

MOTION (Resumption of debate on the Chief Commissioner's motion
Draft Estimates 2006/2007)

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me just some four to five sentences to be able to reset the context of my conclusion. So, I was saying yesterday, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Minority Leader demonstrated with figures *à l'appui*, heavy reliance of the Rodriguan economy since 1982, 1983 on public funds. Surely he knows that Singapore, one of the contemporary economic giants, kicked off its economy in the 1960s with complete and total state-sponsored projects.

L'état singapourien pilotait, M. le président, personnellement et totalement son économie à son démarrage. En étant actionnaire majoritaire dans pratiquement tous les principaux secteurs producteurs, *it sets the economic ball rolling and gradually the private sector took over and flourished so well that today it has become one of the most dreadful economic tigers threatening the western industrialised countries.*

So, therefore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we should not see the fact that for the moment our economy rests on public funds as a tragedy. Let us trust our beloved Rodrigues and the capacity of our Rodriguans. As I said in my introduction, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we, on this side of the House, we are optimistic. Once we would have done the main social, cultural and economic

infrastructures and structures, funds will remain for us to inject massively in capital investments and new technology development measures. And the Rodriguan, already empowered, will then be ready *pour monter sur l'autoroute de l'économie, M. le Président. Les rodriguais ne monteront pas seulement sur la route, l'autoroute de l'économie, mais ils vont courir. Et connaissant les qualités physiques et sportives des rodriguais, attendons de contempler les résultats. Je ne suis pas du tout pessimiste, M. le président.*

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I use to believe that a Rodriguan ethnic modernity would be a driving force towards solidarity in front of adversity. But the comments of the respected member, Mr. Agathe, on the budget allocation to Rodrigues has shocked me deeply, aggrieved me Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I can see today, Mr. Chairperson, Sir; that adversity comes from within the Rodriguan society itself. How can a returned member of this House say, I quote:

“M. le chef commissaire est allé quémander de l'argent au ministre des finances à Maurice ».

What does the respected member, Mr. Agathe mean? That Rodrigues is an independent country and that we are not part and parcel of Mauritius?

Qualifier Rodrigues de quémander de l'argent à Maurice est anti-patriotique et anti-Rodriguais, M. le président. Est-ce que les municipalités de Maurice ont honte de prendre leur part du gâteau national pour ces citadins qui habitent Maurice ? Est-ce que les enfants de Souillac, de Curepipe, de Flacq doivent être traités différemment des rodriguais ? M. le président, pourquoi nous, les rodriguais – j'ai envie de pleurer – pourquoi

nous les rodriguais M. le président, devons souffrir ?

Mr. Chairperson : Order Please, order!

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Pourquoi nous, M. le président, devons subir un traitement différent ? Pourquoi ? Sommes-nous indépendants à une certaine extrémité ou bien sommes-nous à l'extrême, une colonie de Maurice, M. le président, ou bien sommes-nous une partie intégrante de l'île Maurice? Il faut nous le dire une fois pour toute M. le président.

When Mauritius became independent, didn't it rely on the ex-colonial power to have financial resources until it could stand on its feet? *M. le président, il y a eu beaucoup de mesures, et même jusqu'aujourd'hui, pour que Maurice puisse tenir sur ses pieds.* Did the English nationals denigrate the Mauritians for that purpose ? Until the recent years, Mauritius has benefited from many advantages from ancient European powers to give it an edge – *et c'est tout à fait légitime, M. le président* – other competitive countries to allow Mauritius to build its economy. It is today when the Multi-fibre Agreement is being dismantled that we are panicking for we are not already ready to join the dynamics of globalisation.

Maurice doit-elle avoir honte, M. le président, d'avoir bénéficié des ces accords préférentiels ? Chaque pays, même avant le phénomène du village global, « *chaque pays besoin so camarade encore plus quand li pe commencer* ». Et ça je crois, M. le président, c'est une loi naturelle et universelle, parce que cela s'applique aussi pour les enfants. Quand ils

commencent à marcher, *bizin capave attrape so la main*. Ça ne veut pas pour autant dire, M. le président, *ki li pe marche lors béquilles, ki li handicapé* et l'exemple de Maurice à ses débuts, est un vibrant exemple. A cause de cela M. le président, je pense qu'en ces premiers jours de l'autonomie, Maurice devrait, elle aussi, être plus compatissante et aussi généreuse qu'on a été avec elle et négocier des accords économiques préférentiels, intra-républicains avec Rodrigues. Et aujourd'hui, quand on voit le premier ministre de Maurice, l'honorable Dr Navin Ramgoolam, se rendre en Inde et récemment en France, le pays de nos ancêtres pour avoir le soutien de ces grands pays pour lui permettre de soutenir son développement, M. le président, pour négocier, comme nous. Doit-on dire qu'il est allé quémander chez les indiens et chez les français ? Pourquoi nous, à Rodrigues, en tournant vers Maurice, à laquelle – nous ne parlons pas de pays amis, nous faisons partie intégrante de l'île Maurice – M. le président, pourquoi est-ce qu'on doit rougir de notre action. Je ne cesserais de le dire M. le président, Maurice a autant besoin de Rodrigues comme Rodrigues de Maurice. Et hier à la télé, j'ai écouté le premier ministre Ramgoolam dire, lui-même, la résolution – il a rappelé – la résolution 1418 des Nations Unis, qui interdit la démembrement des pays et il parlait à ce titre, M. le président, du droit de Maurice sur le Chagos. Rodrigues n'est-elle pas membre de l'île Maurice ? Quand on est membre – n'est-elle pas membre de la République ? Moi je crois, M. le président, compte tenu de tout ce qu'on a subi dans le passé, que nous devons encourager les Rodriguais à marcher la tête aussi haute, la tête aussi haute que leurs frères mauriciens. Et cela dans n'importe quelle partie de notre territoire, M. le président, dans n'importe quelle partie de notre territoire. Au contraire de certains sentiments, on devrait se réjouir d'avantage du niveau de développement qu'on a atteint malgré les ressources, pas seulement

aujourd'hui limitées, mais qui ont été toujours limitées, M. le président. Si on admet que la course du développement dans la République, que dans la course au développement, Rodrigues n'était pas incluse sur la ligne de départ de cette course, cela bien avant l'avènement de l'indépendance en 1968. Bien avant 1968 je le précise, M. le président, Rodrigues était négligée, il ne faut pas avoir peur de le dire. Et cela remonte à l'époque de l'esclavage. Si bien, savez-vous M. le président, que ce n'est que 4 ans après l'abolition de l'esclavage que nos ancêtres ont été libérés de ce crime, M. le président ? L'histoire le retiendra M. le président, et même, M. le président, et même après, quand on est devenu officiellement mauricien, après la baisse du Union Jack et la levée du quadricolore, les Rodriguais *were never on the same level playing field as their brothers in Mauritius. Facts speak for themselves, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, even recently, recent facts Mr. Chairperson, Sir.*

As when you took the budget 2002/2003, how much financial resource was allocated to the Arts & Culture, for example, for Rodrigues – Rs 217 000, M. le Président. And Women's Affairs Mr Chairperson, Sir, en 2002/2003 quand on a pris le budget? Aujourd'hui, quand j'ai mentionné la liste et I wanted to spare you because you are supposed to know all that we have done – Rs 450 000 M. le président, pour la moitié du ciel de Rodrigues, comme dit ce proverbe chinois, «*la femme est la moitié du ciel*» – Rs 450 000 pour la moitié du ciel de Rodrigues M. le président. Do you think, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that we are playing on the same level playing field? And do you know what staff we had? Saviez-vous M. le président, que pour la femme on avait un officier qui n'était même pas titularisé ? Saviez-vous M. le président, que pour la femme on avait un officier ? And today, after 3 years, the list of our realisations is gigantesque. Et on ose encore dire qu'on n'a pas assez fait ?

Savez-vous que contre cet un officier et ces Rs 117 000 des arts et de la culture quand moi j'ai pris le porte folio pour Rodrigues, celui du ministère des arts et de la culture était plus de 100 millions avec 255 employés, M. le président, *facts speak for themselves Mr Chairperson, Sir. These are facts, even for today*, trois ans de cela M. le president, trois ans de cela. *Even if Rodrigues is smaller Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we were not on the same level playing field.*

The respected member, Mrs. Meunier, reproached vigorously the Chief Commissioner for not having invested *dans ce qu'elle a dit "la base de l'économie"*, the economy basement. *Soit, à Rodrigues, on lui reprochait après vingt ans dans le parlement, quand on sait très bien, M. le président, on est dans un parlement de plus de 100 personnes et derrière on est un. Même dans le gouvernement c'est pareil* Mr Chairperson, Sir. And you know, when you are a back bencher of the government, you must follow the trend.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, vingt ans on a lutté pour avoir cette structure qui ne date que de trois ans pour pouvoir, justement, placer nos priorités. Et M. le président, avec quelles ressources il aurait fait tout ce dont on lui dit aujourd'hui, M. le président ? Je voudrais citer un budget, pas trop loin, cite a budget allocation to Rodrigues, *that of the actual Minister of Finance, who was then in 1995/1996, Minister of Finance, Mr Ramakrishna Sithanen – total provision for Rodrigues 95/96, M. le Président, 446 millions, including a Capital Expenditure possibility of Rs 91 millions.*

What could the minister of Rodrigues, Mr. Serge Clair, do with such a budget? Construct Pistache Dam, open 10 schools, devise hundreds of

economic measures, tar all our roads? Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would remember, when I was a news editor, the budget of Rodrigues – I compared it – it was less than that allocated to the Jeetoo Hospital in Mauritius. And it was not so far from here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, some 10 years back.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the opposition is here to criticise, yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we accept this democratic game, and it is your constitutional role for which you are paid, to criticise. But let us not be too harsh on those who, as pioneers, open the way, who did the donkey's work, plough the land for us to sow, just as we are being emotive and thankful to what Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Sir satcam Boolell and others did for Mauritius. As well, if not more, we, Rodriguan, should admire the courage of Mr Clair. Let us be reasonable in our criticisms in this House, let us be reasonable, *M. le président*, so that one day, we do not regret “*banne mots qui trop malheureux*”. *Voilà pourquoi je pense M. le président, qu'il a été imprudent et puéril de la part du membre, M. Agathe, de dire que le chef commissaire est allé « tale la main » pour avoir de l'argent. Il dit qu'il est blessé par de tels propos M. le président, il dit qu'il est blessé. Et puis, il reproche au même commissaire d'aller faire cela. C'est de l'hypocrisie, M. le président.*

Mr Chairperson : Order, please !

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué : En disant cela, il donne raison à ces illuminés de partout qui croit qu'ils peuvent garder Rodrigues dans l'espace mauricien, une colonie, sans avoir à payer les frais. Nous nous disons M. le président, nous sommes *part and parcel of Mauritius*.

Parlant M. le Président, des critiques sur les revenus. *M. Agathe of all people because he is member of the Public Accounts Committee*, qui sait très bien que toutes les revenus de Rodrigues ne sont pas comptabilisées dans les 16 millions qu'on avait annoncés, mais directement créditées dans le *Consolidated Fund* de Maurice. Il affirme qu'à la place du Chef Commissaire, il aurait honte de nos revenus. Saviez-vous M. le président, saviez-vous que quand nous avons augmenté, nous avons légiféré ici, pour augmenter les licences, après ne l'ayant pas fait pendant 25 ans, *M. Agathe himself, went from shop to shop, telling shopkeepers that the Regional Government was squeezing their neck. How then, how then will he and his group have political courage, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to charge tax from the population, while in power, to increase revenue? Would he have political courage?*

C'est pourquoi je pense que dans son exposé d'hier, le respecté 2^{ème} membre de Maréchal, mal inspiré, M. le président...

Mr. Chairperson : Order, please !

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué : ...mal inspiré et décousu dans son intervention, n'a réussi qu'à blesser la dignité, la valeur du peuple rodriguais. M. Agathe s'exposait, *Mr Chairperson, Sir, like the Russians say niet, nihilism*, il doit aller revoir sa copie.

M. le président, j'ai une question tout de même à poser, que je me pose, et lui, s'il était à notre place, M. le président, que ferait-il, que ferait-il trois ans après avoir été au pouvoir ? *We will be here to watch.* Où ira-t-il M. le

président, puiser son argent? Ne se rendra-t-il pas à Port Louis ? Pour les petites palabres bassement politiques on se rend aujourd'hui à Port Louis. Et pour les grandes affaires, on n'ira pas à Port Louis M. le président ? On n'ira pas à Port Louis M. le président ? On n'ira peut-être pas à Port Louis, on se rendra peut-être jusqu'à l'aéroport dans le *VIP room* de Air Mauritius M. le président, mais on se rendra à Port Louis, mais on se rendra à Maurice, dans cette République de Maurice, M. le président, toutes les routes mènent à Maurice, toutes aujourd'hui, M. le président. *And you know, but we will be here to watch, I am sure God will save my life to see* – trois ans après on nous reproche de nous rendre à Port Louis. Ne vous rendrez-vous pas à Port Louis M. le président ?

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, malgré tout ce qu'on dit de lui – qu'il est incapable, qu'il est incompetent et le plus grave, qu'il est indolent – M. le président, ce qui me fait mal et m'a toujours fait mal, M. le président, Rodriguans, Rodriguans, M. le président, c'est ce qu'on dit de lui. Il est incompetent, incapable, indolent, officiellement des fois. M. le président, *Rodriguans are not just passive pawns on the chessboard. Rodriguans Mr Chairperson, Sir.*

M. le Président, malgré tout ce qu'on dit de lui...

Mr Chairperson : Order please, order!

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué : Malgré tout ce qu'on dit de Rodrigues M. le président, M. le président, Rodriguans are not just passive pawns on the chessboard. Mr. Chairperson, Rodriguans are intelligent, they

have the power to listen, they can separate le bon grain de l'ivrai, they know in this House who tell the truth and who is bluffing.

Being intelligent, they know que bluffer ne sert qu'à miroiter l'impossible en poudre M. le président et croire la nuit « *pou lizour* » M. le président, quand tous ces chapelets pour utiliser les mots du Minority lui-même, tous les chapelets de shopping list, à Rodrigues « *nous appelle ça la liste commissions* », tous ces chapelets M. le président, énumérés par l'opposition, les listes plus longues les unes que les autres, ne peuvent être soutenues financièrement en trois ou quatre budgets. Ça c'est clair.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let those who never sat in the driving seat continue to nurture their dreams, which are, for my personal reason, "*pou mo propre comprehension*" Mr. Chairperson, Sir, which are for me – these dreams that they are nurturing – no more than well-packaged nightmares. While remaining Mr. Chairperson, Sir, unrealistic and pessimistic, we, at the OPR Government, we are realistic, optimistic, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, while constantly assessing the rodriguan realities, consulting our people, taking decisions together and gradually, comme le dit si bien the ex-US president, Franklin Roosevelt, "*we are tightening our rope, we are tightening our rope to, together, make a lead forward*".

Thank you.

(Applause)

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have a point of explanation.

According to Standing Order 35(7)...

Mr. Chairperson: You have got a point of explanation, express yourself.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since long, the Chief Commissioner has said in his speech that “*Rodrigues, déboute lors to dé lipié*”.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please wait. Please wait. Take your seat. If you mention a paragraph of Standing Order and anyway, if you have risen up on a point of explanation, normally it will refer to what you have said and first, try to recap what you said and then try to explain what you meant really.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, the Commissioner for Women referred to my saying “*quémander*”. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we all in Rodrigues have heard that the Chief Commissioner said “*Rodrigues déboute lors to dé lipié. Rodriguai bizin pas vine banne assistés*”. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since long, since the budget of 2003/2004, Rodrigues has a revenue of Rs 16m, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Last year, for the financial year ended 30 June 2005, the revenue, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, had decreased from Rs 16m to Rs 14.5m, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Is it normal Mr. Chairperson, Sir? We Rodriguans, are we proud of this figure?

Secondly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I referred to the CDU. The Commissioner for Women mentioned that in Rodrigues we have a Child Development Unit. I myself...

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, yes, as regards the first explanation that is being given, I don't see "*comment line éclair nous*" on something that we have not understood, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is policy and we are not here to explain policy back again. We must stick to Standing Orders Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and this was not it.

Mr. Chairperson: Do you want me to rule on this point? Yes this clear, I just told you, if you have risen on a point of explanation, refer back to what you said first and then ...

Mr. Agathe: I move to the CDU now

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, it's alright.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner for Women mentioned that in Rodrigues we still have a CDU. I myself, I visited the Cliderlex Building. Since long I have seen another man in the building who has nothing to do with the CDU. And we have a recurrent budget here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Agathe: It refers to Women's Affairs, Family Welfare and Child Development. We have Women's Unit, Family Unit; this is why I said that there is no CDU. Where is the provision for Child Development Unit in that budget? Nothing.

For the shelter now Mr. Chairperson, Sir. A shelter is mentioned – shelter for the victims of domestic violence, Family Unit. When you talk about family Mr. Chairperson, Sir, are you caring only for women? Are you excluding men?

And secondly Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I refer to the three juveniles that have been placed in the centre. On the day that the mother of the two children reported two children missing Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This means that the children are abandoned, they are roaming about.

So, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is a case juvenile delinquency. And if it refers to juvenile delinquency, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what are the reasons behind placing these in the shelter for domestic violence? What are the reasons behind.

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Point of order Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Point of order. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am reiterating what I said. It goes against the Standing Orders he has just been asking. This is not correct, because I, myself, I will be asking time to explain again what I said and I do not agree with that, this is not order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as always you get things wrong.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I have been at pain even myself, Commissioner, how he is explaining himself on what he intervenes. Well what I can say more. If you still have something that you think has been misunderstood by the other members from the other side, of course, you may

still offer the explanation. But on the other hand, you cannot have a second bite at the cherry, you can't comment again, on the budget or what she has said. Probably your colleagues will do that afterwards.

Yes, thank you.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it gives me great pleasure, once again, to give my participation in the debate on the budget which has just been presented for 2006/2007 by the Chief Commissioner. Before I go further deeply into the debate, I have been watching, listening the commissioner, Mrs. Perrine, for quite too long and I am very much surprised to see how she got so much excited for so petty things Mr. Chairperson, Sir. If on that side of the House, they have the right to defend their policy Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and we are not here for nothing because today, this Assembly is going to vote the budget for 2006/2007. All that they have presented in that budget Mr. Chairperson, Sir, once they have been voted, next year, we will have again to see whether they have been able to achieve their objectives and, if not, why. And it will be our duty, then, to question them. And this is what we are doing now Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And I am much also surprised to see the Commissioner always telling as if here on this side we are downgrading Rodriguans, yes, we are unpatriotic. But I am much surprised, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when I recall, at the very beginning of her speech, I think, in this Assembly, when she said that she would never, one day, travel in a minimoke. As if she is only suited to travel in Pajeros. And I think that in so saying, she was referring to

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

point of order.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Mr. Roussety, yes, there is a point of order first; you have got to follow the procedure. If you have something to say, of course you will get the time. Yes, commissioner.

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Yes, I would like to have a personal explanation on what he just said.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, can't wait afterwards now.

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: No, I prefer to finish with it Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: O.k., o.k. Since you are on your feet, yes.

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: M. le président, le Hansard ici est témoin, je n'ai pas dit, M. le président, que je ne vais jamais voyager dans un minimoke. Il faut dire les choses, *I do not care for the press, I care for what is written here and I believe in the Clerk. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this was not what was said.*

Mr. Chairperson: Order please, order please!

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: This was not what was said here Mr. Chairperson, Sir. It is not because you are in the opposition that you are allowed to allege things against people. I did not say it this way. J'ai dit M. le

président, que si on n'est pas d'accord qu'on ait acheté une voiture pour nous, est-ce qu'on voudrait qu'on voyage dans des minimokes pour aller retrouver les ministres à l'aéroport. C'est ça que j'ai dit, et il y a une différence, M. le président. C'est ce que j'avais dit, c'est écrit noir sur blanc dans le Hansard. Stop criticising people the other way round. Tell things the way they are and we will accept criticisms here, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, order!

Mr. Jabeemissar: M. le Président.

Mr. Chairperson : Yes, please wait. There are some remarks which are really untoward; I will not accept these remarks any more. Enough is enough in this House. Yes.

Mr. Jabeemissar: In presenting the 2006/2007 budget under the theme "Empower the Population", I really think that the Chief Commissioner has, although it is too late, done a good thing. Why do I say it is too late, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is simply because the Chief Commissioner has waited three years after the first budget he presented, three years after the autonomy, while presenting his fifth budget, to realise at last that the only way to get Rodrigues out of the gutter is by empowering its population.

We all here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, except my colleague Mr. Guillaume, we all work in the teaching profession. We have always, for years, worked at schools. We know what empowering the people of this island is; because we have done this for years. And what we are today, Mr Chairperson, Sir, ce que

nous reprochons aux membres de l'autre côté, à la classe dirigeante M. le président, c'est qu'une fois les rodriguais, ils ont pris en charge, ils veulent prendre en charge la destinée de ce pays. Après avoir passé des années à étudier, après avoir fourni des efforts extraordinaires à travailler la terre, à chercher un permis à avoir un logement etc, nous sommes en train de leur dire qu'avec tous les budgets qu'on a présentés ici depuis l'autonomie, les gens ne se retrouvent pas, il y a le découragement, il y en a qui vont à Maurice et, dites-vous bien M. le président, des fois, comme dit l'anglais, « *it is a blessing in disguise* ».

When our young people leave this island to go abroad, to go to Mauritius, very often, because they have to face a lot of difficulties there, many difficulties and they acquire very very many skills. Skills, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, which they are willing, when they come back here, to give, to share to this country, to give their full participation, to develop our island. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we know what we mean, we know what we are saying, these people are faced with many many administrative difficulties. This is what we are reproaching them. They are not giving facilities to these people to help them give their contribution to this country. I don't see why we should get so angry when we point out all these little things. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if in realising development projects on one hand, this is true because these are facts, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this Local Government has created and still creates disparity on the other hand, in many parts of this island as far as development projects are concerned.

If I take for example, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that question of water

supply. Let me tell you Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I have gone through the previous budgets of the water sector Mr. Chairperson, Sir. In 2002/2003 budget Mr. Chairperson, Sir, out of the three items, Water Supply Development Projects, Construction and Rehabilitation of Dams and Reservoirs, Desalination projects, more than Rs 64m were earmarked. The next budget 2003/2004, for the same items – Rs 95m; 2004/2005, for the same items – Rs 103m and 2005/2006 up to 30 June this year – Rs 95m Mr. Chairperson, Sir. In all, more than Rs 400m and people still suffer from lack of water Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will give you my own example.

At my place, in the village where I live, before it first started raining this year in 2006, we got tap water only once, i.e two months back, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Nobody knows when the next tap water will be supplied to that village. And if I am talking about Corail, this applies also to Plaine Corail, to Camp Pintade, to Baie Topaze and to Baie du Nord. What we are questioning Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that although all these sums have been appropriated, we are still not getting value for money. This is what we are questioning Mr. Chairperson, Sir. We don't say that you have done nothing. You have done a lot of things. But have you done the things to satisfy the whole population? This is the great question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Now in the 2006/2007 budget, a lot of money is again appropriated for the same items, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for laying of water pipes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. But in certain places, the water pipes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, are leaking because they date back to 30 to 40 years – galvanised pipes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, still exist in many parts. And we all know, when water is being supplied, what sort of problems these types of pipes cause Mr.

Chairperson, Sir.

In the centre of the island, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, infrastructure works on roads, buildings, water, leisure etc, are continuously being carried out in all budgets, whereas in other regions, some projects which have already started never go to an end. I will take an example Mr. Chairperson, Sir. In the 2004/2005 budget, a road started at Grand La Fouche Mangles to link the village of Limon. After this road had been completed Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in that financial year, the road ended with only a few metres long, ending with a bridge, and still, the whole village of Limon and the vicinity are still not *désenclavés comme on entend souvent monsieur l'adjoint au chef commissaire dire*.

Il a dit sa politique de désenclaver les endroits de Rodrigues, de permettre à ces gens-là, M. le président, d'avoir accès au développement. Dans ce même village M. le président, il y a une dizaine de maisons pour les very low cost housing units qui ont été construites, donc, qui n'ont pas encore été allouées, pourtant les gens dans ces endroits-là, il y a des gens qui sont sans logement, qui attendent toujours. Quand il pleut, quand il y a un problème quelconque, par exemple un cas de maladie, l'ambulance ne veut pas y pénétrer parce que la route est impraticable, M. le président. L'expérience des récentes pluies nous montre, M. le président, le calvaire que ces gens-là ont quand ils doivent aller à l'hôpital ou sortir de chez eux, les enfants pour aller à l'école etc. C'est ça qu'on appelle *empowering the population*, M. le président? C'est pourquoi nous sommes en train de questionner ceux de l'autre côté sur leurs visions de *empowering the population*. Mais s'ils vont dans cette direction, M. le président, s'ils créent

dans leurs façons de diriger le pays, des éternels insatisfaits, M. le président, on sera toujours là pour les questionner. Ça vous pouvez en être sûr.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Mahatma Gandhi once said, I quote:

“We must become the change we want to see.”

All of us Mr. Chairperson, Sir, be on the other side or on our side, our prime concern, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what we cherish the most Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is to see that one day our beloved country, this island, on which all of us were born Mr. Chairperson, Sir, reaches the maximum level of development. When I speak of development, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is not the tall buildings, the beautiful roads etc, we want our people to feel happy, proud of living in this country because they can have their own means of living here Mr. Chairperson, Sir. They have a work. This is what gives a man dignity, when he is able to work, when he is able to feed his family. And unfortunately, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I cannot see why months after months – yesterday my colleague Mr. Agathe laid on the table the statistics of how many people, months after months, leave this island to go elsewhere. Do you think if we are proud to be a Rodriguan, we are empowered to work in this country, we will leave our island for nothing, like that?

I personally think, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that this 2006/2007 budget reminds us one thing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. You know all the books which deal with the global economy today will tell us one thing Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The global economy today is like the Darwinian selection of species where only the best fitted economy will survive and this is what is happening to our whole Republic today, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Chief Commissioner rightly said that the Republic is faced with three external shocks; namely the dismantling of the Multi-fibre Agreement, the Sugar protocol and something which we are continuously facing is the price increase in fuel cost.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we, on this side of the House, our vision for Rodrigues, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that we have the capacity, we have not only the will, not only the capacity – but we have the means – not only to be the one who will always get money from the mainland – but we have the possibility to give our share, to contribute to the Mauritian economy in the days when we are facing so many threats.

Let's take an example Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Today, the present government, under the leadership of the right honourable Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, has talked of one the measures to address all these problems, is to *miser beaucoup sur le sea food hub. Pour le faire M. le président, à Maurice, nous savons tous que Port Louis est déjà un port trop saturé. Ils vont délocaliser de Trou Fanfaron pour aller vers Caudan, investir des millions à faire un port de pêche. A Rodrigues nous avons déjà un port qui n'est pas développé. Nous avons encore d'autres possibilités de développer nos ports à Rodrigues. Mais s'il y avait un working arrangement, good negotiations between the authorities and those of Mauritius, showing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that Rodrigues, being part and parcel of Mauritius, can bring its contribution to the Mauritian economy.*

Don't you think Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the government, the Central

Government would willingly like to invest in Rodrigues here in the sea food hub rather than on Mainland Mauritius itself? Would this not be a way of proving that we can give our share to the national economy? Not just go and ask – this is what my friend was going to explain. May be he was misunderstood. We can give our share, our contribution to the Mauritian economy on this side.

Secondly Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the tourism sector, in Mauritius there are no more places to build hotels nowadays, no more places. But in Rodrigues we are on the threshold of development in that sector. We have many possibilities in front of us. What is much more surprising Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in previous budgets, when – I think it was in 2003/2004 or 2004/2005 budget – when Rs 1 m was appropriated for the tourism sector i.e for the promotion of tourism; after reallocation, that budget was reduced to half. On the contrary, the budget which was appropriated for “*la journée de Rodrigues*” and “*festival créole*” nearly doubled, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for that same financial year. Can we say Mr. Chairperson Sir, we have appropriated funds for a productive sector and at the end of the financial year we have done nothing, we have found it useless to spend all this money in that sector and have preferred to spend it – I would not say – yes because they like the word that we always use “*la faya*” Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is unbelievable, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is only now, this year, that the budget for tourism, promotion of tourism, has increased to 4 m. And we know in Mainland Mauritius, the Central Government has proposed Rs 400,000 m (400 times as much) Mr. Chairperson, Sir. That is to say how much vision the central government has in trying to invest massively in a productive sector. But here, it is as if the money that we get from the central government is just

to be spent.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, everybody will agree. Each year since 2002, billions of rupees are being invested in Rodrigues, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The members on the other side have decided to use that money in their own way but we here would have preferred that money to have been used in different ways. That's why, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, sometimes we do not agree with the way they spend the money. This is what we are questioning Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, I now come to the agricultural sector. In the 2006/2007 budget, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is proposed to go ahead with the development of agriculture so as to make Rodrigues more productive. Let me tell you Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if you go to places like Camp Pintade, Dans Coco, La Ferme, Piment, Plaine Corail, where there are large extents of land, cultivable land, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, fertile land which has been abandoned, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Do you know why? Due to lack of man power, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. People are no more interested in working large pieces of land because it costs them too much in terms of labour. And the out-turn, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, will not be of the expected because, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these places need mechanisation, need irrigation and need constant help from the agricultural authority. And nothing is done Mr. Chairperson, Sir, nothing is proposed in the budget and nothing is done now. What is being proposed as far as irrigation is concerned is to irrigate Baie Malgache. You know, Baie Malgache, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when that part of Rodrigues was being restored by the late Fonds Européen de Développement, one of the objectives was to have a place, a valley region where there is fertile soil, there is water to

allow the maximum of people to grow crops there. And if you go now and see that valley Mr. Chairperson, Sir, less than 10% of that valley is being cultivated. You know what is happening to the 90%? They have fenced many lots; people prefer to do farming.

There is another irrigation project at Grand Var, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, which has started since the last budget. You know, there are more than 20 families there. Do you know that project is benefiting 2 families only? Only 2 families Mr. Chairperson, Sir, are benefiting from that project. And I wonder now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir – the Chief Commissioner has mentioned that more funds are being invested in these two projects – I wonder Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether we are going to get value for money for that. And next year, again, we will come to question him about that.

Also concerning agriculture Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when we look at the village of Anse Quitor – you know there is a tourist project in that region – where most of the people living there are farmers. Formerly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all these people used to have their animals, especially goats, breeding in that region which has been allocated now for a tortoise park, I think. And now, these people they have great difficulty to rear their animals because there is no more space. And you know what is happening in that region Mr. Chairperson, Sir, 2 or 3 families only have fenced many acres of land, on their own, without any authority. And, although Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all regions starting from Anse Quitor to Vangassailles, this is, we can call it a pasture land.

If that Local Government Mr. Chairperson, Sir, really cares for poor

people, when that project was allocated to that promoter in Anse Quitor, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, did they think about how to compensate the farmers? This could have been done Mr. Chairperson, Sir, by having that large portion of land at Vangassailles and Anse Quitor planted with fodder, especially now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that in Rodrigues – I have heard people saying that Rodriguans are being encouraged to rear goats because goats are more profitable. But, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, has any study being done to see how many goats, what is the rearing capacity of goats in this island? Because, let us not forget, goats are very devastative animals. This is a great paradox Mr. Chairperson, Sir. On one hand we are trying to restore our island, the natural forest of our island, we want our island to be forested but at the same time, we are allowing such animals to be bred without any control. Some people – as far as I know – have hundreds of goats and is it fair to allow only a few to do that economic activity whereas most families in Rodrigues, nearly all families in Rodrigues, would like to have this same facility.

Now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, yesterday I listened carefully to my friend on the other side, Mr. Roussety saying how they were proud of the tremendous work they have accomplished and to illustrate his speech he used “the cathedral” just to say how – you know a cathedral is a gigantic building – that is to illustrate how gigantic the work they have accomplished. Let me tell him Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are not questioning whether or not he hasn’t done so much but we are just telling him that in his huge cathedral there are many cracks that he needs to repair, to mend. There is dirt everywhere in the corners that needs to be cleaned. I wonder whether the foundation itself can withstand that huge building. And let me give him now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I’ll give him another cathedral that we on this side – this is how we believe

things must be – I have never been there, I will give you the website later on if you are interested; it concerns the Sagrada Familia Cathedral which is in Barcelona in Spain. Do you know that large Roman Catholic basilica is still under construction but it dated as far back as the 19th century, when it was first planned. And it started, the construction work started under the supervision of Anthony Gowdy and it commenced in the 1880's and is still going on. And you know when it is expected to be completed? It is expected to be completed in 2026 i.e. in 20 years' time and it is expected to mark the 100th anniversary of Gowdy's death.

This is to say Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the things that we are doing now in that country, let the future generation, let them judge us on what we would have done and not try to be our own judge now.

(Applause)

Now Mr. Chairperson, Sir, yesterday I listened with much interest to my friend Mr. Pierre Louis. When he said that he is proud of all that has been done up to now by the Regional Government in order to improve the quality of life of our people, it's true. May be he is proud his life has been greatly improved. But he must not forget that we are not here speaking for people who are proud of their situation because they have got storeyed buildings, tap water flowing in their homes.

We are here to speak, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for those people who have not yet got a roof above their head, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The situation today is such that there are still people – if 1000 houses have been built up to now by

the Trust Fund for Vulnerable Groups, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it's a fact, this is true. But what is questionable Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is whether all these people in Rodrigues who really needed a house, have they got that facility, that possibility?

If you go everywhere around Rodrigues Mr. Chairperson, Sir, sometimes you can see some houses which have been built by Trust Fund. These houses, they have already been enlarged by another concrete house. This lets us think Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this lets us, ask ourselves Mr. Chairperson, Sir, did these people really need a house. Because they have been able to add a concrete compartment to that house. Whereas Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are still people in this country, in this island where, either they are living in a very small corrugated iron-roofed house with leakages everywhere or under "une payotte" ou bien sans aucune maison. And then Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Mr. Pierre Louis also deplored the fact that Rodriguans don't want to work at all, they spend their time drinking Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and the last – yes I want you to react, yes, come on.

Mr. Pierre Louis: Point of order Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Order?

Mr. Pierre Louis: Explanation.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Pierre Louis: I don't say the Rodriguans drink, I say that they

spend in alcohol – some, yes, concrete example.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is a fact. Many Rodriguans are in alcohol. You know why Mr. Chairperson, Sir? It is surprising Mr. Chairperson, Sir. We want our country to be our *fierté* as was the theme of the last National Day celebration. But at the very entrance of Port Mathurin, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, one can read on a very large *panneau publicitaire* M. le president, “*nu la biere, nu fierté, nu pays*”. C’est ça notre *fierté*? We have passed regulations recently on – we have passed Mr. Chairperson, Sir, regulations on advertisement, public advertisement, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I wonder why this is tolerated Mr. Chairperson, Sir, everywhere, as if posters, banners, everywhere around Rodrigues, inviting people to drink. And then you deplore that so many Rodriguans are in alcoholism.

Sports facilities Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in villages Mr. Chairperson, Sir, where these people really need, for example at Cité Patate. Let me ask them whether they have thought about Cité Patate in their intention to empower the people. The people in these poor regions do not have any leisure facility. But they want to have a leisure ground. There is enough space there. What is being proposed for them? “*Jette l’argent dans bois*”? Voilà M. le président, c’est la preuve qu’elle s’est contredit elle-même M. le Président. Elle n’a pas confiance en elle-même, ni dans les Rodriguais M. le président. Voilà M. le président, la commissaire est en train de se contredire elle-même. C’est la première fois que j’interviens M. le président, je n’ai rien dit avant. Si le *minority group* a dit voilà je viens rectifier ce que vous vous n’avez pas compris M. le président. Elle n’a pas compris que pour *empower the*

population Mr. Chairperson, Sir, you must go where they really need it.

At the centre of the island Mr. Chairperson, Sir, now in this 2006/2007 budget, you see roads starting from Mont Lubin to Saint François, Mont Lubin to Dans Bébé, Mont Lubin to Citronelle. Piscine, I don't want any piscine. We have told you that the piscine now is a poor investment Mr. Chairperson, Sir – we have already talked about that yesterday. When it rains Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if you go at La Fouche Corail, you have families there Mr. Chairperson, Sir, you can see how at the – anytime when it rains – you look at the round-about at La Fouche Corail, there is stagnant water. I have asked questions twice in this House Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and the commissioner responsible replied that it was not his responsibility since he did not build that road Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The road starting from Grand La Fouche Corail to Petite Butte Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I invite anybody here now, at this time, to go there and see what is the state of that road Mr. Chairperson, Sir. It is continuously being damaged Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because there are no drains. When it rains Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this road becomes a raging torrent. And then, later on, you will see people coming there just to do a little patching and after the next rain it will again be damaged, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And I remember when I first asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner to see to it that this road is given due consideration in the budget, he even asked me to show him how to make coffees, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is what he told me in this House Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Before I end Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to comment, to say that

the 2006/2007 budget, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, should have provided for more incentives to local and foreign investors in order to help our local enterprises. Very often Mr. Chairperson Sir, we have asked in this House what are the indicators, on what the Local Government bases itself to assess what is planned for Rodrigues in the economic sectors, what will be the development trends. And we have deplored Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the fact that there is an absence of statistics. In the tourism sector we have no statistics, in the agricultural sector, no statistics at all Mr. Chairperson, Sir, trade, no statistics Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Let us not forget the episode of pigs on the market. I remember when I once asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner what he is doing in order to help the surplus of pigs on the market and he simply replied that it was a question of demand and supply. O.k, and those people who have invested money in that business Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they pay for their animals' feed, a lot of money, there is no subsidy on that and in return they can't even sell their pigs. And we know what happened to these people when one of them decided to kill and sell it locally, some have even been arrested by policemen and sanitary services Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And you know now what happened, in this country there is no more pigs on the market. All the pig breeders Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they have completely, ils ont été découragés, ils ne veulent plus entreprendre ce genre d'activité. C'est ça qu'on appelle "empower the population"? You want me to stop Mrs. Bégué? I won't. Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, no actions have been entertained by the Executive Council with the Central Government to have our share of

participation, as I said, in the sea food hub programme. We have qualified manpower for off-shore fishing Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The general perception Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before I end this is what I am going to say, it is as if Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this Local Government is like a ship where a captain and its crew are governing without any navigational equipment. Let us guess Mr. Chairperson, Sir, where such a ship will take us.

I thank you for your attention Mr. Chairperson Sir.

(Applause)

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, will you have a last member? Yes.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner (Mr. Jean Daniel Speville): M. le président, je dois avouer d'emblée, qu'il m'est particulièrement agréable d'intervenir aujourd'hui sur le budget présenté par le chef commissaire et commissaire des finances mercredi dernier. Pourquoi ? J'interviens sur le budget aujourd'hui tandis que depuis quelques jours nous constatons, de part ses réactions dans les bureaux, la population en générale et partenaires sociaux dans leur ensemble, ont déjà accueilli les propositions budgétaires.

It is my pleasure to comment on this 2006/2007 draft estimates, especially Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the new philosophy of its contents and vision. Before proceeding however, I must thank all those who participated in the pre-budget activities. Mr. Chairperson, this Regional Government is fully committed to the principle of dialogue and consultation as a means of obtaining broad consensus on matters of national importance.

In this regard, I am pleased to inform this honourable House that the series of public consultations which preceded this budget presentation was a tremendous success. I especially want to express my gratitude to the private sector and civil society groups for sharing the perspectives and recommendations on so many issues and my colleagues commissioners and other members of the Regional Government for their work in shaping the strategies and programme that form the core of the budget. I also salute those public officers who continue to demonstrate the highest level of professionalism and dedication in preparing all the documents laid before this honourable House today.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this budget continues to strengthen the platform for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by responding to those fundamental needs that we desire and deserve to have fulfilled. It gives priority to the issues affecting the family as well as our collective concerns for security and safety, a relevant education system, quality health care services, adequate housing and poverty reduction.

Additionally, priority attention will be given to stimulating the productive sectors of our economy namely agriculture, tourism and agro-processing to create sustainable employment and generate revenue to finance our development. This budget Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can be resumed in a phrase “prioritising our people by empowering them to ensure their future survival”.

Mr. Chairperson, achieving this will require a great deal of

introspection on the part of all of us in this country. As a people, we must reexamine our values and attitude. We must develop a greater sense of national and personal pride, community ownership, environmental sensitivity, respect, discipline, tolerance, responsibility and a culture of performance and excellence. If we want to enjoy a higher quality of life, we must also be prepared to work harder and be more productive.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is no greater merit than to be of service to one's country and people. This merit assumes greater significance when that service takes place at a time when the Republic of Mauritius is going through tough and trying time with the triple external shocks, namely the dismantling of the Multi-fibre Agreement, high oil prices and decrease in the guaranteed sugar prices.

Moreover, Rodrigues is also recovering from one among the most difficult period of its history. Over the last 5 years, Rodrigues has been hit by major events, which not only slowed our economic progress, but also impacted on our people psychologically and spiritually Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

These events were:-

- (i) the disastrous cyclone Kalundé of year 2003;
- (ii) the Tsunami of December 2005; and
- (iii) the last torrential rain of this year.

These events Mr. Chairperson, Sir, have increased the development needs, giving rise to a large demand in building up of more robust infrastructures and thus causing fluctuation in the economic growth, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Indeed, these events warranted the best of leadership qualities and composure to chart the course, first, for rehabilitation and recovery and then for the long reconstruction of the island and its economic sector. We never buckled, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, under these conditions, we were able to face and overcome them.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, notwithstanding these natural calamities and their hostile influences on our economic environment, our country has made significant strides since the advent of autonomy. Visitors to our shores cannot believe the tremendous progress that we have made in such short times. This progress Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is testimony of our vision to make the autonomy of the Rodrigues Island a success and as well as the fortitude and resilience of our people.

We greatly appreciate the interest shown by our patriotic Rodriguans as well as the Government of Mauritius and its people in the re-building of our island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we can now safely say that the reconstruction of our economy is very much on track and therefore, what is now required is for us to embark on addressing the longer term challenges facing our country for its survival.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in support of our vision statement to promote

Rodrigues Island to be the successful model of an ecological and sustainable socio-cultural and economic development based on an empowered population, the budget for the fiscal year 2006/2007 underscores a number of interconnected priorities as announced in the page 3 of the Chief Commissioner's budget speech for fiscal year 2006/2007.

I am pleased to say, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the journey to a society which all citizens can aspire to, has begun. The SIDPR is being prepared by the multi-sectoral group, which is being given full autonomy in its exercise. May I take this opportunity on behalf of the Regional Government and the population of Rodrigues to thank the UNDP and the members of that group who are contributing to the formulation of this plan. Your efforts, in spite of the cynicism and lack of faith of some, demonstrate that you are indeed true sons and daughters of this country.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have listened to many speeches from both sides of the House, some very astounding statements, some contradicting one another and some even going to the extent to make us believe that this budget speech delivered by the Chief Commissioner has no impact on the population, as if it has left the population indifferent, as if they are the only ones who communicate with the population and we, on this side of the House, we are far away, kept off and remote from the population.

I was really shocked and surprised to hear such arguments in this House because, who doesn't know this Rodriguan population Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Therefore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when we go through this budget speech, the measures that have been taken, we see that there is not a single instance where

we have made a step backward. We have all along been making a step forward in every sector, in every field. Of course, very often we are blamed that we did not tackle the housing problem in time; we did not build ICT towers. But we had our priorities in the situation in which we want the country to go ahead. What was most important was to re-launch the economy of this country, to create jobs. We had to build infrastructures, the airport, roads, energy, water. If we had not put the necessary infrastructure for the future development of SMEs for example and to foster an entrepreneurship, do you think that it can be a success?

Then, what is the first thing that gives dignity to a person Mr. Chairperson, Sir. It is a job. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, so we have our priorities now that we have invested in basic infrastructure. We are building houses to fight exclusion – if there is specific exclusion, because I still maintain that there is no generalized poverty in this country – it's true that on paper we see about 3000 unemployed persons but they are people who want to pick and choose, they want to have certain kinds of job, they don't want to do any job.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, do you know that at this very time, the climate being suitable for agricultural practices, many planters are searching people to prepare their land. But those unemployed remain near the shop as stated by Mr. Pierre Louis.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I turn to agriculture. The agricultural sector constitutes a vital pillar of our economy. The main drivers of success in that field will be the quality of our access roads, drainage, irrigation and water management system, land use rationalization, availability of finance and

credit and effective marketing and the policy and regulatory framework.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, having revisited the agricultural sector in Rodrigues, *des mesures ont été prises pour entamer une réforme agraire et pendant l'année financière 2005/2006*, my commission is:-

- (i) setting up, first, an agricultural land office to deal with all matters related to agricultural land use, planning and development and for state land for agricultural and farming project;
- (ii) setting of an irrigation unit to advise planters on new irrigation techniques, devise irrigation networks in different areas of the island; and
- (iii) setting of an “*unité de l'unité de l'entrepreneuriat*” - one-stop shop where agricultural officers, officers from SEHDA and financial institutions will assist people from their project write-up to the setting up of their project.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in line with the commission's objectives to empower and resolve difficulties faced by the local planting community, the Commission for agriculture has, once more, embarked on various projects to increase food production, upgrade technology available to planters and has put special emphasis on training of farmers in Rodrigues and abroad. Collaboration from IFAD is also acknowledged for assistance on a number of projects in the agricultural sector. Some of the major achievements in the

field of agriculture in the past year are given below:-

- (1) launching of an additional one-stop shop at Port Sud-Est where there is an important population of farmers;
- (2) construction of another one-stop shop at Trèfles has been completed and will be inaugurated in the coming days;
- (3) water troughs at Grenade and Baie Malgache have been rehabilitated and are now operational;
- (4) setting-up of green houses at Grand La Fouche Corail, Rivière Banane, Nouvelle Découverte and Fond La Bonté;
- (5) a parcel of land has been put at the disposal of ex-IVTB students of Saint Gabriel; they have obtained facilities for land preparation, seeds, pesticides, installation of irrigation network and advice from officers from the agricultural services;
- (6) some 1200 metres of drain canal at Rivière Banane, Montagne Jacques and Mourouk valley bottom have been maintained.
- (7) water uses troughs have been consolidated through visits and meetings for efficient and sustainable use of available water; and
- (8) the progress at the water harvesting structure at Papayes is to be noted Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to empower the population, from July to December 2005, some 1010 planters have been visited by extension staff and 23 meetings and a conducted tour for orchards growers to Mauritius was organised. Some 1200 fruit trees have been sold to the public. Selection breeding of local chili was ongoing and some 170, 000 fruit seeds have been produced and seedlings are being distributed to chili growers. Other projects and research were ongoing on palm crop production, bean, potato, onion, pest control, fruit fly control, quarantine and bee keeping. A group of bee keepers went on a study tour to Reunion Island in December 2005 and were given training by a British Consultant in February/March 2006. Special support is also given to hydroponic growers Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

As for the Veterinary Unit, free consultations to livestock breeders and the registration of dogs also have been ongoing. A Veterinary Officer is on a 24-hour call and farmers have accessed to free drugs as and when required.

Concerning the agro-processing unit which is due to become a key section at the commission, a study tour was organised in Mauritius for 4 women entrepreneurs and 2 officers. The survey of agro-processors is ongoing. Some 100 agro-processors have been visited. AREU has also carried out a study on the sector and some recommendations made are being put into practice.

Furthermore, as an incentive to agro-processors, jars are sold to them at low prices. A training on *boucheries* in collaboration with *La Chambre des Métiers de La Réunion* was organised in December 2005.

In view, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to encourage livestock production, 10 training sessions were organised for a total 235 farmers. Meetings, talks, touched 459 farmers, 6 conducted tours were done for 63 farmers, 962 farmers received visits of officers from the agricultural service and 37 on-farm demonstrations were made. Also, 13 individual and 4 groups of farmers were assisted for project write-up. Furthermore, farmers were encouraged to cultivate forage and to set up their own pasture. Farmers' groups of Mourouk, Eau Claire, Citron Donis and Ste Marie have been assisted in order to set up their own pasture and 23 farmers have been assisted in order to set up their own pasture. Sale of about 400 piglets, 31 beef/cattle and 90 sheep were sold to farmers in order to upgrade their breed. 6 bucks, purchased with the help of IFAD have also been put at the disposal of goat breeders. Incentive for local breeds, purchase of a number of light equipment for bee keepers and provision of 2 km of fencing and poles to farmers.

Proposals

For the financial year 2006/2007, total budgetary provision for agriculture is about 8 m, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This will include purchase of drip irrigation system for farmers' associations, double the amount of subsidised feed sold by the agricultural services from 200 tons to 400 tons provided by Richelieu Livestock Feed, assistance for construction of reservoirs at planters level, construction of water troughs for livestock, further promote plantation of fodder and other crops, launch construction of a food analysis plant at Citronelle, consultancy in respect of the construction of an agricultural Institut de Formation at Saint Gabriel, setting up of model

levelled orchards and model bean and chili plots, setting up of model poultry, goat, sheep, cattle farms to encourage livestock production, decentralization of veterinary services to La Ferme, setting up of a quarantine unit, re-opening of the honey centre and the setting-up of a dog pound at Pointe au Sel.

Finally, there will be the coming into the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, of 2 regulations namely the Dog Catch Regulations and the Cattle Walk Regulations to address the problem animals wandering everywhere, which should be considered Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as a social programme but not as a political one with slogans *“to boeuf pou ale délo vert amba là-bas”*.

Mechanisation

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my commission will set up a mechanisation unit shortly. In the field of mechanisation, 4 power tillers have been obtained with the help of IFAD, 5 tractors have been repaired. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to inform this House that implements for land mechanisation have been purchased and is awaiting commissioning in the forthcoming months. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased also to inform the House that mechanisation of land tilling will be free for registered planters and youths who want to start an agricultural project as at the beginning of the next financial year.

The irrigation unit

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my commission is looking forward to the setting-up of an irrigation unit. Since last year, emphasis has been laid on

irrigation, which is expected to play a vital role in the development of agriculture and the empowerment of those involved with the following advantages:-

- motivate the farmers to develop their lands;
- increase the yields per hectare;
- increase the revenues of the farmers by the cultivation of cash crop such as onion, garlic and groundnut; and
- rendering Rodrigues self-sufficient in food growth and open avenues for export.

Construction for mini irrigation projects of size varying from 10 to 20 hectares have been designed and built by utilising normal flows of river streams after bringing minor remedial actions to the storage structures. During the short-term programme the following areas have been covered:-

- (1) Grand Var; but at Grand Var there is a problem – many of the land occupiers are reluctant to pay, to buy the spare parts to connect for water connection with the primary main;
- (2) Baie Malgache;
- (3) Mourouk;
- (4) Camp Paul;
- (5) Graviers; and
- (6) Anse Ally.

This development concerns 150 planters for an irrigated area of 90 hectares, Mr. Chairperson, Sir; purchase of pipes for irrigation and other components at the tune of Rs 3.8 m is underway and irrigation network will be set up in the following areas in the next financial year:

- (i) Champs
- (ii) Deux Goyaves;
- (iii) Chateau des Fleurs;
- (iv) Baie Topaze;
- (v) Mt Plate;
- (vi) Mt du Sable;
- (vii) Gravières;R
- (viii) Reposeur; and
- (ix) Vainqueur.

This concerns a total of about 160 planters for an area of 60 arpents.

M. le président, le chef commissaire a mentionné dans son discours, que le programme de co-operation décentralisée sera mis en chantier à Rodrigues cette année avec une enveloppe de 60 m de roupies destiné aux ONGs et autres organisations de la société civile, dont les associations de planteurs et d'éleveurs. La commission a aménagé déjà un bureau pour l'Unité de Co-ordination du programme à Citronelle. C'est un apport considérable pour le développement du secteur agricole, d'élevage et d'apiculture, Mr Chairperson, Sir, d'autres sources de financement seront aussi explorées dans le but de soutenir notre développement dans le secteur

eau. C'est aussi, M. le président, un moyen efficace pour empower les organisations dans leurs activités économiques et sociales et créer des emplois dans leurs secteurs d'activité.

Water

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, development in that field is ongoing. I welcome the decision of the Chief Commissioner to give high priorities to that sector. In the financial year 2005/2006, pipe laying works in the eastern region is nearing completion, namely from Petit Brulé to Roche Bon Dieu Reservoir and from Coromandel to Mt Cabris Reservoir. This will ensure a good primary network as in the southern part of the island. The coming into operation of the Anse Raffin Dam has increased our water production capacity to about 5500 m³ daily. Much has been said on the Anse Raffin Dam Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I want to point out that any modification in the scope of work of a project should be agreed by the Central Tender Board before coming ahead. Payment by authorised officers is done after engineers, consultant have taken cognisance of the work done and the specified contractual rate. Many think that it is easy to steal public funds, easy to steal millions of rupees. But there is a police inquiry Mr. Chairperson, Sir. We are in a democratic island. One day we will have the real truth and its final outcomes.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Anse Raffin Dam has been very useful in improving the distribution of water in the southern region during the year 2005. For the time being, the commission is preparing to set back the normal distribution after the heavy rainfall because some springs are being desilted,

the Anse Raffin Dam should be stabilized and some repairs done on some water networks which have been affected by the last heavy rain.

To my concern Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been no commissioner concerned in the police inquiry concerning the dam construction. But I would like to tell the House, that it is always easy for some to throw dirt on others. Without knowing that dirt follows dirt, that is the boomerang effect Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The construction of the Pavé La Bonté Dam is awaiting Central Tender Board's approval. This project, with Rs 50m earmarked in this financial year, is an important one which will cater for 1000 m³ production daily for the northern and, possibly, the southern region. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the policy of this Regional Government is to maximize the stockage of surface water to sustain the demand of 9000 m³ daily. Approval for the construction of 3 reservoirs at L'Union, Anse Baleine and Anse Quito has been obtained and works will start shortly. This is a pre-requisite for water distribution in these regions, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because the number of houses near the present service reservoir in these regions is increasing. The water supply development project will cater also for the upgrading of Mourouk system with pressure filters and purchase of pipes and fittings, pumps and spare parts for financial year 2006/2007.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this Regional Government has always "*taille so palto selon grandeur so la toile*". The minority has always been fascinated by the Pistache Dam construction. And yesterday, Mr. Guillaume came again with that in his statement. They have talked of big construction contract, but what

about Pistache Dam? Will it be a small one?

M. le président, le leader de la minorité, hier, a fait une allégation grave et gratuite, et sans fondement, au sujet des contrats alloués et a insinué que nous avons pris en considération, que l'allocation de gros contrats avec des sous-entendus inacceptables à cet auguste assemblée. Je voudrais souligner, pour sa gouverne, que le CTB est l'instance indépendante qui alloue tout contrat dépassant 1 million de roupies et tout contrat est alloué sous le CTB Act.

In 2004, Mr Chairperson, Sir, a feasibility study was conducted by Ng Ham Chan in association with Servansing - Jadav and Partners and they arrived to the conclusion Mr. Guillaume, that a dam on the River Pistache is technically feasible and that it can supply the domestic demand in the southern region as well as the combined demand of La Ferme and Baie Malgache at appropriate level of insurance. The study found that a concrete face rock-filled dam with a side channel spillway was the most appropriate for this application. But the dam is relatively expensive for its yield as Rodrigues has a very unfavourable hydrology and topography for dams in general. The overall capital costs of the dam – treatment works and convenience system – is 700 millions of rupees in 2004 prices. And with an increase in construction materials, it will amount to 1 billion Mr Chairperson, Sir, about 3 times our capital budget. The economic and financial analysis, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, showed that the unit cost of water from the construction of this dam for this scheme is too high. The water tariff required to achieve full cost recovery would be unaffordable by the water users without some form of subsidy to cover most or all of the capital cost. This is why a token vote of Rs 10 has been

earmarked for the desalination project, which is more valuable than this project, et d'autres sources aussi de financement sont en train d'être explorées avec d'autres bailleurs de fonds dans le but de soutenir d'autres développements dans le secteur eau. Je cite, par exemple, la construction d'un barrage à Anse Baleine et la reconstruction des barrages Solitude, Cascade Pigeons et Graviers.

M. le président, ma commission entamera bientôt aussi une enquête sur la capacité de stockage d'eau des maisons individuelles, des bâtiments publics pour développer une stratégie politique pour promouvoir de plus la collecte d'eau de pluie.

M. le président, la situation concernant la réduction des dépenses de l'état et de ses organismes est indépendant de notre volonté. Mais je trouve drôle que le Minority Leader, M. Agathe et Mme Meunier ont laissé croire que cela s'applique seulement pour Rodrigues. M. Agathe a dit que nous sommes partis demander de l'argent au ministère des finances. M. le président, la consultation pré-budgétaire avec le ministre des finances à Maurice s'applique pour tous les ministères. Les quantums des ministères et de l'assemblée régionale aussi de Rodrigues, est décidé à travers des réunions pré-budgétaires avec le ministère des finances.

M. le président, je dois dire que même la presse a mis la population au courant bien avant la présentation du budget. Dans un extrait du journal 'La Tribune' datant 17 mars 2006, je cite :

« Le ministre des finances, Rama Sithanen a demandé aux

ministères et aux institutions de l'état de restreindre les dépenses et de se préparer pour des réductions budgétaires lors du prochain exercice financier. Rodrigues ne sera, sans aucun doute, épargnée par cet effort de la part du gouvernement en vue de contenir le nombre de déficit budgétaire auquel doit faire face les finances publiques actuellement. Dans le service public à Maurice, on ne recrute plus jusqu'à nouvel ordre, car le gouvernement ne veut pas augmenter les dépenses. »

Et quand le membre Meunier dit que les robinets ne coulent plus, je dois attirer son attention de plus que le nouveau ministère des finances a émis des directives *so that the sustainable investment rule, that the net public debt as a proportion of GDP should be on a downward track*. Cela veut dire de 6% à 3%, M. le président. Cela aura une incidence directe sur les dépenses gouvernementales de chaque ministère et chaque ministère a été appelé à proposer que les projets en cours pour 2006/2007.

And moreover, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the decision to restrict creation of posts and the filling of vacancies in the public sector is in line with the policy of the International Monetary Fund to decrease the public salary bill to the strict minimum. Vacancies are filled only, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in priority sectors like health and education and we should know also that preparation of the budget is spanned over a median-term basis to enable the load of the budget not to be borne in a single year.

M. le président, la construction d'un kilomètre de route se situe entre 12 à 20 millions de roupies, selon l'étendue des travaux. Pour l'année

2005/2006, la construction des routes Mont Lubin/Grande Montagne, Mont Lubin/Dans Bébé et Citronelle/Citronelle Reservoir sera à la hauteur de Rs 125m quand c'est terminé.

M. le président, la construction d'une route n'est pas faite seulement pour les voitures, les piétons y marchent et cela permet le loisir dans les villages, augmente la productivité et aide les écoliers, les handicapés et les personnes âgées. Il est bon de noter que le Gouvernement Régional intervient aussi dans le ré-asphaltage s'il y a des savings et pour l'année dernière on a pu réaliser le ré-asphaltage des tronçons de routes suivantes : La Ferme/Baie Topaze, Palissade/Lataniers, Ti Réserve/Le Chou, Baie aux Huîtres/Allée Tamarin, ainsi que la construction du pont de Grand La Fouche Mangles, pas de la route, la construction du pont de Grand La Fouche Mangles, Mr. Jabeemissar. And this year, savings will also be redirected to road resurfacing, drain rehabilitation in some areas, resurfacing of schoolyards if need be.

Durant cette année financière 2006/2007, plusieurs tronçons de route, à Port Mathurin, notamment, near the container park, near the Police Station et à Fond La Digue seront en construction. Les propositions budgétaire pour 2006/2007, M. le Président, concernant les routes est de Rs 50m et sera utilisée pour commencer la construction de la route Port Mathurin/Le Chou/Soupir qui va palier les problèmes de transport dans ces régions-là, les problèmes de drains à côté de cette route et qui va confortablement desservir l'école communautaire de Mt Charlot qui sera construite dans l'année financière 2006/2007. Je dois aussi rappeler au membre Agathe que la compagnie Gibbs a supervisé la construction de 3 routes seulement et que la

supervision des autres routes se fait au niveau de ma commission par mes officiers.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is also paying much attention to dark spot in Rodrigues. During financial year 2006/2007, about 400 new street lanterns have been installed on roads and villages and other dark spots. This amounts to about Rs 2.1m per year. For the year 2006/2007, procedures are being triggered to buy another batch of 200 street lanterns. I would like to correct Mr. Agathe in saying that Trèfles wind park generates 10% of our total electrical power requirement.

NOTE:-

Trèfles wind park has an installed capacity of 3 x 60 kilowatt and generates a total of 1.4%, Mr. Agathe, of the total requirement.

Housing

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Executive Council has inherited a wrongly conceptualised project of the Ministry of Rodrigues. The 108 low-cost housing was redesigned with finishes. The original size was smaller than those which have been built now. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the total cost of their project was about Rs 19m and the cost of 1 unit, including consultancy fee, is Rs 225,000. Much time, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is being taken to deliver these houses because the scheme for granting requires lots of procedures which should carefully be adhered to.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to tell the House that the caring

Regional Government has decided to lower the price of 1 housing unit from Rs 225,000 to Rs 50,000 per unit for those having a septic tank, Rs 40,000 for those having no septic tank. Moreover, a sum of about Rs 200,000 will be paid for the preparation of sale deeds of all the units during this financial year.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the prime function of the Regional Government is to ensure that affordable quality housing are available to those who otherwise, would not be able to acquire this basic necessity. Tender documents for the construction of housing units comprising 2 bedrooms, 1 kitchen, water closet and bathroom is at the Central Tender Board for launching. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, out of the Rs 21m earmarked for this financial year, about 8m will be used for the Elderly Housing Scheme. I would like to tell this House that 10 houses will also be constructed for urgent family support in this financial year.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, our housing policy is designed to increase the availability of affordable quality homes, mainly to citizens in the low-income brackets with family breakdown. The tender for construction of social houses will span over the financial year 2006/2007 where there Rs 12m earmarked.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the collaboration between my Commission and the NHDC is very pro-active. For the financial year 2005/2006, 297 cases for casting of slabs and 7 for purchase of materials have been sent to Mauritius and are awaiting payment. Moreover, Mr. Chairperson, Sir – Mr. Momus also is in that batch – moreover, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a fast track system has also been set up for hardship cases falling under that scheme.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Regional Government has created a special

capital vote/item – Improvement/Renewal of minor projects in villages – *parce que nous sommes conscients qu’il faut relier les communautés, l’infrastructure doit se mettre au service des gens qui sont dans le besoin. Pour l’année 2005/2006, nous avons accordé une attention spéciale au co-financement des projets IFAD, comme les vestiaires de Patate Théophile, le centre artisanal de Mont Lubin, le centre communautaire de La Ferme et la rénovation du complexe de Mt Cabris, l’aménagement du centre social de Tamarin et celui de Bigarade. Toujours pour effectuer un « big contract rate », le gouvernement est conscient qu’une infrastructure à petite échelle a un effet direct et important sur divers aspects de la pauvreté et de la sécurité humaine.*

M. le président, on a oublié que Rodrigues est autonome et pas indépendante, et que le développement portuaire coûterait le demi-milliard pour que les bateaux puissent venir directement de l’Amérique M. Guillaume.

Les villageois ont le sentiment accru de maîtriser ces petits projets et ces projets à petite échelle ainsi que le développement d’infrastructures à grande échelle sont synergiques, M. le président, et c’est pourquoi pour l’année 2005/2006, le Gouvernement Régional va construire environ 10 km de trackroads dans plusieurs villages sur une base volontaire, les accès pour les personnes handicapées font aussi partie de cet item. La construction de trackroads et de footpaths va continuer dans l’année financière 2006/2007, la réhabilitation des centres sociaux seront aussi de la partie, la construction d’un centre communautaire à Petit Gabriel, l’installation de toilettes publiques dans différents coins de l’île, l’installation des panneaux pour coller les affiches et l’aménagement d’une espace de vente auprès du marché de Port

Mathurin, entre autres.

Agro-business

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following my intervention with the Minister of Agro-Industry, Dr Arvin Boolell, 17 stakeholders are going to Mauritius this week for a forum on agro-business. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this will enable the Regional Government and the stakeholders to develop an awareness of their prospects in the agro-business at the local level, launch a number of new projects by entrepreneurs, elaborate a regional strategy for the development of agro-industry and identify micro projects to be undertaken by vulnerable groups.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to add that during this financial year, about 100 agricultural project will be approved by the Agricultural Technical Project Committee. A first batch of 62 projects has been screened and the process will be ongoing. Project from the Network Support Services from the Commission for Social Security are also being looked into.

During this financial year, a batch of about 15 projects for new butchers' shop will be approved. An "Association des Bouchers de l'île Rodrigues" will be set up to cater for sale of quality meat and new Slaughtering of Livestock Regulations for Rodrigues are under preparation.

Dairy cows are being purchased by my Commission, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during this financial year and an "*Association des Propriétaires de Vache Laitière*" is being set up to cater for sale of fresh milk and also for the manufacture of added products.

Moreover, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the “*Association des Apiculteurs de Rodrigues* » has been reconsolidated. A guaranteed market of 10 tons of honey per year from Mauritius has been obtained and the reopening of the honey centre at Citronelle will boost this sector more again. About 30,000 pineapple suckers will be distributed during this financial year to planters to combat soil erosion and produce pineapple. This is a must to support the School Feeding Project “*qui a été doté d’une provision de Rs 4m par le chef commissaire*”.

Hier le membre Meunier a remarqué le fait que les élèves prennent seulement des bananes pendant une année ; ce n’est qu’un commencement, madame, c’est un supplément. On parle de « unbalanced diet » ; moi je pense qu’il faut féliciter ces planteurs de bananes et je dirai même que c’est un bon signe car il y a même des membres de cette assemblée qui sont de grands planteurs de bananes et il y a même ceux qui emboîtent leurs plants enroulés avec des bananiers pour faire la transplantation. Mais on va venir avec les œufs, les achards, this is empowering, Mr. Chairperson, this is empowering our population to produce more, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Dans cette assemblée, on a bien parlé, on a bien parlé de l’unemployment pour les diplômés. Mais quand même, à Rodrigues, il y des diplômés qui ont un double emploi. On a aussi beaucoup parlé de l’entrepreneuriat. Concernant nos jeunes diplômés, à qui la faute ?

M. le président, c’est notre système d’éducation. Tout le monde dans ce pays est conscient de la lutte que nous menons pour que Rodrigues puisse

avoir un système d'éducation qui réponde aux besoins de notre île. Même le Minority Leader, en tant qu'enseignant, a oublié qu'il a dit dans un rapport *'Formulating an Economic Agenda for Rodrigues', I quote,*

« We cannot keep training people for sectors in which they are going to be unemployed on completion of their training.»

M. le président, on parle de *derocking* et en même temps, M. Guillaume a parlé d'un second Red Sea, quelle contradiction l'aspect *derocking* facilitera l'érosion, chers messieurs. M. Agathe a parlé de l'exploitation des terres agricoles librement dans le sud. Est-ce qu'il sait qu'avec les projets, la commission de l'agriculture et des terres, on est en train de mettre en avant un partage équitable des terrains agricoles et qu'en ce moment, certaines personnes dans le sud on mis des veto sur la terre de l'état et parfois même, évitant les gens de prendre un sentier quelconque dans ces terrains. Plusieurs étendues de terres dans la région de Dans Coco ont été clôturées pour mettre deux bœufs, M. le président.

Concerning reallocation from emoluments, I would like to stress that the FMM has been amended by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Agathe, through a circular letter of 9 July 1992, of Chapter 20.3 of the Financial Management Manual which reads as follows; "Money may NOT be reallocated to or from any Personal Emoluments sub-heads". La question de justice, M. le président, mentionnée hier par la minorité concernant l'emploi dans le gouvernement, remet en question, vraiment, le statut indépendant de la PSC.

Concernant les baux, je salue l'initiative du chef commissaire pour

faire les remises officiellement. Si l'allocation des baux était partie prise, pourquoi avoir enclenché une contestation, chers messieurs, car je vois des gens appartenant à plusieurs partis dans cette remise, même « *parti zoiseau* ». C'est la transparence M. le président. C'est la transparence, M. le président.

M. le président, l'industrie de la construction, qui emploie en ce moment environ 1000 personnes, va plutôt être stable l'année prochaine parce qu'on aura des ongoing projects dans le secteur de la construction pour les différentes commissions, commission de la santé, commission de l'éducation et cela va aider les maçons, les contracteurs, les propriétaires de camions, les laboureurs entre autres.

M. le président, on avait déjà pensé à l'allocation des paiements de mauvais temps aux personnes âgées de plus de 60 ans. But this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is a national policy decision. We are not here to be treated as "*les politiciens arrachent cartes pêcheurs*". However, during our pre-budgetary consultations, this point has been raised and a collective decision comprising the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agro-industry and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will be taken to review the criteria for bad weather allowance.

M. le président, je viens d'entendre quelqu'un de la minorité qui disait qu'il faut que Rodrigues puisse créer sa richesse avec la sueur de son front. Quelle contradiction, M. le président, à celui qui a dit : « *au lieu li donne toi ene travail, li dire toi alle prête l'argent la banque développement* ».

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is very easy to promise but to take action and

when you are in government, it is then that we stand the test whether you can keep all nice promises that you have made to the population, that life was going to be easy. Bring the change, give us power, we are going to bring heaven to you! And what happens to that? We live for a while in hell, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these honourable members are making some sort of promises to the population and here I would like to draw the attention of the youth of this country, those who are going to vote, they should try to know the history of this country, at least from the seventies, to know what's the lot of this island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are being accused of taking this country towards poverty as if we are trying to ruin the economy of this country. Had we been willing to ruin the economy of this country, we would not have taken all the measures which have been mentioned. We all know how unpopular they could have been, but it would have been easier for us to act differently to take popular measures, please the population, that was the easy way. But there is no future in that easy way, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. If we want to preserve our land environment and to create an economy, we need to be more efficient and productive.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me end this presentation by saying that this Regional Government is a responsible one which has got a vision. This Government has got leadership; this Government is a guarantee for continuity. We will work to empower the population, to strengthen families as this is the surest way of strengthening our communities. We will pursue,

with a passion, our efforts to assume the concerns and fears of the citizens. We must regain, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the respect and trust of each of them and as the challenges arrive – which they will – we must put our tall boots, going to the communities and work with our people. We will make Rodrigues the paradise it can be. It is not only a task for the Government; it should be a determined resolve for all our citizens. But to achieve this requires a change in attitude, a commitment and determination by each one of us to be our brothers' keeper. I cannot overemphasise the importance of this. It requires that each day we must be better than the last day. No budget and sums of money can replace these challenges, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. There must be a return to soul, to conscience. This requires unity and not division, and I close Mr. Chairperson, Sir, by reminding this honourable House that this is our island, this is our autonomous Rodrigues Island. To make it better should be our resolve, our commitment and we can achieve this through hard work and a return to basics. There is no other way Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

]Thank you for your attention.

(Applause)

Mr. Chairperson: I suspend the Assembly for 1hour.

(The Assembly was suspended at 12.40 hours for one hour.)

(The Assembly resumed at 13.40 hours.)

Mr Chairperson: Chief Commissioner.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, nous arrivons à la fin de ce débat sur le budget 2006/2007. Je voudrais remercier tous ceux et toutes celles, qui des deux côtés de la chambre, ont pris part aux débats et se sont exprimés sur les différents points, que ce soit le développement social, économique et culturel. Quand nous écoutons les orateurs qui ont pris la parole, nous constatons qu'il y a une grande différence dans l'approche, nous constatons un grand contraste entre les interventions des membres de la majorité. Du côté de la majorité, c'est un combat depuis plusieurs années pour que le peuple rodriguais soit au centre de tout développement humain, social, économique et culturel, parce que notre culture est une force. C'est ce qui anime notre volonté de continuer le combat pour le bonheur du peuple rodriguais aujourd'hui et dans l'avenir.

De l'autre côté, nous avons constaté des remarques, des critiques, des suggestions. Mais nous déplorons, M. le président, certaines insinuations et des allégations. Nous déplorons l'utilisation des noms des fonctionnaires. Mais dans une assemblée nationale, on ne mentionne pas les noms des fonctionnaires ; on a un respect. Et je voulais surtout, dès le début de mon résumé, apporter tout mon appui à M. Frank Casimir, qu'on a mentionné ici, dans un cas de mauvais comportement vis-à-vis de quelqu'un qui est venu le voir. Mais ayant contacté M. Casimir, il nous dit ne pas reconnaître s'il s'est conduit ainsi.

Je voudrais dire, M. le président, que M. Frank Casimir est le seul urbaniste que nous avons à Rodrigues et il est débordé par le travail. Quand le Comité Terre approuve les demandes, cela va au Cadastre Et il appartient à

l'urbaniste d'aller voir si la demande entre dans une zone d'habitation. Il doit agir par rapport au National Development Strategy, qui nous dit, d'abord, la terre pour l'économie, deuxièmement, protéger l'environnement et troisièmement pour le progrès social.

Quand j'ai été pour la première fois voir le ministre Dullull pour lui demander s'il pouvait nous envoyer un urbaniste de plus, il nous a dit qu'il n'en avait pas. C'est pourquoi aujourd'hui M. Frank Casimir abat un travail remarquable dans le contexte de l'aménagement du territoire.

« *Empower the population* », travailler à rendre productifs tous les hommes et toutes les femmes de cette île. Empower the population, M. le président, ce n'est pas une idée d'aujourd'hui. C'est un leit motif. C'est un leit motif qui revient tout le temps dans la politique d'un parti. C'est la base même de tout développement, la base d'une prise de conscience que chaque habitant de Rodrigues, que chaque habitant de Maurice doit jouer sa part entière dans le développement social et économique d'un pays.

En 1977 une des résolutions de l'OPR se lit comme suit :

« L'OPR veut installer à Rodrigues, une mentalité créatrice et productrice, bannissant ainsi la mentalité d'assisté, qui est néfaste pour l'avenir du pays. »

Octobre 1981

L'OPR sort son programme pour les élections de 1982. Il est écrit dans son introduction :

« Il est grand temps que Rodrigues s'engage à transformer radicalement la mentalité d'assisté et la politique en une mentalité productrice, créatrice, par le biais d'une décentralisation du pouvoir. C'est en développant toutes les richesses dont elle dispose que Rodrigues connaîtra un meilleur avenir. Cette nouvelle étape de l'histoire de Rodrigues, doit être entreprise avec et par ceux et celles qui constituent sa population. »

Travailler le budget, M. le président, la richesse de l'île Rodrigues, ce sont ses habitants, ces jeunes qui étudient aujourd'hui, qui demain vont dans les écoles techniques, à l'université ou qui trouvent un débouché ailleurs. C'est aussi un honneur pour notre pays de voir que les jeunes d'aujourd'hui peuvent contribuer au développement social et économique de l'île Maurice ou d'autres pays.

Travailler le budget avec le ministère des finances et le ministre Rama Sithanen, a été pour nous une occasion de réfléchir sur comment, avec la situation actuelle de l'économie et du social de Maurice, comment nous pouvons arriver, nous, à Rodrigues, à porter notre contribution. Tous les ministères ont eu le mot d'ordre de ne pas créer des postes supplémentaires et des nouveaux postes, de ne pas faire des dépenses inutiles, de ne pas aller vers des nouveaux projets sans que ces projets ne soient bien étudiés et acceptés

par le ministère des finances. M. Sithanen nous a fait comprendre que la situation économique de Maurice ne permet pas une augmentation de notre budget ou des budgets des autres ministères.

M. le président, nous sommes dans la république de Maurice. Je dois dire par là que nous nous sentons solidaire de l'île Maurice, de sa population et de cette situation qui existe en ce moment-ci. Nos enfants et les personnes du troisième âge jouissent du transport gratuit, le gouvernement subventionne la bonbonne de gaz de 12 kilo à Rs 280. Ce sont des informations qui nous ont été données par le ministre lui-même. Donc, il y a une grosse subvention sur la bonbonne de gaz et nous ici, cette augmentation nous a un peu effrayés, attention que la population retourne à l'utilisation du bois pour la cuisson. Nous avons essayé, là aussi, de faire une demande pour que le Gouvernement Régional puisse apporter, lui aussi, une subvention afin que la bonbonne de gaz soit au même prix qu'à Maurice parce qu'ici, c'est à Rs 280.

Donc, M. le président, nous ne sommes pas partis pour Maurice pour aller quémander. Il y a cette réalité que nous sommes une région autonome. Et quand M. Valayden était venu, tout dernièrement, il va apporter des amendements à Local Government Act à Maurice. Il nous a dit que probablement, il y a des personnes qui vont venir ici pour voir comment l'économie de Rodrigues marche afin qu'il puissent, eux aussi, donner plus d'autonomie à des régions, à des municipalités à Maurice. Nous dialoguons sur nos priorités, dans le développement humain, social, économique et culturel de Rodrigues. Rodrigues fait partie du territoire national. Nous avons notre part dans le gâteau national, mais cette part de gâteau doit être discutée, soit que le gouvernement national – parce que nous présentons et

connaissons la spécificité de Rodrigues – apporte une contribution beaucoup plus notre ministère. Et je dois dire, M. le président, qu’après le vote sur ce budget, je dois rencontrer le premier ministre, qui est le ministre de Rodrigues, pour lui soumettre le budget et j’ai l’intention d’attirer son attention sur quelques points essentiels où nous pensons que le gouvernement central aurait apporté une contribution en plus.

Je ne vois aucune différence entre la mentalité de M. Agathe et ce natif de Maurice, habitant à Rodrigues qui déclare « *nou ki pe nourri zotte* », parce que le budget 2005/2006 avait atteint la somme de Rs 1.3 milliard. C’est humiliant de nous traiter ainsi. C’est pourquoi j’invite les Rodriguais à relever le défi. C’est ce que j’avais dit dans les réunions avec les parents des écoles primaires « *a nou aprane nourri nou par nou même* ».

Ce budget, quoique réduit de quelques millions, doit être une occasion pour le peuple de Rodrigues de se ressaisir afin d’apprendre pour entreprendre. Une occasion pour nous rendre plus utiles, plus productifs. C’est ce que nous avons dit au début. Travailler à rendre plus productif, chaque homme, chaque femme qui habite cette île. Et pour cela, M. le président, il y a tout un travail d’éducation et de formation. Pourquoi toujours compter sur la nourriture qui sort de l’extérieur ? Nous l’avons dit en 1976 ; « *pas compte lor mangé ki sorti dehors ; a nou compte lors mangé ki sorti dans nous la terre* ». Aujourd’hui, toute aide extérieure, c’est pour accompagner l’homme et la femme, comme la co-opération décentralisée – comme A Nou Deboute Ensam, Leve Deboute – c’est pour accompagner l’homme et la femme à développer leurs capacités d’entreprendre. Aujourd’hui il n’y a pas d’aide pour construire un centre, pour construire une

route. Tout est centré sur la capacité de l'homme et de la femme à mener le combat contre la misère et contre la pauvreté. Tel est le projet Coopération Décentralisée de L'Union Européenne qui figure dans ce budget 2006/2007.

M. le président, beaucoup parlent de l'économie, de l'indépendance économique. Connaître l'histoire de Rodrigues est primordial. L'enseignement secondaire est venu fournir du personnel pour l'administration gouvernementale, et cela pendant des années et des années, et même jusqu'aujourd'hui. La sécheresse des années 73, 74, 75, est venue tout bouleverser. Les planteurs, pêcheurs, éleveurs étaient devenus des fonctionnaires. Ensuite viennent s'y ajouter l'assistance publique, les pensions, l'allocation des pêcheurs etc, la mentalité change. Le système d'éducation de l'île Maurice est exporté sur Rodrigues mettant l'accent sur l'académique à tel point qu'un politicien, c'est ce que mon collègue a dit tout à l'heure-là – proclamer dans un *meeting* du 1^{er} mai, « *au lieu ki donne zot ene travail, zor dir ou alle prête l'argent la banque Développement pou faire ene développement*. C'est ainsi qu'on a mis l'accent sur l'instruction qui donne la connaissance au lieu sur une éducation qui forme des hommes et des femmes. C'est ainsi que notre économie a disparu, cette économie culturelle venant du profondeur de la terre, la culture qui est notre force. C'est ainsi que notre économie a disparu cédant la place à une économie de type industriel à la manière mauricienne ou d'autres pays européens.

Souvent nous portons des réflexions dessus – est-ce que nous avons le courage de développer une économie typiquement Rodriguaise. Posons-nous la question. Quel type d'économie doit être développé à Rodrigues ? Type industriel, donnant de l'emploi à des centaines de personnes ? Est-ce que cela

est possible ? Ou est-ce le type d'économie rurale, que nous pouvons appeler l'économie culturelle ? Nos grand parents et parents ont fait fructifier cette terre avec des moyens traditionnels et certains continuent encore aujourd'hui. Nos jeunes qui quittent les collèges et l'université, ne pourront-ils pas prendre la relève avec des techniques modernes et avec leurs connaissances en management et comptabilité ? Nous nous félicitons de voir aujourd'hui des jeunes enseignants du secondaire, et des jeunes quittant le collège, se lancer dans les entreprises agricoles. On comprend très mal quand nous parlons d'entreprises agricoles. On croit qu'on dit à ce jeune d'aller piocher la terre. Non, il devient *businessman*. Cela existe partout, il devient son propre patron. Soit il fait une autre société avec d'autres amis, soit il emploie des jeunes qui ont suivi une formation.

Vous savez M. le président, qu'à La Réunion, pour pouvoir être un agriculteur professionnel, il faut passer par une polytechnique, tel le Lycée de Saint Joseph, qui est un lycée polytechnique et qui nous a beaucoup inspiré pour l'avenir de Rodrigues et c'est ainsi que Saint Gabriel voudrait devenir, justement, cet institut de formation agricole.

Donc, nous nous félicitons de tous ces jeunes aujourd'hui. C'est la nouvelle génération d'entrepreneurs rodriguais. Ils sont les jeunes libérés des on dit. Ils ont compris que la force est la culture, il en de même pour ces jeunes qui veulent se lancer dans un dans un élevage scientifique, ces femmes qui transforment les produits agricoles et ces pêcheurs qui n'hésitent pas à investir dans un plus gros bateau pour la pêche hors lagon. Le professionnalisme pénètre de plus en plus dans la mentalité des Rodriguais. J'étais émerveillé quand nous avons visité la foire qui s'est tenue l'année

dernière à Port Mathurin, de voir que de plus en plus, les produits rodriguais se professionnalisent et peuvent être exportés à l'extérieur. Et c'est pourquoi nous avons cette compagnie pour exporter les produits rodriguais vers Maurice. Donc, à partir de cette compagnie, les personnes qui se lancent dans n'importe quelle entreprise, de l'agriculture (transformation), de la pêche (transformation du poisson) – je viendrai sur le *Sea Food Hub* tout à l'heure. Ces personnes pourront vendre leurs produits à cette compagnie.

Une dame, détentrice d'un diplôme universitaire, cherche des personnes pour être employées dans son entreprise agricole. Elle n'en trouve pas. Pourquoi ? Parce qu'il y a tout un mythe qui a été créé autour de l'emploi, autour du chômage. Créer la richesse par le travail n'est pas de leur ressort. Et je pense toujours à cette dame qui disait « *grâce à mo travail dans la terre ou ailleurs, mone réussi envoie mo deux ti fille collège* ». Voilà le grand dilemme auquel Rodrigues a à faire face.

L'éducation d'abord. Mon collègue a lu quelques lignes d'un rapport du Minority Leader. Quels types d'éducation donner à nos enfants et à nos jeunes ? Quels types d'éducation ? Quand je parle aux parents dans les écoles, je dis « *que seront nos enfants dans dix ans, dans vingt ans* ». Joseph qui est là, comment est-ce qu'il sera dans dix ans, dans vingt ans ? Est-ce que notre éducation tient compte de cela ? Est-ce que notre éducation tient compte des enfants *in the future* ? Quel type d'éducation on donne à nos jeunes dans les collèges. Quels types d'homme et de femme sommes-nous en train de former ? C'est ce genre de conversation que je tiens avec les parents, avec les jeunes. Il faut en finir avec ce système qui ne donne que des connaissances. Nous allons bientôt venir avec un grand *forum* sur

l'éducation.

La société civil, les ONGs, les politiciens, doivent se rencontrer pour pouvoir se dire « *allons-nous continuer comme ça, ou allons-nous créer cette nouvelle génération d'entrepreneurs, qui va aujourd'hui, qui va demain, créer un secteur privé solide, comme nous avons vu à Maurice après l'indépendance* ». Ou après l'indépendance on disait encore « *acheter étranger, les produits étrangers étaient beaucoup meilleurs* ». Et ensuite les entrepreneurs sont venus, avec beaucoup de courage, « acheter mauricien ». Et aujourd'hui, l'île Maurice exporte.

Un dialogue doit être entamé avec le ministre de l'éducation afin que nos jeunes soient plus *business minded* et libérés de tous préjugés vis-à-vis des métiers.

L'environnement

On a beaucoup parlé de l'environnement, c'est vrai, on a un pays, on a une île qu'il faut beaucoup protéger. D'ailleurs, dans le *National Development Strategy* dit, deuxièmement, protéger l'environnement.

Le *Development Coastal Zone Management Plan* qui est entrepris par le ministère de l'environnement, inclue aussi Rodrigues. Le *coastal erosion* – nous avons des recommandations du rapport Bert et de Madame Duvas qui dit ceci :

« On a toujours, nous, posé la question. Des experts disent ceci, des gens disent cela. Au niveau de l'environnement, très souvent on est dans le flou. Ne touchez que quand il y a menace. Autrement, laissez la nature faire son travail. »

On a beaucoup parlé des passes. Je me souviens il y avait une étude qui a été faite par ICOD, une agence Canadienne de l'océan. On avait dit de faire l'étude concernant les passes pour sortir de la terre entre ces passes pour aller hors de mer. Ils l'ont déconseillé, parce que plus on bouge, quand on bouge, on fouille, avec le courant, il y a tout autour, alors, on a peur que l'Ile au Sable, l'Ile au Coco se dégradent. Il y a tout un mouvement. Moi j'ai vu quand j'étais ministre en 82, j'ai été à St Brandon. La première fois que j'ai été, j'ai vu un banc de sable par ici, et quelques mois après je reviens le banc de sable est de ce côté-là. Ben je connais bien ...

Notre marina à Port Sud Est, le *marina*, il y a un rapport EIA qui est au ministère de l'environnement, nous attendons l'approbation. Maintenant on se dépasse, là aussi, M. le président, je parlais tout à l'heure-là – un EIA a été entrepris par des experts du ministère de la pêche. Nous attendons le rapport final et l'approbation du ministère de l'environnement. Aujourd'hui, d'après la loi, pour tout ce qu'on fait, il faut un EIA – même pour creuser un trou dans la mer, même pour faire un mur dans la mer, il faut un EIA.

Le dépotoir de Grenade est presque saturé et donc, nous avons un projet d'aller de l'avant et le EIA est envoyé au ministère de l'environnement.

Le marina à Baie aux Huîtres

M. le président, il y a un *master plan* qui a été travaillé par le Mauritius Ports Authority pour avoir un quai de 250 mètres de long et faire un comblage pour pouvoir stocker le diesel, l'essence et le gaz en dehors de la ville de Port Mathurin. C'est un projet qui coûte autour de 450m de roupies. Nous avons approché plusieurs fois le ministère des finances et nous avons demandé au ministère des finances de faire des démarches auprès de la banque mondiale pour que ce projet se classe parmi ce qu'on appelle des projets financés pour les pays les moins avancés. Et nous allons continuer d'envoyer des documents au ministère des finances parce que nous pensons que c'est un projet qui va durer. Et le marina de Baie au Huîtres dépend de ce projet de l'agrandissement du port de Port mathurin ; et je dois dire que c'est un must, parce qu'on ne peut pas savoir ce qui peut arriver d'un moment à l'autre, un dépôt d'essence, de gaz et de diesel en plein milieu des habitations. Nous exprimons une grande frayeur de ce côté-là. En même temps, M. le président – on a parlé de *Sea Food Hub* – nous avons eues plusieurs demandes de personnes pour s'installer ici pour que Rodrigues soit un pied-à-terre pour la pêche en haute mer. Il y a quelqu'un qui vient d'envoyer son projet après plusieurs mois de discussion, il y a un autre qui est venu il y a quelques semaines de cela, mais il y a aussi nos pêcheurs, les organisations coopératives de pêcheurs, les sociétés de pêcheurs. Nous sommes en train de leur donner des morceaux de terrain à Pointe Monier. Mais le gros problème reste le dragage de ce bassin de Pointe Monier qui est rempli de boue et qu'il faudra draguer pour permettre un plus grand tirant d'eau.

La pêche, M. le président, les pêcheurs aujourd'hui expriment

beaucoup d'intérêt pour construire un bateau beaucoup plus gros pour aller vers les radeaux – nous avons dit que les radeaux allaient être installés, il y en a six ou sept encore qui vont être installés un peu plus près des récifs pour permettre à des bateaux de 26, 27 pieds d'y aller.

Off-lagoon Fishing

Les pêcheurs peuvent aller à la Banque de Développement jusqu'à 200000 roupies à 3% d'intérêt, repayable sur 7 ans avec une année moratoire. La DBM finance à 100%, il n'y a pas de contribution du pêcheur qui est requise, parce que très souvent, et plus on va vers les grosses sommes, ça demande une contribution des pêcheurs. Mais il y a aussi, un peu plus loin, la DBM donne aussi des emprunts pour *working capital* et construction d'un bâtiment industriel autour de 3m de roupies à 7% d'intérêt repayable sur 5 ans. Cela suppose M. le président, que c'est une industrie de pêche qui marche très très bien pour pouvoir rembourser 3m de roupies en 5 ans. La DBM finance jusqu'à la hauteur de 1m à 3% repayable en 7 ans plus une année de moratoire.

Alors donc, il y a beaucoup de possibilités pour des personnes d'aller en haute mer et créer vraiment une autre génération de pêcheurs. Il a été signalé ici, la question de pêcheurs et si vous remarquez bien, la somme d'allocation de mauvais temps est descendue à 45m.

Et justement, il y a un *policy decision* qui va être prise au cours de cette année concernant les pêcheurs au-dessus de 60 ans. Et nous avons aussi discuté avec le ministre des finances et ça, ce sera aussi un point que je vais

prendre avec le premier ministre ; comment amener des personnes à terre, surtout avec le parc marin, il y aura à peu près 400 pêcheurs qui doivent être déplacés de cette région. Au lieu de les faire aller ailleurs – et ça va causer beaucoup plus de dégâts à l’environnement – nous sommes en train de voir un *scheme* comment les amener à terre pour justement s’occuper de l’environnement. Ça aussi c’est un point que nous allons discuter avec le premier ministre dans ce comité spécial.

La coopération décentralisée, M. le président, c’est un projet, je dirai, qui justement va dans le sens de *capacity building*. Eveiller l’esprit des gens à justement, entreprendre, à faire quelque chose, à se débrouiller. Et c’est pourquoi, quand nous avons pris la commission de l’éducation, nous avons confié à M. Lélío Roussety, un travail bien spécifique ; s’occuper justement de tous ces jeunes *prevocational* qui sont dans les écoles, les collèges. Il faut pouvoir les suivre et leur donner plus de formation et voir comment les envoyer au IVTB. Il y a un groupe qui fait une 4^{ème} année au IVTB et lorsqu’ils sortent de là ce sont des gars beaucoup plus éveillés, soit ils peuvent continuer quelque chose avec leurs parents ou faire un travail ailleurs.

Donc, nous voulons que dans cette île Rodrigues, qu’il y ait – comment dirai-je – tout un programme de formation pour que tout le monde soit éveillé à un métier. C’est ce que fait la dame, je pense qu’elle a mentionné 500 dames ou un peu plus, 2500/2000 dames éveillées à l’entrepreneuriat aux petits business. Et c’est pourquoi nous sommes en train de voir. Sur le comblage de Mont Lubin, ça va un petit endroit où les dames, où les messieurs vont venir vendre leurs produits. On a mis aussi des kiosques devant le bâtiment à Port Mathurin, et là aussi pour permettre à des personnes de vendre des produits.

Nous voudrions, à Mont Limon, par exemple, nous voudrions que tout au long des routes, qu'on construise – on a vu ça au Seychelles – qu'on construise des petites maisons très rustiques, éviter un peu ces tabagies en tôle et puis qui restent là sur une roue, mais construire des petites unités un peu partout qui peuvent être occupées par des personnes pour vendre leurs produits. Ah oui, il faut parfois rêver, vous ne rêvez pas le soir, vous ?

M. le président, le tourisme, quoique nous ayons demandé un peu plus, mais malheureusement, on a négocié, on nous a – pas qu'émendé – nous avons, dans le budget, mis tant de sommes et que 4m de roupies, mais selon la décision du ministre Xavier Duval, si nous mettons 4m de roupies, la MTPA met 4m de roupies, ce qui veut dire pour la promotion du tourisme ; nous avons 8m de roupies.

L'office du tourisme aura lieu. Le personnel est dans le budget, un Tourism Planner, Enforcement Officers, Tourism and Leisure Officers, mais nous avons aussi demandé un Tourism promotion Manager, un peu comme un Marketing Manager au niveau de la promotion du tourisme.

Alors, donc, mais évidemment – c'est là-dessus qu'on va discuter – si on va mettre ce Tourism Promotion Manager, ça va être un poste ouvert, ça va être n'importe qui qui peut venir, un Singapourien, un Français, un Américain, un Africain, tout ce que vous voulez. Alors, donc, le personnel va être recruté très prochainement. Le bureau du tourisme se situera dans le vieux bâtiment en bois qui est en train d'être réhabilité par les hommes de l'infrastructure publique. Donc ce sera là, ce beau bâtiment, bien travaillé, rustique et qui va être le bureau du tourisme, mais en même temps, nos sommes en train de

travailler des règlements bien spécifiques à Rodrigues.

M. le président, la terre. M. le président, j'exprime une grande joie aujourd'hui, de voir que même si ça a pris du temps – il a fallu lutter – que le projet « *Housing and Cadastral Survey* » a abouti. Le Tender Board a répondu ce matin pour allouer le contrat – je ne vais pas le dire – mais le travail va commencer.

M. le président, c'est depuis des années et des années alors que j'étais au parlement, j'ai toujours défendu un plan d'aménagement pour Rodrigues. Et même l'Union Européenne, à un certain moment, voulait financer ce projet mais malheureusement il y a eu le ministère des terres qui a mis certaines objections, disant ceci ou cela. Je me souviens de tout ça.

Donc, après ce cadastre, celui qui veut avoir un bout de terrain pour construire une maison, celui qui veut avoir un bout de terrain pour faire un élevage, celui qui veut un bout de terrain pour faire une petite entreprise, donc, tout sera là M. le président, tout sera sur un plan, les lots seront là et la personne pourra avoir son bail le plus vite possible. C'est ça justement, c'est ça, et on a entendu toutes sortes d'histoires de Maurice dans les journaux alors que nous ici, on peut dire, d'un certain côté, nos sommes en avance sur Maurice. Même si on est une petite île on doit pouvoir toujours donner l'exemple de ce qu'on peut faire. Oui, je dis toujours il faut garder notre réputation, il faut montrer ce qu'on peut faire.

Donc, c'est une grande joie que j'annonce là aujourd'hui. M. le président, je voudrais donner quelques chiffres – on a la pensée, mais

justement ce que c'est que cette histoire d'enquête.

M. le président, vous venez d'avoir un bail, mais dans le bail il faut dire – est-ce que vous êtes marié, est-ce que vous êtes divorcé. Mais dans le bail c'est comme ça. Mais pour l'application, il faut que vous dites – êtes-vous marié, célibataire ? *Mais ou pas rempli ou income tax paper là, ou pas dire si ou marié ou divorcé ou si d'autre ? Mais non, li pas confidentiel ça.*

Alors. Maintenant, M. le président, il faut savoir si vous travaillez, si vous êtes un pensionnaire. Pourquoi ? On va calculer le barème à payer par rapport à votre salaire. Celui qui touche les Rs 50 milles par mois là, comme celui-là, comme vous là-bas, alors il faut payer par rapport au salaire. Ils ne vont pas payer Rs 100 comme un vieillard qui touche Rs 2000 ou Rs 3000. Alors, donc, si vous touchez un plus gros salaire, maintenant, si votre salaire descend à un certain moment, ben vous allez faire des recommandations pour descendre le barème, le tarif de votre bail.

Maintenant, M. le président, je pense que nous aurions du faire ça depuis assez longtemps, c'est quand nous donnons le bail, nous invitons les personnes pour expliquer ce qu'il y a dans le bail. Mais oui, dans le bail il est dit ; c'est un contrat qu'on vous donne, le gouvernement vous dit « entretenez cette terre, nettoyez la cour, nettoyez devant votre maison, les canalisation et tout ça ». Alors donc, expliquer M. le président, et aussi on les aide en ce qui concerne la construction de leur maison. On a vu des photos par ci par là, on a donné des baux, un peu dans la montagne, dans ceci cela, je ne sais pas quand, et on a vu des gens qui ont cassé des murs, qui ont construit et puis la terre s'en va. Et puis aussi, M. le président, j'étais à Tobago, yes, I think we can go to

Tobago, because of the coopération décentralisée, il y a une somme pour nous ici.

Alors, M. le président, donc, on nous donne aussi des conseils. Ce n'est pas nécessaire de casser un emplacement pour construire une maison. Et c'est pourquoi avec les grandes eaux qui sont arrivées, il faut bien faire attention ou donner la terre à quelqu'un pour qu'il n'y ait pas d'éboulements. Donc, nous avons le cyclone, nous avons le tsunami et maintenant nous avons eu l'inondation qui nous a donné l'expérience, vraiment, où il faut donner une terre à quelqu'un.

Maintenant je voudrais donner quelques chiffres, M. le président, et il a été signalé ce matin, quelque chose d'intéressant. Ces personnes qui clôturent de grandes espaces, comme-ci c'est leurs terres.

M. le président, nous avons maintenant un legal adviser, nous allons discuter, comment, justement, est-ce que les terres seront profitables à tout le monde et non pas à quelques personnes. Il y a cette histoire de *paddock* et *unit farm*. Donc nous allons faire des règlements, des lois pour éliminer les *paddocks* et *unit farm* et créer des pâturages selon les lois et les règlements.

M. le président, de novembre 2005 à mars 2006, nous avons délivré 495 lettres d'intention pour que les gens aillent payer et ensuite pour pouvoir préparer le bail. Sur ces 495, 105 n'ont pas encore payé jusqu'à maintenant. Nous avons préparé 390 baux, seulement 290 ont été signés. Avant novembre 2005, 455 baux n'ont pas été signés, 455 baux, préparés là, n'ont pas été signés. Et la plupart du temps, des gens qui payent 50, Rs 100.

Maintenant, M. le président, concernant la terre, le *derocking scheme*, je voudrais partager avec nos amis ici, quand j'étais ministre, M. Jayan Cuttaree travaillait au *Mechanical Pool* à Cassis, j'avais demandé une étude sur le *derocking* à Rodrigues et le rapport est arrivé négatif, parce que plus vous enlevez des pierres, plus l'érosion va s'accélérer. Donc, il faut faire bien attention, on ne peut pas faire le *derocking* comme ça, il y a quand même, toute une étude qu'il faudrait faire, peut-être il serait bon que les commissaires, le chef commissaire adjoint puisse demander à une organisation quelconque ou le ministère de l'agriculture de faire une étude sur le *derocking* ici.

M. le président, je suis arrivé à la fin de ce résumé, je voudrais signaler ici que ce qui a été dit concernant la baisse dans les revenus. Cette baisse dans les revenus est le résultat des non-paiement des *state land leases mainly due to the fact that the computerisation was not completed*.

Upon the coming of housing and land survey, all lessees will be identified and the island revenue will definitely increase. *C'est pourquoi il y a ce survey, parce qu'il y a beaucoup de maisons où les gens habitent et n'ont pas de baux, on fait les build-ups, on est en train de travailler dessus, leur donner leurs baux. Il y a beaucoup de maisons aussi qui sont abandonnées, « change couleur », les gens sont partis. Ils ont besoin, vraiment, d'avoir un survey sur tout ça.*

The actual revenue collected in 2004/2005 has been Rs 14.6 million and expected revenue in 2005/2006 will be Rs 16.5 million. So, there is no

decrease really.

Lessees have been invited through individual letters to settle their outstanding rent and some 500 letters have already been issued.

M. le président, donc, encore une fois merci à tous ceux qui ont pris part au débat sur ce budget. Des idées ont été émises et de ce côté de la chambre, nous avons exprimé tout le travail fait pendant ces trois ans et demi et que même avec ce qu'on a, il faut pouvoir aller beaucoup plus loin. Mais comme j'ai dit au début, la population ne doit pas regarder l'argent qu'on a, que ce soit plus, que ce soit moins. Mais la population doit pouvoir se dire « comment je pourrais contribuer à l'économie de ce pays, parce que quand on regarde bien nos exportations, il y a beaucoup de choses qui ne sont pas comptabilisées dans nos exportations et c'est pourquoi le SIDPR, le contrat a déjà été alloué. Et là je signale qu'on a mentionné quelques conflits par ci par là, qui est un peu dommage, mais le contrat a déjà été alloué à la firme consultant KPMG qui arrive à Rodrigues cette semaine-ci et qui va commencer le travail.

Donc, pour cette étude, ils vont commencer à travailler déjà avec les groupes qui ont déjà travaillé. Mais cette étude est vraiment importante dans le sens que ça ne va pas être une étude comme on a fait dans le passé – *socio-economic survey* – quelqu'un vient, passe un jour, deux jours, puis retourne à Maurice, écrit telle une histoire, et ce sera une étude qui va projeter Rodrigues dans l'avenir, vouloir résoudre le Millenium Goals, que soit les problèmes de l'emploi, combat de la pauvreté, augmenter le nombre de réussite dans les écoles, les examens, la santé, l'éducation, l'environnement et

tout.

Donc, ce sera une étude qui va demander – avec la contribution des Rodriguais – qui va demander à ces experts, ces consultants, de nous projeter dans l’avenir à partir de ce qu’on voit, ce qu’on vit aujourd’hui. Un budget, M. le président, comme certains disent, c’est un exercice comptable, mais c’est aussi et surtout, tout un esprit qui dirige et ce qui oriente ce budget, c’est qu’il faut travailler à rendre productif chaque homme et chaque femme qui vit dans cette île Rodrigues.

Merci, M. le président.

(Applause)

COMMITTEE STAGE – BUDGET 2006/2007

Mr. Chairperson: Can we proceed like the previous years with the draft recurrent budget?

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to make a remark, please.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Agathe: Yesterday I made a speech regarding the basic principles of the Financial Management Manual and this morning...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I think it is a little bit late now. Well, wait until we reach the item/ votes and then you may make your request.

The Assembly is no more sitting. Can you realize? We are in committee.

Yes, you have got to take your seat...

The Minority Leader: Can we know, first of all, this stage of proceedings before we go to the different items of the current budget as far as the recurrent budget of last year is concerned? What have been the general policy regarding the reallocation of items in the recurrent budget?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader, if you want to, yes, I just said we are in committee; we are no more concerned with general policy. It is only with reference with the specific items that we are now in committee and this committee is supposed to be for that. Notwithstanding this, if when we reach that item, you feel that what you have just said is relevant to it, then, of course, you can raise the issue and the Commissioner will answer, of course. But we cannot, at this stage, before we even begin, even if it is in relation, you have got to.

The Minority Leader: Yes, can we proceed?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, thank you. Yes, Clerk, can we proceed?

The Clerk: Recurrent revenue for 2006/2007, page 2, Vote 21, Contribution to Rodrigues Regional Assembly, 21.101 – Contribution from Central Government.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 846,000,000 stands part of the vote. Yes. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. The “ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Contribution to Independence Day celebration – Item .002

Mr. Chairperson: That the token vote of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. The “ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Item .102 – Contribution to Social Security, .001 – Retiring allowance scheme for members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 170,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. The “ayes” have it.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, contribution to Social Security, I would like to ask
.....

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you Minority Leader. Yes, can we proceed?

The Clerk: Vote 22 , Item .001 – Trade Licences.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 2,000,000 stands part of the vote.

Yes, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: I am questioning on which basis these estimates of Rs 2,000,000 have been made. It remains the same for 2005/2006 and 2006/2007.

Mr. Chairperson: Any reply?

Commissioner Lisette: With respect to the number of licences that are being paid right now and the number of licences that we think will be issued next year. But there are some licences which are cancelled, may be every year, so, this is why more or less it remains the same.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

The Clerk: Same vote, Item .003.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount of Rs 2,000,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. “Ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, Item .002 – Professional Licences.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 500 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. “Ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Same vote 22, Item .999 – Miscellaneous.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, question; that the amount of Rs 200,000 stands part of the vote.

Mr. Jabeemissar: On that issue Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we have information why in the 2006/2007 it is less than the previous budget? On what basis is this ...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

The Minority Leader: Can we have a list of items included in this Miscellaneous?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, any Commissioner? Otherwise Chief Commissioner, any information?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it could be different licences, a lot of licences in the Licences Regulations. It could be Trade Licences, Provisional Licences or Miscellaneous Licences and different and other licences can be – we have a lot of different licences in the Licences Regulations.

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Commissioner concerned why it is not specified? Why it has be Miscellaneous if it has to do with licences?

Chief Commissioner: There will be a long list of different licences. We can have a licence of Rs 200,000, it can Rs 10, it can be Rs 15. So, you can have a long list and even in national budgets it is Miscellaneous.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the fist question remains unanswered. Why is it that for 2005/2006 it is Rs 250000 and this year there is a decrease in the estimates?

The Chief Commissioner: Perhaps someone has stopped a licence. there are different reasons why the sum has decreased. It could be that sometime you stop a licence, you don't renew your licence, you do not require it, you do not renew your licence.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 200,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say "aye" those against say "no". The "ayes" have it.

The Clerk: Vote 23, Item .999 – Miscellaneous.

Mr. Chairperson: That the token vote of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say "aye" those against say "no". The "ayes" have it.

The Clerk: Vote 24, Item .001.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 2,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. “Ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, .002 – Fee for visiting vessel.

Mr. Chairperson: That the token vote of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Yes.

The Minority Leader: Can we know what is this fee for visiting vessel? And if it is related to the visit of Mauritius Pride, Mauritius Trochetia etc, why is it that this is a token vote, because this can be estimated objectively?

The Chief Commissioner: No fee is being paid for the time being, whatever kind of fee for the visiting vessel. No, we don’t create fee for the visiting vessel.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the token vote of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. The “ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, please, .003 – Burial permit.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 160 forms part of the vote.

The Minority Leader: Again, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rs 160, is this logical for – I don’t know what is the number of death in Rodrigues, what is

the amount of the permit per person who is buried, but is 160 an objective and fair estimate of what will be received from these burial purposes?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I think that concerning the revenue side, perhaps we can come afterwards with more information because it is more or less an estimation of the amount that has been paid for the last year and I think that even the officers who are here do not have enough information. Perhaps next year we can come with a solid ...

(Interruptions)

The Minority Leader: Can we know, Mr Chairperson, Sir, can we know what is the amount for one burial permit? At least – you say you are a caring Regional Government – at least to bury the death in this country, you must know what is the cost which is paid to Government.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I understand the point raised by the Deputy Chief Commissioner. You know, it is rather different from what obtains in the National Assembly because there we have to bring revenue because the revenue, normally, emanates from laws, from regulations and so forth. But of course, on this question put to this Committee, I cannot give a ruling that those answers be postponed.

The Minority Leader: If it is 160 Mr Chairperson, Sir – let me suppose that it is Rs 10 – so, these people are making a very big miracle in Rodrigues, they will bury only 16 persons next year. This is what I am made to understand. You have to be serious, you say caring Regional Government,

your revenue has fallen. This is an example where you could increase your revenue by some thousands of rupees.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, order please, order please!

The Minority Leader: We would like to know, most of all, Mr Chairperson, Sir, because the provisions have been increased from 100 to 160. This means that they have a basis, they do have a basis on which they have based themselves to estimate this amount of revenue receivable from burial permits. You know, the House may say that they are going in each and every detail, but we really want to understand how they reached some figures before proposing. I, personally, would like to know really how these figures have been reached.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader, yes, I think we are in a sort of locked situation. Yes, you are asking questions and the answers are not forthcoming. You will have to stop here or you proceed.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: From my information, it is Rs 2.50 per permit.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 160 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye”, those against say “no”. The “ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Vote 24 again, .001 – rate for emptying of cess pool.

Mr. Chairperson: That the token vote of Rs 10 forms part of the item. Those in favour say “aye”, those against say “no”. The “ayes” have it.

The Clerk: The same vote, .999 – Miscellaneous.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 50,000 stands part of the vote.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Yes, I would like to know, this item “waste water”, for what other activities in that specific field will that revenue be collected. What are the other parts of this?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Commissioners, if ever there are officers who are now in the public gallery, may they be allowed to come down so that this House can be enlightened about the numbers. Are there any officers required here not present? Yes, may they be allowed to...

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been a swapping of revenue. The item 0.999 should have been credited to the 0.01 item.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we move that – being given this item – we move that item .102, .001 and .999 be swapped inversely so that rate for emptying of cess pool be 50,000 and Miscellaneous be Rs 10.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, don't do that, don't do that. Let's take item by item. So, you substitute an amount for another amount; two amendments at the same time.

The Minority Leader: Yes, substitute for rate for emptying of cess pool, substitute Rs 50,000 for Rs 10.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before we proceed with that, I would like to ask whether any fee is being charged for the emptying of cess pool in Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson: What?

Mr. Jabeemissar: I would like to ask the Commissioner concerned, whether any fee is being charged for the emptying of cess pool in Rodrigues.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is Rs 300 per unit.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I am just asking about the rationale of the amendment. I understand that, normally, people of finance who normally move this sort of swapping figures. With respect to you, Minority Leader...

The Minority Leader: I propose an amendment, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: correctly, there are two items completely common, take each item first.

The Minority Leader: I move, under revenue item, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, waste water - .102, sub-item .001, rate for emptying of cess pool, that the item of Rs 10 be substituted for Rs 50,000.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I agree that you have got a right to make any motion, but if you have a go at Standing Order 55(a) Yes, it is a problem.

So, Deputy Chief Commissioner, can you, please, move for the amendment?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that the Rs 50,000 be swapped with item 0.01.

Mr. Chairperson: No, it is not proper, you have got to proceed by item, proceed by saying that you want to substitute X amount for X amount.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that the sum of Rs 10 be substituted by the sum of Rs 50,000.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, secondment?

Question; that the amount of Rs 50,000 be substituted for Rs 10 in the vote 102.001. Those in favour say “aye”, those against say “no”. The “ayes” have it.

And then, the other motion, please.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the second item, I move that the sum of Rs 50,000 be replaced by Rs 10 in the sub-item .999.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 10 be substituted for the amount of Rs 50,000 for item .999. Those in favour say “aye”, those against say “no”.

Mr. Pierre Louis: Point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Section 55(8); Section 8 – No amendments for increase in the sums.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, vote please, yes, “ayes”.

The “ayes” have it.

The Clerk: .103 – Water/Irrigation, .001 – Rodrigues Water Rate.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount of Rs 50,000 stands part of the vote.

Yes, now we can ask questions. Yes?

Mr. Grandcourt: I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner why is it that this amount has decreased significantly this year. It is only Rs 50,000.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I want to make an amendment. That the sum of Rs 125,000 be substituted by Rs 50,000.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner, I should not say this, but it seems that your revised estimate is Rs 50,000. Can you have consultation with your officers, because the revised is Rs 50,000. Yes, well, can you, please consult with the officers whether you want to increase it or to maintain it at Rs 50,000?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have designed many regulations...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, the thing is that your estimate is Rs 125,000. Yes, this was last year's estimate. And then, when you revised it it came down to Rs 50,000.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Because normally this amount is based on the actual collection, but normally, from the commission, the number of irrigation network which has been designed, the total sum is more than Rs 50,000.

Mr. Chairperson: You mean, will be more than Rs 50,000.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes. The actual amount base is Rs 50,000 but for the next year it will be over 50,000.

Mr. Chairperson: You have got a note somewhere.

The Minority Leader: In the meantime, if we look at the trend, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the trend was, the estimate is Rs 50,000. In 2004/2005 it was Rs 65,000. In 2005/2006, what they expect to get, which is quasi certain at this time, it is Rs 125,000. The estimates for 2006/2007 cannot be Rs 50,000. It should be between Rs 65,000 and Rs 125,000 or more.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, I maintain the figure 50,000 because it is based on the actual figure collected at the level of the commission.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner, yes, we have got two booklets to approve, try to convince your officer to be as prompt as possible.

Question; that the amount of Rs 50,000 forms part of the vote .103.001. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Still vote 24 .001 – Pleasure Craft Licence.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 75,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote .001 – Duty on Scales (Industry and Commerce).

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 60,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Civil Status .001 – Issue of certificates.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 1,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .002 – Fees for celebration of Civil Marriage.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 12,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: 25 – Receipts from Public Services, .001 – Court Fees.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 300,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote .002 – Usher's and Interpreter's Fees.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 1,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Please wait. Chief Commissioner, for the purpose of the Draft Estimates Committee, probably, in the future, if you can have a subtotal of all these votes so that we don't have to put all questions.

Yes, thank you.

The Clerk: Same vote, .003 – Fines.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 1,200,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, .004 – Sale of Judgement.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 1,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, .999 – Miscellaneous.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 200,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Electoral - .001, Refund of electoral expenses (Sale of Registers).

Mr. Chairperson: That the token vote of Rs 10 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, .999 – Miscellaneous. The estimate is Rs 1,000.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 1,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye”, those against say “no”. “Ayes” have it.

The Clerk: Police – .103.001 – Fee for Police Services.

Mr. Chairperson: That the token vote of Rs 10 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .103.999 – Miscellaneous.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 10 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Printing - .104.001, Sale of publication (Regulations made by Rodrigues Regional Assembly).

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 100 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: 105 – Health, item .001 – Pharmacy licences.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on this item .001 – Pharmacy licences, I would like to know why there is a token vote for that item, because we do have one pharmacy here, which is a private one. Don’t we collect any revenue from it?

Commissioner Lisette: The pharmacy that exists in Rodrigues holds a trade licence under the Pharmacy Act. So, it is a Trade Licence which is paid by the pharmacy under the Rodrigues Regulations which is computerised in the item vote 22 – Trade Licences.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the token amount of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Health - .002 – overtime.

Mr. Chairperson: That the token amount of Rs 10 stands part of the vote.

The Minority Leader: Can we know how this amount of Health – overtime be an item of revenue?

Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, will he give the answer about this item?

Mr. Chairperson: Well, the answer is forthcoming, allow the Commissioner to, at least, obtain information, yes.

Commissioner Sooprayen: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this has been designed for the collection of revenue, for the payment of revenue in connection with overtime performed by Sanitary Officers for private bodies.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the token amount of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye”, those against say “no”. “Ayes” have it.

That the item .999 – Miscellaneous, that the token amount of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Agriculture - .106, .001 – Fees for Veterinary Services.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 1,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .002 – Pest control for fruit trees.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 15,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .003 (Quarantine Fees).

Mr. Chairperson: That a token amount of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .004 (Sale of animal feed).

Mr. Chairperson: That a token amount of Rs 10 stands part of that vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .005 – Sale of seeds.

Mr. Chairperson: That a token amount of Rs 10 stands part of that vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .006 – Sale of plants, fruits and agricultural produce.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 50,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .007 – Sale of milk.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 15,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .008 – Sale of poultry and eggs.

Mr. Chairperson: That a amount of Rs 10 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .009 – Sale of livestock.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 300,000 stands part of that vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .010 – Sale of forest produce.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 200,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .011 – Rent of mechanical equipment.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 1,000 stands part of that vote.

Yes.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know the rate per acre, per arpent?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Rs 600 per arpent.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know the types of yield. Is it the proper figure or should it be more?

Mr. Agathe: Can we know what are the hectares of agricultural land that we have and whether all these lands will be ploughed this year?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, land is ploughed on demand.

Mr. Agathe: Can I assume that we have only two vehicles for all demands?

The Minority Leader: The Commissioner has just mentioned that for ploughing of land, these mechanical services will be free of charge. Yes, we are speaking of the next financial year, the expected estimate is Rs 1,000. It should not be 1000, it should be a token vote, if you really expect to make it free of charge.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, there is a question, please.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the revenue for this year has been credited to item 0.999 – Miscellaneous.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

The Minority Leader: The question is: in his statement, in his speech he has said that rent of mechanical equipment will be free of charge – he said it like this – free of charge. So, now he is expecting to get Rs 1,000 from these. This is not clear, it should be a token vote of Rs 10. You agree?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I say that the revenue for this year has been credited to item 0.999 – Miscellaneous. Miscellaneous covers a series of services that can be provided by the Commission.

The Minority Leader: Yes. “*Mettre la charrue devant les bœufs, on n’est pas encore arrivé sur* Miscellaneous. We are still on rent of mechanical equipment, whose estimate for the next financial year 2006/2007 is Rs 1,000.

But you have just mentioned – and if you really want to go in line with what you have just mentioned, I request that you put this Rs 1,000 as a token vote of Rs 10. Because if somebody engaged in agriculture opens this booklet and sees 1,000, your statement is false. You will be misleading yourself as very often and once again you want to mislead yourself.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it may happen that there are arrears that will be collected in the next financial year.

The Minority Leader: This is wrong, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, arrears would be credited to the financial year concerned, not to the next financial year. This is an accounting principle. It is an accounting principle that revenue collected for a period is credited to that period, the officers here can confirm – you cannot put revenue for this year in the next financial year when the revenue is receivable now.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner. You maintain this amount for the vote?

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 1,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, an amendment to this item. I was on my feet before you caught my.....

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I saw you wanted to rise but and then you sat again; yes, I could not follow.

Mr. Jabeemissar: We were waiting for the Commissioner to give an answer.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, in the future if you find may be I am reading the figures, you just draw my attention, not my eyes, my attention.

Yes, next item .999, that the amount of Rs 50,000 stands part of the vote.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner talked about the rent of mechanical equipment being part of the Miscellaneous – I think it is one part. What are the other services that are included within this Miscellaneous item?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: There are other services like “moulding of maize” at the Agricultural Services.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 50,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Yes, respected members, I have been intimated that there will be a motion under paragraph 5 of Standing Order 9. I will, therefore, resume the sitting of the Assembly in order for that motion to be made.

Yes, Chief Commissioner.

The Chief Commissioner (Mr. Louis Serge CLAIR): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that all business on today's Order Paper be exempted from the provisions of paragraphs 3 and 6 of Standing Order 9.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that all the business on today's Order Paper be exempted from paragraphs 3 and 6 of Standing Order 9. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

I suspend the Assembly for 15 minutes.

(The Assembly was suspended from 15.40 hours to 16.00 hours.)

The Clerk: Resumption of Committee Stage.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, members, the process we have started, may be, is time consuming, I propose that we go direct for the subtotal of all the revenues. Of course, considering that some of the votes have already been voted.

Question; that the amount of Rs 862,500,000 stands part of the vote. We have reached page 4. So, we start from vote .107 – Fisheries.

The Clerk: .107 – Fisheries, item .001 - Rodrigues Regional Assembly, Compensation in respect of Government-owned vehicles.

Customs and Excise – Overtime and Supervision Fees, Fees for processing bill of entry.

Public Infrastructure – Building ordinance fees, Miscellaneous .

Road Transport – Examination fees: Driver and Motor Vehicles, .002-Registration and transfer of vehicles.

Mr. Chairperson: So, let us proceed page by page. So, I will mention the page; if there are any questions or comments, then the members may rise. Page 5, yes, page 5, anything?

.112 – Housing, anything? .113 – Labour, vote .114 – Employment, vote .115 – Fire Services, vote 116 – Social Security, vote .117 – Prisons, vote .119 – Miscellaneous. Yes?

Mr. Grandcourt: Vote .119 (.003) – Sale of stores. Can we have more information about this?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, before we attend to that, anything about fines Recurrent Revenue?

Mr. Agathe: Recurrent Revenue, Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes. Let us deal with Recurrent Revenue. Yes, question.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, what does refund stand for?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, sale of stores, yes, condemned stores sold by the.....

Mr. Chairperson: The previous item refund of revenue.

The Chief Commissioner: Refund of revenue – revenue collected in excess has to be refunded.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, in relation to what? In relation to what? It is refunded in relation to what?

The Chief Commissioner: Revenue collected in excess has to be refunded.

The Minority Leader: Can we know – the item has not been voted – under Miscellaneous for fines, there is already an item for fines under item 25 – Receipts from public services on page 3. We have already fines. Now we have another item for fines under Miscellaneous. Yes, but what are these fines? Fines for what?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, I think that under the item Miscellaneous, the fines are these amounts they have “*payées à la cour.*” This one, so, there must be any fine, according to the RRA, any fine paid for – I don’t know – late payments, recondition, things like that, yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, sale of stores. We still have a question, yes.
The Question is?

Mr. Agathe: Refund of revenue.

The Chief Commissioner: Revenue collected in excess has to be refunded.

Mr. Chairperson: The question is, which item?

The Chief Commissioner: Revenue collected in excess has to be refunded. Revenue – refunded. “*Banne dimoune ki besoin rembourser, ine donne zotte en plus, zotte besoin rembourser, ine donne li en plus li besoin render. Par exemple so la paye. » Nou ine paye li en plus li besoin render*»

Any revenue, excess payment on rent

Mr. Agathe: In excess of rent, does it not fall under Interest?

The Chief Commissioner: Let's say we rent a building and it ends by the end of may and we have paid for the month of – let's say – ten days next month. So, it has to be refunded.

Mr. Chairperson: Item .003 – Sale of stores.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, condemned stores sold by the; “ *I vieux lili, I vieux matelas*”.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we have more clarification on this item 0.999 – Miscellaneous, because the sum is 1.6 million rupees.

The Chief Commissioner: Rs 1,600,000, so, it will be a lot of items – I don't know – I suppose it is a long list of different items, I think. Well, I don't know exactly but you have some items, revenue...

Mr. Chairperson: Vote .120 – Tourism.

The Chief Commissioner: Sale of items not listed under any other item.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, well, it is very – as they can see – it is time consuming to look for. We have a lot of items – I don't know whether the officers will remember what kinds of item. Well, I will ask the officers to prepare a statement for me for the next sitting so that I can make a statement on those different items.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Can we move on? Vote .120 – Tourism. .001, .002, .999, vote .121 – Environment, .001.

The Clerk: Vote 26.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, I see that it's new for our colleagues here this Environment .001 – Environment Protection Fee, I think there is some information I should like to give to our colleagues here. It is a fee of 0.75% on the monthly revenue of hotels, restaurants and other tourism sectors. This is the Environment Protection Fee which was formerly collected by the Ministry of Environment in Mauritius and now it has come into our budget.

The Clerk: Vote 26 – Rental of Government Property, .001.

The Minority Leader: State Land Tourism – Rs 500,000.

The Clerk: .004.

Mr. Chairperson: .004, anything before? No?

Yes, proceed.

The Minority Leader: When we know that the lease for a hotel is about Rs 200,000/Rs 350,000 yearly. Is this figure of Rs 500,000 objective?

The Chief Commissioner: We discussed that outside the House. We said that sometimes we have delays in paying and also, there can be, during the coming months, payment for leases for tourism. Are you saying that whether – this is what we are just forecasting. Are we going to forecast whether we shall have Rs 1m or Rs 2m. I think these are those which have been paid till now and I think this will increase in the coming months.

Mr. Chairperson: .005.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Still on .004?

The Minority Leader: No, in general on Rental of Government Property.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

The Minority Leader: Seen from a humanistic point of view – you are speaking about empowering people – is it o.k. to put for example State Land Residential under Rental of Government Property, stressing on this Rental of Government Property as if these residential leases; putting emphasis that it is – it is legally Government Property – but putting that item under State Land Residential – Rental of Government Property just like rental of

Buildings is a bit like assimilating these residential land to Government – we know it is for Government. But I think that something has to be done so that it does not sound that it is nearly rental as it is to be taken in the literal sense. It should be under – may be an item “State Lands”, etc.

The chief Commissioner: These are suggestions, o.k.

Mr. Chairperson: .005, .006, .007. Yes, Clerk.

The Clerk: Vote 27 – Interest, Royalties, etc, starting with .101.

Mr. Agathe: Interest, yes. We do pay interest on government vehicles, we have interest on state land leases also. Where does it fall? How come that only Rs 10 are going to be received this year?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, we have not yet contracted any loan from any bank, from any financial institution. *On n'a pas fait d'emprunt jusqu'à maintenant quoique nous avons la possibilité de le faire avec l'accord du Gouvernement. Mais pour l'instant, il n'y a aucun emprunt qui a été fait au nom du RRA.*

Mr. Agathe: Let me clarify, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is not that the Regional Assembly which has borrowed money from other sources, but we, as members here, we do pay interest on motorcycles, vans, and, also we receive interest also on arrears of state land rents.

Mr. Chairperson: You have understood the question?

The Chief Commissioner: There are saying that whenever we have interest on arrears concerning that...

Let's suppose that someone does not pay his state land lease on tourism, there is interest, I think, on that. As regards car loan, that's SICOM, you don't pay

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may be I should enlighten the Commissioner; it is not just members of Rodrigues Regional Assembly who take loans. There are also people from the Government Service like Forest Rangers, etc, and there is interest on the loan. So, where does this interest go?

The Chief Commissioner: The interest on loans to purchase cars or motorcycles is refunded to the Treasury in Mauritius. Well, I think we need much more information on this. Well, I will come with a statement, please note, at the next sitting.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 862,500,000 less the amount already approved stands part of that vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Can we, now, turn to the item "Expenditure".

The Clerk: Recurrent Expenditure, page 10, vote 1 – Regional Assembly, A-Personal Emoluments, B-Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait, please wait. Yes, let us have page 10 first.

That the amount of Rs 6,487,000 stands part of the vote. Yes?

The Minority Leader: Can we know, at this point, whether there has been, in the estimates 2005/2006, any reallocation under this item?

Mr. Chairperson: Which item you mean?

The Minority Leader: Overall, every item which is on page 10, whether any reallocation has been made, and, if yes, from which item to where?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, the vote is this Assembly.

The Minority Leader: Yes, of course.

In general, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, you are going to examine the budget. I would like to ask, we want to know from the recurrent budget, items in the recurrent budget – because we can ask the question for every item – I prefer to ask it once and for all. What item, if any, in general, can we have a general overview whether items in the recurrent budget have been reallocated. If yes, whether any of these items have been transferred to the capital account?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I understand your question very well. It is really a question of policy. But can you realise

The Minority Leader: Yes, it is a question of policy; I do not want to go in one and every detail. I just want an answer whether this has been done.

Mr. Chairperson: It is not only with regard to the item of the Regional Assembly. It is more or less general. Yes, now I understand, yes.

So, before we really get to the different items... Yes? Not specifically to our vote of Regional Assembly but in general, in general.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are now examining provisions for next financial year. No reallocation has as yet been made. Well, if the Minority Leader would come next sitting, with a substantial question, perhaps in this financial year as to whether there has been reallocation in this financial year, that means 2005/2006. But we are now examining the budget 2006/2007. Thus, there has not yet been reallocation in this budget. So, he can come with a substantive question whether there has been any reallocation in the budget 2005/2006.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, let us move to the first vote. Question; that the amount of Rs 6 million

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, part 7 – Reporters.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, we have an amount of Rs 380,000 that has been placed for two Reporters. We are now three years; till now we do not have any Reporter. I would like to know where matters stand regarding that.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the proposed scheme of service has been submitted to the Minister of Civil Service Affairs and to the PSC on the 21st November, 2005. Meanwhile, a case has been made to the PSC on the 20th September 2005 for the recruitment of two Reporters on a contract-gratuity basis.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anything?

Question; that the amount of Rs 6 million... Yes?

Mr. Agathe: 15. How many do we have? Do we have two handy workers.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, we have two handy workers.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anything? Anything else? Yes, that the amount of Rs 6,487,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Other charges recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 2,227,000 stands part of the vote. Yes, no question? Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Vote 2 – Central Administration, A-Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Agathe: 28 Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait, please wait! Yes, yes, 13, 14. That the amount of Rs 38,432,000 stands part of the vote. Let us proceed page by page. Page 13.

Mr. Agathe: Page 13, yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Agathe: 28.

Mr. Chairperson: Item 38?

Mr. Agathe: 28.

Mr. Chairperson: 28? Before that, anything?

Mr. Agathe: General Worker.

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait. Before that, anything? Yes, put your question.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, I understand that interviews were carried out recently regarding that type of worker. I would ask whether these workers are going to be recruited in this financial year or whether this is not being taken into consideration.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir the exercise has been put into abeyance because of financial constraints. Well, excuse me, excuse me.

As you know, we have referred to it in my speech, we did not meet the representatives of the ministry of finance and we have been advised not to go ahead with any recruitment or any additional posts. This is an advice given to all ministries in Mauritius.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, can we move on to page 14? Yes, page 14.

Yes, vote?

The Minority Leader: Can we have this affair of Financial Cadre? We see there is Chief Finance Officer, Principal Finance Officer, etc. Can we know where matters stand regarding staffing of these sections?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, the Chief Finance Officer is here, Principal Financer Officer, 3 Senior Finance Officers, 12 Finance Officers who are posted in the different Commissions and also Assistant Finance Officers who are also in the different Commissions. Well, the discussion on the token vote here, it is paid from Mauritius, yes, they are paid from the Ministry of Finance in Mauritius. But the Disturbance Allowance is being paid here.

The Minority Leader: How about these Assistant Finance Officers, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, have they been confirmed or are they just under training now to be confirmed later on?

The Chief Commissioner: Well there has been training and they have been interviewed by the Public Service Commission and now they are posted – I don't know whether they have been confirmed – yes, they have been confirmed.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes? Yes, nothing else on page 14?

The Minority Leader: Can we know under the item Economic Development – being given the proposals which have been made for the SIDPR, staffing of the SIDPR, creation of an economic and monitoring planning unit – why does it remain the same? There is Adviser, we don't know what is this Adviser for, this is a *reliquat* of the ancient presidency of somebody from the Ministry of Economic Development. There is an Economist, but the dotation is Rs 138,000. The basic salary for an Economist entering Government is Rs 14,200. If you multiply by 12, it does not make Rs

138,000. There have been vacancies in the press, if you really intend to recruit an Economist by next year it must be for twelve months. So, can we have more details about-

- (i) why this unit has not been reinforced in view of the SIDPR; and
- (ii) the vote for the item Economist?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, it seems that the post has been advertised and sometimes we don't put the full twelve-month salary as it depends during what period of the year the person would be employed, that's why we don't put the full salary. But there can always be – if the salary is more than Rs 138,000 - there can be reallocation in the context of emoluments.

The Minority Leader: Yes, we have – under economic development, Mr Chairperson, Sir – if I read this section literally, as it is presented, we have an Adviser-token vote of 10, an Economist that they propose to recruit and for which they will not pay the full yearly salary, a Senior Statistical Assistant and two Statistical Assistants. You see what is the amount of the salaries. As far as I know, nobody there, from Mauritius, there is no Economist, no Adviser, no Senior Statistical Assistant or Statistical Assistant from Mauritius. But there is a Disturbance Allowance of Rs 1,500,000, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Secondly, same thing for Gratuity, same thing for End-of-year Bonus, Rs 2,300,000 for three employees. I don't know whether the Clerk would

arrange for us also to have such an end-of-year bonus. We should not play the lottery at the end of the year.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I myself I put the question to the Chief Finance Officer. Well, I also disagreed to that and I said “wow, what a grand sum of money for four persons!” Well, it is for the whole of the Central Administration. Well. I think this has to be corrected, I don’t know – the Disturbance Allowance in respect of the whole Central Administration also is for the end-of-year bonus to

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we remove this and put it where it is appropriate?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, I have been told that there is no amendment as it is under the same vote, it is under the same vote.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 38,432,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

The Clerk: Other charger Recurrent – Rs 18,530,000.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount of 18,530,000 stands part of the vote.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, .011, can we know how many Committees there are?

The Chief Commissioner: We have a State Land Committee, Environment Committee, a Fisheries Committee, a Tourism Committee, four Committees in all, yes. It's only a money given for travelling from one place to another.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know what amounts are being paid to the chairman and the members?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, it's according to the PRB Report. So, I don't know, we are going to find out. It's not as those Committees Rs 12,000 a month, these are Boards. For the standing Committees, the chairmen sometimes get Rs 500 and the members Rs 200/250, I think. It is as per sitting.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, down the page anything?

Mr. Agathe: Yes, Rodrigues Trade Union Trust Fund. Mr Chairperson, Sir we know that the Trade Union is

Mr. Chairperson: Which vote it is?

Mr. Agathe: Yes, .354.

Mr. Chairperson: .354 yes, a little bit before that, no?

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, before that we have Security Services, can we have more information about this Security Services and

Mr. Chairperson: Which vote, please?

Mr. Grandcourt: .113 – Security Services. Can we have more information about this?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, now we have Private Security Services instead of having watchmen. We have the Security Services at the hospitals, at the Central Administration, at the Human Resource Centre, what else? You know it very well that there will be a watch over there.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, .354, before .354?

Mr. Jabeemissar: Yes, .326 – Subsidy to shipping services from and to Rodrigues. I would like to have information about how this subsidy is being carried out, to how many ships and at what frequency and so on – and on what services.

The Chief Commissioner: The provision of Rs 1.5m is for freight charges on agriculture and artisanal products, animal feed, raw materials and equipment on the basis of the following formulae – 50% freight rebate on the

importation of raw materials and equipment for registered enterprises and SMIDO, 50% of the animal feed exported from Mauritius, 100% freight on agricultural and artisanal products.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, .354?

Mr. Agathe: Yes, as we know that the Trade Union Trust Fund is a corporate body and the Trade Union Trust Fund Act 1997 has to be amended first so that we can include Rodrigues in that; so, how come that we have already placed Rs 100,000 for that?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, I'll say no, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have Trade Unions here which are autonomous Trade Unions. Well, that's why when we are preparing the Pre-primary School Trust Fund, the Health Community Trust Fund, so we are preparing a law for this Trust Fund for Trade Unions. It will come, that's why we have put a sum on it.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, question; that the amount of 18,530,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Next.

The Clerk: Vote 2, item 02-102. – Environment Division, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 8, 006,000 stand part of the vote.

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner concerned whether we have two – items - 1,2,3 – Environment Officer, Technical Officer, Enforcement Officer – I don't know if we have two Environment Officers, one Technical Officer, three Enforcement Officers, whether he has the number shown here within the Environment Division.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, we have already advertised and the exercise has been carried out and the PSC has selected two Environment Officers. Now, the two posts will be filled. There will be one Technical Officer – no, the Technical Officer is already in post – that's why he has been given assignment and now the Enforcement Officer we have only one; we have asked for candidates to fill the two posts, to become three.

Mr. Grandcourt: But the Rs 320,000; is this figure significant here, since we have three Environment Officers?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, if you have a look at the salary and you multiply it by 3, you will have the sum

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 8,006,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Other charges Recurrent – that the amount of Rs 9,948,000 stands part of the vote.

Down the page, nothing?

Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote – Education, 02.103 – Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 41,533,000 stand part of the vote. Anything?

Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote – Other Charges Recurrent, Education.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 42,541,000 stands part of the vote.

Anything? Yes?

Mr. Agathe: Can we know for each pre-primary school teacher – 436.

Mr. Chairperson: Which vote?

Mr. Agathe: 436.

Mr. Chairperson: 436, the last item, yes?

Mr. Agathe: What amount will be paid to one teacher?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there have been discussions through the *Asociation des Ecoles Maternelles* and we are preparing a paper for the Ministry of Rodrigues, the Prime Minister to be presented at the Cabinet in order to accept the sum, the additional sum which we are going to pay. So, we must have, first, the agreement of the Cabinet because it is a policy decision to pay Rs 200 per child of the pre-primary school. That's why we need to present a memorandum through the Prime Minister's office so that the Cabinet could agree that we pay a much more um of money for each child, we have already thought that it could be a salary of Rs 5,000 to Rs 5,500.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount of Rs 42,541,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: 104 – Human Resource Centre, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 1,893,000 stand part of the vote.

Yes, nothing?

The Clerk: Other Charges Recurrent

Mr. Chairperson: Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Other Charges Recurrent – that the amount of 4,620,000 stands part of the vote. Yes?

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have, through this Human Resource Centre, 14 employees of which 8 are manual workers. Then we have yearly telephone bills amounting to Rs 220,000 for administrative staff of 6. Six, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, divided by 6, about 25/30, more than Rs 30,000 per administrative staff per year, meaning divide by 12, more than Rs 2,500 per month. This is Economic Analysis, practical economics, which means about Rs 3,000 per employee, Rs 3,000 not for the department, yes, for the Human Resource Centre, not for the department of Human Resource Centre, per employee, Rs 3,000 telephone bills. Is that logical?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think the remark is quite interesting. The Human Resource Centre is a unit which communicates with students in Mauritius, different partners in Mauritius, and also abroad with student scholars abroad, and also the internet facilities to the population; that means students who come to the library, the least line of high speed available for the students and that's why the sum is very high here. I think we must understand that; that the Human Resource Centre, through the Head, is in very close communication with our students in Mauritius and abroad and this question of also internet disposal to the students at the library.

The Minority Leader: Even that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have technical information that the ISDN, which gives, I don't know how many

lines which give permanent access for number of computers, high speed access to the internet, it is about Rs 15,000 per month for this ISDN. For 12 months it will be Rs 180,000. Unlimited communication on the internet locally and in Mauritius.

So, how come that it is – if at least it was – *ils passent leur vie au telephone alors?* They come at 8.30, they take their phone. For this I think they should call the USA one hour per day. For this amount, are they really calling student abroad, etc? Students are abroad, you have to call the students, the students are o.k. We don't agree with this on this side of the House, this is excessive. We look at the number of persons, Mr. Chairperson – 14; there are 6 who are administrative, 220,000? This is out of reach for us.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are fighting on what we call a sum of money. But we know that the Human Resource Centre is the backbone of our communication outside Rodrigues. The system we have, the lines of high speed system, it costs about Rs 17,250 a month. Well, when I look at the work which is being done at the Human Resource Centre – people coming in and out, students coming in and out looking for information and Mrs. Yeung has to phone at the university, has to phone to the polytechnics, has to phone here and there and to phone everybody - coming to Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 4,620,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, 105 – Customs.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 2,040,000 stand part of the vote.

Nothing? Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Customs – Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of 688,000 stand part of the vote.

Nothing? Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, 106 – Transport Section, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 2,900,000 stand part of the vote. Yes?

The Minority Leader: Can we know where matters stand for filling of the post of Transport Superintendent?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, the post has been advertised by the PSC, they have no suitable candidate and that's why the Transport Superintendent here is a token vote.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount of 2,900,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 798,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Same vote, item 107 – Judicial, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 915,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 896,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Item 108 – Civil Aviation, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 5,974,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: 109 – Forestry, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: No, Other Charges Recurrent.

The Clerk: Civil Aviation, Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 1,459,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Forestry – 109, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 17,471,000 stand part of the vote.

Yes?

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know why the post of Officer in charge of Forestry has not been filled and it is not going to be filled in the next financial year?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, the post has been created under the recommendation of the PRB pending prescription of the scheme of service, the Forest Ranger is being paid an *ad-hoc* allowance.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes?

The Clerk: Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait, please wait. Nothing? That the amount of 17,471,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 3,020,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Yes, next.

The Clerk: 110 – Registration Unit (Personal Emoluments).

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 1,044,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

Other Charges Recurrent, same vote. That the amount of 153,500 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: 111 – Fisheries, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 12,934,000 stands part of the vote. Anything? No? Yes?

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, concerning the Acting Allowance, can we have – item 19 – can we know what is that?

The Chief Commissioner: So, an Acting Allowance, whether someone is being assigned higher duties, so, you give him an Acting Allowance. Well, in the case here it is a token vote, so, there....

Mr. Chairperson: No, 145,000.

The Chief Commissioner: Excuse me. Well, sometimes, you know, we need to assign higher duty to someone, so, he is paid an Acting Allowance in the post which is not being filled.

It is proposed to fill the one existing vacancy in order to meet the objective of encouraging fishermen for outer-lagoon fishing, it is enough. Increased provisions for payment of an *ad hoc* allowance to 27 General Workers to the posted to the Fisheries Protection Service. So, we are going ahead with those 27 General Workers who are going to be paid acting allowance and then they are going to be on the Fish Landing Station so that there can be many more fisheries guards in the lagoon to control illegal fishing.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anything? Proceed.

The Minority Leader: Can we know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the controversial issue of fuel, super, where is the item for the Fisheries Division?

Mr. Chairperson: No, it is probably the next item, yes, let us finish with Personal Emoluments. That the amount of 12,934,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no.

Other Charges Recurrent, same vote, that the amount of 47,869,000 stand part of the vote. Anything?

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, page 27, yes.

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, page 27. The minority wanted to know, as far as – yes, your provision – I don't understand what is in this item.

The Chief Commissioner: I think it is in the Central Administration. Will you come with a substantive question? You mean fuel used by the Fisheries guards, the boatmen when there is not an item here, it could be a general item for all Commissions. Maintenance and running of vessels, here you are – Rs 10,000.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, compensation to net fishermen.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes?

Mr. Agathe: Compensation to net fishermen. I know that there are many fishermen that have already relinquished their net and now I see only Rs 10.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, the Rs 10 it's for the Rodrigues Fishermen Welfare Fund. When you have been talking about relinquishment of the fishermen's net...

Mr. Chairperson: You mean which vote, please? 136 yes? 136.

The Chief Commissioner: The compensation for net fishermen who wish to relinquish net fishing. This is being met from funds made available by the Ministry of Fisheries. That's why we are discussing with the Ministry of Fisheries on different items concerning the payment of those who have relinquished their net fishing. It's in the package, concerning also decisions to be taken concerning the bad weather allowance.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anything else? That the amount 47,869,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: .112 – Marine Services, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 3,765,000 stand part of the vote. Yes?

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, item 19 – Disturbance Allowance. Can we know to whom this Disturbance Allowance is paid?

Mr. Chairperson: Page 28, vote 19.

The Chief Commissioner: So, it's a token vote?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, yes it is.

The Chief Commissioner: Disturbance Allowance is a token vote.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount of 3,765,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Other Charges Recurrent, same vote; that the amount of 365,500 stands part of the vote. Anything? Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Next item, please.

The Clerk: 113 – Cadastral Division, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 6,346,000 stands part of the vote. Nothing? Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Other Charges Recurrent, same vote; that the amount of 930,000 stands part of the vote. Nothing? Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Next.

The Clerk: 114 – Meteorological.

Mr. Chairperson: Personal Emoluments – that the amount of 3,108,000 stands part of the vote. Yes?

The Minority Leader: Yes, at this Meteorological Station, this PMT (Principal Meteorological Technician), is he somebody from Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: It's usually someone coming from Mauritius and I think there will be training for the Meteorological Observers and they will be promoted and then the Meteorological Technician there, one of the Senior Meteorological Observer can become the Meteorological Technician. And then, after that, you will see they will have to be promoted and perhaps one day, Principal Meteorological Technician can be a Rodriguan.

The Minority Leader: Yes, the item 1 Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes?

The Minority Leader: For the PMT (Principal Meteorological Technician), we have seen for the financial cadre the salaries, the provision for the salaries are a token vote, because they are paid from Mauritius. This person also is paid from Mauritius. Why do we have this item here?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, would you recite the question, please?

The Minority Leader: Yes, we have seen for the finance cadre that Chief Finance Officer, Principal Finance Officer, all these are token vote because their votes are in their respective Ministries in Mauritius. This Principal Meteorological Technician, he comes from Mauritius. So, his vote is with the Meteorological Services in Mauritius, because he comes here –

unless he comes from somewhere else, I don't know – so, if he comes from the Meteorological Services in Mauritius, why is it that we have Rs 278,000 instead of a token vote?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, probably you should ask the first question, put it simpler, whether the PMT is paid...

The Minority Leader: Yes, whether this person is paid on the Rodrigues Establishment. It can't, because the person comes from Mauritius.

The Chief Commissioner: I will say something I tried to understand – the funds are refunded by the Meteo Service in Mauritius. He is paid by Mauritius.

Ah! Maintenant on comprend, maintenant on comprend. « *Zot dire nous met so salaire lors la ler la li dire nou ben retourne li la bas* ». This means that he is being paid by Mauritius, here you are. Well, I must say that we need much more clarification on that. We pay him and we are being refunded by Mauritius.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, what I can understand is that he receives his salary from Mauritius and then the Regional Assembly refunds Mauritius. Yes, you may confirm this, yes?

The Chief Commissioner: Why don't they pay directly from Mauritius?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, because there have been new amendments to the RRA Act, yes.

The Chief Commissioner: There has been a sort of agreement.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, we have likes which are being treated as unlikes now. For the finance cadre, the parent ministry in Mauritius is paying. I will insist, because we have here, somebody from Mauritius and then they invent another story for us. The Chief Commissioner has just invented a story to explain to us, *il a inventé une histoire sur le tas*.

Mr. Chairperson: No improper motives, please.

The Minority Leader: Is it like this; when was this agreement made? Yes, for the posts of Meteorological Technician, when do you expect these to be filled?

The Chief Commissioner: I don't have the information, we shall get the information when the post will be advertised or someone will be promoted, I don't think so.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 3,108,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Other Charges Recurrent, same vote, that the amount of 1,032,000 stand part of the

vote. Anything? Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Next.

The Clerk: 115 – Tourism, Personal Emoluments.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 508,000 stand part of the vote. Yes?

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Tourism Planner, the Tourism Enforcement Officer, i.e 1, 2 and 3; do these posts exist here, in Rodrigues? Are they filled? Est-ce qu'on a des officiers qui ont...

The Chief Commissioner : Comme j'ai dit tout à l'heure dans mon intervention, ce sont des postes which have been advertised. The Recruitment has not been made. I think the interview will soon be made and the PSC will come with names. For the Tourism Planner, the post has not yet been advertised. But the Tourism Enforcement Officer – 2, the post has been advertised, Leisure Officer, the post has been advertised.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anything else? That the amount of 508,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Other Charges Recurrent, same vote, that the amount of 121,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Next.

The Clerk: 116 – Industrial Development. Personal Emoluments, Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 92,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. Other Charges Recurrent, same vote; that the amount of 10,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Deputy Chief Commissioner's office, vote 3, page 33.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

The Clerk: Personal Emoluments, total and Other Charges Recurrent...

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait, please wait. Let me put the question first. Yes, question for all the votes; that the amount of 199,095,000 stands part of the vote. So, we'll proceed page by page. Page 34, item 50. Yes, anything before? No? Yes, proceed.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, we see that we have 30 Watchmen, 2005/2006 – 30; 2006/2007 – 30. The estimates for 2005/2006 was 2,583,100 and for 2006/2007 – 2,558,400. How come that there has been a decrease?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner, yes?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the decrease in the emoluments is explained by the fact that some old Watchmen have retired and are being replaced by younger ones, drawing a lesser salary.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anything else on page 34? We move on to page 36, nothing? Page 36, page 36, nothing, page 36?

Mrs. Meunier: Yes, on page 36, we have item 51 – Rigger, I would like to know Mr. Chairperson, Sir, why this post has been abolished?

Mr. Chairperson: Which page, 36?

Mrs. Meunier: 35, 35.

Mr. Chairperson: We've finished with that, yes, it's alright. Yes, o.k.

Mrs. Meunier: Why the post has been abolished?

Mr. Chairperson: Page 35.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Here we no longer require the service of a Rigger. The service of a Rigger is no longer required.

Mrs. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I understand that there are different types of Riggers. So, where was the Rigger posted so that the post is now abolished.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, you insist on the answer? Yes, we move to page 36. Yes, Mr. Second member for La Ferme, please. 37, no? Page 38, nothing? Page 39? Page 40, yes?

Mr. Agathe: 59.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes?

Mr. Agathe: Electricity charges – 5,200,000. Can we have more details on it?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the sum of Rs 5,200,000 caters for the production of water for domestic consumption from electric supplies for the operation of boreholes, surface water pumps, chlorination plants, replacements filters and lighting.

Mr. Agathe: Can we know how many water pumps we have in Rodrigues that use electricity?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been an increase, because there has been an increase in electricity charges and also new pumps have been installed at Anse Raffin Dam Treatment Plant. About 17.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, we move to page 41. Page 41, nothing? 42, 43?

The Clerk: Vote 4.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of Rs 199,095,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Vote 4 – Commission for Arts & Culture, etc, Personal Emoluments, Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 18,651,000 stand part of the vote. Page 45, 46, 47? Page 46, page 47? O.k. page 48? O.k. page 49? Question; that the amount 18, 651,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Vote 5 – Commission for Vocational Training, Personal Emoluments, Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 4,789,500 stands part of the vote. Page 51? 52?

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 4,789,500 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Vote 6 – Commission for Health, Co-operatives and Fire Services (Personal Emoluments), Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 146,290,500 stands part of the vote. Page 53? 54? 55? 56? 57? 58? 59? That the amount of 146,290,500

stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Vote 7-1 – Commission for Youth & Sports, etc (Personal Emoluments), Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 24,240,500 stand part of the vote. Page 61? Yes? 61, nothing? 62?

The Minority Leader: Can we know.

The Clerk: Which page.

Mr. Chairperson: 62.

The Minority Leader: Yes, the Security Services, can we have a breakdown of this item?

Mr. Chairperson: Which vote, please?

The Minority Leader: .113.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes?

The Minority Leader: Security Services – the breakdown for this.

Commissioner Lisette: Security Services at the stadium of Camp du Roi and also we have Security Services at the Swimming Pool. It is through a contract that was awarded through tender procedures.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we see that the Commissioner still has 8 Watchmen. Can we know why they have recruited the services of the security.

Commissioner Lisette: I think that the 8 Watchman, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they are posted at the Youth Centres, Youth Centres, we have 4 – Petit Gabriel, La Ferme, Grande Montagne and a “*centre d’accueil*”. So, they are normally on a shift system.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, do we have any Watchman at the Swimming Pool e.g. Does it mean that we don’t have any Watchman at the Swimming Pool?

Commissioner Lisette: No, no, Security Services are on a 24-hour basis.

Mr. Agathe: Page 62? 154 – (Promotion of sports activities). Did the Commissioner have a request from the different sports discipline in order to have the detailed expenses?

Commissioner Lisette: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, normally, before we proceed with allocation of the different funds under each item to the different Regional Committees, we do ask the different Regional Committees to submit their calendar of activities. So, as per the provisions that have been made here, Rs 4.1m, we are going to have meetings with the Regional Committees and, accordingly, we are going to allocate the funds as priorities, number of athletes and the activities that they are going to perform throughout the year.

Mr. Agathe: 178 – can we have more information about this?

Commissioner Lisette: For the major international events, the fund is meant for the participation of our athletes.

Mr. Agathe: Has a lot of participation from Mayotte been observed? Are we going to have both masculine and feminine teams?

Commissioner Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is going to be dealt with as per our financial resources. We are going to discuss the matter with the Handball Committee and, accordingly, I don't think, as regards to busses, that we are going to be able to accommodate four teams. So, it is up to the Regional Committees to decide whether to send a feminine or a masculine team. They are going to decide.

Mr. Agathe: Has he made provision for both masculine and feminine teams?

Commissioner Lisette: The provision made here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is for the two events. So, I think it is going to be distributed between the two competitions that we feel like doing. So, the Regional Committees will have to cut its the cloth as per the financial resources.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, page 63, 63? 64, page 64? Yes, that the amount of 24,240,500 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Vote 8-1 – Commission for Social Security, Labour, etc, Personal Emoluments, Other Charges Recurrent.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 180,777,500 stands part of the vote. Page 65, 66, nothing on 66? 67, 68. That the amount of 180,777,500 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. This will do with the Draft Recurrent Budget. Can we now move forward with the Draft Capital Budget?

The Clerk: Draft Capital Budget, Capital Revenue, page 1.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount Rs 300,000,090 stands part of the vote. Yes, anything? 51 – Grants.

The Clerk: Page 1 – Capital Revenue, votes 51 to 54. First one is Grants, Loans – 52, 53 – Return from investments and 54 is Miscellaneous.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, question; that the amount of Rs 300,000,090 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Page 2, vote 31 – Project Expenditure, 101 – Services under the control of the Chief Commissioner.

Mr. Chairperson: Question; that the amount of 71,600,060 stand part of the vote. Yes, we move on to page 3, to page 4. Page 4.

The Clerk: 101 – Central Administration.

Mr. Chairperson: Nothing?

The Clerk: Education Unit.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Central Administration.

Mr. Grandcourt: 003 – Contribution to Rodrigues Venture Capital and Leasing Fund, I see this year this is a token vote. Can the Commissioner explain this, why is there a token vote here this year?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, during discussions on the budget we did ask the Minister of Finance so that this Venture Capital Fund could be managed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. So, it seems that he did not accept but we had to send representatives on the Board of the Rodrigues Venture Capital Fund. That's why we have not put any sum here.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, we move to the Education Division. Yes.

Mr. Agathe: Agricultural and Rural Development Project – is it the same as it had been or is it different? I see only Rs 10.

The Chief Commissioner: Only a token vote appears under this item. The total amount of 21,000,000 voted for financial 2005/2006 would be spent before 30th June as the IFAD Project is coming to an end.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, can we now move on to the vote/items under the Education Division? Yes, anything?

The Clerk: Tourism.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, nothing? Yes, page 5.

Mr. Agathe: Tourism.

Mr. Chairperson: Tourism, yes?

Mr. Agathe: Can we know what activities are proposed for the promotion of tourism?

The Chief Commissioner: First of all, nous avons le salon au niveau international, il y aura la chasse aux trésors qui va avoir lieu en novembre, en décembre cette année-ci. Il y aura aussi le website que nous allons mettre sur

piéd. Alors qu'est-ce qu'il y a d'autre, il y a les guides, les vidéos, les DVDs qu'on va faire, les guides, les posters qui vont faire connaître Rodrigues à Maurice et dans le monde entier.

Mr. Chairperson : Yes, can we move on to page 6 ? Page 5, yes. Marine Services.

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, for the items 016 and 019 – I have the same question – it seems that no money has been spent for this financial year 2005/2006 and we still have the same amount here for this year, the same amount of money has been earmarked for this year.

The Chief Commissioner: Port Development within Marine Services, yes, yes. Well, we are going ahead with the maintenance of sea-reef passes, as we said, we are waiting for approval of the EIA and we are going ahead. Port Development, as I said in my speech, is for minor works; Marine Protected Area is co-funded with the UNDP, Lagoon Regeneration Project (dredging works) – 019 – provision is required for dredging works and construction of a marina at Port Sud Est. The EIA licence is being processed by the Ministry of Environment and NDU. So, we are going to start this marina at Port Sud Est.

Mr. Grandcourt: You have been talking about marina. Does the Rs 2 million earmarked here accounts for both dredging works and the marina?

The Chief Commissioner: Dredging works and the construction of the marina itself. Well, we are going to see. I think we can reallocate but we have also the possibility of looking for funds – what we call the Environment

Investment Fund – with the Ministry of Environment. They have a special budget for certain projects there. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes?

Mr. Jabeemissar: Environment Unit – 021 – Control of soil erosion. The previous budget has an estimate of 1m and it has been revised to zero. Now, I would like to know whether this project is of no more interest because we have a token vote for the next financial year.

The Chief Commissioner: It seems that it's a project which was under the EDF project which has come to an end. We say that we are going to continue the soil erosion whereas in the marine park, there will be a part on land where we are going to plant trees or any other species to protect the land inside. Well, it's good that we explain to you the marine park, it's not only in the sea, in the lagoon, it's also in land, we have to protect the lagoon from land erosion. That's why also we are going ahead with that.

Mr. Chairperson: Page 6.

The Clerk: Cadastral Unit, 31-101 – Cadastral Unit, Cadastral Survey, Acquisition of property. Forestry.

Mr. Grandcourt: Forestry – Community Forestry, can we have more information about this Community Forestry? How it will be done?

The Chief Commissioner: Usually it's being done with the community, with the villages, e.g., at Dan Coco or in other villages, when we are required to pursue the reforestation programme in Rodrigues, which is an ongoing project to restore the tourist ecosystem.

A plantation programme in the regions of Dan Coco, at Mt. Cabris, Grand Var is being started following the recent rains. The programme will continue in the south east valleys such as Ile Michel, Rivière Cocos, Anse Raffin during financial year 2006/2007.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, question; that the amount of 71,600,060 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Next item, please.

The Clerk: Page 2, 102 – Services under the control of the Deputy Chief Commissioner.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 148,800,010 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say “aye” those against say “no”. Page 6.

The Clerk: Page 6, Building Division.

The Minority Leader: The Chief Commissioner has been explaining fully that he will go ahead with the Irrigation Unit etc, but how can he explain the decrease in his provision from 3.8m to 3m?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, proceed!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the year 2005/2006, pipes and fittings and other components for the setting up of the Irrigation Unit have been ordered and the 3 million will be used for the provision of the Irrigation Network in the different places mentioned in the budget speech this morning.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, yes page 6?

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we see for 2005/2006 the revised estimate was Rs 3,800,000. Up to now, he has not spent any rupee. How will the Commissioner spend the Rs 3 million in the next coming days?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the 3.8m will be used in the purchase of pipes. Irrigation is on an ongoing process and these pipes will be used to set up the irrigation network in the region.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, now page 7.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Public Infrastructure – for construction of bridges, the estimate for 2006/2007 is only 3.3m. I want to know how many bridges will be constructed for that sum and what about the Winston Churchill Bridge, is it included in that?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the 3.3m will be used for the construction of the Gravieres/Anse Fémie Bridge, for the upgrading of raders on coastal zones and for the rehabilitation of the Anse aux Anglais.

Mr. Jabeemissar: Yes, part of my question has not been answered. I asked also for the construction of Winston Churchill.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have raised this question – we have all the plans at the level of my Commission and we are trying to see where there are savings so that we can go ahead with the construction of the bridge. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the firm Allied Builders had promised the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to build the bridge free of charge. But we are waiting, we have proposed them to give us a schedule of work but they do not appear and we have decided to go ahead ...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, what is your question? What is your question? Order, order, please! Yes?

Mr. Agathe: Yes, 009, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have Rs 1,500,000 for last year. We all know that problems that people living in residential morcellement are getting – at Baie Malgache, Roche Bon Dieu, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Pointe La Gueule – and now, only Rs 1m is earmarked. In which place are you going to invest the 1m?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have made a priority list for the construction of accessible roads in morcellements. The first one is in Roche Bon Dieu and the second one will be at Songes.

Mr. Agathe: Have you made a cost-estimate to see how much the road at Roche Bon Dieu would cost?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have just launched the contract and the track road within the morcellement of Roche Bon Dieu is within Rs 1m.

Mr. Agathe: Are you going to build a track road or a road in the morcellement?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, track roads.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anything – Water Resources Division. Nothing on water? Housing Division, nothing? Housing, nothing? That the amount of 125,800,010 form part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: 103 – Services under the Control of the Commissioner for Arts and Culture.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 20,000,010 form part of the vote. Page 8, yes.

The Clerk: Arts and Culture.

Mr. Agathe: 001 – Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we saw that Rs 39,000,000 was used. How come that now it has decreased to Rs 9,200,000?

Commissioner Perrine-Bégué: Yes, we are expecting that the building will be completed by May. By May we must have completed the whole building, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for which we had an estimate in 2005/2006 of Rs 25,000 but the revised Capital Budget after discussion and reallocation, we have already catered for Rs 48m for this building.

So, we shall completely finished with the building by May. But payment, retention money and everything, we will need an additional sum of Rs 9,200,000 that we will pay by June, i.e. by end of June, *Rs 39,000,000 on aura payé et il restera un balance de Rs 9.2m.*

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, that the amount of Rs 20,000,010 forms part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: 104 – Services under the control of the Commissioner for Vocational Training.

Mr. Grandcourt: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we have an explanation about this token vote given to the poor Commissioner who insisted yesterday that he is the Commissioner for Vocational Training and so on. Can we know how is he going to help his Commissioner with this token vote?

Commissioner Roussety: Yes, capital budget and you will go to the saying that Vocational Training is going to be worked out in conjunction with the Commission for Education. So, we are going to work together and the Human Resource Centre. The money is there, when I need the money, I know exactly where to get it. And I say we talked about a project at L'Union which is phased out in this item, will be completed before June 2006. So, the token amount is for the possibility of phase 2 of the project.

I may appear to be a poor Commissioner, but I can tell you that there is plenty for me with the other Commissions.

Mrs. Meunier: I don't quite understand this because as the Commissioner said "nous devons" empower our people and now we have a Commissioner with a token vote of 10 and he is going to ask for money from the Chief Commissioner's Commission and we have an important sector; important like Vocational Training – they are talking about people being able to stand on their feet, o.k? Employment, Information Technology. Can the Commissioner explain how is he going to manage by picking here and there from the Chief Commissioner's Funds?

Commissioner Roussety: It is really a budget exercise, it's a question of figures, you see? So, it's a budget exercise and initially the Commission had been allocated and they had to shift it somewhere else and it is going to be that shift in ward so as to be able to finely manage with education and with

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of Rs 10 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Next item.

The Clerk: 105 – Services under the control of the Commissioner for Health, Co-operatives and Fire Services.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 25,100,000 stand part of the vote. Page 9. Nothing? Yes; that the amount of 25,100,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it.

The Clerk: Vote 106 – Services under the control of the Commissioner for Youth & Sports.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 26,500,000 stands part of the vote. Page 9. Yes, proceed.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, 003 – Construction of Swimming Pool at Marechal, 2.5 m.

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait. You brought an earlier comment, yes.

Mr. Agathe: Yes, Youth Centres - 001. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we all know that the Youth Centre at La Ferme is near to collapse. Does the provision of Rs 1 million cater for the Youth Centre?

Commissioner Lisette: I'll tell you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the provision of Rs 1m is not meant for any new youth centre. But as regards the question raised by the member, we had a visit here with the Engineer of the Commission for Public Infrastructure. So, they reported that there is no danger as regards the state of the building right now. So, we are going to – of course with the Rs 1m which has been provided – to upgrade the Youth Centres. In fact we are moving ahead with the launching of a tender – it's already in the newspapers – for the payment and the upgrading of all the environment, the yard around the centre itself.

Mr. Agathe: Sport Complexes at Manges. We have a lot of youth who are playing volleyball, handball, basketball, and they are playing in the dark. And here, we have Rs 23m. Does the provision cater also for the installation of lights.

Commissioner Lisette: Already, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Consultant Gibbs is already working for the lighting of not less than 5 volleyball pitches namely Manges, La Ferme, Citron Donis, we have also at Champs and then we have also at Nassola. So, the Consultant is already moving in that direction.

Mr. Agathe: Is the sum for these sport complexes also.

Commissioner Lisette: As far as possible, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if the tender is launched within this current financial year, we do have provisions for some spending within the current financial year. If the needs arise, and the

works overlap in the next financial year, of course we will have to cater for these needs.

Mr. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, 003 – Construction of Swimming Pool at Marechal. Can we have a breakdown of all the works or any maintenance works to be carried out at this site? I don't understand Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we see here 'construction', there is the word 'construction' here. It seems to be almost completed.

Commissioner Lisette: In fact. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Rs 2.5m which is mentioned here, it is meant for retention money as regards the construction of the Swimming Pool. The Rs 2.5m is being used as retention money for the payment of the construction of the Swimming Pool.

Mr. Grandcourt: But Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what about the maintenance, is it mentioned here, about the maintenance of this Swimming Pool?

Commissioner Lisette: As regards the maintenance, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it's there, in the Recurrent Budget.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes.

Commissioner Lisette: In the Recurrent Budget, so the maintenance includes the purchase of chemicals, electricity charges and petty things.

Mr. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if this amount is for retention money, can we know the rate? I know that the retention money is about 10% of the project value and if I make a short calculation here, it will come to Rs 9,000,000.

Commissioner Lisette: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is not necessary that the percentage retention is 10%; it can be 2.5%, it can be 5%. In this case, it is about 2.5%, the retention money. Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, can we move on? Yes, question. Trade, Commerce and Licensing, nothing? Page 9, still. Yes, that the amount of 29,500,000 stand part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. Yes, last item.

The Clerk: 107 – Services under the control of the Commission for Social Security, Labour and Industrial Relations.

Mr. Chairperson: That the amount of 5,000,000 stands part of the vote. Yes, page 10, vote 107 – Social Security.

The Clerk: Social Security – 107, Reforms Institutions.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, question; that the amount of 5,000,000 stands part of the vote. Those in favour say aye, those against say no.

REPORT STAGE

I wish to report to the House that the draft estimates of recurrent revenue and recurrent expenditure and capital revenue and capital expenditure for the financial year 2006/2007 have passed the Draft Estimates Committee with amendments. Yes, anything, no? Question; that this Assembly resolves that for the purposes of section 35(1) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, there is approved the draft estimates of recurrent revenue and recurrent expenditure and capital revenue and capital expenditure for the financial year 2006/2007 with amendments. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. Yes, adjournment?

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that this Assembly be adjourned to Tuesday 9th May 2006 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Mr. Chairperson: That the Assembly be adjourned to Tuesday 9th May 2006 at 10.30 a.m. Those in favour say aye, those against say no. The ayes have it. The House stands adjourned.

On its rising at 18.05, the Assembly stood adjourned to Tuesday 9th May 2006 at 10.30 a.m.