre R 200 millions? Quel est le genre de *planning* qu'ils font? Ils doivent avoir une indication de ce qu'ils veulent. Ils veulent un gradin à cinq marches, il y a des techniciens à la commission des ingénieurs et des architectes qui peuvent estimer jusqu'où on peut aller et le *tender* ne doit pas dépasser un certain montant. Comment peut-on ouvrir les *tenders* et dire que les *tender documents* dépassent tel montant? Quel genre de *planning* font-ils? Ce sont les contracteurs qui doivent leur dire quel est le montant du projet? C'est cela leur problème, c'est le piège dans lequel Rodrigues est en train de tomber; le piège des multinationales, le piège des grandes compagnies de construction qui viennent ici pour faire de l'argent. C'est cela la transparence! Quand on met un projet, on ne demande pas au contracteur de mettre le prix. Ce n'est pas de la politique. On ne demande pas au contracteur de mettre le prix ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please, Order, please!

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, si je peux parler calmement. S'il y a un projet à Baie aux Huîtres, s'il y avait le *capital budget*, s'il y avait un *planning*, on aurait eu une estimation globale de combien cela va coûter. Il y a les ingénieurs, les *Quantity Surveyors*, tout le *staff* qui peuvent faire le travail. Donc, il est logique, qu'un projet doit tourner dans une fourchette.

J'ai l'impression que eux ils disent qu'on veut faire cela à Baie aux Huîtres: regardez ce que vous pouvez faire, soumettez les *bids*. Et puis eux ils décident de l'envoyer au *Central Tender Board*. Ce n'est pas sérieux. C'est pourquoi les projets ne sont pas en train d'aboutir. Moi, j'ai demandé combien le projet de Baie aux Huîtres coûte. Il a dit R 10 millions, puis il a dit l'année dernière, et puis le projet va être complété et inauguré. *Where is the seriousness?*

Mr Chairperson: The part of the reference to a previous speech is not allowed.

Mr Lisette: I never said that the project would be completed in the financial year 2003/2004. Maybe just to clear up the mind of the Minority Leader as regards the procedure according to the Financial Management Manual, maybe it's good to give him a lesson on this. We can say that a project will cost Rs9 m., but when the contractor bids, it is higher than Rs10

m., it is a must that we should go to the Central Tender Board. So, for those contracts which are below Rs10 m., the Departmental Head himself can approve them, but if we have three contractors who have sent bids for the contract, two of whom have bids for less than Rs10 m. and one has a bid for more than Rs10 m., ultimately we have to send the evaluation report to the Central Tender Board. This is what they are not understanding, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the Commissioner knows the Financial Management Manual very well. I have very serious doubts regarding the funds which have been allocated to La Ferme.

Mr Chairperson: But we are in Committee.

Mr Agathe: He needs Rs15 m. now. So, will he go for a Commission of inquiry?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: This is not allowed. Next item, please!

Mr Agathe: Under item 30-106.003 *Construction of Swimming Pool at Marechal*, there is a sum of Rs58 m. earmarked for the coming year. Could the Commissioner tell us if there has been a plan of activities regarding this project and what percentage of work has been achieved up to now?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally before we start a project, we are very scientific in our approach. We do ask for a cashflow of the project. For the information of the respected Member, we have already paid Rs2 m. under the swimming pool project for mobilisation costs. In March, we have already paid Rs6.5 m. and we are about to pay Rs6.7 m. this year. Normally, this project is under the consultancy of the SPDC. So, it is up to SPDC to follow the type of work that is being done and send to the Commission for recommendation to see whether the amount of work that has been completed is related to the sum asked by the contractor.

Mr Agathe: Would the Commissioner let us know whether for the coming years there is going to be a plan of activities, that is, quarterly or a medium term plan, so that we can follow him.

Mr Chairperson: You mean the contractor not the Commissioner?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally we do meet our consultant once a month. What I can assure the respected Member is that, according to the schedule, the work will be completed by end of November.

Mrs Meunier: Under item 30-106.004 *Infrastructure, Equipment and Furniture*, I'd like to ask the Commissioner whether he would include the purchase of equipment, because now people in villages are being coached for basketball, volleyball, etc., under a programme of the Commission for Youth. Does this equipment include balls, nets, etc.?

Mr Lisette: The respected Member may note that item 30-106.004 is a new one. It intends to repair any broken equipment in the gymnasium and other sports complexes and ultimately to equip the volleyball fields with nets, posts, etc.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I conclude. Since the Commissioner needs Rs75,500,000 - and we know that for the year up to June, 2003, he was granted Rs32 m. and he has used Rs3 m. only, that is, 10% of the work - How can he achieve up to 42% up to February?

Mr Chairperson: I have been flexible to allow a previous question on the total. But this is not normally done. You should go by the items and ask for precision and details on each item. Can you rephrase your question?

Vote 30-106 - Services under the Control of Commissioner for Youth and Sports, etc. (Rs75,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vote 30-107 - Services under the control of the Commissioner for Social Security was called.

Mr Agathe: Can the Commissioner enlighten us on those social security centres?

Mr Mercure: The Centre is a recreational one for the elderly and for the disabled like the one that we have at Pointe aux Sables in Mauritius. It is not the same centre as we have for the elderly where they normally hold

some meetings. It is a recreational one. In Mauritius, there are, at least, two. Now, we are proposing to build one here.

Vote 30-107 - Services under the control of Commissioner for Social Security (Rs1,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Mr Chairperson: This is the completion of the discussions itemwise, if I may say so.

Mr J. Roussety: One point, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Regarding the item for the new Terminal Building at the airport, we have increased it. Has it been reflected in the total which has been brought to Rs800,000?

Mr Chairperson: No, this is only for the sake of completion. It was, in fact, only an amendment.

On the Assembly resuming with Mr Chairperson in the Chair, Mr Chairperson reported accordingly.

The Recurrent Revenue and Recurrent Expenditure and Capital Revenue and Capital Expenditure for financial year 2004-2005 were, as amended, agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 27 April 2004 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

At 5.45 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 27 April 2004 at 10.30 a.m.