

Debate No.11 of 2005**Papers:**

Chief Commissioner: Statement of re-allocation – Recurrent and Capital Expenditure for financial year 2004 – 2005 (laid on the table).

Chairperson: Respected members, the first member for La Ferme has intimated to me that he has met this morning with an unforeseen problem and has prayed that this questions be maintained. Therefore, the questions B/124, B/125 will be maintained until he arrives. Of course, provided he comes during question time. Thank you very much. So, we start with the sixth Island Region Member. Before we start, the Minority Leader was on his feet.

Minority Leader: I was standing to pledge for Mr. Grandcourt.

QUESTIONS (Oral)

Chairperson: Yes, thank you very much. Yes, the sixth Island Region Member.

Mrs. Prosper: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/126.

SANITATION IN PUBLIC PLACES

B/126 The Sixth Island Region Member (Mrs. PROSPER) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether, as regards sanitation in public places, namely toilets, drains, hospital and health Centres, which in many cases have much to be desired;

- (a) the Commissioner would inform the House about the reasons therefor; and
- (b) which actions he contemplates to remedy same?

Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner for Health.

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that as far as public toilets are concerned a private company is doing the cleaning regularly. We have noted that at times there is a misuse of the toilets by some members of the public. As for hospital and Health Centres, the main reason is due to the topography of the region. Rain water gains access to existing septic tanks causing overflowing of same, despite regular emptying by the cesspool emptier.

(b) To remedy the situation, regarding public toilets and drains, a committee has been set up comprising representatives of the Public Health Office, the Commission for Public Infrastructure and the Environment Unit to look into the matter. A survey on the frequency of use of public toilets during different specific days is being carried out and remedial actions will be initiated accordingly.

For drains a sum of Rs 5m has recently been earmarked for the rehabilitation/provision of drains at Francois Leguat and Victoria Streets, around Cliderlex Building and in front of

the market in Port Mathurin, at Oyster Bay and La Ferme in front of the school, the new administrative building and at Grand La Fouche Corail. In the meantime regular larviciding and disinfection are being carried out in the abovementioned areas and public toilets by the Public Health Office.

As for hospitals, the whole rain water disposal system needs to be reviewed, as recommended by the Sanitary Engineer of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life in his report. In the meantime, a maintenance team from the Commission for Public Infrastructure is now attached to the hospital for regular maintenance and improvement works there. Recently, two rows of concrete blocks have been placed around the septic tank near the Paediatric Ward to prevent access of surface run off water from uphill during rainy weather. Behind the new block a septic tank which was not in operation, has already been connected to the waste water network. To cope with the situation, regular emptying of the septic tanks by the cesspool emptier and daily larviciding/disinfection of the vicinity are being carried out.

Mrs. Meunier: May I ask the Commissioner, he has talked about a survey being made to know the frequency of the use of the toilets and then he has talked about the misuse of the toilets by people. Does the survey also include a kind of sensitisation campaign about the use of these toilets?

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I just said there is a committee which has been instituted and definitely there will be sensitisation.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner for Health whether, as regards toilets in Port Mathurin and other places, by now, before he starts the survey, he is aware of the situation of these toilets where water remains stagnant on the floor and this, of course, causes very much discomfort to public users, specially foreigners who visit us and this is not a very good thing to see, whether he is aware of the present situation and action has already been taken in order to avoid such discomfort.

Commissioner Sooprayen: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am aware of the problem and we have talked to the company and even people working at the Sanitary Office are helping. And as I have first said we are having a committee to follow. But the maintenance is being done.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have seen that many public toilets are meant for, let us say, normal people. But will the survey cater also for handicapped persons?

Commissioner Sooprayen: I beg your pardon.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in Rodrigues we have toilets for normal people but we have also people who are handicapped. Will the survey also cater for these?

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have already thought about this. It will be in the survey.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, toilets give the public, specially visitors, an idea of how a country keeps the cleanliness. Visitors, for example, go into public toilets and get an insight on how a country is being managed. Less than one week ago, I was in

front of the Port Mathurin police station and I went to the toilet. I don't think my English will enable me to have the words to describe the pitiful, dirty, extreme situation, for the toilet was closed and the people who came did what they had to do outside. May I invite the respected Commissioner responsible for this matter to go and have a look at the situation and further take necessary action or come to this House with a statement about what he has seen and what he has done, because it is not a question of politics, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Executive Council has a policy of making Rodrigues a tourism-friendly ecologically. But may be they are not aware. We invite the Commissioner after this sitting to go there, have a look and see by himself.

Chairperson: Yes, no response? Yes, it is more of an invitation than a question. Next question then.

Mrs. Meunier: I have one more supplementary.

Chairperson: Yes, of course, please do so.

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, sometimes these toilets are subject to vandalism. What security measures are being taken so that this does not occur.

Commissioner Sooprayen: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I just said, sometimes there is a misuse of the toilets by some members of the public and there is also vandalism. We'll see to it now as we did formerly, but this time more frequently and the police will have to do its work.

Chairperson: Next question.

Mrs. Prosper: B/127.

PROBLEMS FACED BY REGISTERED FISHERWOMEN DURING THEIR PREGNANCY

B/127 The Sixth Island Region Member (Mrs. PROSPER) asked the Chief Commissioner, as regards fisherwomen registered with his Commission, whether

- (a) he would state the number thereof; and
- (b) he is aware of the hardship these women endure during their pregnancy and postnatal period, and if so what he contemplates to remedy their situation?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, (a) according to records, 759 fisherwomen are registered with the Fisheries Protection Division. (b) I am aware that these fisherwomen encounter difficulties during their pregnancy and postnatal period as they may not be eligible for the payment of bad weather allowance, according to established conditions and criteria. Normally fishers are paid a Bad Weather Allowance for a maximum of 14 days; if they have been admitted in hospital for a minimum period of 14 days. The Commission for Social Security may also assist if they cannot resume their

fishing activities for a longer period subject to their satisfying the social aid criteria substantiated by a medical certificate. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the difficulties faced by the fisherwomen as reported by the Fishermen's Association, have been discussed at the level of the Fisheries Co-ordinating Committee of my office. Consultations initiated with the Ministry of Fisheries on this issue will be pursued so that an appropriate decision could be taken for the welfare of the fisherwomen.

Mrs. Prosper: Est-ce-que le Chef Commissaire peut nous dire qu'est-ce qu'il préconise pour aider ces femmes-là, parce que toutes les femmes qui travaillent ont droit à trois mois de maternity leave, et pour ces femmes, qu'est-ce qu'il préconise ?

Chief Commissioner : C'est justement les recommandations qu'elles ont faites au ministère de la pêche pour cette question de « *maternity leave* » et même pour les ante natal et le post natal. Il y a les élections qui sont arrivées, donc on va continuer à voir et il y a aussi cette possibilité de prendre des décisions ici et de présenter ça directement à travers le ministre de Rodrigues, le Premier Ministre, pour que nous puissions prendre des mesures. C'est une des recommandations qui ont été faites par les associations et que nous avons transmises au ministère de la pêche pour consultation, pour avoir leur opinion là-dessus.

Mrs. Prosper : Lorsque nous étions à Maurice, nous avons vu madame la ministre Seeburn et nous en avons parlé. Elle a pris note mais ce serait bon que le Chef Commissaire donne un petit coup de main pour que ces femmes trouvent leurs valeurs parce que ces femmes-là aussi ont leurs droits. Ce serait bon.

Chief Commissioner : Je suis d'accord avec l'honorable élue de l'autre côté de la chambre. Ce sont des recommandations que nous avons faites et vu qu'il y a des élections, le ministre de la pêche qui a même à un certain moment, avait démissionné de son poste, M. Sylvio Michel, à qui on avait parlé quand il était ici, on avait fait des représentations, il y a eu des discussions concernant la sécurité sociale et le « *Bad Weather Allowance* ». Nous avons suggéré que les femmes, pendant trois mois, reçoivent le plein de « *Bad Weather Allowance* » que les hommes reçoivent. C'était ça notre recommandation. Et on a même recommandé aussi qu'avant l'accouchement qu'il soit un mois ou deux mois justement de « *Bad Weather Allowance* » tout comme les hommes reçoivent. Donc, nous allons continuer dans ce sens et faire aboutir ces mesures que nous avons préconisées.

Chairperson : Next question. Second Island Region Member.

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/128.

STILL BIRTHS AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

B/128 The Second Island Region Member (Mrs. MEUNIER) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health, as regards women giving birth at Queen Elizabeth Hospital for the period June to August, 2005, whether the Commissioner

- (a) would say how many cases of stillbirth there have been and the reasons therefor; and
- (b) table the names of the mothers concerned?

Chairperson: Yes.

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there have been three (3) cases of still birth from June to mid August, 2005. The reason thereof:

- (i) On 25th June 2005 : One case of **Severe Pre Eclamptic Toxaemia**
(i.e. *Hypertension & Fits*)
- (ii) On 8th July, 2005 : The second case, **Thick Meconium, tight cord round neck**
(i.e. *tight cord around neck*)
- (iii) On 16th August, 2005: The last case: **Anencephaly**
(i.e. *deformity*)

(b) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have been advised that, being given the highly sensitive and private nature, it will not be proper to reveal the names of the mothers concerned.

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we ask the Commissioner whether this situation has not occurred due to a lack of equipment viz the echographic equipment.

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't think so. Because last year there was a report on that question of still birth and a consultant gynaecology came and finally we got the report and we are working according to the recommendations given by Dr. AUMEER. All the same, may I inform that House that the number of stillbirth has from 2004 to date completely decreased.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the period relevant to the question, was there any equipment – echography apparatus or any other equipment related to the care of pregnant women and their unborn child, whether any of these items of equipment, specially the echography apparatus, was faulty or not in operation.

Commissioner Sooprayen: M. le Président, je peux vous dire oui, il y avait un appareil qui ne marchait pas pendant quelques mois, oui. Moi j'ai été informé par des gynécologues et par des consultants. Bons appareils, oui, il en manque, on a envoyé à Maurice pour être réparés, il manquait des pièces, on a attendu des mois et des mois, que ça vienne de l'extérieur, des Etats Unis. O.k, finalement c'est arrivé. C'est en opération. Mais d'après le médecin, les gynécologues qui viennent aussi sont très expérimentés, même sans cet appareil, disent-ils, ils ont pu travailler. C'est pour vous dire alors que l'année dernière, l'appareil fonctionnait, l'année dernière il y avait beaucoup plus de cas.

Minority Leader : L'année dernière, il y avait l'appareil, ça marchait, il y avait beaucoup plus de cas. Maintenant, pendant la période concernée par la question, l'appareil est en panne mais selon le Commissaire, selon l'avis technique qu'il a donné,

de ses consultants, ce n'est pas un problème même si l'appareil ne marche pas. Puis-je lui demander qu'elle est l'utilité d'avoir cet appareil, M. le Président ? Est-ce qu'il est en train de dire à cette assemblée, à toutes les mamans de Rodrigues que l'appareil d'échographie n'est pas important et que même s'il n'y a pas d'appareil d'échographie, on peut donner les traitements nécessaires.

Commissioner Sooprayen : M. le Président, je n'ai pas dit que l'appareil n'est pas important. Un appareil, c'est très important ; nous vivons dans un monde moderne, évolué. Mais je vous dis que s'il y a une panne, on peut toujours, avec les médecins qui ont de l'expérience, le travail peut être fait temporairement oui, pas éternellement. Pareil à aujourd'hui, il y a l'électricité là mais si tout d'un coup il y a une panne d'électricité, un black out, qu'est-ce qu'on fait ? Il y a des jours où si vous êtes chez vous, il y a un black out, vous allez vous servir de la bougie. Cette bougie va vous éclairer tout le temps, même après votre mort.

Minority Leader : M. le Président, le Commissaire veut entrer dans des syllogismes. Je vais lui demander personnellement si on vous enlève tout de suite vos verres là, est-ce que vous allez pouvoir me répondre, les questions que vous lisez là.

Chairperson : Yes, I don't think this is a relevant question.

Minority Leader: This is to say, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that without proper equipment, we are putting the lives of mothers and unborn children at risk. Can I ask, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these babies who unfortunately have died at birth, still births, what was the means, the way they were born, born still, was it by caesarian or was it by natural way. I believe, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that if the echography equipment was o.k, I have a friend whose baby has died. The doctor told him that if this apparatus was o.k, they would have been able, may be, to save the life of the baby. Would the Commissioner, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, tell us whether, if this apparatus was o.k, any of these unfortunate babies would have been saved?

Commissioner Sooprayen: I can't answer this question. It is too technical.

Mr. Jabeemissar: M. le Président, je voudrais demander au Commissaire de la santé, je ne me rappelle pas s'il a dit dans sa réponse combien de temps cet appareil d'échographie a été en panne. Mais vu, à mon avis, la longue période où on n'a pas eu cet appareil à l'hôpital, est-ce qu'à son niveau, il a fait des demandes parce qu'il a dit que l'appareil a été réparé, on a dû aller chercher des pièces ailleurs, aux états unis, etc. Mais est-ce qu'à son niveau il a essayé de faire des démarches auprès de l'île Maurice pour essayer au moins d'avoir un appareil en emprunt jusqu'à ce que l'autre soit réparé. Si oui, comment cela a été fait et quand.

Commissioner Sooprayen : M. le Président, cet appareil était en panne. On l'a envoyé à Maurice pour être réparé. C'était en février, je ne me rappelle de la date exacte et là je dois vous dire quelque chose que je ne devrais pas dire, qu'entre-temps, j'avais eu un appareil portable échographique que j'ai eu d'un médecin ici qui est parti ; je peux dire son nom ? Le docteur DUMAZEL. On l'a mis en service et ils se sont servis de cet appareil pendant quelque temps et tout récemment c'est tombé en panne. Entre-temps, l'appareil est là, ça fonctionne.

Chairperson : Time is almost up. Two last questions.

Mrs. Meunier: Je voudrais reprendre la question que le leader de la minorité a posée tout à l'heure quand le Commissaire a dit que le bébé est mort en ayant le cordon ombilical entortillé autour du dos. Mais, moi personnellement, me basant sur mon expérience, je pense que s'il y avait un appareil échographique, peut-être le bébé aurait pu être sauvé en faisant une césarienne. Est-ce que vous croyez, est-ce que vous êtes sûr que sans cet appareil, les médecins ont pu travailler correctement. Mais moi personnellement je ne crois pas.

Chairperson : Yes, there is a question before this House, yes, you have got the question.

Mrs. Meunier: Est-ce que personnellement vous croyez que sans l'appareil échographique les médecins ont pu travailler correctement ?

Chairperson : I am afraid this question is based on a hypothesis. Can you reword it? If you rephrase it, make it admissible or we take the next question so that you can have time to think.

Mrs. Prosper: M. le Président, comme le Commissaire vient de le dire, l'appareil était en panne et on l'a envoyé à Maurice pour la réparation. Mais est-ce qu'il n'y a pas un technicien sur place à Rodrigues pour la réparation, pour la maintenance ? Sinon, à chaque fois qu'il y a une panne, faudrait-il envoyer ça à Maurice et bloquer l'hôpital. Que pense-t-il faire pour remédier à la situation ?

Commissioner Sooprayen : M. le Président, on a besoin d'un « biochemical technician », qu'on a pas à Rodrigues. Là peut-être à l'avenir, avec les étudiants qui sortent de l'université, il y aura des candidats qualifiés, ça on en a bien besoin. Mais à chaque fois qu'il y a une panne, ça nous coûte beaucoup. Il faut faire venir de Maurice un technicien. Nous, maintenant, le gouvernement régional, nous sommes en train de faire de notre mieux pour qu'on puisse employer plus de Rodriguais qualifiés et ça va venir.

Chairperson : Next question.

Mrs. Meunier : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/129.

**ROADS FROM CAVERNE PROVERT TO MORCELLEMENT TERRE ROUGE
AND FROM MALABAR TO ST GABRIEL**

B/129 The Second Island Region Member (Mrs. MEUNIER) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether the Commissioner inform would the House

- (a) about the state of the roads from Caverne Provert to Morcellement Terre Rouge and from Malabar to St. Gabriel; and
- (b) what measures he intends to take to remedy the situation?

Deputy Chief Commissioner : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that during the recent rainfall, the road from Caverne Provert to Morcellement Terre Rouge and from Malabar to St. Gabriel have been damaged with several potholes in the surface thereof. A programme for the patching up the main roads all around the island has been worked out and was due to start in early August this year. However, due to a breakdown on the asphalt plant of the contractor, a slight delay occurred in the implementation of the programme for patching works. Works have finally started last Friday and are scheduled to be completed next week.

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner talked about recent rainfall. But we know that in Rodrigues we have rainfall throughout the year. What measures does he intend to take to ensure that the roads are maintained correctly.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these roads are secondary ones. They were built very long ago and normally they lack a good drain system. My Commission has instituted a team which is working islandwise, for example, in Port Mathurin, Camp du Roi, Baie Malgache to remove all obstructions in drains and to clear all of them to allow for better water drainage along these roads.

Mrs. Meunier: You have talked about the cleaning of drains but what about places where there is a total absence of drains, in Terre Rouge, for example, on one side of the road there is no drain at all?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the team will be responsible for cleaning of drains and the building of new drains along these roads, building and digging of new drains along these roads like they are doing at Baie Malgache.

Chairperson: Yes, can we go back to B/124? First Local Region Member for La Ferme.

Mr. Grandcourt: Thank you Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Question B/124.

DUMPING OF WASTE AT GRENADINE DUMPING SITE

B/124 The First Local Region Member for La Ferme (Mr. GRANDCOURT) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the dumping of waste at Grenadine dumping site, he could give details about

- (a) how the waste is disposed of or processed at the site; and
- (b) the frequency at which regular monitoring of the site is made to prevent further deterioration of the area and health hazards?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, (a) all waste collected throughout Rodrigues is disposed of at the Grenadine dumping site. A contract for twelve months has been awarded to société Kan John on the 31st December, 2004 for its management. The

scope of works comprises removing waste from the offloading area as instructed by the Environment Unit to create access and adequate space inside the dumping site. These works are carried out twice a week.

(b) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards monitoring of the site, a gangman is permanently posted there to control vehicle movement and to record data concerning waste disposal. In addition, a watchman is also posted to the site to keep watch over the operations and to prevent unauthorized entry. The Environment Unit ensures daily monitoring to make sure that accidental fires are controlled as far as possible to avoid air pollution. Wind blown wastes are collected regularly as and when required. The société Kan John complies with the conditions of the contract. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I'd like to inform the Assembly that the existing site at Grenade had been constructed before the establishment of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and does not meet the appropriate environment norms. My Commission has already initiated the appropriate procedures for the construction of a proper landfill site in the vicinity of Pointe au Sel. The detailed design has been completed and the Consultant (Gibbs) Ltd is presently working on the environment and assessment study.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as far as the processing of the waste is concerned, we have got the information that these wastes are burnt. The Chief Commissioner has been talking of accidental fire. Can the Chief Commissioner tell us whether this is the case or not?

Chief Commissioner: I always question the staff of the Environment Unit on the question of fire. No, they don't put fire. There is the question of gas, I have been told. This is technical.. They even say that after Kalundé, the waste did continue to burn. The gas inside is fabricated by the waste just as we have gas "des excréments des boeufs, de fermentation", something like that. We are not allowed to burn. It is a question of gas. That's why for the new landfill site, there will be much more control. When we have finished, we will put soil on it. This is according to norms. We are doing things at Pointe au Sel according to the norms. But I must say to the honourable members here, that this will cost a lot of money, millions of rupees and we are trying to find funds for that because it is a matter of urgency. The present dumping site is really full and is causing a lot of damage to the environment, especially to people at Rivière Banane.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as far as the management of the waste by société Kan John is concerned, can we know from the Chief Commissioner, the scope of work and whether this includes the segregation of the waste, because sometimes there is fire. All the waste will get burnt? Is there any segregation of the waste?

Chief commissioner: The scope of work consists of moving waste from the offloading area as is instructed by the Environment and creating access and adequate space inside the dumping site. These works are carried out twice a week. This means that the management is not what we call a real management according to norms, it's only to move all the waste around and to put it aside so that we get access inside. I shall try to get more information on the works and come with a statement later.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner himself agrees that the management is not according to norms. There is a problem. He is the Commissioner responsible for environment. He has to see to it that the norms are respected. It is not a

question of talking about Pointe au Sel, now we are talking of Grenade. I think there is a problem here. He should see to it that the problem is solved. Because if there is no segregation of the waste, what will happen if ever there is an accidental fire? What will happen? Plastic will get burnt. The fire is permanent. What will happen? All these toxic gases; there should, I think, be that segregation of waste or add it to the scope of work of the société Kan John.

Chief Commissioner: The dumping site itself is not according to norms. When I mention management it is just to put aside the dumped waste coming there, to level the dumping site and to find ways to have access for lorries. The dumping site itself is not according to norms, that's why it is impossible to segregate all the waste. That's why I say the plastic bottles, the cans have now been segregated. If there had not been "*Rod Green*" this dumping site would have been full with all these plastic bags and so on. That's why we say it is urgent that we go ahead with a landfill site. At Grenade it is a dumping site. What we are proposing at Pointe au Sel is a landfill site according to norms. The dumping site itself is not according to norms and so we want to go very quickly with Pointe au Sel.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we appreciate the concern of the Commissioner about this matter. I would like to ask him about liquid waste. What about it? Is it deposited in that area?

Chief Commissioner: There is a special leachate site at Grenade Dam. This is dumped inside and the leachate site is about 500 meters further down. The leachate will be included in the landfill site project. That's why we say we could not allow this leachate to go to the sea. That's why we say it will cost a lot of money. It has been estimated at about Rs 40 million. The protection of the environment costs a lot of money. That's why we are asking the population to collaborate so that environment can be one of our priorities in the island.

Chairperson: Time is up. Yes, last question.

Minority Leader: We have a proposal which could partly solve the problem.

Chairperson: Proposal? Word it properly.

Minority Leader: Yes, in the interest of Rodrigues. I will rephrase as a question so that the Commissioner may react to it. Whether he will look into the possibility of having a sort "de tri de déchets don't mon ami qui est absent aujourd'hui avait parlé la dernière fois du nombre grandissant de bouteilles en plastique, des bouteilles en verre, des pots, toutes sortes de pots en verre, etc, etc. Dès qu'on a fini de consommer, on jette à la poubelle et ça va à Roche Bon Dieu. M. le Président, s'il y avait un système de tri, dix à vingt personnes que l'on paie pour trier les déchets, mettre les plastiques d'un côté et les verres d'un autre côté, il resterait pas grand-chose. Ces plastiques et ces bouteilles-là pourraient être re-exportés vers Maurice ou bien même gardés à Rodrigues dans une unité pour les transformer, les envoyer dans des containers vides et là-bas ils pourraient les recycler. Est-ce qu'il pourrait envisager à l'avenir de regarder ces solutions-là.

Chief Commissioner : M. le Président, dans toute cette question de tri qui a été abordée par pas mal de promoteurs qui sont venus nous voir, on a regardé si cela peut se faire d'une façon automatique. Mais le tri que propose le leader de la minorité, c'est quand même « hazardous » pour la santé des personnes. Et dans le nouveau landfill site, il va y avoir des tris et même si on remet ça au secteur privé, on nous a même dit que le projet pourrait coûter Rs 100 millions, on trie automatiquement et ça sort en composte. Même le fer peut être converti en composte. La question de tri actuellement à Roche Bon Dieu, à Grenade. Il faut se poser la question. Est-ce que ça peut se faire. En ce moment ci, est-ce que ce n'est pas trop tard ou bien déjà il y a le tri en ce qui concerne les bouteilles de plastiques, les cannettes de bière ainsi de suite. Et c'est ce qu'on dit aux gens chez eux, c'est-à-dire de ne pas jeter n'importe quoi dans la poubelle, de ramasser les sacs en plastique, de mettre de côté tout ce qui est plastique et bouteille, c'est ça, on essaie de demander à la population de participer aussi à ce tri de déchets, et ça pourrait aider d'une certaine façon. Ce que Rod Green a fait, c'est justement mettre des poubelles pour permettre qu'autant de cannettes de bière, des bouteilles de plastiques n'allaient pas à Grenade et c'est ce qui nous fait comprendre aujourd'hui que le fait qu'il y ait Rod Green, c'est un heureux hasard, sinon le dépotoir aurait déjà été rempli. Donc, si on veut maintenant faire des tris, il faudra aller voir au niveau de la santé, si ça peut se faire, comment ça va se faire, quel type d'installation il faudrait. Il faut faire des installations là-haut, ensuite ça roule, ça roule, on fait des tris. Donc, c'est la mécanisation qu'il faudrait. Est-ce qu'on va dire aux gens, comme les gens qui fouillent dans les poubelles de faire des tris. A ce niveau-là ce n'est pas possible. C'est peut-être mettre sur une roulette et ensuite trier ci et là. Est-ce qu'il serait mieux maintenant d'investir dans cette affaire-là ou aller directement et le plus vite possible au landfill site de Pointe au Sel ?

Chairperson : Next question. Same member.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/125.

TURNOVER/TRANSFER OF STAFF AT THE LEVEL OF DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

B/125 The First Local Region Member for La Ferme (Mr. GRANDCOURT) asked the Chief Commissioner, he could inform the House whether there had been a turnover/transfer of staff at the level of Departmental Heads from the inception of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to date and, if yes, state the respective numbers thereof?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the situation of the staff at the level of Departmental Head since the coming into operation of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to date is as follows:

(a) Four officers who were offered appointment as Departmental Head have declined the offer. (b) One officer who was employed as Departmental Head on a contractual basis has been assigned higher duties. (c) Five officers who have served as Departmental Heads have left. Presently eight Departmental Heads are in post; two officers have been transferred for administrative convenience.

Minority Leader: M. le Président, on voit défiler à Rodrigues des gens qualifiés certainement, dont la compétence bien sûr, n'est nullement mise en cause, mais qui pour des raisons personnelles, familiales ne peuvent pas, M. le Président, rester ici en permanence ou bien s'adapter sur une période qui permet à une Commission d'avoir un professionnel pour une période pouvant assurer la continuité, par exemple d'une politique où des actions entreprises par cette Commission-là. Il y a des Commissions qui ont des Departmental Heads pendant un mois, deux mois, la personne part ensuite. L'éducation, par exemple, c'est très fameux de voir que M. le Commissaire détient le record de changements de D.H. M. le Chef Commissaire, dans l'intérêt de la gestion de ces Commissions, dans le long terme, pourrait-il envisager la possibilité de donner la chance aux professionnels Rodriguais qualifiés qui sont déjà dans la fonction publique. Il y a certains dans les collèges, d'autres dans le secteur privé. Vous avez certains qui ont BSC (Accounting), d'autres un BSC (Sociologie), maîtrise en administration, gestion des entreprises, BTS, Master, etc ; des Rodriguais et des Rodriguais valables, M. le Président, pourquoi ne pas leur donner la chance ? Est-ce que le Chef Commissaire peut, dans cette politique de recrutement, encourager des jeunes professionnels Rodriguais qualifiés au niveau des qualifications et de l'expérience à avoir la possibilité d'entrer dans ces postes.

Chief Commissioner : M. le Président, le poste de Departmental Head, c'est un poste ouvert d'après l'appel de candidature fait par la PSC. Or, nous savons que la PSC est indépendant. Et puis ceux qui le désirent peuvent envoyer leurs candidatures. On ne peut pas, on l'a dit plusieurs fois qu'un tel peut-être, mais ils n'envoient pas leurs candidatures. S'ils envoyaient leurs candidatures, s'ils sont qualifiés et selon les interviews, tout dépend de la Public Service Commission, M. le Président. Nous n'entrons pas dans le choix de la PSC. Nous ne sommes pas une municipalité, nous tombons encore, nous sommes un gouvernement avec des employés du Service Civil. Alors c'est libre, n'importe qui peut envoyer sa candidature, n'importe qui passe par des interviews et la PSC choisit. C'est comme ça. Il y a aucune intervention de notre part. Certains croient que c'est nous qui employons, c'est nous qui disons à la PSC. Il y a des institutions indépendantes. Vous pouvez faire toutes les remarques que vous voulez, il y a des institutions indépendantes. Et c'est ça qu'il faut savoir. La PSC est une institution indépendante dans la Constitution. On ne peut faire autrement. Alors, la nomination des membres de la PSC, consultation, le Premier Ministre, le Président de la République, ainsi de suite. Alors il faut que les personnes soient qualifiées et aient les compétences et passent par les interviews de la Public Service Commission. Aucune intervention, c'est libre, tout le monde peut envoyer sa candidature selon sa volonté et son amour du travail.

Minority Leader : Est-ce que le Chef Commissaire peut dire, M. le Président, s'il lui est arrivé de protester d'une manière ou d'une autre, refuser la sélection de M. X ou Mme. Y faite par la PSC ?

Chief Commissioner : Quelle allégation, M. le Président ! Quelle allégation ! Quelle insinuation ! Alors, est-ce que moi j'ai le droit de dire à la PSC telle affaire ou telle affaire ? Je n'ai pas le droit. Je dis toujours aux gens. Il y a trois choses où le politicien ne doit pas mettre son nez ; 1^{er} la justice, un magistrat, 2^{ème} les affaires de police et 3^{ème} la Public Service Commission. Ça c'est des choses que j'ai dites aux gens et j'ai toujours été rappelé par le Premier Ministre Sir Anerood Jagnauth quand j'étais au Conseil des Ministres. Et je suis sûr aujourd'hui que le Premier Ministre, le docteur Navin Ramgoolam, a aussi rappelé à ses ministres de faire bien attention – de ne pas mettre

votre nez dans les affaires de la PSC, de la justice et des affaires de la police. Voilà les trois choses.

Mr. Grandcourt : J'espère que le Chef Commissaire tient à ses principes, M. le Président. Je voudrais demander l'avis du Chef Commissaire, le fait qu'on change de Departmental Head à chaque fois, on prend l'exemple de la commission de l'éducation, est-ce que ça, d'après lui, assure la continuité, comme l'a si bien dit le Minority Leader, est-ce que ça assure la continuité dans la commission ?

Chief Commissioner : M. le Président, il y avait d'abord un principal de collège qui avait été sélectionné pour aller à « Youth & Sports ». Il pouvait pas. Il a demandé l'éducation. Il est parti. Un autre monsieur est arrivé, lui ensuite, il est reparti encore parce que justement, on voudrait et tout ça s'est discuté au niveau de l'administration et au niveau de demande et au niveau, justement, des partages de certains et aussi des connaissances de la situation. Alors donc, c'est une question administrative qu'on transfère quelqu'un pour essayer de donner un peu plus d'aide de l'autre côté. C'est une question de balancer les responsabilités dans la fonction publique à Rodrigues.

Chairperson : Time is up. Next question. Can we move on to question B/130? The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/130.

DRAINS AT GRAND LA FOUCH CORAIL AND CAMP PINTADE MAIN ROADS

B/130 The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme (Mr. JABEEMISSAR) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, as regards the obstruction or total absence of drains at Grand La Fouche Corail and Camp Pintade main road, causing permanent damage to the roads at these places, whether he was aware of such problems and if so, what actions he contemplated to remedy same?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there are no proper drains both at Grand la Fouche Corail and Camp Pintade main road. We have received several complaints from the road section that after heavy rainfalls water use to accumulate in these places. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I said in answer to question B/129, there are many other places around Rodrigues which have the same type of problem. Several places have been identified and action is being taken to remedy same, for example, works have already started at Camp du Roi, Port Mathurin and Baie Malgache. This work comprises the removal of obstructing materials, cleaning of drains and digging of new ones in nearby roads. This action will apply to all regions island-wise and same will apply to road junction at Grand la Fouche Corail near Welcome Industries and Camp Pintade.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I'd refer the DCC to question B/523 of 2004 which I personally asked more than one year ago. In his reply the Deputy Chief Commissioner stated, I quote.

Chairperson: Yes, when was that answer given?

Mr. Jabeemissar: In May, 2004.

Chairperson: In May, 2004, yes proceed.

Mr. Jabeemissar: I quote “I am informed that the Public Infrastructure Commission is initiating action for the enlargement of the road reserve to accommodate a footpath and a drain at Grand la Fouche Corail. Now I wonder, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, after more than one year, the Deputy Chief Commissioner himself must admitted that the problem is still there and I have to ask him whether he is aware of the danger that such a situation may cause to road users especially motorcyclists and in fact, other road users. This constitutes a real threat, whether he has taken this as a matter of urgency.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are conscious of this problem and I’d like to tell this Assembly that this road function was asphalted by the former Ministry for Rodrigues without catering for proper drainage suspect. As regards the road function at Grand la Fouche Corail, there is a problem of gradient. We have a team in-house which is responsible for the proper cleaning of drains all around the island but the road junction at Grand la Fouche Corail needs a more technical input. A survey has already been made on this road junction and I can assure this House that immediate action will be taken both on resurfacing of part of the road and the drainage system.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, concerning the road at Camp Pintade, the Deputy Chief Commissioner has signified his intention to start immediate action at Grand la Fouche Corail. I would like to ask him whether he is aware of the situation at Camp Pintade where the road is on flat land and during the least rainfall, the water remain stagnant on the road. Is he aware of the problem and what immediate action is he going to take? I myself I visited the portion of road last week at Camp Pintade and this place will be taken as a priority on the list. Moreover, I should tell this House that we have a management Committee which meets every fifteen days and in this committee we discuss these issues e.g on the secondary roads we are talking initiatives to place handrails, to re-adjust turning, for example at Camp Pintade, for better running of buses. All these actions are being taken. I can assure this House that, at Camp Pintade, the team which is responsible for the cleaning of drains in the Programme of work for will attend to Camp Pintade also.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, we have identified a list of places which are prone to water accumulation during heavy rainfall.

Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/131.

PRODUCTION OF “HARICOT ROUGE” IN RODRIGUES

B/131 The Second Local Region Member for La Ferme (Mr. JABEEMISSAR) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner, as regards the production of “*Haricot Rouge*” in Rodrigues this year, whether

- (a) he would inform the House of the total area cultivated and the expected yield per hectare;
- (b) he would say if the planters concerned benefited from any help from his Commission and if so, of what nature; and
- (c) he would table the list of planters involved in this activity since 2002 including the area of land they occupy, their locality and their yield for each year?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are happy to inform this House that, further to the policy of the present Regional Government to professionalise productive sectors in agriculture, there has been a substantial increase in the production of “*haricots rouges*” this year. I am informed that as at June 2005 the total area under cultivation of local red beans is about 49.6 hectares and the expected average yield per hectare is 1480 kilogrammes giving a production of about 70.4 tons compared to about 43 tons last year. This figure excludes those areas which have been re-cultivated with local red beans in July. As regards part (b) of the question, most of the planters have benefited from various forms of help from my Commission through the agricultural services viz technical advice by the Extension Service on best cultural practices and pest management, provision of seeds at a subsidised price of 40 rupees per kilogramme compared to the market price of Rs 100 to 120 per kilogramme, spraying of fields by Pest Control Unit upon requests at a subsidised price of Rs 500 per acre for pesticides and Rs 800 per acre for herbicides. It is as a result of all these services that have been offered that we are in a positive state concerning red beans. As regards part (c) of the question, the detailed information requested is available only for this year 2005. Same is being compiled and **will be tabled in the library of the Regional Assembly.**

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the D.C.C in his reply to part (b) stated that most of the planters have obtained help from his Commission. May I ask him what criteria were used in order to select those planters who had to be given help, why not all of them were given help by his Commission.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, normally the help is given to those planters who are registered with my Commission and who are bean planters. This is done upon request. However, we have earmarked an item “incentive to planters” and are taking the decision that all planters of bean and onion be treated on the same level in the next financial year.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, among the reasons why the yield has been so good this year, the D.C.C stated mostly the part that his Commission played, i.e giving help to planters. Can he not admit that climatic conditions have, this year, been more favourable and this has caused such good results. In that case, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask him whether, as regards the good yield of “*haricots rouges*” this year, whether these planters have got any market difficulty to sell their products.

Chairperson: Yes, please wait. I can't see any relation to marketability as far as the main question is worded. But being given the nature of the answer, I will exceptionally allow the question. Yes.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are just in the aftermath of the harvest and normally we have never experienced before any problem of marketing of red beans. In fact, over the previous years there has been a shortage of that commodity to such an extent that the price has been very high, of course for the benefit of the planters involved. At times it was the middle man who made a very high margin of profit. This is why this year the Executive Council has approved the setting up of a public company to be known as the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company Ltd to be responsible for the trading and marketing of local produce if there is a problem of market. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is important to note that there has been a study financed by the European Union on the production and marketing of red bean along with other produce, onion, pork, and it is apposite to note, I quote from the report "all producers agree that demand for red bean exceeds by far the supply; it is thought that even if production is doubled the market will absorb all of it without affecting the price.

Chairperson: Yes, next question.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/132.

PARTICIPATION OF PUBLIC OFFICERS IN THE LAST GENERAL ELECTIONS

B/132 The Minority Leader (Mr. ROUSSETY) asked the Chief Commissioner, as regards the period from the last general elections to date, whether he will

- (a) inform the House of the number of public officers to whom letters have been issued relating to their participation in any manner in the political activities and asking them to provide explanations;
- (b) produce the list of those officers to whom letters have been sent and cause copies of all letters issued relating to same to be laid on the table of the Assembly when answering this question;
- (c) state on what basis these letters have been issued; and
- (d) state whether in any of these letters the name of any political party is mentioned, for which reasons and under which circumstances.

Chief Commissioner: This question refers to disciplinary action initiated by the Island Chief Executive who is the administrative head of the staff of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly against public officers in respect of whom reports have been received on alleged participation in political activities. As I indicated in my reply to question B/108 at the sitting of 18th February, 2004, I am informed that disciplinary action initiated against any officer should not be made public.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, nous avons eu des élections. Il y a eu des gens de tous les bords politiques qui ont été impliqués, des fonctionnaires qui se sont laissés emportés et c'est vrai, dans le feu de la politique. Le ICE qui lui-même, M. le Président, a déjà été vu....

Chairperson: This is not allowed.

Minority Leader: This is my opinion.

Chairperson: This is question time. You cannot make a speech. Put your question, straightaway, I have been very lenient all this time.

Minority Leader: The Island Chief Executive, I'd remind you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Chairperson: You don't have to remind me. This is question time and the floor is yours. Ask your question.

Minority Leader: Why are you supporting the Island Chief Executive? Is he covered by privilege under the Standing Orders?

Chairperson: Why privilege?

Minority Leader: Privilege like for judges, magistrates, etc.

Chairperson: He is not.

Minority Leader: Or the Prime Minister?

Chairperson: He is not.

Minority Leader: So, we can ask questions.

Chairperson: Yes, if you go through the provisions. Please wait until I answer you. Just see the provisions that govern questions. You will see. If ever any member under the cover of privilege in this House wants to cast aspersions on any Officer, I will stay the question and, if need be, request the member to formally deposit on the table proof that such member and until be given, then the question will not be allowed. Yes, let me finish. I will refer to Standing Orders 19(2)(h): No question shall include the name of persons or statements of fact and in case of facts can be authenticated by the member". Don't think I want to stop you in your arguments. Of course, you can reword your question and make it admissible. But this is what is written here.

Minority Leader: I'd like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he has said disciplinary action has been taken by the Island Chief Executive. That's very good from reports which have been made. I just want him to tell me whether he is aware that the present Island Chief Executive has been seen on the day of the results of the first Regional Assembly Elections 2002 in political activities with white flags on his vehicle.

Chairperson: This has no bearing on the main question. It is not allowed. It is not a question of not allowing the question in this Assembly. If you give notice of it, of course, if you give notice of the question, of course.

Minority Leader: Yes, o.k, everybody knows the truth here from this side. Disciplinary action is taken by the Island Chief Executive. Is the Island Chief Executive being on contract until some time again, more time, a few months, is the Island Chief Executive authorised, in his capacity as an officer who is on contract in this post, to send threatening letters to public officers who they are, full-fledged public officers.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to draw your attention to what has been said concerning threatening letters. Well, the Island Chief Executive or any Departmental Head does not send threatening letters, he just asks for explanations. Well, the Island Chief Executive, the ex Island Chief Executive was on contract. The Assembly will recall that similar action was initiated in 2003 by the ex Island Chief Executive in response to reports made against public officers.

Chairperson: There is a point of order and the rules require me to stop you and hear the point of order.

Minority Leader: Yes, every time we have questions on the Island Chief Executive, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the other Commissioners try to throw “de la boue” sur l’ancien Island Chief Executive. My question was not to compare policies between the two Island Chief Executives but to tell me whether the Island Chief Executive, in his capacity as a contract officer, can take disciplinary action?

Chairperson: Yes, please wait. Well, I can’t see any infringement of the Standing Orders in this point of order but, of course, if the Chief Commissioner can react to it.

Chief Commissioner: This is what I was explaining. Even the ex Island Chief Executive was on contract, nominated by the Public Service Commission. So, everybody who is here is on contract. Even the Departmental Heads are on contract. Even the Departmental Heads are on contract here and they can ask for explanations and the Island Chief Executive, who is the head of the Civil Service here, is responsible for public officers and even if you are on contract, appointed by the Public Service Commission, you are assigned duty as a public officer. The ex Island Chief Executive also received reports made against public officers and letters were also sent, I remember one Departmental Head sent a letter to public officers in his department asking for explanations. They have the right. It is in the Personnel Management Manual whereas the present Island Chief Executive is on assignment, either on contract or on assignment nominated by the Public Service Commission. So, they have the right and the duty to ask for explanation not to threaten public officers.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in many of these letters, it is said, I have a copy of the letter, I’d ask a question afterward following what I cite “You have been seen insulting the Chief Commissioner, his family and OPR partisans on the 4th of July at Accacia in a microphone”. I’d say it is very unprofessional and not recommended for a public officer to insult the Chief Commissioner of the Assembly, especially his family in a microphone. I don’t know what are the facts. I’d like to ask the Chief Commissioner,

how can the person who signed this letter, Mr. Thomas GENAVE, Departmental Head know and put in his letter that this person was specifically insulting OPR partisans – a political party. Comment un officier du gouvernement peut savoir qu'un tel, officier du gouvernement était en train d'insulter d'autres personnes et la couleur politique de ces gens-là.

Chief Commissioner : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a Departmental Head or the Island Chief Executive acts on letters received and signed by people. It was the same after the elections of 2002 as I said. The ex Island Chief Executive received letters even from the Prime Minister's Office and those letters received were sent to people who had been the no, no "Mo pas pou dire cotte li sorti ça banne lettres là". As I said, the Assembly may recall that similar actions were initiated in 2003 by the ex Island Chief Executive. He has to put in his letter what has been said by the member of the public who sent these letters. Now, it is the right of the person to reply. According to his reply, he can deny, he can say I was not there, he just replies. We receive a letter we have to ask. It is not only for political matters. It is always also when someone has been absent for three weeks without coming to work. So, we have to send a letter, you have been absent for three (3) weeks, give your reasons, why, not only for letters received from the public against public officers but it also for administrative matters among public officers who behave wrongly or sometimes trying to go against the rules of the public service. The Island Chief Executive sends a letter and the person has to reply. Evidemment le Departmental Head ne peut pas savoir mais c'est ce qui a été dit. Il demande ...

(Interruptions)

Chief Commissioner : We receive letters like this.

(More interruptions)

Chief Commissioner: Even you know you raise problems on a public officer who was working in the Regional Assembly. Are not public officers as members of the public the right to consider – this is a public officer, he is behaving like that, he has the right to write, as you have the right also to write, to protest against a member of the public service.

Minority Leader: Monsieur le Président il y a des lettres. Le Chief Commissioner a admis que l'Island Chief Executive, le Departmental Head eux même devraient faire leurs propres examens de conscience en ce qu'il s'agit de participation dans des activités politiques avant de signer des lettres pour.

Chief Commissioner : A point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Yes, he is making allegations, insinuations. I wish you rule on that. Well, he is continuing to make allegations against public officers. Public officers swear as public officers. They are not political men. They do their duties according to rules and regulations.

Chairperson: Yes, well I understand this is a question which is highly controversial. Many issues related to day-to-day administration have been asked and answered and, of course, what I alluded to earlier. This is an Assembly House and normally only questions which relate to what a Commissioner is responsible is permissible here. But, of course, if

I want to be very strict on this, then the debate won't be open. The answers, I mean it is not a debate, the answers won't be open but I stated earlier that I will not allow anybody to make specific allegations unless he is prepared to substantiate, authenticate what he is saying. But of course, I agree with the Chief Commissioner that members in this House should not persist in casting aspersions on officers. But, of course, if the member has a very great qualm about the system, about public administration, if he feels that you as Chief Commissioner, are responsible for that matter, of course, he is competent to ask the question but, of course, within permissible limits and up and until your answer is clear and unequivocal on this issue, then the question will be entertained. Yes.

Minority Leader: Yes, I was saying Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not pinpointing anybody. I was just speaking in general. Some people, he would agree with me from both sides of politics, from North to South, East to West devraient faire leurs examens de conscience. Ce que je voudrais savoir maintenant premièrement, des plaintes ont été reçues, je voudrais savoir sous quelle forme ces plaintes ont été reçues ? Est-ce que ce sont des lettres, des faxes, des coups de téléphone, des e-mails ? Et à partir de là, est-ce que le bureau du Chef Commissaire, ces officiers qui ont signé les lettres, ont fait une investigation avant, pour voir quelle est la véracité, l'exactitude de ce qui a été rapporté avant d'aller nuire psychologiquement, certains fonctionnaires, je ne dis pas tous, certains sont impliqués peut-être, la plupart d'entre eux étaient chez eux et les faits qu'on leur reproché sont largement faux et dépassés. Deuxième chose, est-ce que sérieusement on a entrepris au niveau de l'administration une petite enquête pour savoir si vraiment les faits qu'on reproche dans ces lettres étaient exacts. Monsieur le Président, aller emmerder un fonctionnaire à chaque fois que quelqu'un prend un bout de papier et écrit quelque chose sur lui.

Chief Commissioner: Monsieur le Président, il y a des aspects administratifs qui ne relèvent pas de mes compétences. Je voudrais pour ne pas aller plus loin dans cette affaire, ces questions. Je pense que la chambre a besoin de savoir dans tout ce qui s'appelle l'Establishment, le management et l'administration comment se font les choses. Je pourrais venir avec une déclaration sur ce sujet parce que moi-même je ne sais pas comment les plaintes ont été faites. Est-ce que je dis je suis un politicien, il y a l'aspect administratif et le fonctionnaire doit prendre ses décisions d'après les lois et les règlements, rules and regulations of the Personnel Management Manual of the Civil Service. C'est dedans et s'il faut peut être voir si on peut déposer une copie à l'Assemblée Régionale, comme ça les membres pourraient la consulter, mais pour mettre fin à tout cela, I'll come forward at the next sitting of the Regional Assembly with a statement giving all explanations concerning when a public officer writes or complains to the administration and what the Island Chief Executive or the Departmental Head will do first of all or is it simply written in the Management Manual, simply send a letter to the person concerned and let the person write and say this is false. I was at my place. Just as when someone goes to make a declaration to the police station and then there is an enquiry and then the person can say « no, I was not there. I was doing something else ». This is the question and then I think this question that we should know, I myself I am still learning the difference between administration, public officers and politicians. You must stick in government service to what is written in the Personnel Management Manual. I think **I'll come at the next meeting with a statement on that question.**

Mr. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, je dois demander au Chef Commissaire concernant les fonctionnaires qui ont été rapportés, je voudrais lui demander, concernant les « disciplinary actions », si tous les fonctionnaires qui ont été rapportés ont eu cette lettre ou bien il y a certains qui ne l'ont pas eue.

Chief Commissioner : M. le Président, je suis incapable d'entrer dans ce domaine. Le Island Chief Executive, bien sûr prend ses responsabilités. Il y a des choses administratives. Il faut faire une différence entre l'administration et les décisions politiques. On questionne sur les décisions politiques, on ne questionne pas sur l'administration car elle est gouvernée par des lois et des règlements du service civil. Et ça c'est dit qu'un politicien n'a pas le droit de venir amender ou bien dire à un fonctionnaire « attention, il ne faut pas faire ça, il faut mettre ça de côté, parce que c'est le fonctionnaire qui signe.

Chairperson : Yes.

Chief Commissioner: Well you say that letters have been sent and i have signed these letters. “Et ou là », non, non, il y a beaucoup de choses dedans, beaucoup de choses que je laisse les fonctionnaires faire.

Minority Leader : Mr. Chairperson, from the answer he has just given, is he aware that these letters are issued under the authority of his office. It is written here “Chief Commissioner’s Office” Rodrigues Regional Assembly. As far as I know the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Louis Serge CLAIR, and these letters are issued under the auspices of the Chief Commissioner’s Office and in the minds of people, it is from the office of the Chief Commission that the Island Chief Executive is taking disciplinary action and the name of his party, his function as Chief Commissioner is mentioned. Therefore, Mr. Chairperson, sir, he is directly associated with this. I believe he should pay, if really he cares for the well being of all public officers, attention to what officers in his office are issuing to public officers.

(Interruptions)

Chief Commissioner: Monsieur le Président, il faut faire bien attention, sur n'importe quelle Commission il y a l'aspect administratif, il y a l'aspect politique. Yes, yes, I know but, you know when there was the case as I said, the ex Island Chief Executive did also send letters to because I have the Departmental Heads. Well, letters sent by education, by agriculture are under the heads of the Deputy Chief Commissioner, the Commissioner for Health. Now, when letters were received, it was the same under the former Island Chief Executive.

(Interruptions)

Chief Commissioner: I have been told that members of your party did go to see the Island Chief Executive. Well, you know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, every member of the public service should know. When they are enrolled in the public service, they have to swear the Secrecy Oath and the Departmental Head or Island Chief Executive act according to rules and regulations.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir ...

Chairperson: I will allow one question. We've spent nearly 30 minutes on this question. The last one.

Mr. Jabeemisar: I should like to ask the Chief Commissioner one thing. In his last reply he has talked about the administrative implications of such decisions. But since the letters which have been sent deal exclusively with political implications of these public officers' actions, can I ask the Chief Commissioner honestly, whether the way these letters have been sent, is not discriminatory because in the alleged complaints only public officers participating in one political activity only; honestly, can't he see that everywhere in Rodrigues, all public officers in one way or another manifested, participated in a way or another in all political activities which have been recently been held in Rodrigues. In order to avoid psychological effects on these public officers who feel victimized, can't the Chief Commissioner use his good officer in order to see to it that all these letters which have been sent, be stopped once for all so that nobody feel victimized in one way or another.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, after the election of 2003 letters were received on public officers – I will not say which party – and the ex Island Chief Executive did ...

(Interruptions)

Chief Commissioner: Why do you look at this one, you don't see the other one? Why do you forget 2003. Quand ou ti envoie bannes lettres, letters sent to the Prime Minister's Office with coupures des journal et photos de personnes and then the Prime Minister's Office sent this to the Island Chief Executive and those letters were sent to Departmental Heads and people received letters like those ones.

(More interruptions)

Chairperson: Order, please, order, please. Yes, next question. Minority Leader, next question, please; next question, order, please, next question, yes Minority Leader you are on your feet. I am waiting for you.

Minority Leader: People are talking, I can't

Chairperson: Yes, order please. I am waiting for you, Minority Leader.

Minority Leader: B/133.

PROBLEMS FACED BY ACCUSED PARTIES DURING WEEKENDS

B/133 The Minority Leader (Mr. ROUSSETY) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in view of easing the problems faced by accused parties on weekends regarding release on bail owing to, the non-availability of a magistrate and from a wider Human Rights

point of view, he would use his good office to approach the Attorney General so that this problem can be solved?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during my recent meeting with the Attorney General in Mauritius, the necessity of posting a magistrate on a full time basis in Rodrigues was raised and I shall follow up on the matter. However, I am informed that there is a long standing practice of releasing detainees during weekends, where there is no police objections by the Prosecutor, making a simple call phone to the magistrate on call in Mauritius. The procedure is well known to all members of the legal profession and the Prosecutor in Rodrigues. In addition to this, detainees, are also released on parole by the police when the magistrate who is on call is not available depending on the nature of the case and on the condition that the detainee calls the next day for bail formalities.

Chairperson: Yes, next.

Minority Leader: B/134.

REDCO (RODRIGUES EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY)

B/134 The Minority Leader (Mr. ROUSSETY) asked the Commissioner responsible for Education, as regards the REDCO (Rodrigues Educational Development Company), whether he will

- (a) ascertain if the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) is now the majority shareholder and the extent of the interest of each previous and new shareholder after the changes in shareholding;
- (b) state what is the composition of the new Board of Directors and give details about the experience and qualifications of each member appointed or proposed;
- (c) state how, when, and under which schedule of responsibilities and conditions a Manager, if any, will be appointed; and
- (d) ensure that all REDCO Colleges have the appropriate staff especially as regards teaching staff and management?

Chairperson: Commissioner for Education.

Commissioner Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on the 23rd June, 2005, the government of Mauritius represented by the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research transferred 5,100 ordinary shares of the value of Rs 10 each to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The transfer was made against payment of Rs 51,000 drawn in favour of the government of Mauritius. This, therefore, makes the Rodrigues Regional Assembly the majority shareholder with 51 % of the shares. The Ministry of Education holds 29% and the Stated Investment Corporation holds 20%. Part (b) – Mr. Chairperson, sir, a new Board of Directors has not yet been constituted in view of the fact that the Ministry of Education has not yet nominated its representative. As for part (c) – a manager can only be

appointed by the Board of Directors and it is the management who acts on behalf of the Board concerning matters of day-to-day administration of each of the colleges under its responsibility. As regards part (d) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in spite of the fact that there is no manager at the moment, every effort is being made by my Commission to intercede with the Private Secondary Schools Authority in order to facilitate recruitment for 3rd term academic year and for the payment of salaries.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since RRA through the Commissioner for Education has the majority shareholding in Redco Company, can I ask him whether he has not temporarily appointed a manager. I think 2 months have already gone or somebody to act as a manager?

Commissioner Roussety: Well, I wish to remind the House that first and foremost, REDCO is a private limited company governed by the Companies Act and then, of course, it is the Board as I just said in my original reply, which is entitled and empowered to appoint a manager. But I will also inform the House that two weeks ago, I had a working session with the Minister of Education and I explained to him the problems facing the management of the five (5) REDCO colleges in Rodrigues. I pleaded with him to expedite matters in the nomination of the members of the government in Mauritius so that the Board could meet and a manager appointed because only the manager is entitled to act on behalf of the Board in all matters of administration. The Minister said he would take the matter to Cabinet and we are still waiting for an answer – I will say a positive answer from the Minister.

Mr. Grandcourt: M. le Président, est-ce que je pourrais demander au Commissaire de l'éducation si dans sa commission il a déjà nommé les membres du nouveau Board.

Commissioner Roussety : No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been no nomination of the members of the Board to represent the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the simple reason that as I said – and I will insist on this. We are awaiting for the Minister of Education to nominate its three (3) members of the Board over there and then we shall nominate our member, in Section 1, you see we'll be entitled to four (4) plus one. As majority shareholder, we'll be entitled to nominate a Chairman. There will be four over there, three on behalf of the government, represented by the Ministry of Education and one from State Investment Corporation. When they have made known to us their three nominees, we'll nominate here and call for the first meeting of the Board.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has admitted that REDCO is a company set up under the Companies Act and that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly holds 51% of the shares; I believe they are ordinary shares i.e shares giving voting rights. What is the Commissioner waiting for? When you have 51%, you can nominate your Board, you are the majority shareholder, you can even nominate the full Board or if this is not permitted by the memorandum of association of the company, you can even amend the memorandum of association when you are the majority shareholder. I'd like to know where is the problem, why the Commissioner has to wait for the nominations from Mauritius when he has the tools, the absolute power in his hands – 51% – to constitute the full Board of part of it and have the quorum and nominate the manager.

Commissioner Roussety: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I fully understand what the Minority Leader is saying and these, as I said, are thoughts that have already entered my mind but we have to act according to law, according to the constitution of the Board of REDCO. We better not run and create any conflict with the Central Government in Mauritius. I assure the House that we are very impatient as well to see that the matter is settled as soon as possible in order to ensure the good management of the five colleges which have been placed under REDCO's management. I give an undertaking that everything humanly possible is being done so that we can bring the matter to a happy conclusion for the benefit of one and all.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the benefit of one and all, can he tell us whether waiting for the constitution of the Board is beneficial for the smooth running of these five colleges in Rodrigues?

Commissioner Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to remind the House that we are in the Republic in a period of transition and that it is a new government which has just taken over. It's only fair to give them a little time to sit down and put their feet under the table and look at what is in front of them, as I said, not only with the honourable Minister did I have consultation but also I went to the PSSA to find out in what way we could possibly do certain things until this matter is sorted out. The PSSA has helped us but don't forget the PSSA also has rules and regulations. So, I will not say that for the moment we are particularly up against a brick wall but as I said, easy, tacit and we'll get there soon.

Chairperson: Yes, last question, we have exceeded the time.

Minority Leader: The Commissioner mentioned the possibility of conflict with Central Government. He said we do not want to engage in any conflict with the Central Government. M. le Président, he said "we do not want", I noted it "we do not want to engage in any conflict with the Central Government". That is very good and I would advise you not to engage in any conflict with this present Central Government. Has there, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, been an initial conflict with the Minister of Education et c'est pour ça que le Board n'a pas pu être constitué parce que l'actionnaire principale, la commission de l'Education, qui représente l'assemblée régionale avait déjà commencé les procédures avancées pour nommer quelqu'un comme manager sans en informer les autres actionnaires.

Comissioner Roussety : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would not say that there has been at any time a situation of conflict between the Commission for Education, i.e the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the Ministry of Education in Mauritius. After the elections and when the new government had been incepted, we did make an approach by saying that we would like the Board to be convened so that we might, in the shortest possible delay, nominate a manager in order to deal with urgent matters, i.e the recruitment of staff because the commission has been informed by the various rectors that there was a total of about 15 vacancies to be filled and, as the House will probably remember, the set procedure established by the PSSA wants that it is the manager who has to sign a contract between a recruit and REDCO and then of course they said, we'll stay action, we were told to stay action, and this is what we did, We waited for the honourable Minister to let

us know exactly how to proceed. And either the Minister and the Senior Chief Executive. We are waiting for the moment.

Chairperson: Next question, Minority Leader.

Minority Leader: B/135.

“MATHEMATICAL MODELLING OF THE RODRIGUAN ECONOMY”

B/135 The Minority Leader (Mr. ROUSSETY) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the “Mathematical Modeling of the Rodriguan Economy” carried out recently by a consultant, he would disclose the full findings of the consultancy, cause a complete copy of the report to be laid on the table of the Assembly and state how he proposes to use such findings or tools developed by the consultancy, if any?

Chairperson: Yes, Chief Commissioner.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the information is as follows:- the project Sustainable Integrated Development Plan for Rodrigues (SIDPR) provides that special studies could be carried out to identify critical information gaps in the diagnostic phase. The research work on mathematical modeling of the new Rodriguan economy undertaken by Mr. COLLET is an input in the formulation of the Sustainable Integrated Development for Rodrigues for which consultancy services are being invited at present. The draft report was discussed in a workshop held on 28th July, 2005 with various commissions and stakeholders and the final report has been submitted on 8th August, 2005. The findings of the final report will be taken into consideration by the consultants in the formulation of the SIDPR which consists of a diagnostic report, a strategy and an action plan. Some of the main findings can be summarised as follows: (1) climate is a crucial factor in economic development of the island (2) there is an increase pressure in the socioeconomic demand on the scarce land resources (c) economic development can influence population growth (4) tourism is a driver of the economy with parallel development in production, accommodation, transport, catering and services (5) an increase in labour and capital investment could cause an increase in the output of agriculture (6) productivity can be increased by encouraging savings, investment, education and research (7) the economy will be characterized by the creation of SMEs, development of agriculture, fisheries and tourism. This report is a preliminary input in the SIDPR project and will be further analysed as other reports in all sectors until the formulation of the final SIDPR report by consultants. **I table a copy of the document containing the model.**

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know, as regards this mathematical modeling of the Rodriguan economy. On which statistical grounds, I believe a model has been output, on which statistical grounds this model has been built?

Chief Commissioner: Well, the statistics have been collected till now by the statistical office in Mauritius and in Rodrigues and, as I said here the research work undertaken by Mr. COLLET is an input in the formulation of the SIDPR for which consultancy services are sought. This is an input. Consultancy services are being invited. There has been a

tender for the consultancy services and now it depends on the consultancy services to take into account the study made by Mr. COLLET. And it depends on them to examine and to see whether the findings of Mr. COLLET are good or they need to be changed or they may have more input in that and I think this study is an input just to help as there have been other studies which have produced reports on agriculture, social work, culture and so on. And the mathematical modeling is a model for the Rodriguan economy. This does not mean that what Mr. COLLET has found is final. It is not. It is just an input as other inputs just to prepare the work of the consultants in the next few months.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what is the model? The objective of the study is mathematical modeling of the Rodriguan economy. Where is the model? What is the model? There is one and it has an output in the form of; especially it is said mathematical modeling. What and where is the model and how is it going to be used as an input for future consultants? What is the model, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I replied to that question B/682. The modeling framework will be developed at both macro and micro levels of interrelated mathematical expressions and equations which relate to time. The overall socio-economic system. Well, what Mr. COLLET has done? It is in the findings. The findings can help the Consultants. The Consultant can say this is not the model. The model is the new Rodriguan economy. It is based on what? What are the findings? Climate, pressure on land, economic development, tourism, labour, capital, investments, productivity. These findings can help in the modeling of the new Rodriguan economy. Well, as I said, it's not Mr. COLLET who will have the final model of the economy of Rodrigues. It will be the consultants who are going to have the final model of the economy of Rodrigues. Well, perhaps the Minority Leader would like to contest the title of the study – mathematical modeling of the new Rodriguan economy. Well, I think it's good that Mr. COLLET has selected this title, where he can himself get into this new economy of Rodrigues after his findings, his research concerning agriculture, tourism and so on. Will the consultants come with another type of modeling or improve the model? What's a model? You can change a model. That's why I am saying; perhaps you are contesting the title of the study. I don't know. It depends on the consultants. When they come and see the study, whether the title needs to be changed or are they going to change it. A model can be changed. The economy, society and culture can change.

Chairperson: We've finished with this question. Time is up. It is an appropriate time to break for lunch? Yes, I suspend the Assembly for 45 minutes.

(The Assembly is suspended at 12.40 hours.)

(Resumption of debate of the Assembly at 13.25 hours)

Clerk: Resumption of questions.

Chairperson: Yes, the Second Local Region Member for Maréchal, please.

Mr. Agathe: B/136.

**VISIT SCHEDULED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER
OF YOUTH & SPORTS TO RODRIGUES**

B/136 The Second Local Region Member for Maréchal (Mr. AGATHE) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports whether there has been a visit scheduled by the Honourable Minister of Youth & Sports to Rodrigues during the month of August 2005, and, if yes, whether he will give details of the scheduled programme and objectives of the visit and the reasons why this visit has been cancelled, when this was done and whether his Commission bears any responsibility for this cancellation of the first visit of the new government?

Commissioner Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a visit of the Minister of Youth & Sports was scheduled during the weekend 13th to 14th August, 2005 in Rodrigues on the invitation of the Mauritius Football Association. My Commission was informed by the Ministry in a correspondence dated 11th August, 2005, i.e the day before the arrival of the Minister, that the Minister had been invited by the Mauritius Football Association for a function to be held on Saturday 13th August, 2005 in connection with one week activities programmed for the upgrading of referees and coaches in Rodrigues. The Minister, together with his Permanent Secretary and Senior Sports Officer were due to arrive in Rodrigues on the 12th August. The Minister proposed to take advantage of the visit to Rodrigues to have a meeting with the Commissioner of Youth & Sports and to visit some sports infrastructure of the island. No schedule of activities was attached to the correspondence. Once the correspondence was received, I contacted the Minister to inform him that I am most willing to meet him, however, my Commission was not formally informed of any function in connection with football as stipulated in the letter. As regards the cancellation of the visit, my Commission bears no responsibility for same. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to end by pointing out that any Minister is most welcome anytime in Rodrigues.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner who invited the Minister to Rodrigues, whether it was the Mauritius Football Association or the Comité Régional de Football de Rodrigues.

Commissioner Lisette: As pointed out in the answer, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Mauritius Football Association.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner, quelle est la nature des relations entre sa Commission et le Ministre des Sports, c'est-à-dire, quelle ligne de communication y a-t-il entre le Ministre et sa Commission ?

Commissioner Lisette : Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are having a very good relationship and I should say that right now, the Ministry is collaborating with my Commission to provide technical support may it be in the field of training or in the field of technical support like providing technical coaches and even for our swimming pool. This means there is a very good relationship between the Commission and the Minister.

Mr. Agathe: May I ask the Commissioner whether – si c'est vrai que lui, en tant que Commissaire, il n'était pas d'accord que le Ministre Tang vienne à Rodrigues, que lui-

même personnellement, il n'était pas d'accord et il y avait un conflit verbal entre lui et le Ministre ?

Commissioner Lisette : Not at all, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is no conflict at all. I should say I share a very good relationship with the Minister. Not later than yesterday, I spoke to him; I invited him to Rodrigues for the Cadet Inter Island Championship that is going to be held here on the 3rd and 4th September. So, this means, I don't see where the question of conflict arises, where does it come from.

Mr. Agathe: Who has cancelled the visit of the Minister?

Commissioner Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have no right to cancel or to prevent any Minister from coming to Rodrigues. So, it is up to the Minister himself; if he decides to come or not to come. It is his privilege to come or not to come.

Mr. Agathe: As regards disbursements for the visit, were expenses to be met from the Commission or from the Minister.

Commissioner Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is straight forward that the Minister was invited by the Mauritius Football Association. As regards tickets, board and lodging, it is the Association that should bear the costs.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can he tell the House when he was informed that the visit of the Minister had been cancelled?

Commissioner Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Departmental Head did liaise with the Permanent Secretary of the Minister on the 12th and it was only then that we were told that the Minister's visit had been cancelled.

Minority Leader: So, is it on the day the Minister was supposed to arrive, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

Commissioner Lisette: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since my Commission was made aware of the visit on the very eve of the Minister's visit and as per our conversation, it is only on the day that the Minister was to come that the visit was cancelled.

Minority Leader: Did the Commissioner invite the Minister or did he ask the Minister why, surprisingly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, his visit had been scheduled, he had written to the Commission, why, for which reasons, "à la dernière minute le ministre a choisi d'annuler sa visite"?

Commissioner Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can't speak for the Minister himself, but I presume that the Minister had reacted and I congratulate him for that. He has reacted in a way showing "respect de l'institution". Because, remember, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that a sports function was to be held in Rodrigues invited by the MFA and my Commission was not aware of it. So, I think and I congratulate the Minister to have had such a state of mind that "dans l'esprit du respect des institutions", he considered that it would be better that for this function is not held.

Minority Leader: Voilà, M. le Président, le Commissaire avoue qu'il y a eu un conflit, des problèmes de sa part parce que sa Commission n'a pas été mis au courant que le Ministre allait venir. Est-ce qu'il peut assurer à cette chambre, M. le Président, que sa Commission, que n'importe qui dans sa Commission, n'a pas dit de mauvaises choses comme « *Ministre Tang pena narien pou faire dan Rodrigues, pena aucaine crédit pou gagner dan Rodrigues* » ; that des high officers at his Commission said publicly that « *nou ki bizin gagne role* », Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is he, Which proof do you want me to produce, are we a court of law here? You want me to call witness, yes, I am a politician and not a

(Interruptions)

Chairperson: Order, order, please, allow the member to put his question. Order, please. I don't want any more sitting interruptions.

Minority Leader: Is he aware that such remarks have been made in public by officers of his Commission?

Commissioner Lisette: First of all, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will have to say that there is no conflict of any nature between my Commission and the ministry. I will like to further add what the Minority Leader has said, I will not reply to it unless he comes here with proof. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have seen that every Commissioner here is going to ministries to meet their counterparts in the respective ministries, to meet the respective Ministers. Even myself, through my schedule, I am able to have a visit to discuss matters relating to sports and youth with the new Minister. And, as I have said, I have already invited him to the inter island championship that is going to be held here on the 3rd and 4th. So, I don't think that there is anything amiss as regards sports, etc.

Minority Leader: M. le Président, est-ce que cette visite n'a pas été annulée, je ne demande pas au Commissaire de répondre pour le ministre, est-ce que la visite n'a pas été annulée parce que la Commission a trouvé que la MFA, ce n'est pas la MFA en fait, c'est la Rodrigues Regional Football Committee, à travers la MFA qui ont invité le Ministre à venir ? Et moi je pense que la chose à faire, M. le Président, si la Commission n'avait pas été impliqué, ça prouve, M. le Président, que cette Commission, elle est dans son coin. Le comité régional de football organise une fonction, la Commission ne sait pas que le ministre va venir. Elle n'est même pas au courant qui on a invité. Qu'est-ce que la Commission fait ? Une formation pour les arbitres, le Commissaire doit savoir qu'est-ce que c'est, moi je ne sais ce que c'est, qu'est-ce qu'il y a, qui va inaugurer, qui va venir, quel est le rôle du Departmental Head, quel est le rôle du Commissaire, de tous ses officiers. Je dis le rôle, Mr. le Président.

Chief Commissioner: He is making a speech. Can he ask his question?

Chairperson : Yes, the point has been rightly taken. Do not take advantage of my flexibility. Be direct, yes. Yes, has a question been put?

Commissioner Lisette: I'd like to state again, Mr. Chairperson, Sir that the invitation to the Minister was made by the Mauritius Football Association and not by the Rodrigues

Regional Football Committee. This is one thing. As regards the activities, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am well aware there was a coaching and a training course for referees as well as administrators but in the letter sent to me by the Rodrigues Regional Football Committee, it was stated only for the opening of the training, but it was nowhere mentioned that the Minister was invited.

Chairperson: Yes, next question, same member.

Mr. Agathe: B/137.

THE OFFICIAL VEHICLE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH

B/137 The Second Local Region Member for Maréchal (Mr. AGATHE) asked the Chief Commissioner, since an official vehicle (a Pajero) was placed at the disposal; of the Commissioner for Health, would he state

- (a) why the Commissioner for Health was currently using other government vehicles for his official trips;
- (b) the whereabouts of the official vehicle, that is the Pajero since July 2005;
- (c) whether the vehicle has had any problem and, if yes, the nature thereof and the costs to the authorities; and
- (d) table a copy of the findings of the Government valuer, if any, in respect of damage to the vehicle, if any?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that (a) vehicle GM 8457 had been put at the disposal of the Commissioner for Health since 4th July, 2005 as his official vehicle was damaged in an accident on 27th June, 2005 on the road leading to Plaine Corail airport at Papayes. (b) Upon the advice of the officer in charge of the Mechanical Workshop, the damaged vehicle has been shipped to Mauritius to the official dealer, from whom the vehicle was purchased, for repairs as it could be repaired locally. (c) A quotation for the repairs of the vehicle received from the official dealer is being looked into by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land, Transport and Shipping. (d) A copy of the examination report with details of the estimated value of the damage **is being circulated.**

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner where the vehicle was going on that day?

Chief Commissioner: No. I don't have this information. I know that on the 27th June, 2005, it was going in the direction of Plaine Corail.

Chairperson: Yes, order, please, yes, order, please. There is a member on his feet. If you want to engage in sitting interruptions and converse privately when a member is on his feet, obviously you should know this is not allowed. I don't have to remind you of this. Yes, Chief Commissioner. No interruptions, please. I'll take sanction, if need be.

Chief Commissioner: Well, I presume that I did say that along the road leading to Plaine Corail airport at Papayes. I need notice of the question where at that time, what was the function of the Commissioner and that is the reply.

Minority Leader: M. le Président, d'après l'examen du rapport de l'accident, les dommages par l'officier du Mechanical Workshop sont estimés à deux cent mille roupies (Rs 200,000), 200,000 roupies. Opportunity cost : 4 low cost homes for 4 families in Rodrigues. Quatre maisons pour quatre familles démunies de Rodrigues. Peut-on savoir, M. le Président, in this pompons state of affairs of elected members who are governing the affairs of this island, who will bear the costs of these repairs?

Chief Commissioner: As I said, a quotation for repairs of the vehicle received from the official dealer is being looked into by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Transport & Shipping. And usually when a government vehicle is involved in an accident, the fact has to be reported to the Ministry of Finance according to the FMM and it seems, I don't know, I need notice of the question, who is going to pay, either the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or the Ministry of Finance? Usually, also there are lots of accidents where public officers are driving cars or vehicles and all this goes to the Ministry of Finance and then to the Accountant General who usually sees the amount of damages which are going to be paid whether by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or by the Accountant General of the Ministry of Finance. I need information on this.

Chairperson: Yes, please wait, we've got a little less than 30 minutes for approximately ten questions. So, we have got roughly 3 minutes for each question. So, I will allow only one last supplementary. Yes.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Pajero has gone to Mauritius and has been shipped. I'd ask the Chief Commissioner – who will bear the cost for the shipment of the vehicle including when it is sent back.

Chief Commissioner: Usually... I need notice of the question. Perhaps it would be the Commissioner itself or the administration of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Sometimes when the public officer is coming to work in Rodrigues, they bring their car. It's the same. It is a question of car being shipped to Mauritius or to Rodrigues. Who pays?

(Interruptions)

Chairperson: No challenge, please; order, please, yes, you have finished?

(Further interruptions)

Chairperson: I said we are not going to have any more supplementary questions. Yes, if you have got a point of order, please, do so.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I heard the Commissioner mention "*taler, joindre moi dehors*". I want the Commissioner to withdraw these words.

Chairperson: The Second Member for Maréchal, you yourself have been unruly all the times, you have been keeping offending the Standing Orders, Hoe can you? Yes, I agree but if you stop interrupting him, of course there will be no such things. Yes, next question.

Mr. Agathe: B/138.

Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner for Health. Don't get distracted, please. There will be no order in this House.

Chairperson: Yes, please, yes, next question.

Mr. Agathe: B/138.

CONSULTANCY ON THE CULTURAL INDUSTRY IN RODRIGUES

B/138 The Second Local Region Member for Marechal (Mr. AGATHE) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Women's Affairs, Family Welfare, Community Developments, etc whether, with regard to the consultancy on the cultural industry in Rodrigues, she would state where matters stood and give a breakdown of all payments made to all the consultants to date?

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in December 2003, the Regional Government took the decision to carry out a study on the development and promotion of culture and of cultural industries in Rodrigues. Public tenders were invited and the services of Mr. Jean Pierre Souci were retained. The Consultant started his assignment in May, 2004 and handed over his report in three volumes in March, 2005 viz the study, a cultural inventory for Rodrigues and the compilation of universal declarations and international recommendations for cultural developments. A copy of the report has been submitted to the French Embassy in Mauritius. The recommendations of the consultant are presently under consideration by an advisory committee comprising people versed in culture to appraise the report before rendering it public. The agreed consultancy fee of Rs 567,000, financed equally by my Commission and the French Embassy has been paid as follows: in accordance with the terms of the contract: 1st instalment on 6 May, 2004, 2nd instalment on 13 August, 2004, 3rd instalment on the 6 December, 2004 and 4th instalment on 16 March, 2005.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, regarding the consultancy, I'd ask the Commissioner what scope of work has been given to the contractor.

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: M. Chairperson, Sir, I am sorry I was not

Mr. Agathe: About the scope of work?

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: That is what I said, i.e the Consultant had to produce a report and recommendations on the development and promotion of culture in Rodrigues cum development and promotion of cultural industries in Rodrigues.

Mr. Agathe: When we talk about culture, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have in mind “*Séga Tambour*”, musicians and so on. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether there have been meetings or interviews with the musicians.

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, he has had meetings with different groups of persons all around the island during the course of his study. Culture does not mean only “*Séga Tambour, accordéons*” or things like these, culture means a way of life. It is education, training, history, heritage, traditions, language, tourism, theatre, photography, media, radio, TV, press, cinema, whatever has to do with our way of life. I myself I participated in a meeting with stakeholders which was held at the Human Resource Centre at the beginning of his study but he had also sectoral meetings.

Chairperson: Yes, last question.

Minority Leader: Can the Commissioner tell us whether the terms of the contract provide for provision of an office for the Consultants at her Commission and, if yes, whether this is written in the contract, and if it is not written in the contract, explain to this House why the Consultants have been using an ex-office of the Family Protection Unit in the Cliderlex Building in Port Mathurin?

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, again there are two different statements in this question. So, I’ll try to answer the first one.. The Minority Leader was asking whether there was any term in the agreement of the Consultants for the use of an office by him. I must say that during the negotiation with the French Embassy which is the co-partner in this project, the Regional Government agreed to provide logistics and any other facilities to the Consultant to allow him to do his job correctly. By logistics, we were to give all possible facilities and also an office for him to work. As you know, my whole Commission has found a room in Central Administration and there is not enough space to cater for everybody being given the number of portfolios that we have. The office that is found at Cliderlex was closed because, as we have mentioned so many times in reply to questions and in statements here, there was no personnel working there and we were renting this office. That’s why we proposed to the Consultant to occupy the office when it is not needed by the service because now and then Consultants, were coming from Mauritius to give legal advice to the people and during these times, the Consultant was not using the office.

Chairperson: Next question. Time is up.

Mr. Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir. B/139.

UPGRADING OF INFRASTRUCTURE AT LA FERME AREA HEALTH CENTRE

B/139 The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr. PIERRE LOUIS) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health; whether the Commissioner could inform the house about the measures his Commission was taking or intended to take to upgrade the infrastructure at La Ferme Area Health Centre?

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a contract is expected to be awarded for the enlargement of the entrance to the La Ferme Area Health Centre as well as to the existing parking space for ambulances. In the meantime, actions are being initiated to repair the Health Centre within the next two weeks together with refurbishing the roads.

Chairperson: Yes, a supplementary question?

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, I would like to make a request in the form of a question, to ask the Commissioner whether he would cancel, you know “juste à l’arrière du male et female wards, il y a un parking pour les ambulances, mais ça dérange les patients. Je voudrais demander au Commissaire s’il envisage d’éliminer cette partie?

Commissioner Sooprayen: Ce n’est pas prévu.

Chairperson: Next question, the First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres.

Mr. François: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/140.

SUPPLY OF WATER FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES TO THE VILLAGES OF FOND LA BONTE AND FOND BAIE AUX HUITRES

B/140 The First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres (Mr. FRANCOIS) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether with regard to the supply of water for domestic purposes to the villages of Fond La Bonté and Fond Baie Aux Huîtres, he could say if the water supplied was safe for human consumption, and if not, what was being done to remedy the situation?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the village of Fond La Bonté et part of Fond Baie aux Huîtres are presently provided with water supplied from Source Tindoye. The water is presently not treated but action has already been initiated to equip the system with a fully automatic water treatment plant which will include the following: pipe laying works, flocculation unit, pressure filters, chlorination, pumping devices and water storage tank. The contract was awarded to the lowest bidder viz Aquaria Ltd. for a sum of Rs 592,250. The contract period is 8 weeks. The site was handed over on 9th August, 2005 and now, the reinforcement works for the storage water tank and casting of concrete are in progress.

Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mr. François: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, question B/141.

EXTENSION OF MONT LUBIN HEALTH CENTRE

B/141 The First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huîtres (Mr. FRANCOIS) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health, whether, as regards, the extension of Mont Lubin Area Health Centre, he would make a brief statement on the scope of work to be carried out there, the time schedule and when work was due to start?

Chairperson: Yes Commissioner for Health.

Commissioner Sooprayen: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the scope of the work to be carried out at the Mont Lubin Area Health Centre comprises (a) a project to extend Mont Lubin Area Health Centre consisting of the extension of an existing building; the area of extension is about 700 m², (b) the renovation of the existing records office on the ground floor, (c) the first floor will comprise the following: dental surgery, sterilisation and preparation room, record and guardroom, waiting area, family planning, nurses' mess, store/pharmacy, doctors' mess, lecture room and NCD room.

Chairperson: Yes, next question.

Mr. François: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/142.

LAUNCHING OF HEALTH AND NUTRITION CLUBS IN RODRIGUES

B/142 The First Local region Member for Baie aux Huîtres (Mr. FRANCOIS) asked the Commissioner for Health whether, as regards the launching of Health and Nutrition Clubs in Rodrigues, he could state to the House

- (a) the number of clubs set up to date and their locations;
- (b) the targeted group/s and the number of persons attending these clubs; and
- (c) what are the objectives of setting up such clubs?

Commissioner Mercure: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I shall reply to question B/142, first of all I'd start with all the objectives of setting up of the Health and Nutrition Club in Rodrigues. I, therefore, wish to apprise this Assembly that the Health and Nutrition Club aims at promoting health and nutrition of the elderly population, carrying a sensitization campaign on good dietary habits with a view to contributing towards minimising the effects of diabetes, hypertension – two non-communicable diseases causing much havoc among senior citizens. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as a caring regional government aiming at promoting healthy life styles of senior citizens, my Commission, in collaboration with the Commission for Health and others has identified twelve committee and senior citizen centres islandwide to set up the Health and Nutrition Club. To-day eleven Health and Nutrition Clubs have already been set up at the following locations: La Ferme, Maréchal, Rivière Cocos, Songes, Ste Famille, Soupir, Petit Gabriel, Accacia, Batatran, Mont Lubin, English Bay. The twelfth one will be launched at Dans Bébé on Wednesday 24th August, 2005. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, over and above the promotion of a healthy life style of the elderly population, the staff of my Commission and the Commissioner for Health also lay emphasis as follows: on the importance of physical exercise i.e leisure, walking, aerobic and so on; training for the carers who look after very old senior citizens as well as bed ridden ones so that they could provide some « soins palliatifs »; providing each senior citizen with a health card which contains necessary information about their health state. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards the targeted groups, I would like to state that 3500 citizens if the island are fully

concerned with these clubs. To date, some 1500 senior citizens have attended these clubs on a voluntary basis and some more are expected at Dans Bébé to-morrow. Further an aggressive sensitization campaign will be launched to take on board the whole community of senior citizens in Rodrigues as the regional government has a lot of concern in respect of the welfare of this category of our population who have, at a given point in time, contributed a lot to the advancement of our island. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson: Yes, next.

Miss Castel: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, question B/143.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY IN RODRIGUES

B/143 The Fifth Island Region Member (Miss CASTEL) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Women's Affairs, Family Welfare, Community Developments, etc; whether the Commissioner could state what action she was contemplating to address the problem of teenage pregnancy in Rodrigues during the new financial year?

Mrs. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my colleague, the Commissioner for Health explained lengthily with figures during the past sittings in this House the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Rodrigues. Being equally concerned, my Commission will soon undertake a study on the phenomenon. Provision has been made in the current estimates 2005-2006 for a survey of the causes of teenage pregnancy in Rodrigues and experts would be called upon to investigate and determine the courses of teenage pregnancy in Rodrigues, its impact on the socio-economic fabric and propose appropriate remedies. During their recent visit in Rodrigues, high officials of the IPPF (International Planned Parenthood Federation) have offered to give a helping hand in this project mainly in terms of technical assistance.

Chairperson: Yes, next.

Miss Castel: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/144.

PARTICIPATION OF MEN IN THE SOCIAL AND FAMILY FABRIC

B/144 The Fifth Island Region Member (Miss CASTEL) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Women's Affairs, Family Welfare, Community Developments etc; whether the Commissioner could state what action she was taking for greater involvement and participation of men in the social and family fabric?

Mrs. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. chairperson, Sir, conscious of the importance of men's role in the family and in society at large and the fact that men's participation tends to be less visible in social activities and that their involvement in sensitisation and participation campaign in Rodrigues is below expectations, my Commission organises frequent meetings with men to sensitise them on their duties and responsibilities in society and in

the family. A series of consultative meetings called “*zommes, a nous causer*” has been organized for men all around the island last year. Three workshops are being programmed on gender equality viz one for decision makers which has already been held one for men and one for women scheduled in the coming days. Following proposals from these forums and from men themselves, my Commission has, from this year organized a men’s day as an annual feature to put men’s roles, rights and responsibilities in the limelight.

Chairperson: Next question.

Miss Castel: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/145.

SENSITISING WOMEN ON LEGISLATION AFFECTING THEIR RIGHTS

B/145 The Fifth Island Region Member (Miss CASTEL) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Women’s Affairs, Family Welfare, Community Developments etc; whether the Commissioner could inform the House of the measures to be taken by her Commission for sensitizing women on legislation affecting their rights?

Mrs. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission has already carried out a sensitisation campaign on women’s rights throughout the island. The following points were covered: rights of women, remedies available under the Domestic Violence Act, procedures for obtaining alimony, workshops on gender equality. As from 25th August, 2005, my Commission is organising a series of 60 workshops on laws affecting families. The services of two barristers have been enlisted for this sensitisation programme which will last until the 16th June, 2006.

Chairperson: Next.

Miss Castel: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, question B/146.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LIBRARY SERVICES’ SECTOR

B/146 The Fifth Island Region Member (Miss CASTEL) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Women’s Affairs, Family Welfare, Community Developments etc; whether as Commissioner responsible for Library Services, she could inform the House of new developments in this sector?

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the library services have been reorganised and upgraded in Rodrigues. The boarding’s of the various “*centres de lecture et d’animation culturelle*”, the CLAC has been renovated and the stocks of books replaced. A new library will be opened at the Administrative complex of La Ferme soon. As regards the public library, major developments will be introduced during the forthcoming weeks. The public library will be housed in the new building in Port Mathurin situated on the ground floor, thus allowing easy access to all, especially to the elderly and the handicapped persons. Further, the floor area of the new building may be

twice as much as the existing one including the ground floor and a mezzanine. There will be also a special children's corner for cultural "animation" and a story-telling, promoting and boosting up the readership in general. Free internet access facilities will also increase. Provision has been made for the setting up of the unit of the National Library where all publications in Rodrigues will be deposited in accordance with the law. As regards capacity building in this sector, a workshop has been organised in Rodrigues in April, 2005 for the benefit of all library staff, resource persons including the Director of the National Library, Library Organiser and the Registrar of Council of professional librarians. My Commission is contemplating the possibility of sponsoring all library staff for training in librarianship by distance learning for them to obtain certificates at diploma levels to work as full fledged librarians.

Chairperson: All questions exhausted. Next item, please.

Clerk: Statements by Commissioners.

Chairperson: No statement.

Clerk: Motions.

Chairperson: Yes, all the business has been exhausted. Adjournment?

ADJOURNMENT

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, sir, I move that the Assembly be adjourned to Tuesday 23rd September, 2005 at 10.30 a.m.

(The Deputy Chief Commissioner bowed his secondment)

Chairperson: That this Assembly be adjourned to Tuesday 23rd September, 2005 at 10.30 a.m. Those in favour say "aye" those against say "no". The "ayes" have it.

Chairperson: Any statement on adjournment. Yes.

STATEMENT ON ADJOURNMENT – MINORITY LEADER

Minority Leader: Je voudrais, M. le Président, intervenir sur la mesure historique prise par le nouveau gouvernement concernant l'élargissement du Welfare State au sein de la République, Rodrigues comprise, et surtout la gratuité du transport pour les étudiants, écoliers, stagiaires. M. le Président, l'histoire a retenu que le père de la nation, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam avait donné au peuple, à la population de Maurice et de Rodrigues l'éducation secondaire universelle et gratuite et c'est pour cela qu'aujourd'hui nous-même nous sommes les heureux produits de cette décision historique. Aujourd'hui, nous avons le Premier Ministre, le Dr. Navin Ramgoolam qui est allé encore plus loin en offrant, son gouvernement a offert le transport gratuit aux étudiants et à Rodrigues, moi je dois dire nous devons remercier et féliciter le gouvernement, les familles Rodriguaises et le gouvernement central, d'être venu de l'avant avec cette mesure historique qui a

certainement été accueillie avec beaucoup de joie et d'enthousiasme et surtout avec beaucoup de soulagement parce qu'on a fait un calcul de notre côté. On a vu que mensuellement, le transport pour envoyer un étudiant au collège, à l'école, ça peut arriver jusqu'à Rs 500 ou Rs 600 par mois. Imaginez si quelqu'un a une famille – beaucoup de familles Rodriguaises ont deux ou trois enfants qui vont à l'école, à l'IVTB, à différents collèges. Ça fait Rs 3000 par an qu'ils économisent dans le budget de ces familles. Surtout quand on pense qu'il faut penser à d'autres dépenses, par exemple, sur les livres, des matières d'écolage, d'uniformes, etc. Nous espérons toutefois que toutes familles Rodriguaises vont utiliser ces économies à bon escient, beaucoup plus pour le bien-être de leurs enfants, investir dans plus de livres, par exemple, les dictionnaires, des aides pour leurs enfants. M. le Président, je le redis, c'est une mesure historique et les familles et étudiants rodriguais l'ont accueillie avec beaucoup de fierté comme c'est le cas, il ne faut pas l'oublier, pour les personnes âgées, le transport gratuit a été accueilli avec beaucoup d'enthousiasme. C'est une décision courageuse, ça montre que la gouvernement actuel à Maurice means business et quand vous avez des politiciens dans une campagne électorale, qui ont un programme, ils disent qu'ils peuvent faire quelque chose et qu'il le font ensuite, ça c'est formidable. Nous avons dit nous, M. le Président, qu'un jour les Rodriguais seront propriétaires, ceux qui le désirent, sous des certaines conditions, sous une loi bien établie, sous des conditions bien strictes, bien observées, seront propriétaires de leurs terrains privés, je le redis encore, c'est dans notre programme électoral, un jour, M. le Président, j'ai l'ultime sentiment que ce sera réalisable. Donc, je félicite le gouvernement central pour cette mesure historique concernant les étudiants et les personnes âgées. Toutefois, M. le Président, il y a un problème grave et je crois que les autorités en face de nous doivent agir en ce qui concerne le prix du lait. La Commission du Commerce, je pense, doit faire son travail parce que, je ne vais pas entrer dans le débat mauricien. Le gouvernement a trouvé que les importateurs fixent trop cher; car il y a un débat là-dessus, ce n'est pas vraiment mon problème; mon problème c'est qu'il y a une baisse substantielle dans le prix du lait à Maurice qui a pris effet immédiatement et le prix du lait a effectivement diminué entre dix et vingt roupies sur un sachet de lait. Mais ici à Rodrigues, après les mesures, nous sommes allés vérifier dans les boutiques, les autres membres et moi-même. Est-ce que le prix du lait a diminué. Donc, M. le Président. Ce n'est pas possible qu'une mesure nationale qui touche tout le monde, qui affecte le budget de tous les jours, les citoyens de toute la république, il y a une décision gouvernementale qui reste inappliquée; le prix du lait n'a pas encore baissé à Rodrigues. Il faut faire quelque chose, il faut voir tout de suite comment de mettre au diapason de cette baisse qui a été faite à Rodrigues. J'ai été aux nouvelles auprès de certains commerçants et ils m'ont dit « on ne peut pas baisser le prix du lait, nous », ils ne vont jamais le faire, naturellement, à moins qu'on leur dise de le faire. Si ça avait été augmenté, tout de suite ils auraient augmenté, mais le problème vient encore de la fixation du prix. Les commerçants disent « oui on peut baisser les prix mais on travaille d'après le « *price list* ». Mais alors, que fait la Commission, est-ce que la Commission a contacté le ministre du commerce à Maurice pour voir comment appliquer cette mesure à Rodrigues. Parce que le coût de la vie est encore plus cher à Rodrigues; il y a le prix du frêt, il y a d'autres coûts, d'autres frais qui s'associent au prix qui est vendu à Maurice. Alors, je voudrais demander au Chef Commissaire, à son Commissaire du Commerce, d'intervenir assez vite pour que la population de Rodrigues, les vieilles personnes, les enfants, tout le monde à Rodrigues puissent bénéficier de cette décision gouvernementale qui a fait réduire le prix du lait qui était, d'après ce que j'ai lu dans la presse, était artificiellement élevé, 40% de profit, c'était exagéré. Je vous

remercie, M. le Président, et j'espère avoir des éclaircissement plus tard ; sinon, voir les actions, voir le prix du lait baisser effectivement.

(Applause)

Chairperson : Yes, no other intervention ? This House stands adjourned.

On its rising at 14.15, the Assembly stood adjourned to Tuesday 27th September, 2005 at 10.30 a.m.