

Debate 20.04.2009

Mr. Chairperson: On the last occasion, we had listened to the Budget Speech of the Chief Commissioner. Now I will ask from this side who is going to speak first. Yes? The Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, vendredi dernier pendant deux heures de temps on nous a présenté un budget de six mois. Et pendant ces deux heures de temps nous avons eu des informations concernant tous ce qui a été fait depuis 2006. C'est à dire pendant trois ans.

Le budget qui nous a été présenté vendredi dernier ne révèle rien de nouveau ; pas d'esprit inventif mais tous simplement des répétitions. Simplement une roue qui tourne déjà et il leur a pris trois ans pour comprendre ce que l'OPR avait commencé et avait réalisé dans l'esprit de combat pour l'autonomie de Rodrigues.

Après 25 ans de combat, pour l'autonomie de Rodrigues, nous avons eu que trois ans et demi pour nous organiser, jeter les bases de cette autonomie et pour commencer le travail que nous avons fait et que nous avons fait. Pour commencer le travail nous en avons fait beaucoup durant ce peu temps ayant comme toile de fond « Empower the Rodriguans », « rodriguais debout lor to dé lipié ». Malheureusement ils ont pris le pouvoir avec la complicité de deux transfuges qui ont brisé le rêve de tout un peuple.

(Interruptions)

The Minority Leader : L'autonomie ce n'est pas que de la finance.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, Order ! Yes, Minority Leader proceed. I asked you to proceed not to sit.

The Minority Leader : L'autonomie n'est pas une question de finance. Mais malheureusement pendant trois ans la finance a été le nerf de la guerre entre le gouvernement autonome et le gouvernement centrale. En 2001, Monsieur Robert Anni, Ex Juge, soutenait que l'autonomie et la décentralisation demeurent avant tous une question de co-opération entre les deux parties de l'état. Si il n'y a pas cette confiance entre Maurice et Rodrigues on peut dire point à la ligne, c'est fini. Donc, pendant trois ans nous avons eu cet nerf de guerre concernant la finance. Rodrigues a besoin d'une bonne gestion financière. Que voyons nous aujourd'hui après trois ans au pouvoir de l'exécutif actuel. Selon le rapport accablant de l'audit et des abus de toutes sortes, mentionnant même que Rs 45 millions ont été illégalement déposé dans un compte en banque.

The Chief Commissioner: Point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I think these allegations «Rs 45 millions déposé illégalement dans un compte en banque » are criminal defamation against me and this government. If the Minority Leader wants to speak on the budget, he speaks on the budget and the policies. Coming here and criminally incriminating my government is an act of stupidity. An act of stupidity and I would say an act “de lacheté”. I would invite the Minority Leader and the Chairperson to ensure that the allegations which are made here are clear. Unless they are able to substantiate to what they are saying and if they are not able then don't say it, please. There is a level of debate which is to be preserved here. Not coming and putting allegations on people, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you beforehand.

Mr. Chairperson: Are the allegations that the Minority Leader, well I just said allegations, I took his words. Are those allegations made against you or you are being against them?

The Minority Leader: I am referring to the Audit report saying that Rs 45 millions have been deposited in an account and according if this have been raised in this Audit Report.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, order, please. Order please. I don't think that need be any ruling being given that the two leaders are fighting. Order, Chief Commissioner, please. I understand that there is a ruling on this floor and then the matter get heated up. If a Member during his speech is making a reference to what the books or in this case to the Director of Audit Report concerning the allocations of funds and budget items. I think if the reference is honestly made then the Member is allowed with as much ado. But the Member should not in a sort of way cast allegations at the government of the day or at Members individually. Thank you, may you proceed, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, si tout a été fait selon les règles et les lois de la finance, est ce que le Directeur de l'Audit aurait mentionné cela dans son rapport ? Non. Alors la question qu'on pose.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, order, please!

The Minority Leader: M. le président, il nous a traité de lâche, il nous traite de fou. Alors ou est ce qu'on est dans ce pays là ? A qui on a affaires aujourd'hui ? On a voulu l'autonomie pendant 25 ans pour avoir ce genre de discussions aujourd'hui ? Ce genre de discussion, nous traité de lâche et la MBC nous rapporte tous cela dehors ? Alors qui nous sommes dans ce pays là ? Qui sommes nous ?

« Quand l'audit rapport faire ène faute c'est pas illégale ? Quand li rapporté ? Si li pas ti rapporté. Alors bizin dire. »

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Commissioners, please. From this side, please order. I have to give a note of caution to the Commissioners on the last occasion, the Chief Commissioner came here and address this House on the budget. He made a speech which last a little less than two hours and I did not hear a little word from the Minority Side. I expect that, I understand your position but you should understand that I am in the chair. It is me who has to preside over the Assembly those which are inadmissible I hold the responsibility to rule out and I will ask for your indulgence so that the Minority Leader may conclude his speech. Thank you.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, si nos amis, les membres de l'Opposition ont accepté..... donc je retire le mot « illégale » mais je dois dire que du fait que cela a été rapporter par le directeur de l'audit dans son rapport, cela veut dire qu'il y a anguille sous roches quelque part. Et c'est ça, c'est irrégulier. Et si tout a été fait selon les lois de la finance, le directeur de l'audit ne l'aurait pas mentionné dans son rapport. Et pourtant d'années en année depuis Décembre 2006, on nous répète « *to ensure sign public sector financial management with emphasis on accountability on all levels and to get down on productive spending and wastage.* ».

Et au cours de ce débat sur le budget, les années précédentes, quand je parlais d'une bonne gestion financière, on m'avait lancé à la figure « ki pou fout are la loi, fout la loi dan coin ». Rodrigues fait face aujourd'hui et toute la population le sait à du gaspillage, à une gestion des finances. Rodrigues fait face aujourd'hui à des pollutions sociales, comme la drogue, le vole, l'éclatement de la famille avec l'exode massive des jeux, casinos, des courses de chevaux, l'augmentation des débit d'alcool.

Pendant, trois ans il y a eu une dégradation de niveau de vie de la population. C'est un constat général. Un budget de deux heures de temps avec des slogans qui ne reflète pas la réalité et l'intérêt du peuple rodriguais. Il y a *no feel good factor* pas de sentiment de bien-être qui s'installe à Rodrigues. On ne parle plus de l'emploi durable mais de l'emploi saisonnier et occasionnel. Les chutes de la gestion de notre pays a pris trois ans amènent la jeunesse et la génération à venir à se poser beaucoup de questions sur leur avenir. Ils ne veulent plus rentrer au pays à cause de l'anarchie qui s'est installé à Rodrigues. La façon dont Rodrigues est gérée aujourd'hui ne leur donne plus confiance en l'avenir. « Avec transfuge, content l'argent. Alors comment zot ti été sa bane transfuges là ? Ki la vie zot ti pé amené ? ». Alors la façon dont Rodrigues est dirigé aujourd'hui ne leur donne plus confiance à l'avenir. Par ailleurs, il y a même des personnes qui ont fait des études à l'université de Maurice refusent d'envoyer leur candidatures pour tels ou tels postes. La façon dont Rodrigues est dirigé aujourd'hui ne donne plus confiance à ces jeunes en l'avenir. Par ailleurs, la

politique sociale et économique qui doit être conduite en fonction des intérêts de la population et non pas en fonction d'un groupe ciblé. La politisation a outrance sans tenir compte des conditions de vie de la personne, de la population. Le développement d'un pays doit encourager l'initiative des hommes et des femmes. Alors que voyons nous ? Le gouvernement se substitue à l'initiative privée. L'élevage des vaches laitières pour vendre du lait. On constate un retour de plusieurs années en arrière.

Mr. Chairperson: I think that without uttering a word, the Minority Leader has made a point. If you will allow him to finish his speech, please. Yes, proceed. Don't get interrupted please.

The Minority Leader: Can I continue without any interruptions?

Mr. Chairperson: Interruptions are not allowed.

The Minority Leader: Thank you. Les compagnies privées de l'état seront le coup de grâce à l'initiative, à la productivité et à la créativité de l'homme et de la femme rodriguais. Le rôle des haut cadres de la fonction publique qui est de veiller à un meilleur service publique sera diminuer. Cette même fonction publique, qu'est devenue cette autonomie ? La rodriguation pour laquelle nous avons lutté pendant tant d'années que sont devenu les compétences ? En 2006, on parlait de *liberals approaches in managing public affairs*. Que voit-on aujourd'hui ? Une fonction publique qui n'a plus de repères. Des fonctionnaires sont victimes de la politisation à outrance. Leur dignité et leur valeurs sont bafoués ; même le simple laboureur parle de « qui nous dignité ine perdi ». Le mépris et le manque de respect envers les fonctionnaires. Ils sont traités de manque de savoir faire et d'expertise, de boycottage.

Rodrigues a des ingénieurs, des géomètres qualifiés, des scientifiques...

Mr. Chairperson: Minority Leader before you interrupt your speech, I will ask you to ask for my ruling and who is the Member who seems to interrupt you and then I will make a ruling.

The Minority Leader: Le mépris et le manque de respect envers les fonctionnaires. Ils sont traités, on a entendu plusieurs fois ici, encore vendredi dernier, de manque de savoir faire et d'expertise, il faut aller chercher ces expertise ailleurs, de boycottage.

Rodrigues a des ingénieurs, des géomètres qualifiés, des scientifiques, des vétérinaires et tant d'autres. Le doute, la frustration, le découragement, l'insécurité et la confusion s'installent. Les soit disant stagiaires remplacent des fonctionnaires comme réceptionniste, *valve-operators*, comme si dirait ils sont des employés dans la

fonction publique. Je pose la question aujourd'hui, est ce que ce type de stage est conforme aux règlements de la fonction publique ? Beaucoup de travail a été fait dans le passé dans le domaine de la pêche. La formation, l'accès aux finances pour la pêche à travers la banque de développement pour la pêche en haut mer, y compris la formation des skippers qui avait commencé, le projet IFAD pour les plus gros bateaux. Avec le projet de parc marin qui pendant trois ans n'a pas beaucoup avancé, nous avons commencé à travailler tout un programme de recyclage des pêcheurs. Mais qu'avons nous entendu vendredi dernier ? Dans le passé, donne cartes pêcheurs à tords et à travers. Y avait-il des règlements pour empêcher un pêcheur d'avoir une carte de pêcheur ? Ne sait-on pas que d'avoir l'autonomie de Rodrigues, les décisions concernant la pêche à Rodrigues et à Maurice étaient prises par le Ministère de la Pêche. Pendant des années la pêche dans le lagon a fait nourrir beaucoup de familles. Pour les pêcheurs, la mer s'est leur gagne-pain. Pourquoi les dénigrer ? Pourquoi continuer sans cesse à les utiliser à des fins politiques ? On parle d'allouer un contrat pour une étude de faisabilité détaillé pour un port de pêche à ; et pourtant on a construit un parc au coût de Rs 26 millions à *Baie-aux-Huitres* sans un EIA, sans un plan directeur *master plan*, sans études de faisabilité, pas une vrai vision de l'aménagement du territoire, pas de respect pour la loi environnemental et aujourd'hui on vient nous parler de plan *master plan* pour des études de faisabilité pour un marina à *Baie-aux-Huitres*. Quel est l'accord abouti entre le Mauritius Ports Authority et L'Assemblée Régionale ? Comment concilier ce projet mal conçus au départ ? Ce projet de parc dans le lagon ?

Nous arrivons maintenant, M. le président, à un aspect très important de notre pays. La gestion de la terre. Notre terre selon la vision de l'OPR faut la faire produire, la protéger, et l'organiser. Dans le discours du budget de vendredi dernier, nous avons eu que des belles paroles mais dans la réalité, qu'en est-il vraiment ? Aujourd'hui on parle d'aménagement du territoire, du développement durable, allocation judicieuse de terres et cela après trois ans au pouvoir quand les dégâts sont visibles. Rien de nouveau, on n'invente pas une roue qui tourne. Notre vision concernant la gestion de la terre, faire de Rodrigues une île écologique et durable. On a parlé de l'allocation des baux comme ci dirait c'est nouveau, de 2000 baux en deux ans. Alors quand nous étions là on donnait 1150 baux par mois. On a parlé de légiférer la gestion de la terre. Or, il faut aller chercher dans les tiroirs, OPR

(Interruptions)

The Minority Leader: On a point of order...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, this is minor. Chief Commissioner you have to understand him as well. Yes, proceed.

The Minority Leader: Nous avons déjà préparé une loi. *Rodrigues Environmental Planning and Development Bill 2005* qui dort quelque part dans les

tirroirs. Il est gros comme ça. J'aurais du l'apporter pour montrer à ces messieurs. Qu'on ne me dise pas que dans le bureau du Island Chief Executive on ne voit pas ce document. « Ah bon, quand li ine vini zot ine défalquer tout ? » Le Island Chief Executive est là. Je le vois en train de sourire.

Mr. Chairperson: Excuse me; I already made an order, please. Can you proceed?

The Minority Leader: Je n'ai pas attaqué le Island Chief Executive. Je dis que cette loi a été préparé avec la collaboration d'une australienne et d'un anglais ou un écossais et qui a préparé un loi de cette grosseur et qui justement *Rodrigues Environmental Planning and Development Bill*. Et c'est tout un document d'explication, d'orientation et vient ensuite la loi.

Le *Geographical Information System*, L'OPR a déjà installé un système indépendant pour les différents départements comme l'agriculture, l'infrastructure publique, services des forêts, le service des forêts a déjà complété un beau travail. Il y a besoin tout simplement d'améliorer et de centraliser avec les dernières technologies. La formation sur l'utilisation du GIS a déjà commencé en 2004 et qui doit continuer. Le bureau du cadastre n'avait pas la base de données cadastrale. Nous avons donné un contrat de Rs 24 millions pour un cadastre à Rodrigues. L'importance du projet du cadastre et qui n'a pas été fait mention dans ce discours du budget. Nous avons dit aux gens qu'il fallait faire ce cadastre pour que justement la demande d'un morceau de terre, leur bail aurait été prêt dans deux semaines ou un mois. Tous les outils nécessaires sont là. Le *National Development Strategie 2003*, le plan d'ensemble avec la *Scheme Area Action Plan* commencé dans la région de La Ferme sous la direction de l'urbaniste, Frank Casimir. Je demande à mes collègues de taper une main pour ce Monsieur Frank Casimir qui a fait un beau travail. On a même volé le disque dur de son ordinateur. Il a été mis au placard en 2006 afin de donner des terres à tords et à travers pour gagner les élections. Alors que les terres qu'on donnait, tous passaient par l'urbaniste qui en même temps faisait le *Outline Scheme*, le *Area Action Plan* et c'était justement le travail qu'il faisait et c'est comme ça quand on donnait un bail c'était un bail vraiment réfléchi respectant l'environnement, respectant tout un esprit de durabilité.

Aujourd'hui, c'est le désordre. Développement incontrôlé. Nous avons pas exemple ces terres, des pâturages qu'on labourait à tords et à travers à la boucherie et qu'on donnait à des éleveurs choisis des arpents de terres alors qu'il y a d'autres éleveurs dans les environs. La spéculation foncière, la dilapidation de terres de l'état pour quelques milliers de roupies ont défiguré notre environnement avec des constructions au bord de la mer. *Baie-aux-Huitres*, pas de plan d'aménagement. On construit un parc de Rs 26 millions sans un plan d'aménagement sans un *master plan*. Baie Lascars, masse de bétons. Baie Lascars est devenu une masse de béton. On devait décentraliser Port Mathurin au niveau de la station d'essence. On a coupé la

superficie et sur cette superficie deux gros bâtiments en béton. Dans les années à venir, Port Mathurin sera décongestionner par les voitures qui attendent pour aller faire le plein d'essence. A *Mont Lubin*, on a donné des baux sans expertise, sur ce comblage qui nous on savait que c'était un comblage il y avait tout dedans. Et que ce n'était pas fini d'aménager. Il fallait faire un mur de soutènement mais on est venu donner 12 baux dessus, au milieu d'un village que des bâtiments en béton, aucun sens de l'environnement, aucune vision de durabilité. Parce que la durabilité c'est l'homme au centre de tout et non pas les bâtiments.

L'allocation des terres sans plan d'aménagement. Les mots de la rue, « bane la pé fini ek vane sa pays la ». D'autres disent heureusement l'OPR ti préserve la terre agricole...

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, le Minority Leader veut faire impression. Il faut attention à ce qu'on dit. Tout à l'heure il a dit « illégalement on a transférer des fonds » maintenant il dit « vane sa pays la ». Je ne sais pas si vous avez entendu mais je vous demanderai, M. le président de faire respecter le décorum dans cette assemblée. Parce que dire qu'un gouvernement « pé vane sa pays la », c'est grave et inacceptable. J'aurai l'occasion de répondre à ce monsieur tout à l'heure. Mais je lui demanderai de retirer ce qu'il a dit « le gouvernement est en train de vane sa pays la ». Parce que si on disait la même chose sur lui on pourrait bien dire que lui aussi il a vendu le pays. Je demanderai que le Minority Leader se concentre sur le budget, ses allégations il les garde pour lui ou s'il en a, s'il a le courage, qu'il aille à L'ICAC ou à la police qu'il aille dire qu'est ce qu'on a vendu et si on a vendu vraiment qu'on nous enferme, je le challenge d'aller dire. « Alle la police alle dire ».

Mr. Chairperson: No challenge, please!

The Chief Commissioner: He has said “mo pé vane pays, gouvernement pé vane pays”. I want the Chairperson to reflect on this and to tell this Member that this is not allowed here.

Mr. Chairperson: Well, Chief Commissioner you are right on this point. Any Member cannot say that another Member or the government has acted illegally because this is not a Court of Law and any illegal matters there are specific procedures for that. This is correct. And then the second point is that whether the government was selling in the words of the Chief Commissioner was selling the island. I do understand what the Minority Leader was saying he said that he heard. Well this is a little on the border line, you cannot say they were persons but the way it is said, it is not acceptable to the four corners but it is on the border line. And I would have to give a note that any Member in this House should refrain from referring to illegal acts. There is a procedure if you say that it is illegal then you go to prove it and before proving it you have to make the necessary reference before a Court or the appropriate institutions. This is not entertained in this House. Secondly

if there is any allegations refrained, you may say that it is your alternative policy or you comment on the policy adopted by the present Executive Council, this is perfectly in order but to cast allegations on illegal matters this is not allowed. Chief Commissioner my ruling is done. You may proceed.

The Minority Leader: Donc, je disais l'allocation des terres sans plan d'urbanisation. On a même donné des baux dans des terres agricoles. Il y a eu même des déclarations à la police. Mais malheureusement cela n'a pas avancé. Aujourd'hui c'est le désordre total avec des conséquences graves sur l'avenir. L'Environnement, le tourisme, aucune approche durable. On parle de l'environnement, nous avons déjà commencé à travailler sur un projet d'enfouissement des ordures à *Pointe au Sel* avec une station de triages des ordures. Le plan était déjà préparé et aujourd'hui on ne parle absolument rien de comment les ordures vont être traité à l'avenir.

M. le président, c'est après trois ans que ce gouvernement régional se rend compte qu'il faut aménager la nouvelle maternité, le centre culturel de Mont Plaisir, continuera la construction de réservoirs de 1000 m³, poursuivre le projet de désalement, etc, qu'il faut créer l'emploi quand des centaines de rodriguais vont chercher du travail à Maurice, qu'il faut une bonne gestion de nos ressources naturels terre, mer, qu'il faut continuer le travail commencer dans le secteur de l'eau, santé, agriculture, éducation et autres. En somme durant trois ans ils ont fait souffrir ce peuple, dégrader notre environnement en faisant à Rodrigues ce qu'on fait à l'Ile Maurice, encourager le laisser aller et le laisser faire. Voilà c'est ce qu'on nous a produit dans ce budget de deux heures de temps vendredi dernier.

Merci, M. le président.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, anybody from the majority side? Deputy Chief Commissioner you want to intervene now?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first of all, I would like to congratulate the Chief Commissioner for his budget speech on Friday 17th of April, 2009 where in the vision of this regional government for the development of Rodrigues be proposed a population centered, sustainable development approach for the next six month budget and beyond that. I also thank him for his continuous support to my Commission particularly in promoting education, arts and culture, training and library services.

M. le président, mon discours aujourd'hui sera axé sur deux principaux volés. Premièrement je passerai en revue toutes les réalisations accomplies jusqu'ici durant cette présente année financière et deuxièmement j'aborderai les différentes mesures que ma Commission durant cette *indicative* Programme Based Budget de six mois.

M. le président, je voudrais profiter de cette occasion pour remercier tous les officiers de ma Commission qui ont fait un travail formidable dans l'accomplissement des toutes les mesures annoncées dans le discours du budget 2008/2009 plus particulièrement Madame Christelle Grandcourt qui en était la cheville ouvrière durant la période où elle servait sous ma Commission étant Chef de Cabinet par intérim. Je suis entièrement satisfait des résultats positifs que ma Commission ait pu parvenir jusqu'ici. Donc, je suis confiant que les efforts déployés en vue d'atteindre l'indépendance économique comme préconiser par le gouvernement régional du Mouvement Rodriguais est dans la bonne voie.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me give an outline of all the achievements of 2008/2009 in the education sector, pre-primary and primary education in line with the measures announced in the budget speech and provisions made for the financial year 2008/2009, the following capital projects have been achieved at the level of the pre-primary and primary education during this financial year.

1. Construction of a pre-primary school at Terre Rouge;
2. Rehabilitation of an old toilet block at Basile Allas Port Mathurin Govt School;

With a view to promote a conducive environment for teaching and learning and improve school infrastructure, the following projects have been initiated at the level of pre-primary and primary schools:

1. Embellishment of pre-primary and primary school environment through the implementation of tree planting project;
2. All classrooms at the primary schools are on the process of being painted. This exercise has started during the Easter Holidays in collaboration with parents;
3. Following the tiling project of the standard one classroom during the last financial year, it has been decided to extend the same project to standard two classrooms during this financial year.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, under the supplementary School Feeding Project, during the period under review we have continued to provide milk, grapes, cheese, butter and fruits to all pupils of both pre-primary and primary schools. In addition, a balanced diet has also been provided to pupils of St Therese de L'enfant Jesus RCA School under the Zone d'Education Prioritaire Project. An amount of Rs 8.6 million was spent during the present financial year for that item.

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Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to promote a reading culture among all pupils of primary schools, my Commission will continue to supply one daily newspaper to all the 13 primary schools of Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as announced in the budget speech, parallel to the 4 capital grant being paid for 4+ pupils, an amount of Rs 1.8 million have been provided for the payment of fees for the 3+ pupils who were not attending school as their parents were facing financial problems. As such it was decided to pay the full schooling fees in favour of the 3+ pupils so as to ensure that they attend school. Some 795 pupils benefited from the payment of the schooling fees from July to November 2008 and for the period January to December 2009 some 255 cases have already been approved. In all, some 850 pupils have already benefited from the project. This measure, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, has proved to be very successful as the objective of ensuring that all 3+ year children attend school have been attain.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as announced in budget speech 2008/2009, pedagogical materials specific to the need of the schools to the tune of Rs 1, 161,275 have been given to pre-primary and primary schools so as to facilitate the teaching and learning process. These equipments include 8 copy-printer/photocopying machines, 4 laptops, 4 LCD Projectors, 33 television sets, 33 DVD players, 4 portable VCD players and 23 white boards.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to decrease the high rate of CPE failures and to further motivate schools to improve, the following initiatives as mentioned in the budget speech for this financial year have been undertaken:

1. The Antoinette Prudence Award Ceremony was held on 31st January 2009 at the Cultural and Leisure Centre at *Mont Plaisir*. The awards were as follows:
 - Category best school CPE Pass rate of 94.74% and the awardee was Marc Etienne Roche Bon Dieu Govt School and the price awarded was one shield plus a cash price of Rs 25,000.
 - Category of best performing school ranking from aggregate 22 to 24, the awardee were 22 CPE candidates of 2008 that is 9 boys and 14 girls. The price was one shield and a cash price of Rs 10,000 to each student.
 - Category best school with the best improvement rate, the awardee was Oyster Bay Govt School having made the highest improvement at CPE that is at 36% to 72%. And the price awarded was a shield and a cash price of Rs 15,000.
 - And the fourth category was the best class 2008, the awardee was Terre Rouge Govt School and the price was a shield and school materials.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I now come to the training component. School based training has now come a regular feature with contribution of Inspectors who during school visit held working sessions with teachers, Head masters, Deputy Head masters with a view to provide the necessary guidance teaching strategies and advice.

Secondly, in addition several workshops have been organized for several teachers, Deputy Head master and Head masters to keep them abreast of new trend in education aiming at increasing their knowledge and know-how.

Next, our residential seminar for CPE teachers has now become an annual feature.

Next, parents participation have been enlisted in their child schooling through a series of meeting which I had with all parents of CPE classes last year.

Much emphasis have been made on the implementation of the Bridging the Gap Programme of standard one as it is believed that strong foundations at lower levels at primary schooling will ensure the success of the child at higher levels. In addition, a baseline profiling aiming at identifying the competencies acquired by the child at pre-primary level has been carried out with a view to enable teachers to establish their programme of work based on the child knowledge and experience. Thereafter, a diagnosis assessment is made at the level of standard 3 to identify the learning difficulties of the child for remedial action.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, an additional amount of Rs 50,000 has been granted to each school parents teachers association for minor renovation work in primary schools and acquisition of specific pedagogical tools. The grant to the Roman Catholic Authority

(Gap on cassette)

RCA school and entertained other minor renovation work in RCA schools.

Moreover, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, financial assistance will also be granted to students studying abroad during this financial year. In fact.....

In line with the decision of the regional government to provide books on loan to secondary students, necessary arrangements are being made to provide new and additional books for distribution to students as per request received. An amount of Rs 2 million has been disbursed for this item. With a view to promote other training opportunities and foster the life long learning among the Rodriguans, additional scholarships besides the existing ones have also been introduced as from this year as detailed below:

- 2 scholarships under the Chief Commissioner's Award Scheme; and
- 12 scholarships for distance learning.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, procedures for the grant of financial assistance to the tune of Rs 3,000 monthly to students who are facing financial difficulties to meet the cost of living and accommodation in Mauritius are being finalized. During this financial year 33 needy students will benefit from this scheme. It is to be noted that 21 students have already benefited from the scheme since January 2009.

And now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when I heard the Minority Leader saying that they started empowering the Rodriguan people, according to him nothing is being done for the empowerment of the Rodriguan. These are proofs, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, of how much we are being invested in capacity building in helping our Rodriguans to have further and better education.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, ongoing projects for Education. The following projects are ongoing and expected to be completed in the coming months:

1. Painting materials will be given to pre-primary schools for the painting of schools in collaboration with children's parents;
2. Construction of six additional classrooms at Manges Govt School;
3. Minor renovation works such as review of the electrical supply in all primary schools;
4. Plumbing and sealing works in two schools namely Grand La Fouche Corail Govt School and Oyster Bay Govt School;
5. Construction of 6 additional classrooms at Mont Lubin College.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a new secondary school will be constructed at Terre Rouge. Preliminary works such as site visits and preparations of documents are currently under process. It is expected that a tender will be launched during the forthcoming period.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Human Resource Centre. During this financial year, the Human Resource Centre in line with its mission to act as facilitator and catalyst in capacity building in Rodrigues has worked with various local and national institutions to provide academic, professional and technical training to several target

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groups including the public and the private sector such as teachers, entrepreneurs, students, unemployed, youths and public in general.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the literacy and numeracy project which is being implemented with the financial assistance of the Decentralised Corporation Programme is in its last phase of implementation. 22 trainers and 12 members of the pedagogical cell were recruited and trained under this project. Out of 1200 applicants targeted, 700 have already been trained to date. Training are being delivered 3 hours weekly in 45 training venues throughout the island. My Commission intends to continue the training of the remaining 500 cases.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view of enhancing capacity building for teaching staff, necessary arrangements have been made to organize and facilitate training for pre-primary, primary and secondary staff as follows:

- The certificate in early childhood is ongoing and will end this year;
- The Teachers' diploma course which is being run by the Mauritius Institute Education in collaboration with the IGNOU as from June 2008 is expected to end by September 2009. 78 school teachers are following same.
- Training course in diploma in educational management, the DEPEM for 20 Deputy Head Masters.
- Training in counseling techniques will be run for about 50 educators for secondary schools with a view to empower them so that they are able to provide counseling and psychological support to students.
- My Commission is running a BSC Hons Top up Management Programme in collaboration with the University of Mauritius as from January 2009 for 11 diploma holders;
- An induction course for 38 newly recruited teachers in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resource has been held.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in line with its objective of capacity building, the Human Resource Center is continuing to act as a facilitator for the implementation of the Universal Computer Education Programme commonly known as IC3. A Project Coordinator was recruited by the National Computer Board in December 2008 to ensure the smooth running of the programme. In addition, since January 2009 the IC3 has been included in the ICT Programme which is being run in schools for Form 1 to Form 3 students. To date more than 600 Rodriguans have been trained in the IC3 courses.

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Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in line with the reforms in the public sector, for the development of performance oriented and efficient public officers, a diploma in Human Resource Management was launched for 17 officers in collaboration with the University of Technology in November 2008. In addition, several public officers have been sponsored to follow training programmes mounted locally or being run in Mauritius.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, another mission of the Human Resource Centre is also to provide career guidance service to youth of Rodrigues. As such an information desk has been set up to provide students with information on study and scholarship opportunities as well as guidance for the choice of field study at post secondary level. In that context, the list of indicative priority fields of study for Rodrigues have been updated in view of ensuring that there are no mismatch between availability of local resources and offer of jobs on local labour market. This includes the list ...study areas to support existing priority sectors as well as emerging ones for sustainable development of the island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Human Resource Centre has also facilitated the enrolment of about 80 students in the Universities, Polytechnics schools and distance learning institutions for the period under review. The Documentation Unit of the Centre has been equipped with a series of new reference books and information on training institutions and also with facilities for free internet access. The HRC provides also facility venues for information session campaign provided by recognized institution abroad such as MANCOSA, UNISA, ACCA, Australomafrican and Middlesex University.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to enable school leavers who are willing to obtain or improve their School Certificate or Higher School Certificate, tuitions programmes have been mounted and are being run at the Commission for private candidates who will sit for these examinations this year. A pool of 23 trainers from secondary schools have been recruited to dispense the tuitions. 85 private candidates are following the tuitions for GCE O Level and 90 other for the GCE A Level examinations.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as promoter for capacity building some 12 trainees under the Student Works Scheme Programme were swept and an Empowerment Programme were offered placement at the Commission for a short period or for period not exceeding 12 months. We have also held 4 half days course on stress management for staff of the Commission, Head Masters and Deputy Head Masters in collaboration with the Brahma Kumaris. A total of 38 persons benefitted from the same.

Arts and Culture, M. le président, il est un fait aujourd'hui que la culture tient une place plus importante dans la vie de la population rodriguaise en générale. Nous

avons constaté que bon nombre de nos jeunes se tournent davantage vers des métiers d'arts tels que la sculpture, la peinture, la musique, le théâtre, la poésie entre-autres. M. le président, conscient de l'importance de la culture comme un des moteurs du développement, ma Commission n'épargne aucun moyen pour favoriser tous les aspects de la diversité culturelle en ligne avec la politique de l'UNESCO. A cet effet nous observons et commémorons toutes les différentes journées mondiales ayant trait à la culture. Durant cette présente année financière, nous avons accueilli chez nous une délégation de haute instance de l'UNESCO dirigé par L'Ambassadrice de Maurice, Madame Indira Takoor Cidaya, ainsi que le Directeur Général-Régionale de L'UNESCO basé à Dal Sala, Monsieur Tdian Cee. Dans le sciage de cette visite dans la république de Maurice, un accord a été signé entre le Premier Ministre de Maurice, Le Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam et le Directeur Général de L'UNESCO à Paris, Monsieur....Patchira en Octobre dernier. Dans cet accord, M. le président, Rodrigues bénéficiera beaucoup de l'aide et l'expertise de l'UNESCO dans plusieurs domaines de la culture et de l'éducation.

Durant cette présente année financière, nous avons organisé plusieurs ateliers de travail visant à renforcer les capacités de nos artistes dans les domaines suivants :

- Sculpture en papier machés ;
- La peinture ;
- Fabrication de tambours ;
- Moulins crase café ; etc.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as announced in budget speech 2008/2009, my Commission is submitting this week a draft of the Rodrigues Heritage 2009 to the Executive Council, a copy of which will be sent to the State Law Office, National Heritage Fund and Legal Adviser for vetting and advice. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, such regulation will help to protect and promote our natural, cultural and historical heritage which are not classified by the National Heritage Fund. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Heritage Regulation of Rodrigues will be effective soon.

With a view to promote Arts and Culture in Rodrigues in the year 2008/2009 the following programmes were held:

- The Rodrigues Day Celebration 2008; several activities were held to mark the sixth anniversary of the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly such as an open presentation where representatives of each Commission, parastatal bodies, private sector, NGOs, artist, etc, delivered a speech or a presentation on the theme "Fier d'être Rodriguais". An award night was held at the Passenger Terminal

whereby the deserving personalities and officers who have contributed in the social, cultural and economic advancement of the island were awarded a gratitude medal and a title of Honorary Freeman. An official ceremony was also held at Camp du Roi Stadium to commemorate this patriotic event.

- To mark the 10th edition of the Festival Creole, the slogan “Costé nu enan nu valere” was substituted by “Costé nu marié pike pu nu creolité”. A new jingle was produced and a logo competition was launched. As from now on there is a new logo in force. The theme chosen was “Fierté ek diversité cultureldans ban zils creole”. The Festival Creole was held from 3rd to 7th December and mobilized the whole population in the different activities which were organised. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the first time a pre-launching ceremony was held in the context of the Festival Creole. The aim is to sensitize the people of the region hosting the ceremony to appropriate the event. A film on the previous festival was also projected. In addition, in the context of the Festival Creole, an artistic garden was inaugurated on the 21st December 2008 with the aim to provide a platform and a space for artists to perform arts works. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, several activities were also held as follows:

- Artistic workshops were organized on that occasion;
- Methodology of playing steel drums;
- Vocal announcement techniques;
- Fine arts making;
- Mortier crase café;
- Sculture papier maché, etc.

A monument representing the main economic activities of the south east region that is agriculture and fishing was unveiled by the Chief Guest, Hon. Dr. James Burty David, Minister of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands on the 3rd December 2008 on the public beach of Port Sud Est. Artistic and handicraft sales exhibition to promote the local arts and handicraft, Soirée Sirondane, Journée de la Gastronomie et degustation de jus des îles, international conference on the cultural diversity with the participation of speakers from Mauritius, Republic of Seychelles, Reunion Island, Chagos, Martinique and Rodrigues. Sega Tambour contest at Mangues, Joué Lontemps, Manzé creole at Bigarade,

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a regatta competition was held on 6th December and Miss and Mister Festival Creole contest, Grand Concert L'ambiance bane zils at Mourouk.

- Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a training programme in events management was scheduled from 15th to 19th October 2008 and was conducted by a Principal Cultural Officer of the Ministry of Education and Culture. 30 officers from both the public and the private sectors, NGOs and private individuals actively involved in the organization of events attended the programme. It was aimed at empowering events organizers with new techniques and skills required for the organization of an event.
- Mr. Chairperson, Sir, financial assistance was also allocated to 15 artists and cultural groups for the conception and implementation of new and original projects in the field of music, theatre, fine arts, choreography, cinematography and literature. An amount of Rs 80,000 was disbursed.
- The cultural Animators continue to deliver artistic workshops or courses in the fields of traditional music and dance in youth and social centers on a specific basis. This programme aims at promoting arts and culture among children and youth. Recently, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, traditional dance classes are being offered at the Regional Cultural Leisure Centre and targets to participate to all age groups willing to learn our folkloric dance.
- On the occasion of the World Poetry Day held on 21st of March, a round table was organised and in the context I launched "Le prix de la littérature rodrigueuse" and international artist in the person of Maki Rasta graced the function.
- The same month, my Commission organised a humoristic contest and a drama show in the context of the World Theatre Day.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to promote performing arts in Rodrigues, my Commission is planning to organize a hip hop workshop intended for about 40 choreographers and a jazz and blues music workshop for local musicians and composers before the end of this current financial year.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to boost up drama activities, I recently re-launched the drama festival after three years of inactivity. Such festival is now known as Festival Art Dramatic. The Drama Festival will be in 3 languages: creole, French and English. Announcements have already been made to local press. The competition will start as from July 2009 and will culminate at the Rodrigues Day where the 3 best plays will be presented and prizes will be awarded.

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Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the context of the setting up of a museum in Rodrigues. A Rodrigues Museum Advisory Committee has been set up with a view to discuss the type of artifact to be presented in the museum and the modalities thereof. Sub-committees for national science, history, as well as artistic and handicraft aspect has been set up and the acquisition of specimen and artifacts have been initiated. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is working in close collaboration with the Mauritius Museum Council, the sensitization campaign will be launched on the 18th of May instant in the context of the International Museum Day. Pending the construction of the museum complex, a Storage and Information Unit has been set up at my Commission and will be inaugurated on the same date. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a special technical committee has been set up at the Rodrigues Museum Advisory Committee to start with the acquisition of specimen and artifacts, arrangements will be made by my office to obtain the appropriate permit, license with the Fisheries and Forest Division to allow our stakeholders such as Shoals Rodrigues and the Wildlife Foundation to gather specimen in our nature and marine reserves. Partners involved in the collection of artifacts, specimen have received training with a curator and a conservator as regards to storage, preservation and stuffing of objects. Requests for proposal for the design and supervision for the construction of the museum have been launched and will be awarded soon.

I now come to the Archives Unit, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. A delegation from the National Archives comprising of Mr. Chan Sam Wan, Acting Deputy Director and Mr. Gotool was on mission to Rodrigues from 21st to 23rd January this year to provide assistance to the Commission in the context of setting up a branch of the National Archives in Rodrigues. During their mission, the delegation visited the Central Administration, the Commission for Public Infrastructure, the Commission for Agriculture and the Commission for Education so as to carry out survey for the non-current and current files which would eventually be transferred to the Archives antenna of Rodrigues. In the same line a presentation and a brainstorming session on records keeping and management intended for officers of the RRA working in Registries, Record Officers, and Archives Unit was held on 23rd of January. 30 officers attended the presentation. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the coming months, the MOU will be signed with the National Archives Unit concerning the Archives Project in Rodrigues. In this context, correspondence has been sent to the University of Mauritius to have copies of journal articles, ...and other documents written in Rodrigues. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following the decision of the Executive Council to convert one of the Government Quarters at Mont Venus into an Art Gallery, a site visit has been effected and necessary actions will follow soon.

Now concerning the Cultural and Leisure Centre, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Cultural and Leisure Centre is now operational with a CLAC and with current workshops on drama namely “L’Histoire d’un peuple” and traditional dance are going on everyday. A sum of Rs 4.3 million has been spent for the construction of

the access road to the Regional Cultural and Leisure Centre in collaboration with the Commission for Public Infrastructure.

Library Services, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, within the period under review, 4 Trainee Library Clerks have completed successfully their certificate course in Librarianship run by the Mauritius College of the Air through a distance learning mode. In view of upgrading the quality standard of our staff, one Library Clerk has been transferred temporarily to Mauritius to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources to enable her to follow a diploma course at the University of Mauritius. In July 2008 an American corner has been set up at the Alfred North Coombes Library in collaboration with the United States Embassy. The corner is equipped with book, documents, reference materials and DVDs pertaining to the American history and culture. November 2008, an additional connection line for internet was installed at the American corner. The aim is to provide school materials in order to help school children and the general public to have adequate information and a better knowledge and understanding of the American culture through an electronic means. 1011 books have been purchased to be distributed amongst the library departments and the CLACs of Rodrigues. A kit of first aid including some first aid materials was installed at the Alfred North Coombes Library on September 2008. Since November 2008, a non-stop service is being offered during lunch time at the Alfred North Coombes Library as well as at all our CLACs. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as announced in the budget speech 2008/2009, I am proud to inform the House that necessary arrangements have been made at the National Library in Mauritius to set up a branch in Rodrigues. I am pleased to announce that our branch will be operational in the first week of July this year.

Now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I come to projects being implemented from 1st July to 31 December 2009. Since the education sector has an important role to play in the development of Rodrigues and in bringing our island towards an economic independence. In line with the vision of the regional government much emphasis will be laid to improve further the quality and the level of education in Rodrigues. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, emphasis will also be laid on improvement of the school infrastructure which form part of our continued action and strategies since 2006 to promote a good teaching/learning and conducive environment in all our schools. The following projects will be undertaken:

1. Renovation works at Marc Etienne Roche Bon Dieu Govt School;
2. Tiling of standard 3 classrooms in all government schools;
3. Completion of works at Mont Charlot Community School; and
4. Rehabilitation of ceiling and waterproofing at Oyster Bay Govt, Grand La Fouché Corail Govt School and Port Sud Est Govt Schools.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, an amount of Rs 50,000 will be granted to schools to as to enable them to enter take minor renovation works at the level of the schools. In the context of the School Feeding Project, a provision of Rs 8.6 million has been spent for the purchase of bread, butter, cheese, milk and fruits to be distributed to pupils of all pre-primary and primary schools.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as we believe that early childhood education is particularly critical in the development of any child in addition to ensuring that each 3+ year child attend school, the payment of full school is for the children whose parents face difficulties to send them to schools will be maintained. The Per Capital grant of 4years + children will also be maintained in line with the policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all 4+ pupils benefit from the Per Capital Grant. But although all the 4+ pupils benefit from the Per Capital Grant, it has been found that those vulnerable cases that we have taken into consideration at the 3+, still cannot pay the difference. My Commission will continue to support all these pupils who have benefitted from the 3+ grant to continue their pre-primary schooling.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, our objective is to give equal opportunities to all pre-primary schools pupils. Since the initiative undertaken during the financial year 2008/2009 to combat the high level of CPE failures have proved to be successful, more effort will be put for constant improvement of the CPE pass rate and the same time, the level of education and the primary sector, the following will be undertaken:

- Constant monitoring of teacher's performance and pupils progress by Inspectorate;
- School based training with a view to provide monitoring of form teachers;
- Maintaining the award scheme with a view to give due recognition to the best institutional institution for the efforts and commitments and achievement to bring quality education and also to students to encourage them to perform better;
- Systematic analysis workshop for CPE teachers by resource persons from MES.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have already set up a career guidance unit as well as a counseling one at the level of each secondary school. The units will be headed by educators of the school. These units will work in close collaboration with the Information Desk of the Commission for Education. Necessary logistic support will be provided for schools for same.

At the level of the HRC, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in line with its mandate, the Human Resource Centre will continue to act as a facilitator for the organization and mounting of several programmes with a view to promote capacity building and develop human resources across all sectors. Being given that the literacy and numeracy project has helped to improve the literacy and numeracy rate among the Rodriguan population, my Commission will look into the possibility of extending it to other beneficiaries and take on the experience of the pool of local trainers and pedagogical cell that have been trained under this project.

Since teachers play a central role in education, training programmes will be mounted for teachers of the pre-primary, primary and secondary schools so as to enable them to meet the challenges of their demanding jobs and become more competent and effective in schools. Continued support and assistance will be provided to HSC school leavers and the population in general to enable them to pursue further studies to upgrade themselves and with a view to instill a mindset of life long learning among the Rodriguan population. A training needs analysis of the youth, school leavers and the population in general will be undertaken with the collaboration of the Human Resource Development Council. Thereafter short courses and training courses will be mounted with the help of training institutions accordingly in a view of empowering the beneficiaries and enable them to integrate the labour market.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in addition, my Commission intends to introduce new and innovative courses to meet the changing demands in our population both in private and public sectors as follows:

- Palliative treatment courses;
- Care for Elderly courses;
- Customer Care courses;
- Communication skills courses;
- Electrical and electronic courses for unemployed youths;
- Courses for local contractors of Rodrigues, for example empowering for how to fill tender documents, etc;

The Arts and Culture, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, much emphasis will be laid on the development, promotion and preservation of our cultural heritage and history. As such the following initiatives will be undertaken:

- Provide training to musicians, artists and cultural groups with a view to improve their performance in their respective art;

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- Organise conferences, Cultural Exhibitions and programmes, seminars, workshops and other training activities and competitions at regional level to promote knowledge and understanding of practice of arts and culture;
- Provide assistance to artists in terms of techniques, finance, advice and logistics;
- Promote research and development in the field of cultural heritage. The Cultural and Leisure Centre at Mont Plaisir will be called upon to act as a focal point for the holding of activities relating to arts and culture;
- Training in artistic fields will be mounted for the population;
- Films projections and drama plays will be regularly organised for the public with a view to promote leisure and recreational activities;
- The Centre will also be put at the disposal of artists, socio-cultural organizations and to individuals for the holding of activities related to arts and culture.

The construction of the museum is expected to start during the forthcoming period. The collection of artifacts to be displayed in the museum would be on-going. Two major events namely the Rodrigues Day and the Festival Creole will be celebrated during this next financial year.

Last but not least, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the library services. The CLAC at la Ferme will be upgraded through the provision of one additional computer and free internet access facilities with the objective to enhance interest and knowledge in Information Technology and boost up participation in the library activities. Additional books will be purchased to update the existing books, reference materials. With a view to further strengthen the reading culture among students, a mobile book kit will be introduced and circulated among primary and secondary schools.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as stated in my last budget speech, innovative and pragmatic measures have been undertaken by my Commission for all sectors falling under my provision. Today, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the results speak for themselves. I am again confident that with commitment, dedication and hard work, we shall meet all our objectives set for the benefit and the betterment of all our population. Now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when I heard the Minority Leader talk about all the problems is encountering, he has failed to mention that Rodrigues as all the other countries in the world is facing the problems due to *“la crises, la recession internationale”*.

M. le président, si les pays comme les Etat Unis, comme la Chine, comme les grandes économies d'Europe et du monde sont dans la récession quand il y a des

pertes d'emplois massifs. Quand le monde est au bord du précipice économique comment pouvons-nous croire que Rodrigues puisse en être autrement ? M. le président, est ce que le départ massif de nos jeunes vers Maurice, est ce que c'est un facteur récent ? Quand l'Opposition était au pouvoir, M. le président est ce que les secteurs privés à Rodrigues, est qu'il y avait plus de firmes à Rodrigues ? Est ce qu'il y avait plus de secteurs privés à Rodrigues, M. le président ? C'est parce que conscient de la vulnérabilité, M. le président, de notre population, des demandeurs d'emplois, etc, que ce présent gouvernement, M. le président, est venu avec des mesures socio en créant des compagnies owned by RRA. En vue de soutenir ces personnes, M. le président, en vue de leur garantir un emploi durable.

C'est pourquoi donc, M. le président, je ne vois rien qui puissent dire que durant ces trois ans que nous sommes là, nous n'avons rien fait, nous avons failli. Au contraire, nous avons, M. le président, fait ce que les autres n'ont pas pu faire avant nous. Et malgré la crise internationale, malgré les difficultés que nous rencontrons au niveau des finances parce que comme tous les autres pays, l'Ile Maurice, le gouvernement centrale lui aussi il fait face aux mêmes problèmes que les autres pays. C'est pourquoi, M. le président, il y a le Stimulus package. C'est parce que le gouvernement est conscient de la fragilité, de la vulnérabilité du secteur privé. C'est pourquoi le gouvernement est la comme facilitateur afin de garantir que les emplois durables persistent dans le pays malgré la crise internationales, M. le président. Il ne faut pas oublier non plus, M. le président, Rodrigues est aussi vulnérable dans le sens que nous sommes totalement dépendent de tous nos importations, en particulier nos besoins en énergie. C'est pourquoi, M. le président, nous allons venir de l'avant tout à l'heure, mon collègue, le Commissaire de L'Environnement va en parler. Nous aussi nous voulons participer dans ce projet, Maurice Ile durable. Rodrigues nous avons de l'énergie solaire et éolienne qu'il nous faut développer et nous irons de l'avant avec l'aide et l'expertise des techniques étrangères.

Donc, M. le président, tout à l'heure on a parlé aussi de la politisation à outrance. C'est normal aujourd'hui on n'est plus au pouvoir on a cette amertume de quand on était au pouvoir ce que les autres disaient sur nous, aujourd'hui on vient dire la même chose parce qu'on n'est pas au pouvoir. Alors tout est fait dans la transparence, M. le président, tous ceux qui obtiennent de l'emploi, ils l'ont eu parce qu'ils le méritaient. Il n'y a jamais eu de la politique à outrance, au contraire, M. le président, combien sont ceux qui sont venus dire à ceux qui nous ont toujours soutenus « guet la zordi to parti au pouvoir to pas gagne travail, ala nou nou ine gagner ». Il y a des gens comme ça. Ils se vantent d'avoir obtenu de l'emploi tandis que les autres n'on pas eu. C'est pour vous montrer, M. le président que dans l'exercice de tous ce la il y a de la transparence.

Donc, M. le président, on vient dire aujourd'hui il y a la pollution sociale à travers la prolifération de la drogue, à travers l'éclatement familiale, etc, mais combien de fois nous avons avertis, alerté l'opinion publique. Quel est le rôle de

l'Opposition dans tout cela, M. le président ? Quel est le rôle ? S'asseoir et regarder et se dire c'est vous qui êtes au pouvoir c'est à vous de tenir la, comme avait l'habitude de dire Madame Arlette Perrine-Begue, la manche poêlon ? La manche c'est sure, c'est nous qui le tenons mais vous, vous aussi vous avez votre rôle, la société civile aussi a son rôle à jouer, tous les rodriguais doivent se sentir interpellé et jouer leur rôle pleinement, M. le président. Parce que si la société rodriguaise part en déclin n'oubliez pas c'est pas seulement le gouvernement qui va en payer le prix mais toute la population.

Donc je lance un appel à tous ceux qui se disent patriotes, qui se disent confiants d'avoir mis l'autonomie rodriguaise sur les rails, montrez que vous êtes capables que vous aussi vous participez pleinement dans le développement sociale, économique et culturel de ce pays. Sur ce M. le président, encore une fois je tiens à remercier le Chef Commissaire pour tous les efforts qu'on est en train de faire à travers le présent mandat que nous avons en vue de sortir le pays du sous-développement parce que l'accent est mis sur la promotion de l'homme rodriguais et il leur dit « it is a population centered budget ». Nous avons misé beaucoup sur le sociale malgré la crise, malgré les affaires externes qui nous affectent. Nous sommes confiants, M. le président que nous allons réussir.

Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

Mr. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first of all I wish to thank the people of Rodrigues for this opportunity given to me to speak in this House on their behalf to respond to this present budget.

Once again, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is sad to see that the passion to use the catching words, the catching phrases towards economic independence we see that it bears no link with the measures announced in their successive budgets. The Deputy Chief Commissioner just mentioned that we are dependent on our exportations and so on. What is there in this budget to make us less dependent?

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this budget drives us further down the road of disaster. No strong policy that can lead to a recovery of our economy and social crisis that we are facing now. Nothing has been spelt out in this budget. It has not addressed the people's preoccupations. It has not empowered our people. It has not ensured anybody's survival. Obviously for some small groups of politicians, political agents and we know that after this budget we will not be moving onwards.

This government has decided to continue stubbornly along its misguided policy direction which has greatly contributed towards the weakening of this economy since the past three years. Now people and organizations are asking the following questions:

- Are these the right promises?
- Is this the change that we expected?
- Are these the priorities the one that the citizens consider as the most pressing?
- Did the different regions and sectors of the economy get the money that they promised?
- Will the government observe strict financial discipline and will they stick to their spending estimates or will things continue to be done as we have seen in those past three years? *(Gap on cassette)*.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, can I, in order for me to follow you, what is the link between the illegal activities and the policies of government?

Mr. D. Baptiste: I am talking about the social deterioration of our environment, Mr. Chairperson, Sir and these are linked directly to the situation and these are facts.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, my question is what is the link between the executive policies? You mean that the executive council has a say over this cultivation or whatever?

Mr. D. Baptiste: No, I didn't mean...

Mr. Chairperson: I understand your point but you have to understand what is acceptable in this House as well. Proceed.

Mr. D. Baptiste: Yes, I am talking Mr. Chairperson, Sir, about some social problems....

Mr. Chairperson: I heard some interruptions about social problems as if on budget time everybody can come here and say everything he wants and just link it to the social problems. This is not the purpose of this Assembly. I made a ruling earlier concerning allegations of illegal activities. When you want to get into the tray of illegal activities, you got to be certain and you have to consider that this House is not a Court Law. You get my point? Proceed.

Mr. D. Baptiste: I am not saying that it is related to anybody but we have facts. Just a few weeks back we know that this happened at Graviers...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, you want to comment on this. If you see that there are illegal activities there is Dangerous Drug Act you go to report the matter to the police. It is not here that we are going to discuss this policy.

Mr. D. Baptiste: I am just raising matters of concern...

Mr. Chairperson: Look there is...I have to make a little warning. When it goes to the dignity of a House, it is not only a discretion for a Member to allege but it is a duty for him to allege corruption, illegal activities but you have to do it in a constitutional way, in the way it is provided for. If you feel that a Member has acted illegally or is conducting his affairs in an illegal way, there is a procedure for that. My point is, it is not a budget time that you can deal, you can mention it summarily or you make a sweeping statement but you should not deal on it. You get my point? Proceed.

Mr. D. Baptiste: But I just want to continue with the stress that we are witnessing here. We know that victimization of public officers and preferential treatment also specially for officer working in the public sector. Misuse and sometimes abuse of power on an upward trance in any government institutions and youngsters particularly students are mainly concerned in this issue. They have experienced it when the 245 *stagiaires* were chosen. And now they all fear that their efforts and educational achievement might not serve their purpose as political backing seems to be the main criteria for a job or other social facilities.

Theft has reached an unprecedented level and now even churches one of the most respected institution in Rodrigues has become the targets of thieves. Infrastructure development is no longer a priority and people has found that the regional government is wrong in its policy not to invest in major infrastructural projects such as roads and construction and this is the main cause of massive unemployment and this has forced most of our construction workers to leave the island and their families against their will.

It is a fact that all those economy which are now developed from Singapore to USA and Europe, all these economies have gone through the construction boom first and now this government does not believe in this policy. Our environment is being seriously threatened and particularly our lagoon where we have seen fraudulent and over-exploitation of sea cucumber since these part two years. Violation of human rights also where poor people are the main victims. They have neither the resources nor the connection to protect themselves. And this government reserves different treatment for different people.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I believe that most of us are aware of the critical situation in which Rodrigues is going through since August 2006. The other situation gives cause for concern. The indication points towards businesses facing declining

trends. The tourist industry which is in the red. The number of small businesses which are going bankrupt is really alarming. And now we can say that a crisis of governance has placed this government in a position where it is no longer capable to fulfilling the function for which government exists. Government exists to give hope and chance to people. Unfortunately the dreams and hopes of Rodriguans, our people have been destroyed. This dream and hope has been replaced with deep frustration felt by people left abandoned by a government that has their main preoccupation to satisfy the ego of some privileged ones rather than rescuing people who are helpless. The misfortunes of this country, our Rodrigues are not the result of accidents or because of the world crisis only. They are primarily the consequences of the choice made by this government and the path they have pursued.

The policies to set up by this actual government. RRA fully owned companies such as General Fishing Company, the Discovery Company Ltd, these are just examples of non-efficient organization and wastages of public funds. They have already wasted a lot of money and have failed to accomplish what they promised. Will Discovery Rodrigues be able to rescue the tourism industry from its alarming downwards trends, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? Who honestly believe that fishermen really benefit from the Rodrigues General Fishing Company? The only hope but there is a hope; the only hope for Rodriguan people and they are talking about it everywhere is the come back of the OPR party to power.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order please!

Mr. D. Baptiste: Now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, everyone is saying that only our leader Serge Clair and his team can put this country back on track. Yes, he is really a great leader, full of wisdom, having a great sense of patriotism. He is someone who is guided by principles and ethics for good governance and I am grateful to him for that. He always thinks about serving people first and about empowering them through education and training. But, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, education and training is not the priority of this government. This great tool to combat poverty and to empower people is simply being neglected. Adequate funds have not been allocated for training for example for re-skilling of fishermen so that they can become employable. The 245 stagieres have not at all been given any training programme and some of them were already skilled and they are being exploited by carrying out jobs which were supposed to be done by government employees and they are just getting a meagre sum of money for that. Others are simply using their political support to threaten and victimize officers duly employed to assign a specific job, that's what we are witnessing today, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

There is a real lack of commitment on the part of this government to improve the educational sector. Decisions have been taken without taking into account the

views of stakeholders. We can notice delays in the implementations of different projects and most of which were already initiated by the previous government and which should have been completed months or even years back. Allow me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to illustrate some of these bleak points relating to what I have just mentioned.

No construction or extension projects for secondary schools since August 2006 despite the fact that provision were made for same in the last three successive budget. What has been done by the Commission for Education when you realize that provision of Rs 36 million for the extension and construction of secondary schools which constitute 65% of its capital budget, year 2008/2009 has not yet been utilized.

Tenders were launched for the extension of the Grande Montagne College on 4th May 2006. Unfortunately no follow-up, no decisions were made since the government took office in August 2006. This could be new policy but students are the main victims. These students are being penalized and we know that students are being penalized at the Grande Montagne College for example due to lack of proper infrastructures such as laboratories, proper computer rooms and proper specialist rooms. Despite various meetings between PTAs and the staff of the college with REDCO Managers as well as Chairman since this Company was entrusted to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on July 2006, nothing has been done so far to attend such request. But anyway what can we say about the Commission for Education when it took two years to just repair a of toilet at Grande Montagne College which was out of use, two years just to repair!

And besides that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Citron Donis College was closed down due to adequate planning of the actual government. The project of a new college at Terre Rouge was announced in the 2008/2009 budget has not yet been kicked off. The Commission for Education has first of all misled parents, even the MIE and the population in general by allocating Terre Rouge College to those students who are now housed at Citron Donis. In fact there is no college in Rodrigues registered as Terre Rouge College but I don't know how things went like that. The Commission simply failed to meet the basic necessary requirements of the PSSA and they filed the procedures for registration very days after the time frame, this indicates the lack of seriousness in the administration of education in Rodrigues. The question that many stakeholders are asking, is it really worthy to construct a new school at Terre Rouge now that the Ex-Citron Donis College is under utilized and is likely to remain idle in the future. It seems that the plan for the conversion of this complex into a polytechnic and training school is not on the card of this government. Is it not better to use such funds to provide all the necessary facilities to the existing colleges one and for all, such as providing them with fully equipped laboratories, computer labs, replacing all the broken chairs and tables to ensure a better working environment to the students. It seems that the Commission for Education is not worried about what is going on in the management of these colleges.

Three years have already lapsed and the problem of overcrowded classes is worsening in some colleges. Some students failed to secure a seat for promotion to lower six this year, though they were fully eligible according to the PSSA Circular No. 12 of 2009, dated 28 January 2009. The reasons either powerful of privilege rectors are applying their own rules and regulations just for the sake of improving SC and HSC results or some of them were told that there were no seats available. At the same time I am happy to say that two students....

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Order please!

Mr. D. Baptiste: I am happy to say that due to my intervention in this Assembly, two students have been able to secure a seat at Le Chou. If you want to know their names, I can give. And at the same time...It is your job. While I was helping these people, the Commission was watching helplessly. Does he care for these people?

Now let me tell you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that things are not so bright in the primary and pre-primary schools as well. The construction of two community schools at Araucaria and Mont Charlot initiated by OPR government which started in May 2006 and scheduled for completion on 22nd of May 2007 are still going on. Two years behind. Works are progressing at a snail's pace. Everyone is wondering whenever this project will be completed by the end of the mandate of this government, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Now, I will like to focus on some problems faced by people from my region and I know that this often extends to other regions as well. And I would like to point out that most of them have emerged since the coming into power of this government. Let me start with the water problem, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

This has become a very serious problem during these past few months and has worsened in the month of February. Villages used to get tap water weekly and then it became quart-nightly and now since the month of February, nobody knows when we can get some water, nobody knows when water is to be distributed to the villagers, not even the Valve-operators, not even the Reservoir Keepers, nobody knows. And worst I learnt that people from the western region are still facing serious water problems as well. Things have not improved so much. People have to wait for as long as two months to have access and at *La Ferme* one and a half month. We can see people now in region six, queuing up early in the morning at springs as far as one to two kilometers away from their homes in an attempt to obtain some buckets of water. Go to *Batardeaux* you will see, go to *Bassin Banane* and you will see. And these are things that have not happened in the past two decades when the OPR government

was on power. The change in the water portfolio, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, has even worsened things and people are very sceptical about any probable improvements with the privatization process of this sector soon. Go to *Coromandel*, go to *Montagne Cabris*, ask people there whether they are happy with the water distribution. They will tell you. The Chief Commissioner made reference to Valve-Operators, we know many of them who used to discharge their responsibilities correctly in a remarkable way but now they are unable to do so because they are at the mercy of certain politicians, political agents and even certain stagiaires. Back to the main problem, go to *Coromandel*, ask people, they will tell you.

Now let me tell you of the Marine Reserve of *Riviere Banane*. Marine Reserves are proved to be very effective when properly managed. Every stakeholder should benefit from the introduction such project which is in line with the vision of the OPR party. However, the lack of strong political will can defeat the purpose of such projects. The fishermen community of *Riviere Banane* is agreeable to this reserve but now they are being left abandoned by the regional government. People come from different part of the island, from the North, from Baie du Nord, etc, we have seen these people come in this zone of fraudulent fishing under the blessing of certain officers. « *Le 12 mars, mone aller mo ti trouvé, mone allé, mone trouvé, c'est pas allégations* ». This is creating frustration and anger among the fishermen community who really want to abide to the laws. A delegation of fishermen have been to the office of the Chief Commissioner to denounce such practices still things have not really changed.

Land Mechanization, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Lots of nice words have been said, they sound good but they are not good as they sound. So much hectares have been ploughed, however, it is unfortunate to note that most planters in my region, in region six, are still waiting for tractors and this date even back as early 2008. My colleague, Franchette Gaspard Pierre Louis and myself have raised this issue in this Assembly last year. Who are benefitting from such services, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? Yes the Commissioner for Agriculture knows well about the case of Anse Ally planters. He has been there, he has met the planters, and he has acknowledged that they have made a demand but up to now no action. On the other hand, I know that some planters of *Camp Pintade*, *Baie Topaze*, etc, have had their land mechanized at least twice in this year. Is this the balance, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is this the policy to encourage our farmers who are already struggling hard to earn a living in this declining economy.

What about refuse collection? All villages used to be covered with the service of refuse collection on a regular basis in all the different villages. But today some villages are not having such facilities for months. Despite complaints made by certain villages and organizations, nothing has been done. For example, the last time Rod Clean went to *Vainqueur* dates back to January. Go and ask people over there, you will know. Complaints have even been made to the Management of Rod Clean and

you know what sometimes they say? Do you know what are often the answer? “*Nou pas capave cause avec sa bane travailleurs la, Commissaire mem pas capave cause avec zot* ». This is curt answer. Is this efficiency, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? Rod Clean, is it efficiency?

Road Network, access road, since the past three years I have not seen any track road being constructed in local region six, obviously except the ten metres, I know you are watching me, you are looking at me. The ten metres of *Montagne Cabris* to *Montagne Longue* in August 2006. This is the only but now it is in an abandoned state. Lots of electoral promises. Who will not remember the Nassola road, where preliminary works started and which was supposed to be completed very soon to enable villagers to have a bus route. Who will not remember this? But now it is really in a pitiful state. The resurfacing of *Grande Montagne* to *Brulé* road is also questionable. The standard has really decreased. There is no comparison, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, between this road and *la route de l'autonomie* or even the *Mont Lubin/ Grande Montagne* stretch. It is unfortunate to note that this government does not believe in quality but they think only about quantity. But even often we don't even see the quantity. Is this policy cost effective, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? The resurfacing of this main road is not what people expected in this new era of autonomy. This is a main road. People expect main roads to have foot paths, to have street lightings, to have lay-by for buses and provisions for other security measures. Go to Notre Dames de Brulé on Sundays, go to Notre Dames de Lourdes RCA School after school hours at 3pm, you will see what is the threat to all our students, go. But now things have changed, you have promised changes and this change is not change, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Minority Leader: Point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. My colleague has delivering his speech for a long time and every time he has been interrupted. We can't continue like that in this Assembly.

Mr. Chairperson: The point raised by the Minority Leader cannot be taken excessively. This point has been raised a couple of time, probably more. Well if you Members of the Assembly want a debate then you should accept what the others are referring. Proceed.

Mr. D. Baptiste: Particularly when I am talking about facts, things that can be... As regards to MBC TV, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I welcome the effort to increase the number of channels but however I would like to make a correction to what the Chief Commissioner said last time who misled to some extent about the figures. Every Rodriguan knows that there are only four channels and not five as announced in the budget speech. They always talk about quantity. Quantity oriented not quality oriented. But do you know and care about what type of programmes that are being proposed to TV viewers in Rodrigues? Are there enough local programmes about this island? Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I regret to inform this House that all villages receiving

signal from *Trèfles*, villages like *Montagne Cabris*, like *Graviers*, *Pointe Coton*, *St Francois* are regularly facing reception problems and instead of having a choice among the four channels, they are constraint to watch only no signal on their screen. So despite numerous complaints the problem still exists and many people are saying that if things continue to be like that then it would be better to revert back to the old system. Many poor people cannot watch TV simply because they are vey low income earners, they are vey poor and they can't even afford to pay for a *décodeur*. Has there been any move from the government to help these people?

Now let me just comment a few things about sports. I commented about the pitiful state of most of our sports infrastructures

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, order!! Order, please! Well we can't continue like this. You want me to stop the Assembly? Yes proceed.

Mr. D. Baptiste: Unfortunately, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, once again nothing significant has been proposed in this budget to remedy these problems of sports infrastructures. I will not comment on it this time because things are almost the same. But I would just like to outline some of the disgraceful treatment given to our athletes and coaches. First of all, our young athletes are no longer getting the equipment facilities regularly. This is the case for "Ecole de Foot" who are waiting for long for the equipment that should be granted to them since long time back, at least from the *Centre de Formation d'Athletisme* also facing the same problem. Undue pressure is also being exerted on the Coaches for different sports discipline where there is a lengthy wasteful procedure for them to fill a lot of forms so that they can get a small allowance. And this is shameful. This is unbelievable especially towards those people who have contributed every often voluntarily but thoughtfully over years to promote sports and to help Rodrigues to reach such a standard today. As for the *Jeux de Rodrigues*, the Commission for Youth and Sports together with the organizing committee have proved to be inefficient. Poor organization, poor management. There was a lot of confusion, for example in relation to distribution of equipment and ensuring that athletes really represented their respective zone, among others. Do you know that some athletes and officials received their equipments days even weeks after the closing ceremony of the Games and the most unfortunate did not receive them at all. Officials in certain sports discipline did not get their appropriate equipment like T-shirts. Doubtful practices have occurred during the distribution process. What will happen for example if some other sponsors come to know that some equipments like T-shirts for officials were not really distributed to them. They did not get this for the *Jeux de Rodrigues*. And later on we have seen the same T-shirts being distributed to members, to officers of the Commission for Youth and Sports and even to some trainees. I can give you information about this if you want later on.

As regards to *Jeux de L'Avenir*, let me congratulate these athletes for all their efforts as well as their Coaches for their performance which I believe is mainly due to the unconditional support of all those who interested in sports. Their boldness and determination against all odds have proved to be fruitful. But they are still convinced that if they had a better treatment they could have even performed better. First of all, Coaches who were supposed to have priority to form part the delegation were simply put aside. They were replaced by some privileged ones who had nothing to do with *Jeux de L'Avenir*. Some people have even sent sms to condemn this wrong doing. Close friends, intimate friends but not Coaches this is the truth, this is a fact and everybody knows about what I am saying. The athletes and Coaches lamented the fact that they had to travel by sea for such an important competition and this is very tiresome. And this is the first time in their career that something like that happens. And beyond that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, once they reached *Port Louis* after more than one day travel they were bound to go directly to a function at *Pamplemousses* hosted by the Minister for Youth and Sports, no time to refresh, to go to their hotel or whatever, to rest, nothing and at *Pamplemousses*, no provision were made for sitting arrangements. They were just treated like, I don't know but this is shameful because I think that these people, these athletes, these Coaches did not deserve such a deplorable treatment. It is unforgivable for the Commission for Youth and Sports to downgrade our talented athletes like that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And in contrast to that the privilege one, most of whom had nothing to do with the *Jeux de L'Avenir* travelled smoothly by plane and had plenty of time to relax in their hotel before attending the function. Is this good governance, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? Over there, confusion and dispute among the officials of the Commission was remarkable. There was incoherence in the decisions making. At least for example signed for a financial grant of Rs 400 but received in the first place only Rs 200. But fortunately some of them are very alert and some persons questioned these acts of wrong doing. They reacted to that. Where are we going Mr. Chairperson, Sir? As I said the only thing that is supporting the Sports Community in Rodrigues is the will and determination of athletes and coaches themselves. A better vision and good governance on the part of the Commissioner for Youth and Sports would have helped to enhance the overall performance and overall standards in these matters.

This government, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, should be more committed and sound in their policy decision for the betterment of the whole population. We can get as much money that we want for a particular budget but if there is no good governance, there is no value for money. This is what I have tried to explain all this time. Money is not the only thing but good governance is most important. The truth is that, this government has been taking chances with the lives of the Rodriguan people for the past three years. Our own people bear the consequences today in the form of the injustice, lack of economic development, lack of job opportunities, and lack of hope. The people have been denied protection for their rights. They have been disrespected and disregarded and treated sometimes in any way which can very often be

disgraceful. They are suffering from bad governance. But here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are here or we are supposed to be here so that we can give these people a chance. We want these things to happen, we want people to get a chance. We owe it to our young school leavers who are facing a blank wall of hopelessness and despair. They need hope, they need opportunities and we must give them this chance. We owe it to the graduates, to our highly skilled labour who are leaving Rodrigues day after day because they can't find any opportunity here. We trained them to build Rodrigues, we trained them for years. It is not the fruit of 2 or 3 years. It is the fruit of 25 years back. We trained them to help build Rodrigues and we are all here fruits of this training. But we should give this generation also their chance, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. We owe it to all these young professionals. It is their skills and ability to tackle problems with new solutions that will take us on the road to prosperity. I make once again Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to this present government, we must give a chance to the people of Rodrigues. Give them the same chance as they used to have when OPR was on power under the leadership of Serge Clair, give them the chance to become Higher Executive, to become Commissioners, to become doctors, to become entrepreneurs. And let them have this hope.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: May it is a good time to suspend. I would like to know how many Members who are still going to... All Members on this side? Yes. I suspend this Assembly for one hour.

At 12.30 hrs the Assembly was suspended for one hour.

The Assembly resumed at 13.30 hrs with the Chairperson in the Chair.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, last time we had a Member from the Minority side.

Mrs. L. Chan Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me to thank and to congratulate the Chief Commissioner and his team for the presentation of this budget, a first under the PBB approach. But before I engage myself in my speech, I'd like to make a few comments regarding some issues raised by the Minority group since this morning.

Depuis ce matin on a entendu plusieurs intervenants du coté de la minorité et on a entendu aussi plusieurs points qu'ils ont soulevé. Entre autres on a entendu parler du fait qu'à Rodrigues on ne parle que d'emploi saisonnier ou occasionnel. Mais moi je dirai il faut voir dans quel contexte Rodrigues se place aujourd'hui dans le monde quand on parle d'un monde qui devient un village globale quand on parle d'un monde qui fait face a beaucoup de crise, est que des emplois saisonniers, ces emplois occasionnels ne sont pas des emplois ? Qu'est ce qu'on aurait dit, M. le président si vendredi le Chef Commissaire n'avait pas parlé d'emploi tout court parce

qu'on sait qu'à Maurice on a eu des directives pour dire de ne pas créer de l'emploi, il ne faut pas. A Maurice les gens perdent leurs emplois. Donc si on était venu à l'Assemblée sans faire mention de création d'emploi, on aurait dit, voilà ce gouvernement là ne fait rien. Mais quand on parle de solution, d'autres possibilités la encore parce qu'on est l'Opposition on va trouver des choses à dire. Mais moi je crois qu'emploi saisonnier ou que ce soit occasionnel c'est toujours quelque chose parce qu'à Rodrigues on sait bien que trouver de l'emploi, il n'y a pas que dans le gouvernement on peut aussi travailler autre part et à travers ces emplois saisonniers ou occasionnel on va renforcer notre secteur privé à Rodrigues.

J'aimerais aussi parler sur quelque chose qui m'a touché, c'est qu'on a beaucoup mis l'accent sur la politique de petit copain. Mais moi je dirai, la politique de petit copain ça ne date pas d'hier. On a dans cette Assemblée la ici même, présent, des gens victimes et d'autres qui ont bénéficié de cette même politique de petit copain quand l'OPR était au pouvoir. Alors comment peut-on venir nous pointer du doigt le gouvernement pour dire que nous faisons politiques de petit copain ? Il y a des gens qui ont peut-être jeter des jalons, ils ont commencé à le faire mais maintenant ils ne sentent sa très fort parce qu'ils ne sont pas là, ils ne sont pas au pouvoir on ressent encore le malaise du transfuge règne toujours sur la minorité. Quand on parle de politique de petit copain, j'aimerais dire que si on va au Département de Cadastre, là aussi on va voir des petits copains, *those concerned you know what i am talking about*. Et la politique de petit copain a mis certaines personnes dans certains postes, je sais de quoi je parle. Et ils ont reçu des bourses, ils ont reçu des formations, peut-être leurs qualifications, peut-être qu'ils le méritaient mais je sais aussi que derrière il y avait la politique de petit copain. Et aujourd'hui on retrouve ces gens là au sein du Cadastre par exemple, qui de part leur manque de collaboration, M. le président, nous démontrent clairement qu'ils ne veulent pas contribuer pour l'avancement de Rodrigues. Et si on ne veut pas travailler avec un gouvernement, qu'est ce que cela veut prouver ? Qu'on a été mis là pour travailler pour un certain gouvernement. Mais heureusement, forte heureusement il y a des femmes surtout et il y a des hommes qui ont *the goodwill to work for the advancement of Rodrigues*. Et à ce jour je veux parler du plan d'action qui a été mis sur pied, qui a été travailler et qui est prêt à être *implemented* pour la région numéro un où il y a un genre d'aménagement du territoire dans la région numéro un où la terre a été divisé pour plusieurs utilisations que ce soit agricole, pour l'élevage, le sociale, pour résidence, etc. Donc ça je tiens à féliciter les gens de bonnes volontés qui ont œuvré pour que cela soit possible. Tandis qu'on a quelqu'un de qualifié pourtant qui a reçu des formations, oui certes, il a des diplômes très bien mais qui refusent de travailler pour Rodrigues. Et puis on vient plaindre ici qu'on n'a pas de vision d'aménagement du territoire. Mais malheureusement les professionnels ne travaillent pas. Ils passent leur temps plus dans le jardin d'enfant à coté que dans leur bureau pour faire leur travail comme il le faut. **(Gap on cassette)**. On a pu *whipout the backlog* qui était là depuis qu'on est venu au pouvoir. Et aujourd'hui c'est avec

une certaine facilité que tout le monde trouve son compte quand il veut construire une maison.

De plus on a entendu aussi parler du niveau de vie. On est d'accord, Rodrigues on n'est pas petite île extraordinaire paradis sur terre. On souffre, il y a des problèmes économiques bien sûr mais quand on parle de niveau de vie, certaines personnes le ressentent plus que d'autres, c'est comme ça c'est dans toute société. Mais quand on veut faire croire qu'à Rodrigues tout est macabre, tout est noir, tout va mal, c'est un peu mauvaise foi aussi parce que lorsqu'on regarde, le Commissaire des Infrastructures Publiques serait certainement d'accord avec moi, combien de permis de construction que sa Commission donne à longueur de jours de semaine. Il y a beaucoup de gens qui construisent leur maison. Il y a beaucoup de voitures, si vous regardez l'arrivée du Mauritius Pride ou de Mauritius Trochetia et vous voyez l'arrivée des voitures à Rodrigues, on voit beaucoup de voitures et on va encore dire mais oui c'est seulement pour les Commissaires, les grands, etc. Mais cela nous démontre, M. le président, qu'il y a quand même un niveau de vie acceptable à Rodrigues. Mais cela ne veut pas dire non plus qu'on va en rester là, que ça va. Il faut faire encore plus pour ceux qui n'ont pas le moyen. Mais il ne faut pas brosser un tableau noir, un tableau désastreuse de l'île Rodrigues, ce n'est pas dans l'avantage de Rodrigues. Pour une Rodriguais ce n'est pas bien de le faire. On a des problèmes, on vient le dire mais ce n'est pas non plus la peine de noircir le tableau à ce point.

Quand j'ai entendu aussi l'intervention sur l'éducation ; là je me suis dit encore une fois c'est un peu de manque de bonne foi. Parce que quand on veut qu'il y ait des collèges qui soient construits et ensuite on vient faire un discours sur le nom qu'on a donné au collège, il y a pas de collège qui s'appelle Terre Rouge, etc, *what's in a name*, Shakespeare avait dit, *what's in a name* ? L'essentielle c'est quoi ? C'est qu'on ait un collège, c'est que nos enfants aillent au collège. Est-ce qu'on aurait préféré que ces enfants là restent sur la rue ou encore ou qu'on ait des *over crowded classes* à Le Chou ou à Grande Montagne ou autre part ou lieu de créer quelque chose d'autre. Et on le sait que si il n'y a pas de collège qui s'appelle Terre Rouge c'est tout un truc administratif. Pour pouvoir donner un nom, pour pouvoir avoir la licence d'opérer comme un collège, il y a des critères à respecter mais *so far the students who are going to Citron Donis, they cannot respect these criterias*. Donc on a ouvert Citron Donis comme *annex* de Marechal. Il n'y a pas de mal à ça mais néanmoins il faut toujours dire quelque chose. On parle de construction et puis on dit est-ce qu'on doit construire de nouvelles écoles, il ne faut pas construire à Terre Rouge. Est-ce qu'on veut dire là que construire à Terre Rouge n'est pas bon ? Que les gens de Terre Rouge ne méritent pas d'avoir un collège dans leur village ? Donc il faut savoir ce qu'on veut ; soit on construit, soit on ne construit pas.

On a aussi parlé de, on manque tout, on manque de vision économique, sociale, etc. Nous on a rien, mais malheureusement, ce qui a été déplorer des fois, c'est lorsqu'on demande à la minorité de participer *and they have so rightly talked*

about good governance et je dois dire que *good governance* c'est aussi la participation de la minorité. C'est pas rester à l'écart en dehors et puis venir dire *we didn't know, you did not tell us, we were not aware. You form part of this dynamics governance, so please when you are asked to participate for the well being of all the Rodriguans, I am not talking about my well being but for the well being of Rodriguans, you should see it fit to participate and not stay aside and criticize.* C'est trop facile de pointer du doigt mais on voit que néanmoins qu'il y a beaucoup qui se font, il y a beaucoup d'accomplissements qui arrivent à Rodrigues et bien sûr moi je dis tout le temps, je tiens en compte que les critiques que les autres émettent sinon on n'aurait pas eu besoin d'une minorité, on va prendre en compte vos critiques mais venez avec des suggestions qui sont vraiment *helpful*. Il y a des causes qui se doit être battus à deux quand je dis à deux c'est la minorité et la majorité et non pas seulement par la majorité. Et c'est là où la population dont vous parliez qui dites voilà il faut que l'OPR revienne, c'est la que la population comme Monsieur Baptiste a si bien dit ce matin, voit la différence de *the type of government that they have. You have to participate, you have to come forward and tell us, give us what are your arguments?* Qu'est ce que vous proposer? Vous ne proposez rien, vous ne faites que critiquer. Si vous voulez nous montrer quelque chose de différent, venez de l'avant et donnez nous de suggestions fermes et concrètes sur lesquels on pourrait travailler et avancez. Sur ce M. le président, laissez moi aborder mon discours.

M. le président, lorsque le Chef Commissaire avait débuté son discours, il nous avait mis devant une situation qui nous donnerai à réfléchir à comparer avec certain qui disait ce matin que la situation n'est pas bien. Mais c'est vrai il est d'accord dessus, on est d'accord sur ce point et il a parlé de notre situation socio-économique qui n'est pas *much brighter. So he state dit in his speech so to come here and say that the situation is not much brighter* on ne va pas reinventer la roué, on le sait déjà, on fait face à cela. Mais ce que je qualifierai d'excellent c'est que malgré le fait que nous faisons face à des adversités qui sont *beyond our control* ce présent gouvernement a pu accomplir beaucoup et en si peu de temps. Et là je fais un peu allusion au pont Winston Churchill, qui l'a démoli ? Le MR ? Le gouvernement MR a démoli le pont Winston Churchill ? On sait démolir, facile à démolir, on démoli facilement avec nos critiques, avec nos points de vues un peu bizarre mais pour reconstruire il faut savoir construire. La construction, vous avez surement déjà pris part à la construction des choses chez vous, ça ne se fait pas facilement pour détruire c'est facile mais pour reconstruire ce n'est pas évident. Et aujourd'hui c'est avec un grand plaisir que nous avons vu que le travail *is going on, has started and will be soon completed.* C'est ce qu'il faut retenir dans ce budget, M. le président. Et là je voudrais féliciter toute l'équipe qui a fait que cela soit possible.

M. le président, le Chef Commissaire nous a brossé un tableau positif de ce que le gouvernement régional a accompli durant l'année financière 2008/2009 mais nous avons aussi constaté que beaucoup reste à faire. Les temps sont dure et cela M. le président, personne ne veut le nier ni le cesserons de le répéter. Mais contre vent et

marée nous restons fideles à nous mêmes dans la présentation d'une prévision budgétaire qui vise la continuité, le progrès et l'épanouissement de chaque rodriguais. Je crois fermement que les objectifs fixé par le gouvernement régional pour les six mois à venir se veulent être des secteurs clés et prioritaires pour un développement intégré et équilibrer de Rodrigues.

M. le président, qui ne se posent pas de questions, comment Rodrigues va savoir garder la tête hors de l'eau pendant cette crise mondiale. Notre souci primaire est de maintenir une certaine stabilité dans le secteur touristique. C'est pour cela qu'on doit soutenir et la demande de l'Association du Tourisme Réunionnais et la requête du Chef Commissaire au gouvernement central à donner priorité à l'enlèvement de la taxe sur le billet d'avion Maurice-Rodrigues et de rendre l'agrandissement de la piste d'atterrissage une réalité. Et la encore une fois je vais m'adresser à la minorité pour nous donner un coup de main s'ils veulent vraiment que Rodrigues progresse. Ce sera aussi un grand soutien aux operateurs touristique que de voir cette réduction de 50% dans le bail à payer en juillet 2009.