

RODRIGUES

SECOND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 11 of 2007

Sitting of Tuesday 09 October, 2007

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

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

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RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 09 OCTOBER, 2007

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**The Executive Council
(Formed by Mr. Johnson Roussety)**

Mr. Johnson Roussety	Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Finance, Economic Affairs, Central Administration, Civil Aviation (administration), Civil status, Customs and Excise (administration), Fisheries, Industrial Development, Information Technology and Telecommunications, Judicial (administration), Legal Services, Marine Services (administration), Meteorology (administration), Postal Services (administration), Registration, State Lands, Statistics in respects of Rodrigues, Town and Country Planning, Tourism, Trade, Commerce and Licensing, Handicraft, Consumer Protection.
Mr. Gaetan Jabeemissar	Deputy Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Education (administration), Library Services, Museums, Archives, Historical Sites and buildings, Vocational Training
Mrs. Marie Thérèse CLAIR	Commissioner responsible for Social Security, Child Development, Family Welfare, Social Security(administration), Women's Affairs, Poverty Alleviation
Mr. Franceau Aubret Grandcourt	Commissioner responsible for Environment, Housing, Infrastructure including Highways and Roads and Public Buildings and Utilities, Marine Parks, Transport
Mr. Jean Christian Agathe	Commissioner responsible for Labour and Industrial Relations, Youth and Sports, Employment
Mr. Joseph Allan Ladd Emilien	Commissioner responsible for Community Development, Co-operatives, Fire Services, Health (administration), Prisons and Reform Institutions (administration)
Mr. Louis Ange Perrine	Commissioner responsible for Agriculture, Food Production, Forestry, Handicraft, Plant and animal quarantine, Water Resources

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PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Mr. Chairperson - Lamvohee, Mr. Joseph Chenlye

Clerk - Toulouse, Louis Richard

Serjeant –at-Arms - Louis, Mr. Jorgenson

Debate 09 October 2007

QUESTION (Oral)

STATELAND - ANSE AUX ANGLAIS

(No. B/153) Mr. L.S. Clair (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether with regards to state land within the Pas Geometriques, at *Anse Aux Anglais*, between La Residence Hotelieres Les Cocotiers Ltee and Le Recif, whether any part is subject to any letter of reservation, intent or lease, if yes, would he state

- (a) to whom;
- (b) the nature of the letter of lease;
- (c) the extent thereof;
- (d) its terms and conditions;
- (e) its annual rental; and
- (f) whether it is still accessible to the public?

The Chief Commissioner: My answer is as follows:-

- (a) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a letter of intent was issued on 31st July 2007 to Mr. William Auguste.
- (b) The purpose of the letter of lease is for the running of a restaurant, night club, guest house and bungalow.
- (c) An extent of 770m2 situated between Le Recif and Les Cocotiers Ltd has been annexed to the lease of Le Recif.
- (d) Being given that the above extent will be included in the original lease amended held by Mr William Auguste, the terms and conditions will be therefore as per his original lease. I am tabling a copy of the lease conditions, except for special condition (a), that is, the purpose of the lease. **(APPENDIX I).**

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- (e) The annual rental is being assessed by the Chief Government Valuer and has not yet been communicated to the beneficiary.
- (f) In view of the development which will be carried out, the subject site will not be accessible to the public. It is to be observed that the site is not bounded by the high water mark and the area between the site and the high water mark as usual will be accessible to the public.

**RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT OF SKILLING &
RESKILLING OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS**

(No. B/154) Mr. L.S. Clair (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether with regards to recruitment and placement of skilling and reskilling of unemployed persons, he would state:-

- (a) the selection procedures, criteria, terms and conditions attached thereto;
- (b) the number of applications received;
- (c) table a list of all applicants with the names and addresses;
- (d) table a list of all successful applicants with the names and addresses;
- (e) state where they are posted for training; and
- (f) state the amount of stipend to be paid to each trainee and the source of funding?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, due to financial constraint only 245 candidates could be enlisted under the programme although all the candidates who had shown an interest in the programme were found to be equally deserving.

The selection procedure involved the following steps:

- Call for applications from candidates interested in the skilling and reskilling of the Unemployed Programme” through the written press and the radio;
- Receipt and processing of applications at the Chief Commissioner’s Office;

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- Shortlisting and selection of the Candidates by a Selection Board to give a fair chance to the most deserving applicants, the selection was based not only on educational qualifications of applicants but the Board has attempted to give an equal opportunity to candidates living throughout the island, to this end the following factors were also taken into consideration in order to obtain a mix of candidates of different age groups and priority was given to candidates; (i) with relatively poor socio-economic conditions including housing ownership, employment status, sources of income and number of dependants; (ii) Candidates having shown an interest in the acquisition of different skills among others masonry, agro-business, carpentry, environment embellishment, handicrafts.

The total number of applications received on the closing date for submission of applications were 3790.

As regard to part (c) & (d) in considering whether to release the list of those selected as and requested in this question, I have given thought to two things:

- (i) The need for transparency in our governance and the right of the minority to have access to the information;
- (ii) The need to preserve confidentiality and prevent politically controversial use of this list which will not be the interest of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and least of all in the interest of the selected candidates.

Mr. Chairperson, the second matter seems to weigh a lot in the balance and I don't consider it to be advisable to release the list of those selected at this stage.

The selected candidates have all been posted to the Commission for Agriculture in the first instance and will later be posted to other Commissions.

A monthly stipend of Rs. 3,500 is payable to each trainee for the whole duration of the training and travelling expenses we are considering according to our budget to allocate to them refund of traveling expenses. The different payment would be made from the Recurrent Budget of the RRA. Thank You.

Mrs. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, being given that he said that there has been a board of selection for the selection of these trainees, can he say when was this board of selection set up and who composed this board?

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The Chief Commissioner: The board of selection was set up Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as soon as the decision to recruit these persons, the following advertisement which were made, I don't have the exact date. The members of the selection Committee were Mr. FELICITE, Acting Senior Agricultural Officer, Mr. Roméo MEUNIER, Temporary Finance Officer, Mr. Chantal GASPARD, Office Superintendant, Mr. JEETOO, Adviser on economic development. The Committee has done an arduous task by processing this 3790 applications which were also included in a software to get the data on the candidates for the sorting as per the specified criteria.

Mrs. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, prior to the setting up of this board and then after the selection short listing has been made by this board, I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner, whether any communication has been sent as per regulation to the Civil Service and the approval has been received for these persons to start working and at the same time for the board to carry on with the interview.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member is confusing employment in the public service and a placement. This placement/enlistment as trainees is not of offer of employment in the public service and as such we did not have to seek the views or approval of the Ministry of Civil Service before and ruling them as placement. It is clear that they are on placement, *en français Monsieur le Président "en stage" Merci.*

Mrs. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that there were public communiqué that has been broadcast and at the same time publish in newspapers to ask people to apply can the Chief Commissioner say whether any interview has been made for further shorth listing of 200 and something out of the 3000 and something.

The Chief Commissioner: Again Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I repeat that this is a placement. I have explain the Member this is a selection criteria and if she have listen well she would have heard that there was no interview provided for this selection exercise.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it can be a placement but it is a fact that public fund are being use for the training of these people Mr. Chairperson, Sir. There is a lack of transparency given that there is some 3000 application that has been made and there are only 200 youngsters that have been call for the job. Is the Chief Commissioner aware, being given that he has said that one of the factor that he has consider is the question of the situation of the family, is the Chief Commissioner aware that in some cases there are four or five persons from the same family at the placement.

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The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of what he is saying and if this has arise I will ask the board to supply the information if this has arise and why this has arise and they may have their justification of course.

Mrs. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am astonish that no interview has been made. Can the Chief Commissioner can give more precision as to how those persons who have been nominated and they are looking at this composition of the selection board, how these persons finally without any interview came to the conclusion that 224 out of 3020 application were those who were most eligible for these employment between inverted commas.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have explained to the respected Member the selection procedure. This selection procedure has been approved by the Executive Council for her placement and as such it would not be appropriate for us to interview 3790. It would have taken may be six month for interview all these people. I don't know whether the respected Member has had a look at the application form but they have use the information submitted in the application form which is more than complete to select these persons Mr. Chairperson, Sir. To answer the respected second Member for Baie Aux Huitres, if he has a formula for me to equate 3790 with 245 I will be glad to have it.

Mr. N. Lisette: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may be I am going to give the formula to the Chief Commissioner if you want so. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether there has been any consideration as regard to those persons who are registered at the Labour Office?

The Chief Commissioner: Of course Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the board has been given the instruction to see to it that priority to be given to those person who are long, more than ten years unemployed at the labour office and which have not been considered in the recurrent recruitment which has been done by the previous Government.

Mr. N. Lisette: Being given that, as refer to my previous question the Chief Commissioner in some way has admitted that there is possibility of discrepancy in the board of selection, when he say that he is not aware that four or five persons have been recruited or place from the same family. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner as regard to the training of these skilled or unskilled workers, what is the Executive Council envisage to do for the empowerment as regard to the creation of the job later.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Minority as usual is thinking out of the box and they don't know what the scope of the project is, they should have asked for the scope of the project what we want to do with these trainees. First of all we have enlisted them in our programme of "*rehabilitation de*

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resource naturelle”. So, they are now they are working in the different sector of the Commission for Agriculture. They are cleaning the forest, they have started to get a work, they have clean at Fond La Digue, at Cascade Pigeon and the work is beautiful Mr. Chairperson, Sir. These persons we have give them the task that they have to do and the following month during their training which is an initial of one year, they will be trained in different sectors of activity; they will be trained for example in horticulture, they may be trained for those who want it in Masonry, they will be trained in Carpentry and in all areas in which they are interested. Shortly after some weeks they will be in the Government structure we will ask them select one or two areas of catchmentship where are going to get training. We are not going to train everybody in masonry and everybody in horticulture but for those who want to be trained in a particular field we will give them the opportunity to have this training within the different Division of the Regional Assembly and it is not impossible Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that during normal recruitment that will be made in the Public Service will call upon these persons following appropriate selection exercise to enter the service because they will already have an experience of this type of service.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I understand the people and the minority but we have made an effort at the level of Assembly to take on board these 245 persons but it is unfortunate that we cant take everybody. We are doing our best given the difficult economic conditions.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the placement of the skilling and reskilling of the unemployed persons is on a year basis year and is met for the financial year 2007/2008, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner if the contract will overlaps on the next financial year?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is a very interesting question. May I suggest to the Member to wait for the next budget speech for this answer.

Mrs. Perrine-Begu : I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, he himself he admitted that those persons might have an option Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for any further recruitment full-fledged job in the Civil Service “*dans la fonction publique*” in Rodrigues. This is just what the Chief Commissioner has just said Mr. Chairperson, Sir, he has admitted that there has been a selection that has been made out of a number of 3790 applications, only 244 selected and he just said that those persons might have an option as regard to the privilege that has been given to them, as regard to training...

Mr. Chairperson: You don’t have to repeat what he said; you have to put your question.

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Mrs. Perrine –Begué: I will put my question because we well know that some persons have been taking more than one hour to put a question here. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, you don't make any insinuation either you put your question or you take your seat.

Mrs. Perrine-Begué: I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner either he considers it as transparent, equitable and fair that these persons have not been interviewed for this particular exercise and at the same times he says here ...

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member has done as if I have look into the mirror and I have said that I am Sylvester Stallone, this is not true Mr. Chairperson, Sir! you should not take one part of the information and work out only one part of this information. Yes, I admitted that this person will have the possibility subject to the normal recruitment procedure in the Government service and if they are qualified and selected to enter the Public Service. So, when there is new recruitment anybody who is qualified according to the rules and regulations for entering the Public Service, including all those who are outside the purview of this placement exercise. This is what the Member should and has to understand.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I come back to the selection board and as we have noted there has not been a clear procedure because their has been no interview.

The Chief Commissioner: I object Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to this Point of Order the Member is making a false allegation on my administration saying that it is not clear. I have explained it is clear and there has been no over up or whatever in the recruitment. So, it is not proper to impute the term "*not clear*" to the selection exercise.

Mr. N. Lisette: I am going to clarify..

Mr. Chairperson: I understand you don't want any ruling. You don't want any ruling, you understood what he said? My ruling is clear, it is contain in the Point of Order itself. What I realize up to now, between these 15 minutes that we just started is that most of you are trying to repeat the question. Of course you have to repeat the answer in order to make your questions connected but you don't have to repeat all the things, or to misinterpret.

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Mr. N. Lisette: There is one matter I would like to raise Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the selection board. I have raised the matter before about the possibility of four persons being recruited in the same family. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he is aware that there are some people who were already working, may be in the hotel industry, who have left their job to come in this placement?

The Chief Commissioner: So what Mr. Chairperson, Sir? I understand the feeling and the reasoning of the Member; I should step in the shoes in the people to tell them and decide for them where they should work. This is not my purview Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is not the role of this side of the House. We want people to decide for themselves, if they have been selected for a placement and they want to leave their job to come for this placement, it is their rational decision this is not my problem Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. N. Lisette: I know this is the decision of that person Mr. Chairperson, Sir but the fact remain that this placement should have been in preferential for those who are not working. How come that those who are working have been placed and those who have applied for the job who are not working have not been placed for this work.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been a board of selection there has been criteria and of course of the board of selection has stick to the criteria which has been given to them and they have a database, they have base themselves on this database and they have come up with a list of selected persons. Now, some of these persons were Woodcutters, other were members of this House, others were in Mauritius, others were not of such and such characteristics, it is their problem and it is up to them to choose Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have a point of Order, but the debate is very hot so I didn't ..

Mr. Chairperson: You want to make it now.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Yes if you would allow me because the Commissioner responsible for Social Security told the Minority Leader "*reste tranquille toi tone vié toi dans coin*". She has just organized....

(Interruptions)

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: I would like her to excuse herself.

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Mr. Chairperson: Chief Commissioner please!

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Let me put my point Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Order please, there is a Member on her feet.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: I am still sad with this Mr. Chairperson, Sir and I have my point that she has just organized a meeting to honour all the elderly in Rodrigues, how come that she is responsible for Social Security and she comes here Mr. Chairperson, Sir and she is saying “*reste tranquille vie popote reste tranquille*” Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I want her to excuse herself in the name of all the elderly persons in Rodrigues.

Mrs. Clair: Mr. Chairperson, Sir..

Mr. Chairperson: Do you want a ruling from me or it's alright. I want to know whether the first Member of the local region Member three want a ruling on this point or is it correct.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: I am sure you didn't hear it.

Mr. Chairperson: You can't be sure that we didn't hear it because you are not here!

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Otherwise you would have stopped her. O.k thank you very much.

Mr. Chairperson: Let move on the same question?

Mr. N. Lisette: I am coming to the scrutinisation of the 3000 something application that has been received.

Mr. Chairperson: 3790.

Mr. N. Lisette: 3700 and something as regard to the application that have been received I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether the board of selection has made a clear and transparent scrutiny on these applications, as regard to the former two questions that I've asked, as regards to those ---- to come here and recruitment regarding same in the

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am fully satisfied with the work which has been done by the Selection Committee.

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Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether any request was made from the MRC and from the Empowerment Fund to fund this project and why they turned down the request?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the HRDC, National Human Resource Development Council first approached us to submit proposal for this programme which was announced in my last budget speech. However, during the visit of a delegation of the HRDC we observed that they have a similar programme for the unemployed in Mauritius. So, we wanted to make use of the technical services and additional financing to make our programme more successful. However, the HRDC later inform us that the problem, it would not be applicable to posting in the Regional Assembly because Empowerment Programme is concern only with the private sector and not Governmental bodies. So, we decided to implement the programme on our own as announce on the budget speech. The first instance the employment was requested to submit the name of all registered employees and a list was obtained.

However, to ensure that only those who are really interested in the programme be offered a placement was decided to invite application through the press. A letter dated 7 June 2007; *“The Human Resources Development Council inform me that the training and placement of unemployed Committee of the Empowerment Programme has approved my request to contribute 50% allowance payable to the two hundred unemployed persons, who were to be offered a placement in the Commission of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in the context of the National Resources Rehabilitation Programme”*.

Unfortunately, this approval was thereafter removed in another letter dated 24 July 2007. At my meeting with the Representatives of the Empowerment Programme, it was thereafter explained that such financial assistance is provided for only placement in the private sector and not in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly which is a Governmental Organisations. I have been informed also that such decisions have been influence following a letter sent to the HRDC by the Minority Leader. Thank you.

The Minority Leader: Is it fair that references be made to letters sent to organizations here? I should like if you can rule on that.

Mr. Chairperson: Well it is a rather difficult point to rule. But first of all I have to remind each and every Member that this is a House of transparency within our political system here. Normally what is done in this House of transparency is to question, make motion in order to have the decision of the House and to raise any such matter like laws etc in this House. I don't feel that it is out of order if a Member mention something that another Member has done because if it is in the course of an answer or in a debate but the fact is that our Standing Order defend or prevent any Member from making what I can say, I prefer to cite the Standing Order, but “defend

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a Member from analyzing, commenting on the conduct of another Member except if he comes with a substantive Motion”.

Mr. Chairperson: This does not of course preclude that a Member cannot make some reference to the other actions but if you want to the Assembly to judge the conduct of the other Member then he has to make a substantive Motion. Therefore, in my ruling the Chief Commissioner in limit can make the reference but he should not deal further in this issue. Thank you.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have a question as regard those who have been selected for this placement. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner how many of these persons come from the electoral region number five?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is another question which notice should be given.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, we have exhausted

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: One more question, please.

Mr. Chairperson: A last one.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: I would like to ask two small questions as regard to the administrative aspect of this placement, firstly who made the dispatch to the recipient there, secondly is the Chief Commissioner aware that the Acting Island Chief Executive at that time signed the letter as Island Chief Executive and whether this letter is legal?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the first part of the question is to dispatch these letters the dispatch has been made by the dispatchers people who are employed to dispatch letters at my office and it may have been dispatch by other Government officers, persons responsible for dispatching letters and as regard to the second part of the question, I have noted this issue of the Acting Island Chief Executive signing as Island Chief Executive and the Island Chief Executive has informed me that it is a practice for the incumbent in an Acting capacity to sign as the main persons in that post. This is a practice, you are ignorant, you are laughing but this is a practice.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me just one little because I need more clarifications as regard to the answer that the Chief Commissioner gave. I would like to ask him whether an Adviser to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is considered that dispatching is one of his responsibilities?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, everybody know everybody here in Rodrigues. You will recall members who have some knowledge of the history, if they have in the other side of the House; that letter were dispatch in front of the Post Office of all people who came to Port Mathurin and somebody living at Plaine Corail could take another letter for the person and send the letter, this was a practice. Why not an Adviser who leave in place somewhere take these letter a give them to the people who are his neighbour. Where is the problem in what, where is the shame, where is corruptions? They want to see heel everywhere. What is the problem if it is an Adviser of even myself took a letter and give it to someone who leave near my place. Is this a problem?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Faire signer tous!

The Chief Commissioner: Of course he must sign, to acknowledge that he receive the letter. I am not questioning this saying that this should be the practice. But of course if the person to whom the responsibility to deliver has given this to such and such Adviser telling him please deliver this because there were 245, there is no problem in that Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

LOCAL RESIDENT PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

(No. B/155) Mr. L.S. Clair (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether with regards to the Local Resident Property Development Schemes, would he:-

- (a) explain to the House the underlying principle of this policy;
- (b) state the number of applications received; and
- (c) give a list of all applications approved indicating in each case;
 - (i) the area of activities; and
 - (ii) the conditions attached thereto?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the Budget Speech 2007-2008 in this House, I announced that *“le gouvernement régional introduira un Local Resident Property Development Scheme” qui permettra aux nationaux et résidents de Rodrigues d’avoir la possibilité d’avoir un terrain commercial à bail pour un développement immobilier qu’ils pourront par la suite sous louer aux touristes ou à d’autres personnes ou transmettre plus tard à leurs enfants. Tout un chacun pourra faire une demande en ce sens et implémenter un projet de ce type. Cette mesure devra permettre une croissance dans le domaine de l’industrie de la*

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construction et dans le domaine des investissements. Des compagnies avec des nationaux et résidents de Rodrigues comme actionnaires majoritaires pourront aussi se prévaloir de cette mesure. Le prix du bail de ce type de développement sera évidemment plus élevé.’’ Fin de citation.

In line with the above announced budgetary measure, my Executive Council launched the Local Resident Property Development Scheme on the 1st of September 2007. The scheme makes provision for the following:

- Any local resident of Mauritian nationality domiciled in Rodrigues or person of Rodriguan origin in Mauritius or abroad is allowed, under conditions mentioned below, to obtain an additional lease for bungalow site to develop a property for either his/her own residential purpose or for commercial purposes for rent to tourists. The scheme would be open to one and all;
- Only one lease under this scheme would be allowed per applicant/couple/company;
- The lease would be for a period of 20 years renewable for further periods with revised rentals;
- The property would need to be of high standard, basically of creole architecture, and with facilities including a minimum of two bedrooms, living room, kitchen, toilets/bathroom, septic tank, rain water harvesting, water tank and balcony;
- The extent that would be leased under this scheme would be of about 400m²;
- The lessee will be called upon to make a one-off contribution of Rs 50,000 to the RRA upon approval of the lease representing its social contribution for economic/social projects. This contribution would be imposed under the terms and conditions of lease;
- The rental that would be applicable on such leases would be as follows:
 - First 10 years – Rs 12,000 annually
 - Next 10 years – Rs 30,000 annually
 - After the period of 20 years, the rental will be reassessed and agreed by both parties.
- The Local Resident Property Development Scheme leases would be grouped in specific regions and areas. The Cadastral Office would be called upon to

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identify specific regions within the island where such leases would be granted based on demand and preferences of applicants.

- The following factors would be considered when deciding on the allocation of the leases:-
 - The financial strength of the applicant for successfully developing and maintaining the property and paying the contribution and rentals;
 - The proposed architecture of the property; and
 - The investments that will be generated.

It is expected that the scheme would bring the following benefits to Rodrigues:-

- 1) generate investments within our local economy;
- 2) create employment within the construction industry and thereafter for the maintenance of these properties;
- 3) bring in additional revenue for the regional government through additional rentals, which shall be at a higher rate for such leases;
- 4) generate one-off contributions to the RRA for implementation of social projects; and
- 5) increase the number of rooms within our tourism industry which at peak periods is limited.

As regards to (b), no applications have been received under the scheme up to date. Some 10 potential applicants have called at the office of Invest Rodrigues for information on the conditions and procedures relating to the scheme. It is to be noted that to prevent a backlog being created and unserious application to be made by people who don't have the capabilities to implement the scheme, a non-refunding application fee of Rs 1000 is applicable on submission of the application.

Given no application have been received, the answer to (c) does not arise.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner how does he way the adequation on the gain of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or the Island of Rodrigues in term of fees that he say will be collected he has said the amount per year from those persons who will get a portion of land under this scheme and which he said will be used eventually for social

development and the lost of those small Rodriguans who are in *Gites, Chambres and Table d'hotes* who will come under the direct competition with those who will make bungalows Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and are visibly those who have money.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the question of guessing this estimate is like asking me to be a magician who I am not yet, may be one day. As regards to the debates back up by the Minority saying that people will loose client at their *Gites*. This is ignorance Mr. Chairperson, Sir, again of the philosophy behind a *Gites* and the type of product offered by a *Gites* and the services which some persons going for this Local Resident Property Development Scheme may be offering if one persons apply for a piece of land under the Scheme and then after this person decides to rent the building or the premises. It is like renting a building with anybody in it whereas a *Gites* if you look, you revise your Tourism Regulation 2007 of which you have made a lot of noise here, you will see that a *Gites* the owner needs to reside on that *Gites* and therefore the owner have to give personal care and personal attention to the tourist in the *Gites*. It is different product and tourist residences a type of license with of course for those who want rent their bungalows or what has been give under the Scheme they will have to apply to a tourist residence license before renting the rooms or renting the property. So, the issue of assessing the loss by the *Gites* and gain made from the revenue of rental therefore, does not arise.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner while actually since these last few years we seen that in Mauritius there is no more peak period or low period in Tourism and the tourist is still continuing increase in number coming to Mauritius. In Rodrigues actually we have for example very low period. I have been around a number of these *Gites* and they are suffering also in water problem, I won't come in that. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when you look at this you realise that the small number of tourist who comes to Rodrigues will certainly have to pick and choose between those high standards or at least those bungalows and at the same time between those *Gites* where classification has just be made and people are trying to be up to the standards that has been put by the Regional Assembly. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether he is aware and what measures he consider to take to make sure that the people in Rodrigues themselves beneficieate from those rather slow increase that is happening in Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let try to reply to the conference she has made. First of all *M. le Président, quand j'ai pris la direction du Commission du Tourisme, la croupe des arrivés touristique était en chute libre. Depuis 2004 les arrivés touristiques étaient en constant chute a Rodrigues et grâce a nos effort et grâce aux soutiens de Monsieur Xavier Duval Ministre du Tourisme, grâce aux lancement du Ministre du Tourisme de Rodrigues, grâce aux déploiement de toutes les outils de promotion que nous avons, grâce a nos participation actives aux différentes foires touristiques, aux salons professionnels, grâce a une très bonnes*

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et petites équipes qui travaillent très dure a l'office du Tourisme et a la Commission du Tourisme nous avons pu relancer le tourisme M. le Président, nous avons jusqu'a ce jour 15% d'augmentation par rapport a l'année dernière et Madame la première Membre local region number three trouve qu'on est en train de régresser M. le Président et elle veut comparer Maurice avec Rodrigues. But Mauritius is not like Rodrigues, you should compare like with like. Therefore, the question I repeat of competition between the two does not arise because tourist businesses will remain strict tourist businesses for which promotion will be ensured and for which tourist will get a particular service according to the provisions, according to the different needs specified in the Tourism Regulation which will come in force on 1st January, 2008. The others under the Scheme concerned will have a property development aspect. We want people to develop their property to be able to invest their money in something which is tangible and which they can save their money Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Many people have complaint that they have some money they want to invest, they can't invest.

So, why not give them the possibility to build another thing to rent it or to have it ready for their son, for their daughter who someday can get married and use it as their home. We are removing Mr. Chairperson, Sir, stones, big stones which were in the path of Rodriguan families, Rodriguan people. We are paving the way for a brighter future for these people and for housing and investment in Rodrigues.

(Applause)

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner stated that the services offered by the *Gites* and the type of apartment that are going to be built the facilities, the services are different but there is one things that remains it is the fact that as regards to Rodrigues the most number of tourist that comes to Rodrigues are mainly from mainland Mauritius out of 65, 000 I think 50, 000 comes from Mauritius. Don't the Chief Commissioner think that as regard to this there will be a direct concurrent of those persons who are going to apply for these apartments in Rodrigues who are living in Mauritius directly with these *Chambres and Gites* in Rodrigues.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't think so because as he has said in his question "tourist from Mauritius they

(Gaps on cassette)

Mauritian people I don't believe and I don't see them going in the small *Gites*. Who goes to the small *Gites* Mr. Chairperson, Sir? It is the people who come from Reunion Island, who come from France, who come from Europe and who goes there to look for this authenticity offers. You say that you have been speaking to the *Gites* owners; you should speak more to them. They themselves they don't target Mauritian

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market; they target French and European market for their clients. The question once more does not arise. This is why they had fail in Tourism because they don't understand the basic dynamics and the different times in this industry.

HEALTH SERVICES

(No. B/156) Mr. S. Roussety (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether as regard to the health services delivered to patients by medical practitioner (generalists) and dentists on Wednesday 26 September 2007 at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, would he for the benefit of the House state

- (a) whether there was any suspension in the delivery of services to the patients on that day; and
- (b) if yes, the reason thereof?

Commissioner for Health & Ors (Mr. A. L. Emilien): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the reply to part (a) of the question is no, and, as a matter of fact, part (b) does not arise. However, for the sake of transparency and to show that there is nothing to hide, I am giving these information to enlighten the House on what really happened.

In the morning September 26 this year (which was Pay Day for the Public Service) representatives of Medical Officers and Dentists called at the Commission's Headquarters to complain that their bank accounts had not been credited with the full 50% of inducement allowance payable monthly in accordance with their letters of employment during their tour of service in Rodrigues.

Those officers met the Departmental Head and myself in the former's Office and we explained to them that both the Commission and the Office of the Island Chief Executive had written to the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life applying for an extension of the authority to pay such allowance for the current financial year, the said authority which was meant for 3 years having lapsed on 30 June, 2007. The letter, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, copy of which is here, dates back to August 18, 2007. The office of the Island Chief Executive immediately that is on 23 August, 2007 addressed a letter to the Senior Chief Executive of Ministry of Health and Quality of Life requesting the said authority to be extended to enable the payment of 25% inducement allowance.

We also told those officers that the Ministry had written to the Ministry for Civil Service along the same lines and a positive reply would be forthcoming. By the way, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the authority of the Ministry for Civil Service was obtained and faxed to Rodrigues in the afternoon of the same day and this letter

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referred to the one sent by the office of the Island Chief Executive for the request of extension of such authority.

The representatives spent some 15 to 20 minutes at the Commission and, after receiving the explanations mentioned above, returned to their respective sites of work where their colleagues were already attending to patients. Consequently, there was no discontinuation in the delivery of services to patients on that day.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson Sir, the Commissioner just said that there were no disruption of service and so that those Medical Officers came to the office of the Departmental Head. For how long did they stay there Mr. Chairperson Sir and who were assuring the service at that time? Given the time that they stayed at the Departmental Head's Office collectively doesn't he consider it as a discontentment of the service; a go slow in the service.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I would request the respected Member to listen carefully when the Commissioner give the reply to the questions, I repeat, "*The representatives spent some 15 to 20 minutes at the Commission*" may be you didn't hear. While the representatives were at the Commissioner Mr. Chairperson Sir, there were Medical Officers attending to patients at Queen Elizabeth Hospital namely Dr. Seetohul and Dr. Chunnoo and there were also Medical Specialists, Gynaecologist, Pediatrician, Ophthalmologist, Surgeon and Anesthesiologist were in attendance at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Whereas at Mont Lubin we had Dr. Chumun and at La Ferm Dr. Luchoo and Dr. Kooduruth. So, we never had any discontinuation in the delivery services on that day.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that the Doctor Seethohul, the Acting Health Director, examined only one emergency case while the other practitioners were at his office until 11 hours.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how many patients the respected Member were expected the Acting Health Director to see in fifteen to twenty minutes when his colleagues were absent. Other hand he is admitting that Dr. Seethohul were attending to patients.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Being given that this is the first time that this happened in Rodrigues, I would like to ask the Commissioner why his Commission has taken too much time to inform the Ministry of Health on the removal of 50% inducement allowance to the Doctors for the financial year.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: I will say Mr. Chairperson, Sir that the respected Member is not listening at all. I informed the House that the authority was for three years from the 1 July, 2004 to 30 June, 2007. Taking into consideration our good faith at my Commission paid full inducement allowance for the month of July 2007 thinking that

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the renewal was to be automatic because we wrote to the office of ICE in April 2007 I have copy of letters here Mr. Chairperson, Sir, where we wrote to the office of ICE and copy of letters where the office of the ICE wrote to the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life dated 23 August and the Ministry referred to that date in their letter sending the authority to pay the 25% inducement for another period of one year. Please refer to your letter dated 23 August. As far back as April 2007 before the end of the authority we have written to the Ministry *et la balle n'est pas dans notre camp Monsieur le Président, nous attendons que les autorités concernés fasse le nécessaire.*

Mr. J. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, between April and August there are four months. Did the Commissioner think that the office of the Island Chief Executive has taken too much time to write to the Ministry?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I said that we wrote since April but in April the authority to pay 25% inducement allowance was still in force and till the 30th of June this year as from July 2007 this authority lapse. We paid for the month of July and the finance section drew our attention that the authority has lapse and it is then that the office of the Island Chief Executive wrote to the Ministry for the extension of this authority as simple as that.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health is it a normal practice of his Commission that at a time when the number of patients are at its peak at the hospital, there is only one Doctor who is looking after the patients at the hospitals?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can't understand the reasoning of the respected Member. Is it a normal practice? This was specified in my reply the 26 September which was pay day and the Medical Officers knew that the 25% inducement allowance has not been credited to their bank account. They came just for 15 to 20 just to have some clarification. What practice are you referring to?

Mr. N. Lisette: May I ask the Commissioner for Health then, how does he account for the presence of unusual number of Policemen at the Hospital on that particular day?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of the presence of unusual presence of Policemen there.

X-RAY APPARATUS - QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

(No. B/157) Mr. S. Roussety (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether as regards to the X-ray Apparatus of Queen Elizabeth Hospital, will he state

- (a) whether the X-ray apparatus found in the Administrative Block and that found near the female ward broke down during this year;
- (b) if in the affirmative, since when; and
- (c) whether the broken down has resulted in any suspension in the service provided to patients?

Commissioner for Health (Mr. A. L. Emilien): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, The Siemens Heliophos D X-Ray apparatus at the Casualty Department (Administrative Block) broke down on 20 April this year. Consequently, all x-rays examination were performed in the main X-Ray Room near the female ward.

The Biomedical Technician of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life (Mr. Sungkur) was called upon to attend to the repairs. The technician came on 13 May, 2007 but the machine could not be repaired. Upon the request of the Commission, the Bio medical Technician came back again accompanied this time by the Biomedical Engineer on the 23 June, 2007 and 23 August, 2007 respectively for further attempts to repair the machine but in vain.

On 28 August, 2007 during an exposure, the SIEMENS KLINOGRAPH X-Ray machine at the Main X-Ray Department also broke down.

A SIMOX D portable X-Ray apparatus (which was at the ICU) was brought to the X-Ray Room at the Casualty Department (Administrative Block). My Commission then contacted the Ministry to have a more powerful portable X-Ray machine (of 300 MA) to attend to complex cases which could not be handled with the SIMOX D portable X-Ray machine in use at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

As I was in Mauritius at that time, I went personally to SSRN Hospital to negotiate with the authorities for obtaining the X Ray machine and arranging for the packing thereof. I took delivery of the machine and signed the relevant Store Form personally in view to alleviate procedures.

In the meantime my office had arranged with Air Mauritius for issuing an MCO for the airfreight of the machine. However on account of its weight (over 325 kgs) that machine could not be air freighted to Rodrigues and had to be sent by ship and same arrived in Rodrigues on 27 September, 2007.

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In the meantime, the Commission had arranged with IBL for the repair of the 2 X-Ray machines namely the SIEMENS Heliophos D at the Casualty Department and the SIEMENS Klinograph at the main X-Ray Department.

On 20 September, 2007 IBL's technician came to Rodrigues and repaired the SIEMENS Heliophos machine. Since then 3 X Ray machines are in good working condition namely:

- (i) the SIEMENS Heliophos D;
- (ii) the 300 MA portable machine from SSRN Hospital;
- (iii) the SIMOX D portable machine of Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

A few patients needing x-rays of abdomen and spines had been requested to call later when the machines would be operational again. Subsequently, all such cases have been attended to. Not less than 200 applicants for enlistment as Police Constable are presently being examined on the X-Ray machine at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. This, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, clearly shows that we are fully equipped in so far as X-Ray machines are concerned.

IBL has identified the necessary spare parts for the SIEMENS Klinograph machine and will bring them over to Rodrigues for the repair of thereof in due course. In spite of being fully capable of managing the situations, we have been rather farsighted. Let me tell you why Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Procedures for the acquisition of a new X-Ray machine were launched as early as December 2006. However, on account of the estimated cost which exceeds Rs 1 m and the need for technical specifications, the Central Tender Board has had to vet the tender documents prior to public invitation in the press. The time limit for submission of tenders was 26 September, 2007 and the Ministry of Health is presently arranging for the offers received to be evaluated technically at the Central Tender Board's Office in Mauritius after which the order will be placed for the supply, installation and commissioning of a new x-ray apparatus.

RENOVATION OF QUARTERS

(No. B/158) Mr. S. P. Roussety (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health whether as regard to the renovation of quarters A2, A35, A36, 5A and 5B will he state for the benefit of the House:-

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- (a) whether the renovations have been completed;
- (b) if yes, to state how much money have been spent in relation to each of the abovementioned quarters;
- (c) to table a breakdown of the expenses;
- (d) whether all medical specialists on mission for the time being are being accommodated in these quarters in Rodrigues.
- (e) if not, why?

Commissioner for Health & Ors (Mr. A. L. Emilien): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the answer to question (a) is yes the renovation of the quarters have been completed.

The materials have been purchased globally for all the quarters. We had to upgrade 5 quarters and it would have been inappropriate to purchase materials peace meal – for each quarters separately. It would have surely cost more. A survey was made for the whole lot and the contracts for works also have been allocated for all the quarters and not for individual ones. The total cost of the renovation works is Rs 435,350.

I am tabling a breakdown of the expenses. **(APPENDIX II)**

The answer to part (d) is no. As from 01 September, 2007 Medical Specialists on a one month tour of service are not accommodated in these quarters.

Medical Specialists on short tour of service are being accommodated at “Le Tamaris” Hotel following instructions to that effect given by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I believe that the main aim of the renovation of the quarters was to accommodate visiting specialist. May I know from the Commissioner for Health why this is not so?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will repeat again part Medical Specialists on short tour of service are being accommodated at “Le Tamaris” Hotel following instructions to that effect given by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. I have here a copy of the letter giving these instructions which says that “*the Commission has to accommodate incoming Specialists on a tour of service of one month in hotels forthwith*”.

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Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my question is clear why can't the specialists be accommodated in these renovated quarters. According to information gathered Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the medical council; I mean trade union, association grouping medical practitioners in Mauritius, the trade union have given instructions to the Members not to accept to be accommodated in any of these quarters because according to them the standard is not o.k. But the Ministry delegated some people here, Dr. Jayphaul, Principal Medical Officer and Mr. ----, Principal Assistant Secretary, just to evaluate the standard of these quarters and in their draft report Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I quote:

“the Guest Houses identified and innovated are of good standards for the accommodation of specialist” endquote.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: The item identified as missing to be provided immediately by the Commission in fact during our visit itself most of the items were already provided. Guest Houses A2, A35 and A36 were suitable in the present condition to accommodate the specialist and in another page of this report it is mention:

At the second visit on the 27 July they came from the 26 and 27 July except for the washing machine all the other shortcomings were already addressed. The other outstanding works was the repair of the entrance required some cement work. Other observations were as follows; standard good. Once the work at the entrance is completed, Specialist can be accommodated therein and so on.

So, this denotes clearly Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the standard of the Guest Houses are good but the Union has requested his Members not to go there and the Ministry has acceded to the request so we have no alternative than to hope. One thing Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to point out, I have hear a copy of a letter emanating from a Medical Specialist who will be on a tour of service of two month in a few days time, he has written to my Departmental Head saying that he is coming to Rodrigues soon, the date is specified here and that I would prefer to stay in the Guest House opposite the new Maternity Hospital instead of staying at Tamaris Hotel. This clearly shows Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the money spent for the upgrading of these Quarters, Guest Houses were fully justify. That's why provision was made also in the Recurrent Estimates 2007/2008 for Rs 500,000 for this item.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner was talking about financial constraints. I would like to ask the Commissioner on what budgetary provision is the cost of accommodation of these Doctors in Hotels?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I know that provision was made in the Recurrent Estimates 2007/2008 but I don't have the vote item handy. So if the respected Member could come with this question later.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is one thing that I need to be highlighted by the Commissioner for Health. On the one hand he is saying that the Quarters are of good standard. On the other hand he is saying that the Medical Council recommends that these Specialists not to be accommodated in these...

Mr. Chairperson: Is it a Council or a Union?

Mr. N. Lisette: The Union recommended not to go there. Has the Commissioner for Health questioned or asked the Union what standard is required by the Specialist because we know that the accommodation of these visiting Specialists to Rodrigues cost a lot to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. May we know what is the standard recommended by the Union?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Medical Specialist are employed by the Ministry of Health and Quality of life and as such we don't have to deal with whatever Union because these people they come from Mauritius, the Ministry of Health. So, please try to know things better before putting questions because you know the cost of accommodation in Hotels as you rightly pointed out cost a lot. So, it is not a pleasure for us to accommodate them in Hotels that's why we have been upgrading these Quarters but these Specialists are employed by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. We deal with the Ministry, all the negotiations are made there and because they have been accustom to be in Hotel and you know Mr. Chairperson, Sir, some Doctors, some Specialist when they come here they say "*I want to be at Pointe Venus*" and they don't want to go at such and such hotels because in the past they were accommodated in hotels without any complaints. Now the union is urging on the authorities to accommodate the members in Hotels.

Mr. J. D. Speville: I would like to ask the Commissioner where supplementary budget will be sought if the cost he has paid for the Hotels for the financial year exceed the budgetary provision provided in the budget. Being given that we can take policy decision on the administration of Hospital in Rodrigues, is it a practice for the decision of this Ministry to over rule the decision taken at the level of your Commission?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the respected Member clearly pointed out that we have only administration. We are speaking of Hospital of Health yes and not Agriculture. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of respected Member that we have been instructed to accommodate those Specialist coming for a tour of service of one month at Le Tamaris Hotel. But up to now we haven't spent only one cent for this because we are still in the negotiation with the Ministry to pay for that because we didn't accommodate the Doctors there. The booking has been made by the Ministry of Health. They will have to bear the cost because we don't have budgetary provision for that.

Mr. Chairperson: Time exhausted next question.

Mr. P. Francois: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before I move the question 159 I will like to draw the attention of the Chairperson and that the House in general that there is a little mistake in the question but anyhow it does not change the meaning. I think the Commissioner has got it.

Mr. Chairperson: There is a mistake or is it something edited by our Clerk here. So, if it is a detail it can be a mistake.

Mr. P. Francois: No, no there is a word. The word “which company” I checked my copy the word “company” after “which” is not in my copy, “which will operate”. I think that the word won’t change the meaning for the question.

Mr. Chairperson: It won’t change the whole substance of the question. It’s correct then.

ROD CLEAN COMPANY LIMITED

(No. B/159) Mr. P. Francois (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Environment whether as regard to the newly created “Rodclean Company Limited” by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, which Company will operate under the aegis of the Commission for Environment, will he state

- (a) when was the Company incorporated;
- (b) what will be the scope of work of the Company;
- (c) how many persons will be employed by the Company and the mode of recruitment, and
- (d) whether their conditions of work will be in accordance with the labour law and other relevant laws?

Commissioner for Public Infrastructure & Ors (Mr. F. A. Grandcourt): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (a) of the question the “*Rodclean Limited*” not the “*Rodclean Company Limited*” was incorporated on 19 September 2007.

The scope of work of the company is the cleaning and transportation of wastes throughout the island. The cleaning and transportation services which would be undertaken by the new company shall comprise of the following:

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- (i) removal of household waste and wastes from inside, outside and around public bins, refuse collection points, bare lands and any other places indicated by the Commission for the Environment;
- (ii) transport in waste carriers vehicles of the collected waste to Grenade Dumping site under the supervision of an authorised Officer.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in a first instance, the refuse collection works shall comprise the following three lots but will be extended in future to cover the whole island:

- (i) Lot 1 – Cleaning and refuse collection in industrial and commercial areas.

The works will include daily cleaning and collection of refuse from Port Mathurin, Mont. Lubin, La Ferme, Oyster Bay, English Bay and on alternate days from Riviere Coco and Grand La Fouche Corail and once weekly from roadsides of the designated localities.

- (ii) Lot 2 – Cleaning of Public Building and places.

This will include the sweeping, mowing and grass cutting, weeding of public places and premises lopping and pruning in green spaces.

- (iii) Lot 3 – Cleaning of Public Toilets

The work will consist of cleaning and sanitizing of public toilets across the island. The transportation works will involve collecting wastes along asphalted and non-asphalted roads from inside and around public bins and garbage collection points; on public beaches, bare lands and government (Rodrigues Regional Assembly) premises.

As regard to part (c) the Board of Directors shall determine the number of persons to be employed and the mode of recruitment. The company will be managed along modern management principles in order to ensure higher efficiency and greater productivity.

The conditions of work will be in accordance with the Labour law and other relevant legislation.

Mr. P. Francois: According to the humanitarian ground I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the workers who's contract will expire at the end of October at La Voirie Ltée will have the chance to reintegrate this Company?

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Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, We will look if the possibility of having these guides.

Mr. P. Francois: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, If you would allow me I would like to ask the Commissioner since there is a Company which is doing the work now, when will the new Rodrigues Limited take over?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the contract will expire at the end of October that is at the end of this month and normally the Company will take over, soon.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the contract of the present contractor will going to expire at the end of this month, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Environment if the Rod Clean Company Limited will be sufficiently equipped to take over for the collection of refuse?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are fully equipped. We have already submitted quotation for acquisition of compactor lorry and the meantime we will hire lorries from the waste carrier ----.

PAYMENT OF SOCIAL AID PENSION

(No. B/160) Mr. P. Francois (Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security whether in regard to the payment of Social Aids/pensions to beneficiaries, will she state whether her Commission has received any complaint in relation to the payment of social aids/pensions; if yes, would she inform the House of:

- (a) the number of complaints her Commission has received during the last three months;
- (b) the number of cases resolved to date:
- (c) the number of persons who have not yet received their social aids/pensions and the reasons thereof; and
- (d) the measures she intends to take to pay to those who have not yet received their social aids/pensions?

Commissioner for Social Security & Ors (Mrs. M. T Clair): Mr. Chairperson Sir, before coming to the core of the question I just to point out the following information; I wish to inform the Member which has put this question that

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the criteria for allocating social aids which normally should be social assistance because social aid is one thing and we have another social assistance which is called U.H.R and pension they are not the same. So, this question I think should have been put into two instead of one. I would like to inform the House and the information of the respected Member that there are four types of pension which is known as the:

- (i) Basic National Pension;
- (ii) Basic Retirement Pension;
- (iii) Basic Invalidity Pension;
- (iv) Basic Widows Pension; and
- (v) Basic Orphan Pension.

As regard to part (a) so far, no complaints have been received regarding the payment of social aid and Pensions in general. But following new procedures regarding payment of Basic Retirement Pension through Post Office by Pension Cards instead of Order Book, some beneficiaries for the month of September 2007 have not cashed their pension for the said month.

The information is being compiled and would be available soon because this is process in Mauritius.

During bulk distribution of new Pension Cards, Social Security Officers have noticed that some beneficiaries could not cash their pension for the following reasons:-

- (i) ID on new pension card or pay sheets does not tally with ID on the NIC of the beneficiary
- (ii) Name of beneficiary on paysheet/pension cards differs from name on NIC
- (iii) Name of beneficiary does not appear on paysheet
- (iv) No NIC and Birth Certificate.

Measures have already been taken. Wrong Pension cards have been immediately cancelled and forwarded same along with copy of NIC and copy of Birth Certificate to the benefit branch in Mauritius, so that name of Beneficiary could appear on paysheet for the following month. Here I want to inform the House that already these people who had these problems had cashed their pension this month with arrears paid. In some cases, where the beneficiaries have complained for acute hardship necessary measures have been taken this month so that payment could be done after reception of authority faxed from Benefits Branch for immediate payment.

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For more information regarding social aid, I want to point out here that for social aid cases there are only presently I think this is what the Member was referring to; 41 cases for the four sections of Social Security which has not been attended to for the time being. These cases are being dealt with by Officers of the Social Security. These are new cases, new applicants. This has already been effected either applicant have not been reached or absent during a visit of a Social Security Officer, or there need to be further enquiries because of missing information and documents or we need to have a medical assessment.

It is to be noted that among running cases i.e those beneficiaries who draw Social Aid regularly some cases have been kept in abeyance until further investigation. For these cases, the Social Security Officers have already informed those beneficiaries in advance through memo with stated reasons.

For Basic National Pensions, only applications are filled at our level and cases are processed by the Ministry of Social Security at the Benefits Branch in Mauritius that is why some information might not available now at our end and these information would be forwarded later.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begu : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner if she is aware that I don't know whether it is during the process of changing card proceedings but there are old age persons who have not been receiving their pensions. I myself I have seen three of these cases, quite recently old age pension who have not received their pensions for at least two months. In those cases where I am sure complaints have been made at the necessary offices, what policy does she apply, is there any way pending that there cards or the necessary checking are made for them to get their salary correctly? Is there any amount of money which is give to them so that they may be able to cater for all their needs?

Mrs. M. T Clair: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I think Members on the other side don't listen when we reply to questions. Where beneficiaries do complaint I have said in part (d) of the question when acute hardship what you have just said necessary measures are taken so that payment could be done after reception of authority faxed from Benefits Branch because we have no power to pay them. O.k. we have to have this authority, so we faxed them the complaint and they give us back the authority to pay and we pay at our level.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begu : How long does that take Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to take care of such cases of elderly persons having not been able to cash their pension after two or three months.

Mrs. M. T Clair: Mr. Chairperson Sir, here I don't know how long it would take, it depend on the authority which should be faxed by the benefits branch because

we have no power on ourselves to take this decision. This matter is being done in Mauritius, we only have the power to pay social aid and UHR as for the other pension we have to take the authority from the benefits branch in Mauritius. So, I can't give you that information.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson Sir, as regard to the matter raise by my colleague I think that this is a sensitive issue being given we have having old age pensioners who are not having their due. Three months they have not get it and they are still waiting may be for x amount of time to get their money. This is the question in what way the Commission can help these elderly people as they have to wait for six month until they get their due, some times up to six months?

Mrs. M. T Clair: In some cases, it's not only for National Pension for Elderly but for B.R.P again most of the time these people wait after medical board, sometimes they have to wait four months, six months depending on the benefit branch. But at our level we have an assistance which we do sometimes help depending on the hardship of the people because some people you must understand they don't have only this Basic Retirement Pension they also have their pension from state. So, if the persons come to me and we survey and we see he deserves to have some assistance we gave the assistance to the persons.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson Sir, it seems that the number of complaints that we receive at the opposition sides that there a number of persons who usually received their U.H.R, Unemployment Hardship Relief that its just cut overnight and until they have their children to look after etc. can she tell the House how many of these cases she has received complaint of?

Mrs. M.T Clair: I don't really have official complaints I have just said earlier of people having their Social Aid cut overnight because normally for the Social Aid we kept in abeyance and there is a procedure and there is a memo which is serve with one week or one month notice depending on the reason. This is done by the Social Security Officer and the Higher Social Security Officer who visits the persons and for some reasons some people have their Unemployment Hardship Relief stop because they are taking up a job. So, this is the case I can't tell you more than that.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I know some cases in L'union and some cases in Orange, I know a number of cases where those persons have not get a new job but their U.H.R have been cut and I know that procedures are being kept at the National level what I suggest is that within the autonomy of Rodrigues, I suggest that for the sake of those children's and women's and also those persons who are depending on those, persons who depending on those U.H.R and pending that those pensions is being cut whether a small amount of money are being given to them until there is a very comprehensive report and studies is being made of their case because there is sometime we see that neighbours come around and they say " he is

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having a job, he is doing agriculture in the backyard etc” and the U.H.R is being cut and people are not being able to cater for theirs children’s need. That why it would like to ask whether she can consider putting forward policy so that this is not cut overnight and children are not becoming victim.

Mrs. M. T. Clair: I just want to make a personal explanation to the respected Member. for social aid cases and U.H.R cases this is dealt at our level and we abide to the Social Aid Act and as for U.H.R. which is Unemployment Hardship Relief it is calculated according to the income of the persons; so if the persons is having an income in his backyard he is cultivating and he says he cultivating something and he owns a small business so the officer will naturally calculate the income and would deduct what he is having and will give him his U.H.R. so, if he is having an income and he doesn’t deserve his U.H.R. and there is no way that we can. But still there are some people do complaints of hardship and we have a number of ways of helping him with other assistance.

PERMITS - TAXI OPERATORS

(No. B/161) Mr. P. Francois (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Transport whether he will for the benefit of the House obtain information from the National Transport Authority (N.T.A) as to the permits issued recently to taxi operators

- (a) the number of applications received and the number of permits issued;
- (b) the conditions attached thereof;
- (c) the names and residential addresses of all the beneficiaries of such permit together with the make model, year of registration of the vehicles being used and the routes they are deserving?

Commissioner for Public Infrastructure (Mr. F. A. Grandcourt): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to improve the taxi service throughout the island taking into consideration the population figures, the level of economic activities and to improve transport facilities. The National Transport Authority decided to invite applications for new Public Service Vehicle (Taxi) Licenses. Ninety (90) applications were received and at its meeting held on 25 June 2007, the Rodrigues Transport Committee decided to grant nineteen (19) Public Service Vehicles (Taxis) licenses.

As regard to part (b) I am tabling the conditions attached to those who have been granted a taxi service license. **(APPENDIX III).**

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I am also tabling the names and residential addresses all the beneficiaries for the time being and the other information's are being compiled. **(APPENDIX IV)**.

Mr. D. Speville: I would like to ask the Commissioner if he is aware that the bus owners are complaining on the behaviour of these taxi owners. Some used to take passengers on the bus stop. I would like to ask the Commissioner what is being done at the level of his Commission to combine this concurrence in the mode of transport?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, In fact we have the NTA officers who will see to it that there are no competition between those processing bus license and those that have just being granted a taxi license.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that the question was clear about the year of registration of the vehicles and I note that as regard to what has been table if all the estimation has been given to me by the Clerk there is no information as regard to the model, the year of registration of the vehicles.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have just said that for the time being I am tabling the list of beneficiaries with the respective addresses and the other information are being compiled. I just say that you have to listen.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, 19 taxi permit has been issued....

(Gaps on cassette)

My quote is why is there a lack of transparency with respect to this issue?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, This is the opinion of the respected Member. There is no lack of transparency. I have said we are compiling all these information. The officers of the NTA has not got enough time to have all these information because these guys they are working and if you want to have those information you can go at the NTA office and have these information.

Mr. N. Lisette: I would like to ask the Commissioner Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether all the vehicles that are in operation right now are according to the laws as regard to the years of registration?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the answer is yes.

Mr. N. Lisette: Can the Commissioner enlighten us Mr. Chairperson, Sir about the number of years in which a taxi can come into operation as regard to its lifetime.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have just given a copy of the conditions it is written in the conditions the number of years. The Member has to read.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner there were at least some fifteen licenses in operation and now some twenty that has just been given that this new Regional Government for less than thirty six thousand people and we know in Port Louis that we have less than thirty taxi licenses operating for one million persons. I would like to ask whether the Commissioner thinks “*que c’est soutenable*”. If it sustainable for those persons for taxi persons?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the answer is yes.

Mr. N. Lisette: I refer to the conditions that have been table by the Commissioner and note that as regard to point 1 to 16 that has been stated in this conditions, there is no way that I can notice where it has been specified the number of years that the vehicle should be operating. This is why I am asking the Commissioner for Transport for how long can a taxi remain in operation after it has been bought?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the respected Member repeat his question please.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my question was a clear one, I was asking the Commissioner for Transport when a permit is delivered or issued to a person, that particular taxi that is operating can stay for an amount of time as regard to the permit what is the number of years that such a vehicle can remain in operation as a taxi.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is according to the recommendation of the NTA officers. Once the guy has bought his taxi and once it has been examine so it is the NTA who determine the fitness of this vehicle and to allow him to operate as a taxi.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *il s’agit de la sécurité des gens, je voudrais demander au Commissaire si seulement le Fitness Certificate est important pour délivrer un permit de taxi si l’age n’est pas important?*

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the answer is yes. Monsieur le Président, mais si la voiture est bien entretenue et les Officiers de la NTA voient que la voiture peut rouler, on lui donne le permit.

VISIT TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

(No. B/162) Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Chief Commissioner whether any delegation from Rodrigues visited Trinidad and Tobago recently, and, if yes to

- (a) state who initiated the project;
- (b) state the persons forming part of the delegation and in which capacity; and
- (c) table all expenses met for each member of the delegation, clearly stating the contribution of any institution and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please Chief Commissioner if this in some part implicated me yes I will in due respect leave the chair but if it is not then...

The Chief Commissioner: No I don't think unless you celebrated the marriage there.

Mr. Chairperson: I am not aware of this. Yes, you can proceed then.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, with regards to part (a) of the question. The project was worked out by the Secretariat of the Assembly in consultation with my office and submitted to the European Union Delegation in Mauritius for consideration in the context of the Decentralised Cooperation Programme under the component on governance.

I headed the delegation which was composed of the Chairperson, the Commissioner for Public Infrastructure, Honourable L. J. Vonmally, Member of National Assembly and Leader of the *Mouvement Rodriguais* Party and the Island Chief Executive. Although the request was made for a larger and diversified delegation, unfortunately the EU delegation advised the secretariat that, it could meet expenses for the participation of only three persons. In view of the objective of the mission, and with the clearance of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development it was decided that Rodrigues Regional Assembly would meet the cost for two additional persons.

The expenses for myself, the Chairperson and the Island Chief Executive were met partly by the Decentralised Cooperation Programme and partly by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly while expenses for my colleague Commissioner Mr. F.A. Grandcourt and Honourable L. J. Vonmally were met by the Rodrigues Regional

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Assembly. The cost of one air ticket to Trinidad and Tobago is Rs 73,172 and subsistence allowances were paid to each member of the delegation according to approved rates which Members are aware of. Thank you.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, vu que le Chef Commissaire a fait mention, que ce projet a été initié par l'Assemblée Régionale, comment est-ce que le Chef Commissaire peut nous expliquer la composition de la délégation qui comprend une seule parti de la chambre ?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I cannot answer for the Secretariat of the Assembly.

The Minority Leader: Well, this is a good question. How is it that the Regional Assembly makes a request for a delegation to the Tobago as to the Assembly and only...

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait. Take your seat please. I believe that the answer given has not been detailed enough from what I see; The Secretariat of the Assembly, it is in the House of the Assembly and I am the Chairperson of this Assembly and I am aware of since the first move up to the finish and that some of them are within my province and as such there are procedures for that. If a Member wish to know, to have more details they can come through the appropriate procedures and in accordance with parliamentary practice they are going to get the information. But just to make some imputation that this has been made by the first Member of Grande Montagne who has not understood the answer at all and the Minority Leader which said that it has been made by the Secretariat of the Assembly this is not the answer. You have to understand the answer. You can't take part of the answer and liaise a basis and then attack the Secretariat of the House, you can't do that. You have to go to the proper procedure if you don't know, just come to my office and I'll show you. The project was initiated by the Assembly in consultation...

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, in due respect to you, I don't think you should come out over and above and enter what the opposition wants to ask from us. I will invite you to stay out of this because this should not be up to you to explain here decision take by us.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, thank you. What I am up to is not just to refute the question. I am explaining what the position is; I can refute the question straight away. No, but I have to inform the Members why this is so. I don't want to jump in what is being discussed here but what is irregular. The question is irregular. I have to explain why it is irregular I agree with you.

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The Minority Leader: Let me put a question now. Who initiated, who made the request to EEO to pay the delegation to Tobago. I would like to know exactly who made the request.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, there was not specific request for such or such Members of persons to go for this mission. There was a project submitted by the Secretariat of the Assembly, authorised by the Executive Council and telling them in this project, specifying under their component on governance, to tell them that we would like to go and see in Trinidad and Tobago what is going on there because our model of Regional Assembly has been based on their model and I must tell the House that we had had very fruitful contributions and experience unforgettable there, the report is under preparation. A draft would be submitted to this House, debate will be promoted in this House on the report but the ultimate choice Mr. Chairperson, Sir, of those composing the delegation was made by the Executive Council. The Assembly worked on the project because they have a delegation to go there and you are aware as a former Chief Commissioner, I don't know what the practices under you were but under me nobody is allowed to go on official mission unless I approve it. This is the practice. Even for you if you want to go on official mission I must approve it this is the practice in Mauritius. You may laugh but this is the practice Mr. Chairperson Sir. If you want to go on official mission any Member, any Government official going on official mission if you don't have the approval of the Chief Commissioner you don't go. This is like this; this is the case in Mauritius Mr. Chairperson Sir. Even myself if I have to go on official mission I have to seek for the approval of the Prime Minister. Therefore, after obtaining the financing from the U..... delegation in Mauritius the Chairperson and the office of the Clerk communicated to us and I brought the matter to the Executive Council and of course the Executive Council decided to nominate such and such persons to go out for this fruitful and important mission this is the procedure.

The Minority Leader: The request has been made by the Secretariat of the RRA, we suppose the Secretariat of the RRA is not partial. We suppose that ...

Mr. Chairperson: You cannot comment on the Secretariat I have just informed you. You can't do that!

The Minority Leader: If the request has been by the Secretariat of the RRA there should be also Members of the Minority because the House...

Mr. Chairperson: You can't comment on at least if have seen the request.

The Minority Leader: Why the Executive Council as the...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, take you seat..

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(Interruptions)

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I want to be enlightened by the Chief Commissioner on that particular matter. The project was initiated by the Secretariat of the Executive Council and I understand well it was later ----- by the Executive Council and the names of the persons to be compose by the delegation...

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait. It again has a bearing on this. If you have a question you put it. I will rule it, agreed or not but you are not allowed to make any comment, any insinuation or any hypothesis. If you want to get information probably you don't know up to now after five years , you go to see the Clerk and the Clerk will of course inform you that is in the file. You are not allowed to make this here.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir,...

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait and I have to inform that at this stage this is my announcement that the project was conceived in 2003. The authorities have been informed and we have not receive any support if previous Clerk and me went to negotiate with the ----- of the foundation and the only thing that remain was the Executive to communicate to them. I am proud to say that the actual executive council has been cooperative not only to this project but has allowed the head of delegation of the European Commission to meet me and the Clerk at the Assembly. The initial project consisted of having Members of both side of the House. The initial project consisted of Members coming on both side of the House. I am finished with the announcement. This is by information from the Secretariat for which I head. Any further information is not going to be questioned here. They will be obtainable either from the Secretariat or from the Chairperson's office.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the Chairperson has just been attacking the former Executive Council..

Mr. Chairperson: Yes you are not allowed to do that. We move to the next question. If they want to have supplementary this is perfect in order in this House its O.K.

Mr. N. Lisette: My question is when I see the composition to the delegation I would like to ask the Commissioner how does he account the presence of Honourable Vonmally in the delegation, being given that he is not a Member of the RRA.

Mr. Chairperson: This question is allowed.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, to get married as they have said, *il faut le marié et la mariée, M. le Président.*

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(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: There are interruptions. I don't know whether the answer is finish or not.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: My question Mr. Chairperson Sir, is as regard to the way that the project has been initiated how come that the other side of the House was not informed that such a project as regard the honour of this House that this project was initiated in their name?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le Président, laissez moi si vous permettez situé les choses dans le respectives. M. le Président, Je ne sais pas si vous participer, je vous vois parfois dans les différents fonctions de l'Assemblée Régionale, que les Commissaires, que les Commissions organisent. Savez vous que depuis que nous sommes les différents Commissions, les nouveaux Commissaires, le nouveau Gouvernement Régionale est en place, il y a eu un boycottage systématiques et généralisé de toutes les fonctions M. le Président, laissez moi parler s'il vous plaît.

The Minority Leader: These comments are irrelevant. We need an answer to our question not comments on our questions.

Mr. Chairperson: The point made by the Minority Leader is correct of course if a question is asked what is being expected is answer.

The Chief Commissioner: Thank you Mr. Chairperson, Sir. *Ma petite introduction, ma référence a cela est pour comprendre l'esprit que le conseil exécutif a eu en décidant. On a en face de nous une opposition, minorité qui refuse de participer et qu refuse de jouer son rôle de minorité. Monsieur le Président je vous ai parlé des différentes fonctions et des différents séminaires qu'on organise. Parfois il y a des étrangers qui sont présents. Je vous donne par exemple le Select Committee sur la terre M. le Président. On a demandé leurs participations...*

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order this is not question here. The main problem is the delegation of Tobago. You are commenting on our own behaviour. No we don't accept that.

Mr. Chairperson: Let me rule. If the Minority Leader means that the person answering has to be relevant. He is correct on this point but if he means that he can direct the Member how to answer the question this won't be correct. But of course the only guideline; the only order that I may take is to ask the Commissioner to be relevant and be strict to the question.

The Chief Commissioner: The relevancy of what I am saying will come to light one and all when I will finish my answer. Monsieur le Président, il ne faut pas

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poser des questions et puis s'attendre qu'on ne réponde pas. Donc je vous disais dans la généralité et dans l'ensemble depuis que nous sommes de ce côté de la chambre il y a eu dans mon opinion un boycottage et une absence...

The Minority Leader: Ça c'est votre jugement.

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: M. le Président une absence remarqué des oppositions dans nos différentes fonction je viens vous parler de l'absence de l'opposition dans le *Select Committee*, Comité parlementaire sur le domaine de la terre. On ne dit pas a l'opposition de venir dans le comité pour venir dire oui, au contraire on s'attendait a ce qu'il viennent opposer a ce qu'il participe. Tous ceci a été pris en compte. Quand le Secrétariat de l'Assemblée nous a envoyé le dossier pour nous dire de ratifier la liste des participants dans la mission de Tobago. Les Commissaires qui sont derrières moi et moi-même nous avons pris en compte tout cet aspect des choses, des non-participations. Monsieur le Président si vous avez une famille, vous ne fréquenter pas cette famille, comment voulez-vous qu'on vous invite aux mariages.

Mr. Chairperson: The Chief Commissioner said that the reason why this delegation went to Tobago had to do with governance and I suppose good governance and I believe that the Chief Commissioner will agree with me that good governance and governance has a relativity with democracy and that democracy has to do with balance of power and separation of institutions. How come that the Executive Council top up a project which was instituted by a separate and supposedly independent body which represent the whole population of Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Two things the Member has been trying to give lessons on democracy and that democracy should take the two sides of course. I am telling her that she has not been participating in our functions and the different things and matters organize by the Assembly. May I remind her as regard participation that the motto of her party is "*democracy participative*" and she is not applying it. Second, Mr. Chairperson Sir, we didn't hijack any project it is not our practice. Reference was made

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: Your office, this House, the people responsible here, they know that the Executive has to give their views and they asked us to give our views, it was an exchange. I raise the question with the chair whether we should not include at least one representative from the opposition and she is confirming what we discuss, they would not have participated. *Donc, c'est une tempête dans un verre d'eau.*

RECRUITMENT OF RODRIGUAN - INFINITY CALL CENTRE

(No. B/163) Mrs. F.Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner responsible for Employment and Industrial Relations, whether as regards to the recruitment of Rodriguans to work at the Infinity Call Centre in Mauritius could he state whether the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has been involved in the recruitment process; if yes;

- (i) state the number of persons selected;
- (ii) state whether the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has made any financial contribution, if yes, table
- (iii) the list of expenditures (tickets, lodging etc) which were financed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly?

Commissioner for Youth and Sports & Ors (Mr. C. Agathe): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House that during the last election of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly held in December last, the people of Rodrigues a voter pour le *changement et changement veut aussi dire changement sur la facon de gouverner, la facons de voir les choses et sans oublier la facons d'excuter les choses. Le chômage a toujours été un problème majeur à Rodrigues.* According to digest on statistic on Rodrigues for the year 2005, *la population actuelle est 36, 994 quand il aurait du être 41,674. La question qu'on se pose ou sont passer tous ces jeunes car ils ne sont pas morts. La réponse est qu'ils sont immigrés. Il y a certains qui sont retournés mais d'autres qui sont parties pour toujours. En voyant cette tendance Monsieur le Président en tant que patriote et responsable nous ne pouvons pas rester les bras croisés et laisser la situation se détériorer. Il faut dire aussi Monsieur le Président que ces jeunes qui se sont immigrés dans le passé partent sans même savoir ou ils vont exactement, c'est pourquoi nous avons pas mal de nos compatriotes qui habite dans des longer a Maurice, Carreau Caliptis, en bas la rivière a Roche Bois ou d'autre place malfameux.*

As indicated in my reply to Parliamentary Question B/100, the number of unemployment in Rodrigues has always been increasing and already reached an alarming state which exceeding 3000, when we took office in December last year. To tackle this issue effectively and to reverse this tendency, we have had to change from a traditional and passive way of functioning of the Employment Office which falls under my responsibility, to a more dynamic and proactive approach, which actively aims at bringing job providers and job seekers to interface together to enable better access to training and job placement.

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It is in this perspective that my Commission headed by myself has been on several mission to Mauritius to meet and discuss the issue with the stakeholders in the mainland to identified the different ways to help the Rodriguan to become employable in their country of residence. We have been able to meet the Chairman and board members of Enterprise Mauritius, Human Resource and Development Council, SEHDA, Development Bank of Mauritius, the Ministry of unemployment and representative of empowerment programme. In addition I have personally liaise with potential private firms of good reputation, I underline the word “good reputation” Mr. Chairperson, Sir, particularly in the field of Call Centre operation to unable training and placement of our young qualified unemployed youth to act teller agents. Pending the installation of Call Centres in Rodrigues.n I have also visited a Call Centre operation at Ebene and have met the Chairman of BPO Infinity with also the Senior Adviser of the Prime Minister Mr. Jean Suzanne who have accepted to provide training and job placement to our young Rodriguans. Training and job placement in Mauritius is in line with the policy of the Government of Mauritius to encourage circular migration as a means to provide training and temporary job opportunities to our unemployed to acquire the necessary skills and to come back to participate and contribute in the economic socio development of their country. Among the firm which I have contacted the Chairman of the Infinity BPO has agreed to collaborate with the empowerment programme through the Human Resort Development Council to provide training and job placement to our qualified unemployed youth and has shown interest to install a unit of its operation in Rodrigues once our telecommunication connection is improved.

As regard to part (a) of the question, my Commission has played a facilitating role in the recruitment process and has organised radio talk and communiqué to sensitize potential candidates on opportunities being offered. my Commission has also organize a meeting with the Chairman of the Infinity BPO and the youth at Malabar Gymnasium on 26 June, 2007, to explain to them the details of call centre operation as this is quite a new subject. As at to date 44 candidates has been selected following two interviewing exercises which were carried out by the representatives of the Infinity Ltd.

The Rodrigues Regional Assembly is contributing to meet the cost inter island traveling by sea of the selected candidates following a decision of Executive Council as indicated above the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is meeting expenses for return sea tickets of the selected candidates, thus details are being table. **(APPENDIX V).**

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner for Employment, how many of those persons selected have yet received the payment for their transport to Mauritius.

Mr. J. C Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, 13.

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Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: It seems that 44 of them were selected and the Commissioner said that only 30 have been paid... 13. So, how can he account for the difference between 44 and 13?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the remaining 23 they have to send their receipt and account no in order to credit their account.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner whether he is aware that most of these persons are having problems; problem for lodging, problem for their stipend in Mauritius?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have been visiting these persons and this is not the case.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know at the time being how many of these persons are still at the Infinity? At the time being how many of 44 are still there?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, around 35.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has just said very proudly, with just a pride that circular migration is in his policy. Is he aware that the conditions that are given to persons going to work in Mauritius with the help of this Regional Government change completely when these persons are in Mauritius, being in the construction sector or even in Infinity? Is he aware that the engagement taken here in Rodrigues and as per the negotiation and the sort of incentive given to them to leave their family behind and the exact condition that they are suffering there is not the same, that they "*subir*" is not same?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to the reply that I have just said, the Executive Council is catering only for the sea fare and for those attached, accommodation etc it is under the purview of the trainees, it is not under the purview of the Executive Council.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commission admitting a political irresponsibility as regard to a project that he...

The Chief Commissioner: Point of Order. *M. le Président. The Member is casting false allegations, "Irresponsabilité politique"* Where is the political irresponsibility may I ask the chair? This is purely imputing motive Mr. Chairperson, Sir. According to the thinking of the Member, the Commissioner has done an effort to cater for the ticket, now the Commissioner should cater for the bed, for the toothpaste, for the shoes, for the comb and for everything for the person...

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Mr. Chairperson: You have made a point of order he is making his point of order.

The Chief Commissioner: It is clearly specified in the condition that it is not in the responsibility of the Commission to cater for all these matter and that any person should not Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I agree that there may be some problems...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, you have risen on a point of order, you've finish...

The Chief Commissioner: I will come later to make a Statement.

Mr. Chairperson: yes, you proceed. We had a point of order. You want to insist or it's o.k. you have to raise.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my point is that the Chief Commissioner is imputing motives of what I said. I want to have a self explanation. I never said that the Commissioner has to cater to the bed etc. My point as regard to political irresponsibility is that we are in a representative democracy where we represent the people of Rodrigues. When you are putting the reputation of the Regional Assembly in something we must make sure of the engagements. Otherwise it is between the Infinity and his persons and it is of the Regional Assembly it is questionable and it has to do with the responsibility of the whole Executive Council. That what my question because he admitted Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that as regard to what happen in Mauritius it is not his concern, that's why I was asking....

The Chief Commissioner: Excusez moi est-ce que c'est un *Point of Order* ou bien un débat ou un discours. *If you have a point of order, you raise you let the House rule. You are making a speech out of a point of order. Where do you want to go? You are making a speech out of a point of order. I am sorry to have tell you, you make your point you sit down and let the House rule*

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: But let me talk.

The Chief Commissioner: You want to talk one hour. You think my time is seeing by yours.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, time exhausted for this question. That is B/163.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have one more question on the matter.

Mr. Chairperson: One last because you have exhausted too much time on this question.

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Mr. N. Lisette: This will depend on the answer that is going to be given by the Commissioner.

Mr. Chairperson: No, you will not order me. I am going to allow you to put that question.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir...

Mr. Chairperson: No, no, I am not going to allow you. We stop with question B/163 and we break here for 45 minutes.

(At 12.45 a.m the sitting was suspended for 45 minutes)

(Resumption at 1.35 p.m with the Chairperson was in the chair)

FETE LOR QUAI

(No. B/164) Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Region Member for Grand Montagne) asked the Commissioner responsible for Tourism as regard to the “Fete lor Quai” organized by his Commission on every first Friday of each month, will he

- (a) state how many of such “Fete lor Quai” have been organized up to now;
- (b) table the amount of money spent for each “Fete lor Quai” stating clearly the breakdown of expenditure;
- (c) state the number of local artists who participated in the said activity;
- (d) state whether any group/artist from Mauritius or abroad have been invited to participate in the activity?
- (e) state whether any case of electrocution occurred during the last “Fete lor Quai”; and
- (f) inform the House of any other incident which occurred during the different “Fete lor Quai”?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the “Animation lor Quai” is organized in principle on every first Friday of each month in collaboration with the Commission for Arts & Culture so as to promote night life and entertainment among

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tourists and the Rodriguan population. Three “*Animation lor Quai*” have been organized up to now, namely on 1 June, 6 July and 7 September 2007.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the amount spent for each “Animation Lor Quai”. However, the amount spent for the last “*Animation Lor Quai*” has not been finalized yet. **(APPENDIX VI)**.

200 artists participated in the said activity.

No artist was invited from Mauritius. However, a group namely “Fight Apart”, which was in Rodrigues, and who expressed the wish to perform, was enlisted during the last “*Animation Lor Quai*”. This was done free of charge.

No report of electrocution has been made to my office nor at any Commission to date.

No record of any incident is available.

Mr. Chairperson: No, supplementary?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begu : One supplementary, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask to the Chief Commissioner whether this “*Fete lor quai*” has to do with only entertainment or also as a cultural activity?

The Chief Commissioner: As I said Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is organised with the collaboration of the Commission for Arts and Cultures and Statement we made to this House and answers to question, we said it is to promote entertainment as also to allow local artists of various field and styles to be able to have a forum to express their art.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begu : As such I would like to know how the selection of these 200 artists is being made for each “*Fete lor quai*?”

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don’t go into these details myself. There is an Organisation Committee comprising Officers of the Tourism Office and those of the Commission for Arts and Culture and they are free to choose among local artist those artists who are selected to perform. But in any case, any artist who wants the chance specific to participate they can write to the Commission for Arts and Culture or for the Commission for Tourism to say that they want to participate in the forthcoming events.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begu : What measures are being taken for these tourists to participate in such activities and after three events is the Chief Commissioner able to

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say whether there is any response from Tourist residences organisations who participated in this?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have seen much number of tourists in the events. However, I must express that the tourists, those who are informed from one or another they are able to come. But some hotels in their own interest they don't want the tourist to leave the hotel to go there because the tourist will go for dinner out, they will go to spent etc. some hotel and tourist accommodation, they tend not to encourage tourist to go there just to have a tourist staying and to have money at their premises.

DISCOVERY RODRIGUES COMPANY LTD

(No. B/165) Mrs. A. Perrine-Begue (First Local Region Member for St Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner as regard to the Discovery Rodrigues Company Ltd, if he could inform the House

- (a) When was it incorporated, the name of the shareholders and their respective percentage of shares held;
- (b) The composition of its Board of Directors, the name of the Chairman and the Manager;
- (c) state the amount of allowance, fees or salary being paid to them if any;
- (d) state the number of staff recruited, if any, their scheme of work and salary; and
- (e) table a list of all tourist attraction sites vested into the Company?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Discovery Rodrigues Co Ltd was incorporated on 15th November 2006. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly is the sole shareholder of the company with 100% of shares.

The composition of the Board of Directors of the company is as follows:

- (i) Mr. Robertson Mercure as Chairman
- (ii) Mr. Pritam Singh Mattan as Director
- (iii) Mr. D. Ragoobarsingh as Director
- (iv) Mr. Nigel Waterstone as Director
- (v) Mr. Louis Johnson Roussety as Director
- (vi) Mr. Henri Meunier as Director

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Mr. Robertson Mercure is the Chairman of the company while Mrs. Jinny Wendy Kan John-Begue is the Manager of the company.

The information requested is as follows:

- The Chairman – A monthly allowance of Rs 5,000
- Each Director – A monthly allowance of Rs 1,000
- The Manager – A monthly salary of Rs 20,000

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that only one staff has been recruited by the company up to now, namely the Manager. As I already mentioned, the salary of the Manager is Rs. 20,000 monthly. The scheme of work of the Manager is as follows:

1. To be responsible for the overall management of the Company;
2. To be responsible for the execution of policies in line with the objectives of the Company;
3. To be responsible to the Board for the running of the company and for the organisation, planning and control of the work of the company and its staff;
4. To formulate, define, review and update the Company's strategy of operations so as to maximize revenue;
5. To coordinate and integrate the various activities of the Company;
6. To ensure strict compliance with all legislations and standards;
7. To represent the Company on designated institutions;
8. To ensure that the Board is at all times provided with necessary information regarding the operations of the company and to enable it to take decisions;
9. To carry out such other functions as may be delegated by the Board.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, only the site at Cavernes Patates has been vested with the company. The company has also been entrusted the responsibility for issuing visiting permits for Ile Aux Cocos.

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Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to explain the policy of the Regional Government with regards to the setting up of the specific bodies such as Discovery Rodrigues Co Ltd. The House would note that the Executive Council has decided to set up the following companies with specialized services and responsibilities:

1. Discovery Rodrigues Co Ltd – with the responsibility of developing tourist sites and ensuring effective and professional management of these sites;
2. Rodrigues Water Company Ltd – for the effective management of the water sector of Rodrigues in view of the forthcoming measure of having water being paid on rate;
3. RodClean Ltd – For the provision of scavenging and waste collection services for the island because our estimation for this year would have been 10 million rupees with private while a government company can do the job for less have the equipment bought and more people employed;
4. Rodrigues General Fishing Co Ltd –management of the “*Maison Des Pecheurs*” and the development of the fisheries sector of the island;
5. Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Co Ltd – for professionalised processing, packaging and marketing of local Rodriguan products.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the above sectors within which these companies have been set up, represents the main pillars of our economy. There is need for these sectors to be managed in a more professional and result-oriented manner. We need to do away with the systems and structures that have failed to deliver over the years. We cannot afford to continue leaving our population deprived of essential services or letting our structures prevent economic development of the island. The trend in public administration is towards productivity, efficiency and flexibility. These companies would be given specific responsibilities and would be required to deliver quality services and at the same time develop the sectors in which they are operating. In addition to the employment that these companies would create, they would also bring in the expected know-how and professionalized and cost-effective management.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have seen similar strategies adopted in the United Kingdom during its most successful periods of growth as well as in Mauritius during the 1980's. These companies will bring in the necessary investments in the sectors and through strategic partners the latest technologies and know-how. I am fully confident that these companies would pave the way for the development of Rodrigues and contribute towards the economic independence of our island.

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Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner when he speaks about developing the tourist sites, I would like first to ask him why since the incorporation of the Company only Caverne Patates has been vested into the company.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Caverne Patate was a government site and it could be vested in the Company while Ile aux Cocos is a nature reserve and as such it cannot be vested by the company. Only the access, the management of the access of Ile aux Cocos, shortly; as from the month of November they will issue tickets for Ile aux Cocos and they will help also for the embellishment of the site. Other sites which may be vested by the company will be studied upon proposal, upon the company I am going to take over these

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it doesn't seem serious to me that so much money is being paid for example as fees or salaries for the Members of the board and to the Secretary etc and that only one site is being vested in that Company. The Chief Commissioner is speaking about studying now, while the Company is already been incorporated. I am questioning about this issue Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and wondering why such a company incorporated with money being paid each month by the RRA for it, to only deliver permits and see access to some few tourist sites which have not yet been even indexed.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member is again speaking without having all the relevant information. I have said it is not necessary for Ile aux Cocos to be vested in the company. It is access the to Ile aux Cocos which is vested and as such the revenue will go to the company and the revenue of the entrance ticket at the Caverne will go to company and according to our pre-visibility study we can pay for what is being paid as cost salary etc in this company.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Can the Chief Commissioner say how much revenue we have had and an approximate sum of revenue coming from these sites he is mentioning?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Discovery Rodrigues has not yet started to build entrance to Ile aux Cocos and to Caverne Patate. From the information we have Ile aux Coco have generated about Rs 400,000 as permits; Rs 200 a permit Ile aux Cocos and Caverne Patate. But when we will apply the fee per persons here, it is obvious that there will be more funds available and we expect that profit will be made in the first years.

Mr. N. Lisette: I listen carefully to the Chief Commissioner, it is clear now that the Company is not financially autonomous. Is there a target that has been set by the Commission for Tourism to go there with the Company as regard to the financial autonomy of this company?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. It is obvious that we have embarked ourselves to something which will not be sustainable over the long term. You don't expect the company to make profit on his first, second or third or fourth years. I have told you I am confident according to figures that have been worked out by my office that the company will be able to meet its cost and that it may be profitable in the first year itself. In any case, the Regional Assembly will support this Company in its first year and we must not only look at the cost and profitability that the service which is being rendered and the social implication of the Company.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Being given that the Company's main objective has to do with development of tourist site, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner when the Executive Council namely the Commission for Tourism considers coming forward with a comprehensive list of tourist attraction site which according to me is a major tool and the major information for the creation of this company in the first place?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member would like a baby to run before the baby start walking. Let us allow the baby to start walking and then when the need come he would run Mr. Chairperson, Sir of course. Nothing tomorrow prevents us vesting the access to the different nature reserve, to the different marine parks that are under way to be vested in this Company. I don't know what can be vested in the Company tomorrow. At my office we are even thinking of vesting the promotion of tourist Rodrigues destination as a tourist destination to that company because they are more flexible of entering into contract, into printing documents, into sending reports abroad etc all these are in the scope of the company but we have to give to the Company latitude to work. The Company has only one employee as at to date, they are in the process of recruiting more persons so let the company start walking before you request them to run.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, one last question. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner about the speciality of the persons recruited for example the Chairperson and the executive secretary as regard to the nature of the job that is expected by the company to be done?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chairman is an ex Commissioner, an Adviser to myself and the person who has been designated following interview and appropriate recruitment exercise that person I think hold a license in administration économique and I don't think why she is not qualified. She has been working Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at *A nou Diboute Ensam* something like that, at Rodnix Ltd and she is fully qualified and we trust her that she will be able to bring the management affairs of the company to the respected Member. First of all she is a

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woman Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and you should feel honored. Listen to me, you should feel honored that a qualified Rodriguan woman is being given the chance to take over a company of such importance, you should applaud.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner if there is a public private partnership which exists between that company and with other company dealing with natural conservation like the giant tortoise at Anse Quito who is managing the case in the south west of the Island?

The Chief Commissioner: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

MONUMENT DE L'AUTONOMIE

(No. B/166) Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué (First local Region Member of St Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture as regard to the “*Monument de l'Autonomie*”, can he inform the House if the Regional Monument de L'Autonomie” in Rodrigues and if yes, to state the cost and reason thereof?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the information is as follows; The Regional Government have no project to erect a new “*Monument de l'Autonomie*”. In fact my Commission has decided to erect a monument just to commemorate the 5th anniversary of the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly under the theme “*Fiere d’etre Rodriguais*”.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: As Deputy Chief Commissioner number two of the Regional Government and as Commissioner for Arts and Culture, I would like to ask the respected Member whether he is aware that in the local press namely in the organ of the ruling party, it has been said that “*ene tas roche*” has been constructed...

The Chief Commissioner: I have a Point of Order. Questions Mr. Chairperson, Sir and I believe supplementary questions also I believe we should not refer to articles publish in the press; controversial issues.

Mr. Chairperson: These are basics. My ruling is done these are basics.

Mr. N. Lisette: I have a question Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Can I ask the Commissioner for Arts and Culture about the materials that are going to be used for the construction of that monument?

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The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, unless the respected Member has anything else in mind, I think a monument is made of concrete, or stones or rock, local materials o.k

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: I would like to rephrase my question because I consider it as very important as regard to the matter of policy and cultural heritage and cultural framework and policy. I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether there is any controversy or any problem as regard to his party and as regard to this monument de l'autonomie?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think the Member is imputing motives this is not allowed.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, this prerogative belongs to me only. So, I did not even have time to understand the question when you were on your feet but as you rightly said this can't be allowed this question but you can reformulate it if you wish.

(interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: You've got another question. But I would like to point out one little thing in response to what she said from sitting position is that any imputation on parties which do not really pursue for within our Standing Order no. 36. This is right but the higher imputation is you have to understand well the whole formulation of the question in order to perceive that.

PAYMENT OF BAD WEATHER ALLOWANCE

(No. B/167) Mrs. A. Perrine-Begue (First Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner with regards to the payment of bad weather allowance to fishermen in Rodrigues will he

- (a) state whether any Communiqué or press release has been published or broadcasted recently informing them of a new mode for recording their attendance; and if yes
- (b) state whether the computation of attendance will no more be taken into consideration for payment of bad weather allowance in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the answer to part (a) is yes. We have reviewed the system of computation of attendance for the payment of bad weather allowance and registered fishers will have to stamp their cards from the 1st to 8th of each month in any of the three fisheries posts. Attendance will be taken on a random basis as it is the case in Mauritius.

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This measures will alleviate registered fishers from the cumbersome system of taking attendance everyday and allow the Fisheries Protection Service to move back not less than fifteen Fisheries Protection Officers from Fish Landing Stations to Fisheries Post and introduce a 24 hour and 48 hours off duty system at Petite Butte and Graviers Fisheries Posts, in addition to Pointe Monier Fisheries Post. This will allow us to strengthen the control of illegal fishing in Rodrigues.

The seven General Workers which were working as taking the attendances, having special assignment will monitor attendance of fishers under the supervision of Senior Fisheries Protection Officer posted in the three fishing posts.

Mr. N. Lisette: Being given that attendance are going to be done on a random basis may I ask the Chief Commissioner to enlighten us on the mode of payment of these fishermen as regard to bad weather allowance, how is it going to be paid?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the mode of payment will be the same as it was. However, only the attendance which has to be taken once from the 1st to the 8th in each month will be taken into consideration instead of each day, daily attendance. This means that if somebody is not present at the random attendance he is taken, it means that this person is no longer fishing and he will not receive his attendance.

Mr. N. Lisette: May I ask the Chief Commissioner then, if in a particular month Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that fishermen on a random basis went through attendance for two days and there are fifteen bad weather allowance days during the month. How will the bad weather allowance be accounted for?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the problem here is not the number of bad weather days. The number of bad weather days will always be provided by the meteorological station o.k you got it. Now for knowing whether to pay a fishermen or not they will take into consideration, whether when attendance were taken at random he was present and this is in the advantage of the fishermen because they don't have to be present everyday. Some fishermen in the previous system had to wait. This system has proved to be very advantageous when introduced in Mauritius, we are putting the same system.

Mr. N. Lisette: I would like to know Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to this question of attendance and bad weather days is it based on a zoning system.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, actually we are not paying the bad weather allowance on a zoning system despite the fact that the aegis for the meteorological station a zoning system and I have to warn Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if you would allow me there is a case in court actually and if the court says that actually that we have to go back to the bad weather allowance system as before those people

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who have put this case, unfortunately this will be a very disadvantage of fishermen. Some people will receive nothing during most of the time, some will receive one day and some will receive two days. It will be at the benefit of the 160 or more out lagoon fishermen. I think politically you are measuring the whole scope of the action you are submitting in court.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Rest assured all our action has to do with the law and coming to the law specifically I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner when he said that this new mode of attendance and payment of bad weather allowance has been introduced and is working in Mauritius. Can he tell us since when this has been introduced in Mauritius and by which order, which delegation legislation or which law?

The Chief Commissioner: Fortunately, I am a bit young Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I don't know when this has been introduced in Mauritius and I must tell the Member that this is an administrative measure and there is no need to illegal background it is just an administrative arrangement made under the supervision of the Departmental Head, Commission for Fisheries.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: But Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the way it was done in the past it was done according to law and now it seems that the Chief Commissioner is saying that the law can be "*supplenter*" by administrative measures is that correct?

Chief Commissioner: I don't know which law the Member is talking. I don't know which law, which section of law I will be glad may be to interpret Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

FREE BOOK LOAN SCHEME

(No. B/168) Mr. J. D. Speville (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Education as regard to the issue of free books to secondary school students, will he state

- (a) whether the books will have to be returned to the appropriate schools;
- (b) the measures to be taken with regards to lost and damaged books; and
- (c) his policy with regards to granting of books to form IV and lower VI students?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the information is as follows:-

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- (a) the answer is yes.
- (b) lost and damage books will have to be refunded by pupils.
- (c) necessary arrangement will be made at the level of my Commission to grant books to Form iv and to lower vi students.

Mr. D. Speville: Being given that the parents of some students are having financial difficulties and some are found in Mauritius. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner if he can review his policy with regards to loss and torn books because instead of asking them to pay the price of a whole book it would be appreciable if a minimum fee could be asked from them for book repairs or book purchase.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I understand the respected Member. But if such measures have been initiated it is just to make parents and pupils responsible for the books..

Mr. Chairperson: Order, order, please!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: For the books which has been granted to them. So if ever there is no loss and no damage, so parents or pupils concerned don't have to worry at all. If however such things happened we will look into the matter. The financial situation of the parents of pupils we will have to look at it into a case to case basis.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner if the decision for form iv and lower vi students still stands good because as from now no information has been directed to on the possibility for these students who have a two year programme course to keep their books.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I need more information about that and I would like the respected Member to come later with a question.

WATER DISTRIBUTION - PT GABRIEL & OTHERS

(No. B/169) Mr. J. D. Speville (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources with regards to water sector in the villages of Pt. Gabriel, Eau Vannée, Malartic and Citron Donis will he state

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- (a) the number of water sources and their locations as well as the number of water distribution main pipes, feeding the villages of Petit Gabriel, Eau Vannée, Malartic and Citron Donis;
- (b) the frequency of the supply of water in the abovenamed villages;
- (c) whether he proposes to increase the production of water for these regions;
- (d) whether there has been any reshuffling of workers in the water sector in these regions, if yes; and
- (e) the number of workers in this sector together with their grades who have been reshuffled from these region to other regions during the year 2006 to date and why?

Commissioner for Agriculture and Water Resources (Mr. L.A. Perrine):

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the number of water sources in the different villages requested is as follows:-

Eau Vannée	-	12 units
Malartic	-	3 units
Petit Gabriel	-	3 units
Citron Donis	-	<u>3 units</u>
Total		<u>21 units</u>

Furthermore, I am also informed that the number of distribution mains, sub mains and feeder mains in the same region is as follows:-

Citron Donis	-	24
Malartic	-	20
Eau Vannée	-	14
Petit Gabriel	-	<u>13</u>
Total		<u>77</u>

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Moreover, I would like to add that the reservoirs of Petit Gabriel, Malartic and Citron Donis are provided with water as follows:-

- Citron Donis reservoir from Bigarade Pumping Station
- Petit Gabriel reservoir from Bassin Gallard borehole
- Malartic reservoir from Bassin Gallard, Le Chou and Malabar boreholes.

The frequency of the supply of water in the villages under reference varies between a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 15 days depending on the number of connections on each distribution sub mains and the supply is of 3 hours duration.

The answer is yes. I am pleased to inform the House that the following action has already been taken to increase water production for these regions:-

- (i) The desilting of St. Gabriel dam of a capacity of 4,000 m³ which is being carried out by Lax Mambai and Company is nearly completed. The water will be treated and pumped to Malartic reservoir. This will enable Petit Gabriel reservoir to be supplied with water from the borehole of Bassin Gallard on a 24-hours basis.
- (ii) The small dam at Eau Vannée which is supplied with water from two small springs namely Nane and William is being desilted and will be fenced. The water will subsequently be tested, treated and pumped into Petit Gabriel reservoir.
- (iii) Tender has already been floated for the airlift of all boreholes in Rodrigues. This exercise long overdue will eventually increase the yield of every borehole over the island and consequently increase underground water production.
- (iv) An aggressive campaign for rainwater harvesting will be launched shortly.

As regards to part (d), the answer is yes. I am informed that the number of workers concerned is as follows:-

- (i) 1 General Worker and 1 Gangman were reshuffled to the Commission for Agriculture as their services were required there. I must say that when I took the Commission their were Gangman without any game at all and so I have to reshuffle workers so that the ratio is gone to 20.

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- (ii) 1 Gangman has been promoted Senior Gangman and has been consequently called upon to perform higher duties at the Water Resources Unit.

Mr. D. Speville: Being given that the level of the borehole at Bassin Gallard has drop significantly, would the Commissioner seen to it that water from the borehole of Bassin Gallard be transferred to Petit Gabriel only because a high number of inhabitants and that of Malartic be fed only for the time being by Le Chou, Malabar and Latanier borehole.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: The borehole of Bassin Gallard is about 10m³ per hour and the number of consumer we have at Petit Gabriel is about 294 and I think it will be sufficient but any way I will look into the matter and we solve the solution there, the water crisis I will take necessary action to do the work.

Mr. D. Speville: Secondly, I would like the Commissioner if he can see into the possibility to provide the second part of Eau Vannée with the water which will be treated from the second part of Eau Vannee is having difficulty to have a frequent distribution of water at the time being from the Citron Donis reservoir.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: I have receive a letter I think from a girl of Eau Vannée telling me that there are twelve springs at Eau Vannée and nothing has been done to clear these springs. But what we are going to do; as from next week there is a team of workers going there to desilt and clear these sources and I can assure the respected Member that the solution in this region will be solve.

WATER SUPPLY - BAIE TOPAZE

(No. B/170) Mr. J. D. Speville (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources as regard to water supply to the region of Baie Topaze which also includes Camp Pintade, Pointe Palmiste and to the region of Corail which also includes Petite Butte, Corail Petite Butte, Vangasaille, Anse Quitor, Dans Coco, Cite Patate and Grand La Fouche Corail, will he state

- (a) When each of the abovementioned villages was last supplied with water for the two last times;
- (b) the frequency of which normally tap water is supplied to them;
- (c) if there has been any delay in the water distribution and if yes to give the reasons therefore; and

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(d) what steps have been taken to remedy the situation?

Commissioner for Agriculture & Water Resources (Mr. L. A. Perrine):
Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to section (a) the information is as follows:-

Camp Pintade	-	22, 24, 26 September & 03 October
Pointe Palmiste	-	01 October
Corail Petite Butte	-	11 and 15 September 24 to 29 September
Vangasailles	-	19 September 02 to 04 October
Anse Quitor	-	04 and 05 October
Dans Coco	-	01 and 05 October
Cite Patate	-	05 and 17 September
Grand La Fouche Corail	-	24 September and 01 October
Baie Topaze	-	01 and 05 October

I have to inform the House that depending upon the availability of water at Anse Raffin dam, the normal frequency of water distribution is every 10 days.

I have to inform the House that as Anse Raffin dam has reached the dead storage level, pumping of water from the dam has had to be ceased thus causing a delay of five to six days in the distribution of water in the region which is presently being supplied by water from Mourouk borehole at the rate of 15 m³ per hour.

I have to inform the House that to improve the situation, the tender document is being finalized for the installation of one prefabricated desalination plant at *Songes* which will provide an additional 250 m³ of water per day to the south westerly region.

Mr. D. Speville: I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether water which is being tap from Bassin Canne at Baie Topaze and distributed to villages in that region comply with International and National Standard.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, you want an answer or no.

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Mr. L. A. Perrine: Yesterday I had a meeting with all the villages of the region and they have requested to be supply with this water, not as potable water but to be use for cleaning and for other purposes. The water from Bassin Cannes which is a borehole and I will like to inform the Member that tender has also been floated and will be awarded next week for the installation of a desalination plant there this is what we call -----.... Water and that before the end of the year all the region over there about 8000 will be supply with potable water.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, has the villagers at Baie Topaze be informed that the water from Bassin Cannes is not for domestic purposes because from information obtained people is using this water for domestic purposes. They have not been informed that the water is not for domestic purposes.

Mr. Chairperson: Order please.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the villagers has been made aware and that to solve this problem we have seven fibre tank glass there which has been damaged and which has been left unattended. We have promised the villagers that these fiber glasses will be repaired and has as from next week, they will be provided with water from Mourouck in these fiber glasses that they can use to drink.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that the villagers for Cité Patate come to fetch water by boat at Dans Coco. I would like to ask the Commissioner what is being done to help these inhabitants during that seasons which is a dry season.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, I have just pointed out that the purpose of building the Anse Raffin Dam it was to solve the water problem in the south, unfortunately there is no water. As pumping operation has ...

(interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner

Mr. L. A. Perrine: As respected Member is insisted that there is water in Anse Raffin Dam I would like to circulate picture of the situation. There is no water.

Mr. Chairperson: You want to circulate how many photos? Only one with several copies, record only one. Show the photos to the Members and for the record sake, the photograph takes state its site. Which state it was?

(interruptions)

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Mr. L. A. Perrine: The situation will be remedy as soon as the desalination plant is being installed at Songes where we will provide about 250 m³ additional to the people in the south western region.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: I would like to ask the Commissioner for water resources regarding the funds which are available for those alternative measures which he has been announcing. Can he enlighten the House as regard to the percentage which is going to be use for the western region of the population as regard to the amount that has been allocated during this current budget?

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, two regions that are more affected by the water crisis it is the South and the North, Port Mathurin as for the central the situation is not that bad. So, desalination plant will be installed in the south to solve the problem in the south and also in the North. It is difficult for me at this moment to say what amount of money will be used. Whenever we see the quotation then it will be able for me to say what will be the cost for these installations.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am a little bit taken back by the answer of the Commissioner of Water Resources when he say it is the south and the north. Actually as far as we can see on the ground is that in the south there are a number of sources for example which are not been taken for example in Songes which is giving water to people. Is it the south or the western part of the region which is really affected?

Mr. L. A. Perrine: South westerly region Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

DESILTING OF DAMS AND RESERVOIR

(No. B/171) Mr. J. D. Speville (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources whether as regard to the desilting of dams and reservoirs in Rodrigues he will give a description of progress from Financial year 2006-2007 to date, a breakdown of labour and costs involved per each dams and reservoir desilted and those costs and labour which will be necessary to complete the works in the contractual specified time frame?

Commissioner for Agriculture & Water Resources (Mr. L. A. Perrine): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since the taking of office of this new Regional Government in December 2006, seven dams/reservoirs have been either desilted or ongoing.

My Commission started with the desilting of Bassin Gallard Dam where 10 m³ *la boue la vase was removed*. The works started in March 2007 and finished in May 2007. Works were carried out in-house and consisted of: -

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- (i) Removing all soil and debris from the impounding structure.
- (ii) Erection of Gabion at the inlet structure

The costs of materials and labour are as follows: -

- (i) Gabions used - 16 for an estimated costs of Rs 16,000
- (i) Broken Stones - 30 m³ for the sum of Rs 13,000
- (iii) Labour - Rs 280,000

The total costs associated with the desilting of this dam is to the tune of Rs 309,000.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the next dam was Cygangué one 1. Works at this structure started in February 2007 and finished in the same month. The scope of works consisted as follows: -

- (i) Removal of soil and rocks and other debris from the dam as well as upgrading works around the structure.
- (ii) Erection of a protective shed
- (iii) Erection of gabion structure to prevent further siltation
- (iv) Fencing of the perimeter around the dam area

The total costs associated with the renovating of this impounding structure are as follows: -

- (i) Gabions used - Rs 9,000
- (ii) Fencing used - 5 rolls Rs 37,000
- (iii) Galvanised poles - Rs 17,000
- (iv) Sand, rock sand and cement and other materials - Rs 1,900
- (v) Costs of labour force - Rs 91,050

The total costs associated with the renovation and desilting of Cygangué one is to the tune of Rs. 157, 000 for a storage capacity of 1,500 cubic metre of water.

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Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the next dam to be desilted was project which set the members as *gros maman* of Fond la Bonté.

The works carried out are as follows: -

- (i) Removal of soil, rock, plant debris and big trees of more than 20 years old
- (ii) Upgrading to the dam structure
- (iii) Erection of gabion inlet structure
- (iv) Erection of gabion wall on the dam bank
- (v) Reinforcement of racing floor
- (vi) Erecting of stone walls
- (vii) Fencing of the dam area

The works consisted into two phase, phase one which consisted of removing of soil, rocks and all debris started on the 27 January 2007 and ended on the 3 February of the same year.

- (i) Cost associated with the transportation of silt from dam which was contracted out is to the tune of Rs 481,000
- (ii) Cost for labour Caterpillar Operator and lorry loaders is to the tune of Rs 57, 000.

The total cost for the 1st phase is to the tune of Rs 538,000.

Phase two consisted into the erecting of gabion inlet structure, gabion wall, stone walls and others started in June 2007 and ended on the 15 September 2007.

The costs associated with this part of work are as follows:-

- (i) 291 Gabions used - Rs 291,000
- (ii) 10 Gabion mattress - Rs 15,000
- (iii) 815 m³ broken stone - for the sum of Rs 350,000
- (iv) 10 m³ Rock sand - for the sum of Rs 6,000

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- (v) 10 m³ Aggregates - for the sum of Rs 3,000
- (vi) 70 Cement bags - for the sum of Rs 14,000
- (vii) 250 Kg Galvanised wire - for the sum of Rs 20,000
- (x) 20 bars Iron Bars of 8 mm- for the sum of Rs 3,000
- (xi) Contract for the excavation works (hired excavator on two occasions) to removed mud, soil and other unused materials: Rs. 28,000
- (xi) Labour force, salary and overtime: Rs. 580,000

The total cost for both phases of the program for the desilting and reinstating of Fond la Bonté Dam is to the tune of Rs 18, 000, 000.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the next project that this Regional Government carried out is the desilting of Letchis Dam. Contractors were requested to submit their quotation on a unit rate basis, i.e to quote for each meter cube of soil and debris to be removed. The scopes of works were as follows: -

- (i) to excavate in any type of soil including rocks, boulders and any materials found in the dam so as to obtain the required capacity and to cart way all debris as directed by the Senior Technical Officer of the Agricultural Department.
- (ii) to remove all obstructions from the outlet of the dam

The costs associated with the desilting of this impounding structure are as follows: -

- (i) Soil, boulders and plant materials removed within the dam and surrounding 90 m³ for the sum of Rs 38,000
- (ii) Erection of a protective wall within the dam and surrounding for the sum of Rs 19,000

The Total associated with the desilting and reinstating of this structure is to the tune of Rs 50, 000

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the next project is the desilting of St. Gabriel Dam for the production of an additional 4,000 m³ of water. The works consist of:-

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- (i) Excavation in any type of soil including rocks, boulders and other materials so as to obtain required storage capacity and carting away of above materials as directed by the Engineer. After tendering procedures, the contract have been awarded to Laxmanbhai & Co (MTIUS) Ltd for the sum of Rs 285, 000).

As to date the works is ongoing and the project is supposed to be completed in two weeks' time.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the next project of my Commission was to desilt the impounding structures at Moricco and Cygangué II. The works consisted of: -

- (ii) Excavation in any type of soil including rocks, boulders or any type of materials found in the dams so as to obtain the required storage capacity and carting away of above materials as directed by the Engineer in Charge Water Resources.

After tendering procedures, the contract has been awarded to the Contractor Mr. Berchman ROSE at the rate of Rs 200 per m³ of debris removed.

The last but not least of project that my Commission is engaged into is the reinstate of Baie Topaze ancient dam which was constructed 1967 by Mr. Dellet into a Rain Water harvesting structure. The works consist of excavation of soil, rocks, boulders and plants debris from an ancient dam and to install a Geomembrane within the dam structure to retain water.

As to date the removal of soil and debris has been completed and works for the preparation of the pond to place the geomembrane layer by the contractors is ongoing.

In addition works to the river course for diverting water during heavy rainfall, thus protecting the geomembrane layer is also ongoing.

The construction of the rain water harvesting structure is expected to be completed by December 2007.

As to date no money has been disbursed for this project. Excavation works have been carried out in house whereas transportation of soil and debris from the dam has been contracted out through tendering procedures. The cost for transportation of soil and debris is estimated to the tune of Rs. 500, 000. A provision of Rs. 1.6 Million has been made to for the implementation of this project.

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STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to make a Statement in connection with the fifth anniversary of the Assembly. As you are aware we are celebrating on this 12th October, 2007 the fifth anniversary of the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Members who sworn in the first anniversary of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on 12 October, 2002 will recall the immense pride the people of Rodrigues took the setting up of the House of our Assembly and the different institutions. Since that day much has been done and many things have occurred. There is the land mark of the breaking up of the majority of the first Regional Government around August 2006 and the dissolution of the Assembly followed by the General Regional Assembly elections of the 10th of December, 2006.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what is relevant is that the Assembly has worked and that all those to whom responsibilities have been entrusted have been doing their utmost to carry out their duties and functions. Over these five years Rodrigues has integrated into its political and administrative structure the different provisions of the constitutional changes that were brought about to bring local Governments and democracy to the people of this Island. This task of learning and capacity building is now bearing its fruits and all the institutions are in place. We must now endeavour to use these tools to consolidate the economy of the island and to achieve independence and thus a higher standard of living for the people. No doubt this is a challenging task but I am confident that with the existing collaboration of our partners, specially the Central Government, the Civil Society and the private sector, we shall leave up to our expectation.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rodriguans must be proud of this Assembly. We have to get the people to become serious about what is going on here on the agenda of the House. The interaction must be more active between us and the people and at the same time as leader of this House and following fruitful experience gains at the Tobago House of Assembly, I propose to bring in more debates through Motions and Commissioners will be invited to bring to this House, to promote the exchange of views on various matters of policy for which we are responsible.

Finally Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am glad to confirm that his excellence President of the Republic will be guest for the celebrations of our fifth anniversary. May I invite the people of Rodrigues and Members of the House including Members of the opposition to participate fully in this celebration and to take pride in our Assembly. Thank You Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

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THE RENAMING OF PLAINE CORAIL AIRPORT AS THE SIR GAETAN DUVAL AIRPORT PLAINE CORAIL

The Chief Commissioner : Monsieur le Président, permettez moi de faire une déclaration a la suite qu'on a renommé l'aéroport de Plaine Corail en l'aéroport de *Sir Gaetan Duval Airport*. I have to inform this Assembly, the Report has been vested in the Central Government and the renaming of the Airport is the priority of the Central Government. The late Sir Gaetan Duval has made a remarkable contribution to the development of Rodrigues particularly in the Tourism Sector, Rodrigues and Mauritius. I wish to point out that Sir Gaetan Duval was closely associated with the initial construction of the initial airway for Plaine Corail Airport. He was the person who initially inspired the Rodriguans and we recall that he was after the Court ruling in the case Roussety Justice Attorney General that the Supreme Court rule that Rodrigues should be included in the electoral boundaries thus giving Rodriguan for the first time the right to vote in 1967. Sir Gaetan Duval was one of the first counsels who came to Rodrigues to defend persons prosecuted in Courts. He was also a Member of Parliament elected in Rodrigues and he was beside the creation of the Ministry for Rodrigues in 1976. Sir Gaetan Duval helped in the upliftment of the living condition of the population, especially through the implementation of a number of social projects, such as housing for the vulnerable groups, construction of Area Health Centres, the provision of electricity and water supply and the digging of the first channel to Port Mathurin. Henceforth, the Airport will be known as Sir Gaetan Duval Airport, Plaine Corail.

Today is in fact the 77th birthday if he was still here of Sir Gaetan Duval.

Thank you.

ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY HIS COMMISSION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RRA

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have the following Statement to make as regard the different activities that my Commission has decided to organise to mark Rodrigues Day 2007. Each 12 October the Rodrigues Day is celebrated with great enthusiasm amongst the population. This year to fifth anniversary of the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the theme chosen is "*Fiere d'être Rodriguais*". As such my Commission has decided to organise various activities to commemorate the Rodrigues Day as follows:-

On 21st September an elocution contest on Rodrigues "*5 ans d'autonomie qu'elle avancer*" was organized for students of Form iv and Form v. the aim of the competition was to enable pupils to express themselves of the various aspects of Rodriguan life and the development taking place in the island and the same time

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develop their communication skills. A poetry and drawing competitions were also organized for standard iv, v and vi pupils in September. The aim of the poetry competition was to give pupils the opportunity to develop their writing skills and at the same time enhance their knowledge of the cultural history of Rodrigues. A drawing competition was organized with the objective to enable pupil to develop their creativity through paintings as well as evaluate their cultural knowledge.

In addition Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a song competition on the theme “*Fiere d’etre Rodriguais*” was organized on 20 September with a view to foster among the public a spirit of patriotism and solidarity and also to encourage Rodriguan authors, composers to promote a cultural value of the island. The competition was organized in two categories namely for main for male and female singers. 16 candidates participated in the competition. The final was held on 6 October, 2007 at the Cultural Leisure Centre, Malabar.

The final of the Drama Competition which was launched since August 2007 was also held on 6 October, 2007. 12 entries were received. The theme chosen was “*Probleme société dan Rodrigues*”. The main objective of the competition was to sensitize people on the problem affecting the Rodriguan society, to enhance and promote drama activities in Rodrigues.

From 8th to 10th October a three day exhibition on the services offered by the Commission of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is being organized at the parking area in front of the Human Resource Centre. I take this opportunity here to say that although all of them were invited, it was regretful to see that none of the opposition was present yesterday. The objective of the exhibition is to:-

- (i) Showcase the services offered by each Commission of the RRA
- (ii) to provide more information on the services offered; and
- (iii) to enable the public to know where to address for a given service.

On the 12th October the renovated administrative block will be inaugurated at 9 hrs in the presence of the guest of honour for Rodrigues Day, the President of Republic of Mauritius, the Honorable Sir Aneerood Jugnauth. Thereafter the monument marking the 5th anniversary of the setting up of the RRA will be unveiled. At 10.30 hrs, the message of the Chief Commissioner on the occasion will be read by guest of honour all Primary Schools. On the same day at 14 hrs the public debate on the theme “*Rodrigues 5 ans d’autonomie qu’elle avancer*” will be organised. Of course you will be invited and you will be asked to participate. In addition at 18 hrs an Award night will be confer a title of honory freemen to personalities and

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institutions to award “*medaille de reconnaissance*” to citizens, public officers and organizations.

On Sunday 14th October an official ceremony will be held at Camp Du Roi as from 13 hrs followed by a football match at 15 hrs.

Thank you for your attention.

THE POLICY OF HIS COMMISSION IN RELATION TO WATER SECTOR

Commissioner for Agriculture & Water Resources (Mr. L.A. Perrine): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to apprise the House of the present water situation in Rodrigues as a caring Government so as not to put politics on water. Presently, under the appropriate measures that we are going to take to cope with the situation in the coming dry month. Presently, water for Rodrigues is being supplied by surface of water through river, dams and springs. The total production has decreased and theoretically our demand is about 9000 m³ per day but we are producing only 4500 m³. Rainfall during January to May which is the wettest month has been below the normal. The actual total water available per day is about 4600 m³. Production of yield is expected to decrease in the remaining dry month. The present yield of surface water..

(interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Please wait Commissioner. Until all the persons are silent. OK, you may resume.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: the present...

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait. Mrs. Arlette Perrine-Begué it is not the place to moan here but you have at least to stay silent when the Commissioner is talking, it is not too much asking.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: The present yield of surface water is alarming in a decrease of more than 60%. The main source of potable water is from abstraction from river Mourouck whose yield is about 1500 m³ per day during wet season and 800m³ during normal dry season. The present yield is only 500m³ per day. Recently Anse Raffin was constructed to improve the supply. The normal abstraction from this dam is 600 m³ per day. The level of water as I have said earlier is so low that we have stopped pumping operation. The total yield of surface water presently is about 1700 m³ per day. Moreover, with the coming of the dryer month's borehole production is also likely to decrease drastically.

Consequently, the situation in Rodrigues concerning water supply distribution is being closely monitored and Water Monitoring Committee under my chairmanship

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is having weekly meeting to avoid a chaotic situation. There are no available spare resources either underground or surface which can be exploited. However, all abandoned springs which can be clean and exploited for water supply are being envisaged. Even though yield of these resources are negligible and may not be of much help. With the scarcity of water and the increasing demand for potable and irrigation water, harvesting rain water is one of the most economical way to solve the water crisis. The water harvesting unit has already been set up at my Commission and a project to harvest rain water at specific places including old government building is under consideration. An aggressive campaign will be shortly launched to sensitize the whole population on this issue.

In view of the difficult situation it has been recommended that the only way immediate solution is to install pre-fabricated desalination plant at two strategic location:

- (i) one at Port Mathurin to cater for essential services like hospital and other important activities;
- (ii) another one to supplement for considerable short fall of water in the Anse Rafffin dam. The capacity of these plants have been decided taking into consideration the install cost, running cost and volume of water required and also the availability of the plant. It is moreover propose that plant of the capacity of 250 m³ per day is the most appropriate. Long term solution – additional volume of water can be obtained by construction of more storage dam at sight such as Pistache. This will involve mobilization of huge amount of fund and the construction of such dam may take some years to be completed. Thank you Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: I beg to move the Assembly to be adjourned to Tuesday 13 November, 2007 at 10.30 a.m.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: I understand one Member want to intervene. Yes, you may now.

ADJOURNMENT MATTERS

PROBLEM OF STRAY DOGS

Mr. D. Speville: M. le Président, on ne peut pas rester insensible aux souffrances des gens. Le 22 Septembre c'était la veille de la première communion dans la paroisse de St Gabriel. Une vieille dame très débrouillarde de nature, est venue me voir en pleurant. Elle venait me solliciter de l'aide pour l'achat des brioches pour la Première Communion de sa petite fille dont les parents sont partis à Maurice pour travailler. Pourquoi en pleurant M. le Président? Après l'avoir questionné, elle m'a dit que les deux moutons qu'elle devrait vendre pour financer la communion de sa petite fille avaient disparus. Mais où sont passés les deux moutons ? Dans le ventre des chiens errants M. le Président?

M. le Président, on dit que le chien est l'ami de l'homme et de la femme mais actuellement à Rodrigues nous voyons que les chiens agressent, voire tuent, les animaux tous les jours. Si on ne fait rien maintenant, on se retrouvera dans une situation de mort d'homme plus tard. Si ce risque existe aujourd'hui, c'est bien dû à une indifférence généralisée et d'une inconscience certaine face à la question des chiens errants à Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will remind the House that in my capacity as then Commissioner for agriculture, I chaired a committee for agriculture and the MSPCA (The Mauritius Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). We had looked at this problem of stray dogs in a holistic manner and came out with a series of recommendations. The Committee found that stray dogs are a nuisance to the population as they are not helpful at all as development of tourism is concerned.

Les chiens errants sont responsables de problème d'environnement, de problèmes de santé et des problèmes de sécurité. Toutefois les problèmes de chiens errants se pose de manière plus aigues sur des places publiques, dans les hôpitaux, dans les écoles, les plages et dans les hôtels. Comme je viens de dire cela affecte d'avantage le développement touristique. On a vu qu'il y a même des chiens qui habitent la plage. Pendant la journée, ils sont nourris par des pique-niqueurs, et le soir, ils convergent vers les hôtels. La Commission de l'agriculture de l'ex gouvernement régional OPR avait commencer par un travail de partenariat avec la MSPCA de Maurice en passant par l'enregistrement des chiens. Tout cela devrait aboutir par un projet d'installation des trappes pour les chiens sauvages, dans différentes régions de l'île, la formation des *dog catchers* et d'un *dog pound at Grenade* pour éliminer et contrôler les chiens errants à Rodrigues avec la mise en place d'une instance pour contrôler les chiens à Rodrigues par rapport à la mise en place d'un nouveau règlement qui émane du MSPCA (*Officers and Powers and Protection*) Act. Même la transformation d'un véhicule pour le transport de ces chiens avait déjà été initiée.

M. le Président, je dois encore ici signaler que les répercussions des chiens errants sur l'élevage deviennent de plus en plus grave des jours en jours. Les chiens errants mangent des moutons, des cabris attaquent des bœufs. Cela a une répercussion très lourde sur l'élevage et on peut dire que le cheptel de moutons et des cabris va continuer à diminuer parce que les chiens entrent dans les troupeaux égorgent les moutons et c'est tout un troupeau qui est fini et cela a une répercussion négative sur l'économie du pays. C'est pourquoi le gouvernement régional OPR avait cru bon de travailler dans ce sens.

M. le Président, en effet, la loi est vieille de 1971. Aucune prévision n'existe pour différencier chiens de race et autres types de chiens. Ni pour réglementer « l'élevage sauvage » des chiens et encore moins pour des dispositions adéquates pour gérer le problème des chiens errants et dangereux. Jusqu'ici le chien a été pour majorité des Rodriguais, un animal assurant le gardiennage.

Désormais, tout le monde veut un joli toutou, entendons un molosse, pour susciter la peur et éloigner les voleurs. Pourtant les choses ne sont pas aussi simples que cela.

Il est important aujourd'hui de donner une identité à nos chiens. C'est pourquoi l'ex Commission de l'agriculture a délivré environ 5200 médailles et des colliers pendant les enregistrements des chiens. Valeur du jour, on peut dire que le suivi est très lent. On est d'avantage conscient du bien-être animal à présent. Il importe toutefois de savoir également que l'éducation du chien révèle la responsabilité du maître. Pour cela l'ex Commission de l'agriculture avait commencé à entamer une campagne de sensibilisation en collaboration de la MSPCA, les medias et des affiches. Monsieur le Président, la principale préoccupation aujourd'hui et de rationaliser la fascination des chiens. Il y a une grande méconnaissance de la psychologie des chiens à Rodrigues. Tout le monde veut un chien sans savoir comment le contrôler. Certaines personnes aussi garde un chien pour faire joli dans sa cour. Mais c'est comme si on acheter une scie électrique sans le manuel d'utilisation. Or chaque race de chien a été crée pour des raisons spécifiques. On veut le plus beau chien, mieux dresser pour attaquer. C'est celui qui est derrière la laisse qui est le maître. Autrement, c'est l'humain qui rend le chien féroce.

Désormais, la priorité est d'éduquer les gens. Chaque passionné de chiens plaide en ce sens. La contribution des medias serait une bonne chose dans cet exercice de sensibilisation. Avec plusieurs milliers des chiens, ont doit parvenir rapidement à rendre chacun pleinement conscient de ses devoirs.

On est arrivé à la conclusion que le monde moderne n'a pas suffisamment de temps pour les chiens. De surcroît, on commet toutes sortes d'excès. On enlève le chiot de sa mère prématurément. Il n'aura pas eu non plus suffisamment de soin de

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son maître avant d'être adopté par le nouveau maître. Une fois dans sa nouvelle demeure, ce n'est pas toujours qu'on lui donne l'affection et la chaleur humaine dont il a besoin. Ou encore, on tente de dresser un chien avant qu'il ne soit prêt. Il est bon de noter que tout éventuel maître de chien doit posséder une connaissance minimale de la psychologie canine avant de prendre un chien. Car le caractère du chien est déterminé par le traitement qu'il reçoit. Il ne sert à rien de nourrir un chien si on ne voit en celui-ci qu'un objet à faire peur. Le chien garde automatiquement son maître. C'est aux maîtres d'apprendre à le traiter. Le chien ressent ce que le maître veut communiquer mais l'inverse n'est pas toujours vrai.

M. le Président, tout ce qui relève du ramassage, de la maltraitance, de l'élevage des amendes etc tombe sous le MSPCA Act de 1971. Lorsqu'on reçoit une plainte, on se limite à communiquer à la police, l'identité du maître du chien. C'est tout. A Maurice lorsque des propriétaires ramènent des chiens dangereux, à la MSPCA on étudie s'il faut faire dormir (faire subir une euthanasie selon une méthode douce) au chien ou non. Mais tout est aléatoire.

La MSPCA a eu des cas des chiens réputés agressifs que le maître les avait laissés et qui ont été par quelqu'un d'autre qui trouve que c'est le chien est le plus doux qu'il est connu. C'est dire que c'est tout dans la manière de traiter le chien. Dans certains pays comme la France la loi a été modifiée pour prendre en compte le phénomène des chiens errants. Il faut aussi savoir que dans certains pays pour procéder à un type de chien il faut que le maître est plus de 18 ans ou alors en promenade le chien doit être muselé ou encore que des chiens subissent des tests de sociabilités avant d'être adoptés. La classification permet d'identifier des chiens qui ont des papiers et de ceux qui n'en ont pas.

C'est plus approprié pour résoudre des situations éventuellement conflictuelles. Il faut initier des lois adéquates sans basculer dans les extrêmes Monsieur le Président et en même temps il faut savoir qu'on n'est pas loin des agressions car le nombre de chiens potentiellement dangereux a augmenté à Rodrigues. En l'absence d'une réglementation claire nous aurons aussi à faire face à la question de croisement de race qui implique qu'on ne saura plus à quel type de réaction à avoir en face d'un chien car chaque race a un comportement. On a aujourd'hui une population d'environ 6000 dont 5600 sont enregistrés. Il est donc important de sensibiliser les gens. Souvent on a envie de prendre un chien encore faut-il savoir quel type de chien prendre. Aujourd'hui il y a une proportion à prendre des chiens agressifs or une fois le chien est devenu adulte et éventuellement incontrôlable on veut s'en débarrasser. C'est parce qu'au moment de l'adoption on a pas fait le bon choix. Il faut faire savoir à nos citoyens que les chiens ont besoin d'amour. On s'éloigne du traitement du chien attaché dans une cour et dont la fonction était d'aboyer pour prévenir l'arrivée des étrangers. Avec l'accentuation du phénomène des chiens qui le nombre grandissant des chiens bâtards et des roquets le phénomène de chiens errants continue à faire mal aux agriculteurs,

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éleveurs et autre. La loi existe mais peu de gens en tiennent compte pourtant cela cause outre de la nuisance publique en prolifération incontrôlée. La solution n'est pas dans le ramassage de chiens, la véritable solution est la stérilisation M. le Président. Mais c'est toujours insuffisant dont je crois qu'il faut prendre des mesures contre cela. Il y a le critère senti natal qui rentre en jeu mais je crois qu'il faut faire un choix. Il faut un changement dans la législation, il faut de nouvelle structure, de nouveaux règlements afin que nous puissions trouver des solutions et des moyens pour l'homme, les animaux et les chiens puissent vivre en harmonie.

A Maurice plusieurs instances comme Ministère de l'agro industrie, le Ministère du Tourisme et la MSPCA se sont regroupées en un front commun pour traquer les chiens errants. A Rodrigues le *ground work* a déjà été fait il fallait le poursuivre, mais pour l'instant que fait-on ? Est-ce qu'on attend que ces chiens commencent à attaquer les hommes pour réagir. Merci Monsieur le Président.

(Applause)

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will come up the next session with a Statement.* Mais permettez-moi M. le Président de dire quelques mots de la situation pour répondre aux Membres qui viennent de faire un *statement*. Vous savez à l'agriculture quand je suis arrivé concernant ce problème des chiens errants ce que j'ai vu, c'est simplement un dossier et il y avait discussion sur l'allocation pour faire le dog pound, soit à Grenade ou ailleurs. À ma Commission on prend des décisions et on ne reste pas trop longtemps sur ce projet. Pour dire qu'on a déjà pris la décision que le dog pound sera installé très prochainement à Montagne Plate et que déjà les trappes sont en préparation à l'agriculture et le mois dernier le Vétérinaire était à la radio pour expliquer pendant deux heures de temps toute la politique ce que nous voulons faire pour régler ce problème de chiens errants. Alors je vais venir avec un papier plus tard, mais ce que je peux rassurer la chambre, c'est que ma Commission est en train de faire le nécessaire pour que ce problème de chien errant soit réglé une fois pour toutes. Merci M. le Président.

(Applause)

Mr. Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

(On its rising at 3.00 hrs, the Assembly stood adjourned to Tuesday 13 November, 2007 at 10.30)

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WRITTEN ANSWERS

SEA CUCUMBERS

(No. B/172) Mr. N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Chief Commissioner whether any survey/research has been carried out by any institution/consultant on sea cucumbers in Rodrigues and, if yes

- (a) to state the name of the institution/consultant;
- (b) the period that the survey/research was carried out;
- (c) to state whether the institution worked with any local stakeholder;
- (d) to table a copy of the outcome of the survey/research; and
- (e) whether as regard to the outcome of the report, there has been any decision taken by the Executive Council with respect to the collection/fishing of sea cucumbers in Rodrigues?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (a), the answer is yes. The survey was carried out by the Albion Fisheries Research Centre.

As regards part (b) it was carried out from 15 to 28 July 2007.

As regards part (c) the survey was carried out in collaboration with the Fisheries Research and Training Unit and funded by the Mauritius Research Council.

I am tabling a copy of the report. **(APPENDIX...)**.

The Executive Council has decided to grant authorization to applicants for collection and processing of sea cucumbers for an initial period of 3 months. Specific and separate authorizations were granted for collecting and processing sea cucumber and both types of authorization are subject to terms and conditions specifying method and time of collection as well as the size of sea cucumber which can be collected. However, no collection will be allowed during the breeding season of the species from 01 January to 31 March every year.

Fishing of sea cucumber is not authorized in Marine Protected Area and Marine reserves that is English Bay, Grand Bassin, Ile aux Cocos and Riviere Banane.

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Three companies have been granted authorization to collect/process sea cucumber and 441 fishers to fish sea cucumber for the time being for period 1st October to 30th December 2007.

CENTRE FORMATION FOOTBALL

(No. B/173) Mr. N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked to Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports as regard to the different ‘Centre Formation de Football’ which were set up previously in Rodrigues, would he state:

- (a) whether they are still functioning and, if yes;
- (b) the number of stagiaires attending these “Centres de formation”; and
- (c) the place/s where they are being trained

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when I took office in December 2006, there was no Centre Formation de Football operating. I am informed that these centres have ceased operation as from September last year as most of the stagiaires have reached the age limit of 17 years old and were entering examination period. On my coming into office in December 2006, I have preferred to give priority to re-define the overall policy for the development of football and other sports disciplines, including the appropriate structure that needs to be set up, among which is the Centre de Formation. Same is presently under consideration and will be soon operational.

The question (b) and (c) therefore do not arise.

SPORTS ANIMATORS

(No. B/174) Mr. N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth and Sports, whether as regard to the sports animators employed on a sessional basis for the training of the different “*écoles de Sport* and “*Centres de Formation*” in Rodrigues, he would inform the House

- (a) of the number thereof;
- (b) whether there is any lateness in the payment of their sessional fees by his Commission and if yes, to state the reason why;

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- (c) whether he has recommended or intends to recommend for the recruitment of additional ones?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are presently 43 animators employed by my Commission on a sessional basis.

These animators are normally paid following authority from the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms for one financial year. Authority for the previous financial year has lapsed since the end of June 2007. A Request has been made to the above Ministry since May 2007 for the renewal of the authority. Unfortunately, same is being still awaited. Consequently, the animators have not been paid for period starting July to September 2007. They will be back paid once the renewed authority is received.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to further promote sports in Rodrigues, my Commission intends to recruit additional animators in the various sports disciplines. However, due to budgetary constraints, this can only be considered for the next financial year, i.e 2008/2009. For the time being, priority consideration will be given to swimming which badly needs at least one animator to provide assistance in view of the setting up of a Centre de Formation for swimming. Same is presently under consideration.

JUMP AROUND YOUTH CONCERT

(No. B/175) Mr. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports as regard to the organization of the Jump Around Youth Concert in 2007, will he for the benefit of the House

- (a) state the total amount of money spent for that event;
- (b) give breakdown of expenses for the organization of the Jump Around Youth Concert which occurred during the month of August 2007; and
- (c) give a breakdown of expenses for each of the Regional Concert organized which culminated to the Jump Around Youth Concert held in August 2007?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Jump Around Youth Concert held on 4 August 2007 at Camp du Roi Stadium was organized to mark the International Youth Day 2007. The theme put forward by the United Nations for this occasion was ‘be seen, be heard youth participation in development’.

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The organization of a concert was identified as a priority activity in the face of growing social problems such as alcohol, drug and AIDS which are affecting the youth. The activity was also a logical follow up of the 'Ballade de la Jeunesse Programme' which my Commission has organized previously throughout Rodrigues to sensitize the youth on these problems. In addition, the concert was also aimed at providing the youth with an appropriate platform so that they can be seen and heard in view of promoting their artistic talents and skills.

The main concert at Camp du Roi was preceded by a series of 3 regional concerts which were organized at La Ferme, Grande Montagne and Malabar respectively. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, professionalism and quality standard were the two underlying principles which have guided my commission during the organization of these concerts. It was important to encourage that maximum number of youth participate in the event. At the same time it was also important to ensure their good performance so that we can meet our objective of putting them at the forefront to get their skills recognized and solicited by relevant stakeholders.

This has therefore implied a lot of preparation in terms of sensitization, promotion and almost two weeks rehearsals. In addition, we had had to ensure an adequate standard of logistics and support to enable the artists to perform at acceptable level.

Total expenses of approximately Rs 639,052.90 have been incurred to enable us meeting the above objectives in the organization of the three regional concerts and the main one at Camp du Roi. The breakdown of the expenses as regards to part (b) and (c) of the questions is being tabled.

I am proud to inform the house that the success of these concerts has been beyond our expectations. A total of 280 artists have participated in the three preliminaries and 175 of them were selected to participate in the main concert at Camp du Roi. The approximate number of people attending all these concerts was around 9 to 10,000.

Our youth have shown an exemplary behavior as they have all complied with our instruction of 'No use of alcohol' during the concerts. The officers of my Commission have reported that not a single can of alcoholic drink was observed at Camp du Roi stadium after the main concert.

More importantly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the artists who participated in the concerts are now recognized and highly solicited to demonstrate in popular artistic activities which are being organized in Rodrigues, such as *Animation Lors Quai*, the Rodrigues Day among others. This has enabled them to earn some revenue and therefore a means to combat the impacts of unemployment.

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We want to go further and we are presently contemplating to publish their songs through a CD. I intend to seek the contribution of my colleague Deputy Chief Commissioner who is responsible for Arts and Culture in this respect.

- (a) Total Expenses incurred for all the concerts: Rs 639052.90
- (b) Breakdown of expenses for the organization of the main concert at Camp du Roi on 4 August 2007:-

Hiring of sound equipment with the service of a group of musicians and sound technicians for rehearsals, the three preliminary concerts and the Jump Around Youth Concert Rs 400,000

1.	Manufacturing and Erection of Fresque	Rs 32,620
	Rental of buses for artists	Rs 13,500
2.	Expenses for hostesses	Rs 13,890
3.	Expenses/Stipend to artists/dancing groups/official	Rs 63,650
4.	Lunch/Refreshment	Rs 22,063.40
5.	Banners & Posters	Rs 42,700
6.	Others	Rs 23,942.50
7.	Total	Rs 212,605.90

- (c) Breakdown of expenses for each of the regional concert prior to the Jump Around Youth Concert:-

(a) La Ferme

1.	Banners	Rs 1,950
2.	Refreshment for artists and official	Rs 4,040
	Total	Rs 5,990

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(b) Grande Montagne

1.	Banners	Rs 4,100
2.	Refreshment	Rs 7,500
	Total	Rs 11,600

(c) Malabar

1.	Banners	Rs 3,250
2.	Refreshment	Rs 5,607
	Total	Rs 8,857

PAYMENT OF SOCIAL AIDS

(No. B/176) Mr. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security as regards to the discrepancies in the payment of Social Aids, could the Commissioner inform the House where matter stand?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following the updating exercise performed by the officers of the Social Security and the Finance Section of my Commission in July 2007, a discrepancy in the payment was observed in the pay sheets and distribution register. This case was reported immediately to the Office of the Island Chief Executive and to that of the Divisional Commander.

Under the advice of the Chief Finance Officer, the matter has also been referred to the Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance with copies to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs, Director of Audit, Accountant General and the Secretary, Public Service Commission. During the month of September, Officers from Mauritius have led further investigations and I am informed that the enquiry is still ongoing.