

No. 08 of 08.06.04

RODRIGUES FIRST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 08 of 2004

Sitting of Tuesday 08 June 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

RODRIGUES FIRST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 08 June 2004

CONTENTS

QUESTIONS (*Oral*)

STATEMENTS

QUESTIONS (*Written*)

ADJOURNMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AJOURNMENT

QUESTIONS (*Oral*)

- (No. B/497) Mourouk Junction to Hotel - road access
- (No. B/498) Wastewater Service
- (No. B/499) *Radiers* - Drivers & Motorcyclists
- (No. B/500) Camp Pintade - water stagnation
- (No. B/501) Camp du Roi/Hauteur Accacia - traffic problems
- (No. B/502) Queen Elizabeth Hospital & Area Health Centres - parking facilities
- (No. B/503) Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Mt Lubin & La Ferme Area Health Centres - ambulance drivers
- (No. B/504) MSIRI - visit to Rodrigues
- (No. B/505) Government Buildings - construction
- (No. B/506) Hauteur Accacia - excavation works
- (No. B/507) Residential Leases - conditions
- (No. B/508) Pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers & related products - sale
- (No. B/509) Secondary Schools - admission (2005)
- (No. B/510) Registrar of Companies - office - setting up
- (No. B/511) Landowners (Private) - development & Morcellement permits
- (No. B/512) Rodrigues - planning area
- (No. B/513) Child Welfare & Family Counselling Service - personnel
- (No. B/514) Agricultural Services - pest control
- (No. B/515) Agricultural Services - equipment & machines
- (No. B/516) Baie du Nord - water supply

QUESTIONS (*Written*)

- (No. A/5) Contour Oblass/Roseaux/Crève Coeur - access road
- (No. A/6) Papayes/Deux Montagnes/Ile Michel - access road
- (No. A/7) Farmers - loans from banks & lending agencies

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONER

- Agricultural Farmers - development
- Global Consultancy Services

WASTEWATER SERVICE

(No. B/498) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards wastewater service in Rodrigues, he could inform the House of -

- (a) the number of lorries available for this service, and
- (b) where the wastewater is disposed of.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson Sir, I am informed that there is one lorry septic pool emptier and that the sewage is disposed at the septic tank and leaching field of Roche Bon Dieu.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we would like to have more details as to how the water is disposed of.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said in my reply, there is a septic tank at Roche Bon Dieu which has been constructed for that purpose. In the past, there was only one hole where it was deposited. Now, there is a septic tank in very good condition, with a fence around it. There is also a leaching field where the water goes.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner say whether the lorry offers its services to the whole of Rodrigues and, if so, what are the procedures that must be taken in order to have its services available?

The Chief Commissioner: Usually, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this service is under the Commission of Public Infrastructure and the whole service is provided to the public at large with a payment of a fee of Rs200 per trip.

Mrs Prosper: Mr Chairperson, Sir, will the Chief Commissioner say how the service is monitoring the situation during heavy rains?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will come with a statement to give much more detail about this septic tank.

Mr Prosper: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will like to ask the Chief Commissioner if he will consider in the future the setting up of a treatment plant for the wastewater?

The Chief Commissioner: This has to be looked into, Sir.

RADIERS - DRIVERS & MOTORCYCLISTS

(No. B/499) Mrs J. Prosper (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the "*radiers*" in Rodrigues, he will inform the House if -

- (a) they were all safe for drivers and motorcyclists;
- (b) any of them was damaged and thereby constituted a threat to road users, and
- (c) what immediate actions would be taken to remedy same.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the construction of "*radiers*" is a worldwide feature and represents only an inconvenience in case of floods and heavy rains. There are 18 *radiers* in Rodrigues and all are safe for drivers and motorcyclists so long that road users strictly adhere to existing traffic regulations.

I am further informed that four *radiers* have been slightly damaged due to the recent heavy rains. We are aware of the problem. The repairs could not be effected because of the continuing running water on the *radiers* for the past days. The repairs will be effected as soon as the water level will recede on these *radiers*.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, all of us know when a *radier* is overflowed it is a real danger to all road users and pedestrians as well. Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House about the precautionary measures he intends to take? I think there should be warning signs on the *radiers* which represent a threat to road users.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are aware of the problem concerning the *radiers* when there is bad weather. I think that pedestrians should not walk along the *radiers* during rainy seasons. But, Gibb consultants have been apprised by the Regional Assembly to look into the measures that can be taken, and other means that can ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please, Member, let the Deputy Chief Commissioner finish his answer.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: render these *radiers* more accessible during bad weather.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it seems that the Deputy Chief Commissioner puts the responsibility of the proper use of the *radiers* on the road users, which is a good thing as far as driving and walking on the road is concerned.

But, one part of the question, which my colleague has addressed, has not been answered. It concerns traffic signs at night and during the day. There have been deaths. Severe injuries have been caused to people and especially to tourists. They do not know if there is a *radier* unless they reach it and when they reach it, it is too late. The question is: will he intend to put traffic signs to indicate that there is a *radier* at 25 or 50 metres.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Road Safety Committee has taken note of the lack of warning signs along some of the roads and *radiers* in Rodrigues. Quotations have already been launched for the purchase of these warning signs and after these are commissioned, they will be installed in the concerned regions.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, each time we ask questions, we hear that "things will be done; pipes will be installed; studies will be commissioned; traffic signs will be bought." May I ask the Commissioner to give us a time frame - being given he has no budget - for the installation of these traffic signs to improve these *radiers*? Every time we ask questions, we get the same answer: "it will be done soon" and it's never done!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning the Financial Management Manual, quotations and tendering procedures have procedural steps. Quotations have been launched. Things are being done in transparency and we are awaiting for the commission of these traffic signs. And as soon as we get these traffic signs from the bidder concerned they will be installed in the places concerned.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is, of course, usual for Government to follow all those procedures, but still my question is unanswered. It is an important aspect, which concerns the security of road users. What is the time frame of the Commission to install these traffic signs, to repair, to go ahead with measures and to improve security at these

radiers? My question is about the time frame and not about what he is going to do and which Manual he is going to use.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, since the installation of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, we have taken the decision *d'effacer les signes de dégradation*. The Commission of Public Infrastructure is changing road signs on many roads throughout the island everyday and it will come a time where the signs near the *radiers* will be installed after these are commissioned. I have already answered this question, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Two hon. Members cannot stand at the same time, please.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner is speaking about "a time". My question: is which time frame, in how many days, weeks or months! He knows that there is a contract, which has been launched, and he is aware what is going on at his Commission and when he will receive these traffic signs. My specific question concerns *radiers* and not every road in Rodrigues, because these *radiers* are dangerous. Given the high number of vehicles, there have been accidents recently, unless the Commissioner wants to take the responsibility of these accidents. My question: is when approximately these traffic signs would be installed? We cannot accept vague answers like "when the time comes". When the time comes, maybe people would have died!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, these traffic signs have already been commissioned, but the time frame is not specified.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner on which month and year the tender was launched for the purchase of these traffic signs.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, I do not have the information now, but I will come with a statement afterwards.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, according to the reply of the Deputy Chief Commissioner, it seems that he does not consider this issue as urgent.

Mr Chairperson: It is question time, put your question, please.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As I said, I am coming soon with a statement.

Mr Jabeemissar: At Anse Raffin, the *radier* has been damaged well before the rainy season and now if we wait for it to be over, it will again take a long time. So, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner say whether there are other alternatives, for example, deviation of the water from the *radier*, so as to be able to repair the *radier*. We cannot wait that long. If a motorcyclist, even during the day, goes through that *radier*, there will certainly be loss of life. So, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner say whether there are other alternatives to repair that *radier* urgently?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, I have already answered to the question. We are awaiting for the water level to decrease and the repairs will be done in due course.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether he is aware that the *radier* constitutes a threat to all road users. For example, at Port Sud Est and Rivière Cocos when there are high tides - *raz de marée* - the *radier* is inundated with seawater. Does he consider this as a real threat to road users and pedestrians, and, if so, what measures does he intend to take to remedy same?

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

CAMP PINTADE - WATER STAGNATION

(No. B/500) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the stagnation of water at different places of the road at Camp Pintade, he would inform the House about the measures he intends to take to remedy same.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the stagnation of water at different places of the road at Camp Pintade is due to obstruction of road site drains and the existing cross drains.

My Commission has started a campaign of road site drain and the cleaning of cross drain throughout the island. The road leading to Camp Pintade will also be covered into the scope of work.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner say when exactly will this work at Camp Pintade start? Because we are now in rainy period and this is a real danger to all road users.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, Camp Pintade is not the only region concerned with this problem. My Commission is fully aware that the stagnation of water is due to obstruction of drains during heavy rains and we have a regular plan to clean them. Camp Pintade will be taken into consideration when it will be its turn on our scope of work to deal with.

CAMP DU ROI/HAUTEUR ACCACIA - TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

(No. B/501) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with a view to avoiding traffic problems caused by vehicles using the very narrow road from Camp du Roi to Hauteur Accacia and vice versa, he could say if urgent actions will be taken to enlarge it and, if so when.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that construction of roads is carried out on the basis of funds appropriated in the Capital Estimates. A copy of the Capital Estimates 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 is available at the Library of the Assembly. The list of roads earmarked is found in the memorandum thereon.

The Consultant is now working on the preliminary design of that portion of road. A decision will be taken in the light of the report of the Consultant.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, when will the report be ready?

Mr Chairperson: Which report is the Minority Leader referring to? Be specific, please.

Mr J. Roussety: A portion of road going from Camp du Roi to Hauteur Accacia. In 1999 there has been the death of Mrs Merina L'Evêque. We know the events, which happened afterwards. The Deputy Chief Commissioner responsible for infrastructure is going for a report by a consultant to repair 50 metres of road. When has he commissioned this report? When will this report be ready?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the repairs of roads are a technical issue. There are many parameters that have to be taken into consideration, namely other roads, which are linked with this portion of road. We have approached the consultants one month ago. We have told them about this situation. It is a technical issue. They are working on the problem giving us a cost estimate and there will be a preliminary design and I think the work is going ahead and when it's time to say that the design has been completed, we will say it.

Mr J. Roussety: The Deputy Chief Commissioner speaks of technical issues. At the level of his Commission, what technical staff does he have? Does he have engineers, architects, road specialists, planners, etc. at his disposal who could look into that matter?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is another question. We are talking of traffic problems on this portion of road, but this does not include only 50 metres of road as I have said. It includes other parameters, other roads linking with that portion of road. We should look at the problem globally, because if we repair only 50 metres of road, other problems may arise on the other portion of road linking this main road.

Mr J. Roussety: Sir, my question has not been answered. I was asking whether regarding this issue of solving that problem at the level of late Mrs L'Evêque's home, whether he has technical staff at the level of his Commission to undertake these studies to look into the problem. Yes or no?

Mr Chairperson: I have allowed this question, but is very far from the main question.

(Interruptions)

Please wait. Did I allow this question or not? Allow the Commissioner to answer the questions. I did allow the question.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commission for the Executive Council has been given a contract to a global consultancy, namely Gibbs to speed up matters concerning the construction of roads. We have staff at our Commission who can do a preliminary design, but it will take time. The consultants have more appropriate tools and expertise to do things.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not know whether the real problem is understood. We know that when a driver comes from Hauteur Accacia until the junction at Camp du Roi, there is already a sign there giving priority to the oncoming vehicles. But the visibility is poor thus causing obstruction of the road. Is he going to take urgent measures and which measures is he going to take to remedy the situation?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The question has already been answered.

Mr J. Roussety: Can I know what is the amount earmarked for that study?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, normally the cost estimate of a design will depend on the final design itself. We have funds earmarked for roads in the next coming Budget and normally the cost estimate of the final design will depend on the finalisation of the design itself. It will depend on the recommendation of the consultant about the design.

Mr J. Roussety: The Commissioner has not understood the question. The question is about the study, not about the cost of the project. He mentioned that there is a study ongoing by a consultant. What is the amount, which he is going to pay for the study? I am not talking of the project, which is something different.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The amount to be paid, Sir, will be with respect to that project. The project concerns road construction. We have earmarked money in the next Budget for road construction and as this project falls under this item, it will be paid under this item.

Mr J. Roussety: Does the Commissioner mean that the cost of the study is left open? He will pay what the consultant submits. *Est-ce que c'est bien cela que je suis appelé à comprendre?*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the road repair will have a cost and the consultant has a fixed percentage of the project value of a certain work that has been designed by him. It will not be left open. It will be with respect to the cost estimate of that road, that is, the percentage that has been fixed in the original contract to have the consultant in Rodrigues.

Mr J. Roussety: But Mr Chairperson, Sir, has a contract been made for the study?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: No, Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is the Global Consultancy Services. All works falling under the Public Infrastructure will take time, we shall contact the Global Consultancy Services.

Mr J. Roussety: In this case, he means that the Global Consultancy Services has all the contracts for design, etc. What are the criteria for paying for specific items?

(Interruptions)

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, things have got to be clear.

Mr Chairperson: Have you got a question?

Mr J. Roussety: No, I am repeating my question. He seems not to understand as usual. He says that there is global consultancy, does he pay him a monthly amount and they do all the work? In this case, what is he going to pay for this specific study? This is what I want to know.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the consultant is paid as per the project designed by him. There is a fixed rate in the original contract as per the project value of any specific work, it will be paid according to that rate.

Mr J. Roussety: Can we know what is the rate for the payment of these studies, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will ask the Minority Leader to come with a substantive question.

Mr J. Roussety: I will not come with a substantive question because it concerns the content of the question. I did not mention consultancy and studies etc., the Commissioner mentioned it. So, I would kindly request him to answer the question.

Mr Chairperson: The Commissioner has made it clear that he won't answer the question. This is what I understand. Can the Commissioner repeat because the answers are not very clear to the Members. Please be clear.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we consult the Global Consultancy Services for any project and the company is paid on the rate fixed in the original contract. The company is paid a percentage of the cost estimate for each project that he supervises, designs ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please wait. The question was about the percentage rate to be paid to the Global Consultancy Services.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally to have Global Consultancy Services in Rodrigues, we have the usual tendering procedures and normally it is the company which bids for the least percentage that obtains the contract, but for the time being I do not have it in mind.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, which is which? He says there is Global Consultancy, which has been approved to which they give all the contract designs and now he says the company must submit again. What does he mean? *Maintenant il parle du contrat qu'on doit soumettre? Qu'est-ce qu'il veut dire? Il confond tout le monde ici.*

Mr Chairperson: Ask your question and he will provide the answer.

Mr J. Roussety: What is the rate, which is paid to the global consultancy when there is a contract? He should not mix up issues.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Gibbs consultancy is being paid a fixed rate, a percentage ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please wait!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It is the least percentage that all the companies have bid. It is 4.2%.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

(Interruptions)

Order! Next question.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: I am on my feet. The Commissioner wants to reply to the question asked. I am not going to accept any more a conduct of this type from both sides of the House.

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

Mr Chairperson: Thank you. Next question, please!

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL & AREA HEALTH CENTRES – PARKING FACILITIES

(No. B/502) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether, as regards parking facilities for vehicles at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Area Health Centres, he could –

- (a) say whether he intended to enlarge the parking space at Queen Elizabeth Hospital to cater for more vehicles, and

- (b) say whether parking facilities could be offered to area health centres and when.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, parking facilities are available at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Nevertheless, with the increase in the number of vehicles, provision is being made for additional parking space. That will be available upon completion of the ongoing earthwork besides the OPD.

As regards part (b), parking facilities are available at Mont Lubin and La Ferme Area Health Centres. But, my Commission is already looking for additional space for parking of more vehicles.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, regarding the first part of my question, can the Commissioner state the time frame the parking space at Crève Coeur will be made available?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, works have just started last week and it will take some six weeks to be completed. Just after that, we'll go for the parking. M. le président, néanmoins, avec la fermeture d'environ deux cents mètres de route, interdisant l'accès aux voitures entre l'hôpital et le OPD, il y aura d'autres places disponibles pour les parkings.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has talked about parking facilities at the area health centres. Can he state, for example, at La Ferme Area Health Centre, where is the parking found exactly?

Mr Sooprayen: M. le président, à La Ferme, il y a de l'espace juste à l'entrée. De toute façon, la route est assez large, et les voitures peuvent facilement déposer les malades ou les gens venant à l'hôpital et retourner sur la route principale.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if people have to leave the patients on the road, this cannot be called parking. At the entrance of La Ferme Area Health Centre, there is a sign saying that it is authorised to Government vehicles only. This means that only Government vehicles have access to the entrance of the hospital. That is why it would be good if the Commissioner could say if he intends to have a parking space for the public and other vehicles. He says that there is one, but we would like to know where it is found exactly, and if there isn't, when will he make real parking space available.

Mr Sooprayen: M. le président, comme je viens de le dire, *parking is available*. Mais, on fera de notre mieux pour avoir d'autres places.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, since the respected Commissioner for Health mentioned availability of parking, I would like to ask him whether he is talking about La Ferme Area Health Centre and, if yes, where it is situated, as my colleague just said.

Mr Chairperson: The Member is asking the same question.

Mr Grandcourt: The Commissioner was talking about availability of parking. I am asking him whether he means parking at La Ferme Area Health Centre.

Mr Sooprayen: M. le président, j'ai déjà répondu à la question.

Mr Chairperson: Can the Member ask his question again in clearer terms?

Mr Grandcourt: M. le président, le Commissaire a parlé de facilités de parking à La Ferme Area Health Centre. Or, nous savons qu'il n'y en a pas. Je voudrais savoir s'il parle de La Ferme, car, en principe, il n'y a pas de parking.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand that parking is for the ambulance. As regards the public, the drivers drop the patients or their family and then they just move out. But, as I have just said, we are looking forward to have some more space.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has admitted that there is parking space for ambulances only. As he said that he is looking for more parking space, does this mean that it will only be for more ambulances or for other public vehicles?

Mr Sooprayen: First, we will look for space for ambulances and then for other vehicles.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the road in front of the hospital does not provide for parking. *Il y a la ligne continue et le cross here devant l'hôpital*, and if any vehicle parks there, it would be in breach of the law. Therefore, once again, I will ask the Commissioner whether he intends

to create a parking space in the compound of La Ferme Area Health Centre, and, if so, when.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will liaise with the Commissioner responsible for infrastructure and look into the matter.

**QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL, MT. LUBIN & LA FERME
AREA HEALTH CENTRES – AMBULANCE DRIVERS**

(No. B/503) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether, as regards ambulances drivers attached to the Health Services in Rodrigues, he could say –

- (a) how many are posted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital;
- (b) how many are posted to the Area Health Centres, and
- (c) if the number of ambulances and ambulance drivers are sufficient for Rodrigues and, if not, what does he intend to do to remedy same.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that 16 ambulance drivers are posted at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Concerning part (b), four ambulance drivers are attached to Mont Lubin Area Health Centre and four others at La Ferme Area Health Centre.

As regards part (c), with the donation of two ambulances from Lux Development last year and a new one just bought by the Commission, the fleet is now 11, of which two have just been completely upgraded. Thus, we can cope with the current situation.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards the area health centres, can the Commissioner state how many ambulances and drivers are posted to Mont Lubin and La Ferme Area Health Centres? He has talked about four ambulance drivers. But, on how many ambulances do they work in each centre?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, there are four ambulance drivers for Mont Lubin Area Health Centre and four others for La Ferme Area Health Centre. For the time being, there is one ambulance at La Ferme, and another one at Mont Lubin.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner state how the four ambulance drivers operate the ambulances in each centre?

Mr Sooprayen: Those drivers operate on a roster basis.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner stated that two ambulances have recently been upgraded. I would like to ask him where these ambulances have been upgraded.

Mr Sooprayen: M. le président, il y a eu des appels d'offre pour les deux ambulances. On en a retenu deux, notamment de M. Josh Roussety et M. Daniel Savrimootoo.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can he tell us...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Does the Minority Leader intend to ask a question? Please do so.

Mr J. Roussety: Some people are talking.

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr Grandcourt: On a point order, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I saw the Commissioner for Arts & Culture pointing her finger at me. I think this is quite unparliamentary. I will now wait for your ruling.

Mr Chairperson: I am at odd to follow the Member. Could he enlighten me as to which Standing Order has been breached?

Mr J. Roussety: I would like to support the Member.

Mr Chairperson: No, the Member cannot.

Mr J. Roussety: As Minority Leader, I am supporting him!

Mr Chairperson: Once a point of order...

Mr Grandcourt: Sir, I allow him to...

Mr Chairperson: No!

Mr J. Roussety: Everybody deserves a defence!

Mr Chairperson: Minority Leader, can you take your seat? According to the Standing Orders, once a point of order is made, the Member has to resume his seat and wait for my ruling. There cannot be any discussion unless I consider that more clarification should be made. Does the Member still insist on a point of order?

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, Mr Chairperson, I consider this as a threat.

Mr Chairperson: If you say this is out of order I would like to know why is it so?

(Interruptions)

Order, please!

Well, I cannot give a ruling on something, which I have not heard or seen. But, of course, threatening any Member or Commissioner is not allowed in this House. This is unparliamentary.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have a supplementary question.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir,....

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please, resume your seats.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, the Commissioner is not allowed to explain. The matter is closed.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Of course, it is.

(Interruptions)

Order, Take your seats, please!

The Commissioner was on her feet and I don't know what she intended to do.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, what about the point of order?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: I know the hon. Member wanted to reply to the Commissioner without even hearing what she had to say.

At any time, a Member can raise a point of order in this House. So, I'll need to hear the person who is standing to at least know what was the point of order.

It is out of order for another Member to just rise and make comments. You should wait for my ruling and if you are not agreeable, then you follow the procedures; but, at least, I had to understand what the Commissioner had to say.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, if you could rule on the Personal Explanation as regards the Point of Order which the hon. Member has just raised?

Mr Chairperson: If the Commissioner wanted to give a Personal Explanation, this should refer to what she has said. You have not intervened since this morning. Do you want to give any personal explanations with reference to what you said in some previous meetings?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, you ruled out that Members are not allowed to threaten others in this House. I was not threatening anyone...

Mr Chairperson: No, the Commissioner can't give an explanation like this.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have a point of order. While I was putting a supplementary question, I heard comments being made in a sitting position. I believed that you had already given your ruling on the

point of order that was raised by my colleague. The Commissioner, hon. Mrs Perrine-Bégué, has qualified me as a 'terrorist'. All Members on this side of the House heard what she said.

Mr Chairperson, I would like to hear your ruling on this matter and that you call the Commissioner to order. I would also like her to present her apologies and to remove that word 'terrorist'.

Mr Chairperson: Then you expect me the more so to hear what you are saying from a sitting position. I cannot follow all the Members at the same time simultaneously and I have not heard the word the Member just said.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir,

Mr Chairperson: Take your seat. I cannot give a ruling on something, which I have not even heard. If you want to have order in this House, of course, you should obey the Standing Orders. When a person is on his feet on a point or whatever, Members must, at least, keep the decorum of this House and allow me to listen to the Member. If Members want to take this Assembly for another sort of house, then how can they expect me to follow and enforce the rules? Let us proceed with the questions!

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has said that there are four ambulance drivers attached to each centre and that there is only one ambulance. As the number of ambulance drivers has increased, can he see to it that the ambulances also are increased so that we have, at least, two ambulances at each Area Health Centre?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have already thought about it and as from 01 July 2004, there will be one more ambulance at Mont Lubin and one more at La Ferme.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that the ambulances have been repaired at two places. Can he tell us why these ambulances have not been repaired by the Government Mechanical Workshop?

Mr Chairperson: Yes, this question is allowed.

Mr Sooprayen: M. le président, des fois on a envoyé des ambulances au *Mechanical Workshop*, mais ils ont beaucoup de voitures à réparer là-bas et les ambulances c'est une priorité. C'est pour cela que la Commission a pris la décision de lancer des appels d'offres pour qu'on puisse avoir les ambulances le plus vite.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health during which month was the tender launched?

Mr Chairperson: Yes, I will allow this question, but the Member should realise that we are very far from the original question. But, of course, it is normal that supplementary questions follow from what has been mentioned in the answers. So, I will allow only one last supplementary question.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I don't have the exact information now. I need notice of the question.

MSIRI - VISIT TO RODRIGUES

(No. B/504) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether with regard to the recent visit of the delegation of the Mauritius Sugar Industry Research Institute in Rodrigues, he could state -

- (a) the aims of the visit, and
- (b) the decisions taken by his Commission after the visit.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there have been four missions carried out by the Mauritius Sugar Industry Research Institute to Rodrigues recently and are as follows -

- (i) the first mission consisted of the training of officers of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in the use of the Geographical Information System that is being put in place by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly;

- (ii) the second mission consisted of three persons with the objective of carrying a preliminary study towards the establishment of a soil fertility map for arable land in Rodrigues;
- (iii) the third mission was in connection with the supervision of varietal trials of a new family of potato in Rodrigues;
- (iv) the fourth mission was the visit of the Director of the MSIRI.

The first two missions were financed by Anti-erosion Programme, whereas the remaining two were financed by the MSIRI.

My Commission is studying the proposals made by the different missions as well as the cost implications thereof. A decision will be taken after careful consideration of all parameters involved.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS - CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/505) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether with regard to the construction of Government buildings by Government employees, he could state -

- (a) the number of such buildings under construction giving the dates the construction started;
- (b) the number of employees involved on each building and their location, and
- (c) the total amount of money earmarked for each construction.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that, with regard to the construction of major Government buildings by Government employees falling under my Commission, one building at La Ferme is being constructed by Government employees. The number of employees involved is 33 and a sum of Rs10 m. has been earmarked for the completion of the project including labour costs.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as far as this question is concerned, I have myself asked Question B/161 on the administrative building at La Ferme. The Commissioner said that the construction would end by February 2004. Now, we are on 08 June and the construction is not completed yet. I would like to know the reasons from the Commissioner, because he is at the Commission since two years. According to his reply, we have only one building, which is being constructed by the Government employees. Can we know why is it taking so much time? Because the deadline is supposed to be February 2004.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I said in the previous reply that if all the 33 workers are present everyday and also if good weather condition prevails.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, construction of a public building is a very important matter. It should be completed by February, but it has not yet started for the reasons given by the Commissioner. I would like to ask him when will this building be completed.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member said that construction of the building has not started yet, but it has already started and it will be completed in due time.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are accustomed to the answers of the Deputy Chief Commissioner.

Mr Chairperson: You can anticipate.

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, we know. It is "in due time" or "too soon". *C'est très joli pour un prof de mathématiques qui ne ...*

Mr Chairperson: No personal attack, please!

Mr J. Roussety: It is not an attack. The work should have been completed by February. How would he account that bad weather and absences have created - we are now six months - four months lateness? *Et les travaux ne sont pas complétés encore.* Have we had four months bad weather and have there been four months man-days absences at his Commission? Have the 33 workers been absent for a period of four months?

Have there been four months man-hours? How would he account that the delay is so long?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the length of the delay depends on the different causes that I have mentioned before. The number of days that we have had bad weather and the number of days that different workers have been absent either on sick leave or local leave. But, however, we have taken a decision at the Commission that the finishing work will be contracted to private contractors.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House for how long has this building been in a dormant stage?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this building is not in a dormant stage. The building itself costs Rs6,250 per metre square compared to about Rs10,000 metre square if it were to be built on a contract basis. The building is not in a dormant stage. Constructions are being done inside the building and I can say that Government has benefited a lot from buildings being built in that manner in-house.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner will surely agree with me that if the construction had been awarded to contractors, it would have been completed since a long time, thereby saving a lot of money to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. We always hear that the Local Government is complaining of lack of building, it has to rent spaces and so on. We can't tolerate that such works, which should have been completed since a long time, are being delayed for so long.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the construction of a building depends on the amount of funds earmarked for same. Rs10 m. have been earmarked, it was to be built in-house and it was scheduled to be completed in 2004. We are still in 2004, we have had bad weather conditions; we have had problems with the absence of workers and now we have taken a decision to contract the finishing work to local contractors.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to the reply which the Deputy Chief Commissioner made to Question B/161, he did say that the

amount earmarked was Rs8 m. and now he comes and says that the amount earmarked is Rs10 m. Mr Chairperson, Sir, which is which? I want to ask him why there has been this rise in the amount earmarked for this building.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Rs8 m. do not comprise finishing works, laying of ceramic tiles and fixing of windows and doors. The Rs8 m comprise the block of building without these items and now we have decided to contract out the laying of ceramic tiles, the fixing of doors and windows and the laying of corrugated iron sheets on the building. That is why it amounts to Rs10 m.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it should be specified well before we ask questions. At this stage, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner - if he has the figure, he can tell us, if not, he may come with it later on - what is the actual cost of this building. How much has it cost Government?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not have the information.

HAUTEUR ACCACIA – EXCAVATION WORKS

(No. B/506) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to excavation works carried out at Hauteur Accacia, he could state –

- (a) the purpose of same;
- (b) if approval was obtained from the Cadastral Office and the Environment Unit before starting the works, and
- (c) if the site had ever been surveyed by the Cadastral Office for any residential lease.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, following a request made by the Village Community of Hauteur Accacia on 10 August 2003 to upgrade the access road to handicapped persons and a blind woman, I have requested my Commission to carry out levelling works so as to upgrade the access.

Verbal clearance has been obtained from the Cadastral Office and the Environment Unit.

Mr J. Roussety: Had clearance been obtained from the Cadastral Office before the excavations or after the excavations? Please be precise.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, verbal clearance was obtained before excavations and the surveyor was on site during excavation.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, what does the Deputy Chief Commissioner mean by verbal clearance?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is a list drawn up and signed by both parties, no person shall claim ownership of a State land moreover Government can resume possession of any lease site for public interest.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir,

Mr Chairperson: Take your seat. The Deputy Chief Commissioner said “verbal clearance”.

(Interruptions)

The Member wanted to know what the Deputy Chief Commissioner means by verbal clearance.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as it has been said in this Assembly, our people is our priority. These persons are having difficulties for having a road access and we have the Rodrigues Regional Assembly with the Cadastral Office and the Environment Office falling under our full responsibility. We have asked these Government institutions that there have been requests to excavate this portion of road to help these people. The Police de l'Environnement and surveyors have made site visits. Verbally it has been notified to us that the work can be done.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, does he mean that no written authorisation, no written green light was obtained prior to the excavations, prior to the works from the Cadastral Unit?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: No, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have had verbal agreement, because the lease is situated in the region and the “trace” of the road have not been signed yet. It has only been surveyed.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is it his policy at the level of his Commission on such issues, to work on verbal agreements, on verbal items. There are no written items. Is it good for him? Is it the practice at the level of his Commission to go and excavate land anywhere in Rodrigues on verbal advice and not on written one?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, once it regards public interest and as there is a certain mutual correspondence between all the Commissions working in the different divisions and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to worry about people, who are our priority. The Member is worrying about the Cadastral Office and the Environment Unit; we are worrying about sick and handicapped people who do not have a good access road to reach their homes. Now we have had a certain agreement verbally to trace this road.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given that he has had verbal green light from the Cadastral Office, how would he explain that the excavations went over the length leased to one Mr Kirstley Collet at Hauteur Accacia, sawing his fruit trees, etc? Is the Commissioner aware of this? They have excavated the residential lease and destroyed the land leased to that person.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it was by inadvertence. There was no intention to pass on his land. The Cadastral Office has been informed and remedial action is being taken for relocation of the surveyed land with respect to its original land.

Mr J. Roussety: So, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner is wrong. He is acting on verbal agreement. Does he believe that if he had the written agreement or the plans of the area, that problem would not have been caused?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally, for lease given by Government for State land, for public interest part of the land can be taken on their lease and a mutual agreement can be given between the Cadastral Office and the owner concerned for the relocation of his land to the original area as has been stated in the lease document..

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is dictatorship. Does he mean if I understand....

The Chairperson: You have to be clear. If you want to have a standing position and then to attack, it should be clear whether it is against the persons or the Commission as a whole. You have to be precise because the word used in itself is not parliamentary.

Mr J. Roussety: What I mean is that they are doing things like they want. Does the Deputy Chief Commissioner mean, Mr Chairperson, Sir, in this particular case, that he had the right just to take an excavator and go and plough the land of that person?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, when it concerns development for public interest, we have the right. In a letter emanating from the *Police de l'Environnement*, it has been said that there was an existing footpath of about five feet large situated between the land lease of Elisine Collet and Kirstley Collet which should have been enlarged, and, at the same time, we have decided that a retaining wall be erected in the place that land has been excavated.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the intention was good for a blind woman and an handicapped person, but I would like to ask him whether this is applicable for all handicapped persons and blind women of Rodrigues?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank the Member for thanking us for this type of work. There is contradiction. Some of them are thanking us, some of them are criticising. Concerning handicapped persons, sick persons, if there are complaints and requests coming from the Village Communities, my Commission takes the decision to do the work so as to help these persons. Many of these types of work have been carried out in many regions and we will continue to do these works to help people on humanitarian grounds.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there has been the opening of a wide road to go to that handicapped person. These actions – opening of roads as and when requested – somebody writes, the Village Communities writes, we want a road here, they just cut the road. How does he reconcile these actions with the National Physical Development Plan and *Le Plan*

d'Aménagement? How does he reconcile the fact that each and every time somebody wants a road, they just draw the road? Is it good, according to him, just to draw a road for one person, even though he does not know whether the person *le mérite*. He, himself, went there, he decided by himself without consulting the Cadastral Office. He said that there was a verbal agreement. If they went there with the plan, they would have seen that there is a lease there on which they can't go. I would like to ask him whether it is his policy to just go and draw roads each and every time people ask for it. If this is the case, what are the procedures?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally the planner who is mainly concerned with the NPDP documents give us recommendations on these types of work. But, on the spot, there was already a footpath of five metres wide. Using a machine to level this footpath and enlarging it a bit will not disturb the environment as much as we think it might. Because there was already a footpath of five metres, but it needed levelling and enlargement so that ambulances can use the road to help these persons.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner say what type of road will it be?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Village Committee is contacting IFAD and other financing institutions so that a track road can be built on the said levelling ground.

RESIDENTIAL LEASES – CONDITIONS

(No. B/507) Mr J. Roussety (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards residential and other leases granted by Government, he would state what is provided in the event of death of the lessee or at the termination of the lease, particularly as regards immovable property in so far as heirs are concerned.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the conditions of residential leases provide that –

- (a) in the event of the death of the lessee before the termination of his lease, the lease will come to an end;

- (b) at the expiry of the term of the lease or upon its cancellation, the lessee shall yield up the land not otherwise deteriorated in value as they stood at the date of the lease without any claim whatsoever or any indemnity;
- (c) at the expiry of the term of a lease, or upon its cancellation for non-fulfilment of any of the conditions of the lease, the lessee shall remove the building/s or structure/s standing on the land within a period of not more than three months failing which the said building/s or structure/s shall become the property of the lessor.

However, it is the practice that a lease is granted to one of the heirs subject to his/her eligibility and the consent of the other heirs.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is the Chief Commissioner aware that his administration has been refusing the payment of rent for lessees who have died and that the heirs – the children or even the wife or the husband – come to pay and they don't accept the annual rent?

The Chief Commissioner: These are the conditions mentioned here. In the event of the death of the lessee, the lease will come to an end before the termination of his lease. So, no one is allowed to pay a lease when the person is dead. That's why I said at the end of my reply that it is the practice that a lease is granted to one of the heirs, subject to his eligibility and the consent of the other heirs. The other heirs are being requested to solve the problem among themselves and make the Commissioner for land know who will be the owner of this house and then the lease will be granted to the owner of the house. This is clear. So, according to the conditions, we can't accept paying money to the Commission for Land on the death of a person. That's why I say, and I stress on that, I think it's clear, it's according to laws that in the event of the death of the lessee, before the termination of his lease, the lease will come to an end. So, we can't continue to take money from the heirs who are not lessees of the land. You pay when you are a lessee of a land. We have received a case a few days or a few weeks ago. They came to see me and I told them before the Head of Department that they should solve the problem among themselves, *qui sera l'héritier de cette maison, c'est à ce moment là qu'on va faire le bail sur le nom de cette personne. Mais la personne ne devrait pas déjà aussi être en possession d'un bail sur la terre de l'Etat, ce qui veut dire que celui qui va hériter de cette maison ne doit pas être déjà en possession d'une maison sur la terre de*

l'Etat. Il faut que ce soit quelqu'un qui n'ait pas déjà une terre de l'Etat ou une maison sur la terre de l'Etat. C'est clair.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, je remercie le Chef Commissaire pour ces précisions techniques sur la loi, mais il y a la loi et il y a la réalité. Je voudrais lui demander dans l'hypothèse, si vous permettez, que tous les héritiers aient un bail quelconque. Qu'est-ce qui se passe alors pour la maison qui est sur le terrain du gouvernement?

The Chief Commissioner: Soit les héritiers vendent la maison ...

Mr J. Roussety: Avant le bail

The Chief Commissioner: Attention! Mais c'est justement cela! Il faut d'abord avoir l'autorisation avant d'acheter une maison, parce qu'on ne peut pas vendre une maison à quelqu'un qui a déjà une maison sur une terre de l'Etat ou quelqu'un qui a déjà une terre privée. Alors, lorsque les héritiers ont décidé de vendre la maison, il faut qu'ils écrivent à l'autorité concernée pour dire qu'ils ont l'intention de vendre la maison à telle personne.

(Interruptions)

Mais il faut que les héritiers s'entendent entre eux. On n'entre pas dans les affaires des héritiers. Il faudrait qu'ils s'entendent entre eux et à ce moment-là il faut aller chez un avoué pour signer les papiers et les affidavits pour savoir qui sera l'héritier de cette maison. C'est un processus, c'est tout à fait normal, sinon il y aura de la bagarre. S'ils décident de vendre la maison, à ce moment-là les héritiers demandent une autorisation pour vendre la maison à telle personne. A ce moment-là, nous allons faire une enquête pour savoir si cette personne qui va acheter cette maison n'a pas une terre de l'Etat, un bail ou une terre privée. C'est clair.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, le Chef Commissaire a dit, vendre la maison. Est-ce qu'on peut considérer que la propriété de la maison, légalement parlant, est différente de la propriété du terrain, qui reste la propriété du gouvernement?

The Chief Commissioner: C'est cela que j'ai expliqué, M. le président. Il y a une chose qu'on ne comprend pas. C'est pourquoi il faut

avoir une autorisation pour vendre la maison parce que la terre c'est la terre de l'Etat. Vous pouvez vendre la maison et ne pas avoir l'autorisation du transfert de la terre de l'Etat. C'est pourquoi il faut demander l'autorisation. C'est dans la loi, *it's in the Finance Bill*. C'est cela qui va empêcher des gens de Maurice qui ont la terre privée d'acheter des maisons ici sur la terre de l'Etat. On ne peut pas avoir deux résidences dans la même République de Maurice, c'est dans la loi. Alors, c'est clair et net. Il y a une différence entre la maison qui est la propriété des héritiers et la terre de l'Etat, qui d'après la loi, est la terre justement appartenant à l'Etat. Donc, ce sont deux choses différentes. C'est pourquoi il faut avoir une autorisation pour vendre la maison parce que ce n'est pas l'autorisation pour vendre la maison. Et quand on vous donne l'autorisation pour vendre la maison, c'est-à-dire, en même temps implicitement l'autorisation pour transférer le bail.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, si vous permettez, une dernière hypothèse.

Mr Chairperson: It depends how it is.

Mr J. Roussety: You will listen to it.

Mr Chairperson: Yes.

Mr J. Roussety: Il y a des gens, M. le président, qui ont investi toutes leurs économies. La femme a travaillé, le papa a travaillé, le garçon a travaillé, ils ont investi et ils ont construit quelque chose de merveilleux comme beaucoup de familles rodriguaises. *Suppose at the end of the lease agreement or at the death of the lessee, they want to sell the house ...*

(Interruptions)

It is not patrimoine yet because it does not belong to them, you must listen to your Chief Commissioner! If they want to sell the house which is on the Government lease for such and such millions of rupees and they don't find somebody who meets the criteria, who lives in Rodrigues, who does not have a lease or does not have private land.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: A sort of transfer.

The Chief Commissioner: They question among the heirs. If they don't find someone to buy the house, they have to find out whether this house can be given to someone. This is the law. I've already replied to that question. If we are going to amend the law, this can be an amendment to the law in any case. *Heureusement, qu'à Rodrigues nous avons cette possibilité d'appliquer la loi que quelqu'un qui a déjà une terre privée pour sa résidence ne peut pas avoir une terre de l'Etat pour résidence, sinon on tombe dans Rodrigues comme le pays des bungalows. On a déjà eu des cas dans le passé et ce sont des portes qu'il ne faut pas ouvrir. J'ai répondu, M. le président, et je pense que c'est clair. S'il faut amender la loi nationale, la loi cadre, il faut qu'il y ait une proposition comme cela et qu'il y ait des membres de l'Assemblée Nationale qui posent une question à l'Assemblée Nationale.*

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner enlighten me on a point? There have been a lot of questions about the heirs. In the advent of the death of one of the two spouses, for example, if the husband dies, is the wife considered as the heir or is it automatically that the wife will continue with the lease until the termination of the contract?

The Chief Commissioner: A partir du régime matrimonial, il y a toute une procédure qu'il faut observer.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, il y a des personnes qui savent quand ils vont mourir et qui ont l'occasion de ...

Mr Chairperson: You do?

Mr J. Roussety: Non, je ne sais pas encore. J'ai une longue vie devant moi. Il y a des gens qui peuvent faire leur testament. Est-ce-qu'une personne qui sait that he *is going to pass away*, peut inclure, disons, sa maison, comment cela va être ou bien ce qu'il y a sur son bail dans son testament?

Mr Chairperson: Well, this is a sort of complex legal question. If the Chief Commissioner may answer in relation to the lease.

The Chief Commissioner: Il faut bien spécifier. Il y a une différence entre la terre de l'Etat et la propriété sur la terre de l'Etat. Ce sont deux

choses différentes. Concernant la propriété sur la terre de l'Etat, on peut faire son testament pour la maison et tout ce qu'il y a dans la maison. Un avoué ou un notaire ne peut pas faire un testament sans dire que la maison est sur une terre de l'Etat. On voit cela souvent dans les prescriptions ou dans les annonces qu'on voit un peu partout, que la maison est sur la terre de l'Etat. La terre de l'Etat appartient à l'Etat. Donc, c'est une procédure, et concernant la maison c'est une autre procédure. C'est la propriété de l'époux, le système matrimonial, les héritiers et ainsi de suite. J'ai déjà répondu.

Mrs Meunier: M. le président, j'ai déjà été témoin d'un cas où il y a l'épouse dont le mari était mort et où l'épouse a dû procéder à un transfert de bail à son nom pour pouvoir payer. Parce qu'à Rodrigues c'est commun, toutes les gens se marient sous le régime de la communauté des biens, mais il y a eu le cas où la personne a dû transférer cela à son nom. Est-ce que toutes les épouses doivent passer par cette procédure? Est-ce que c'est la loi? Parce que si on est marié sous le régime de la communauté des biens, ce qui appartient au mari appartient naturellement à la femme. Est-ce que pour la terre ...

The Chief Commissioner: Mais la terre n'est pas la propriété des époux et des épouses. M. le président, on tourne en rond.

Mrs Prosper: Qu'est-ce qui se passerait si les héritiers qui ont déjà leurs maisons, après la mort des parents, ne veulent pas vendre la maison?

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: Ils vont essayer de voir ce qu'ils vont faire avec la maison. Quand les héritiers ont décidé ce qu'ils vont faire, à ce moment-là, il faut qu'ils s'adressent à l'Etat pour justement voir à partir des affidavits ou les procédures nécessaires. A ce moment là, l'Etat va regarder toutes ces procédures et on va faire le transfert du bail.

Mrs Meunier: Tous les Rodriguais ont déjà leur maison, ils ont déjà leur bail, mais disons qu'ils veulent garder la maison comme souvenir. Ils ont vécu là ...

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: A ce moment là, s'il faut faire un bail sur tous les noms de ces personnes, il faut voir l'aspect légal dans toute cette affaire là.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, d'après ce que j'ai compris et ce que le Chef Commissaire voudrait bien confirmer, c'est que tous les Rodriguais qui ont un bail du gouvernement et qui ont construit leurs maisons dessus restent des locataires.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Be precise! *Locataire de la maison ou du terrain, du bail.*

Mr J. Roussety: Du terrain.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, this is clear.

Mr J. Roussety: Do all those who have leases in their names, remain lessees? *Est-ce que les Rodriguais restent locataires de ces terrains là à Rodrigues, dans leur île? C'est ce que je veux leur dire.*

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Be straightforward please! Have you finished?

Mr J. Roussety: Yes.

Mr Chairperson: I am sorry, Chief Commissioner.

The Chief Commissioner: Nous louons la terre de l'Etat. C'est une location de la terre de l'Etat. Donc, nous sommes des locataires, nous ne sommes pas des propriétaires.

(Interruptions)

Bien sûr! Malheureusement, il y a des gens qui vendent la terre de l'Etat parce qu'ils croient que la terre de l'Etat c'est leur propriété privée et ils vendent à des milliers et des milliers de roupies, mais on n'a pas le droit de vendre la terre de l'Etat. Donc, nous sommes tous locataires. Après vingt

ans, à ce moment-là, le gouvernement va voir s'il faut renouveler encore. Mais, ce qui est intéressant c'est qu'on revoit régulièrement les tarifs des locations. M. le président, il y avait un politicien qui voulait que les Rodriguais soient les propriétaires de la terre, vous savez ce qui se serait passé? Pour nous tous qui sommes ici, je dis cela, il y aurait eu des gens avec des milliers et des milliers de roupies qui seraient venus acheter toutes les terres, toutes les maisons de ce pays et à ce moment-là, les Rodriguais auraient perdu leur pays, auraient perdu leur terre. On aurait eu des haciendas, de grandes plantations, des milliers d'arpents entre les mains d'un seul propriétaire et je dis heureusement qu'aujourd'hui encore les petites gens peuvent avoir un bail pour R 100 à R 200 par mois et être vraiment en sécurité sur cette terre. Je pense que c'est quelque chose à laquelle il faut bien réfléchir. Qu'est-ce qu'on a vu avec les terres privées dans ce pays? Quand on vient devant les gens demandant R 500,000, R 50,000, on ne se rend pas compte! Et qu'est-ce qui est arrivé aujourd'hui? Qu'est-ce qu'on voit aujourd'hui? Ceux qui achètent les terres privées dans ce pays! Voilà, M. le président, je termine.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, est-ce que le Chef commissaire, dans une perspective de long terme à Rodrigues, souhaite que les Rodriguais et les Rodriguaises, leurs petits-enfants et arrière-petits-enfants restent des locataires dans leur île?

The Chief Commissioner: Qu'ils soient des propriétaires de leur terre?

(Interruptions)

Nous n'avons pas honte d'être des locataires dans notre pays. Celui qui a une maison sur la terre de l'État, il aura toujours sa maison. La maison est à lui. Le gouvernement a été quand même généreux alors qu'à Maurice, il y a des gens qui achètent la terre privée. Cela coûte de l'argent tandis qu'ici les gens sont heureux avec un bail de R100 par mois d'avoir un morceau de terre où ils peuvent contruire une maison. C'est quand même extraordinaire ce pays. Il faut faire attention avec les projets de propriétaires de terres privées ainsi de suite. Nous sommes des locataires mais quand nous continuons à vivre sur cette terre à long terme. C'est pourquoi au niveau de la terre agricole on a donné dix ans pour donner cette impression que la terre lui appartient même s'il est locataire. C'est cela justement: avoir cette impression que sur la terre de l'État, j'ai ma maison; mais après vingt ans, quarante ans je renouvelle à moins qu'il y ait des problèmes d'héritiers.....

PESTICIDES, HERBICIDES, FERTILISERS AND RELATED PRODUCTS - SALE

(No. B/508) Mr J. Roussety (The Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture whether, as regards the sale of pesticides, *insecticides*, herbicides, fertilizers and related products, he would state –

- (a) the number of persons/organisations holding permits therefor, their names and authorised point of sales;
- (b) whether he was aware of the arrest by the Police of the local agent of the Mauritius Vegetable Planters Association (MVPA) recently despite the fact that this association has an authorisation from the Ministry of Agriculture to sell above-named products to its members, and
- (c) what is his stand on this issue.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to answer this question. I have been informed that in regard to part (a), the only organisation that is authorised to import and sell pesticides and related products in Rodrigues is the Rodrigues Agricultural Production and Marketing Co-operative Society based at Citronnelle. The different points of sale are Trèfle, Pont Sud-Est, La Ferme, Port Mathurin, Petit Gabriel and Citronnelle.

As far as part (b) is concerned, I have been informed that no arrest was effected. The Police acted upon the complaints received from a resident of the building where the activity was taking place. A person was brought to the Police station for inquiry in a case of alleged illegal sale of dangerous chemicals and allowed to go after inquiry. The Police inquiry is still under way.

As regards part (c), I am of the opinion that all persons offering pesticides, herbicides and other related products for sale in Rodrigues should comply with the provisions of the Pesticides Control Act and any other such necessary enactment.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that the organisation which was selling pesticides to its members, had an authorisation from the Ministry of Agriculture to sell these products in Rodrigues?

Mr Chairperson : In Rodrigues?

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, in Mauritius, which includes Rodrigues. The interpretations of the Constitution is such that ...

Mr Chairperson: Yes, it is alright. I wanted some precision.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have to be very careful, because it is a very sensitive issue as we are dealing with poisonous substances. The organisation has a permit for distribution of pesticides to its members. But nevertheless, I should bring to the attention of the Member that if anybody wants to carry out an activity in Rodrigues, he should have the authorisation from the Rodrigues Authority itself. Just imagine, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that a person coming from Mauritius with a permit to distribute, without having the authorisation from the Public Health Office here, how do we know that the person is complying with the Pesticides Control Act?

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as far as I am aware this organisation was not selling on a commercial basis to all members. This organisation was offering a distribution service to its registered members. These are the facts. I would like now to ask the Commissioner - because he has chosen to answer the question - whether they have had any communications with this organisation as regards its activities in Rodrigues.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the acting Senior Public Health Officer had a visit on the place where the activity was carried out. It was recommended to the person selling or distributing these chemicals to produce all the relevant documents and he failed to do so.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS – ADMISSION (2005)

(No. B/509) Mr J. Roussety (The Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Education as regards admission in secondary schools in Rodrigues in January 2005, whether he would state what would be the criteria which will be used for admission and if there was any projected

change in the mode of admission and whether dialogue and discussions had been or would be held with all parties concerned.

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the Assembly that the admission in secondary schools in Rodrigues for the year 2005 intake will be on the basis of the policy being implemented by the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research.

As Members of this Assembly are aware, the four best grades out of five subjects will be taken into account for the grade aggregate as from year 2004.

The total grade aggregate for the best grades is 20 units (that is, 4 times 5 units equals 20). However, English, Maths and French remain the three compulsory subjects for the CPE examinations and every pupil should obtain at least a pass in the three subjects, in addition to one of the Science, History and Geography or oriental language subjects.

As regards admission beyond 2005, my Commission is sensitising the school population and all other stakeholders for the education sector of any change, if need be, in future.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, may I assure the Assembly that projected change, if any, will be carried out upon consultations with all the stakeholders for the benefit of the Rodriguan children and society at large.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that admission in Rodrigues will depend on the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research. Can I ask him then what is the role of his Commission in that affair?

Mr L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to remind the House that the whole policy on education remains under the purview of the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research and that the Executive Council of the RRA only has the administration of education. So, the lines of the policies are those drawn up, passed and voted by the Central Government in Mauritius. We only have the application of these policies.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have about 5 to 6 colleges in Rodrigues, including one HSC college and 5 colleges who will have Form

1 intakes. Are there going to be changes in the mode of admission of Form I in 2005?

Mr L. Roussety: As I just said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, a projected change, if any, will be carried out upon consultations with all stakeholders for the benefits of the Rodriguan children and their parents and society at large. So, we are not really contemplating, bulldozing any change in the mode of admission at the moment. What we are doing is that we are only discussing the matter in view of the fact that we now have six colleges in Rodrigues. So, we would like to see a different mode of admission, but as I said, this could only be done after lengthy consultations and agreement with all the parties concerned.

Mr J. Roussety: Can the Commissioner tell us, Mr Chairperson, Sir, whether they are contemplating a particular mode of admission for 2005 and whether they have reached, set down, or are envisaging a particular mode of admission if there is going to be a change?

Mr A. L. Roussety: We have nothing like that, Mr Chairperson, Sir. So, the answer is “no”.

At this stage the Deputy Chairperson took the chair.

REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES – OFFICE - – SETTING UP OF OFFICE

(No. B/510) Mr J. Roussety (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with a view to facilitating corporate business in the island, he would establish contacts with the Registrar of Companies for the setting up of an office in Rodrigues to deal with the registration and all other aspects related to the administrative requirements of the Companies Act.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Executive Council favours the emergence of an organised private sector in Rodrigues to boost up the economic development. During my visit to Mauritius later this week, I shall meet members of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry with a view to seeking their assistance to set up a similar organisation in Rodrigues and, hopefully, result in the creation of many companies.

Compliance with the provision of the Companies Act will be mandatory and it is now easier to form companies following the recent amendments to the Companies Act.

In the light of the outcome of the meeting with members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, necessary action will be taken so that Rodriguan-based companies could be facilitated in their administrative “*démarches*”.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the problem is not with the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry, because the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry is an organisation of entrepreneurs and of firms in Mauritius. And I don’t see how the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry can negotiate for the coming of the Registrar of Companies here. I am asking whether he will deal directly with the Registrar of Companies, which is a Government office, and not with the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, ce n’est pas à la Chambre de Commerce et de d’Industrie de faire des démarches pour nous. Il y aura des discussions où beaucoup de choses vont être abordées et ensuite on va prendre des décisions. Il y aura des contacts avec le *Registrar of Companies* pour voir les possibilités. Ici, nous avons déjà eu les lois, *Registration Act* pour les terres, pour les transactions. Nous allons voir maintenant après ces discussions. C’est bon quand même d’avoir les points de vue des organisations à Maurice, peut-être aussi des points de vue d’autres organisations et ensuite voir comment on va pouvoir avoir des discussions avec le *Registrar of Companies* pour voir comment arriver à mettre une unité ici pour pouvoir faciliter justement la création et l’enregistrement des entreprises à Rodrigues. Mais nous voudrions quand même avoir des discussions avec d’autres organisations pour leur dire comment Rodrigues est. Il y a une possibilité aussi de demander à la Chambre de Commerce et d’Industrie de s’installer à Rodrigues pour aider un peu les compagnies dans la gestion et ainsi de suite. Nous voudrions quand même avoir des contacts avec les organisations pour pouvoir vraiment arriver à prendre une décision finale et avoir leurs points de vue de ce côté là.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, le chef Commissaire parle des entreprises. Je ne parle pas d’entreprises ici, mais de compagnies. Une entreprise n’est pas nécessairement une compagnie. Une compagnie est

quelque chose de plus formelle. Ma question a été posée parce que chaque année les compagnies doivent payer leurs licences, ils doivent *filed* leurs comptes et il y a des tas de procédures pour gérer et enregistrer une compagnie. A chaque fois ces gens là doivent payer un billet pour aller enregistrer un document, payer une licence, etc. Je ne parle pas de *setting up of business in general*, je parle d'un *specific item*, le *Registrar of Companies* et c'est là qu'il faut *deal* directement en tant qu'Assemblée Régionale avec le bureau du *Registrar of Companies* à Maurice. Je ne parle pas de *facilitating business* en général. Je parle spécifiquement de cela. Nous avons besoin de ce bureau ici, du moins d'un officier qui représente ce bureau, vers qui on puisse aller pour payer la licence, enregistrer les comptes; il vérifie et s'il y a un problème lui il renvoie. Parce que, M. le président, une compagnie ne peut pas se déplacer pour aller à Maurice pour des procédures administratives.

The Deputy Chairperson: Est-ce que vous avez une question?

Mr J. Roussety: Ma question est: quelles sont les mesures qu'il va prendre directement du *Registrar of Companies* pour qu'un bureau soit mis en place à Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: J'ai déjà répondu à la question. Nous devons avoir des discussions avec des organisations et avoir des points solides pour d'éventuels contacts avec le *Registrar of Companies*. J'ai abordé ces questions. Nous sommes d'accord qu'il faut qu'il y ait ici une unité comme le *Registration Office*. Il faudrait peut être avoir un amendement au *Companies Act*, comme il y a eu un amendement au *Registration Act*, pour nous permettre d'avoir une unité à Rodrigues. C'est une longue procédure. Je voudrais qu'il y ait un amendement au *Companies Act* à l'Assemblée Nationale pour permettre à Rodrigues d'avoir une certaine spécificité au niveau de cette unité de *Registration of companies*.

Mr Jabeemissar: M. le Président, le chef commissaire a parlé de l'amendement au *Companies Act* à Maurice. Cela concerne l'Assemblée Nationale. Est-ce qu'on va attendre que l'Assemblée Nationale vienne avec cet amendement? Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire à notre niveau pour qu'il ait cet amendement?

The Chief Commissioner: On va *initiate action*.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Chairperson: Order, please! The Member should ask his question.

Mr Jabeemissar: The Chief Commissioner has said that this is an emergency for Rodrigues. Being an autonomous island, we cannot live as we were in the past. We cannot wait for the National Assembly to come with amendments. We have to do our part. May we know what concrete measures the Regional Assembly is going to take in order to force the National Assembly to come with amendments?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je n'ai pas dit que nous allons attendre que l'Assemblée Nationale vienne avec un amendement. C'est nous qui devons *initiate action*. C'est pourquoi j'ai dit qu'il faut qu'il y ait des discussions avec des organisations, le *Registrar of Companies* et voir quelles sont les possibilités avec le ministère des finances. J'ai dit qu'il y a eu un amendement au *Registration Act* à Maurice pour permettre la mise sur pied d'un *Registration Office*. C'est cela que j'ai dit. Je n'ai pas dit que nous allons attendre l'Assemblée Nationale venir avec un amendement. L'Assemblée Nationale ne va pas venir avec un amendement. C'est à nous d'initier des actions auprès des autorités concernées.

Mr Jabeemissar:: The Chief Commissioner has said that preliminary action will be taken. What will be done in order to speed up the procedure?

The Chief Commissioner: Quand on entreprend une action, on doit suivre les procédures. Le conseil exécutif prend la décision, puis, on va vers le ministère concerné pour demander l'amendement au *Companies Act*. Il ne suffit pas de prendre une loi qui est en vigueur à Maurice et de l'imposer à Rodrigues. Il faut travailler une loi spécifique à partir du *Companies Act*. C'est ce que je dis en ce qui concerne le *Registration Office* à Rodrigues. Il y a une loi bien spécifique pour Rodrigues concernant l'enregistrement des documents à Rodrigues. Nous allons initier des actions. C'est ce que nous faisons en ce moment pour plusieurs lois qu'il faudrait amender pour tenir en compte la réalité de Rodrigues.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the time being, it is urgently felt that a sub-office be set up here.

The Deputy Chairperson: Is the Member making a statement or asking a question?

Mr Jabeemissar: My question is whether the Chief Commissioner considers the advisability of setting up a sub-office, and if so, when?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I said that we are going to have meetings with different organisations, and the Registrar of Companies, then we will see what will be the procedures to follow. We will look into the matter.

At this stage Mr Chairperson took the Chair.

Mr Chairperson: I understand that we have exhausted all supplementary questions on PQ No. B/510. Next question, please!

LANDOWNERS (PRIVATE) - DEVELOPMENT & MORCELLEMENT PERMITS

(No. B/511) Mrs. M. T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether he would inform the House about -

- (a) the number of development permit; and
- (b) the number of *morcellement* permit delivered to private landowners in Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Town and Country Planning Act provides that a development permit is required for land development in any area which has been declared a planning area. No development permit is required in Rodrigues as the island has not been declared a planning area.

With respect to part (b), Mr Chairperson, Sir, no *morcellement* permit has been delivered to private landowners in Rodrigues.

Mrs Meunier: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if a private landowner needs to make a development, what will happen?

The Chief Commissioner: I need more precision on this question.

Mrs Meunier: I will come with a substantive question.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, next question, please!

RODRIGUES - PLANNING AREA

(No. B/512) Mrs M. T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether he would inform the House -

- (a) if Rodrigues had been declared a “Planning Area” by the Town and Country Planning Board, and
- (b) if yes, would he state the date on which this declaration was published in the Government Gazette.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson Sir, Rodrigues has not been declared a planning area.

Since the coming into force of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, the responsibility for Town and Country Planning with respect to Rodrigues has been vested in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

After the revision of the Town and Country Planning Act, action will be taken to have Rodrigues declared a planning area. In the meantime, the Cadastral Office is upgrading an outline scheme in line with the recommendation of the National Development Strategy.

Mrs Meunier: If a private land owner needs a *morcellement* permit or a development permit, what procedure will he have to follow?

The Chief Commissioner: For the *morcellement* of a private land, the owner has to comply with the *Morcellement* Act. There is a lot of implications involved. For example, if a person has a plot of land of 5 acres and wants to parcel it into ten or fifteen lots, he will have to apply for a *morcellement* permit at the *Morcellement* Board. The Town and Country Planning Act is being revised and a new Bill, the Planning and Development Bill, will be introduced where Rodrigues will be declared a planning area

and we will then have a *Morcellement* Board in Rodrigues. The State Law Office has advised us that we can have a *Morcellement* Board here instead of having to refer to the *Morcellement* Board in Mauritius. The main thing is that this new Bill will be introduced this year and Rodrigues will be included in the Town and Country Planning Act as a planning area.

CHILD WELFARE AND FAMILY COUNSELLING SERVICE - PERSONNEL

(No. B/513) Mrs M. T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner of Arts and Culture whether as regards the Child Welfare and Family Counselling Service of the Commission -

- (a) she would inform the House about the number of officers working in that service since October 2002 to date;
- (b) when they were recruited, their respective qualifications, their terms and conditions of employment and the work they performed;
- (c) whether the service is still operational and properly staffed, and
- (d) whether there have been changes recently in the personnel and why.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, when we took office in October 2002, two officers were running the Child Development Unit and the Family Counselling Service at the Cliderlex Building. One officer of the Child Development Unit was a Woman Police Constable of the Police Force who had been seconded to that Unit as Child Welfare Officer and the Liaison Officer of the Family Counselling Service was employed on contract by the National Women's Council. The duties of the officer attached to the Child Development Unit consisted mainly of receiving complaints from the public, assisting complainants for procedures of hospitals, police, court and social security, attending to requests for children in distress, carrying out sensitisation campaigns against abuse and exploitation of children, providing legal information to children and their parents. The duties of the officer of Family Counselling Service consist of mainly providing sound psychological support to victims and explaining to them their rights,

conducting social enquiries in cases of family violence, accompanying victims to safety places or hospitals, following of cases reported to the Unit, liaising with authorities concerned about the welfare of victims.

The assignment of the Woman Police Constable was terminated in November 2003 and has not been renewed or extended despite the Commission is repeated requests to the Commissioner of Police. The contract between the National Women's Council and the officer posted at the Family Counselling Service was terminated at the end of April 2004. It is understood that the National Women's Council had extended the officer's contract on a month to month basis, but the latter has declined the offer.

Pending recruitment of the appropriate staff during the next financial year a Children's Desk has been set up at my Commission level to deal with these related issues. An experienced officer, ex-liason officer for UNICEF Liaison in Rodrigues, is in charge of that Unit.

Mrs Meunier: The Woman Police Officer was giving legal and psychological advice to victims. Is the officer presently working, doing the same work?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: The officer who is at present working at my office is doing part of the job, that is, she is actually supporting the victims that we have, as far as psychological aspect is concerned. She is also accompanying the children or the family concerned until we will be able to recruit a psychologist or someone who has competence in this field.

As regards legal aspect, we have for the moment the Police Family Protection Office. Some of the cases where strict legal advice is needed, are sent directly to the Commander of Police in Rodrigues or else to the Court Office and, then, followed up by officers of my Commission.

Mrs Meunier: Would the Commissioner say when she intends to recruit other officers to help in this service?

Mr Perrine-Bégué: Provisions have already been made in the budget, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the recruitment of, at least, two Welfare Officers holding diplomas or being degree holders. We hope that, by the beginning of the next financial year, that is, in a few weeks' time, we will be able to start recruitment.

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES - PEST CONTROL

(No. B/514) Mr D.L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in view of difficulties faced by agriculturalists in the island in regards to pests, he could state -

- (a) how many officers and sprayermen worked for the Pest Control Unit;
- (b) if all agriculturalists were receiving 'Farming News';
- (c) if there was a laboratory to detect bacterial and viral diseases which attack plantations and soil in the island;
- (d) the equipment and apparatuses the agricultural department has to control pests, and
- (e) if he was satisfied with the control of snails, rats and white flies on the island.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that -

- (a) one Technical Officer and thirteen sprayermen are attached to the Pest Control Unit and are under the control of the acting Agricultural Superintendent. Requests for pests control activities are received by the Extension Officers and sent to the Acting Agricultural Superintendent for necessary action.
- (b) 'Farming News' is prepared in Mauritius by AREU. Distribution is effected locally according to the quantity of copies received after each publication. The copies are distributed to Government and non-Government institutions involved in agricultural activities, including all planters who are registered.
- (c) a low power microscope is available for the identification of pests and diseases. A high power microscope is being purchased and is being commissioned. The building to house

the new laboratory is being renovated. Some equipment has already been procured under the anti-erosion programme.

- (d) the agricultural department has the following items of equipment and apparatus to control pests -

11 motorised sprayers

12 knapsacks sprayers

- (e) I will refer the respected Member to my reply PQ No. B/474 with respect to control of white flies. As regards snails, the farmers should report to the nearest Extension Services for advice on the appropriate pesticides to be used. The farmer can alternately use ash.

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES - EQUIPMENT & MACHINES

(No. B/515) Mr D. L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to difficulties faced by agriculturalists to plough their lands, he could state -

- (a) the area of arable land in Rodrigues;
- (b) the area of land that has been ploughed from March to June 2004 and table their locations, and
- (c) the equipment and machines the Agricultural Department has to plough land mechanically and if all of them are in good condition and table a copy of receipts showing when these items of equipment and machines have been purchased.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there are about 3,500 hectares of suitable agricultural land in Rodrigues. I am tabling a list of land as well as the names of the farmers, the area concerned and the location in respect of the land that has been ploughed from March to June 2004. (Appendix A)

I am further tabling a list of equipment and machines available at the Agricultural Services as well as the state of the equipment and machines. (Appendix B).

BAIE DU NORD - WATER SUPPLY

(No. B/516) Mr D.L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to water distribution to the inhabitants of Baie du Nord and next to the A.J. Maurel site, he could state if there has been any change in the diameter of the water distribution pipeline.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the inhabitants of Baie du Nord are still being provided with water from the existing water distribution network and that there has been no change regarding the diameter of the pipe.

Mr Guillaume: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have already asked a question.

Mr Chairperson: At the last sitting?

Mr Grandcourt: Yes, concerning PQ No. B/483, I have two supplementary questions. I told him that day, that is, on 18 May, that workers of the Water Unit were working on the site on the pipeline. The respected Deputy Chief Commissioner answered that they were working on the site to increase the diameter of the pipes. We have been on the site and we have seen that there has been no change in the diameter of the pipe. My colleague has asked the question and this confirms that the Deputy Chief Commissioner has provided us with wrong information. I would like to ask him whether this is true.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please, wait. I allowed the Member to extrapolate his question, but normally he cannot refer to an answer referred back. Can he rephrase his answer?

Mr Grandcourt: Yes, but that question refers to the same pipeline. Which is which, I do not understand, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Last time, he told us that there had been an increase in the diameter, I have been there with my

colleague where we have noticed no change and today he confirms that there has been an increase. I don't know whether he got his information.

Mr Chairperson: I am perplexed what the true question is. Will the Deputy Chief Commissioner answer the question, if he has understood, of course?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in respect to the answer given to PQ No. B/483, it was said during the last sitting that there has been blockage of the pipe because it has been worked by the contractor nearby the site and the contractor has reinstated the pipeline. As the number of consumers is increasing on the line, the diameter of the pipe will be increased. It has been technically advised to increase the diameter of the pipe.

(Interruptions)

It was not said in this Assembly that the diameter is being replaced at the time of work. It was said that due to technical consideration of workers working on the pipeline, that the pipeline need to be increased in diameter because the number of consumers in the region is being increased. But we have a certain scope of work concerning change in pipeline galvanised to polypipe. The region of Baie du Nord has been included in that scope of work.

Mr Chairperson: This will be the last question. Can we move on to the next item on the agenda, please?

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONER

GLOBAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, I would like to make a clarification with respect to the Global Consultancy Services to contract entrusted to Gibbs (Mauritius) Ltd.

The contract was awarded to Gibbs Mauritius following tendering procedure. The rates quoted and approved are 4.5% for normal building and civil engineering works and 5.5% for specialist works such as dams, airport, etc, where specialists input from abroad will be required.

Payments are paid in stages according to the following stages reached and are as follows -

- | | |
|--|-----|
| - submission of preliminary design | 10% |
| - submission of tender drawings and document | 25% |
| - award of contract | 10% |
| - supervision of the work | 50% |
| - and final completion of work | 5% |

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR - DEVELOPMENT

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to make this short statement to this House.

I would like to set things in their right perspectives following the statement made by the respected Third Island Region Member at the last sitting. I am glad to note that the Third Island Region Member is a holder of a *Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnel Agricole*. Mais, je note aussi que le *Leader* de la minorité fait souvent référence à sa formation d'économiste dans ses discours. Alors, je suis perplexe, M. le président, quand le *Third Island Region Member* a dit dans son discours que pendant 25 ans Rodrigues n'a pas eu d'agronome et d'économiste. Quel affront à tous ces jeunes qui ont étudié l'agriculture et l'économie. Je note qu'il y a trois personnes qui ont eu une formation d'agronome dans cette chambre.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: One minute please. Is there a point of order?

Mr J. Roussety: I am not sure that the Third Island Region has said that. First of all, the Deputy Chief Commissioner needs not refer to me and to the Member concerning our academic qualifications, etc. It seems that our qualifications disturb him. Firstly, I would ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner not to refer to us personally and, secondly, he is imputing motives, because the Member did not say that.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, I would like the House to submit copies of the statement made by the Member.

Mr J. Roussety: On a point of order, it's up to the

Mr Chairperson: I do not have the whole statement in hand, but if the maker of the statement would confirm?

(Interruptions)

If there are controversies about this specific item, would the Deputy Chief Commissioner be more careful? You may proceed.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je suis en train de faire mon statement par rapport à ce qui a été dit à la dernière session de l'Assemblée.

(Interruptions)

M. le président, vous conviendrez avec moi que c'était un rapport qui est très mauvais et qui date du temps de Mathusalem, surtout qu'il ne reflète pas la réalité d'aujourd'hui. En écoutant le *Third Island Region Member* à la dernière session, j'ai noté plusieurs contradictions dans son discours. Je cite, par exemple - "*how can we think of agricultural reforms, etc.*" quand lui même vient après avec plusieurs propositions de réforme. Il parle de mettre en place des petits abattoirs aux normes internationales et, en même temps, il dit que les grands abattoirs ne sont pas économiquement viables. Il faut peut être lui expliquer ce qu'est l'économie d'échelle. Si les grands abattoirs ne sont pas viables, comment les petits vont l'être.

Le membre parle souvent de manque de communication entre le service agricole, les agriculteurs et en même temps ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson, I am making my statement and they are arguing on the other side.

Mr Chairperson: This point is well taken. Allow the Deputy Chief Commissioner to make his statement, please.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Le membre parle souvent de manque de communication entre le service agricole et les agriculteurs, mais,

en même temps, il reconnaît le gros travail abattu par ses techniciens et vulgarisateurs.

Ce cher membre parle du déclin de l'agriculture, mais le nombre croissant des marchands au bazar de Port Mathurin indique le contraire.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the light of the above, I am asking myself the question: which is which? M. le président, j'ai fait plusieurs allocutions dans cette chambre concernant la stratégie de développement du secteur agricole à Rodrigues. Nous avons, avec les officiers du service agricole, élaboré une stratégie de développement dans ce secteur. Je me vois dans l'obligation de renvoyer le *Third Island Region Member* à lire les comptes rendus des débats de cette Assemblée depuis le mois d'octobre 2002. Mais je voudrais cependant résumer les points forts de tout ce qui a été dit.

The Third Island Region Member has been saying what we have been saying since long. We said that in English language, but he just said the same thing in French. The main component of our strategy is to promote a transition from the traditional practices towards a more sophisticated, technology-based approach to agriculture with focus on attaining a certain degree of self-sufficiency meeting quality exigencies for regional exportation, developing the local agro-processing industry, promoting entrepreneurship, optimising export opportunities and conforming to international norms governing food safety.

M. le président, il va sans dire que la commission de l'agriculture ne peut jouer qu'un rôle de facilitateur dans cette entreprise. La commission ne peut qu'être le facilitateur de cette réorientation et ce sont les éleveurs et les planteurs eux-mêmes qui seront les principaux acteurs. C'est tout un partenariat qu'il faut mettre en place pour le succès de cette entreprise. Ce serait démagogique de la part de la minorité de mettre tout sur le dos de l'Assemblée Régionale.

Nous gouvernons dans la durée et nous travaillons pour la pérennité de notre secteur agricole. Nous prônons une agriculture biologique. Nous ne visons pas que le court terme. Notre approche vise le long terme et le succès de notre agriculture dans le temps en changeant la fonction sociale de celle-ci en une fonction économique. *A plan was worked out by the agricultural services to address the major hindrances to agricultural development as well as means to optimise our assets.*

The 'organic status' of Rodrigues will be a pivotal element in our agricultural development strategy that needs to be capitalised upon. The plan proposal means to preserve the organic label of our Rodriguan agricultural produce, with emphasis on the development of its export opportunities. Ways and means to “rentabilise” the main Rodriguan endemics such as chillies, lemons, red beans, etc to commercial ends is an important aspect of our strategy. The importance of inculcating a higher degree of professionalism and quality notion amongst agricultural stakeholders in Rodrigues is to be promoted.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, to achieve the above objectives, no doubt several actions have to be taken. I am pleased to note that the agricultural services have already initiated projects in that respect. Let me mention a few of the trainings that have already been carried out to empower our planters and farmers with new techniques.

- (1) Training has been provided to sheep and goat breeders on the new techniques of sheep and goat production. The same training will be carried out in other regions soon.
- (2) A training programme on piglet production and pig fattening was organised in April/May this year.
- (3) A short training was organised on onion production, post-harvest and processing.
- (4) Training on production of potato.
- (5) Training on soil-conservation.
- (6) Training on bean production.
- (7) Three farmers were sent to be acquainted with green house technology.

Several other training sessions will be carried out shortly. A workshop on New Technology in Agriculture will be held this month with emphasis on chilli production.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to note the commitment of the officers of the agricultural services to make the agricultural reform a

success. Several research and experimentations at farmers' level are being carried out. Let me list few of such achievements -

- (1) Maize trials - testing of a new variety of drought-resistant maize has been completed. The result has been beyond expectations with regard both to the grain yield and the plant itself. This variety of maize has been a particular characteristic that the cob dries out completely whereas the whole plant stays green, thereby constituting a viable substitute for fodder.
- (2) Purification of our local chilli, which has been contaminated with the imported varieties, has started.
- (3) The setting up of a ruminant production unit at Montagne Plate with the objective of providing the nearby farmers with different facilities available at the agricultural services.
- (4) We have started a pilot scheme on rotational grazing at Montagne Plate.
- (5) Testing of hydroponics and protected culture under local conditions has means to ensure quality products for the tourism sector.
- (6) A trial has already been conducted on the improvement on lambing pattern and ewes.
- (7) Control of Newcastle disease and gomboro in local poultry through vaccination campaign.

M. le président, cela me fait chaud au coeur de voir que la jeunesse de Rodrigues s'intéresse vraiment et croit fermement dans le secteur agricole. J'ai eu une réunion avec une vingtaine d'ex-étudiants de l'IVTB. Ces jeunes ont démontré beaucoup d'enthousiasme et je trouve bien drôle que le conseil exécutif a pris la décision de les regrouper en association. Trois hectares de terrain à St Gabriel seront mis à leur disposition pour l'exploitation en attendant la mise en place du centre de formation agricole.

My Commission in collaboration with the delegation of the European Commission has entrusted the consultancy firm Vakakis International S.A. with the mission of carrying out a marketing study of some particular Rodriguan agricultural products. The study was carried out over a period of

eight weeks from November 2003 to January 2004 and it is now final and available.

Finally, a series of recommendations were formulated to improve productivity and efficiency. All stakeholders agree on the principle of creating a 'Rodrigues Label' as a mark of quality for products manufactured in Rodrigues under agreed and established standards of quality. The competition for the logo has already been launched and the selection exercise is being carried out.

The study has agreed that the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Agency mentioned in the Budget proposal of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly be created. The Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Agency would be the depositary of the 'Rodrigues Label' and would provide certificates to producers who want to manufacture according to standards leading to the use of the mark of quality.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is more than the "*Centre Diagnostic Filière et Marché*" proposed by the Third Region Member. It will not only diagnose, but also market the different products. The study further indicated that there is need to group producers and processors into associations, except for red beans producers, most of them are now operating independently. Grouping into associations is expected to bring better networking between all stakeholders, improved standards and quality of products offered for sale and may result in specialisation of activities for the benefit of all concerned. The extension service of the Agricultural Services is working towards the implementation of the above objective.

The creation of a Rodrigues Chamber of Commerce and Industry is strongly felt to assist in the efforts to open the island to international trade. This is not new, Mr Chairperson, Sir; this was included in our speech on the last Budget. *Les travaux d'extension du marché de Port Mathurin avaient déjà commencé.*

A slaughterhouse conforming to European Union standards will be set up soon at Pointe La Gueule. A laboratory to carry out test on food items in conformity with international requirements will also be set up. A sum of Rs1.8 m has been provided as incentive for farmers in the coming Budget.

There is no doubt, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that the recommendation of this study provides some powerful tools for the implementation of our agricultural reforms. However, Mr Chairperson, Sir, in order to succeed, our planters and farmers must realise that this is not only the job of the Commission, the agricultural services and public officers. One and every person shall have to commit himself for the success of this reform starting from the one in the field, in the garden up to the top management of the agricultural services and the public at large.

I am convinced, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that with the commitment of one and all, we will succeed in making our agriculture more prosperous.

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

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 29 June 2004 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

At 1.00 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 29 June 2004 at 10.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CONTOUR OBLASS/ ROSEAUX/CREVE COEUR - ACCESS ROAD

(No. A/5) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards the deplorable state of communication by road from Contour Oblass via Roseaux to Creve Coeur, an area where there are numerous old people and school children, would the Deputy Chief Commissioner state -

- (a) the length of the access between the above two spots via Roseaux, and
- (b) what he intended to do to provide a decent access road to the people living in that region?

Reply: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed as follows -

- (a) the length of the access between the two spots is about 650 m.
- (b) IFAD and other funding agencies will be contacted for possible funding of a track road. However, the request should emanate from the Village Committee.

PAPAYES/DEUX MONTAGNES/ILE MICHEL - ACCESS ROAD

(No. A/6) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards the access from Papayes via Deux Montagnes to Ile Michel, would the Deputy Chief Commissioner state -

- (a) the length of the access between these two places, and
- (b) what measures he contemplates to improve circulation by road users of the area?

Reply: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the length of the access behind Papayes via Deux Montagnes to Ile Michel is about 2.75 km

length. The possibility of constructing a track road at least behind Papayes and Deux Montagne in a first instance is being looked into.

FARMERS - LOANS FROM BANKS & LENDING AGENCIES

(No.A/7) Mr J.C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner with regard to farmers who have contracted loans from local banks (after Kalundé) and donor/lending agencies such as IFAD, *lévé diboute, a nou diboute ensemble* and the Trust Fund for Vulnerable Groups and who are now encountering, many difficulties to market their produce and repay their loans, whether he will use his good offices to liaise with banks/donor/lending agencies with a view to either re-organising the repayment schedules or to writing-off the debts/loans.

Reply:

Appendix A

TO BE TABLED

S.N	NAME OF PLANTER	OPERATION (AREA in arpent & TYPE)	ADDRESS
1.	MOMUS Sylvio	0.5 Disc Plough	Plaine Coco
2.	PRUDENCE Arellio	0.25 Disc Plough	Graviers
3.	EDOUARD Marc	1.0 Chisel Plough	Marechal
4.	COLLIN Julien	1.0 Chisel Plough 0.25 Rotovator	Le Chou
5.	MEUNIER Romain	1.0 Chisel Plough	Baie du Nord
6.	GASPARD Anderson	0.5 Disc Plough	Lataniers
7.	RAMDALLY M. Therese	0.25 Chisel Plough	Citron Donis
8.	AZIE Pierrot	0.25 Chisel Plough	Citron Donis
9.	PERRINE J. Irene	0.5 Chisel Plough	Citron Donis
10.	COLLET Clerge	1.0 Chisel Plough	Baie Topaze
11.	RABOUDE Rosange	0.7 Chisel Plough	Baie Topaze
12.	ROUSSETY Feyderbe	0.5 Chisel Plough	La Ferme
13.	LEGENTIL Arlene	0.25 Chisel Plough 0.25 Disc Plough	Baie Topaze
14.	AHTCHANGO Basile	1.0 Disc Plough	Trois Soleils
15.	MILAZAR Darlan	0.5 Rotavator	Piments
16.	TOLBIZE Jean Laurent	0.5 Rotavator	G.L.F. Corail
17.	CLAIR Stanley	0.5 Rotavator	Baie Topaze
18.	CATHELINE Roseline	0.25 Rotavator	Mourouk
19.	RABOUDE Gilbert	0.25 Rotavator	Mourouk
20.	MERCURE Dickson	0.25 Rotavator	Anse Ally
	DEMONSTRATION AND TRIALS FREE		
21.	CLAIR Jean Roland	0.5 Chisel and Rotavator	Marechal
22.	MEUNIER Jacqueline	0.5 Chisel	Montagne du Sable
23.	PERRINE Jules	0.38 Disc Plough	Brulé
24.	MARIANNE Jacqueline	0.5 Chisel	Papayes
25.	SAMOISY Jean Claude	0.25 Chisel and Rotavator	Point Coton
26.	CUPIDON Archange	0.25 Rotovator	Pointe Coton
27.	LAROSE Samuel	0.5 Rotovator	St. François
28.	ITHIER Gerald	0.5 Chisel	La Ferme

Total for Chisel Plough: 8.75 arp.

Total for Disc Plough: 1.0 arp

Total for Rotovator:

3.75 arp.

Appendix B

Two tractors are involved in the mechanization pool namely:-

- *GMR 427 – received on 15 February 1991 from Robert Le Maire, Model MF 365 4WD (EDF project)*
- *GMR 558 – received on 27 August 1996 from Robert Le Maire, Model MF 390 4WD – Store Form No. 219327. Value Rs 485,000.*

❖ *In addition, eight (8) mini tractors with tillwes, were received on 21 June 2001 from the Ministry of Agriculture, Mauritius, donated by the Government of China. Details are as follows:-*

- *Make and Model – Benye 284/c/w*
- *Store Form No. 798989 – Value new Rs 145,000/unit*

<u>Registration No.</u>	<u>State and Conditions</u>
GMR 660	<i>Good working conditions</i>
GMR 661	<i>Broken down</i>
GMR 662	<i>Good working conditions</i>
GMR 663	<i>Broken down</i>
GMR 664	<i>Good working conditions</i>
GMR 665	<i>Donated to IVTB – Le Chou</i>
GMR 666	<i>Broken down</i>
GMR 667	<i>Good working conditions</i>
GMR 427	<i>Good working conditions</i>
GMR 558	<i>Good working conditions</i>