

No. 2 of 2007

RODRIGUES

SECOND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 2 of 2007

Sitting of Tuesday 13 February, 2007

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

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2007

CONTENTS

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT MATTERS

MOTIONS

QUESTIONS

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

QUESTIONS (*Oral*)

- (No. B/1) - Administration and Management of State Lands in Rodrigues
- (No. B/2) - Land use and development
- (No. B/3) - Participation of a delegation of Rodrigues Regional Assembly at the Top Resa Deauville
- (No. B/4) - Mission of the Commissioner of Youth & Sports
- (No. B/5) - Dialysis Machines at Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- (No. B/6) - Appointment of Education Officers of REDCO
- (No. B/7) - Reshuffling of Officer in Charge at REDCO
- (No. B/8) - Free Book Loan Scheme
- (No. B/9) - Appointment of Advisers to different Commissions – December 2006 to January 2007
- (No. B/10) - Free Travel Scheme in Rodrigues
- (No. B/11) - Official vehicles attached to the Commissioners
- (No. B/12) - Incident at the Water Unit involving a foreman of the Water Unit and a consumer of Port Mathurin

- (No. B/13) - Hiring of sound equipment for the Rodrigues Creole Festival – December 2006
- (No. B/14) - Sports Féminin in Rodrigues
- (No. B/15) - Distribution of school materials to students
- (No. B/16) - Appointment of Consultant to study the transport Industry
- (No. B/17) - Conseiller Technique Régional for Rodrigues
- (No. B/18) - New Housing Programme
- (No. B/19) - Delivery of materials to the Elderly
- (No. B/20) - NHDC Housing Project
- (No. B/21) - Desilting of dams in Rodrigues

- (No. B/22) - Admission of Lower VI Students and Form V Repeaters
- (No. B/23) - Number of Public Officers since the setting-up of the New Executive Council
- (No. B/24) - Indian Ocean Islands Games in Madagascar – August 2007
- (No. B/25) - Mission of former Commissioner of Agriculture
- (No. B/26) - Termination of the Assignment of Mr. D. Hee Hong Whye

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

- **Commissioner Franceau Aubret Grandcourt**
 - Policy of Housing Sector in Rodrigues

MOTIONS

- **Chief Commissioner**
 - (i) Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulations 2007
 - (ii) Fisheries and Marine Resources
 - Marine Reserves Regulations 2007

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT MATTERS:

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Compensation of Rs 1000 to professional planters and farmers

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
Mr. Gaetan Jabeemissar	Deputy Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Consumer Protection, 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

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Mr. Chairperson - Lamvohee, Mr. Joseph Chenlye

Clerk - Toulouse, Louis Richard

Serjeant -at-Arms - Louis, Mr. Jorgenson

Announcements

Chairperson: First of all, I have to express my gratitude again to this House for having allowed me again to sit as Chairperson of this Assembly. It has been up to now since 2002 that I used to intervene at announcement's time in order to confirm some of the parliamentary practices that are obtained in this House or to confirm some points of the law. There is no reason why I should depart from this practice and I therefore have several announcements to make.

My first announcement relates to an article captioned "*le temps des règlements de comptes entre le MR et l'OPR*" which appears in the issue of *Le Mauricien* of 10th of February, 2007. The article relates amongst others to the motion of censure debated on the 9th of February, 2007; this is what the article says. L'OPR accuse Chenlye Lamvohee d'adopter un comportement de plus partisan. L'opposition voulait dénoncer les pressions exercés contre les membres du personnel de l'Assemblée en vue de faire de la place pour des partisans du MR. Le Chairperson a adopté un comportement inadmissible. Nous sommes en présence d'un arbitre qui sifflera systématiquement contre la minorité. My first remark is, probably towards the motion which is couched in the future as if the Assembly has to debate on my conduct. The Assembly will have to debate on what I am going to do tomorrow, today. And my second remark is this; the article is written in such a way so as to convey that I am the person who is responsible for the transfer of staff of this Regional Assembly. Well, this is unsown. Everybody is all aware that the responsibility is bestowed on the Island Chief Executive, the Head of our Secretariat, which is the Clerk. It is unjust, it is not normal to lay such things at my door. Secondly, the comments which appeared in newspaper is tantamount to a reflexion of my conduct and may constitute a breach of Section 61(5) of the National Assembly (Privileges, Immunities and Powers) Act which is of course, is applicable to our House. And I cannot, in my capacity as Chairperson leave this uncommented, because it goes directly to the dignity of this House. Of course, the conduct is illegal because it is in breach of the law and I will not pursue however the matter any longer.

My second point is what I understood to be one of the main arguments, of course and based on the Chairperson. The law of the Regional Assembly is not couched and had not borrowed the terms of the Tobago House and Assembly Act which said that the Presiding Officer could be ex-officio, a justice of the peace. Even though our law was inspired thereon, this provision has not been obtained but instead our provision has been aligned to what is obtained in Section 32 of the Constitution of Mauritius which allows the Assembly to elect a Chairperson or a Speaker from among the elected Members or otherwise. On this, there is a House of practice, House of representative practice which I happened to read, I quote "*practice in the House of Representatives has been to change the Speaker with a change of government. This provides a Speaker who is politically affiliated but who is required to be impartial to the Chair rather than a Speaker who is both independent and seen to be independent*"; unquote - I don't have to mention that the law concerning speakership had been changed

in 1996 when the actual Prime Minister brought the Constitution of Mauritius Amendment Bill which henceforth allowed a person for the first time; a person who is not a Member of the Assembly to be elected as Chairperson. Before that it has been invariable; it had been the law that it should be a member who can be elected to the Chairperson. Even though we have this amendment in Mauritius, we have since 1996 three changes of government and we have witnessed that in this change, it has been a different speaker and our practice that is obtainable here, aligned with the same with the system. And I fully agree with the practice, says that it provides for a Speaker which is politically affiliated but is required to be impartial to the Chair and I mentioned in my first speech that I will not belong to any party and I wish to make it back again.

My second announcement, rather my second point on this issue, is that the law also prohibits any debate on the motion for the election of the speaker. In 1996 during the amendment of the Constitution Bill by the Actual Prime Minister, I quote he said *"it is traditional that there should be no debate on the election of the Speaker so as to preserve the dignity of the House, by not debating issues of personality and the law in fact prohibits that"*.

My last announcement relates to the paper handed over to the Clerk by a Member of this Assembly during the sitting of the 9th of February, 2007. The paper purporting to be an extract copy of the Port Mathurin Diary Book. I had been able to cast a glance at the paper and I have noticed that the paper does not reflect the truth and have been manipulated. Yesterday, I went to the Police Station and made a declaration to that effect and I am confident that the Police would of course carry with duty the enquiries so that the truth comes out of it. On the paper it is stated that the declarant came on 12.40 and then Mr. Lamvohee came on 12.46 in order to accompany the declarant in his declaration while in fact the declaration started on 12.43. There are other entries that have been manipulated but since the matter is within the Police enquiry, I will leave it as such but I have to add that forging a document is a criminal offence and I take a very strong view about this. Not only that using a forged document is also a criminal offence under our law and will also constitute an offence if prosecute. This is all that I have to say. Thank you, very much.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the circumstances, may I request to move for a motion at Standing Orders 25 (1)(h).

Chairperson: You mention, I'm sorry, 25 (1)(h). Yes, in terms of the Standing Orders in relation, there can be a motion without notice. Leave is granted but I will draw your attention to Standing Order 15 concerning arrangement of business. I draw your attention to 15(1) raising a matter of privilege. Of course, permission is granted to you to move for a motion but I will pray that you raise a matter at the appropriate time if possible?

Chief Commissioner: Yes.

QUESTION (Oral)

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF STATE LANDS IN RODRIGUES

B/1: The Minority Leader (Mr. L.S Clair) asked the Chief Commissioner whether with regard to the administration and management of state land in Rodrigues, for the benefit of the House he would -

- (a)** state his policies, criteria and procedures for allocation of state land leases (residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and socio-cultural: and
- (b)** table the number and names of lesses, including location and date of application for a lease who received a letter of intent delivered as from the period of August 2006 up to date?

Chief Commissioner: (a) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I stated in my Regional Government Programme 2006-2011, in view of the exiguity of our island, land is in high demand for various purposes all competing among themselves and not always mutual exclusive. Of the 10,800 hectares of State land in Rodrigues, about 1,000 hectares is freehold. My Government realises that the balance has got to be judiciously utilized in the best interests of the population. We believe that in the immediate term, a rapid allocation of leases for productive purposes will help to facilitate economic development and bring economic growth on our island. The general policy of my government with regards to state land is therefore be to ensure an efficient and sustainable allocation of state lands while at the same time ensuring protection of our land resources.

The criteria that are adopted to determine eligibility for allocation of state land residential leases have been set as follows:

- (i)** The applicant need to be a Mauritian Citizen of at least 18 years old domiciled in Rodrigues;
- (ii)** He/She or spouse should not be a landowner or a holder of a residential lease or owner of a housing unit;
- (iii)** He/She who transfers his/her leasehold right will not be eligible for another lease.

The criteria adopted for allocation of industrial, commercial and agricultural leases is on a case to case basis depending on the feasibility of the project, the size of investments, the credentials of promoters, the importance of the project to our population and our economy, and the potential for creation of jobs.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the procedures for the allocation of residential leases have been set as follows:

- (i) Application forms are filled at the Land Section of the Central Administration.
- (ii) Applications are considered by my Office.
- (iii) Cases retained by the State Land Committee are referred to the:
 - (a) Land Section for enquiry; and
 - (b) Cadastral Office for visits and recommendation for final consideration by the State Land Committee and the Departmental Head responsible for state land.
- (iv) The recommendation of the State Land Committee and the Departmental Head are submitted to me for approval.
- (v) Approved cases are referred to the Cadastral Office for surveying, issue of letter of intents and drawing of leases which are signed by the Departmental Head responsible for land matters at my office.

Allocation of leases for commercial, industrial and agricultural purposes follows the same procedures except that the applications for commercial and industrial leases are sent to the Business & Investment Promotion Unit, under the Commission for Industrial Development, for an evaluation of the project and for recommendations, while applications for agricultural leases are sent to the Commission for Agriculture for assessment and recommendations.

- (b) With regard to (b) Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I am tabling the list of all the applicants who received their letter of intent from August 2006 to date. **(Appendix I)** The list includes the number and names of persons to whom a letter of intent were issued during the period and the location of the land. The information regarding the date of application is still being compiled and will be circulated as soon as it is ready. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Minority Leader: May I ask the Chief Commissioner whether during that period - August to December, 2006, whether the applications for state land get through the State Land Committee?

Chief Commissioner: The answer is yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Minority Leader: The composition of the names of the State Land Committee.

Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the State Land Committee is composed of the Departmental Head for Lands as Chairman, the Principal Surveyor and other Officers of the Cadastral Office, the Officer in Charge of Agricultural Services, the Officer in Charge of the Environment.

Minority Leader: I would like to ask the Commissioner who officially signed the letter of intent?

Chief Commissioner: The letters of intent are signed by the Principal Surveyor.

Minority Leader: The letters of intent were signed by Mr. and not by the Principal Surveyor.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is astonishing; the question the Chief Commissioner, the ex-Chief Commissioner is asking, I am still saying Chief Commissioner, he is not the Chief Commissioner. Mr or any Officer of the Public Service is authorised to sign on behalf of the Principal Surveyor. It must be checked whether he had signed on behalf, must be Surveyor for Principal Surveyor. This is the practice.

Mr. N. Lisette: May I ask the Commissioner whether with regards to the land which has been surveyed during the month of August 2006 to date, whether there has been any complaint from the population or from any person; when survey has been done on agricultural lease.

Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there have been complaints.

Mr. N. Lisette: What action has been taken from the Chief Commissioner?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have requested the Cadastral Office to enquire into the matter and not to allocate any lease on agricultural leases. May I put on record Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a case, two cases, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whereby the former Executive Council, former Commissioner for Land at Terre Rouge, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, prime agricultural land at Terre Rouge, prime fertile agricultural land had been surveyed by the Joint Venture Topsy Jeewah for the allocation of agricultural lease and when I visited we decided not to go ahead with this morcellement. Rs 60,000 has been spent and this money is lost because we cannot go ahead with this morcellement. The same thing has happened at Anse Goeland where without authorisation, without planning, the joint venture has gone into agricultural land and surveyed land lease on agricultural terms. This is a problem which has arisen which the former Executive Council did not give enough attention.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, given the fact that you know or that you have records, that agricultural lease have been surveyed just that you have been said for residential purposes, how come that your administration has allowed that the same thing happened? Because you had just confirmed that there have been complaints and effectively we know that a number of persons were growing their land and overnight their land had been delimited for residential purposes. How come that you did the same thing?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, may I repeat for the information of the Member that as far as possible, we have cancelled all morcellements or residential leases which have been made in agricultural plots. May I refresh the memory of the respected Member regarding policy

Chief Commissioner: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairperson, Sir May I remind the respected Member of the former policy whereby they gave on lease Pte Source, a reserve, apastoral area on lease for an hotel project.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has not answered my question. When I was asking him is how come that a number of persons because we know at Soupirs, Palissade Ternel, there are a number of persons whose leases land we use for agricultural purposes and these persons are unemployed, how come that overnight his Officers of the Cadastral Office went there to delimitate for other purposes on agriculture? How come, this is what I am asking this question.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member cannot ask a question in a cloud. Can the Member come with names, those names of the persons, areas and then may be we will answer. This shall form part on a substantive question.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner had just admitted that effectively there had been complaints which means that he knows these persons who had made these complaints. And here, I would like to scope or to mention the name of Mrs. Marie Chantale Casimir of Palissade Ternel who was planting on her land and now the land had been surveyed for other purposes.

Chief Commissioner: I will look into this case, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. May I invite the Member to submit the other cases that she has.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: In the same context, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like the Chief Commissioner, he had just admitted that there are a number of leases for which people had made complaints, that is, there had been re-rooted from the original purpose if he knows these complaints then he knows how many of them. Can he confirm how many of them?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not the type of Chief Commissioner who will look at every I am aware that problems have arisen regarding morcellement that were made by the Executive Council. I am not aware of individual cases. The Cadastral Office is there, if anybody has complaints about the agricultural land, they can go to the Cadastral Office, they can write to the Departmental Head, they can go to the Commission for Agriculture and complain that their land are being taken for residential purposes. But there is a problem, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, many people say that they have agricultural land, they do not cultivate it and one day when another person ask for a lease on it, that they say that it is their land. So, the question is, first, who are the complainants, the Cadastral Office must be aware of them and as soon as they are aware, they have to inquire and see whether it is really agricultural land and if it is agricultural land we have to preserve it.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner if all the letters of intent and all the land which have been surveyed so far, has been done on a chronological order because we have got information may be some persons who are 18 years old had already got a letter of intent. Has it been processed chronologically?

Chief Commissioner: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. It has not been processed chronologically because if it had been processed chronologically, some people would have been dead before they obtained their leases. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this means that the Chief Commissioner is confirming that he has picked and chosen people on the list without using the fairness or the chronological order which says that the order of application. This is injustice, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can you confirm in which way, why he chose people pick and choose on the list and he did not go through it according to chronological order of application?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am the Chief Commissioner of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and as a matter of fact, every Commissioner Executive Council at discretion, we call it discretion, at my discretion under hardship cases, we have allocated leases even though they do not have applications because some persons have always been turned down for their applications. Some persons have applied since ten years but when we enquire where is the application, they had no application record. How can you explain that one Mr. Simon Emilien of Graviers, an ex-soldier having served under Her Majesty Army, a British Army under the Second World War. That guy has 87 years old, and he had been applying for a lease over the last 30 years without issue. And when we came, all these hardships cases when they came to see me they explain, we enquired first, we asked the Cadastral Office to enquire and depending on their conditions, we gave them their leases.

Minority Leader: Is the Chief Commissioner aware that Mr. Simon Emilien, I did not know which name he did mentioned, has a problem with private. Well, could he found out; he has a problem with private land. So, that's why the problem could have been solved first.

Chief Commissioner: My problem, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. A person, a Rodriguan of 87 years old has his house at Graviers where he lives. He pays electricity for it. My problem is that he must have his lease and we have given him his lease. Just like many more families in Rodrigues which were being refused their leases by the former government. I am happy when I see all these families, when I go through some regions in Rodrigues, there was no house, the house was an iron sheet and wooden house, dirty house, very poor condition and now with their lease, they had been able to have a loan. They have been able to have an NHDC slab subsidy to cast their slabs. We are happy, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This side of the House is happy and the people of Rodrigues are happy with our land policy before and now.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the way that the leases had been given, not followed the practice, the chronological order of applications. We see that during the electoral period, this means that this are opened the procedures for traffic but like we say and the people has been said electoral bribery. Because how do we know that such and such person are having hardships. Is it only because these persons came over, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is it because these persons came over. And who tells the Chief Commissioner that those who did not come, were not awaiting patiently for their turn.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I repeat we are vested with land under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act. And the only Authority to grant a lease in Rodrigues, is the ultimate authority is the Chief Commissioner. And it is the Chief Commissioner who took decision, who signed approval of granting of leases. I take the responsibility and I challenge the Member to take any lease which has been granted and come to my office and tell me that lease is not justified, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

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

Chairperson: Yes.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: The word “challenging” is not parliamentary, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, challenging the Member. Mr. Chairperson himself gave the ruling in the past on this issue.

Chairperson: Order, please! There is a point of order! Of course, challenging another Member in the same House; normally it is not allowed. But after having listened to the full sentence that the Chief Commissioner said, in a sort of way invite the Member to bring the names of other cases in his Office. Well, I agree that the word “challenge” should not be used here but we should not take the word in isolation, we have to take it in the whole meaning. Yes, thank you.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I would like to add one more question. These hardships cases, how did the Chief Commissioner consider them, under which criteria and by which way. Because for hardships cases since there are procedures according to law, how land must be given in which way and fairness. How did he decide that such and such cases were hardships cases?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me enlighten the respected Member that there is no law at my Office guiding us regarding allocation of residential state land leases. There are administrative procedures which are set by the Chief Commissioner. Second, the Member should be aware that, all these hardships cases are people who are suffering and may be she is not aware from the period fourth until now. 4th August, 2006, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, until the end of the year, until the eve of the New Year, until today from 100 – 200 persons who are at my Office. And I am faithful to all these Members, Commissioners who came to help me to meet the expectations of these persons. We have to welcome them, listen to their problems and then deal with their problems. So, what does the respected member expect me to do? When a Member, an 87-years old person or a widow or a man willing to get married, a

policeman willing to get married or he is orally married with two children, very low age, the person is living at his family, the person comes to see me. He had just applied a year before. So, will I look chronological order or will I look at the condition of the person? The person is residing at his family's place, he can't have a loan because it is the same thing. I am a victim myself of this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since 1998. Since 1996, I personally asked for a lease. Only in 2003 that they themselves choose the place in spite of the fact that a place who had already surveyed. Honourable Nicolas Vonmally suffered the same thing. How many persons had left this country, how many young persons couples because they have not had a lease. They should thought about this.

Mr. N. Lisette: I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether he considers someone who is 18 years old who may be still studying as a hardship case.

Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it may be.

Mr. N. Lisette: Can he elaborate more on his answer, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, why?

Chief Commissioner: May I request the Member to come forward with a substantive question.

Chairperson: Yes.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

B/2: The Minority Leader (Mr. L.S. Clair) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards to land use and development, there has been any planned subdivision carried out on the reclaimed area at Baie Lascars, next to the bus terminal, Oyster Bay reclaimed area next to the church and the pristine tourism zone next to government quarters at Jeantac, if yes, to table A4 format survey plans of the sites, together with the names of the lessees, if any?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the information is as follows:- Yes, there have been planned subdivisions carried out: some of which have already started under the previous regional government - **(i)** on the reclaimed area at Baie Lascars, next to the bus terminal; **(ii)** on the reclaimed area at Oyster Bay next to the church; and **(iii)** at Jeantac, near to the government quarters.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I am tabling the A4 format survey plans of the sites, together with the names of the lessees, for the information of the House **(Appendix II)**.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that on the subdivision carried out on the reclaimed area at Oyster Bay next to the church, two sites have been vested for the construction of the Oyster Bay Community Centre and the Oyster Bay Women's Association while on the subdivision carried out at Baie Lascars, next to the bus terminal, there are also eight small plots of 108 m² that were surveyed to accommodate applicants who were rejected unjustly by the former government.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the area at Jeantac near the Government quarters has never been designated as pristine tourism zone. My Government had decided that this area should be converted into a residential zone.

Minority Leader (Mr. Clair): Who carried out the design of these subdivisions?

Chief Commissioner: The design had been carried out by the Cadastral Office, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

PARTICIPATION OF A DELEGATION OF RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY AT TOP RESA

B/3: The Minority Leader (Mr. L.S.Claire) asked the Chief Commissioner whether as regard to the participation of a delegation of Rodrigues Regional Assembly at Top Resa, Deauville in September 2006, he could inform the House

- (a)** who formed part of the delegation and in what capacity;
- (b)** who accounts for the costs of lodging, inland and airfares of the delegation; and
- (c)** the cost incurred as per diem for each Member of the delegation.

Chief Commissioner: (a) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that the Top Resa fair is the most important tourism fair in France. France which is our one main tourism market and is attended by some 24,000 professionals. The Top Resa Fair 2006, which was held in Deauville, France from 21 to 23 September 2006, was given a new dimension by the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA) with the objective to recapture the French market after the Chikungunya crisis, through an aggressive promotion campaign. A ministerial mission led by the Honourable Xavier Luc Duval, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism and Leisure and External Communications, and consisting of a high level private sector delegation attended the fair. Given the strategic importance of this fair for the French market, the MTPA had in a letter dated 04 September, 2006 requested that a high level delegation from Rodrigues participates in the Top Resa Fair 2006 as this will provide an opportunity to showcase Mauritius along with Rodrigues. In this connection, as Chief Commissioner and as Commissioner responsible for

Tourism, I decided to personally represent Rodrigues in that fair, and requested the Executive Council to identify a high level Member to accompany me in that mission. The Executive Council decided that the then Deputy Chairperson of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, Mr Allan Ladd EMILIEN, who was also Member of the Rodrigues Tourism Promotion Committee shall accompany me to participate in this high level Mauritian/Rodriguan delegation at the Top Resa Fair 2006 in Deauville, France. The Prime Minister's approval was obtained for the participation of the delegation on 15 September, 2006.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the high level delegation of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly that participated in the Top Resa Fair 2006 therefore consisted of:

- (i) myself as Chief Commissioner and also Commissioner responsible for Tourism; and
- (ii) Mr Allan Ladd EMILIEN, the then Deputy Chairperson of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly as member of the Tourism Promotion Committee.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that the outcome of the mission at Top Resa was simply beyond expectations. Most interlocutors who were dealing with Rodrigues were delighted when they learn about our participation. Rodrigues would have lost much and moved towards more downfall in tourism if we had not been present at Deauville. It has been very important for Rodrigues to be represented at the high level at the Top Resa. It has been complained to us at the fair that Rodrigues has not always been present and that this has been detrimental over the past years to our tourism. Without doubt our participation has first shown our commitment to provide a serious and competitive destination and has reinstated confidence in those tour operators and other professionals who have been working with the destination. The increased arrivals for the end of year 2006 and January 2007 speaks by themselves of the success of our new tourism promotion campaigns. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to table a copy of the mission report for the information of the House **(Appendix III)**.

(b) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to (b), the cost of airfares of the delegation was met by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly as is the established practice for all official missions. The costs of lodging and inland transport etc was met by the members of the delegation themselves out of the Subsistence Allowance paid to them.

(c) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Minority Leader should be aware that per diem is no longer paid. I understand that it is Subsistence Allowance which the Minority Leader is referring to.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that members of delegations participating on official mission overseas are entitled to subsistence allowance at approved rates to cover costs of boarding, accommodation, inland transport, etc. The amount of subsistence allowance paid depends on the country in which the mission is carried out and the cost of living in the country is governed by the Ministry of Finance guidelines. As per guidelines set out by the Ministry of Finance, a subsistence allowance of \$ 3,480 was paid to me as Chief Commissioner and \$ 2,480 was paid to Mr Allan Ladd EMILIEN to cover all costs of boarding, accommodation, inland transport, etc. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Chairperson: No supplementary, next question?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Chairperson: Yes.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, how did he, comment est-ce qu'il était en train de transporter làbas en France, by which means of transport; was it by taxi or was there an official transport be given to him?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we had no official transport in France as I had just said, the Member should listen – as I just said as per guidelines set up by the Ministry of Finance, subsistence allowance was paid to cover all cost of boarding, accommodation, inland transport. As regards the means of transport, we use bus, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in Paris, in Deauville. We used taxi which we pay ourselves. We used the metro, the underground metro in Paris. We used trains, yes. I also went into a horse driven car. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how about the whole Mauritian delegation, does the MTPA has any Representative via the Embassy for their transport there? I mean the whole delegation.

Chief Commissioner: I think that the question should be put to the MTPA, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this was a common delegation like he has just said. He went within the Mauritian/Rodriguan delegation and that is why I was asking him unless we know that the MTPA is a well established delegation with branches everywhere. Why should the Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly used personal transport, taxis and metros while the others are using official transport?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we planned to meet the delegation of Mauritius at the fair in Deauville. The going to Deauville and departure from Deauville was not arranged for both delegations. I am aware that the Honourable Minister, Deputy Prime Minister as well as other persons of the

MTPA did rent taxis, limousine; this was not our case, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And the Member should know that myself and the respected then Deputy Chairperson, now Commissioner – we walked for three kms uphill to Deauville to reach our home where we were living after a dinner invited by Air Mauritius. We walked in the dark, in the cold in France to promote tourism in Rodrigues for one hour, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. We did not rent any limousine and we will not rent any limousine - any Commissioner unless it is provided by the government. Hosting that visit, no Commissioner will travel in any limousine.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Anyway, we were not there and we did not see. These are hearsay. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know whether this inland transport fares was paid within the subsistence allowance or were there separate claims that were made thereafter?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a claim of thirty-two thousand rupees was made by myself and the Deputy Chief Chairperson. Because Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I said in my report, we landed in Paris with 100 kg of promotional materials and we took this by taxi to our hotel at Etoile in Paris. But, it was planned that we moved by trains to Deauville with this 100 kg. I don't know whether the Commissioner said that she was not there – whether she went into Paris going down the metro, going to Mont Parmasse Rail Station with 100 kg of promotional materials and then going to Deauville, from Deauville moving to the place where we were living. This is why, I took the decision to rent a taxi to take us to Deauville with all these materials and we came back by train, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The taxi was taken to take the materials to Deauville, only for that and we asked for refund for that.

MISSION OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR YOUTH & SPORTS

B/4: The Fifth Island Region Member (Mr. S. Roussety) asked the Commissioner for Youth and Sports & Others whether he could inform the House –

- (a)** of the number of missions he has had abroad and in Mauritius from the 16th December, 2006 to date;
- (b)** whether non-public servants accompanied him. In the affirmative to state the names and in which capacity;
- (c)** the aim of such visits and how Rodrigues has benefited therefrom; and
- (d)** table the total amount of expenses incurred for the missions?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, (a) I would like to inform the House that during period 16 December, 2006 to date, I have effected one official

mission in Mauritius as from 13 January to 18 January, 2007 and none abroad.

- (b) The delegation for this mission comprised also of Senior Officers of my Commission including the Departmental Head, the Principal Youth Officer, the Senior Employment Officer, the Labour and Industrial Relations Officer and the President of the Rodrigues Regional Football Committee in the name of Mr. Maurice Elysee.

His participation in the delegation was necessary since we had to discuss with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Mauritius Football Association several issues concerning the development of football in Rodrigues including inter alia:-

- (i) the possibility of football teams taking part in the forthcoming South Africa World Football Cup 2010 to come to Rodrigues as an extension of their 'Camp d'entraînement' in Mauritius.
 - (ii) the setting up of a full time secretariat for the Rodrigues Regional Football Committee; and
 - (iii) the upgrading of the Camp du Roi Stadium.
- (c) **Mr. Chairperson, Sir**, the aim of the mission was to have first contact meetings and working sessions with my counterpart Honorable Ministers, their senior Administrative and Technical staffs, Chairman and Chief Executive Officers of Parastatal and Corporate Bodies and NGO's with a view to sharing the policy of the new Executive Council concerning the areas falling under my responsibility, to strengthen partnership and working collaboration and develop further avenues of cooperation.

I am pleased to inform the distinguished Members of this Assembly that the outcome and the benefits Rodrigues will derive from this mission is of several folds:

- (1) The Ministry of Youth and Sports has agreed to integrate where necessary the requirements of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in its tendering exercise for the supply of sports and maintenance equipment that are not available on the local market. This will considerably decrease the delay in the procurement of these items and more particularly will facilitate the maintenance of our sport infrastructures. *(Examples of these items are chloric acid, chlorine neutralizes solution for the Swimming Pool, lime, kimonos, etc).*
- (2) The Ministry of Youth and Sports has also agreed to provide the necessary support for youth and sport promotion in Rodrigues. In this context, our Youth Officers shall have short attachment posting at the Ministry of Youth and Sports and shall be given the opportunities to participate in national and international events so that they can be kept

abreast of developments which are taking place in the youth sector while at the same time sharing their experience with others.

- (3) We had a working session with the Chairperson of the Centre National du Sport Féminin. It has been decided that a woman from Rodrigues will be invited to participate in a conference to be organized in 19 April, 2007 on 'Olympism and Women'. A delegation of the Centre National du Sport will visit Rodrigues in June this year to launch a training programme in Tai chi which is a new sport discipline. *(Related to Question B14)*
- (4) During our meeting with the Chairman of the Mauritius Football Association, it has been agreed that the MFA will provide full technical assistance to the Rodrigues Regional Football Committee and will shortly organize training for football coaches and referees in Rodrigues.

The MFA has agreed to provide expertise for the upgrading of the football grounds in Rodrigues, and to arrange a working session to be held in March 2007 in Mauritius between my Commission and Mr. Lucien Garcia who is a famous international football marketing consultant to explore the possibility for famous football teams and players to visit Rodrigues particularly in the context of the World Cup 2010 to be held in South Africa. If this is materialized, it will boost up our football and contribute to the promotion of Rodrigues abroad.

This issue was further discussed between the MFA and the Director General of the Ivory football team, Mr. Kabalone who was on mission in Mauritius during last weekend. Unfortunately, I could not attend the meeting due to cyclonic conditions.

- (5) We have also discussed lengthily the issue of youths employability and entreprenariat with the Director of the Human Resource Development Council and the Chairman of the Enterprise Mauritius Ltd. The Human Resource Development Council has agreed to provide training facilities for unemployed youths. The following activities are being considered:-
 - (i) the organizing of a training course for some 20 youths/trainers at the seat of the Council in Mauritius on Entrepreneuriat development and management;
 - (ii) the placement of unemployed youth in enterprises in Mauritius through the Empowerment Programme for practical working experience and skills; and
 - (iii) training of some 15 youths in aquaculture development in Mauritius.

The chairman of the Enterprise Mauritius has agreed to invite two Rodriguan Entrepreneurs to participate in the Anuga Commercial Fair to be held in October 2007 in Germany and to liaise with the Development Bank of Mauritius to extend to Rodrigues the loan scheme of up to Rs 50,000 without the need to

have a guarantee. This will better enable the youths to have access to financial resources to start their enterprises.

- (6) Rodrigues will benefit from the setting up of a Labour Market Information System which is being implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment. This system will enable direct registration of jobseekers on computer network, provide information on the Labour market and existing vacancies and enable electronic labour exchange that will enable the job seekers to make job search and apply on line.
- (d) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the total cost incurred during the mission is being compiled for the attention of the learned Member.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the time that the Commissioner was in Mauritius, I saw him assisting the “baté séga”. Was he by the time he remains in Mauritius, during this period was he paid and lodged on all the costs of Government?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, from record you call the Clerk I have benefited one return air ticket being allowance and privileges under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and I have effected a private visit in Mauritius.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that we are in an autonomous island, and the Commissioner - having an autonomous Commission, why is the need of associating himself, his Commission with the Ministry for Youth and Sports for the procurement of equipment.

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as Commissioner, I used to have contact with the Honourable Minister in order to make arrangement or help to sports.

Mr. N. Lisette: First of all, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, his Commission is fully equipped with respect to Officials, with respect to officers to do all his job. Nevertheless, I would like to answer another question to the Commissioner. He has mistaken about upgrading of Camp du Roi Stadium, can he say specifically what are the upgrading that is going to be done there?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, point of order! This is far from the original question, the question was from official mission and the Member is speaking of upgrading of Camp du Roi Stadium. The question is about mission, how can you come with Camp du Roi?

Chairperson: Yes, do you want me to rule on this point of order? Yes, you are right to say that this question is very far but there has been a sort of mention by the Commissioner but the mention is no way open the door for question which is really very far away from the main question. But of course, you may ask for some explanations but should not be in the form of substantive question to dig deeper in the matter.

Mr. N. Lisette: I just want to have a sort of explanation, being given that he has been in Mauritius to discuss about the upgrading of Camp du Roi Stadium with respect to the Coupe du Monde that is going to be held in South Africa. I think that the Commissioner is well aware of the things that should be upgraded at the Camp du Roi Stadium. So, I think he should be in a position right now, to tell us what are these things that have to be upgraded at Camp du Roi.

Commissioner C. Agathe: I would like to ask the learned Member to come with a substantive question and I will answer him.

Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: B/5.

DIALYSIS MACHINES AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

B/5: The Fifth Island Region Member (Mr. S.P. Roussety) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether as regards to the dialysis machines installed at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he would state:-

- (a)** on what date the dialysis machine broke down in December 2006 and the reasons of its breakdown;
- (b)** when technicians from the Ministry of Health in Mauritius were called on to effect repairs;
- (c)** when repairs were effected and why such delay?

Commissioner A. L. Emilien: Before replying to this question, Mr Chairperson, Sir, allow me to thank the Fifth Island Region Member for his second PQ which gives me the opportunity to deal with my first parliamentary question. (a) Now I come to part (a) of the question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. On Monday 25 December 2006, in the afternoon, the Reverse Osmosis Unit of the Haemodialysis section at Queen Elizabeth Hospital encountered a problem causing the four dialysis apparatus to become temporarily unusable. Here, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I must inform the House that the haemodialysis plant of QEH is made up of four (4) units fitted to a Reverse Osmosis apparatus and that this osmosis apparatus which broke down causing the four dialysis machines to be unusable.

The reasons of the breakdown of this apparatus may be of different nature. But the main one being that the maintenance of these apparatus was not done on a regular basis.

Such expensive apparatus, Mr Chairperson, Sir, should enjoy regular maintenance for a longer life span, being life saving devices. And it seems to me that this was not one of the priorities of the former Government.

Information sought from the Medical and Health services revealed that there has been one and only one maintenance exercise made by the Bio Medical Technician Nooranee on 31 May 2004, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Since then, no such exercise has been done since the 31st of May 2004.

For the information of the House, the first two dialysis apparatus arrived in Rodrigues on 11 June, 2002 and the two additional one reached the island on 31 March, 2006 and commissioned on 14 April in the same year. The first and only maintenance exercise on these two dialysis apparatus occurred some two years after they started to work.

Moreover, I must inform the House that, despite the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life's recommendation to issue a Letter of Award for a Maintenance Contract, no action has been taken, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The recommendations of the Ministry have been approved by the Central Tender Board for a three year contract on a yearly renewable basis. But, unfortunately no action has been taken by the former Government.

(b) Concerning part (b) of the question, Mr Chairperson, Sir, fortunately, and I stress on this word, fortunately, I happened to be on a private visit in Mauritius at that time, contrarily to what was being said here.(Commissaire pé amizé Maurice dimoune pé mort ici).

Early the next morning on the breakdown (i.e. 26 December, 2006), the Haemodialysis Administrator of the Ministry of Health, Mr Juggroo, was informed of the incident. I personally met him at the Ministry and arrangements were made for the technician of the Ministry of Health to come to Rodrigues for the repairs and to bring along the required spare parts based on the assessment of the local technician attached to Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The technician, Mr Sungkur of the Ministry of Health came to Rodrigues on 27 December, 2006, i.e. only two days after the breakdown.

I also met the supplier of the apparatus, namely Mrs Nadine Adam, Manager of Chem Tech. Following discussions I had with her, Mr Farook Lotun came on the 30 December, 2006.

I wish to have the attention of respected Members on the other side of the House on the following: the ag Bio Medical Technician of QEH (COM/HE/23/1, dated 20 May 2004) (in fact he is an electrician benefiting from an ad hoc allowance equivalent to 75% of the responsibility allowance, he would have drawn as a Bio Medical Technician) reported to the Charge Nurse of the dialysis unit of QEH that the water inlet valve and the drain valve of the Reverse Osmosis unit were defective. So, technicians from Mauritius came with these specific parts.

After thorough investigation of the Osmosis Unit not less than the following were found to be defective: (i) 1 set of three (3) membranes for reverse osmosis; (ii) two (2) soft touch panels; (iii) four (4) castor wheels; (iv) one timer for Activated Carbon filter; (v) Two (2) water inlet valve(V1;V9); (vi) three (3) valves(V3;V7;V8); (vii) One set of sand filter replacement kit; (viii) one set of softener resin kit for water softener unit; (ix) one set of activated charcoal kit.

Added to that some 100 kg of coarse gravel of 2.0 to 3.15 mm; 275 kg of fine gravel of 1.0 to 2.0 mm; 30 litres of Ion Exchanger Resin and 100 litres of Activated Carbon Aqua sore needed replacement. All these did not draw the

attention of this particular Bio Medical Technician, these people posted in our hospitals.

(c) Repairs started immediately upon the arrival of the Ministry's technician. However, some additional spare parts were needed for reasons stated above and orders were placed on the suppliers' representative in Mauritius who sent their technician on 30 December, 2006 with part of the requisition.

The remaining items of spare parts could not be supplied immediately because the manufacturer's workshop in Germany opened its doors only on January 9 this year as it was closed for Christmas and the New Year.

In the meantime, arrangements had been made for an Osmoser at J. Nehru Hospital to be sent by air to Rodrigues. I personally called on the Air Cargo department for the conveyance of this heavy equipment to Rodrigues. It weighed some one hundred and twenty kg (120) and the maximum weight for air cargo allowed on the National Carrier aircraft to Rodrigues is 100 kg. The officer in charge of the cargo department being not in attendance, no junior staff would dare allow on board this heavy equipment.

Here I must convey my heartfelt thanks to the Station Manager of Air Mauritius in Rodrigues (Mr James Hung Sik Yuen) who intervened to have the equipment boarded as a life saving device. This is why the osmoser arrived in Rodrigues in the evening of 29 December, 2006 but could unfortunately not be used due to technical reasons.

On 25 January, 2007, Mr. Peter Vickers, an Engineer from Fresenius Medical Care of South Africa and Mr. Farook Lotun, a technician of the local representative of the supplier came to Rodrigues with the required spare parts and attended to the repairs on the very day of their arrival. Same was completed the following day.

On 31 January 2007, the Bio-medical Technician of the Ministry of Health issued a certificate to the effect that:- (a) the repairs had been completed; (b) the plant was fully operational; (c) patients could resume their treatment.

Today, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am proud to say that we have two Reverse Osmosis Units fully operational and that, whenever one of them happens to have a breakdown we can rely on the other one pending repair of the defective one. Moreover, the Letter of Award for Maintenance Contract is already being dealt with to enable regular maintenance of all the equipments. And maintenance of equipment, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is and will always be one of the priorities of my Commission. We cannot spend lot of money on costly equipment without ensuring proper maintenance. This, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is a waste of both money and resources. I wish also to point out that three days after the breakdown of the Reverse Osmosis Unit, patients needing dialysis treatment were sent to Mauritius to continue treatment there. All our patients were sent by air to Mauritius for such treatment. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner what condition was the patients were those living in Mauritius. If meals and transport allowance were given to them and if not, if they will get re-inburse for their stay in Mauritius.

Commissioner A.L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it has never been brought to my knowledge that patients sent to Mauritius are paid per diem or things like that. Or, the patients who are in hospital, nine of them live at relative's place and the others stay at hospital. In hospital, people get drink, get food, get a place to sleep.

Mr. D. Spéville: I personally visited one of the patients and he was complaining about the treatment he was receiving in Mauritius. This is why I was asking the Commissioner whether the cost he has incurred in Mauritius will be re-inbursed.

Commissioner A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, really the question of the respected Member surprises me because it had never been the practice when we send people to Mauritius, they normally stay in hospital; patients they stay in hospital. They may request to be at their relative's place, then it is at their own costs.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health whether it is felt that there has been any vandalism on the dialysis machine.

Commissioner A. L. Emilien: Up to now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is no information whether it has been "sabotage" but anyway an enquiry is being carried out to determine whether it has been a "sabotage". May be you can give some information on the issue.

Mr. P. François: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether death has been caused in connection with the lapse of dialysis to patients during the period of breakdown, whether death has been caused to patients because of the lapse of dialysis.

Commissioner A. L. Emilien: This has been the slogan, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. As far as I know, I don't know. But, may be the respected Member is referring to the case of Mr. Julien Meunier. Of course, I would like to inform the House that Mr. Meunier died the very day he was admitted in hospital, i.e on the 28th of December, he died due to a cardiac respiratorial according to medical prationers there.

Mr. D. Spéville: This is because a communiqué on the radio in December. He mentioned that several patients have been sent to Mauritius and five are in Rodrigues and will be sent to Mauritius. What about the one? Seven plus five make twelve.

Commissioner A. L. Emilien: One of the patients, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Mr. Bapoon went to Mauritius on his own and he used to it. At time, he does not wait for the dialysis treatment. He goes to Mauritius today because he got the means to pay for that.

Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mrs. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, question B/6.

**APPOINTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICERS OF REDCO
AS OFFICERS IN CHARGE & ASSISTANT OFFICERS CHARGE IN 2003**

B/6: The First Local Region Member for Gde Montagne (Mrs. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards, the appointment of Education Officers of REDCO as Officers in Charge and Assistant Officers in Charge in 2003, he would inform the House of the names, qualifications, respective dates of appointments, the position held, and the conditions of service of those concerned?

**RE-SHUFFLEMENT OF
OFFICER IN CHARGE AT REDCO**

B/7: The First Local Region Member for Gde Montagne (Mrs. F.G.P. Louis) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards the re-shufflement which took place in January 2007, in REDCO, the Commissioner could state for the benefit of the House whether any of the Officers in Charge has been transferred. In the affirmative, state the reasons thereof?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: with your permission, I would like to answer parliamentary questions B/6 and B/7 at the same time.

Chairperson: Please wait. Have I any objection from the Member? No, no objection, yes you may proceed, please.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as you are aware, the Rodrigues Educational Development Company Limited (REDCO) is a private company with limited liability in conformity with the provisions of the Companies Act No. 57 of 1984. As such, I consider that it is not appropriate to intervene in the day-to-day affairs and management of the Company.

However, if the Members of the minority wishes to ask questions on matters of policy regarding education including REDCO, I would be pleased to provide the information if ever they come with a substantive question. Thank you, Sir.

Mrs. Gaspard – Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner how many of the OIC's, the Officers in Charge are Rodriguan boy?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I repeat the answer I had just given where I just told the House that due to the fact that the REDCO is a private company, I am not going to give any answer related to the day-to-day affairs of the REDCO, if the respected Member need these information, I would invite her to come with a substantive question and I would be pleased to answer.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, REDCO is a private company and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has got 51% majority shares in it. Why we should not give information concerning the recruitment, the qualifications, transfers and so on. We cannot understand that. You should give us information on what is going on because you have the majority shares in the REDCO. So, do your work correctly, we need information.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I may if I want give these informations; because as I have just said the respected Member. Just like other companies where Government have the majority shareholders, just like for Air Mauritius, for e.g. Government needs not to give any answer to matters pertaining to such companies.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner responsible for Education is responsible as we know in the RRA Act, for administration of Education and does it not find it important for him to see to it that his vision of education is transpired within the different decisions that are being taken through REDCO. Does he find it normal that Rodriguans are sacked for other people, strangers to come with this organization. All these Rodriguans are qualified.

Chief Commissioner: Point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The Member is asking the Commissioner for an opinion. A question should not be asked for an opinion.

Chairperson: Yes.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir. A supplementary question. I'm sorry.

Chairperson: Yes, it's alright. Well, there is a point of order, of course. A Member cannot ask for a question seeking for an opinion from a Commissioner. But of course, you may remove your question if you wish to maintain the question, you may re-word it, so that to convey some sort of matter of fact to the Commissioner is responsible of. Yes, you may proceed if you wish.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Monsieur le Président, Rodrigues à la responsabilité de l'administration de l'éducation et à ce titre le Commissaire est aussi responsable des différentes décisions qui sont prises surtout quand ils sont arbitraires à Rodrigues. Nous aimerions savoir, Monsieur le Président, est-il normal et ça c'est une question, est-il normal pour une personne qui est qualifiée, qui a de l'expérience soit relegué à un poste plus bas sans que le Commissaire ne trouve rien à redire puisque it is within the ambit of these two different questions that we have. C'est à propos de sa

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I do not know which person the respected Member is referring to, but I re-iterate my wish that the respected Member, if she wants to get more information to that question, I invite her to come with a substantive question because as I have just told, the REDCO is a private company, it is managed by a board and the question which the respected Member is asking, it's purely day-to-day affairs of that company and not of the Commissioner.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I would like to make a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. He is asking to come forward with a substantive question where the question is already here! It is substantive. As regard B/7, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard the re-shufflement, on lui demande whether any of the Officer in Charge has been transferred? Et c'est la-dessus que je lui pose la question, it is substantive.

Chairperson: Yes, you may not have grants the second part of the question. You may come with a substantive question but he referred to his stand before but he does not say that you have to come with the same question on the next occasion but in a view that you may come with another substantive that is admissible, that does not form part of the day-to-day administration which the Commissioner refuses to answer. Yes, Minority Leader, please.

Minority Leader: When I was a Member of the National Assembly, I did ask questions on REDCO to the Minister of Education on specific matters concerning the recruitment

(interruptions)

Chairperson: Order, please. Order, please. Yes, allow the Member, the Member is on his feet.

Minority Leader: When I was a Member of the National Assembly, I did put questions and then he did reply on the teachers who are unemployed here,

Mauritian teachers who are domiciled in Rodrigues and who are still being paid disturbance allowance. They have got lease land here. So, he did reply. You should reply to those questions because we need information on what is going on in REDCO, otherwise, what will become to all our teachers, here. We have the right to put questions on what is going on in REDCO because it is a question of education, it is not a question of money and so on.

Mrs. M. T. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order. I don't think the Minority Leader is asking a question and I think he is making a statement on previous practices that he used to have when he was Member of the National Assembly. He should co-relate it in a question.

Chairperson: This is a sort of situation that we had, I personally called it a dead lock. Questions coming from the minority and the answer is that the Commissioner does not fall within. Please order, please!

(interruptions)

Chairperson: Can we move to the next question, same member?

Mrs. F. G. Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, question B/8.

FREE BOOK LOAN SCHEME

B/8: The First Local Region Member for Gde Montagne (Mrs. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner with regards to the free book loan scheme –

- (a)** how many books had been delivered to date and what sum had been disbursed;
- (b)** if the Commissioner could inform the House whether there had been any delay in the delivery of the books;
- (c)** if so, he could inform the House the reasons for the delay; and
- (d)** state whether a tender was floated and if yes, give description of its procedures?

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

- (a) As regards the free book loan scheme, 24,949 books have been delivered to date and no disbursement has been effected yet.
- (b) As at to-date, (90 %) of books have been made available to students & some delays occurred due to the shipping schedules
- (c) of January and February 2007. However, the book shop, namely Ernest Store has made all arrangements to supply the Colleges with their requirements by end of February.
- (d) No tender exercise was carried out by the Commission. To ensure the timely implementation of this project, it was decided to fund the requirements of the colleges which would order the books from the book shop in Rodrigues and manage the book loan scheme at their level. As regards Rodrigues College, it had already ordered its requirements of school textbooks in bulk and has proceeded with their distribution to ensure that students have their books at the beginning of the school year. A monitoring Committee was set up by my Commission to oversee the smooth implementation of the project.

I wish to place on record my appreciation of the entire collaboration of the Rectors of the Colleges in the implementation of the project.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is this procedure of funding the schools they go whether they want to buy books. Is this procedure in order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards public funds.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is a decision that have been approved by the Council and the Commissioner for Finance has given his approval for that.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner precise by which way he said that funds have not been paid until yet to the different colleges. Can he give us the amount of money that should be paid to the different colleges?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, as to date, no disbursement have been made but however, the book loan scheme is estimated to cost about Rs 7 million and my Commission has provided this amount for re-allocation of item under 021- 03434, i.e the books for needy students. Today, as I said once more, no disbursement has been made.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, today we are on the 13th February, how do the Commissioner account that some students are still lacking some books and are having difficulty to learn in some schools? How do you account that some students are still lacking books in some schools?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I've just mentioned that the books which have not been to delivered to students, it is because of shipping problems, shipping schedule for the month of January and February and by now we've got assurance from the Supplier by the end of this month of February also being made available.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are people, students who are in form V, who have still not got their books at Le Chou. I have been told, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, does the Commissioner not consider that one whole month not studying not having books like the different schools materials is a severe impediment of the results of these students.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have to tell the respected Member that I cannot account for any shortage even I have just given it, although if we did not decide to give free books loan scheme students. If there have been delay in the delivery due the fact the ship did not come on time. The

problem would have remained the same. Secondly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I just have to remind the Member but previously when there existed free book loan scheme, it happened that after seven (7) months, pupils, students still lack books in colleges.

Mr. D. Spéville: I would like to know when this policy decision was taken because I know the Commissioner here responsible for education was in office in the 5th August, 2006 and today we are talking of shipping problem and it is now 13 February, some pupils in some classes of the different colleges are still lacking books and he is talking of shipping problems since 5th August, 2006.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: I have to remind the respected Member that the decision to implement these free books loan scheme was taken by this Regional Government after the election of 10th December, 2006.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the books that are being given to different colleges as per the condition, they are supposed to be taken back at the end of the academic year. This mean by the end of October or November. Being given Mr. Chairperson, Sir that Form IV Students and Lower VI Students, they have a two-year and they have to keep on reading; they have to keep on studying in November and in December. Will be ok for these books to be taken back from the students, those who are in Form IV and Lower VI.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Of course, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they need these books for even three or four years. They will be given the books free of charge. It is only at the end of the year that the books should be given back.

Chairperson: Yes, time is up for this question. Yes, last one.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this has not been told to the Students that the Lower Six Students and that the Form IV Students will keep the books at the end of the year.

Chairperson: Any response, next question, please. Next question. Time is up for this one.

Mr. D. Baptiste: B/9

**ADVISERS APPOINTED AT DIFFERENT
COMMISSIONS – DECEMBER 2006 – JANUARY 2007**

B/9: The Second Local Region Member for Gde Montange (Mr. L.D. Baptiste) asked the **Chief Commissioner** whether Advisers have been appointed to the different Commissions between December 2006 to January 2007, if so, he would

- (a) give their names and Commissions attached to, their respective qualifications including their School Certificates if any, salaries, other benefits and conditions of service;
- (b) give details in each case, indicating when recruitment procedures were initiated, and appointment effected; table a copy of the appointment letter; and
- (c) state the number of official trips effected by the Advisers to Mauritius, if any, and the meetings attended to?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, (a) two Advisers as detailed hereunder have been appointed between December 2006 and January 2007:-

- (i) Mr. Robertson MERCURE – Adviser on Communication Matters attached to my office; (ii) Miss Marie Lindsay CASTEL – Adviser on Women's and Family Affairs and Community Development attached to the Commission for Social Security. Their qualifications and conditions of service are being submitted for circulation (**Appendix IV**); (b) procedures were initiated with the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry for Civil Service Affairs for their employment on 19 and 27 December, 2006 respectively and the effective date of their appointment is 4 January, 2007. A copy each of the appointment letter is being circulated (**Appendix V**).
- (c) to date none of these two Advisers has been on official trip to Mauritius or elsewhere.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is it true that there is one William Auguste who has travelled with the Chief Commissioner as Adviser for tourism. Can he tell us on which ground this person

travelled with him? Whether any cost has been incurred by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the different “déplacements”.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Mr. William Auguste did not travel with me as an Adviser.

Chairperson: Yes, any supplementary?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: The Chief Commissioner is confirming that no cost whatsoever has been incurred on his name on whatever purpose.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the question was whether Mr. William Auguste travelled with me as Adviser and if yes, what are the costs? Mr. William Auguste did not travel with me as an Adviser.

Chairperson: Yes, same member, next question, please.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/10.

FREE TRAVEL SCHEME IN RODRIGUES

B/10: The Second Local Region Member for Gde Montagne (Mr. L.D. Baptiste) asked the Commissioner for Transport whether with regards to the Free Travel Scheme in Rodrigues he would –

- (a) state when the memorandum of understanding with the Bus Owners Association has been renewed;
- (b) state whether there had been any representations by the Bus Owners and gave the nature of such representation;
- (c) gave a description of the agreement reached between his Commission and the Rodrigues Bus Owners Associations; and
- (d) State if there been any involvement of other parties to reach same?

Commissioner F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (a), I wish to inform this Assembly that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 4th January, 2007 between the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land, Transport and Shipping and the Bus Owners in Rodrigues.

As regards part (b) I wish to state that the representative of the Bus Owners, at a meeting held on 27th December, 2006 with the representative of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land, Transport and Shipping, did not agree with the quantum proposed by the official

side, taking into account the specificity of the island as well as its topography. The quantum proposed was Rs 1900 for 20 buses and Rs 1700 for 32 buses, this decision has been taken, depending on the routes and number of kilometers being covered by each bus as well as the number of passengers involved.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as far as part (c) is concerned, the Memorandum of Understanding on 4th January, 2007 provides for the continued implementation of the Free Travel Scheme. It is valid up to 30 June, 2007.

It caters for the payment of Rs 30,000 per month per bus for the conveyance of old-aged pensioners, the disabled and the students of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Schools. There are presently 62 buses operating in Rodrigues. It also makes provision for the payment of subsidy for diesel to the Bus Owners in Rodrigues on the 20th of each month when previously same were paid every three months, thus causing a lot embarrassment to the Bus Owners.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform this Assembly that the implementation of the Free Travel Scheme in Rodrigues is estimated at Rs 22.7 m. In this respect, the Central Government has earmarked only a sum of Rs 19.4 m for Rodrigues and the Regional Government has agreed to top up the balance of Rs 3.3 m, i.e Rs 275,000 – per month.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (d) I wish to state that the Honourable Nicolas VONMALLY, Member of the National Assembly and Leader of the “Mouvement Rodriguais”, the Chief Commissioner, myself and my colleagues Commissioners to whom I am very grateful. We used our genuine intervention to reach the above agreement, when we, on this side of this House, we have the interest of the Rodriguan people at heart above all.

Chairperson: Next question, no supplementary.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: B/11

OFFICIAL VEHICLES ATTACHED TO COMMISSIONERS

B/11: The First Local Region Member for St. Gabriel (Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué) asked the Chief Commissioner responsible for finance, with regard to the official vehicles attached to the Commissioners, he would state whether –

- (a) the Commissioners are receiving a petrol allowance to run those vehicles;
- (b) the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is providing petrol to those vehicles and if in the affirmative, he would submit the amount disbursed per vehicle since August 2006 to date;
- (c) table the indent for diesel oil used by each of these vehicles since August 2006; and
- (d) the Ministry of Finance sent any communication regarding this matter during the last six months?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir

- (a) I wish to remind the House of the decision of my Government, the Regional Government not to use the luxurious executive cars namely the BMW X 5 3.0 D Automatic Vehicle and 7 Mitsubishi Pajeros which were purchased and used by our predecessors for a total amount of Rs 8,156,320. This money could have been more judiciously invested in social infrastructures or in other poverty alleviation programmes. You will recall that even when we were on the minority side, we criticised the purchase of these vehicles as we consider that it is most improper to use public funds to purchase and utilize such sumptuous vehicles while a large segment of our population is living in abject poverty. In such circumstances, my colleagues and myself have decided to use any vehicle which is available in our Commission for our official traveling

during official business of our Commission. These vehicles were and are still being used by the Commissions for day to day duties and functions. Consequently, there are no marginal additional cost for the running of these government vehicles and myself and my colleagues are not receiving petrol allowance to run these government vehicles.

(b) & (c) Yes, Mr. Chairperson Sir, the cost of diesel for the Government vehicles used by the Commissioners for official traveling is being met by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the amount disbursed to provide fuel to those vehicles as well as the relevant indents are being compiled for circulation **(Appendix VI)**.

(d) Mr. Chairperson Sir, it is not the policy of this Regional Government to disclose any correspondence with any Ministry or any official correspondence. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development transmitted a letter to which Honourable Alex Nancy as usual made some unfounded allegations on so called mis-appropriations of funds in respect of fuel to government vehicles used by myself, the Deputy Chief Commissioner and my colleagues Commissioners. My office has tendered its comments on the letter of Honourable Nancy, we have further advised the Authority in Mauritius that in line with the provision of Regional Assembly Act which are no longer replied to such farfetched questions. You will agree that any clarifications on the functioning of the Regional Assembly may indeed be sought and obtained through parliamentary questions at the National Assembly or questions in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Furthermore, we have institutions the Public Accounts Committee, we have a Minority Leader who can investigate and know whether there are mis-

appropriations of funds. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the decision not to use this pajero and the BMW had been welcomed by the population and even by Ambassadors visiting Rodrigues. We have been congratulated for that. I repeat, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, no additional cost is being incurred to run these vehicles, there is no specific vehicle attached to any specific Commissioner. The Commissioner is required to use any vehicle available at his Commission. At most Commission, at my Commission my vehicle is used to move other people, to distribute letters to make all sorts of business. There is no vehicle attached as per se to any Commissioner. Thank you.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Monsieur le Président, c'est à dire que le Chef Commissaire vient de confirmer ici qu'ils sont en train d'empocher le petrol allowance on their pay slips and at the same time they are using petrol allowance. This was not the way things were done when we were here. We were, according to law and chauffeur driven-car is said in the RRA Act, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the case of using any transport, Monsieur le Président, est-ce que ça veut dire que quand le Commissaire a besoin d'un transport, it claims any transport, well we know that there is a problem of transport facility within all the different commissions.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have to explain to the Member that she was here with her methods but it is today we are here with our methods and our policies, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. We decide about how we manage our fleet of vehicles, what commissioner will get, etc, etc. No commissioner had bought any computer, no commissioner had bought a new table or a new chair, myself I am sitting on a broken chair at my office, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is our philosophy not to use public money or public funds for our own comfort. We have a minimum comfort, we have vehicles which are in good running conditions, they were already operating and they are being used. My vehicle is at time used to despatch letters, to despatch other officials who come at my office. Some ministers have used

my vehicle when they came to Rodrigues. Advisers used my vehicles, my “*Attaché de Presse*” to go to press conferences, to go to functions. My Secretaries used my vehicle to despatch letters. So, do you think, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that I will use my money, my money I said the travel grant is paid to the Commissioner. It is not specified whether it is for private vehicle or etc. There is a guideline but it is a guideline, we decide and as Commissioner of Finance I have decided, that no Commissioner will put his own money in government vehicles as fuel. How can it come that I fuel government vehicles. If I follow the principles of the Member, I should service the vehicles, I should change the tyres, the wheels of the vehicles, I should pay the driver. We should not compare what is being done in Mauritius, Mr. Chairperson, Sir because it is not the same thing. In Mauritius, Ministers are given private cars fully executive vehicles which are issued by the Police Department. These cars are issued to Honourable Members of the National Assembly, Ministers, etc. I know some of them. I have been in some of these cars. These cars have private numbers. They don’t have government immatriculation. They have private numbers. The cars are kept in permanence with the user, the Minister or the Speaker or whoever, that person use the car and three other persons are allowed to use the car and this is why they fuel the car. Now the money which is paid as travel grant to Members of the Assembly. It is paid for their private car and as a politician, I have to travel in my constituency, I have to visit my mandates, I have to travel. I do not use the government vehicle to travel except in the cyclone I used the government vehicle because my vehicle is not covered by insurance. The cyclone was cyclone Class III and for precaution as a caring Chief Commissioner. I took the vehicle, I have a service licence and I drove it to see whether all was going on. Except these exceptional circumstances, Commissioners are not supposed to use these vehicles for their personal use. I remember, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, seeing pajero, driving the children to school, taking the women at the work bringing them back home, in which democracy we work at this time. Which democracy, now they came and tell how to manage the public funds for Rodrigues. I take the responsibility, I repeat, no supplementary funds are

being used. These vehicles, were already being used. The travel grants paid to Commissioners and other Members of the Assembly are met for their private cars.

Minority Leader (Mr. Clair): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the Commissioners did receive a petrol allowance to pay petrol for their official car and for their private car. Since that this was instruction did come from the Ministry of Finance, it seems that the Chief Commissioner should see with the Island Chief Executive whether there has been any correspondence even the former Island Chief Executive were there, everything was said by the Ministry of Finance that the petrol allowance is paid for official. This is an explanation ...

(interruptions)

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member should realise. This is question time and this is not allowed and he is referring to public officers.

Chairperson: Order, please! Order, please! There is a Member on his feet.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the policy regarding finance in Rodrigues, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the policy this is a very petty matter, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And I was surprised, I am still surprised, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I am still surprised about the number of petty matters in phase which were referred to Mauritius. This country, this Rodrigues Regional Assembly is an autonomous region and we are able and we can take decision if we want to take it. You can question but we have decided, I have brought the matter to the Executive Council. As Commissioner for Finance, I have decided and it will be like that. I have decided that Commissioners - no private party shall put their money in the tanks of the government and no private party will use government party for their private use and it will be the practice. If you are not agree when you come back if ever you come back, you will adopt a new practice.

Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: B/12.

**INCIDENT AT THE WATER UNIT INVOLVING A FOREMAN
OF THE WATER UNIT AND A CONSUMER OF PORT MATHURIN**

B/12: The First Local Region Member for St. Gabriel (Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources, whether with regard to the incident involving a foreman of the Water Unit and a consumer of Port Mathurin on the 14th January, 2007, he would state whether

- (a) the matter was referred to the Police;
- (b) other officials of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly were present. If yes, he will make a statement with regard to their presence; and
- (c) any valve operator has been transferred as a result of this incident?

Chairperson: Order, order, please!

Commissioner L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, (a) As regards to part (a), the answer is yes. I have been informed that the matter was referred to the Police on the 14th January, 2007 by the Foreman himself; (b) with regards to part (b), the answer is no. No Member of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly was present during the incident under reference. Consequently, there is no need for a statement as the answer is no; (c) As a result of this incident, there has been no transfer of any Valve Operator. However, I wish to report that transfer of Valve Operators is a management issue and is only considered in case of redeployment of labour to section where there is a shortage.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I was not asking for Member of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly regarding the matter referred to the Police, I was also talking about officials who assisted the man in the declaration that he made at the Police.

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I was on a site visit on a Sunday 14th with my Departmental Head and I was informed that the foreman

has been assaulted and he was at the Police Station. I and my Departmental Head called at the Police Station to assist him in his declaration.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member had just said that nobody, not a single Member of the RRA assisted the man went to the Police. But at the same time he said himself and the DH.

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, I think that the Member should listen the answer. I mentioned that no member of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly was present at the incident under reference.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is it true that Mr. Wilman Collet refused to confirm the exaggerated declaration that the former made and as a consequence, he was threatened and he was threatened to be transferred and consequently was transferred.

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of this issue as Commissioner, I am in charge of the policy decision, management, petty affairs as Commissioner, I have not been involved in it.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: May be the Commissioner is considering it as petty affairs, everything is petty in this country. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I asked the Commissioner to look into this issue. This man has been victimized and this man is suffering from hypertension at the end of his career, 57 years! This man if he dies tomorrow on the trip to Graviers from where he lives in Port Mathurin, what will happen? Please find out, this thing may be petty for you but life of people are "*en jeu*".

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of this issue but I will look if there is any case of transfer. I will look into the matter.

Chairperson: It is now twenty-five, may be it's time to suspend. I suspend the Assembly for forty-five minutes.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/13.

HIRING OF SOUND EQUIPMENT FOR THE RODRIGUES CREOLE FESTIVAL – DECEMBER 2006

B/13: The First Local Region for St. Gabriel (Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture whether he could state if a tendering exercise was made for the hiring of sound equipment for the Rodrigues Creole Festival in December 2006, if yes, he will give information for the benefit of the House of

- (a)** the names of the different bidders including the successful one and the amount of their bids;

- (b) the amount of freight paid for the shipment of same and the cost and length of the stay in Rodrigues of the representatives of the successful bidder;
- (c) whether the same sound equipment was used during a political gathering on the 3rd December, 2006 at Malabar?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the information is as follows:- (a) In October 2006, quotations were invited from twelve suppliers for the hiring of sound equipment for the Festival Creole held in November, 2006 (**Appendix VII**).

As a closing date of 8 November, only three quotations were received as follows:-

	Name of Bidder	Amount Quoted (Rs)
1.	Mr. Serge GASPARD	350,000
2.	Mr. Richard DESVAUX	240,000
3.	Veera Sound Equipment	125,000

The Quotation Committee at its meeting held on 8 November approved the bid from Veera Sound for the sum of Rs 125,000 as being the lowest bidder.

- (b) The price quoted included freight charges, inland transport, lighting, air travel, board and lodging and the equipment was hired for period 23 to 26 November, 2006.
- (c) The sound equipment was used for official purposes for period 23 to 26 November and was not used for any other function.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the part (c) of the question has not been answered.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I repeat part (c) the sound equipment was used for official purposes for period 23 to 26 November and was not used for any other function. Therefore, it is already replied.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: The information gathered, it happened that this Veera Sound Supplier was the one who was supplying sound equipments to the MR political gathering at Malabar on the 3rd of December 2006.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is concerned about the hiring equipment from period 23 to 26 November, only what has happened after that is not my concern. I do not know anything about it, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Monsieur le Président, est-ce que c'est pas clair qu'il n'y a eu connivence de telle manière à ce que ces équipements lourds qui sont pas disponibles ici for them to be attractive to people ?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir

Chairperson: Please wait. Is it on a point of order?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, on a point of order. I think that the respected Member is imputing motives. There has not been any connivance as she has said. My question is clear. The sound equipment was hired by my Commission for such period and I do not know having nothing to reply that what has happened after that.

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

Chairperson: Please wait. Do you want to re-phrase your question but of course motives can be ok, proceed.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the sound equipment that was used for Festival Kreol, it came from Mauritius and we know quite well when sound equipment is shipped to Rodrigues, it has to be shipped back to Mauritius. Can the Commissioner for Arts and Culture, the Deputy Chief Commissioner tell the House when the sound equipment was shipped back to Mauritius?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have no control on the whereabouts of the person who was the bidder. So, what the person did after having offered his service to us, is not under our control and we had nothing to say about it.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, one point that you have to note down, it is the fact that the bids of the successful bidder it depends upon the length of stay in Rodrigues. The longer it stays in Rodrigues, the higher will be the bids. So, this is why I am asking the question. When was the equipment shipped back to Mauritius?

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I need notice of that question.

Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/14.

SPORTS FEMININ IN RODRIGUES

B/14 The First Local Region Member for St. Gabriel (Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué) asked the Commissioner responsible for Women's Affairs & Poverty Alleviation as regards the promotion of the "Sport Féminin" in Rodrigues, she would state:-

- (a) the number of female instructresses working in the different women training centres dedicated to sports to date; and

- (b) if two young women have been sent for training at the CNSF (the Centre National de Sport Féminin) lately and on which criteria they were selected?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to reply to this question.

Chairperson: Yes, of course, proceed.

Commissioner C. Agathe: I have been informed that there are presently five (5) Women Training Centres in Rodrigues. They are located at La Ferme, Battue Madame, Roche Bon Dieu, Mte Goyave and Malabar respectively. Only three women trainers provide training in aerobic in these centers. There is a pressing need to recruit additional trainers to cope with existing demands of training; (b) The Commission Nationale du Sport Féminin has offered two seats for two women from Rodrigues to follow a five months' training for trainers course in Tai Chi and other sports related discipline which started in January 2007. My Commission has been requested to nominate, not to select but the two participants. The nomination was made using the following criteria:-

- (i) Experience and good records in youth and sport activities;
- (ii) Experience in social work;
- (iii) Good social contact;
- (iv) Experience in working with women; and
- (v) Disponibility – (5 months)

Since the course is for a duration of five months.

The two ladies who have been nominated will be called upon after their training to provide training in Tai Chi in all the Women Centres as well as in all Youth Centres. They will also assist in the setting up of a regional committee for the Commission Nationale du Sport Féminin

(CNSF) and in the organization of forthcoming programmes to promote sport activities among the women community.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, are these two persons who have just been given to follow a training in Mauritius. Are these two persons instructresses already to these five training centres?

Commissioner C. Agathe: No.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Why Mr. Chairperson, Sir, five months' training being given, not to people who are already practicing and offering their service to women. Why two new persons have already been chosen to be given employments before they even have proved whether they will be able to follow these courses or not?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the practicing trainers have not been nominated to benefit their training at this stage. On condition that the absences will be at the seen fact and will disrupt the training session at the training centres and the training course is mainly on Tai Chi which is a new discipline and is not their area of training.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner confirm what is the relationship between these two persons and the Commissioner for Women's Affairs?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I do not have the information in hand.

Chairperson: Next question.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have another supplementary question.

Chairperson: You spend your time in having sitting interruptions. I will exceptionally allow you to.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Thank you. Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Sports when the employment of the trainers who are engaged in sports will be renewed? Because we know that by June, normally these persons are to be renewed and actually these persons are being threatened that they will be fired to hire other people. Mr. Chairperson, the says have been going everywhere in Rodrigues that the Commissioner has been choosing a sister to replace people who are already working. Can the Commissioner say whether these instructresses will lose their jobs?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I take notice of the question.

Mr. N. Lisette: The Commissioner for Youth and Sports said in his answer that the two persons have been nominated. May I ask why a public communiqué was not made to encourage those women who practice sports?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the two persons have been nominated.

Chairperson: Yes, can we move to the next question. Order, please! Order, please!

Mr. N. Lisette: B/15

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL MATERIALS TO STUDENTS

B/15: The First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres (Mr. N. Lisette) asked the Commissioner for Social Security & others:-

- (a)** if any school materials were distributed by her Commission in January last;
- (b)** to specify the category of students who benefited same;

- (c) to give the cost of these materials; and
- (d) to table a list of students who benefited from these facilities?

Commissioner M.T. Clair: Mr Chairperson Sir,

- (a) In January last, the Commission for Social Security which is responsible for Poverty Alleviation in Rodrigues, has helped some families with regard to school materials for their children. It is to be noted that that it has become a common practice since the setting-up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly because of the high level of poverty prevailing in the island. The materials given are exercise books, pens, rulers, pencils, bags, colour pencils, slate and pens, modelling material, scissors, drawing books, files, glasses, wax color pencils, water colour and brush and even shoes and uniforms;
- (b) the category of students who have been helped by our Commission are those whose parents are: fishermen, pensioners, social aid earners; and those people who are living in extreme poverty and without any income below the poverty line;
- (c) These materials had cost **Rs 38,584** to this Commission;
- (d) I do not think it is wise to table a list for students who have benefited from these materials as they are poor people and I do not want to table their names here and we do not have a list of students as it was only parents who attended the Commission and have come to register giving their address, the number of children and the schools or colleges they attended. Indeed, we have helped 152 families which were genuine cases after a thorough enquiry conducted out by our Social Welfare Officer. Parents were visited and their socio economic conditions noted. They expressed their difficulty to cater for some of the school material needed by their children. Not all the materials were given to them. Most parents had attended to part of the materials needed by their children. After enquiry those which have not been purchased on the list provided by the parents were attended to by our Commission. It is to be noted that not all of the materials required by the students were given because of lack of funds and we do encourage parents to make more effort to cater in the future for their children's needs themselves.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is astonishing! that one Social Worker Officer has been able to carry 152 enquiries. I myself, I detailed the procedures and ordinarily that person take one week for three cases only. Can that person, can the Commissioner tell us how come that that person had been able to do 152 cases around Rodrigues, the day between the decision has been taken and these materials were given.

Commissioner M.T. Clair: I should like to inform the respected Member that I am not interested in what he did in the past and this is not an example to follow by my Commission. I have my own way of dealing with things and I would like to inform her that since I am in office since 4th August, 2006, we have registered people who are in dire straits, we should say and who wanted to have help and since that time my Social Welfare Officer conduct a thorough enquiry with all these people and he has been there all the time looking after these people saying their needs and of course we had only given the materials in January, from August up to now. I think it is ample time that 152 cases are looked into.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I myself I sent a woman there to the Commission. And that person during the same day receive equipments, bags, etc. Only the identity card was asked by that person.

Chairperson: Please realise that is question time and not a debate.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I am putting my question. Is that true that people had only to give the identity card to receive materials?

Commissioner M.T. Clair: I am sorry, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I am not aware of that case and I am not aware of what the respected Member is saying.

Chairperson: Next question, same member.

Mr. N. Lisette: B/16, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANT TO STUDY THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

B/16: The First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres (Mr. N. Lisette) asked the Commissioner for Transport:-

- (a) if any person/firm was appointed as consultant to carry as study on the transport industry in Rodrigues;
- (b) the terms of reference of the study;
- (c) the amount of money paid to the consultant;
- (d) to table a copy of the outcome of the study.

Commissioner F. Grandcourt: With your permission Sir, I wish to state that neither the Executive Council nor my Commission per se had caused any survey to be carried out on the Transport Industry in Rodrigues, when the term Transport Industry implies a large variety of vehicles, ships or aircraft as well as

other means of transport such as horses, dogs and tray, bulls and cards for the conveyance of people and transportation of goods. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, no such study has been carried out by my Commission.

Mr. N. Lisette: Being given may be the transport industry to be, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Transport whether any study has been done on any type of vehicle which is being used in Rodrigues.

Commissioner F. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner should know how to phrase his question, the ex-Commissioner, sorry. The respected member must come with a substantive question if he wants to know whether I had carried such or such study on what type of vehicle.

Chairperson: Yes, B/17, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. N. Lisette: B/17, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

CONSEILLER TECHNIQUE REGIONAL FOR RODRIGUES

B/17: The First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres (Mr. N. Lisette) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports:-

- (a) if there has been any request from the Judo Federation or the Ministry for Youth and Sports for the appointment of a Conseiller Technique for Rodrigues;
- (b) whether the views of the Rodrigues Regional Judo-Committee has been sought on the matter, and if yes, what are its stands;
- (c) what is the stand of the Commission on the matter?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission has been informed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in a correspondence dated 13 October, 2006 that the Mauritius Judo Federation has designated a 'Conseiller Technique Regional' in each sport region of the Republic of Mauritius including Rodrigues to ensure that better development and promotion of judo. The designation of a 'Conseiller Technique Regional' from Rodrigues by the Federation has been supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports which has requested that appropriate arrangement be made to the designated person to my Commission. (b) I considered that this matter internal issue between the Mauritius Judo Federation and its regional committee in Rodrigues which are autonomous in their actions; (c) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I consider that the newly designated "*Conseiller Technique Regional*", Mr. Keneth Mercure for Rodrigues is fully qualified and his competence should be put in contribution to further the development of Judo in Rodrigues. My Commission will ensure that there is no

duplication or overlapping of responsibilities and that all partners work together for the welfare of the Judokas.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Youth and Sports whether he contacted the Rodrigues Regional Judo Committee for the appointment of the CTR?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said that appointing the Conseiller Technique Régional is an internal matter between the Regional Committee and the federation.

Mr. N. Lisette: Being given that there is a Commissioner for Youth and Sports in the island and a CTR is being appointed to run in Rodrigues. Did the Commissioner had anything to say in the matter?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is an internal matter as I have said.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the appointment of a CTR, what was the contract between the Commission and the Rodrigues Regional Committee as regard to this matter?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been no contract.

Mr. N. Lisette: It is in fact, Mr. Chairperson, Sir that in this very case, the Commissioner is not giving the right answer. It is a clear fact.

Chairperson: You cannot say Please wait, please. You cannot say that the answer is wrong unless you have got proof, you come in a different sort of according to procedures but this is not allowed. You cannot say, it is wrong. This is his answer. You have other means to query him about but not at this stage.

Mr. N. Lisette: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, has there been any correspondence with this regards, emanating from the Rodrigues Regional Judo Committee to the Commissioner?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have said, I would repeat it again. The “Conseiller Technique de Rodrigues” has been recruited by the Mauritius Federation. I have said this is an internal matter. I will not deal in internal matter.

Mr. N. Lisette: I do not think it is an internal matter because the person who is appointed, he is someone who is being employed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and I think that the Commission should have given his view whether the person who is working in the Regional Assembly, will have the approval of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, here. What is the stand of the Commission when such an approval is being sought?

Commissioner C. Agathe: As I have said, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Conseiller Technique Régional is fully qualified and his competence is to be put in contribution with the development of Judo in Rodrigues.

Mr. N. Lisette: The Conseiller Technique Régional is an employee of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and as such before it is given appointment by the Judo Federation, it should have obtained approval from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. What was the stand of the Commission with respect of this matter?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the person has not been appointed yet.

Chairperson: Yes, next question, please.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/18.

Commissioner F. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am going to make a statement in replies to both question B/18 and B/19 at the end of question time.

NEW HOUSING PROGRAMME

B/18: The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel asked the Commissioner responsible for Housing whether as regards the New Housing Programme and/or the self-help Housing scheme, he will:-

- (a) state the amount of money and types of materials purchased in the budget for financial year 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 and the amount per types of materials delivered so far;
- (b) state the total amount of money disbursed so far under the programme for Financial year 2006-2007 and whether the tendering procedures have been followed;
- (c) state the types of houses and the number per types of houses completed so far under this programme and give the locations, time frame and number of housing units which are being built and which will be built shortly together with names and addresses of the beneficiaries?

DELIVERY OF MATERIALS TO THE ELDERLY

B/19: The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel (Mr. J. D. Spéville) asked the Commissioner responsible for Housing whether with regard to the delivery of materials to the elderly, especially wooden materials he would state:-

- (a) who was awarded the contract for same;

- (b) where matter stands concerning the purchase of other materials, if any, and if yes, state the types and whether the tendering procedures have been followed;
- (c) the procedures involved for the delivery, certification and payment of the amount to date and table the list of beneficiaries to whom these materials have been and will be delivered;
- (d) whether delivery of materials was made by the supplier without the presence of an Officer of his Commission, if in the affirmative, state the number and amount involved?

(B/18 and B/19 replied as a statement)

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/20.

NHDC HOUSING PROJECT

B/20: The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel (Mr. J.D. Spéville) asked the Commissioner responsible for Housing with regards to the eighty-three (83) NHDC Housing Project he would:-

- (a) state the number of applications received, treated, rejected and approved for this project up to now;
- (b) table the names of applicants together with their respective addresses of the housing units approved and give the number of occupied houses with their respective addresses and names of owners up to now;
- (c) state whether all the occupied houses have the necessary accessories and if not how same will be remedied; and
- (d) give the time frame for the total occupation of all houses giving the conditions stipulated in the sales deed and state the government policy with regard to the extension of these housing units and the creation of a healthy environment in these housing lots?

Commissioner F. Grandcourt: I am informed that the NHDC Housing Project took over the previous Housing Scheme under self-help, initially implemented sometimes in 2001. In this respect, ten sites for the construction of the NHDC Complex were identified and PAD Co. Ltd was awarded the contract for the construction of 83 houses.

Subsequently, applications were invited through radio communiqué for the award of these houses. A total of 146 applications have to date been received. Out of 146 applications received, 69 were approved on the basis that the applicants earned a monthly income of Rs 10,000 – as the cost of each housing unit by that time used to be Rs 225,000. Furthermore, 20 applications were rejected due to the fact that the applicants were living in separation or the spouses were owners of either leased or private land.

It has also been reported that 3 applicants declined the offer and 21 are on the waiting list and their applications are being processed accordingly. I wish to state that out of the overall 146 applications received, 113 have been treated and the 33 new applications are presently being scrutinized.

Since my assumption of office at the Commission for Public Infrastructure, I have made it a duty to regularly meet the beneficiaries with a view to ensuring a close follow up of all their “démarche”.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the list of all applicants pertaining to part (b) is being tabled **(Appendix VIII)**.

As regards part (c) , it is worthwhile pointing out that the 83 houses of the NHDC are being delivered to the successful applicants in their existing state, i.e, some of them do not have all the necessary accessories, viz, flush doors, toilet bowls and so on. The beneficiary is fully briefed of the situational conditions of the housing unit prior to his taking into possession of same.

The beneficiaries, by the time of the signature of the sale deed, are advised to make good the conditions of these houses by themselves so that they can dwell in. A copy of the deed of sale is being tabled **(Appendix IX)**.

The present conditions of these houses have caused the price of each housing unit of the NHDC to be fixed at either Rs 53,200 or Rs 43,200. The Housing Unit on sale at Rs 53,200 comprises septic tank facilities whereas the one offered at Rs 43,200 does not have such facilities.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in respect to part (d) I wish to state that, the time frame for the total occupation of any NHDC housing unit depends on the time by which the applicants settle their instalment. The submission of keys to any occupant of such type of houses is conditional to the signature and conclusion of the sale deed before the Notary. Therefore, as soon as the sale deed is concluded in between the two parties, my Commission ensures that the beneficiary could be allowed to occupy the House as immediately as possible. Under such circumstances, there is no prescribed time frame.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission has, in line with the policy of the present Regional Government, facilitated the purchase of these NHDC housing units by providing opportunities for any applicant to either effect a one off payment or do same through instalment to become owners of these houses. For those who opt for monthly instalment a deposit of Rs 12,000 is effected whereas the monthly instalment amounts to Rs 495 – for housing unit at the rate of Rs 43,200 and

Rs 610 for housing unit at the cost of Rs 53,200. The instalments should be settled within a period of ten years for both categories of Housing Units.

Moreover, all the occupants have the possibilities of carrying out extension works at their NHDC Housing Unit. My Commission will put its expertise at the disposal of all occupants for the design of any extensions to their existing housing unit. The more so, all extensions will be subject to the approval of the building plan and issue of building permit by my Commission. This is being closely monitored with a view to avoiding the mushrooming of unaesthetic building structures, thus causing a lot of harassment to the inhabitants of those housing sites.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is also making all necessary arrangements for the construction of access roads, provision of lighting facilities, kinder garden and other social and sport amenities so as to make the living of the occupants of these houses as environmentally friendly as possible. In addition, I am also informed that electricity facilities have been extended to those sites and further arrangements are being made with the Commission for Agriculture and Water for the connection of water supply accordingly.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it happens some beneficiaries had already signed their sale deed and have not obtained their keys. I would like the Commissioner to account for that.

Commissioner F. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the beneficiaries who have signed their sale deeds had already been given their keys.

Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. D. Spéville: B/21.

DESILTING OF DAMS IN RODRIGUES

B/21: The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel (Mr. J.D. Spéville) asked the Commissioner for Water Resources whether as regards the desilting of dams in Rodrigues he would state:-

- (a) if at the moment there was a desilting project, where, and by whom, stating nature of the contract, if any;
- (b) whether there has been a tender launched for the transportation of the soil excavated and, if yes, describe the contract;
- (c) how and where the soil excavated is transported and deposited; and
- (d) the time frame for the completion of the project and the means to be employed to make such a project viable and sustainable?

Commissioner L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, (a) With regard to part (a), the answer is yes there is a desilting project ongoing at Fond La Bonté. This project is being carried out in house jointly by the Agricultural Services and Water Resources Unit, both under my Commission. Since this project is being carried out in-house, there is no contract; The coordination and monitoring of this project was entrusted to a Senior Technical Officer of the Agricultural Services who has more than 25 years of experience into desilting of dams, irrigation projects and construction of Gabions. (c) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (c) soil excavated was to be deposited at Oyster Bay Forestry Nursery and Oyster Bay Agricultural Demonstration plot. However, following pressing demand from villagers of Fond La Bonté, decision was taken to allow lorries to deposit fertile soil on degraded agricultural land of the villagers. This is in line with the policy of my Commission to rehabilitate old agricultural land; (d) Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (d), this project is being carried in two phases:- (i) Phase 1 – digging and removal of soil and debris – This has now been completed since the 6 February, 2007; (ii) Phase II – Construction and Rehabilitation works including gabion and masonry works has just started. I wish to report that this dam was constructed in 1968 and has been out of use for the last 15 years. This dam has been completely abandoned. Therefore, it is not a new project. Being given that this dam is nearly in good condition, and after rehabilitation, it is expected that it will provide an additional of 7500 m³ of water to the northern region of Rodrigues. My Commission is of opinion that the project is viable and sustainable. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, comme la rivière qui alimente ce barrage se trouve dans une région en pente pour le d'érosion est assez haut, durant les grosses pluies, I would like to ask the Commissioner what measures he will take to the same dam does not get silted rapidly.

Commissioner L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that my Commission, the policy of my Commission is to rehabilitate all dams that have been abandoned by the previous government. First, I have

started at Fond la Bonté, we move to Cascade Pigeon to Solitudes and then to Gravières. And I can assure Member that all precautions will be taken so that to prevent soil to come back again into the dam.

Mr. D. Spéville: Can the Member tell us about these precautions. Can the Commissioner tell us about the precautions he will take to avoid siltation of the dam.

Commissioner L. A. Perrine: I have said Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the work had been entrusted to an experienced Officer of 25 years who has been working in soil removal, gabion construction in Rodrigues. He had been made in Charge of the project and my Commission is fully satisfied that he will do his job in efficiency and I wish to inform the House that the La Bonté Dam is full. It is as if nature itself is giving us a helping hand to this project. I will now circulate a picture to emphasize that we have been **(Appendix X).**

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir

Chairperson: Please wait! The Commissioner want to table a picture, is it? Yes, any objection? No.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner how he will cater for the water to be pumped; for the treatment of the water

Chairperson: Yes.

Commissioner L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at La Bonté we have two filter plants, the water will go through the treatment plant and will be injected in the network to supply Accacia, Baie aux Huitres and Allée Tamarin and Fond la Bonté also. So, it will be an additional input to our requirement which is about 800 m³ per day in Port Mathurin. I would like also Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to announce that I have prepared eighteen chopping boards from a tree which had been cut down from Fond la Bonté Dam for 25 years and this will be

available for Members. The chopping boards will be deposit at the Office of the Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. D. Spéville: Normally, the treatment plant at Fond la Bonté is used to treat water from la Source Has the capacity of the treatment plant installed there being tested for the treatment of water from both sources?

Chairperson: Yes, please wait.

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is a technical problem. The technician will look after discussion.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the strategic site of the dam, we know that there is need for water in the North that is why we came forward for a very important project there. We have chosen another alternative which your right. Has the Commissioner ask experts and technical people for a study; une enquête importante. He had said himself that there were years since it has been silted. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a sitting position had been interrupted.

Chairperson: Yes, you are right. Let the Member ask his question, please.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Please.

Chairperson: But this is question time.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Yes.

Chairperson: You put your question but do not make a speech. You have been doing this since the morning. I have been flexible. But you should realize that this question time. You may introduce.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Yes, I am trying to

Chairperson: Of course, I agree with you.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I was saying that being given the strategic place, the importance of water, I myself I am not getting water at home. So, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he does not consider it as important that the re-use of this dam should be subjected to technical advice.

Commissioner L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when I took office as Commissioner, the water sector was in a chaotic situation and with the help of technician, officers and advice from the Central Water Authority, we have conducted a rapid survey and we have decided to rehabilitate, to repair all dams and reservoirs in Rodrigues and the technicians of the Central Water Authority has advised us that the dam at Fond la Bonté can be rehabilitated and repaired. That is why we have started with Fond la Bonté first. I can assure the Member that what we are doing, we have been seeking advice, expert's advice for starting this project.

Mrs. Arlette Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner as regards the lorries which had been given the contract to vehicle those debris are found during the period of desilting of the dam, if the tender procedure or any public request from all the lorries or contractors have been sent to the public.

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, yes quotation was floated to all lorry owners in Rodrigues and we received about fifteen (15) bidders. Out of this, twelve (12) were accepted.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that he had expertised of qualified persons and there was a similar study that was done in December 2000 about the rationalization, rehabilitation and upgrading or extension of the water transmission/ distribution in Rodrigues. Did he counter up what the experts from the CWA did with respect to that study?

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been many studies carried out in Rodrigues concerning water sector. When I took office with the team of technicians that we have in Rodrigues, we have contacted the Central Water Authority and its Principal Engineer was sent to Rodrigues together with him, we carried out a survey and we have to implement a plan in two phases because we should come out with a solution urgently. And so, in the first instance, we were advised to go ahead to the rehabilitation of Fond la Bonté Dam.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson

Chairperson: Yes, this will be the last question on this issue.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Yes, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he does not consider it rather expeditive decision taken as a matter of policy when he overruled the decision to the construction of the dam at Pavé la Bonté which would be 68,000 m³ of water since you are talking about forward looking country as regard to the desilting and the freezing of this project for 7,500 m³ of water.

Commissioner L.A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I need notice of this question.

Chairperson: Yes, next question.

Mr. L. P. François: B/22.

**ADMISSION OF LOWER VI STUDENTS
AND FORM V REPEATERS**

B/22: The Second Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres (Mr. P. François) asked the Commissioner responsible for Education whether with regards to the admission of lower six students and Form V repeaters after the S.C and H.S.C results, he would state

- (a) the conditions attached herewith for the admission of each category of students;
- (b) the number of students of lower six, form V repeaters and upper six repeaters satisfying those conditions;
- (c) how many seats are actually available in the different colleges to cater for these admissions; and
- (d) the employment and training opportunities offered to those students who will have to leave school after the S.C and HSC results?

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

- (a) in accordance with the Private Secondary School Authority (PSSA) Act, the following are taken into consideration as regards Form V repeaters and for admission in Lower VI :
 - (i) to be able to repeat Form V, a student should not have repeated the Form more than once and has not attained the age of 20 years after the end of the school year.
 - (ii) As regards admission to Lower VI, I am tabling Circular No. 8 pertaining to “criteria for promotion to Lower VI – 2007” dated 26 January, 2007 from the PSSA issued to all Managers of Private Secondary Schools **(Appendix XI)**.
- (b) The number of students of Lower VI, Form V repeaters and Upper Six repeaters satisfying the mentioned conditions in the different colleges are as follows:- **(Appendix XII)**

As regards Upper Six repeaters, the figure will be available by the end of this week since the Higher School Certificate results have just been proclaimed yesterday.

- (c) The following seats according to classrooms capacity are actually available in the different colleges to cater for these students:

(Appendix XIII)

- (c) As regards employments opportunities, the following measures have been initiated in order to prepare registered jobseekers for entering the world of work and to enable them to become more employable:

SC and HSC job seekers can register themselves at the Employment Information Centre for placement as and when job vacancies occur.

A Documentation/Reading Unit has been set up at the Employment Information Centre where detailed information on jobs, job description and job available in the labour market are made available.

The Commission of Youth & Sports and Employment with the collaboration of the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relation & Employment will in a near future implement the Labour Market Information System, a web based system offering efficient services to customers. Database will be made interactive between employers and jobseekers. Employers will be able to post vacancies and look for jobseekers while jobseekers will make job searches and register on line.

Job canvassing in enterprises operating locally will be carried out and appropriate candidates will be referred accordingly.

With respect to training opportunities, my Commission acts as a facilitator concerning the enrollment of students at the University of

Mauritius, the University of Technology, the Polytechnic Schools of Mauritius and the Institut de la Francophonie pour l'entrepreneuriat.

Training through distance mode is also promoted by my Commission through information made available at the Documentation Unit.

The best qualified HSC school leavers have the opportunity to undertake studies at tertiary level through the 16 scholarships which are offered each year.

Whenever there is a critical mass for the organization of a training in Rodrigues, my Commission in collaboration with the training institutions concerned make necessary arrangement to organize the training in Rodrigues.

SC School leavers have also the opportunity to join Le Chou Training Centre for training at National Trade Certificate in 10 different areas.

Mr. D. Spéville: I have a supplementary question.

Chairperson: Yes, you have a supplementary.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that after the SC Exams there are classes that are becoming overcrowded? There are classes with forty-one students at Le Chou College, for e.g. and sometimes elective classes are being done in specialist room as audio visual rooms. I would like to ask the Commissioner what provision has been made to cater for these students to learn in good conditions after the HSC Exams.

Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am just losing that I have been herited from the previous Regional Government. The minority side through the respected Member, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, should at least recognize but I have done my best. I cannot run one (1) additional classroom outside the

institution concerned to cater for others students looking for seats at these colleges. The only thing that I had been able to do up to now is to accommodate, to increase the sitting capacity of these colleges for the time being because I could not do otherwise, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Chairperson: Yes, next question. Same Member.

Mr. L. P. François: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/23.

NUMBER OF PUBLIC OFFICERS SINCE THE SETTING-UP OF THE NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

B/23: The Second Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres (Mr P. François) asked the **Chief Commissioner** since the installation of a new Executive Council in August 2006 to date, he could state the number of Public Officers who had been transferred in all government services and the reasons thereof?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, as stated by the Ex-Chief Commissioner in his reply to question B/285 at the sitting of 15 July 2003, it is not in the interest of the public service to give the name of employees transferred. The transfer of employees of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly from one Commission to another and between Divisions of the same Commission is an administrative process which will take place from time to time. Thank you.

Chairperson: Next question, same member.

Mr. L. P. François: Question B/24, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS GAMES IN MADAGASCAR – AUGUST 2007

B/24: The Second Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres (Mr. P. François) asked the **Commissioner for Youth and Sports and others**, as regards to the forthcoming of the Indian Ocean Islands Games to be held in Madagascar in August 2007, what facilities his Commission would provide to the athletes of the different disciplines?

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the context of the forthcoming Indian Ocean Islands Games to be held in Madagascar in August 2007, all necessary facilities will be provided so that our athletes can get better prepared for the games; *Transport facilities* - already transport facilities (1 bus, 3 minibuses and 2 - 4 x 4 vehicles) are being provided to all athletes including those who are pre-selected to enable their proper training; *Infrastructural facilities* - the athletes are also being granted full use of all infrastructural facilities available such as the Camp du Roi Stadium, Malabar Gymnasium and other sport complexes; My Commission is also providing the necessary *technical support* through animators and coaches in different sports disciplines; Our objective is to enable maximum athletes from Rodrigues to form part of the Mauritian teams; In this context, my Commission is sponsoring the participation of Rodriguan athletes in pre-selection competitions in their respective disciplines as follows:- (i) the participation of sixteen judokas in a pre-selection competition which took place last month in Mauritius; (ii) the participation of six women wrestlers in a high level international wrestling competition which will take place in Tourcoing, France from 16 to 18 February, 2007; and (iii) the participation of 13 boxers in the National Senior Boxing Championship 2007 which will take place as from 22 to 25 February at the National Center at Vacoas, Mauritius. In addition, following a meeting with all Regional Sports Committees held early in January last, my Commission has agreed to extend as far as possible all necessary support and assistance including the appropriate equipment to facilitate the participation of Rodriguan athletes in the games. The Ministry of Youth and Sports has already been contacted for technical assistance as and when required.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as up to date, may the Commissioner specify the number of pre-selected athletes to the different disciplines.

Commissioner C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, up to now, we do not have the number of athletes who are pre-selected.

Chairperson: Next question, last one.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: B/25, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

**MISSION OF FORMER
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE**

B/25: The fifth Island Region Member (Mr. S.P. Roussety) asked the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture and Water Resources, as regards the missions of the former Commissioner of Agriculture he could inform the House:-

- (a) of the number of missions the former Commissioner for Agriculture and Water Resources, Mr. J.C. Agathe has had abroad and in Mauritius from 4 August, 2006 to 15 December, 2006;
- (b) whether non-public servants accompanied him and in the affirmative to state the names of these persons and in which capacity;
- (c) of the aim of such missions and how Rodrigues has benefited therefrom; and
- (d) table the total amount paid for these missions?

Commissioner L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the former Commissioner for Agriculture and Water Resources undertook two missions in Mauritius and one in France following a special invitation from Enterprise Mauritius. The first mission of the former Commissioner for Agriculture and Water Resources in Mauritius was from 12 to 17 September 2006, and he was accompanied by the following persons at the request of the Chief Commissioner:- (i) The Departmental Head; (ii) The Senior Agricultural Officer; (iii) The Officer in Charge, Water Resources; (iv) The President of Front des Agriculteurs de Rodrigues; (v) A Member of the majority of the Regional Assembly; (vi) The President of Rodrigues Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Federation Limited. The delegation left Rodrigues on the 12 September, 2006 and was back on 17 September, 2006. The delegation visited places and the objectives of the mission were to discuss future avenues of collaboration between Rodrigues Regional Assembly and these Organisations:- General Manager, Central Water Authority, Agricultural Marketing Board, Mauritius Sugar Industry & Research Institute (MSIRI); Agricultural Research & Extension Unit (AREU) - (a) Wootton Mushroom Unit; Ministry of Public Utilities; (viii) Working session with the Hon. Minister of Agro Industry, Dr. A. Boolell. The total amount paid for the first mission is Rs 87,417. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the second mission by the former Commissioner of Agriculture and others was the participation of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in the (SIAL) Salon Internationale de l'Alimentation, Paris, France from 21 October to 27 October, 2006. This mission was possible following a personal invitation from Enterprise Mauritius whereby Rodrigues was invited to

form part of the delegation to benefit from the exposure and business potentials that the Agro-industry could generate. The Commissioner accompanied the delegation at the request of the Chief Commissioner. The delegation comprises of:- A professional business person in honey production; A Representative of planters with project in food transformation; A producer of agricultural products and also “President of Fédération des Agriculture de Rodrigues”. All costs in relation to ticket, accommodation were borne by Enterprise Mauritius. As far as the cost for the participation of the Commissioner is concerned, it was borne by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The third mission of the former Commissioner was in Mauritius from 14 to 16 November 2006, where he was accompanied by the officer in charge, Water Resources Division. The objectives were:- (i) to meet and discuss with the Minister for Public Utilities; (ii) to visit the small desalination plant for brackish water of the Central Water Authority at Pailles with a view to have a clearer picture and to discuss the possibility to implement a similar project in Rodrigues. The total cost of the mission was Rs 13,203 and inclusive.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner because I was the one who do a private mission in Mauritius discussed about the necessity for the Rodriguans to participate dans le salon and following that Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner – it is true and I sent a paper to the Executive Council prior to this.

Chairperson: Order, please. Your question, please.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I must set it then I will put the question.

Chairperson: Each time you would got to make a speech before you ask a question?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: This is not a speech because I’ve talked a lot and I make more than one sentence like this.

Chairperson: It is not a speech? You are stating a previous policy; it is not a speech?

Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is twenty past 2, I think question time is over.

Chairperson: Yes, Clerk for me it is, what time 25? Yes, you’ve got couples of minutes.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I would like to ask the Commissioner whether there was any other politician in the salon or only the Commissioner for Rodrigues.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: As far as I know, the answer is no.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: The answer is no; that is why Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask whether in Mauritius any Minister accompanied the Enterprise Mauritius. The whole delegation which comprised – I was talking

about the whole delegation. The whole delegation Enterprise Mauritius which included Rodrigues, whether any politician because this was a bias and meeting so, no need for politicians to be here.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware and cannot answer the question.

Chairperson: Yes, last question on the order paper.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, B/26.

TERMINATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT OF MR. DAVIS HEE HONG WHYE

B/26: The Second Local Region Member for Gde Montagne (Mr. L. D. Baptiste) asked the **Chief Commissioner** whether with regards to the termination of assignment of Mr. Hee Hong Whye as Departmental Head, he will obtain information:-

- (a) on the reasons thereof and state when same has been communicated to the latter, if not, why;
- (b) whether on the date of communicating same to the latter, approval of the Public Service Commission was already obtained, if yes, will he tabled a copy of this letter;
- (c) if not, will he make a statement of the procedures followed?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, (a) Mr. D. HEE HONG WHYE was assigned the duties of Departmental Head on ground of administrative convenience for a period of two years ending 16 October, 2006. I repeat 16 October, 2006. Likewise on ground of administrative convenience, it was decided by the present Executive Council not to renew the assignment of the officer beyond its expiry date on 16 October, 2006 and I am informed that Mr. HEE HONG WHYE was made aware of the decision in a letter dated 6 October, 2006.

- (b) & (c) The approval of the Public Service Commission was not sought but the latter was informed of the decision not to renew the assignment. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is there any specific reproach made to that person or any give and says for his contract to be terminated.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this information is of a confidential nature and I am not prepared to discuss the issues related to a person at in this House.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Is it not contrary to the policy that was spelt out in this House someone sitting before that the Commissioner said that there will be no “chasse aux socières”. Is it not contrary to the policy of the same government that this person has not find his contract renewed.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I refresh the mind of the respected Member with a similar case, the present Speaking about was assigned on grounds of administrative convenience and when this assignment terminates on 16 October. The Assembly, the Executive Council decided not to renew his contract for reasons that I repeat cannot expel here. Let me remind the Member of the case of Mr. Jeetoo who was on contract, his contract, his 2-year contract effective from 24 February, 2003 was not renewed on its expiry. The Officer was only informed on 15 February, 2005 that it had been decided not to renew employment beyond the expiry date of 15 February, 2005.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner what administrative inconveniences has the presence of D. Hee Hong Whye caused to the

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is no administrative inconvenience, the presence of Hee Hong Whye who is an engineer, he is employed by the Public Service, there is no inconvenience, he forms part and I hope he realizes it of the Office of the Commission of Public Infrastructure. I repeat again it is not appropriate to discuss here of the conduct or any grievance what the Commission of the Regional Assembly may have against

an Officer in this House. This is not proper and I would not do it. If the Member accepts, he can come to my office and I will explain to him. Thank you.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if tomorrow there is a lack of Departmental Heads in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, will the renewal of D. Hee Hong Whye be made?

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is not me who appoints the Departmental Head, it is the Public Service Commission. There is a procedure for that – it will be up to the Public Service Commission to renew the contract or not or to offer employment. But, I must say, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this decision is motivated and we have the grounds for not renewing the contract or not. Mr. Hee Hong Whye, if he wishes to apply, the Officer holding the qualifications including the respected Member of the other side, if he wants to resign and apply to the Department Head, his application is welcomed.

Chairperson: Yes, no more supplementary, time is up, just up! So, can we move to the next item on the agenda?

Clerk: Statements by Commissioners, please.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order.

Chairperson: Yes, let us wait for the point of order.

Mr. D. Spéville: As the Commissioner is answering to questions B/18 and B/19, I would like him to table the parts of the question; questions B/18 part (c) and B/19 part (b).

Chairperson: Please wait, there is actually a point of order before this House. Yes, there is a point of order, do you want me to rule on this point of

order? Yes, during question time, when we reach, is it B/18 and 19? Commissioner for Transport and others stated that he will come later with a statement. There had been no objection from the Member or from any Member whatsoever and there has been no condition attached and there cannot be any condition attached whenever a Commissioner wishes to make a statement. From what I understand, in other parliaments, there are laws which require paper to be tabled and paper to be tabled within specified time periods. This, of course, any Member has a ground to press on the deposition. But as far as questions, statements, I can find nowhere any obligation on the Member to table any paper, table list whatsoever but of course it stands to reason if for the benefit of the House, if a paper needs to be tabled, and of course the Commissioner will of course depending on his corporation will wish to table it, if he does not table, then what do you want me to do? I have no control over his statement, I have no control over what is in his possession. Yes, this will be my ruling. Yes, you still wish to come forward with your statement?

Commissioner F. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will ask the respected Members on the minority side to listen carefully to my statement on housing scheme. With the coming into power of the new Regional Government, the Executive Council has taken various measures and devised policies for the improvement of the quality of life of the Rodriguan population at large. Among the panoplies of decisions taken, there is no doubt that the implementation of the Low Cost Housing Scheme and the Elderly Housing Scheme has been very high on our agenda.

Low Cost Housing Scheme – self-help basis

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to inform this Assembly that in September 2006, the Regional Government came up with a new scheme for the implementation of Low Cost Housing Scheme and it caters for the donation of materials for the construction of houses for low income groups and

beneficiaries of social aids. The latter provide labour for the construction of Low Cost Housing Units under flat concrete slab.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this scheme aims at providing a house to all those who do not own same as well as providing opportunities to others for extension at a later stage and making optimum and efficient use of land. So far construction materials have been made available to 116 beneficiaries for the construction of Low Cost Housing Units on a self- help basis.

The materials supplied to the 116 beneficiaries under the self-help housing scheme range from timbers, battens, iron bars, iron sheets, cements, bricks, rock sand and aggregates. A sum of Rs 3, 154, 827 – has been disbursed for the purchase of these construction materials during the financial year 2005/2006 whereas a sum of Rs 5,022,512 – has to-date been paid for same in Financial year 2006/2007.

The beneficiaries of construction materials for self-help Housing Scheme use to build their houses on their own pace as it depends on their time availability and there is no prescribed time frame for the completion of their houses. This is done in an attempt to upgrade the dwelling standards of this category of people in Rodrigues.

Elderly Housing Scheme

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the Elderly Housing Scheme I am made to understand that a survey was carried out in 2005/2006, among 296 senior citizens with a view to identifying the number of senior citizens in need of assistance for the repair/consolidation of their houses, as it has been the policy of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to ensure that our senior citizens have a modest and decent house for living.

The Elderly Housing Scheme provides for the purchase of housing materials to be donated to the senior citizens who are facing housing problems. The

persons are identified by the officers of the Network Support Services (Réseau d'accompagnement) and are visited by officers of my Commission and senior citizens association. These visits enable my Commission to know the quantity of materials to be donated to those senior citizens.

The materials which are usually provided vary from timbers corrugated iron sheets and nails and they are supplied as and when required for the benefits of the senior citizens.

The purchase of these materials is effected as per established procurement and store procedures. Therefore, in September 2006 Grewals (Mauritius) Ltd. was awarded the contract for the supply of 5,700 units of Kerwing Timber 4" x 4" x 12' and 540 units of Meranti Battens at the price of Rs 6,308,520 – same had already been delivered to my Commission and appropriate arrangements have been made for the early delivery of these materials to the meritorious senior citizens. Some 119 senior citizens had already been provided with the following wooden materials:

- a. 1445 units of Kerwing Timber 4" x 4" x 12 ft
- b. 719 units of Meranti Batten 2" x 2" x 12 ft

And the remaining 32 will be supplied with wooden materials in the days to come.

So far a sum of Rs 1,853,290 – has been paid to the Grewals (Mauritius) Ltd. and some Rs 2,173,580 – are in process of payment.

It is worthwhile pointing out that the amount of timbers and battens ordered during the tenure of office by my predecessor, are on the high side and my Commission is to date looking into the possibility of granting same to other category of the population, who is also hardly in need of these wooden materials for housing construction purposes, so as not to dish out public funds.

My Commission has subsequently made appropriate arrangements with the Contractor and my officers as well for the delivery of these wooden materials. The Contractor/Supplier is provided with a list of all the eligible beneficiaries. Upon delivery of materials by the Contractor in the presence of one officer of my Commission, a delivery note is signed by the Contractor and the recipient respectively. Accordingly, a certification of all materials delivered is carried out through established store procedures so as to ensure any follow-up action.

I can assure the Assembly that the delivery of any such materials is being carried out in all transparencies, the more so; as public funds are involved.

As far as the supply of other materials is concerned, it has been noted with great dismay that there is delay in the supply of iron sheets, due to some procedural constraints. I am informed that tenders were launched in January 2006 for the supply of plain galvanized sheets i.e 1,410 sheets (22 gauzes) and the contract could not have been awarded to the successful tenderer as the Central Tender Board did not approve same on the ground that the tenders were floated and awarded with a minimum period of time i.e. tenders were floated on 25th January, 2006 and the closing date for submission of bids was fixed for 27th January, 2006. Moreover, the exact number of bidders i.e amounting to four was not correctly reported to the Central Tender Board.

Therefore, tenders were floated anew on 17th May, 2006 for the supply of plain galvanized sheets and the closing date for submission of bids was fixed on 21st June, 2006. The tender was awarded to Joonas and Co. Ltd. for the sum of Rs 695,130. However, the supplier was requested to deliver same at the address of each and every beneficiary, which was categorically declined by the said supplier. Therefore, no plain galvanized sheets have so far been purchased and delivered.

As a caring Regional Government my Commission has to date initiated actions for the floating of tenders for the purchase of corrugated iron sheets as follows:-

Amount	Size
1512	6 ft
1764	7 ft
2016	8 ft
2268	9 ft
2520	10 ft

The Central Tender Board has already launched the tenders and the closing date for submission of bids has now been fixed for 7th March, 2007. We are confident on this side of the Assembly that the senior citizens and others will be provided with adequate construction materials for the proper repair, construction and consolidation of their houses.

This new scheme aims at providing a house to all those who do not own same as well as providing opportunities to others for extension at a later stage and making optimum and efficient use of land. Thank you.

Chairperson: Yes, any other statement. Can we proceed to the next item, Clerk.

Clerk: Motions, please.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the two motions standing in the Order Paper – Marine Reserves and Fisheries Regulations, the two motions – may I request your permission that the two motions being moved at the same time so that the debate under Standing Order 26 which state that

motion whose contents are cognate may be debated together, so there is one debate for the two motions but of course there will be two votes.

Chairperson: Any objection to this course? Question: that the two motions be debated together. On question puts, the motion was agreed to. You can proceed then.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that the two motions on the Order Paper standing in my name today - First, "That this Assembly is of opinion that, by virtue of section 31 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, there is passed the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Fisheries and Marine Resources) Regulations 2007. Second, "that this Assembly is of opinion that, by virtue of section 31 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, there is passed the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Fisheries and Marine Resources - Marine Reserves) Regulations 2007." Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these two regulations are very important for the future of the sea and marine eco-system in Rodrigues. The first Regulation - the Fisheries and Marine Regulations 2007 targets specifically one area - the area of the collection on sea cucumber in Rodrigues, Barbara which has threat since last year to become a public nuisance. Despite the fact that this was a nuisance, the law as such the Fisheries Protection Act and all the laws of the Republic of Mauritius and Regulations did not forbid or did not prohibit for fishermen or any other person who collect sea cucumbers from the sea. Indeed, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, permits were allocated by Fisheries in Mauritius, to collect Barbara in the Republic of Mauritius. We are not against the collection of Barbara or the exploitation of sea cucumbers. However, we think that exploitation of this resource should be done in a sustainable manner in line with the Convention of the Environment and in line with sustainable use of marine resources, in line with the millennium development goals. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these regulations make provision for forbidding the collection of sea cucumberS Barbara of all species. Therefore, no person under Regulation 3, when these regulations will be in force shall offer, fish, sell,

collect, destroy, damage, remove, displace or other terms, any coral shells or sea cucumber without the written authorization of the Commissioner responsible for the subject of Fisheries. We therefore want to forbid without the licence, nobody will be in a position to collect coral shells or sea cucumber in the lagoon. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, or within the purview of application of these regulations. Regulation 4 provides that under certain conditions, the Office for the Commissioner for Fisheries, may issue an authorization for such collection or for such study which may be required. Regulation 5 provides for Offences and Penalties. I would like to stress, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that I have decided that as mover of these regulations, to increase the fees which were originally provided in the Draft Regulations. This is why we have a small error in the Regulation which has been submitted to Members at the time of amendments, I would correct this. At 5(1)(a), you will see, it is one thousand written in words, but the figure is 2000. We increase this figure in fact with 2000. So, it should read 1000 and we would amend it later. The same thing applies to paragraph 5(1)(b) where on a second case of a first commission – if someone, it is proved to the Court that if someone is guilty of collection of bambara, fishing bambara, collecting it, the fine is not less than Rs 2,000 which is summoned and not less than Rs 1,000. In the case of a second and a subsequent condition, the minimum fine is Rs 5,000 and the maximum fine is Rs 10,000, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And of course, we have added at 5(2), a provision under Section 153 under the Criminal Procedure Act, to the effect that the magistrate shall not have discretion to reduce these fines. These fines are therefore fixed between the limits specified in the regulations and one important provision is that the Fisherman Card of any fisherman, who is guilty after the Court are being decided, the Departmental Head responsible for the subject of Fisheries shall remove the Fishermen Card and therefore his allowance of any person found guilty under Section 5(b) of the Regulations. We are therefore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, sending the right signal that we want to protect the sea and we want that the Bambara, shells, etc, have a longer life for the species. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it has been proved under many Scientific Researches, that the Bambara and other shells specifically the Bambara act as very important filters in the sea. They are the scavengers of the sea, they intake all the debris. And

then they protect, they clean up the sea and marine environment. It has been told to us that many Members of this side of the House that in some parts of Madagascar where there has been overexploitation of the Bambara. There is extinction of the Barbara, all sorts of Barbara, swimmers of the beach in the vicinities have had many skin problems due to the destruction of the Bambara population in these regions. So, we want to protect, we don't want to forbid one and for all or one and all. There are actually two big enterprises, foreigners exploiting this, they will have time to adapt and to work another thing, workout other things before the coming into force of these regulations. And of course, after careful study, if need be and under circumstantial condition, licences may be granted for the exploitation of Barbara. This is for the first regulation and I think it comes and I think it comes straight and we have had many regulations; for e.g from shoals Rodrigues, from Marine Conservation Association telling us that this is the good mood. The Second Regulation, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, makes provision for the setting-up of four marine reserves in Rodrigues. In these regulations, we are setting up, we are designating marine reserves at Rivière Banane, at English Bay, at Grand Bassin and at Passe Démie. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have to be responsible to ourselves and to the future generations which will live on this land. In the Environment Sector, we remain inactive, and we let all the resources being destroyed without possibility of renewal at a rapid rate or we act, we take our responsibility, we come to the Assembly with Regulations and we passed Regulations to delimit and specify what are the Marine Reserves and then we specify what are the activities. In the Marine Reserves, which will be designated, no person should carry out any fisheries activities in the marine reserves or fishing reserves, in the marine protected area, unless, authorised in writing by the Departmental Head, responsible for the subject of Fisheries. The different fishing methods for the activities to be authorised shall be prescribed by the Commissioner responsible for the subject of Fisheries. There is therefore a full, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the regulations are there but there are probes, the Commissioner and the Departmental Head for Fisheries have latitude to elucidate measures or specify by administrative means what type of fishing can be allowed, for e.g in some Marine Reserves, by simple letters or simple notice the Departmental Head may

specify that fishing is allowed or “casier” fishing is allowed, net fishing is not allowed, so it is though there are marine reserves, they are going to be as marine reserves, there is latitude afterwards to specify what type under 3(2) the different fishing methods. It is not said that all fishing methods will be forbidden in these marine reserves. So, I invite the Fisherman Community to be responsible and to look at this. We are not going in the first instance to forbid everything in the Marine Reserve. Marine Reserve, there are many passes; les passes like at Rivière Banane, there is the pass at Grenade, the pass at Baladirou which is important and we cannot forbid both fisherman boats from going through the marine reserves to go out in the open sea. The same is true for the marine reserves at Rivière Banane, at Grand Bassin. Grand Bassin is a very important channel for outgoing vessels, fishermen boats, they must be able to go. So, we are not going to say it is forbidden – we can’t go in it. May be you will be able to go, to pass over not to stop, not to fish, not to use the net. These will be specified but we are not saying it is a closed zone. Nobody is allowed to go in it. You will be allowed, fisherman will be allowed to go in it but there are certain things which will be forbidden. There is the example of Passe Demie also. Passe Demie is a natural channel going to the offences. The offences on penalties is, Mr. Chairperson, Sir – a person who contravenes these regulations against the fine are of the same scale and again there is no attitude for the magistrate who will take any matter brought to him by the Prosecution, brought to them by the Fisheries Protection Service or any enforcement agent, the magistrate will not be able to reduce the fines. These marine reserves regulations are very important and I think some of the historic barachois Rodrigues are being restored. It is important for us to have it and I invite the population and all the Fishermen Community to think about it and to say to ourselves that these are important. The importance of marine reserves in the marine eco-system is not to be proved, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is not be proved, the success of these marine reserves, the importance marine reserves act as breeding centres, as concentration of fish, which can reproduce in the marine reserves. Small fish get big and then they move in the marine reserves and they are then able to be fished by the Fishermen or anybody, may be myself – I should be glad, too. It is very important to set up these. It is very important

to say that nobody is allowed to anchor in a marine reserve, will drop their anchors into the marine reserves or to use a rod, to push the rod, may be it should be used motors or should use their sails, these are very important. I therefore invite the Members to be positive and if any Member has proposals, interesting proposals and positive proposals, I would like to hear from them. There is also a small problem with the schedules where the maps – the first schedule on the Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulations – at the top it is Regulation 6 (a,b,c,d, etc) it is not 6, it is in fact, Regulation 3 I think – Regulation 2, with these words, I invite Members to support these two motions, thank you.

Chairperson: In order to administer the debates properly, may I know how many Members from the minority side and how many Members from the majority side who would wish to intervene on this? Yes, only one Member from the minority. Yes, we have four, may be if there is only one Member, may be there may be two Members may wish to intervene first and then the minority. If the Minority Leader wishes to speak now or after 2 Yes, it's up to Members, now.

Commissioner M.T. Clair: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first I would like to congratulate the Commission for Fisheries and the Office of the Chief Commissioner for putting these regulations to the House. My intervention would be mostly concerned with the Fisherwomen, because I think it is important to think about them when we set up these regulations. The Fisherwomen in Rodrigues play an important role in the economy of the island. They are present and active in many sectors. Often they have various occupations, they look after their families, cultivate plots of land and rear animals. As if these were not enough, they set out to sea early in the morning where a very hard task awaits them. This is the day-to-day life of the Octopus Fisherwomen. They are the most respected women in their village. Nevertheless, they are the ones who receive the less credit. Unfortunately, their jobs bring in little money and are menaced by the impoverishment of the lagoon. This is why these regulations will help to encourage the fisherwomen to

protect the lagoon. More than two thousand fishermen have the same occupation. This is too much for our lagoon as it does not provide sufficient resources anymore. Although this activity is being difficult and not too profitable, the women rely on the bad weather allowances to earn a living. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, given the dire economic situation of the island, actually the compensation has encouraged many young women to participate in this activity. However, the activity in the lagoon brings about many consequences. These women have no maternity leave. As even if they are pregnant or they have just given birth, they have to go to sea. Otherwise, they will not be entitled to the bad weather allowance and at some points, some people want to even deprive them of this meager Rs 1,000 which is even below the poverty line. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, by constantly trampling with their boots in search of their pray, the fisherwomen have caused an genuine ecological disaster, the destroyed coral does not offer anymore hiding to the octopuses. The women continue despite the fact that the octopuses have migrated towards other better condition territories destroying and ruling our beautiful lagoon. This Regional Government is conscious of the great impact of this activity of the ecological balance and this is why we have come on the Fisheries and Marine Resources 2007 and Fisheries and Marine Resources Marine Resources Regulations 2007.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, notwithstanding of creating these reserves, I would request the Chief Commissioner, I make a pray to him, at the Commissioner for Fisheries and the Commissioner for Employment to create alternative employment for these women. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Marine Reserves will be created by these Regulations as a Marine Reserve has the potential to protect marine life. Our lagoon contains an extra ordinary range of biological Communities. It is high time that the high proportion marine species be protected from complete destruction. The Marine Reserves underpinned the economically important Tourism Industry as well as favour artisanal fisheries that are a signigance source of income for the local community. Particularly, the high value and sometimes controversial for the sea cucumber fishing. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, fishing has been one of the main means support economy want for the Rodriguans and the increase in population at sea has met by

increasing pressure has been put on the lagoon. These regulations will discourage illegal fishing or industrial fishing in the Marine Reserves and in the lagoon at large. Permitting only local or artisanal fishing are especially in the sea cucumber fishery, this fishery indeed had attracted more people at sea as they believe it is sustainable economically.

However, in the long run, environmentally and economically the most gathering of sea cucumber will have a destructive impact on our marine eco-system. There is a need to develop sustainable alternative to this type of fishery which will make use of the skill of the fishers reducing the total catch of environmentally sustainable levels. Marine Resources had decreased because of other harvesting and illegal fishing. The sea cucumber should not disappear as it had been the case in many regions in the world. The sea cucumber fishery is a new industry in Rodrigues. Several interacting factors have contributed in the mass gathering of this sea animal. Little seems to be known about the biology of the animal. Its importance and damage of over harvesting of it can cause. Sea cucumbers, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, are the relatives of the sea urchin and the star fishers. They live in shallow as well as deep areas, they are bottom dwellings animals that burrow in the sand of mud for bacteria and for other edible any particles. The sea cucumbers are very important. They clean the sea glasses and make nutrients available to fishers and by raking sediments. The over harvesting of sea cucumbers will result in an ecological disaster to marine lives. There is a need not only to protect sea cucumbers but it is necessary to make an extremely effective resource management. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, fishing on the seaside, outside the lagoon or outside the reefs is seasonal. The gust wind and strong waves that make fishing in the open sea outside the protective sector of the reefs too dangerous for small non motorized This is why we have so many fishermen in the lagoon. The heavy damage brought on our reefs through the use of explosives has now become common and the increase in fishing pressure brought about of more fishers and the use of more technology have contributed to the steady degrees in catches. Resources declination can occur very quickly if easy harvest is allowed. Management of these resources is the only way to prevent a total collapse of the

resource. Management should be in the sense of knowledgeable and honest people working in transparency. Ships rules have to enforce to counter for the expectation of other harvesting and illegal fishing. In view, management would lead to the restoration of the resource. It is important to analyse the faith of specific features, held leaders, communities members, legislators, fishermen and fisherwomen an internalizing body for management and its potential. Technical support which would be provided by the Fisheries will help building a united group at the community level of the fishermen. The pride of the sea cucumbers in Rodrigues spoke volume about resource degradation and the needs for management. Example should be taken from countries such as the Gallapagos, Seychelles and Madagascar. The sea cucumbers in these islands help us to analyze events and in the process teaches us many lessons among them the impact of economy globalization. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the potential of regenerating the stock of our resources through management and through these regulations and the role played by the local legislators, executives and politicians is extremely important. I hope the clauses mentioned in the regulations will be respected by the fishers and are appealed to them for that and the officers responsible of applying the law, will not fail in the duty. With this, I thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

(Applause)

Mr. Chairperson: May be before the Minority Leader intervenes, do you have another Member? For the last, So you intervene, the Commissioner for Transport and then you the Minority Leader intervened.

Commissioner Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as was stated by the Chief Commissioner in his speech, one of the key objectives of the new Government is for the preservation and sustainable use of natural resources, land, forest and Marine. The fisheries sector is called upon to be one of our beloved of the Rodriguan's economy. In the fisheries government plan, one of our priorities is to reduce fishing pressure in the lagoon, while concurrently training fishermen to off lagoon fisheries and also redeploying them to income generating land activities. There is a need of regulations in order to provide for better protection of our marine resources and ensure sustainable exploitation.

Actually, there is degradation of marine resources resulting from an over exploitation, siltation of the lagoon and lost of fish habitat. Mr. Chairperson, Sir fishers are becoming rarer and the lagoon and new alternative needs to be

thought, so as to cater for those who are dependant on the fisheries sector and for them to earn their living and also to ensure a harmonious social and economic development of Rodrigues Island.

It is recognised that the Fisheries sector contributes enormously to the Rodriguan economy in terms of jobs and work creation; in fact it is a major source of revenue. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as such the Government is seeking alternatives to lagoon fishing so as to remove, if not to eliminate pressures on the lagoon and also to ensure effective regeneration and protection of marine resources. For instance, much will be done to encourage Fishermen to go off lagoon fishing through the provision help by the FRTU through training and as well as providing proper infrastructure and equipments. This is basically in line with the Government Policy to develop the fishery sector in Rodrigues. It was agreed the promulgation of new regulations would help preventing certain mode of fishing, as well as the exploitation of marine species such as shells and sea cucumbers which as not cadre as the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, various project are underway in order to help reducing overexploitation of the lagoon, caused by the use of unconventional fishing practices by the fishermen. Some of the measures adopted were reduction in the number of fishermen, creation of four Marine Reserves, plantation of mangroves to reduce siltation of the lagoon, payment of bad weather allowance as compensation to fishermen.

Furthermore, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly through the Commission for Fisheries is trying to apply other means to promote effective management and marine resources in Rodrigues. One of the means consist of limiting the number of fishermen in the lagoon, in this line the new fishermen is encouraged to practice the off lagoon fishing. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, another way to reduce fishing pressure in the lagoon is the establishment of marine reserves, which help to regenerate marine eco-system. Marine resources offer the following benefits:-

- (i) First of all, the fisheries of Rodrigues is highly multi species with over 70 fish species from a divest range of families recorded. Within the lagoon, there is also a divest forms of habitats; sea grass med, algae communities, mangroves and corals communities that has great conservation value and are likely to play important roles in the life history of some species.
- (ii) Secondly, marine reserves provide alternative livelihood through jobs and marine rangers, administration and educational opportunities and indirectly through tourism related opportunities such as well informed tourist guide.
- (iii) Marine reserves enable the conservation of areas vital for the vulnerable life stages of certain species.

- (iv) One of the most important roles of marine reserves is the managing of Fishery. Within reserve to sustain or enhance skill and restore all rebuilt stock of other exploited species.
- (v) Last but not least, marine reserves also provide opportunity for conducting marine research.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the establishment of four Marine Reserves in Rodrigues is the reason of the fruitful co-operation between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Shoals of Rodrigues and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is thankful to the latter for its support in this field.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, major investment in the field of Aquaculture, off lagoon fishing among others will largely contribute to the success to the socio economic development of Rodrigues. In order to promote investment the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will make available facilities such as land and infrastructure investors for them to operate. Such investment will generate obviously more jobs. The exploitation of sea cucumbers commonly knows *Bambara* started in Rodrigues last year. Permits for such activities were delivered by the Ministries of Agro Industry and Fisheries and others and it is observed that the collection and possessing of *Bambara* in Rodrigues has developed into as an industry. It is heard that uncontrolled exploitation of sea cucumbers may lead to disastrous and irreversible ecological consequences. It is known Mr. Chairperson, Sir that sea cucumbers are considered as scavengers and help to clean the lagoon eco system. These Fisheries Regulations therefore, will provide a proper control mechanism in that sector. The Government is committed to put an end to all activities causing harm to the marine eco system. The promulgation of these two Regulations will help to attain these objectives.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for long various type of fishing could not be control due to the absence of appropriate legislations. Some examples are:-

- (i) The fishing of octopus using metallic sphere is causing much harm to coral in addition to damage by the trampling of fishermen.
- (ii) The collection and commercialisation of sea cucumbers, shells, corals and other marine fona. The overturning of corals by fishermen during octopus fishing and finally the collection of corals and their utilisation for construction of structures known as parks for capture of Rouget.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Regulations 2007 will help to prevent these activities. But these Regulations of Marine Reserves in Rodrigues is an important step in the Government effort to preserve its marine resources. These marine reserves will enable species to be preserved, will contribute to educate school children, scientific research and ecotourism. It is felt Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the existing result under the Fisheries Regulations no longer serves for their purpose as over years this has become silted and no more collective. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly Regulations

2007 comes therefore, at the appropriate time in view of the environmental and economic importance of marine reserves of the island.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in agreement of any law for the control, protection and management of our fisheries and marine resources, it is always a positive aspect of the environmental and sustainability and biodiversity concepts. The former Regional Government, we started to prepare Regulations concerning the collect of the sea cucumbers. But unfortunately, during the four months, there have been disasters in the lagoon, no control of people collecting (*Bambara*) sea cucumbers here, there without any control. This present fisheries and marine resources Regulation 2007 deserves my full attention, regards mainly to the shortfall that it contains for a better control. It is as if the Chief Commissioner *"a préparé quelque chose en faisant semblant de faire quelque chose avec l'intention de laisser les choses aller comme cela et pratiquer actuellement"* Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a lack of seriousness and professionalism by the Executive Council, in preparing such a poor piece of law in this House.

Now I am going to comment and proposed a few important amendments to these Regulations:-

1. **Regulation (i)** short title

These Regulations may be cited as the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulations 2007. This is too vague and not specific in regulation to the present regulation. The second motion does specify for Marine Reserves, why not for this Regulation which deal specifically with corals, shells and sea cucumbers.

2. **Regulation (ii)** interpretation.

The following important interpretations are missing:-

- (i) Act – means the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001.
- (ii) Authorised Officer – who is an officer, who on reasonable suspicions that an offence is being carried out under these Regulations take appropriate actions to a suspected offender to Court and to produce evidence. Therefore, an Authorised Officer means any public officer designed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly where the responsibility for carrying out all functions specified in these Regulations.

(iii) Commission - Commission means the one responsible for the subject of Fisheries.

(iv) Departmental Head means the Departmental Head responsible for the subject of Fisheries. This is because a Commissioner is not an Administrative Head but a Political Head and is not eligible to issue written authorisation in good governance. For e.g the Departmental Head will issue to a Fishermen, a Fishermen card on such terms and conditions that he may determine

(v) Regulations (iii)

In this Regulation the words:- offer fish, sell, collect, destroy, damage, remove, displaced or overturned have to be interpreted in Regulation (ii). Do they have the same meaning as in the Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulation Act 1998. In Regulation (iii) to up these words under these Regulations between the word authorisation and of (ii), the Regulations should specify how a person wishes to apply for a written authorisation, for the purpose of Regulation (iii) should proceed as regard the application and to whom should the application be made. This is usually specified in a schedule to the Regulation, this does not exist. (iii) – the Regulation should mention whether a fee is to be paid for an eligible applicant to obtain a written authorisation or whether the authorisation will be granted free of charge. (iv) – the form in which the written authorisation should be laid out in a schedule to the Regulation.

(vi) Will a fresh written authorisation be issued to an applicant who has previously been convicted of an offence under these Regulations or any other related legislations like the Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulation Act or the Environment Protection Act.

(vii) If an authorisation is granted to an applicant, what are their acceptable fishing methods that will be allowed?

(viii) What are the grounds and the procedures that are to be taken into account and by whom?

(ix) What about the revocation or suspension of any authorisation?

(x) Should a person who has obtained an authorisation be compelled to produce the written authorisation to an Authorised Officer responsible for the enforcement of these Regulations on demand for a verification? Is failure to produce the document is an offence or not?

- (xi) These Regulations do not provide whether an Authorised Officer, who on reasonable suspicion that an offence is being committed under these Regulations for the purpose of an enquiry or for furnishing evidence or exhibit in Court to (a) seize any device use to collect or fish corals, shell or sea cucumber. (b) Secure any article or sample of any article found on the offender.
- (xii) The Regulation does not provide how sea cucumbers or corals or shells illegally collected or fished be disposed of.

In Regulation (iv)

- (i) The word section is used instead of Regulation, whereas the term Regulation (iii) is used in Regulation (5) (i).
- (ii) And it portrays that this Regulation has not been worked out with full commitment and professionalism.

(Applause)

The degree of absurdity in these Regulations is the provision of Regulation (iv), which stipulates that the Commissioner may issue an authorisation under such conditions as he may determine. It is more than obvious, that this is a deliberate attempt from the part of the Chief Commissioner at ruling with an absolute power, without having any "*compte à rendre à la population*". It is important that in the context of good governance and sustainable use of natural resources, public assets and other resources are used and managed scrupulously, properly, efficiently and effectively, so as to obtain value for money, to avoid waste, overexploitation and extravagance. This is why it is important that the conditions attached to the authorisation to collect the fish, coral or shells or sea cucumbers should be incorporated in these Regulations and that such authorisation is issued in the form of a Licence by the Departmental Head.

I therefore, propose that the following conditions be inserted in the Regulation:-

- (i) The authorisation shall be valid for a period of three month from the date of issue.
- (ii) That the authorisation shall not be capable of being transferred or assigned.
- (iii) That the authorisation to collect of fish, corals, shell or sea cucumbers does not include -----
- (iv) That any licence issued by any other authority, other than the Rodrigues Regional Assembly under any amendment shall not be valid in Rodrigues.

(Applause)

Regulation (v).

Now here in these Regulations mentioned is made whether the contravention of Regulation (iii) is an offence. How can a person be convicted? If there is no offence. Therefore, in Regulation (v) to insert the word commit an offence between the word shall and on.

Regulation (vi) does provide for the cancellation of fishermen card, which is now really to whether the fishing of corals, shells and sea cucumbers is related to possession of a fisherman card for operation.

It is also proposed that officers of the following enforcing agencies monitor compliance of these Regulations; Fisheries Protection Officers, ----- officers. The Regulations should also mention whether authorisation or Licenses issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to any person prior to the coming in force of these Regulations, shall either:-

- (a) be deemed to have been issued under these Regulations;
- (b) remain valid for the period for which it was issued or it be cancelled;
- (c) in view of the major environmental issues associated where the processing of sea cucumbers such as odour, generation of waste water, air pollution, pest, -----, flies and contamination of water courses. It is suggested that a separate Regulations be made for the storage, handle and processing of Sea Cucumbers.

Motion 2

Its the same that I have mentioned concerning interpretation, it does not exist, on a short title, Interpretation, Authorised Officers, Commission, Departmental Head and I think there must be a specific Regulations for the Marine Reserves, as there will be also a specific Regulations for the Marine Parks, Marine Protected Area at Mourouck and Port Sud Est. These need to have specific Regulations, when you look at that it's boneless, "*sans les os pas de solidité*" let do things correctly with professionalism. What I am going to propose, that where these Regulations have been prepared by Public Officers, the Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulations 2007 does not sustain an appropriate mechanism to control, protect and manage the "*pillage de notre lagon avec la collecte des Cocombres de Mer est aussi un moyen pour éduquer la Communauté des Pêcheurs*".

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a shortfall the Fisheries and Marine Regulations 2007 shall not be passed until new Regulations be worked out in collaboration with the Legal Adviser and any other stakeholder for the proposed amendment to substantiate the Regulation and consolidate a

better protection and control of the fishing of Corals, Shells and the Sea Cucumbers in Rodrigues.

So, we propose that we do not pass those Motions today of Regulations and we worked out a true Regulation to control really our lagoon, to control specifically *“ce qu'on dit à l'extérieur, à la radio on parle à Maurice, on a des désastre dans notre lagon. Des experts qui arrivent, donc nous avons besoin pour le développement soutenu et pour la biodiversité et nous demandons de ce côté de la chambre que nous passions pas ce motion aujourd'hui et que nous retravaillons, s'il le faut revenir dans les semaines ou les jours à venir pour une assemblée spéciale, pour justement voter des règlement solides et professionnels pour pouvoir vraiment donner l'exemple à l'île Maurice et au monde entier que nous venons avec des règlements vraiment pour défendre, soutenir et protéger notre environnement marin, Merci Monsieur ”.*

Chairperson: Deputy Chief Commissioner, any intervention, please?

Deputy Chief Commissioner : Mr. Chairperson, Sir. A entendre le Minority Leader parler, je me demande pourquoi, lui qui parle avec tant de conviction, avec comme ci il est un expert dans la matière, après avoir fait autant de propositions, je me demande pourquoi sont Gouvernement Régionale après avoir passé quatre années au pouvoir, il fait comme ci c'est comme nous sommes arrivés au pouvoir, il y a seulement six mois de cela, que le problème de la collecte de *Bambara* a commencé, mais pourtant Monsieur le Président, nous avons posé des questions ici, dans cette même Assemblée, concernant ce que son Gouvernement aller faire pour contrôler cette pêche, mais aujourd'hui, *it's always good to be wise after the event, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, but for my part Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am going to continue with the debate by bringing in some more information just to supplement what my college talked before me.*

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the importance of our marine resources in the socio-economic development of our country, everybody must agree that she control over its biodiversity for the regeneration of exploited species, secondly for the sustainable development of the fishing sector and thirdly for the preservation of some of the unique species are paramount.

Monsieur le Président, protéger l'environnement marin est devenu primordial dans le monde entier, un rapport de Global Reef en 2004 avait mit en exergue le fait que 27% des récifs de corail sont perdus a jamais et que 30% de ce qui restent est détruit par des activités humaines et ajouter a cela le fait qu'un corail ne grandit que d'un millimètre à un centimètre par an.

Le tourisme Monsieur le Président et le Sea Food Hub dépend de l'environnement marin. Secteurs qui sont appelés à avoir un développement majeur chez nous dans un proche avenir, d'où l'importance des règlements appropriés pour protéger les espèces mentionnées dans le Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulations 2007. Les règlements seuls ne se lisent pas si on veut atteindre les objectifs fixés, je propose donc une campagne de sensibilisation dans les institutions scolaires, a travers les cursus scolaires bien sûre, dans les communautés villageoises, causeries et films par les personnes ressources

comme FRTU, de Shoals Rodrigues, de Laval Plaiche auteur de plusieurs cours métrages sur notre biodiversité marine.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am going to highlight some observations and findings from a report, the economic case for conservation of corals and mangroves made in UNEP report by Paris - Nairobi 24 January, 2006. The economic value and life saving function of coral reef and mangrove brought into sharp focus in a new report by the United Nation and Environment Program the UNEP. The report underlines the vital role these natural play in tourism, coastal erosion and acting as nurseries for fish. The report recognised that corals and mangroves absorb up 90% of the energy of wind generated waves, it also underlines that conserving them in a small price to pay when sets again the coastal destroying the more substituting the role with man made structures. The report also underlines the economic, cultural and social of importance of coral reef. I quote :- ----- (cross) Topter, UNEP, Executive Director,

“ I hope the financial fact contain in this study will radically changed the habitude and behaviour of Governments, Industry, Local Authorities and Individuals so that they better breeze and conserves these natural assets, so that they think twice about the pollution, climate change, insensitive development, and other damaging practices that are rapidly undermining the economic basis for so many coastal communities worldwide”.

I therefore, think Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are fully right in proposing such Regulations, the reports also underlined the shore line protection of coral reef, I quote:-

“The ability of coral reef to buffer the coast from waves and storm there is from location to location and depends of the reef shape and size. Nevertheless, the reports estimates that a typical coral reef can absorb up to 90% of a waves force thus protecting the shore and the infrastructure from erosion and damage”.

In addition, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, researches have found that marine organism often contain pharmaceutically active compounds. Reef organisms are so far provided an anti-cancer agent and show great promise for the treatment of HIV and this full report in the front line, shore line protection is available on line at www.unep.w-----

Now Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me make a brief on the status of record coral reefs in Rodrigues by TH Clerk. The results of survey indicate that the reef round Rodrigues is healthy apart from at the two side fish at the local Octopus fishers. It was therefore recommended, I quote

“Implementation of control at the octopus fish sites would be advisable, to prevent further damage and to wait their recovery of this reef. For the reef to recover would also increase the complexity of the environment where fishing

occurs, thus increasing their habitat available for the Octopus and possibly enabling the population to increase”.

Rodrigues, Mr. Chairperson Sir, has the best developed coral reef in the Mascareignes Group. The reef appears from different surveys to be relatively healthy with high percentage of live coral cover and low fleshy algae and sponge cover with little sign of stress such as bleaching or coral disease.

For sustainable development it is found that the lagoon should be relieved of the severe pressure from artisanal fishing and from silt caused by land erosion. Fishing practices are deteriorating whilst the fisheries in the lagoon are being exploited at unsustainable level. The off lagoon fisheries are not utilised to its maximum despite extremely good reports from the new big game boat that exist.

Sites which were fished by octopus fishers were subject to a high degree of disturbance such as trampling and breakage of coral structure. According to the Rodrigues International Marine Biodiversity Workshop 2001, the following were identified: in Rodrigues we have been able to identify some 32 Holothurians that are *Bambusa* species. 104 Foral species, 177 Fish species, 150 species of Algae, 106 bivalve species.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the study reveals the serious depletion of the octopus as a result of habitat lost, due to intensive trampling, high incidence of coral overturning and breakage and over fishing. It was recommended that the octopus fishery be closed for a period of at least two years to allow for regeneration and coral recovery and a complete banning of reef walking activities.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that if we want to protect the Marine and Biodiversity and ensure the long term sustainability of fisheries in Rodrigues, it is paramount that we define certain areas to be considered as Marine Reserves. The over exploitation of our lagoon can no more be tolerated and if we want our Marine Biodiversity to be sustainable and consider the fishing industry as one of the pillars of our economy.

It is therefore right that we come up with such Regulations, which I invite the Members of the minority to consider as just and fair for the sustainable development of our marine resources. The lagoon ecology has been degraded due to intensive and destructive fishing practices.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this fishing pressure and the destruction of the corals, algae and other foundations of the marine eco-system, have led to a severe decline in many of our marine resources namely octopus and fish catches. The marine reserves in coral reef habitat are proving to be successful management tools providing win-win solutions, fulfilling economic, social and environmental objectives. Benefits can include a source of revenue through tourist visits as well as improve biodiversity of the area and increase fish stocks. Marine reserves that combine these aims have been suggested as valuable options for the Rodriguan lagoon.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me to take the case of two countries as my colleague Commissioner Clair has just mentioned where the exploitation of sea cucumbers is done on very large scales and in many cases similar practices are being done as here in Rodrigues.

Let's take the case of the Galapagos in the 1918's Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the international trade in sea cucumber's for food increased dramatically. The fishery in Ecuador emerged at the time comprising almost exclusively only one species of ----- ([Isostichopuses](#)).

By 1991 the fishery for sea cucumbers along main land Ecuador has been exhausted and the country fishing method focused on population in the Galapagos Island. Although export of sea cucumber from Ecuador account for a tiny proportion of the world trade in this commodity, the impact of the fishery in that country threatened to affect the unit eco-system of the Galapagos Island. But only does the fishery causes a direct threat to local sea cucumbers as a resource but also indirectly to the fauna and flora of the Island, recognised worldwide as an immense biological importance. Sea Cucumbers fishers have contravened Regulations in force as regards protection of reserves, felling trees and otherwise affecting local habitat through their processing activities and increasing the opportunities for non native species such as Rats, Ants, weeds to invade the Island. Besides the rapid rise in the human population of the Island, from a new hundreds in the 40's to approximately 14,000 in 1998 is partly a result of the perceive fishing opportunities.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, attempts at the control that is the fishery has been closed since December 1994, were strongly opposed by local communities and in some localities fishing continued unabated. Many are those who arrived on the Island to fish, have a strong incentive to maximize their income in a short period of time and often to repay loans to buy boats and other equipments.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in 1998, a special law was passed giving priority to the designed of a management plan for the Galapagos fisheries. It was felt that the development of a rational management system with carefully controlled exports rather than a complete banned, may reduce the risk of illegal fishing and processing of sea cucumbers.

Now let us take the case of the Seychelles. Sea Cucumbers fishery in the Seychelles was for long periods an unimportant fishery in the terms of cash and economic value. Only a few individuals were involved in the fishery, harvesting Sea Cucumbers in the shallow waters and mainly using snorkeling equipments. Most of the "*bêche de mer*" produced was exported to the South East Asian Countries. The fishery remained unregulated and uncontrolled due to its unimportance and limited financial and human resources and scarcity in the fishery data. This fishery has been a rapid development since 1998, due to a higher prices for the "*bêche de mer*" on the International market and ----- ([bimbling](#)) stocks in many producing country.

In the Seychelles there was an influx of entrance into the fishery and by 1999 there was already sign of stocks depletion. Using a precautionary approach, the National Fisheries Authority implemented limited management measures, in particular with regard to the licensing of this activity both for fishing and processing. These measures had to be adjusted several times in order to make the operators comply with the measures. Today, there is a limit on the number of licenses, only 25 that can be allocated and it has become mandatory for all the licensees to supply their catch and processing data to the Fisheries Authority. Fish regulated data is still too scarce to help the Fisheries Authority assess the stocks of the Sea Cucumbers and to prepare a management plan. Lacking in House Expertise to carry out this task, the FAO was approached to assist in this exercise.

A project to build capacity in the resource management assessment and management of the Seychelles's Holothurians fishery was designed and recently approved for funding by the FAO. The main objectives of these projects are to improve the licensing and reporting mechanism, to carry out surveys, to estimate the extent of the Holothurians rhesus and to assess the impact of fishery catches on the abundance of the Holothurian's in selected fishing areas and to develop an implement of management plan for the Holothurians fishery. A participatory approach will be taken to develop the management plan with the involvement of all stakeholders and it is expected that the plan will be reviewed annually, so that the resource can be exploited on a sustainable level.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there's from the lessons of these cases studies from the Galapagos and the Seychelles's Island I would recommend that a thorough study as regards stock assessment and characteristic of Sea Cucumbers priding the lagoon of Rodrigues be initiated. In view of developing a sustainable exploitation of this marine resource while at the same time aiming at its conservation through appropriate and realistic measures.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the meantime I will suggest that a partnership with the fishermen community, a code of conduct be developed for the sustainable fishing practices. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me before I end to quote that:-

“The sea cucumber is now a very very prolific commercial and very creative activity worldwide.”

In big countries like Australia for example, where this activity is done on a very large scale, the harvesting is done on a very large scale because their consumption is very high during the Chinese New Year at mid year and end of year festivals, dinners and at almost every wedding dinner irrespective of income groups.

Therefore in Australia, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they have come with certain regulations where the catch are limited so that they can be under controlled and fishermen are given quota. I don't know up to now what study have reveal concerning availability of such species in our lagoon, but if we take into consideration, what is happening elsewhere in the world, I think the Sea Cucumber can become a very very high valued commodity for export by

Rodrigues but to be able to reach that level, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think right that we come with the correct Regulations in order to not only control but to preserve such species, with that Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for your attention.

(Applause)

Chief Commissioner : Monsieur le Président, j'ai écouté avec attention les différentes interventions des Membres. Je voudrais remercier les Membres de ce coté de la chambre pour avoir apporté leurs commentaires et leurs propositions en support avec la Motion. Quand le Minority Leader a dit que c'est "*a poor Regulation*".

Je me suis rappelé de quelque chose que le chargé de cours l'Université de la Réunion, deuxième année d'économie, en économie monétaire nous disaient souvent aux étudiants, ils disaient Monsieur le Président, "***ne croyaient pas que je vais vous allouer votre note, vos points, selon le poids de votre scripts***", c'est-à-dire ne croyait pas que si vous écrivait beaucoup, vous faites une réponse de trois milles pages veut nécessairement dire que vous allez avoir plus de points. Le point n'est pas donner dépendant du poids du papier, Monsieur le Président et c'est ça que je veut dire aujourd'hui, ne croyait pas que parce qu'un un papier contient deux pages, un règlement contient deux pages, ça veut dire que c'est ridicule, ça veut dire que c'est pauvre Monsieur le Président.

Regardez ce qu'on voit Monsieur le Président, la loi Mauricienne sur la presse, Newspapers and Periodical Act, la première fois a été fait en 1837, toute la loi mauricienne sur la presse tient sur une page. Monsieur le Président et on vient me reprocher de faire des "*poor regulations*" parce qu'il il y a que quelques sections et que quelques règlements c'est une critique que je mets a part, la loi n'est pas a être peser dépendant du nombre de pages, la loi est a être pesée selon les mots et je crois que les mots qui sont dans ces règlements sont clairs.

Deuxième aspects des choses Monsieur le Président, nous avons changé, il y avait des règlements qui avaient été préparé la, nous avons changé certaine choses et Monsieur le Président, le même *Legal Adviser* qui avait travailler sur les anciens règlements, a recommandé à changer, à *amendé* le même règlement. Donc la même personne est venue avec les mêmes règlements Monsieur le Président et on peut se demander quel est le rôle de ce *Legal Adviser*.

On a dit Monsieur le Président, qu'il n'y a pas eu de controle durant les derniers mois. Quel contrôle il y a eu en 2006 ? Voyez aujourd'hui Monsieur le Président, avec la nouvelle équipe il n'y a plus de fraudes comme il y avait auparavant. Chaque semaine, chaque jour Monsieur le Président, les Officiers du *Fisheries Service* attrapent des gens et il y a quelque jours ils sont même aller plonger Monsieur le Président, pour enlever des sennes. Je voudrais les féliciter pour le bon travail et les encourager et leur dire qu'il faut continuer a protégé la mer. Parce que ceux qui ne font pas leurs travaux naturellement dans n'importe quel domaines il auront a faire a nous.

Il n'y a pas eu control, qu'est ce qui a été fait, Monsieur le Président, avant le 04 août 2006. Est ce que l'exploitation du *Bambara* a commencé avec notre Gouvernement ? Bien avant Monsieur le Président. Quel controle l'ancien Gouvernement a mit? Rien. On a dit qu'il y a eue un *lack of seriousness*. Où est le manque de sérieux, quand depuis quelques mois...

Chairperson: Order please ! please wait. Stop with this sitting interruptions from both sides. Allow the Chief Commissioner to end with this summing up, please.

Chief Commissioner: Merci Monsieur le Président. On a dit un manque de sérieux, quelle manque de sérieux que comme dans le programme on a dit qu'on va venir de lavant avec sa. Quelle manque de sérieux quand j'ai des lettres de certaines associations sur ma table, félicitant le Conseille Exécutive pour notre prise de décision d'introduire ces règlements à l'Assemblée Régionale, Monsieur le Président.

On a dit Monsieur le Président, que les règlements ne sont pas bien etc. Est-ce que je peux encore rafraichir la mémoire de l'ancien Chef Commissaire sur le faite que lui-même et le *Legal Adviser* avaient signer les règlement avec plus au moins les mêmes *wording*, Monsieur le Président, nous, on a fait for *the sake of importance* to cut into two, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Minority Leader has said that the Act is not mentioned. I don't know where it is necessary to mention Act, may be the respected Minority Leader should change his spectacles and look Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Chairperson: No personal attacks, please.

Chief Commissioner: And look what there is said on the Regulations made by Rodrigues Regional Assembly under section 31 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001. It is specified here, may he has not seen it.

On the caution of Authorised Officer, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me take the case of the Newspapers and Periodical Act at the section 6, it is said,

“The name and residence of printer and editor of any newspaper or periodical shall be printed on every sheet or number of the newspaper or periodical, and (ii) any person who contravene Subsection (i) shall commit an offense and shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding 500 rupees.”

It is not said in this piece of law, who is responsible for prosecute, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Authorised Officer, I gather, "j'ai l'impression que la façon donc l'ancien Conseille Exécutive à travaillé il voudrais nous imposer la même façon. Il y a une loi, Monsieur le Président, il y a des offenses qui sont prévues, n'importe qui peut enmener devant la cour, que se soit la police, que se soit le Fisheries Protection Service, que ce soit les Coast Guard peut poursuivre quelqu'un. Notre bureau peut demander au Fisheries Protection Service, aux

Coast Guard de faire la surveillance et s'ils attrapent des gens, il peut les enmener devant la cour et dire que ont a eu telle personne pêchant des *Bambaras*, ont a saisis ses affaires qui est prévues dans le *Fisheries Act* et on a enmener comme exhibit, ou est le problème, Monsieur le Président. Est ce qui est dit ici dans le *Newspapers and Periodical Act* qui doit poursuivre ? il n'est pas dit, qui doit poursuivre. Quest-ce que c'est Monsieur le Président".

Qu'est-ce que c'est Monsieur le Président, Departmental Head to issue licence and not Commissioner. The same thing applies in the Fisheries Act. At many sections, at many provisions responsibility for such and such matter is with the Minister. The condition, authorisation under Regulation 4, the Commissioner may issue an authorisation under subsection (iii) under such conditions. What is the condition? We would specify for what terms, for how many months, for how many days the licence is valid, what is the fee to be paid, it is better to have it like this. The conditions can be changed according to the conditions of the present of the day, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Minority Leader is saying we should provide for processing also. We are providing for what is happening in the sea, there is the law for what is processing. Processing will fall under the Environment and Protection Act because processing of sea cucumber would require a preliminary environment report and it is already provided by the Environment Protection Act.

Donc, emballer d'un seul trait les remarques du Minority Leader et moi je dis que les règlements tels qu'ils ont été fait, sont acceptables, sont biens et ces règlements doivent être passés et parce qu'il y a Monsieur le Président, un certificat d'urgence. There is emergency to pass these Regulations because as they are, they already provide for a quite clear terms that fishing of Bambara is forbidden, there are marine reserves and those who infringe the Regulations, what are the offences. So with these I thank all the Members who have intervened on this Motion and that we move to the amendments.

Chairperson: Before you end your speech, may be it is time for you to move for the rather technical amendments. You need to proceed in terms of the amendments, making in all according to the notice of Motion of amendment. You have four Motions to make and you drew the attention as far as the second Regulations is concerned about the mistake Regulations 6 (a) and then you can move to the first Regulations, first.

Chief Commissioner: I move that under the Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulations 2007 at Section (v) (i) (a) I move that we substitute the word "*one*" by the word "*two*".

Commissioner Grandcourt rose and seconded the motion.

Chairperson: Secondly. Question - that the word "*one*" be substituted by the word "*two*" in Regulations (v) (i) (a). Those in favour say ayes and those against say no.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chief Commissioner: I move Mr. Chairperson, Sir, under the Regulations (v) (i) (a) to substitute the word “two” by the word “five”.

Commissioner Agathe rose and seconded the Motion.

Chairperson: Question - that the word “two” be substituted by the word “five” in Regulation (v) (i) (a).

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chief Commissioner: I move that under the Regulations (v)(i)(b) to substitute the word “two” by the word “five”.

Commissioner Clair seconded the Motion.

Chairperson: Question - that the word “two” be substituted by the word “five” in Regulations (v) (i)(b). Those in favour say ayes and those against say no.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chief Commissioner: Regulation (v) (i)(b) to substitute the word “five” by the word “ten”.

Chairperson: Question - that the word “five” be substituted by the word “ten” in Regulation (v) (i)(b). Those in favour say ayes and those against say no.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chairperson: That is all the amendments.

Chief Commissioner: Yes, for this Motion.

Chairperson: Question –

“That this Assembly is of opinion that, by virtue of section 31 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, there is passed the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Fisheries and Marine Resources) Regulations 2007 with amendments, those in favour say ayes, those against say no.”

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chairperson: Question two for the second motion;

That this assembly is of opinion that, by virtue of section 31 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act.

(Interruptions)

Chairperson: Yes? For the second motion

Chief Commissioner: We have amendments for the second Motion.

Chairperson: Yes you may do so.

Chief Commissioner: I move that Regulations 2 (d) of the Fisheries and Marine Resources - Marine Reserves Regulations 2007, 2(d) I move that the “*semi colon*” at the end of the paragraph and the word “*and*” be deleted.

Chairperson: You move to delete the “*semi colon*” and the word “*and*”. Are you replacing by a dot something like that?

Chief Commissioner: We replace by a dot.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner seconded the motion.

Chairperson: Question - that the “*Semi colon*” and the word “*and*” at the end of the Regulations 2 (d) of the Fisheries and Marine Resources – Marine Reserves Regulations 2007 be substituted by a dot. Those in favour say ayes, those against say no.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that the schedule, that the first schedule, the second schedule and the fourth schedule of the Fisheries and Marine Resources Regulations 2007 be amended.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner seconded.

Chairperson: Yes

Chief Commissioner: Under the caption “*Regulation 6 (a)*” be amended, so that it reads “*Regulations (ii) (a), (ii) (b), (ii) (c), (ii) (d)*” successively.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner seconded the motion

Chairperson: Question – that the word “*six*” appearing as caption in the first schedule, second schedule, third schedule and fourth schedule” be substituted for the word “*two*”. Those in favour say ayes, those against say no.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chairperson: Any other amendment? So, I put the questions.

Question –

“That this Assembly is of opinion that, by virtue of section 31 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, there is passed the

Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Fisheries and Marine Resources – Marine Reserves) Regulations 2007 with amendments”.

Those in favour say ayes, those against say no.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chairperson: May be it's a good time for a little break.

(At 16.05 hours, the Assembly was suspended for 15 minutes)

(Resumption at 16.20 hours with Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

Clerk: Motions continue.

Chief Commissioner: I beg to move to the motion on House Committee standing in my name.

“This Assembly is of opinion that in accordance with Standing Order 65 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001 there are elected the following four members to sit on a House Committee to be styled the House Committee for the Comfort and Convenience of the Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly”.

- 1) Mr. Laval Guillaume
- 2) Mrs. Jacqueline Prosper
- 3) Mr. Louis Phillipe Francois
- 4) Mr. Louis Daniel Baptiste

Thank you.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner seconded the motion.

Mr. Chairperson: It seems that you have amended, you just move for the little amendment.

Chief Commissioner: I move that the two words “Act 2001” be deleted and be replaced by “*Standing Orders and Rules*”.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner seconded the motion.

Mr. Chairperson: And who seconded the Motion for secondment? You yourself.

Question – that the words “Act 2001” appearing in the said Motion be substituted for the word “*Standing Orders and Rules*”.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: The debate is now open. No intervention?

Question –

“That this Assembly is of opinion that in accordance with Standing Order 65 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Standing Orders and Rules, there are elected the following four members to sit on a House Committee to be styled the House Committee for the Comfort and Convenience of the Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly”.

- 1) Mr. Laval Guillaume
- 2) Mrs. Jacqueline Prosper
- 3) Mr. Louis Phillipe Francois
- 4) Mr. Louis Daniel Baptiste

Those in favour say ayes, those against say no.

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chief Commissioner: With your permission Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to move a motion for the setting up of the Standing Orders Committee;

“This Assembly is of the opinion, that in accordance with the Standing Order 64 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Standing Orders and Rules there are elected the three Members to sit on the Standing Orders Committee”.

- 1) Mrs. Marie Therese Clair
- 2) Mr. Joseph Alan Ladd Emilien
- 3) Mrs. Marie Arlette Perrine-Begué

The Deputy Chief Commissioner seconded the motion.

Mr. Chairperson: No debate, question?

“This Assembly is of the opinion that in accordance with the Standing Order 64 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Standing Orders and Rules there are elected the three Members to sit on the Standing Orders Committee”.

- 1) Mrs. Marie Therese Clair
- 2) Mr. Joseph Alan Ladd Emilien
- 3) Mrs. Marie Arlette Perrine-Begué

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the setting up of Public Accounts Committee motion:

“This Assembly is of opinion that, in accordance with Standing Order 63 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Standing Orders and Rules there are elected the following four Members to sit on the Public Accounts Committee”.

- 1) Mrs. Lordana Meunier
- 2) Mr. Laval Guillaume
- 3) Mrs. Jacqueline Prosper
- 4) Mr. Jean Daniel Speville

The Deputy Chief Commissioner seconded the motion.

Mr. Chairperson: No debate, Question -

“This Assembly is of opinion that, in accordance with Standing Order 63 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Standing Orders and Rules there are elected the following four Members to sit on the Public Accounts Committee”.

- 1) Mrs. Lordana Meunier
- 2) Mr. Laval Guillaume
- 3) Mrs. Jacqueline Prosper
- 4) Mr. Jean Daniel Speville

On question put, the motion was agreed to.

All items on the Order paper being exhausted. Any Motion for Adjournment.

Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I moved that the House be adjourned....

(Interruptions)

Chairperson: Please wait

Minority Leader: You have not mention the name of the Chairperson on the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please wait please.

Minority Leader: Why he is not saying it here. Why he did not mention it?

Chairperson: Yes, following practice no mandate is committed one session afterward. Of course Minority Leader, we have taken recognisance of the copy of the letter you sent to us of course. The power is devote upon me and I have taken note of it and I will of course in the next sitting nominate the person.

Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me to clarify the mind of the Minority Leader on this issue, on the Standing Order 63 (i), it is said there shall be a Committee to be known as the Public Account Committee to consist of a Chairperson to be appointed by the Chairperson and not more than four members to be elected by the Assembly. Members should at time, may be before they go to bed take a look to the Standing Orders.

Chairperson: Order please!

Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that the House be Adjourned to Friday 23rd March, 2007 at 15.00 hours.

Mr. Chairperson: At 15 hundred hours.

Chief Commissioner: Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Question- that the House be Adjourned to Friday 23 March, 2007 at 1500 hrs. Those in favour say ayes, those against say no, the ayes have it.

ADJOURNMENT MATTERS

Compensation of Rs 1,000 to Professional Planters & Farmers

Mr. J.D. Speville (Second Local Region Member of St Gabriel): Monsieur le Président, devant la misère engendrer de plus en plus par le chômage, il y a unanimité dans le monde d'aujourd'hui de créer une maximum d'emploies. Soumise au contrainte économique l'île Rodrigues n'est pas entièrement libre d'assortir cette création d'emploies, des conditions de travail qu'elle aurait souhaitait.

Monsieur le Président, l'agriculture occupe une place importante dans la vie des Rodriguais. Beaucoup de Rodriguais qui dépendent pour survivre. Le secteur Agriculture, élevage et Agro-alimentaire sont promis comme pilier et catalyseur du développement économique durable du pays.

Monsieur le President, l'objectif de ce secteur est d'éradiquer la pauvreté et par la transformation économique, par des conditions qui permettraient aux Agriculteurs et d'éleveurs d'avoir accès à la terre et d'être en mesure d'établir une production organisée et appuyer au niveau technologique.

Monsieur le President, nous avons réussi notre première phase de développement agricole, tous en sauvegardant les terres agricoles qui servent aux Rodriguais, mieux nous avons montré que la terre est un moteur puissant du développement.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is outline in the main recommendation of the National Development Strategy which says that land development in Rodrigues should:

- (i) not hinder the economic development of the island.
- (ii) not have any adverse effect on the natural environment
- (iii) contribute toward the progress of the population.

Monsieur le Président, on a aussi entré dans la deuxième phase de développement, ce qui consiste dans le support matériel pour rendre plus dynamique le secteur agricole et ces acteurs. L'ancien Gouvernement Régional qui misait sur une réforme agraire ne visait que pas que le court terme, l'approche était de viser de longs termes et le succès de notre agriculture économique dans le temps, en changeant la fonction sociale de celle-ci, en une fonction économique *and to enter into the second phase of Agricultural development and to empower our planters and farmers.*

The former Regional Government has provided training to planters of Rodrigues and abroad, provided training on potato production, soil conservation, onion production, post harvest and processing on piglet production, pig fattening, on bean production and on green house technology. Built up reservoirs, set up an irrigation unit to design new irrigation networks for planters and setting up of one stop shops in Agricultural zones. Put subsidies on beans and potato seedling, purify our local chilly and put emphasis on the production of high market value product, like red bean, Lemon, Chilly, Onions, Pork, Honey. Undergone maize trial and implement a new variety of dried resistant maize. Set up of an unité Agro-Alimentaire at Citronelle and sell glass, jars and pots at a reduced price with Agro processors. Create a Rodriguan label, enhance procedures for a food laboratory in Rodrigues and a dog plant at Grenades, created the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Agency. Open rooms for involvement of the youth in agriculture by setting up a Young Farmers Entrepreneurs Scheme. A pilot study was triggered at St Gabriel where an Institut de Formation Agricole was to be set up.

Registered planters and farmers, nowadays they are fully recognised with their planters cards. Rot mechanization tools for Freeland Mechanisation in Rodrigues, began to work on the cattle work regulation to preserve agricultural land from roaming animals and taking into account the interest of those performing agriculture. Extend the Port Mathurin market and give way for the setting up of a slaughter house at Pointe la Guele.

Mais, Monsieur le Président, il est aussi essentiel de ne pas avoir faire des exigences de la justice sociale envers les acteurs du secteur agricole, qui sont les planteurs et les éleveurs. Monsieur le Président, il faut connaître l'histoire, le contexte dans lesquels les Gouvernement d'alors avec les institutions que nous avons à l'époque, avec l'apuit technique et financier du Fond Européen de Développement, on entrepris le premier travaux de réaménagement naturels et agricoles de notre l'île Rodrigues.

Le rapport préliminaire avant le démarrage du projet FED a durée de 1980-1987. L'île souffre depuis longtemps de déboisement, de l'érosion du sol, de l'appauvrissement en ressource hydrique et de l'abaissement progressif de la profondeur de lagon. La conjugaison de facteur climatique, sécheresse et cyclone et en tropique forte démographie et surpâturage en est aussi la cause principale.

Monsieur le Président, durant la période d'Août 2006 à Janvier 2007 nos planteurs ont souffert de ce facteur négatif sur leurs activités d'agricole et d'élevage. La pluie qui est non périodique, est aussi rare qu'il a y a eu décès d'animaux et perte en terme de productivité agricole. De plus cela a entraîné une flambé de prix pour les fruits, légumes, et d'autres produits agricoles. Vu le faible pouvoir d'achat, beaucoup de Rodriguais n'arrivait pas à acheter des légumes qui sont conseillable pour une alimentation saine. De plus les femmes qui sont engagé dans la transformation de produit agricoles, ont souffert d'une baisse dans leurs opérations économiques. C'est dans cette perspective que la minorité demande une assistance financière sont donner au planteurs et aux éleveurs pour compenser leurs pertes durant cette période.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on the 22nd December the Chief Commissioner said, I quote :-

“We are proud to report to this assembly that the decision to grant a supplementary end of year allowance of Rs 1000 to all registered fishers have been fulfilled. The book loan scheme for the free provision of books have been finalised and all Secondary students will receive their books via their respective colleges”.

But what about these producers, the planters and the farmers who support our economy? Où est la justice sociale dans tous sa, Monsieur le Président ? Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the minority groups has been elected by the people and we are also elected also by the system.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, order please!

We are representatives of the people, the democratic of the people, the democratic system of the Republic of Mauritius and in line with this we are here to do our job as elected Members, to come here with the grievances of planters and farmers. Even the Chief Commissionner *a été témoin de ce demande la durant la dernière consultation budgétaire*. The planters and farmers are complaining for a compensation, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr. Speville: These people cannot come here, but we are here to defend their interest. We are the voice the people.

Monsieur le Président, nous avons environ 1500 planteurs enregistrer à la Commission de l'agriculture, 600 éleveurs et 160 apiculteurs. Le nombre total de planteur et éleveurs est estimer a 2300 environ. Ces planteurs sont regroupés en 42 associations qui sont regroupé sous l'Association de l'Agriculteur de Rodrigues.

Some of these planters are full time planters and the others are part-time planters. Durant la période Août 2006 a Janvier 2007, surtout dans le mois de Novembre à Janvier, la situation climatique n'a pas été bénéfique pour eux. Pour pouvoir soutenir leur activités, les planteurs et fermiers ont du avoir recours a des frais additionnels pour l'irrigation, les fertilisants et la main-d'œuvre. Et même avec cela certain a encouru des pertes. Le secteur économique engendre certaines situations d'inégalité et même d'injustices si ont ne les tiennent pas en compte.

Monsieur le Président, le 22 Décembre 2006, le Chef Commissaire a dit I quote :

"No doubt much effort and consensus will be required to implement the proper strategies and to set up the proper atmosphere for the complete emancipation of all Rodriguans".

It is important in that prospect to give equality of opportunity to one and all. I quote that is:- ***"To the Fishermen, to the school students"*** and also to the planters and farmers, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, et c'est pour cela que nous pensions que les citoyens qui font un efforts pour survivre par leur activité de producteur et qui prend une mentalité de productrice et non pas l'assistanat doivent bénéficier de façon équitable des retombé matériels et financiers. Et nous demandons qu'une enquête soit faite sur les pertes encourues durant la période ci mentionnée, pour les planteurs et éleveurs et de voir la possibilité de les compenser financièrement, parce que si l'ennuies prend pas garde, si on n'arrive pas a prôner la justice sociale, il y a le risques de dériver vers une société a deux vitesses ou les faussées entre les riches et les pauvres s'agrandirait progressivement.

Merci, Monsieur le Président.

(Applause)

Mr. Chairperson: It seems that the subject matter of the debate is addressed to the Commissioner for Agriculture and the finance as well. Who intervene first? Yes, Chief Commissioner.

Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Si je comprends bien la logique de notre ami de l'autre coté de la chambre, si quelqu'un a des poules et que les poules cessent de pondre, c'est aux Gouvernement de compenser, Monsieur le Président.

Il n'y a pas de provision pour paiement en tant que telle l'allocation des planteurs, comme il y a une allocation pour les pêcheurs et Monsieur le Président, encore une fois je vais donner une leçon sur les *Standing Order*, cette fois ci a l'ancien Chef Commissaire. Il a déposé une motion à la chambre. Il croyait peut être que la motion aller être débattu aujourd'hui, mais c'est un *Private Members Motion*. Il faut qu'ils lisent bien leurs *Standing Orders*. Le *Standing Order* 66 de l'Assemblée *Financial Resolution* except qu'il nous dit, le Membre a déposé une Motion qui a été circulé, mais je sais pas si elle va être débattu a la fin de la session :-

"This Assembly resolves that a compensation of Rs 1000 monthly be granted to professional planters and farmers who suffer a high loss of productivity, owing to the dry seasons during the period August 2006-2007."

Il aurait du mettre Monsieur le Président, *during the period Janvier 1982 when the OPR took Government until 4 August 2007* because all through this period there has been a deterioration of Agriculture, because we are not responsible therefore to come back to the Standing Orders.

Il est dit Monsieur le Président,

"Except upon the recommendations of a Commissioner, the Assembly shall not proceed upon any bill which in of opinion of a person presiding makes provision for any of the following purposes"

"For the payment issue or withdrawal from the consolidated Rodrigues or other public funds of Rodrigues, or any moneys not charged the open, or any increase of the amount of such payment issue or withdrawal"

Et il est dit a la parti 66 (b) :

"Proceed upon any Motion including any amendment to a Motion the effect of which of the opinion of the person presiding would be to make provision for any of the -----"

So, therefore I will invite you Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to consider this Motion carefully.

Mr. Chairperson: On a word I have already rule out this Motion and the Member is aware.

Chief Commissioner: Against, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and the prerogative to allocate the budget of Rodrigues or to make any public expenditure rest with this side of the house. And they should accept.

(Applause)

This is the second time I am telling it. You are not allowed to make Motions to make financial expenses, you are not allowed.

Chairperson: Order, please!

Chief Commissioner: You don't have this power, and you must accept.

(Interruptions)

Chairperson: Order, please from both sides.

Chief Commissioner: Oui Monsieur le Président, a ce que je disait, le Standing Order ne permet pas a un Membre de venir de l'avant avec une Motion ou même une proposition. Je voudrai arrêter le Membre pour dire que le problème de l'Agriculteurs de Rodrigues. La perte de productivité et la souffrance encourue par les agriculteurs, quels efforts ont été faits, Monsieur le Président, je voudrais féliciter les deux Commissaires qui ont fait un travail formidable dans l'Agriculture depuis que je suis Commissaire. Le membre Agathe et mon colistier dument élu Monsieur le Président, le Membre Louis Ange Perrine.

Chairperson: Order, please.

Chief Commissioner: Pendant le mandat

(Interruptions)

Chairperson Order please, from both sides, yes the Chief Commissioner has only seven minute to finish his page, allow him to do so please!

Chief Commissioner: Pendant le mandat de Christian Agathe des milliers de permit Agricole ont été alloué. Des gens qui attendaient leur permit agricoles, *this has been surveyed* et ont leurs a donné.

Minority Leader: I want to know, how many minutes on the Adjournment time are allocated to the Speaker?

Chairperson: Yes the Standing Order provides only the ----- clause as shall adjourn the Assembly, 30 minutes after and the second local Member for the Region number three started a speech at 4.30 and normally at 05.00, we will finish. Normally what if there are many Members to intervene, and then the time is equally divided. So you may proceed Chief Commissioner.

Chief Commissioner: May be I should have some minutes more Mr. Chairperson. All these times they are interrupting me and making me missed my thinking. Yes, *I was saying Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the problems of Agriculture in Rodrigues* ne date pas d'hier Monsieur le Président. L'opposition à le droit de nous enmerder et ont a le droit de répondre, Monsieur le Président et on a le droit de répondre avec la ferveur qu'il faut et nous répondront avec la ferveur qu'il faut.

Donc je voudrais dire a nos amis de l'opposition d'apprendre premièrement a faire l'opposition, deuxièmement d'apprendre le Standing Orders. Je comprends leurs douleurs, leurs souffrances et leurs frustrations, Monsieur le Président. Mais je leurs demanderait Monsieur le Président, de persévérer dans l'opposition parce que ils vont être dans l'opposition pendant longtemps et je leurs demanderaient, Monsieur le Président, que le travaille d'opposition est très difficile, les provisions, les politiques du Gouvernement Régionale se font lors du Budget Monsieur le Président. Qu'est-ce qu'on n'a pas fait Monsieur le Président, savait vous que pendant la campagne électorale un Membre, un élu de la Région numéro trois donnait des piques pour avoir des avoirs des votes. On achète des gens avec des piques et des outils agricoles. Apres on vient dire de payer mille roupies aux planteurs. C'est facile Monsieur le Président de venir dire, qu'il faut payer ceci, qu'il faut payer cela. Mais la décision de faire ceci ou cela, de payer les pêcheurs comme nous avons fait ou de payer n'importe qui , d'aider n'importe qui, la décision revient aux Conseille Exécutive, revient aux Commissaires et aux Commissaire des Finance autant que possible quand le Finance sont concernées. Il faut qu'il apprennent a suivre leurs travaux et a faire le travaille d'opposition. Qu'ils apprennent leurs Standing Orders et qu'ils apprennent à être patients et serviable dans l'opposition. Peut-etre un jour, s'ils sont ensembles ou séparément, *they will have again the privilege to sit on this side.*

Thank you.

Chairperson: Would the Commissioner for Agriculture wished to intervene now or at a later stage? Please wait a Member is on his feet, please wait.

Commissionner L.A. Perrine: Monsieur le Président, ma Commission est entrain de préparer un papier *State of the Agriculture*, que j'aurais le plaisir de présenter dans une prochaine session, mais je voudrais dire quelques mots. J'ai écouté attentivement ce que le Membre vient de déclarer, mais je me demande si cette personne a passé quatre ans et demie à l'Agriculture et si c'est maintenant qu'il vient d'apprendre tous ça.

(Applause)

La situation de l'Agriculture à Rodrigues est catastrophique. Les planteurs et les éleveurs sont démotivés, les officiers sont démotivés, il n'y a pas d'ordre, pas de discipline. Je vais donner comme exemple, il y a Maréchal, ce qu'on appelle *One Stop Shop*. Monsieur le Président, j'ai été visiter, il y a un officier et deux chaises casés. J'ai demandé à mon *Departmental Head*, de fermer ce *One Stop Shop*. Même affaire dans les *Breeding Centres*, dans les démonstration plot il n'y a pas d'ordre, il n'y a pas de discipline. Ce que nous voulons, c'est redonner l'espoir aux Agriculteurs de Rodrigues. Nous allons venir avec un plan pour projet pour développer l'Agriculture à Rodrigues., Je vais donner un exemple, à Rodrigues il y a 4000 hectares cultivables, nous sommes arrivés a moins de 2000. Superficies cultiver l'année dernière est tombé à moins de 100 hectares. La production d'Onions qui été de 1000 tonnes et passer l'année dernière a 200 tonnes. Cette année ci nous allons doubler cette production. Je vais venir avec un papier, je vais présenter, je vais créer des filières, je vais développer l'Agriculture de Rodrigues.Merci.

(Applause)

Chairperson: Yes, six minutes.

Mrs A. Perrine-Begué : Monsieur le Président, ----- (off the cut), quelques mots juste pour vous dire que je soutiens mon Collègue Monsieur Daniel Speville, moi-même étant fille de planteur, nous connaissons la vie des planteurs, des arpents nous en avons planter et nous plantons toujours.

Monsieur le Président, ce que je dois dire mon Collègue Monsieur Daniel Speville, parle dune situation présente, c'est que durant ces cinq derniers mois il y a eu une sécheresse plus ardue, Monsieur le Président, qu'avant. c'est vraie Monsieur le Président, une sècheresse terrible et nous savons ce que les planteurs sommes en train d'endurer, comme par exemple sur les pesticides, les insecticides, les prix sont en train d'augmenter. Au niveau des légumes Monsieur le Président, comme il n'y a pas de pluies du tous nous savons que les planteurs avaient plantés durant la période de Décembre, et moi j'ai visité un planteur et il ma dit Madame Perrine regarder, ces plantes filantes sont entrain de venir dans ma main sécher Monsieur le Président.

Oui, Monsieur le Président, j'ai aussi rencontrer plusieurs de ces femmes Entrepreneurs, que j'avais regroupés dans une Fédération de six branches de Femmes Entrepreneurs, je les rencontrées, elles sont venues me voir a la maison, Monsieur le Président. Plusieurs sont des femmes et j'ai visité aussi la femme qui a eu le *Women Entrepreneur Award* il y a de cela quelques semaines, jai visiter celle qui a eu *the first Women Entrepreneur Award*, elle fait de l'Agriculture. Elle me disait combien de difficultés il y avait, elle était entrain d'investir plus et de ne rien avoir.

Monsieur le Président, il y a eu par exemple pour les planteurs qui se trouvent dans la région centrale, ils sont alimentés, Monsieur le Président, par un réservoir qui s'apelle le réservoir de Brulé. Pendant 42 jours Monsieur le Président, ce réservoir est resté sans aucune alimentation. Ce réservoir soit disant on a envoyé un échantillons à Maurice et ont attendait, on aurait du au

moins donner cette eau pour que les planteurs puissent l'avoir. Pendant 40 jours, on parle de sorcellerie, on parle de tous sa et le réservoir na pas donner d'eau. Et les planteurs qui se trouve sur la crête de l'île, qui d'ordinaire on l'habitude d'avoir de l'eau, *ni ene ti la serain pa pe gagné*, comme quoi *on dirait ene malédiction* depuis que la nouvelle équipe.

Monsieur le Président, j'aurai aimé encore une fois faire cette proposition. Nous savons qu'il y a le Standing Orders, mais quand même nous aimerions faire la proposition à n'importe qu'elle moment *to be considered* que les planteurs soient compenser pour cette période de six mois ou ils n'ont rien pu avoir.

(Interruptions)

Chairperson: Order, please. Allow the Member to speak at least, I don't hear.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Begué: Monsieur le Président, quand après le cyclone Kalundé, le Premier Ministre d'alors été venu a Rodrigues et pour la première fois de notre histoire, Monsieur le Président, un Gouvernement de Rodrigues avait demander une compensation pour les planteurs et ça Monsieur le Président, c'était for *hardship* c'était un Cyclone et la sécheresse encore de plus longue durée.

C'est pour c,a *that I make a pledge* comme mon Collègue pour que cette considération soit donnée. Les planteurs ont besoins de courage, il y a eues deux cyclones qui sont passés même si cyclone pane tape fort, mais pour les petite brin digne, mais peut être vous n'avez pas connue ce que c'est que l'agriculture, mais *quand ene pied filante in vire à gauche, après dans l'autre cyclone li vire a droite, adieu*. Les personnes n'ont rien à manger, moi je sais ce que c'est et c'est pour ça que je lance un appel, Monsieur le Président, *hardship* sur les éleveurs et la je lance un appel au Membres, il sont entrain de rire, mais sa aussi ils sont des électeurs les planteurs, ce sont eux qui donnent à manger a cette population.

Nous ne pouvons pas continuer à importer des légumes et tous les produits subsidiaires de Maurice. Ce que je souhaite c'est que, tous comme a Maurice, ils sont entrain de souffrir, a Rodrigues encore plus avec cette sécheresses et surtout de manque d'eau. Notre population est entrain de souffrir de manque d'eau, il n'y a pas d'eau pour faire l'agriculture depuis quelques temps déjà.

Monsieur le Président, je lance cet appel à la majorité de considérer cette compensation officiellement, cette compensation à donner aux planteurs et ils ont la capacités, pourquoi est ce que *reallocation has been made for school materials or for whatever*. Egalement pour les planteurs, c'est possible, de bonne foi c'est possible. Merci.

Chairperson: The House stands Adjourned.

On its rising at 05.00 p.m, the Assembly stood adjourned to Friday 23 March, 2007 at 15.00 p.m.