

Debate No. 5 of 19.05.09

RODRIGUES

SECOND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 5 of 2009

Sitting of Tuesday 19 May 2009

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

(Mr Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 19 MAY 2009

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The Executive Council
(Formed by Mr Johnson Roussety, G.O.S.K)

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

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Mr Chairperson	-	Lamvohee, Mr Joseph Chenlye, CSK
Clerk	-	Gopall, Mr Navin
Sergeant-at-Arms	-	Louis, Mr Jorgenson

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL - MATERNITY WARD

(No. B/64) Mr P. Francois (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health & Others whether, with regard to the purchase of furniture and equipments for the new Maternity Ward of Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will, for the benefit of the House, state where matters stand for all the tendering exercises that have been triggered since completion of the building in May 2007.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to report that the completion of the building is not May 2007 as stated in the question, but the Practical Completion Certificate was issued on 22 November 2007. The building was under defects and liability period until 22 November 2008 and payment of retention money was due in December 2008. However, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to date, as the contractor has not attended to defects observed in the building, the money has not been released. Therefore, technically, the building has not been completed as stated, and my office will not release the outstanding balance of retention money, Mr Chairperson, Sir, unless the contractor attends to defects noted in the building.

However, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that procedure for preparation of tenders for the purchase of furniture and equipments for the New Maternity Ward of Queen Elisabeth Hospital was initiated on 23 April 2008. It is important, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to know all the mechanism, all the procedures and different steps in the tendering process with the new Public Procurement Act. This will enlighten everybody here.

However, with the coming into force of the new Public Procurement Act in January 2008, and as it was estimated that the total cost of the project would exceed Rs5 m., a first draft of the tender document was forwarded to the Central

Procurement Board (CPB) on 25 April 2008 for vetting and subsequent approval for launching of tendering process.

The response came from the Central Procurement Board on 22 May 2008 informing that the tender documents have been examined and further amendments were required. A meeting was, therefore, scheduled for the 06 June 2008, requesting the scheduled officer to liaise with one Mrs Monebhurrin, Procurement Officer, with a view to finalise the documents, giving consideration to requirements in respect of warranty, maintenance and the need to group various items into lots.

In this respect, Mr Mathang Kowlessur, the then Higher Purchasing and Supply Officer from my Commission, attended not less than three working sessions as follows -

- (i) with Mrs A. Monebhurrin, Procurement Officer, on 23 June 2008;
- (ii) with Mr D. Mannick, Assistant Manager of Procurement, on 31 July 2008, and
- (iii) with Mr Michel Wan Bok Dale, vice-Chairman of the Procurement Board, and Mrs A. Monebhurrin on 01 August 2008, in the presence of the Departmental Head of my Commission.

Upon finalisation of all shortcomings in the tendering process, tenders were floated on 12 August 2008 in both local press and in Mauritius with closing date on 29 September 2008.

It is to be noted, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that tenders were deposited in the Tender Box of Central Procurement Board Office, 1st floor, Social Security House, in Mauritius, and my office has no control whatsoever on this procedure.

Mr Chairperson Sir, on 06 November 2008, a further letter from the CPB was received, requesting my Commission to send an officer not below the rank of Assistant Secretary to act as Secretary for the Bid Evaluation Committee, which

would hold sessions as from 10 November 2008, and Administrative Officer, Mr Django Begué, attended.

Mr Chairperson Sir, following several reminders from my Commission, the Central Procurement Board ultimately conveyed approval on 13 January 2009 for Notification of Award as per section 40 of the Public Procurement Act 2006. Immediately both successful and unsuccessful bidders were notified of the outcomes of the bidding process, as stipulated by the new Public Procurement Act.

Unfortunately, the award of this tender was hampered by challenges from two bidders, which delayed the award process until 01 April 2009, whereby all clearances were obtained from the Central Procurement Board for the award of this contract. On the same day of 01 April 2009, the contract was awarded partially to -

- (i) Robert le Maire Ltd, for the sum of Rs2,759,150.00, and
- (ii) Chem Tech Ltd, for the sum of Rs5,837,000.00,

and on 22 April 2009 for another item to Chem Tech Ltd, for the sum of Rs1,272,000.00. This was due, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to a delay in response to challenges.

As the bidding process was open for international bidders, the delivery period was set by the Central Procurement Board for within 120 days as from the award of the contract. The last delivery date is, therefore, 01 July 2009. However, both suppliers have confirmed that, given the urgency of the situation to get the new maternity operational, they will supply at an earlier date. We are expecting same by the third week of June at the latest.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, everybody would have been glad, and I would have been the first one to see the New Maternity Ward operational. Unfortunately, with the coming into force of the new tendering processes of the new Public Procurement Act, things go unfortunately very slowly. We are not the only institution to complain about this, Mr Chairperson, Sir. In the press we see that many Ministries and local

authorities in Mauritius have made complaints about the long and complicated procedures of the new Procurement Act. Anyway, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I can assure the House that necessary measures have been taken to have it operational very soon.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, before concluding, I would like to inform the House that, contrary to what has been reported in this Assembly by a Member from the other side, namely Mrs Arlette Perrine Begué, the Budgetary Provision, Capital Estimates for Financial Year 2006-2007, services under the control of Commissioner for Health, Co-operatives and Fire Services, 31-105.002 “Equipment and Furniture”, was only Rs3 m. and not Rs39 m. as reported by her. She said that Rs39 m. were earmarked for equipment and furniture for the New Maternity Ward, whereas the fact is only Rs3 m. were allocated for not only the New Maternity but for the whole health services.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has been mentioning that tenders have been hampered by challenges. I should like to know from the Commissioner whether there has been any protest from one of the tenderers and the nature thereof.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the protest is what we call challenges. Members of this House have to know, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the process, some of the mechanisms of the new Public Procurement Act. Whenever tenders have been launched or have been floated for whatever item, after that the Evaluation Committee has examined all the quotations, all the bidders have to be notified about the cost; the amount of money quoted by each and every bidder, the reason why such and such bidder has been successful, why they have chosen such bidder. And if at least one bidder is not agreeable with the decision of the Bid Evaluation Committee, he challenges. At times, we have only one challenge and at times we have many challenges.

This is what I think the Respected Member on the other side is mentioning as protest. In fact, there have been challenges; this is why I mentioned in my reply, Mr

Chairperson, Sir, that the whole process has been hampered with challenges from another bidder.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner how does he account for the delay of seven months, since May 2007 to January 2008, to trigger tendering procedures for the purchase of furniture and equipment?

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think I have been clear in my reply. I have mentioned all the procedures, what has happened, why there has been delay. If the Respected Member wants me to read again the reply, there is no problem. But it has been very clear I think.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the question relates to furniture and equipment. I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health whether the Commission has received some equipment since the beginning of the year or since May 2007.

Mr Emilien: I am informed, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that some equipment - maybe there is furniture also - have arrived on the island already. But I can't, at this point in time, say whether it is only furniture or only equipment.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner how the commissioning of the equipment and furniture will be done. Will it be done in Mauritius or in Rodrigues? Who will be responsible to mount these equipment and furniture? Will same be done in the presence of the tenderer?

Mr Emilien: I think that it should be done according to the norms, Mr Chairperson, Sir. In the tender document, all these are mentioned. If it is mentioned that the tenderer has to mount it here in Rodrigues, then it will be done accordingly.

Mr Lisette: I want to ask the Commissioner for Health whether there has been a separate contract for furniture specifically.

Mr Emilien: Unfortunately, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I can't give a reply to this question because I don't personally deal with this. If the Member wanted to know this, he should have put a substantive question, specifically asking whether it is

separate or not. I don't deal with these matters, and I don't know whether it is separate.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with respect to the purchase of furniture and equipment, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether there was one contract as a whole or several split contracts with respect to the different items?

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I must be frank, I don't know if there was a bulk. What I know is that whenever tenders are floated, we have response from potential bidders. I am informed that we have potential bidders who quote for specific items that they can supply, but I don't think that the tender document has been split into different lots.

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am a little bit surprised to hear that the Commissioner does not to know the whereabouts of this so important and lagging behind project. I would like to ask the Commissioner, since there have been challenges, as he has said, and so many problems on this file, whether a Committee or his staff is regularly briefing him on the issue? Is he asking questions to make sure that the necessary steps are being taken, so that the major problems are being *contournés*?

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I said in my reply, after request from my Commission, the Central Procurement Board conveyed approval on 30 January of this year for notification of award. My Commission, at this stage, has nothing to do with all these procedures. It is within the hands of the new Public Procurement Board. There is a Bid Evaluation Committee to deal with technical specifications. Most challenges mainly come from the price, of course, and from technical specifications, and these specifications have to be dealt with by specialists. There is a Committee at the level of the Procurement Board that deals with these matters. So, at the level of my Commission, we don't have to mingle with this, because it is only technical aspects that are being taken into consideration.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if I refer to the answer of the Commissioner for Health, the preparation of documents started on 23 April 2008, and the Practical Completion Certificate was given on 22 November 2007, whereas in the question it is put that the construction was over by May 2007. Was it not possible, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the preparation of the procurement document while the construction was going on?

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I stated in my reply that procedures for preparation of tenders for purchase of furniture and equipment of the New Maternity Ward at Queen Elizabeth Hospital was initiated on 23 April 2008. But we had to complete the process with the building first before preparing the documents for the launching of equipment and furniture. This is why it was done in April. And, concerning challenges, I would like to add, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that normally challenges are launched at the CPB and not at the level of my Commission. I just want to clarify this.

Mr Lisette: I want to come on the same question, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I am taking the date mentioned by the Commissioner himself, 22 November 2007, as regards when the Practical Completion Certificate was issued. From November to April, it makes a delay of five months. I would like to know from the Commissioner for Health why there is such a delay in the kick-off of procedure in respect of the purchase of furniture and equipment.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed that the whole procedure for launching of tenders for equipment has to go through specific processes, because there are technical implications, as I said earlier. This is why it has taken so much time. If it was only for, let's say drugs or things you can just buy like this, it would have been more quickly than that. But this needs to have specific specifications. At times, due to very petty things, the whole lot is being rejected or challenged by the other bidders; because of small specifications. That's why there has to be a Technical Committee to deal with these very tricky things.

Mr Lisette: I would like to ask the Commissioner, Mr Chairperson, Sir, who was responsible for the listing of the equipment to be purchased.

Mr Emilien: This has been done, Mr Chairperson, Sir, with the help of specialists from the Ministry of Health and from the health services.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to come back to the furniture issue. Is the Commissioner aware that, as at now, furniture is being mounted in the New Maternity Ward by a team of skilling and re-skilling workers?

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is what their purpose was: to give a helping hand at the level of these units.

WATER METERS - INSTALLATION

(No. B/65) Mr P. Francois (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huîtres) asked the Chief Commissioner with regard to the installation of a water meter to each water prise, he would inform the House -

- (a) the total number of water meters installed to each water prise to date;
- (b) who was responsible for the whole exercise;
- (c) whether any complaints have been received as regards the performance of these water meters, and
- (d) what is his policy as regards to the installation of these water meters to each water prise.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the installation of a water meter to each water prise, I am informed as follows -

- (a) the total number of water meters installed to date is 7,936.
- (b) the meters were partly installed by the Water Unit and by a private contractor.

- (c) no official complaint has been received so far with regard to the performance of the water meters.
- (d) the meters have been installed to quantify the volume of water received by the consumers, so as to enable a better management of the water resources.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has mentioned that no official complaint has been received. I would like to know from him whether he is aware that, in some places, water meters have been removed due to low pressure from the water tap.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are aware, but we have not received any complaints. The question relates to complaints. Some people removed the water meter, which has been installed, together with the box, because of the low water pressure which exists, and if the water meter is left on the prise, the water will not flow to these persons. This is a fact that exists in Rodrigues. With the reforms, we expect that there will be an equitable balance of the overall network of water in Rodrigues on the days of distribution; a scientific approach of water distribution which will not necessitate the removal of these water meters. With the reforms undergoing, there will be also water regulations, laws which will make an offence the tampering of any water network, including the removal of water meters. This will not be allowed in the future. If the person has a problem of water pressure, he will have to liaise with the relevant authorities, make an official complaint, and the relevant water authority, at a relevant time in the future, will be able to deal with these problems.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner how many families and in which regions these water meters have not been installed.

The Chief Commissioner: I repeat, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that the question relates to the installation of water meters to each water prise. I was asked to state the total number of water meters; this has been stated – 7,936. I have not been asked how many households have not been connected. This is not in the question. I don't have the information at this stage, and I don't think that there have been exclusions. In the whole procedure, maybe there has been some minor exclusion, because perhaps some persons don't have water prises or they are in remote places. But, in practice, the overall of Rodrigues has been covered with the installation of water prises.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I asked the question because there are some villages in my constituency, where no new water meters were installed. And even Mr Lisette and I have not had any water meters installed. So, it is not a question of remoteness. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether any study or survey has been made as regards to existing water meters which were installed some years back in Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that this Member should ask her ex-colleague, who was responsible for water resources, about his project. He started this. If the two Members have not been installed with water meters, may I assure them that it will be done during the week. And, of course, Mr Chairperson, Sir, as you are aware, we are in a process of reforms in Rodrigues, and if there have not been water meters installed in some places, it is may be due to some oversight or some lack of planning, which is a sort of characteristic of the actual management set-up of water in Rodrigues. I don't think that, when we will have the Water Company fully operational in Rodrigues together with the regulatory framework monitoring by the Commission for Water Resources, there will be some houses where there will be no water prises. It will be an offence. It will be as if you are tapping electricity from the network without a meter. So, it will be the responsibility of the consumers who do not have a meter to come at the Water

Company or to the Commission to state that they don't have a meter, and the meter will have to be installed.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: I would like to pursue on this same direction concerning cost effectiveness, Mr Chairperson, Sir. We see that in some places, people do still have the ancient water meters. I would like to know whether the Commission is aware of same and whether any test has been made to know whether these water meters are still operational and in good condition. To cut cost, maybe half of them should have been bought and not 7,000 or 8,000.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have not installed 7,936 new; part of them were already installed, including by the former government, and we have completed the work in most parts of Rodrigues. The information I have is that it has been done in all Rodrigues. Of course, you know how the Commission is staffed. There is lack of information; we don't know how many water prizes we have, who are the clients. What can I do? I inherited from this situation; we inherited from it. Now, we are putting the reforms. Tomorrow, we will have a computerized system, where we will know who the water customer is, what his consumption per month is. Do we have people who can go and read water meters today? Did you put it in place? Who put it in place, Mr Chairperson, Sir? We are putting it in place now. By the end of this year, we will have a complete team at the Rodrigues Water Company who will be able to go and read water meters. Then, we will know. We didn't have the team. We should not be told to do things that you, while in government, have not done. The process of water reforms which is undergoing with the help of AFD, UNDP, Ministry of Finance, Government of Mauritius and CWA is a step-wise process. And I have just received the latest report from the UNDESA expert, Mr Cheney, and he has made some very useful suggestions and stated that we should not only concentrate on the setting up of the corporate body, the autonomous body to manage water, but that we should also give due attention to regulations, control of boreholes, regulations of water production, etc. So, the whole issue of installation of

water meters will have to be viewed within the general framework of the water reforms undergoing. The expert has also made some comments on the type of water prise which has been installed; there are much more efficient water prises where water can flow in it without obstructing it. There is a problem of obstruction of the water prises because of the high level of sediments in it. When it passes through it, it obstructs. This highlights criticisms that can be made on the type of water pipe which has been selected and installed in the past.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: The Chief Commissioner has just revealed that some of the water meters were ancient ones, and we have not heard, as far as we know, of any tender procedures for buying new water meters. Can he tell us more about this? I am sure that he knows better than the former Commissioner who said that some questions have to be put before he answers. Surely, *il connait bien* son dossier, and he can tell us how many of these new water meters have been given.

The Chief Commissioner: I would like to thank the Member for the compliment, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I am proud of what we are doing; the great adventure we are undergoing in the water sector in Rodrigues. I was just listening to the Member, and I heard the word ‘ancient’. I don’t know what she means by ‘ancient’. Ancient for me - I don’t have a dictionary at hand; the Clerk has one - would mean maybe some 1,000 years back. All Members would agree what the word ‘ancient’ means. Maybe the Clerk can open his dictionary. We don’t have ancient water meters. We have water meters. And as regards to new tendering, there has been no new tendering because this - I think that the information is right - was already bought. It was already in government stores.

BAIE LASCARS - FILAO TREES - CUTTING DOWN

(No. B/66) Mr P. Francois (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure, Housing and Environment & Others with regard to the cutting down of filao trees and excavation

work on the reclaimed land of Baie lascars, whether he would inform the House of any new infrastructural project that will be kicked off, threat.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the company “*Ti Mais Resort Ltée*” holds a commercial lease at the said site at Baie Lascars. The lessee is proceeding with the construction of a building of a total extent of 338 m² to house a restaurant, and for which a building permit has been granted on 17 April 2009.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the issue of the lease, I would like to know from the Commissioner whether the rules governing construction have been observed, especially since it is found near the sea.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed that the promoter is in compliance with all the conditions as regards to the building and land use permit. As far as it is near the sea, I have been informed that the promoter is in compliance with all environmental issues concerning the construction of the building.

FISHERS - STUDY TOUR IN MAURITIUS

(No. B/67) Mr P. Francois (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huîtres) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the proposed study tour for a group of fishers in Mauritius, he will, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) what are the objects of the tour, the length and the proposed areas of study;
- (b) the number of fishers per category and gender, and
- (c) what will be the next step of this study tour.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the proposed study tour, I would like to refer the Member to paragraph 63 of my Budget Speech, whereby the objects of the tour were spelt out. I would like also to further inform the Members that the modalities of the tour are being finalised and that the House and

the press also will be informed accordingly once all formalities and modalities have been completed.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner whether fisherwomen will also be included in the tour.

The Chief Commissioner: My Commission has a gender-balanced approach, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can we know, since the tour is being planned actually, what is the sum earmarked for this project?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, again this information is available in the Budget Speech and the budget accounts of the Regional Assembly. We have provided the amount for this in the Recurrent Budget of the Regional Assembly.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, 40 persons are going over to Mauritius. We see that in the Executive Council decisions of the 8th of May, it is said that fishers are mainly there to visit the different types of fishing boats and new prototypes. I would like to ask the Commissioner what is the rationale behind moving up to Mauritius such a big group with all its related cost. Nowadays, we have improved a lot in techniques, showing persons prototypes in 3-Ds, etc. Is it not more cost effective? Weren't there any other alternatives than to send all those persons *nourris, logés, blanchis* there?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, you can't feel a boat by looking at pictures. I don't see why I can't take 40 persons to Mauritius, fishermen, professional persons, when my colleague, Mr Agathe, has taken a boat - Mauritius Pride - of sportsmen to Mauritius lastly and has got very good results at the *Jeux de l'Avenir*. The object of the mission will not only be to look at boats but also to visit people, to visit enterprises and to expose those people in Rodrigues to various scopes of the fishing industry in Mauritius, including fish transformation, and let them have

meetings and contacts in Mauritius. I can assure the Member that we are not up to date in our fishing techniques and fishing boats in Rodrigues. Fishing boats that we have in Rodrigues are too small today. We have visited, with officers planning the session, some prototypes of boats which already exist in Mauritius that are adapted to Rodrigues from the point of view of the sea and from the cost point of view also. And, of course, if any Member of the Opposition wants to be included in this mission as a sort of observer, we will be glad to include them.

PIG REARING

(No. B/68) Mr P. Roussety (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health & Others whether, with regard to pig rearing in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain the following information -

- (a) whether the section for Public Health has received any complaints from the inhabitants of *Camp du Roi* for the rearing of pigs from January 2008 to date; and if so, the number and nature of same;
- (b) whether pig breeders have received permission for pig rearing in that village, and if so,
- (c) what immediate action he intends to take to find a solution to the complaint/s.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Principal Health Inspector that his office has received no formal written complaint from any inhabitant of Camp du Roi from January 2008 to date regarding pig rearing activities.

However, the Principal Health Inspector informed that, during the last week of December 2008, one Mrs Rivière of Camp du Roi phoned at the Public Health Office to inform that one Mr Modeste of that locality was breeding pigs in that region, thereby causing inconvenience to her.

The next day, an inspection by the Public Health Section was carried out, and it was found that one Mr Daniel Modeste was effectively running a pig sty (on large scale) on his premises.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, on the same day, Mr Modeste was warned that such activity was causing much inconvenience to inhabitants of the region, and he was verbally summoned to discontinue with the said pig breeding activity on his premises.

During follow-up visit on 07 January 2009, it was observed that the pig breeding activity was still going on, and the said Mr Daniel Modeste was issued with a written Sanitary Notice (15/08/C) under the Public Health Act 1927, to cause said pig breeding to be shifted within a delay of 30 days to another site approved by the appropriate authority. It is to be noted, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that my Commission provides only sanitary clearances and not permission for pig rearing.

On expiry of the said delay on 19 February 2009, Mr Modeste applied for additional delay, as the Commission for Agriculture had not yet finalised his lease for which he has been granted an agricultural permit.

The delay was granted on the ground that procedures for the granting of an agricultural lease were in the pipeline and under finalisation.

However, as at 19 March 2009, the lease has not been finalised and the problem was still ongoing; Mr Modeste was given a contravention for failing to comply with a written Sanitary Notice. Legal procedures are underway against the said Mr Modeste to prosecute him in the District Court of Rodrigues under the Public Health Act.

Mr Chairperson Sir, as regards to part (b), the question does not arise as it does not concern the Commission for Health prerogatives. It is not in the prerogatives of my Commission to find a solution to this problem either.

As for part (c), the vicinity is being disinfected regularly as a preventive measure. But it does not fall under the purview of my Commission, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I have been informed by the Commission for Agriculture that an agricultural permit for livestock rearing has been issued to Mr Jean Daniel Modeste on 08 May to enable the latter to shift his piggery from Camp du Roi to elsewhere.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given that in the vicinity there is a borehole, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the Sanitary Authority division has certified that the water is not liable to be defiled by any matter or water issuing from the pig sty during the granted delay.

Mr Emilien: This is not the only problem, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Many problems have been identified. But, as I have said, necessary actions have been initiated against Mr Modeste. I was informed this morning, just before coming here, that he has been issued with an agricultural permit on 08 May this year. So, he has the time to move. But, in the meantime, as I mentioned in my reply, the vicinity is being disinfected and there are regular visits from the health sector.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, unfortunately, we don't have the Commissioner. I think that, maybe, being given the importance of the problem in the region, we have to come forward with another question with the Commissioner to scrutinise him on the earmarking of the land which has not been given to that person until now. I am just a close neighbour to that person. The Public Health Act says that 90 days only should be given for abatement of nuisance after complaints have been made. The Commissioner has mentioned that, since December, there was a first complaint made by Mrs Rivière, and now we are in May; it's more than twice 90 days. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he finds it normal that such an overlooking is happening under his jurisdiction.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it has been very clear in my reply why delay has been given to Mr Modeste. It is because all the procedures with the Commission for Agriculture were under process. Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to

law, we can't just close down the sty, because there are live animals there. We can't do that, because it would be against law. We would prevent live animals from being fed if we close down the sty before the person has an appropriate place to bring his animals. But, anyway, he has been granted an agricultural permit, and he will move shortly. Concerning the delay, you must know, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that, according to law, only working days count; no Saturdays, no Sundays, no public holidays. If you just have a small mathematical exercise, you will see that there is no big difference if you take into account these days.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Complaints were made in December, and normally there is a delay of 30 days that is given to that person to move. He has asked for a further delay, and I have read in the law that it is not more than 15 days further. Anyway, within 90 days, there must be abatement of nuisance. Is it not true, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that it is because of administrative and political pressure, pending that decision is being made at the level Agriculture, which is taking time, that *l'intêret particulier prime sur l'intêret general*?

Mr Emilien: Unfortunately, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I can't answer for my colleague of the agricultural services. I don't know if the Member has heard part of my reply concerning procedures to prosecute him.

Mrs Perrine- Bégué: M. le président, ce monsieur a une centaine de porcs, sans compter les petits qui crient du matin au soir. Une centaine de porcs dans une zone résidentielle, et cette personne n'a pas de permis. La loi dit 90 jours seulement entre les *complaints* et le *judgement of abatement of nuisance*. Là, M. le président, on parle de décembre, mais ça fait plus d'une année. Je suis sûre que le standard du *Sanitary Officer* a explosé, parce qu'il y a beaucoup de villageois qui ont téléphoné. M. le président, beaucoup de gens savent pour quelles raisons des décisions n'ont pas été prises dans le cas de cette personne. Une année, M. le président!

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is a fact known to everybody that nearly all Rodriguans have always been rearing pigs. Maybe, this is on a larger scale but,

anyway, all procedures are underway, Mr Chairperson, Sir. He is going to stop very shortly.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: On this same file, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether, in his routine meetings with the different divisions, he has noted any increase in the number of complaints and nuisance caused by pig rearing in Rodrigues.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I mentioned in my reply that no formal complaint has been received; only a phone call from Mrs Rivière. No formal complaint has been received at the level of the Health Services in Rodrigues.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health what is the last date given to that pig breeder for leaving that site.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to law, there is a delay. Let's take a date at random. We can't say that, by 30 May, he has to stop; otherwise we take all his pigs away.

Mr Lisette: There is the potential nuisance that it may cause to the population there. At this particular point in time, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is a big problem related to swine fever disease with respect to the same type of animal. Does not the Commissioner consider that, being given that particular situation in which we are in now with respect to the fever, it is of utmost urgency that this person leaves that site?

Mr Emilien: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I agree with the Respected Member on the other side of the House that it is a nuisance, of course, but don't invent swine fever. It has never been the case in Rodrigues neither in Mauritius. I know that my colleague, Mr Louis Ange Perrine, from the Commission for Agriculture, is coming with new criteria, with new regulations concerning allocation of agricultural permit. This will be done, I think, in a few days' time. Anyway, I have been informed that an agricultural permit has been granted to him. So, he will have to move all the stock and move away in a few days' time, I think. I am informed also that he has been

granted an extra portion of 8,840 square metres of land just to proceed with his activities.

Mrs Perrine- Bégué: Being given that I am next to that person in a catchment area where everybody is blood-related, it's more than one year since this problem exists. Just to say that people have had goodwill towards this young man who is trying to have a living, but the authorities already knew about the problem because people were phoning. The Sanitary Officer has just given December, which is not true. Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given that it is a health issue, is it not true that this person has also been an administrative victim? Because earmarking of land is one thing, but giving clearance for that person to go is another thing. That's why people have been waiting, especially the officers at the Sanitary, for the administrative decisions to be taken at another level, for that person to have clearance to move. One hundred pigs, Mr Chairperson, Sir! Is it not true that sometimes red tapism and other decisions cause people and all other persons around to suffer?

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is unfair. It is unfair for that Member to say that the Health Services are not doing anything and are waiting for procedures from other authorities; this is unfair. I have informed the House that actions have been initiated and he will be prosecuted in Court. I understand that she is upset, because this is causing a nuisance to her. But this is not justified to say that nothing is being done at the level of the Commission. This is not true.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: The issue has been brought to the attention of the authorities since December. I think that I have always looked around to see whether the Commissioner will come and see; there are rivers and rivulets just passing around. Is the Commissioner aware that this major project is just next to a river? The river is just flowing next to it.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL -PATHOLOGICAL TESTS

(No. B/69) Mr P. Roussety (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health & Others with regard to the pathological tests effected at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, if he will, for the benefit of the House, state

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- (a) whether complaints for any loss of blood test results have been received from patients from January 2008 to date; and if so, the number of cases recorded thereof, and
- (b) what action is being taken to remedy this situation so as to ensure that no results from the laboratory are misled, if any.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson Sir, as regards to part (a) of the question, my office is not in the presence of any official complaint relating the loss of blood tests.

However, I have personally come across a few verbal complaints from patients claiming that, while attending Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Mont Lubin and La Ferme Area Health Centres, they have been told that their blood tests were untraceable.

I myself find this sort of situation unacceptable and command a deep enquiry into the matter. The Departmental Head and the Health Director have been requested to report any shortcomings, if any, for appropriate remedial actions, and in the worst case, if ever any defaulter is being identified, necessary actions will be taken.

Mr Chairperson Sir, I am informed by the Health Director that, after investigation, in most cases the blood results have been traced out.

However, it has been situated that certain blood results have been wrongly despatched to other Area Health Centres, as the Pathological Request Forms were not properly filled.

As regards to part (b), to remedy this situation, the Health Director has issued a circular to all Medical and Health Officers, so that all request forms are properly filled before sending to laboratory for investigations, so that the reports are not misdirected.

Mr P. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner state whether the results issued by the laboratory are treated in confidentiality?

Mr Emilien: The answer is yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr P. Roussety: M. le président, est-ce que le Commissaire peut dire à la Chambre où sont gardés les résultats d'analyses avant d'être envoyés à la section *records* de l'hôpital ?

Mr Emilien: Ils sont gardés à l'hôpital, M. le président.

Mr P. Roussety : M. le président, je tiens à déposer ici ce document, montrant où sont gardés les résultats des analyses des patients. Ils se trouvent dans une armoire, dans une salle publique, dans le bâtiment du laboratoire où tout le monde peut y avoir accès, lire les résultats et même les détruire s'ils le veulent.

Mr Emilien: This is a serious accusation, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I will look into the matter.

Mr Chairperson: The Member can't table documents like this. He may illustrate his question by tendering this picture, and I will see with the Clerk whether this can form part of the debate. But he can't table it as a document. I consider that this picture illustrates what he is saying and if the Clerk can circulate it and let, at least, the Commissioner see what is in there.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the meanwhile, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health whether he is aware - as has been told by my colleague - that the pathological tests are being kept in a waiting room to which the public has access right now.

Mr Emilien: This is not the case, Mr Chairperson, Sir...

Mr Chairperson: Mr Lisette, I understand you asked a question. I will ask the Commissioner for Health whether he is responding to the question.

Mr Emilien: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, just to say that this is in fact in the past; the ancient use of this cupboard. It is no more used. The fact that it is open shows that it is no more in use, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

SPORTS COMPLEX - USE

(No. B/70) Mr P. Roussety (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports & Others whether, with regard to the use of sports complex in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state whether the Camp du Roi Stadium and the Malabar Gymnasium are being put at the disposal of Rodriguan teams for training and, if so, which teams are benefiting from such facilities.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, every citizen of this country, and even pre-primary school children know that, at Camp du Roi, we have both a running track and a playing field. The Malabar Gymnasium is also dedicated to all indoor games.

By so doing, all the Rodrigues Regional Assembly sports infrastructures are at the disposal of all Rodriguans. Being given that the two main infrastructures, that is, Malabar Gymnasium and Camp du Roi Stadium are being used for competitive purposes, there is an established programme to abide.

Mr P. Roussety: M. le président, il y avait une équipe de football qui s'entraînait jusqu'à la semaine dernière sur le stade de Camp du Roi, parce qu'il y a pas de lumière sur le terrain de Baie Lascars. Le Commissaire compte-t-il faire installer l'électricité sur le terrain de Baie Lascars comme les autres terrains de football pour ne pas pénaliser ces footballeurs, et pourra-t-il nous dire quand cela se fera?

Mr Agathe: M. le président, si on parle du terrain de Baie Lascars, c'est autre chose comparé à la question du Membre.

Mr Chairperson: You don't consider this ground as a sports complex.

Mr Agathe: Yes. He is referring to Camp du Roi and...

Mr Chairperson: So, you won't answer this question; you don't have the information.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I just want to ask the Commissioner for Sports whether, as at last week, there were any team which was having training at Camp du Roi Stadium.

Mr Agathe: As I have said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Camp du Roi Stadium is for all Rodriguans. So, it is meant for all teams of Rodrigues.

Mr Lisette: In this respect, Mr Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner for Sports whether any Rodriguan team may apply for the utilisation of the Camp du Roi Stadium for training purposes?

Mr Agathe: I would say yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, because the infrastructure is for Rodriguans. There is an established programme at Camp du Roi and Malabar Gymnasium, and they have to abide to the established programme.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with such a policy of the Commissioner for Sports, has he assessed the potential danger that may be caused because of over-utilisation of the training track?

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we must feel happy that people in Rodrigues are trained and are in good health. And maybe, as regards to the infrastructure itself, that is, the playground, we are going to look into the possibility of watering the fields so that players can train more easily.

Mr P. Roussety: Est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous dire pourquoi le club United North a été interdit de terrain la semaine dernière ?

Mr Agathe: M. le président, le club United North a été interdit, parce que le jour où il devait faire l'entraînement, le terrain était déjà *booked*.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Regarding the Malabar Gymnasium, has the Commission for Youth and Sports received any subsequent complaints after groups

which asked to use this particular sports complex found that their approval was colliding?

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, there is an established programme at the Malabar gymnasium. And I know that there are a lot of teams, regional committees that want to use the Malabar Gymnasium. This is why we are asking whether we can have another gymnasium for indoor games in Rodrigues.

Mrs Perrine- Bégué: I would like to know, Mr Chairperson, Sir, who plans the use of this complex, particularly the Malabar Gymnasium, and whether there is an established or already publicised delay which the sportspersons know already from the Commission?

Mr Agathe: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is an established programme at the Malabar Gymnasium, because we have “*écoles de sports*”, volleyball, judo, *la boxe* and all that.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner for Sports aware of the potential conflict of interests that has arisen with respect to the utilisation of the Camp du Roi Stadium, especially that some officers of his Commission are unofficially coaching some teams?

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member rightly said ‘unofficially’. I am not aware of unofficial things.

Mr Lisette: In this case, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner what is the policy of his Commission with respect to unofficial coaching of teams. Is this allowed?

Mr Chairperson: If you lay a basis as unofficial, you will get a curious answer.

Mr Lisette: I am asking the Commissioner whether he is aware that an officer is coaching a team, and what will be the stand of the Commission with respect to that.

Mr Agathe: What is the purpose of a Sports Coach, Mr Chairperson, Sir? A Sports Coach is meant to coach.

Mr Lisette: So, the Commissioner means that ...

Mr Chairperson: You have to be precise.

Mr Lisette: Do I understand from the Commissioner that an officer of his Commission can officially coach a team for a season?

Mr Chairperson: You mean other than an appointed Sports Coach? **Mr Lisette:** I did not get your point.

Mr Chairperson: Your question relates to an officer who is not an appointed Sports Coach.

Mr Lisette: No, who is an appointed Sports Coach of the Commission but who is training a team to take part into competitions, leagues, tournaments, championships with other teams of Rodrigues.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Sports Coaches have been trained maybe in Rodrigues and in Mauritius, or they have gone abroad to understand the different techniques of sports. The coach has to go and coach any team who wants him to give some advice or some coaching. According to the plan of work of the coaches, they can go and help any team who wants them to come to their club and coach their team.

Mr Lisette: I do understand, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that coaches are meant for coaching and giving a general overview of all existing teams in Rodrigues. But if you have a coach who is adhered to a specific team for a specific season; this is why I am asking the question of the potential possibility of conflict of interests, especially that these sports coaches are the ones who are taking part in the setting up of all these timetables for the utilisation of the sports complex. This is why there is possibility for conflict of interests. They are coaching a team for most of the time and, at the same

time, they are the ones who are involved in the setting up of the time tables. Does the Commissioner agree that there is conflict of interests with respect to that?

Mr Agathe: Maybe, Mr Chairperson, Sir. But what we want in sports in Rodrigues is that players achieve a certain standard of playing. In the end, we want that every team in Rodrigues gets the good techniques, in order to go to Mauritius and meet other teams. What we want is to achieve a certain level of techniques.

FISHERIES RESEARCH & TRAINING UNIT

(No. B/71) Mr P. Roussety (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the Fisheries Research and Training Unit (FRTU), he will, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) the number of trainees attached to the Fisheries Training Unit at present, together with the name of the fishing boat attached thereto;
- (b) if the fishing boat is operational and, if not, why, and
- (c) if there is any boat that has been hired by the Fisheries Research and Training Unit.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that a total of 300 fishers have been registered as trainees for the off-lagoon fishing training course at the Fisheries Research and Training Unit (FRTU). Presently, two government boats are attached to the FRTU, namely Diego Rodriguez and François Leguat.

The two fishing boats are in good running conditions; however, the marine hull insurance has not yet been renewed by the insurance company due to the non availability of some safety equipment which have been ordered but not yet received.

One boat has been hired by the FRTU to accelerate the practical training at sea, due to the fact that the project which is funded by the Decentralised Cooperation Programme is due to be completed by December 2009.

Mr P. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House when the insurance of the Diego Rodriguez has expired and why no action has been taken to renew the insurance since that date?

The Chief Commissioner: I did not say, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that no action has been taken to renew the insurance. I stated that there are safety equipment which have been ordered but have not been received, and unless you have all your safety equipment, the insurance company will not reissue the license. The problem is not with the reissuing of the license; the problem is with safety equipments available on board.

Mr Lisette: May I know from the Chief Commissioner, Mr Chairperson, Sir, when these safety equipment are expected to be received?

The Chief Commissioner: The safety equipment, Mr Chairperson, Sir, are at times not immediately available in Mauritius such as lifeboats. They have been ordered, and I don't have the specific date on which these are to be received. Of course, Diego Rodriguez is the only government boat. It is a priority that the equipment are received without further delay.

Mr Lisette: May I ask the Chief Commissioner what are the terms and conditions that are attached to the contract that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has given to the private boat?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, part (c) of the question states whether any boat has been hired. Nothing is asked about the terms of the contract. I am sorry; I don't have this information at this time.

Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis: Can we know from the Chief Commissioner from whom this boat has been hired?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the boat's name is Zambezia. The boat has been hired from a fishing company registered in Rodrigues, operating in Rodrigues, whose name is Rodrigues Seafood Company Limited.

Mr Lisette: May I ask the Chief Commissioner for how long this boat has been hired, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

The Chief Commissioner: This boat has not been hired, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for a period. It has been hired for a maximum of 300 trips, and these trips will be made as and when required, as long as there is need for the trips to be made and as long as the boat is available.

Mr Lisette: With regard to the trips, can we know, Mr Chairperson, Sir, what this is costing to the Commission?

The Chief Commissioner: The cost, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for five fishermen, together with their trainers and the staff of the boat is Rs17,500 per day for a trip of ten hours from port to port. This has been done through a tender; an appropriate tender was launched at the beginning of the training in this project financed by the DCP. Tenders were launched to all those registered boat owners in Rodrigues, including the pleasure craft boats. One tender was received from the successful awardee, Rodrigues Seafood Company, and no other tenders were received. Tenders were floated under usual practices. There is one boat owner “Why Not”, which responded by way of a letter, stating that they can’t tender for this because their boat is not adapted to this type of job.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is one thing that is quite striking; maybe, I will have to ask the information from the Chief Commissioner. It is the fact that the two boats owned by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, namely the François Leguat and the Diego Rodriguez, had some faulty equipment at the same time. May I ask the Chief Commissioner when was this state of affairs known by his Commission? The boats had faulty equipment simultaneously or one after the other?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, Members should listen when a Commissioner answers a question. At paragraph 2 of my answer, it is stated that the two fishing boats are in good running condition. You can go and take the boat if you

want - I give you permission - and have a tour at sea if you feel it. As for the second part of the question, there is no coincidence or sort of arrangements. It was in the project that there would be rental of appropriate fishing boats to go for this training, Mr Chairperson, Sir, because Diego Rodriguez is not a fishing boat; it is a research boat. It is not a specific fishing boat. We are not going to put fishermen on the Diego Rodriguez if we don't have enough lifeboats. So, in the tender, there was provision for the rental of fishing boats, Mr Chairperson, Sir, and we have followed what was in the project.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have right now two fishing boats which do not have any insurance, and one boat which has been hired and which is taking the fishermen at sea. May I ask the Chief Commissioner what will be his course of action in the event that that boat which is being hired breaks down at sea?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Diego Rodriguez can intervene. I repeat that the marine hull insurance has not been renewed, and it is a government boat. As you are aware, government vehicles, government property need not have complete insurance or insurance up to a certain level. Diego Rodriguez is not adapted for training. We can't put fishermen who have families, who are individuals on this boat to go for training. But government officers, the skippers at the FRTU can use it, because they are covered by government official responsibility. And if there is any breakdown like it has happened once, Diego Rodriguez intervenes, or in any case we can hire at short notice boats that are available at the port, pleasure craft boats; they collaborate. The community at sea is a *solidaire* one.

FREE BOOK LOAN SCHEME

(No. B/72) Mr N. Lisette (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the Free Book Scheme in Rodrigues, he would for the benefit of the House -

- (a) table a list of books which are lacking in each secondary school, respectively for each level as to date;
- (b) give reasons for the delay in providing these books to the students.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the list of books which are lacking in each secondary school and level wise.

With regard to part (b), the main factor responsible for the delay in delivery of books is the unavailability of same both on the local and national markets. Other factors which contributed to delays are -

- (i) shipment period;
- (ii) lead time between order and receipts, and
- (iii) wrong editions have been received and same have to be returned to suppliers.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as you know, many questions about the availability of books have been raised in this Assembly. I would like to ask the Commissioner where matters stand concerning the uniformisation of all the subject books in all the colleges. Where do matters stand on that issue?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Same is underway, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis: M. le président, je voudrais savoir du Commissaire de l'Education à quelle période de l'année ces livres sont commandés, parce qu'il a parlé de délai.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the first request was received in September 2008 and the second one in January/February 2009 after the publication of the SC and HSC results.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is understood that one of the factors that affect the availability of the books is based on the fact that there is a lack on the market. But, nevertheless, I think that there is resistance sometimes from the part of

the Commission for the purchase of new editions especially that this will mean additional cost for the Commission, given that there are some existing editions that some students are already using and the. May I ask the Commissioner for Education whether there is such resistance on the part of his Commission for the purchase of new edition books or where there is a lack on the market, the purchase of books from other authors?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Of course, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the question of supply of books has been a matter of several questions here in this House, and year after year we are experiencing the same problems. But I have had different meetings with Rectors of all the schools right from the beginning before we order the books. They have analysed the different difficulties that may crop up before we purchase books. Mr Chairperson, Sir, we cannot spend money on an edition, and then next time all these books will not be used again. So, we would have invested wrongly. What we expect Rectors to do is to see to it that the right orders are being made, so as to avoid such problems. Secondly, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we hope that with the standardisation of books in all secondary schools, which is under process, as I have mentioned, and with the implementation of same, most of the difficulties encountered in the current Book Loan Scheme will be solved. This is the only way we can get out of this problem.

Mr Lisette: I take an example, Mr Chairperson, Sir. At Marechal College, there is a lack of chemistry books. There is a lack of Chemistry 5th Edition by Briggs, and this college, knowing quite well that these books were not available on the market, did recommend for the purchase of books by other authors. Does not the Commissioner consider it as a matter of urgency, given that we are in the mid of the second term and some students have no books, to go along with the purchase of the books that have been recommended by the college, which is not necessarily uniform with the list given here?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, I will look into it, Mr Chairperson, Sir, and maybe I will consider the Member's suggestion.

Mrs Perrine Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I don't work in colleges but the information I got is that part of the problem is in the projection of stocks. The Commissioner just said that, in September, there were projections about the number of students who may pass and be promoted to another class. It happens that what the colleges have ordered for is not the number that finally is required in classes. This problem can easily be streamlined. But even if it is recurrent, yet the Commission for this year, again, has not judged it expedient to, for example, buy a bigger stock over and above the projections made by colleges.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally for the first order that we did in September 2008, there has not been any problem in the delivery of the books. We nearly got all the books. We had problems with the orders we had in January and February this year, and this is due because we had to wait for the SC and HSC exams results. We are investing a lot in such items, Mr Chairperson, Sir, and we are doing our utmost in order to see to it that all our students have all the necessary books. But, of course, Mr Chairperson, Sir, many things are beyond our control, and that's why I told the Rectors to be wise themselves, because if they send us the wrong orders they are going to penalise their students. In some cases, certain Rectors made wrong orders and this, of course, delayed the whole process. There is another factor which affects the supply of books. Now we are reordering the books, and the prices have increased. This also will have an impact on the normal process of books delivery.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given that it is taking time for the standardisation process to become anew in all the colleges, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner if his Commission intends to buy old books from school leavers in Rodrigues, *dans certains collèges comme Grande Montagne College* where the lack of books is not so high for certain subjects as New French Simpler

Course Seven, Distinction in English Comprehension Four. We can have these books on the market. I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner if these books cannot be bought from these school leavers, so that we can *amortir cela*.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank the Member for his good proposal. But, however, I would like to look into the cost effectiveness of such measure, as to whether it is worthwhile and then I will come in due course with the necessary arrangements.

Mrs Perrine Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have seen that sometimes the books are not available on the local market, but there are some colleges which volunteer to order from abroad. Actually, this is what is being done with the literature books. Being given that the scheme is sponsored wholly by the government, will the Commission foot the bill of those who have volunteered to order the books from abroad?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the next budget, we will be coming with a new policy as regards to the Book Loan Scheme. Maybe, we will have to give the grant to each college, so that they manage their own affairs. But, believe me, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the management of grants is not so easy. We have to put the proper mechanism, to ensure that it is done effectively. But it is one way of getting out of it.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we see that some students are poor. Those who have money can order from abroad, but those who are poor are now photocopying chapters of those books from their colleges and have to pay for that. I would like to ask the Commissioner if he can look into the matter and maybe refund somehow those who are spending all their money photocopying those chapters, pending these books are being ordered on the market .

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: This is not allowed, Mr Chairperson, Sir, because they have to bear in mind that there is a Copyright Act. However, I have

good news. I have just been informed that a consignment will reach Rodrigues by the next coming ship. I don't know what books and how many; I do know that there is a consignment coming soon in the next coming ship.

LA FERME/CITRON REGION – WATER RESOURCE

(No. B/73) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huîtres) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards to water in the region of La Ferme/Citron in Rodrigues, whether he would, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) if there is any study/report which has been carried out to determine the availability of ground water in that region, and if yes, to table same;
- (b) if there is any borehole/wells which have been drilled by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly since January 2009 in the above region; and if yes, to state their respective location/sites and costs, if any;
- (c) if there has been any authorisation/license/s granted to any individual/person/s for the setting up of any borehole/well/s for abstracting/using ground water in the same region for the above period, and if yes,
 - (i) the date/s the application/s were made;
 - (ii) the name/s of the person/s making the application/s, and
 - (iii) the conditions attached to the license/authorisation/s.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the water resource in the region of La Ferme/Citron, I wish to inform the House that -

- (a) a Hydro Geological Report was prepared in 1998 by the *Fonds d'Aide et de Coopération Française* and has confirmed the presence of an aquifer in that region. I am tabling a copy of the report.
- (b) No boreholes have been drilled by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly since January 2009 in that region.

- (c) One Mrs R. Grandcourt has made an application for the digging of a borehole on 26 January 2009 and authorisation was granted to her. The main condition attached to the authorisation is that the Commission has the right to limit the volume of water pumped per day by way of a meter, in case the borehole has a direct impact on other boreholes in the vicinity. A meter will be installed to monitor the volume of water to be pumped and a certain volume only will be allowed.

One Mr Wong So has also made an application in December 2008. The application is being processed.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with respect to the authorisation granted to R. G, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, as stipulated in the existing laws, whether the application was gazetted and published in daily newspapers.

The Chief Commissioner: Can the Member state which law, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am referring to the Ground Water Act.

The Chief Commissioner: Which sub section, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

(Interruptions)

I, therefore, cannot answer, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if he is not aware of the Act, I am going to inform you of same. Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the Ground Water Act of 1969...

Mr Chairperson: Please draw the attention of the Chief Commissioner to the section, and then you read that section.

Mr Lisette: Yes. Under section 5, it is stipulated “any person who wishes to obtain a ground water licence shall make an application on the prescribed form of the authority and cause a notice of the application to be published in the gazette and in

two daily newspapers approved by the authority”. This is the section I was referring to.

The Chief Commissioner: As the time is to law interpretation, Mr Chairperson, Sir, let me state section 26 (1) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act - “without prejudice to the provisions of chapter VI of the Constitution and notwithstanding anything to the contrary, in any other law, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly shall, in relation to Rodrigues, be responsible for the formulation and implementation of the policy set out in the Fourth Schedule”. In the Fourth Schedule, Mr Chairperson, Sir, water resources is stated at item 45.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do agree with the section pointed out by the Chief Commissioner since there is delegation of powers with respect to water. But, still, as regards to the abstraction and the utilisation of water, I do believe that the laws that regulate such utilisation still stand and still apply to Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: May I ask the Member, Mr Chairperson, Sir, why, for the borehole which was dug at Anse aux Anglais for a hotel, this procedure was not complied with?

Mr Lisette: I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, Mr Chairperson, Sir, whether the Ground Water Act applies to Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: The Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, Mr Chairperson, Sir, applies to Rodrigues, and any other law not in contrary to it applies to Rodrigues. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly raised the concept and principles of autonomy, which means that Rodriguan people elected manage things according to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and according to national law. My interpretation is that there is delegation of powers for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in the field of water, and this is an administrative decision. There are, Mr Chairperson, Sir, previous cases where boreholes have been allocated without this procedure. Any Member of the public feeling aggrieved can go, by way of judicial

review, to challenge any administrative decision taken by myself, any Commissioner or any officer of the Regional Assembly. We have interpreted it that we are authorised to give permission to use this borehole.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with respect to the authorisation, the report, as mentioned by the Chief Commissioner, was made in 1998. Is there any investigation or whatsoever, to see what will be the effect of the new boreholes on existing boreholes?

The Chief Commissioner: This question is trivial, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Look at the boreholes in Rodrigues, Mr Chairperson, Sir. What has happened at Fond La Digue? They are speaking of the management of boreholes. What has happened at Fond La Digue? Borehole at Fond La Digue was a fresh water borehole. What happened during their mandate? They pumped water without management, and today they come and tell me to do each and every study, as if like Jules Verne, I should go into the earth and see whether there is water. Listen to what was stated in the report. They are making a whole mess of this, making even public protest out of a simple, trivial matter. Mr Chairperson, Sir, section 20 of the 1998 report states –

« L'aquifère de l'effondrement ouest située dans la région de La Ferme/Manique. Cette aquifère est connectée à la coulée d'Hawaï altérée, perméable aux eaux de surface qui alimentent en partie la dépression structurale. Les forages effectués dans ce secteur ont traversé une grande épaisseur de terrain argileux et de basalte très altéré, peu propice à l'obtention de débits importants ».

They are making a whole mess as if we are giving all the water of Rodrigues to this borehole. *Peu propice à l'obtention de débits importants*. Do you how many private boreholes there are in Rodrigues? I am not aware of it myself; I am not aware because there was no monitoring, there was no law. What have they done to put specific laws for Rodrigues regarding drilling of boreholes? What have they done when they were here? They have done nothing. Now we are reforming and the

regulations will come. Don't come and say anything here; saying that people are tapping water, going on the streets and making public protest, frightening families of people, as if someone cannot have a borehole. We are Rodriguans; we can have it. Why can't a Rodriguan have a borehole at his home, if it is alright? Who is doing the monitoring here? Nobody is doing the monitoring. The monitoring will start now. The UNDP and AFD are helping us to put the framework. Where are their technicians who were supposed to monitor the aquifers? They have put nothing in place, and now they come and tell me that we should do this and that. Please wait; we will do it.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, has the Chief Commissioner measured the potential impact of the private new boreholes on the ones which were giving water to the public in that region?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, Rodrigues is a small island, and we know where there is water, we know what is the impact of things, and as long as I am Chief Commissioner I will use my judgement. If there is need to grant something to somebody who deserves it, we will grant it, Mr Chairperson, Sir, be it a borehole, be it a lease, be it anything. We will grant it to any Rodriguan who deserves it. Do what you want, go in the streets, I will grant it. Any Commissioner in the Executive Council will grant it. There is a problem of water, the person has invested in a borehole, has paid Rs300,000, Mr Chairperson, Sir, and has invested in a pump. Where is the problem with this person? Do you think that this person will pump a hundred thousand litres per day? Is it an industry, Mr Chairperson, Sir? How much drinking water this person will pump? How much water for irrigation they will pump? They need some scientific thinking, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I don't say that everybody should have a borehole, but why should people who can do it be prevented from doing it? I agree there is problem with the monitoring; we don't know how much water there is. Is it my fault? Can I prevent the person from having this, if it is with his money, Mr Chairperson, Sir? It is their business. I am not here to

jam people; I am here to facilitate things. I don't have all the information, but in my judgement we can do it. It can be done. So, where is the problem?

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner where is that borehole found? Is it on a freehold or a State land?

The Chief Commissioner: The borehole is on a State land, Mr Chairperson, Sir, leased for residential and agricultural purposes.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner mentioned his judgement. Is his judgement a scientific judgement?

The Chief Commissioner: My judgement is not only scientific, Mr Chairperson, Sir. It is rational and popular.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the land belongs to government and one of the main and most scarce resources in Rodrigues is found on that State land. The land can be claimed back if there is enough water. It is not a question of money; if everybody has money, then anybody can do a borehole? That's why I would like to ask him how he reconciles the fact that it is a private borehole and at the same time it is found on State land? Is it acceptable to the Commissioner for Water?

The Chief Commissioner: I don't have any reconciliation to make Mr Chairperson, Sir. There is no account in suspense; there is no reconciliation to be made. What I am telling this House is that I assume the responsibility of what has been granted to this person, Mr Chairperson, Sir. It is not the first borehole which exists in Rodrigues. There are many boreholes in Rodrigues which are private boreholes; some of them have been dug and are not being used, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I know a friend in the region of Citron who has a borehole and is not exploiting it. Who dug this borehole? Was it when I was Commissioner for Water Resources? It was during their mandate that this was dug, Mr Chairperson, Sir. The problem is that there is an absence of appropriate legislation for Rodrigues after the autonomy to deal with these matters. Mr Chairperson, Sir, I repeat that I assume the responsibility

of what has been done. Any application of borehole will be considered in the light of all information we have, and decisions will be made in an objective manner, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner stated that application will be received and boreholes given based on his judgement. May I ask the Chief Commissioner whether he will allow the possibility for the public to object to such application?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are in a State, a nation where there is the rule of law. Of course, people have to participate and tell what they think. There is no framework which is specifically designed for Rodrigues and which is adapted to the new set-up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The practice has been the person writes and then authorisation is given. It is not a practice introduced by me; it's a practice which was already here. The case of the Cocotiers Hotel which has a borehole in Fond Anse Aux Anglais is an example. Now we are coming forward with the legal framework for water management in Rodrigues. All these will have to be taken in it, namely what will happen if someone has a borehole, what should be paid, what is the procedure, what is the challenge, etc. Mr Chairperson, Sir, what is the challenge? Why should someone challenge somebody having a borehole at his place? Where is the challenge? There is very low flow of water in this aquifer. Is it not a question of greed, as some Members are saying, Mr Chairperson, Sir? It is a question of greed.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand that the Chief Commissioner is rejecting totally the application.

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, Mr Chairperson, Sir! The Member is taking my statement and is interpreting it in a manner which I don't accept. I am not rejecting anything. I'm just telling that laws are coming. You are in the Opposition; make proposals. You chose not to come to the Cotton Bay Water Reforms Seminar. Where were you? Why didn't you come and say you don't agree

to put boreholes? Where were you? You chose to stand away and then you come to say it is not ok. You should participate, bring suggestions. Laws are coming, regulations are coming, and I hope you will be here and not walk out.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Ground Water Act that the Chief Commissioner said is not applicable to Rodrigues...

Mr Chairperson: No, he didn't say that. What he said is that, according to him, he interprets the Regional Assembly Act to give him these powers. He never said that this Act is not applicable or he won't observe that Act. He didn't say that. Proceed, please.

Mr Lisette: If I refer to that Act, Mr Chairperson, Sir, it provides the possibility to any citizen to object whenever an application is made for ground water. I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner whether he rendered that application public to provide the possibility of the citizens of Rodrigues to comment and give their views on same.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have officers at my Commission for Water Resources and they know their job. They recommended that the authorisation be granted. The Executive Council, on my proposal, took the decision to grant this. It is a decision that I assume. If the Member feels aggrieved, this House is not a Court of Law. If you think such law - as I think the laws in Rodrigues regarding the Ministry of Finance granting of funds - has not been followed, you can go to Court and challenge the decision. You have gone through public protest. You can organise a petition, you can send it, but it will be rejected because the Executive Council has taken this decision in the light of all solid information, Mr Chairperson, Sir. At times, government decisions seem arbitrary for some people, at times it seems good; it is a question of interpretation and decision making. The Member is fully aware of it. So, we have a mandate to deal with the public affairs of Rodrigues, and we will deal with it in our manner, not in their manner.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the quantity to pump, the Chief Commissioner has said that a meter would be put. I would like to ask him whether, in the decision to allow that person to exploit and operate this borehole, there are any conditions attached as regards to the quantity. I would also like to seize this opportunity to ask the Chief Commissioner a second question as regards to the impact on the environment, because it has to do with water. Was there any specific study made or observation as regards to the quantity and quality of water that can be affected, being given that this is a private borehole in that region?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are conditions attached in the letter of award which has been given to Mrs Grandcourt. These conditions will be strictly monitored by the Commission, which will play a regulatory role in the future water setup in Rodrigues. Regarding the second part of the question, as I said, we don't have this information; it will be assessed when we will have the appropriate technicians either in the future or presently in this specific area. But I repeat that the volume of water which will be pumped from this borehole will be limited for domestic consumption and for irrigation, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis: M. le président, je voudrais savoir du Chef commissaire s'il y a eu des plaintes, des rapports concernant la quantité d'eau qui est pompée dans les autres *boreholes*, c'est-à-dire Citadelle, concernant la diminution de l'eau ?

The Chief Commissioner: Il n'y a pas eu de plaintes, M. le président. Mais il y a eu beaucoup de palabres.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner said that he is here for the common good. I would like to ask him whether his Commission has done an assessment or will do an assessment to see whether the operation of this borehole will not have any negative impact on the nearer borehole which is found at Citron. We have had complaints that the amount of water that is feeding Citadelle reservoir from Citron is diminishing. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner if he will

consider it as a possibility in crisis moment to feed the Citadelle reservoir from this borehole also. If he is here for the common good, he should feed the Citadelle reservoir from this borehole also, so that La Ferme/Citron, Baie Topaze, La Ferme inhabitants can have sufficient amount of water.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, and I will add another condition to all boreholes in Rodrigues. Mr Chairperson, Sir, at any time, government can use this borehole for any period. I will propose this to the Executive Council. Why should I go and monitor one borehole, Mr Chairperson, Sir? We will have to introduce on a continuous basis, and this is being highlighted by the report of Cheney. There is no information as such on the management of boreholes, volume of water pumped, etc. This will have to be done in a global approach for the whole of Rodrigues, including government, private and fraudulent boreholes also. As to the second part of the question, for all boreholes in Rodrigues, even if they are in a private zone, I don't think someone will refuse that we pump water, unless it is a private borehole.

At 12.25 p.m., the Assembly was suspended.

On resuming at 1.25 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.

RODRIGUES – LAW & ORDER

(No. B/74) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards to law and order in Rodrigues, he would, for the benefit of the House, seek information from the relevant institutions on the following -

- (a) the total number of offences reported per month to the Police as regards to thefts and drug related offences, respectively from January 2008 to date and table same;
- (b) the total amount of raids effected by the Police related to marijuana and other drugs for the same period and if any:

- (i) the amount of drugs seized/uprooted on a monthly basis, and
- (ii) the number of persons taken in for questioning related to each subsequent successful raids.

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

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As regards part (a), I am tabling the total number of offences reported per month to the police with respect to thefts and drug related offences for period January 2008 to date.

With regard to part (b), I am tabling the requested information as reported by the Rodrigues Police Division.

RODRIGUES - LAND LEASES

(No. B/75) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards to land leases in Rodrigues, he would for the benefit of the House -

- (a) table the names of all the persons/companies who have been granted industrial and/or commercial leases from July 2006 to date stating their respective locations and area/extent of leases granted;
- (b) give details as to the number of pledge of rights granted on these leases, and
- (c) state how many of the promoters have started their constructions and/of activities so far.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a), the information is being tabled.

With regard to part (b), I am informed that, out of the 200 industrial/commercial leases that have been granted during the said period, 30

pledges on leasehold rights have been granted for loan purposes in favour of lending institutions.

With regard to part (c), the information is being compiled and will be tabled as soon as available.

COTTON BAY HOTEL - WORKSHOP

(No. B/76) Mrs A. Perrine-Begu  (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the workshop held at Cotton Bay Hotel on 02 March on reforms in the Water Sector, he will state -

- (a) the outcome of same, and
- (b) whether any immediate actions in the water sector are contemplated, if any and, if so, state which ones and by which means.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the workshop held at Cotton Bay Hotel on 02 March 2009 on reforms in the water sector, I wish to inform the House that the objective of the workshop was to consult stakeholders on the proposed institutional changes in the water sector. I am pleased to note that all stakeholders present have actively participated in the consultative workshop, voiced out their opinion, made valuable suggestions. The deliberation has led to a consensus among those present that the reform in the water sector is essential in order to aim at efficient water use and improved water distribution.

One of the immediate actions that have been taken is to accelerate the operationalisation of the Rodrigues Water Company Ltd. by recruitment of all staff required and the provision of all logistics required. I have to deplore the non-participation and the boycott of the Minority and some trade unions.

Mrs Perrine-B gu : Mr Chairperson, Sir, as we know, proposals come from the government. It is its job, and our job here is to scrutinise and ask questions, and this is why this question has been asked so that we might have the opportunity, through questions, to put ideas eventually. Being given that matters that have been

discussed in that workshop concern three major issues, among which, of course, are capital investment, water development, can the Commissioner give us some information as to the main proposals thereto?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is surprising that I have to answer here what has been discussed there, when the Member was duly invited. I am sorry, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I can't come back on this. Proposals have been condensed in a report which has been made by the Commission. The Commissioner for Youth and Sports chose not to answer some questions because of your attitude. Commissioners can refuse to answer some questions. You were invited; you could have sent, at least, one person on this important issue. You chose to be absent, and now I choose not to answer.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: On a point of order, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I know the Chief Commissioner may refuse to answer, but there is no collision between activities of the government, to which we were invited, and the role of this Assembly.

Mr Chairperson: I understand your point and I understand the stand of the Chief Commissioner as well. The Standing Orders say that if the question is refused, there is nothing we can do about it, unless we change the rules of the Standing Orders.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a matter of explanation. We have policy lines, party lines as well, as he knows. If the stand of the Opposition is not to participate at proposal level for which we were not mandated, what is the problem? Our role here, Mr Chairperson, Sir, within the ambit of the RRA Act, is that we should ask questions and the majority to answer.

Mr Chairperson: This is your perception. But the perception of the majority is something different.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: This is not perception; this is fact.

Mr Chairperson: You seem not to understand why I used “perception”. You perceive this workshop as being something that you should not participate and the majority perceives that you should participate in order to get useful information. And now he won’t answer. Well, what can we do?

POINTE CANON & HAUTEUR ACCACIA DESALINATION PLANT

(No. B/77) Mrs A. Perrine-Bégué (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards continuous run-off and accumulation of water coming from the Pointe Canon and Hauteur Accacia desalination plants/reservoirs which are causing water logging, damages and environmental concerns to the residents living on the northern boundary towards the Cardinal Gantin Allée and the Camp du Roi Village, respectively, he will state -

- (a) the root causes of the problem;
- (b) if it constitutes a threat to the residents and Allée users, and
- (c) what immediate actions will be taken to remedy the problem.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there is no longer run-off and accumulation of water from the brackish water plants at Pointe Canon and Hauteur Accacia, as the reject water from the plants has been diverted to nearby canals and rivers.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Can I ask the Chief Commissioner when was any remedial action taken?

The Chief Commissioner: Recently, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Not in the ancient past.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, particularly as regards Pointe Canon, whether any complaints were made or any damages caused to the environment or any persons who have been hurt by the state of affairs before remedy was done?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the run-off of water was causing inconvenience at Cardinal Gantin Allée towards the hospital, and remedial action was taken immediately. We needed pipes, and these pipes were not available. But as soon as we got these pipes, the water was connected from the outlet at the brackish water plant and directed towards the river. I am not aware of any person who has been hurt; maybe some persons have stumbled, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, maybe the Chief Commissioner is not aware. There are two persons who have been hurt, who have slipped on the Cardinal Gantin Allée due to this situation which has occurred for long. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he is aware - I have asked him, and he has not subsequently answered specifically to that question - that fruit trees on these areas which have been touched by this situation are dried out now.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is a fact. I am aware that, at Camp du Roi, some “*piquant loulou*” have died because of brackish water. I am also aware that some fortunate inhabitants are taking a big advantage of this flow of water and happily growing vegetables as well as bananas. So, there is a paradox: “*piquant loulou*” dies, other plants thrive. Maybe I will have to go through a big scientific study for this.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner is making a joke of almost everything. I would like to ask him where is the water now being deviated, being given that fruit trees at Crève Coeur have died with accumulation of water *dans certains la cour dimoune*.

The Chief Commissioner: The water does not go to people’s households, Mr Chairperson, Sir. If there are fruit trees which have been affected, I will invite my colleague from the Commission for Agriculture to look into this matter. It is not salty water in any case. It may not be due to the salinity of the water; it may be due to the excess of water also.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can I know from the Chief Commissioner where is the water from Hauteur Accacia now deviated, as well as from the Pointe Canon Filter plant?

The Chief Commissioner: From the Pointe Canon Filter plant, it goes directly through a pipe to the river which is upstream the small footpath bridge that is used to go there by Allée Cardinal Gantin. And, at Hauteur Accacia, it goes down the valley towards Camp du Roi in a canal across the house of Mr Leong Lone, across the house of Mr Chiam How and across the house of other villagers whom, unfortunately, I don't know the names.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: With regard to Camp du Roi, my last question concerns the running off of this water through the canal specifically. Mr Chairperson, Sir, this water goes just down my home, and I know about the situation. We have come across the issue of pigs before, Mr Chairperson, Sir, and the problems that they cause to such sensitive areas. It is the same thing with the brackish water which flows directly in those rivers. Being given that these rivulets/rivers are supposed to be sensitive areas, where only natural flows should go by, is it not true that it is causing an environmental harm to those sensitive areas?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the salinity of the water has to be assessed. I myself have tasted it, and it is not that salty. It is unfortunate that the vicinity of the residence of the Respected Member is being subject to so many hazards, including the problem with the pigs. I do hope that she is not trying to use the forum of this House for her own benefit. And, of course, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I don't think that, at this stage, acting objectively without scientific knowledge, there is much impact of this flow of water. Because it is water pumped from underground; it is not sea water; it is brackish water. Do not forget that formerly this brackish water was being distributed as such to households. People were using this to bathe, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to drink, including cooking, and some rice was getting very brownish with this.

“FÊTE DU POISSON” - ORGANISATION

(No. B/78) Mrs A. Perrine-Begué (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the organisation of the “*fête du poisson*” at Petite Butte this year, he will state -

- (a) the overall cost for that event and table the breakdown of same;
- (b) whether any individual artist or group of artists was/were invited from Mauritius as guests to entertain in that event; and if so, to state the cost of their stay and performance;
- (c) the sum paid or to be paid to each local individual artist and group to perform for that event.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the total cost for the holding of the “*Fête du Poisson*” event this year was Rs270,152, out of which some Rs81,900 have been financed by the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority. The breakdown of costs is being tabled.

The answer to (b) is yes. I am informed that the Organising Committee of the event had decided to invite the group ‘Zot Sa’ from Mauritius to participate in the event. The cost incurred for their stay and performance is as follows -

- Performance Fees - Rs20,000
- Cost of Stay - Rs33,120

With regard to part (c), the information is being tabled.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as we all know, actually there is an economic crisis with many poverty cases around, to which our dear Commissioner for Poverty usually says she doesn’t have any answer handy. Can the Chief Commissioner explain why was it important to invite groups coming from abroad for such an event?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am surprised by the cultural remoteness and lack of openness of the ex-Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture. It has always been a sort of custom and tradition in mostly all cultural events to have people from other horizons and other artists, to have them exposed to local people and local artists, and to have a mixture. Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have not derogated from this policy of openness towards culture. We can't promote a closed culture here in Rodrigues. I am not a proponent of this.

Mrs Perrine Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a matter of explanation first, because he has said that he is surprised of my non-openness. Our policy at that time, Mr Chairperson, Sir, was only for the Festival Creole, which is an exchange; but not for all types of projects. That is why I would like to ask the Commissioner what is the aim of the "*Fête du Poisson*".

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member seems not to be aware that times have changed. And the objective of the "*Fête du Poisson*", Mr Chairperson, Sir, is to have something cultural, to make a *valorisation* and a sort of event on the opening of net fishing in Rodrigues which, as we all know, has always been a tradition, a sort of preparation and a special day in the life of the Rodriguans. So, the "*Fête du Poisson*" objective is to have a promotion of this in the culture of the Rodriguans and also to act as a sort of event in the tourism calendar of Rodrigues. Where is the wrong in organising the "*Fête du Poisson*"? I don't see the wrong, except that there is a cost for it, a budget for it.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: M. le président, j'espère qu'on n'est pas en train de payer le prix d'un balai à R 55,000, parce qu'il me semble que c'est l'opération balayer qui est en train d'être payée là. M. le président, ceci étant dit, *I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether it would not be more appropriate to give the tourists une affiche totalement rodriguaise, avec le poisson rodriguais, at this particular point in time where artists are really very competitive even on the national*

market, than to relever l'affiche with others. Is it not a message that we are less culturally powerful than others in that region?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, out of the artists who performed there, there are seven local artists and groups which participated, and only one foreign artist. Members of this House as well as members of the public have to note the lack of cultural openness of the Respected Member. As I have said, times have changed, we have a policy to organise the *Fête du Poisson* in our manner, and we do it our way in collaboration with all stakeholders. I am sorry; we cannot always please the Opposition.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: M. le président, qui ne se rappelle pas de l'opération « cadenas » sur les arts et la culture ? Qui ne se rappelle pas des interventions qui ont été faites dans le cadre des arts et de la culture ? Ces mêmes personnes parlent aujourd'hui de *openness*. *One has to look at policy sometimes before speaking.* Mr Chairperson, Sir, j'aimerais demander au Chef commissaire de nous parler du traitement des artistes. *Is it true that refreshment, water, as well as transport facilities were not given to local artists who performed on that day?*

The Chief Commissioner: I am not aware of this, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I don't even recall on that day which song was sung, and by whom, etc. I heard operation "*balayer*". I don't know what the Member is referring to. If she is referring to a famous song "*balayer*" by Mrs Nancy Desrougere, I have to tell her that I like this song, because it is a very symbolic song and it reminds me of times of change. It has been the culture in many parts of the world that, for example, political campaigns or political figures are accompanied by songs. Let us remember the song which accompanied the ANC, Nelson Mandela, songs which accompanied the great leaders of change in the world. It is always like this. People adapt culture to their changes. Look at what happened to all the artists who gathered the cause of Mr Obama. Of course, I can't answer for the artists, but I am aware that the policy of the Commission for Tourism is a policy of respect and a policy of giving value to all

artists. They are paid for; whether or not they have been given transport is not a problem, because they are paid for. When they ask for their fee, they are not given transport; they have to claim for it. Government cannot, when organise something, give transport and refreshment to one and all. It involves a lot of organisation; there are taxis, there are private owners of buses whom they can contact and rent, and include it in their cost or ask for a cost for it. They have to say it to the organisers, to the *Office du Tourisme*, to the Commission for Arts and Culture. But it is not always that we have a driver and a vehicle available to go and drive people, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: M. le président, ma question est celle-ci. Le Chef commissaire vient de parler de R 20,000 et R 33,000. Je vois ici que plus de R 100,000 a été donné à l'équipe de 'Zot Sa', incluant le billet de l'ordre de R 52,000. Un artiste local est payé R 1,000, sans transport sans rafraichissement. Alors que pour ce groupe, M. le président, qui n'est même pas pour un échange, ils ont été invités pour un aller-retour simple. Il n'y a rien en contrepartie pour les artistes locaux. C'est pour ça que je pose la question, M. le president: *where is the rationale behind this? Can we speak of cultural openness?* Ou bien on va parler de profit et de rentabilité pour certains?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, unfortunately, I am no artist, and I think that the price the artist has to be paid has to be negotiated by the artist with the relevant Commission or the relevant person. If they accept to dance or sing for Rs1,000, is it my business, Mr Chairperson, Sir? They have to go for the price. There are artists associations here in Rodrigues. There are people who are spokesmen and spokeswomen for artists. They have to speak, tell the Commissioner for Arts and Culture that they don't want to work for Rs1,000. They have to negotiate. It is not my business if they work for Rs1,000.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I note in the paper tabled by the Chief Commissioner that some individual artists have been paid Rs1,000, others have been

paid Rs3,500 and artists performing in groups are being paid the same amount of Rs3,500. I want to know from the Chief Commissioner whether there has been an agreement which was reached prior to the *Fête du Poisson*.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am tempted to say something, but I won't say it. There is an event; the Commission for Arts and Culture and the Commission for Tourism are organising something, and they need artists. The artists are very eager to participate and give their performance, and there is a price which is negotiated. This price is not imposed. If somebody wants an improvement, an increase in his price, he must refuse to participate and say "ok, I will not participate for Rs1,000, I want Rs1,200, Rs1,500". They can do it. Now, whether someone has been paid Rs1,000, another one has been paid Rs3,500, I don't know; there is a price for artists. If you want Johnny Hallyday to come here for one day, it may cost millions and millions of rupees; if you want a Mauritian guy to come, it may cost less. The value of artists is priceless, and it is not up to me to put prices. They have to negotiate about their prices. It's a false debate.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Is the Chief Commissioner aware *de la frustration des artistes*? One group coming from Mauritius is being paid Rs20,000 for performance - negotiations or not - and a group from here is being paid Rs3,500; and the Chief Commissioner says this is not his problem. *Est-ce que c'est juste qu'on ait payé R 55,000 pour qu'un groupe vienne ici, avec le transport, la nourriture et en plus on leur donne un cachet royal et qu'on ait donné aux autres seulement R 3,500 par groupe ?* Over and above this, I would like to insert just a little bracket to say that some who negotiated to perform on group side had to beg to be paid, because they were finally asked to be paid as individuals instead of groups. Sometimes we say that we are organising things, but when the Chief Commissioner says that he is not concerned, that is my question.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I repeat that anybody who feels aggrieved by the price proposed by the Commission can say that they will not

perform for this price. We are in a free market economy, and people who want to give their services can do it. In Rodrigues, as you know, we do not have much professional artists, whereas those artists who were invited from Mauritius are professionals. In this sense, they told the Commission that they had to be paid in terms of professional artists. Rodriguan artists have to voice their concern that they need to be paid such and such amount. Where is this problem? Is it my problem if the artists themselves don't know how to negotiate their price? The price is not imposed. They have to tell their price or the Commission will put a price, and if they don't agree they can negotiate. If the Commission can't do anything because of lack of budget, what can we do? I will apologise on behalf on this Member, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for having said that people coming from abroad are paid more. Obviously, they have to be paid more. Because they have a cost of displacement; they are displacing themselves with their equipment. When Rodriguan artists go to Mauritius, they are paid more; this is a fact. We don't have to judge the artists on the amount that they are receiving, especially foreign artists. Rodrigues has an open culture policy, and it will remain an open culture policy, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

PORK - IMPORTATION

(No. B/79) Mrs A. Perrine-Begué (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture and Others whether, as regards pork importation in Rodrigues, he will -

- (a) inform the House of any cargo of pork which have been controlled, put in quarantine, destroyed or shipped back to Mauritius since the African Swine Fever, and if so;
- (b) give the reason, thereof and the exact quantity concerned, and
- (c) state if there is any ban in pork importation, its by-products and/or other products from Mauritius to Rodrigues and Rodrigues to Mauritius; and if so, state which are they and since when.

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to pork importation, I am informed by the Veterinary Services of my Commission that, on 27 October 2007, a cargo of pork products was detained and destroyed by incineration.

Furthermore, on 29 November 2007, a container with all its contents was detained and shipped back to Mauritius.

With regard to part (b), Mr Chairperson, Sir, let me inform the House that the outbreak of African swine fever was officially declared on 11 October 2007 by the Division of Veterinary Services in Mauritius. Consequently, a Swine Fever Committee was set up by my Commission and took the decision to ban the importation of all live pigs and pork products in order to prevent the entry of the disease in Rodrigues, in accordance with regulations in force.

The exact quantity of products seized and destroyed on 27 October 2007 was as follows -

- 11 kg of frozen meat
- 45 kg of pork sausages
- 23 kg of bacon
- 25 kg of Chinese sausage
- 10 kg of salami
- 10 kg of ham
- 10 kg of *boucané poitrine*
- 10 kg of *saucisse chipolata*

For the cargo which was seized and shipped back to Mauritius on 29 November 2007, I am informed that it consisted of 450 kg of pork products.

With regard to part (c), Mr Chairperson, Sir, let me inform the House that there is a ban on importation of live pigs and pork products into Rodrigues since 11 October 2007.

With regard to exports, since 30 April 2009, only live pigs meant for slaughter is allowed to Mauritius.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, what I would like to know is when those cargos of imported foods, especially pork meat were imported? Those cargos of food are certified as good for consumption from Mauritius. On which ground is the local authority basing itself to destroy or to put in quarantine or even ship back those foods to Mauritius?

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to the Swine Fever Regulation 1958, any pork product coming from an island where there is swine fever should not be allowed to disembark in Rodrigues. It should be destroyed. We have been informed on 12 October that there was a state of emergency in Mauritius. There was African swine fever, and we have been advised to seize and destroy all pork products coming to Rodrigues by incineration.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Can I know who took the decision for the banning since 30 April 2007?

Mr Perrine: I will repeat what I have said, Mr Chairperson, Sir. On 12 October 2007, the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Veterinary Section, submitted a letter to my Commission informing the veterinary service in Rodrigues not to allow pork products and live pork from Mauritius to enter Rodrigues because of the existence of the African swine fever in Mauritius. So long we are not informed that the swine fever no longer exists in Mauritius, this measure will stay in force.

RODRIGUES TRADE & MARKETING COMPANY - SEEDS - SALE

(No. B/80) Mr D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture and Others whether, with

regards to the selling of seeds “*semence*” by the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company, he would, for the benefit of the House, obtain the following information -

- (a) the *modus operandi* and procedural steps involved in the production, purchase, stock and selling of seeds from other sources via the company to the local planters;
- (b) the different categories of seeds that are being sold by the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company together with their specific purchasing and selling prices, and
- (c) table the prices of the different categories of seeds as sold by the Commission for Agriculture for the last years before the coming into operation of the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company.

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to sales of seeds by the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Company Limited, I am informed that the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Co. Ltd purchases seeds that are produced by trusty sources, namely Agricultural Services, Mauritius Agricultural Marketing Board and private companies involved in importation of seeds.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the importance of seeds in agriculture cannot be overlooked. Prior to purchase, special care must be taken with regard to pests and diseases screening, especially seed borne diseases and the general phytosanitary conditions under which the seeds are produced. Hence, the importance of purchasing seeds from trusted sources that are viable and relatively free from major pests and diseases.

With regard to part (b), Mr Chairperson, Sir, the purchase and selling prices of onion, beans and potato set by the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Co. Ltd (RTMC) are as follows -

Commodity	Selling Price (Rs/Kg)
Onion (<i>Local Toupie</i>)	450
Onion (<i>Véronique</i>)	2,000
Potato (<i>Spunta</i>)	30
Bean (<i>Pulse</i>)	200
Bean (<i>Fresh</i>)	500

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (c), the information is being compiled and will be submitted in due course.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner responsible for agriculture whether, under the Food Security Fund, there is any development underway to help the planters to have seeds at a more competitive price to boost food production for maximum food security in Rodrigues; what types of projects if any, and will same be kick started in the time frame 2008/2009.

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, subsidy on seeds is a strategy to boost up production, but there are alternatives and other ways to increase production. For instance, the RTMC has introduced a new system of marketing which is called contract growing, and it boosts the scheme, that is, seeds are available to all planters, and it recoups the money back on the proceeds of the sale. This is working very well here, and even the price of let's say beans appears to be a bit high. The planters are having the seeds and will not have to pay anything. They will only pay when they sell the product in the future. I must say this system is working very well because we have had an increase in the beans area planted, which has increased from 100 *arpents*

last year to about 150 this year. If good climatic condition persists, this will allow us to double the production of beans in Rodrigues, that is, bring it to 150 tons.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is quite strange to note that the Commissioner has not been able to provide us with the information as regards to the ex-price of seeds. But, nevertheless, may I ask him whether, before the setting up of the RTMC, the prices of seeds were on the increase or on the decrease?

Mr Perrine: There has been an increase in the price of seeds in the world, not only in Rodrigues. But what is important for the seeds is that we should do the germination tests. What I have observed is that this was not being done properly. Now the selection and the sorting out of the seeds are done on a professional basis, and the germination is nearly 100%. This is why the price of beans may appear to be a bit high, but I must say after the sorting out of the seeds, nearly 20 or 20% have to be rejected.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the time being there is an accumulation of rainfall; water lock soil is hindering the crop production, namely red bean production everywhere in Rodrigues. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether his Commission has made an assessment of this negative phenomenon. Has he been made aware of such complaints and what is being made to help these planters, to compensate them for their high production prices? Because many planters have to pay labour; they have to pay Rs2,000 per kilo to buy seeds, and they don't have free mechanization. We are looking what type of planters we should take on board to mechanize their land. In Rodrigues, it is like that. This is why I am asking the Commissioner what is being done to help these Rodriguans, these local planters, to compensate them for these losses for the time being.

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the Member that, under the Food Security Fund, a sum of money has been provided for rehabilitation of drains and terraces all over Rodrigues. I must say that all the drains and terraces

have not been maintained, and that is why we are having this problem now. Under the Food Security Fund, all these drains and terraces will be upgraded.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, given the high price that the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company is selling beans seeds to the planters, has the Commissioner for Agriculture assessed the impact of such a high price of seeds on the farmers' purchasing power?

Mr Perrine: I am pleased to say that we have obtained good results. The RTMC has sold 600 kilograms of bean seeds and the planters are happy, because the germination has been 100%. I must say that, after the sale, the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company is contemplating to introduce a bonus on surplus, that is, the planters will receive a share of the profit at the end of the day.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the Commission for Agriculture is still involved in seed production. Since 2004/2005, we have been engaged in giving seeds, resistant maize to planters. Many seeds have been given to planters to help them boost up agriculture. In Rodrigues, under this government, only the tobacco seeds have been given to the planters, as you know. I would like to ask the Commissioner for Agriculture if the Commission is still involved in seed production to help these planters.

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member should be smart enough to recognise that now the agricultural sector is taking off. The RTMC is introducing a new scheme, which is called Bean Booster Scheme, whereas seeds are given at the beginning without any payment. The money will be recouped on the proceeds of sale. This is a good incentive because the RTMC has purchased 600 kilos of bean seeds, which have been sold within one day, and everybody is happy. According to my feedback, we are expecting to have a record production of beans this year. Maybe, we will organise *Fête Haricots*.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether all the planters will be taken on board and if the planter doing backyard agriculture will also be taken on board on this issue?

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, for contract growing, the planters have the obligation to sell their products to the RTMC, which has received a good order from Mauritius. We believe that, afterwards, the profit that will be accrued will be redistributed to all the planters in terms of bonus and dividends.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have a question as regards to the beans. I heard that beans are being sold at Rs2,000 per kilo to planters. I would like to know where you get those beans seeds. Are they from Rodrigues or from elsewhere?

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, from Rodrigues. We make a selection from planters, and we make the sorting out. The beans have to go through several exercises, that is, they have to be dried up and kept in cold storage for five months, treated, and then sold to planters.

INTER COLLEGES SPORTS DAY – TRAVELLING EXPENSES

(No. B/81) Mr D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner with regard to the forthcoming Inter Colleges Sports Day to be held in June 2009 at Camp du Roi Stadium, he will, for the benefit of the House -

- (a) state whether the free travel grant scheme would be applied to all students from home to Port Mathurin Stadium and vice versa and, if not, give details thereof;
- (b) inform the House of any other fee that students should pay to assist same, if any, and
- (c) inform the House on any incentives whatsoever that his Commission and/or others are envisaging to give to the different colleges to better

motivate students to attend and participate in the Inter Colleges Sports Day.

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

As regards part (a), the answer is no. The Free Travel Scheme applies only from place of residence to school and back. The students from the four REDCO Colleges will have to pay student fare except for those of Rodrigues College.

(b) The students will have to pay an entry fee of Rs10, as has been the practice in the past.

(c) So as to motivate students to participate in the Inter College Sports Day, my Commission is providing the necessary basic amenities for their training such as football playgrounds, volley ball pitches and others.

At the level of colleges, athletes are being sponsored to the tune of 1/3 of the cost. Some equipments are also renewed almost every year. Schools also benefit from sponsorship arrangements with private firms.

My Commission is also envisaging the upgrading of sports infrastructure in all secondary schools.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given that it is the only day that all the students from the different colleges meet, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he finds it fair that an unequal treatment is given to students in terms of transport. Students have to pay Rs10; students have to pay for their lunch, and we have seen in different colleges that it is as if a financial burden for them to attend same. This is causing much discouragement at the level of many colleges. This is why I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner if an incentive can be given to these students. They have to pay MSSSA Rs10. Even though this has been done in the past, we know that now the price of transport has risen. Can his Commission

look into a special derogation in terms of the Rs10 that should be paid to MSSSA be kicked off, so that this will motivate these students to attend same and participate?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this event is done once every year. What I can do in order to avoid the students from paying the Rs10 is to liaise with MSSSA.

AH1N1 DISEASE – IMPACT ON RODRIGUES

(No. B/82) Mr D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health & Others whether, with regard to the epidemic AH1NI “*grippe porcine*” that is affecting the world, he will -

- (a) state the precautionary measures that have been taken so far in Rodrigues for maximum prevention against same;
- (b) inform the House whether this epidemic is having a negative impact on the commercialisation of pigs from Rodrigues to Mauritius as well as other pig-derived products between the two islands and, if so,
- (c) what is being done to remedy same.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, on 28 April 2009, while watching the MBC news at 19.00 hours, I learned of the declaration of the Director-General of the World Health Organisation which, upon the advice of the World Health Organisation Emergency Committee, called under the rules of the International Health Regulations has declared the then so-called Swine Influenza AH1N1 as being a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 25 April 2009.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, on the following day, i.e. on 29 April 2009, I called for a joint Commission Committee meeting between the Commission for Health and Commission for Agriculture for Thursday 30 April 2009 at 10.00 hours with all stakeholders involved in monitoring and surveillance of Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, immediately “*un état des lieux*” was undertaken, and I took stock that no suspected cases have been detected so far. Since the announcement of the Swine Influenza AH1N1, now confirmed to be Influenza Type AH1N1, the following actions have been taken, although all points of entry under surveillance were reinforced in Mauritius both at airport and sea port -

- (i) Surveillance enhanced at Sir Gaëtan Duval Airport and the port of Port Mathurin.
- (ii) Health services personnel presence has been increased at passengers’ bridge of aircrafts and ships.
- (iii) Immigration officers are also involved into visual screening of passengers.
- (iv) Personnel at airport, namely Civil Aviation, Air Mauritius, Airport of Rodrigues Ltd, Police Officers, Immigration Officers, Fire Fighters and all concerned have been briefed on what exactly are being expected from them in case any passenger is seen showing the symptoms.
- (v) An isolation room at the “Nursing post” within airport compound has been identified, and doctors from La Ferme Area Health Centre will attend whenever need be.
- (vi) Working sessions were held also with officers of Mauritius Ports Authority, Mauritius Shipping Corporation, Stevedores, Associated Containers Ltd and others.
- (vii) Clearance from the Health Services for every yacht entering the port has to be sought immediately after radio contact has been established with the National Coast Guard, i.e the Public Health Officer has to go on board to ensure that those on board do not show any symptoms of influenza.

- (viii) Whenever the Mauritius Trochetia and Mauritius Pride board at Port Mathurin, there is the presence of a Medical and Health Officer/Senior Medical and Health Officer for visual screening of all passengers, together with the Health Officer, in addition to the report of the doctor on board.
- (ix) The involvement of all stakeholders such as Health personnel, ARL, Air Mauritius, Civil Aviation, Fire Fighters, MPA, Stevedores, Mauritius Shipping, Associated Containers Services Ltd, the Quarantine Services, Commission for Agriculture, Veterinary Services, Customs, Police Passport and Immigration Services Office, the Police Force, National Coast Guard and Tourism Operators have been sensitised during the meetings; sensitisation is ongoing, Mr Chairperson, Sir.
- (x) List of all passengers both by air and sea coming from countries at risk is obtained everyday for proper surveillance by health officers from their counterparts in Mauritius
- (xi) Visit of two officers of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, namely Dr. Mrs S. Aboobakar, Regional Public Health Superintendent and Mr S. Beeharee, Senior Health Inspector, to sensitise health personnel and other stakeholders about the emergency procedures plan of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life in response to an eventual outbreak of Influenza AH1N1 and to assess the existing response plan in place in Rodrigues.
- (xii) Regular interventions on MBC Radio.
- (xiii) Establishment of a protocol for actions to be taken in case the virus is suspected or detected on Rodrigues and for the treatment of infected patients by medical and health personnel

- (xiv) Two isolation rooms have been set up at Q.E.H and, if need be, the Maternity Ward of Mt. Lubin Area Health Centre will be used as isolation ward.
- (xv) The number of doses of Tami Flu, the medicine used in confirmed case of flu AH1N1 at Q.E.H has been increased.
- (xvi) A considerable number of masks has been ordered and kept at Q.E.H and Sir Gaëtan Duval Airport and the Area Health Centres. Health announcements have been recorded to be used at the airport among others.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, regular follow-up meetings have been held and are still ongoing. Regular monitoring of activities of most stakeholders is being made. In brief, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am not inviting the virus to Rodrigues, but I can say that the preparedness level is more than acceptable and that I am fully satisfied of what has been done so far.

Mr Chairperson Sir, as regards to parts (b) and (c) of the question, I will request the Respected Member to come with a substantive question addressed to the appropriate Commissioner, as my office does not deal with the commercialisation of pigs and pig derived products between Rodrigues and Mauritius. I think that I have given sufficient explanation on the issue at Question B/79.

Mr Spéville: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health whether there are other sensitisation campaigns which are being made among the public, in the schools, in the community, where and when?

Mr Emilien: I have said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that sensitisation campaign is ongoing. For the time being, only people concerned with passengers coming from abroad, i.e the tourism sector is being sensitised, but it will come to schools, to colleges at a later stage.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (c) of the question, the Commissioner said that other questions regarding this health issue have to be put to the related Commissioner. There has been a state of emergency, Mr Chairperson, Sir, around the world and alerts coming from the UN concerning all the nations. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether there have been cross-sectoral decisions or committees or Commissioner's committees on this issue. Because he himself has just mentioned in his answer that, in case of detection of the illness here in Rodrigues, there are a number of issues that he considers important, which means that these two Commissioners have to work together. That is why I would like to ask him whether, at the outburst of this state of emergency, any other particular decision was taken for cooperation between those two Commissions concerned.

Mr Emilien: So far as detection is concerned, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this concerns the Public Health Services and the whole Health Services. Insofar as other Commissions are concerned, as I have said, the first meeting was a joint committee meeting between the Commission for Agriculture and other stakeholders. I have said that all measures have been reinforced in Mauritius, because we don't have any direct flight with any other country than Mauritius nor do we have any ships except yachts coming directly to Rodrigues. All these measures have been reinforced in Mauritius. Over and above that, we have screening both at airport and on ships. What we are concerned for the time being is the screening of incoming passengers to Rodrigues, to see whether there is the presence of the symptoms of Influenza. Because the cases have not yet reached Mauritius; so, let's touch wood.

Mrs Perrine-Bégué: *M. le président, gouverner c'est prévoir comme on dit. C'est pour cela que j'insiste pour dire que there is much scientific confusion as regards to the reason why we have swine flu. We know that in Rodrigues this is a major economic activity. When I listen to the Commissioner for Health, I see that there is a very important correlation between the activity and health. That's why I would like to ask the Commissioner to insist on the correlation since, as far as*

detection is concerned, there is still confusion at higher level. There is the question of the way the animal is reared. We see that in Rodrigues there are a number of practices, but some of them really bring *la grippe par exemple*. Mr Chairperson, Sir, we see animals that are allowed to stray in the sun, *dans l'eau, dans du vent*. *C'est pour cela, M. le président, que je voudrais demander au commissaire, vu que c'est un state of emergency, s'il ne juge pas important qu'il y ait une coopération entre les deux, surtout pour voir la façon dont les animaux sont élevés.*

Mr Emilien: M. le président, la coopération existe déjà. D'ailleurs, j'ai dit dans la réponse que dès la toute première réunion on a réuni les deux Commissions, mais il ne faudrait pas créer une psychose à Rodrigues. Le Membre parle de confusion, mais il a été prouvé qu'il n'y a pas de possibilité de contracter cette maladie en consommant des dérivés de porc ou la transmission de l'animal à l'être humain. Donc, je ne vois pas de quelle confusion parle le Membre. Il a été prouvé que ce type de virus se transmet d'un animal à un autre et de l'homme à l'homme.

Mr Chairperson: Before going to the other question, I will have to make a little ruling concerning questions. At times, the Secretariat refers to my office that there are questions of mixed responsibilities. Either I order to ask the Member whether he can separate the questions or, if not, I tell Commissioners that if such questions do find their way to them, then they have the right to transfer the questions. When I say transfer questions, it means part of the questions can be transferred as well. As far as possible, I will ask all Members - I mean backbenchers - if they can ask questions to one Commissioner dealing with only his or her responsibilities. That will be clearer, so that in the end they don't have to ask the question anew.

PORT MATHURIN – PORT RADIO

(No. B/83) Mr L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards the Port of Port Mathurin, whether he could, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the relevant authorities the following information -

- (a) whether there is a Control Room and what is its time of operation;
- (b) whether Port radio is operational, its exact location, who operate it and what is its channel;
- (c) what are the times at which ship and boats can enter the Port and whether the Port radio is operating at these time, and
- (d) confirm if at times during day light time the Port radio never answers to ships and boats entering and leaving the Port.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the Port of Port Mathurin, I am informed that there is no control room at the Port.

As regards to part (b), the Port radio which is located in the Port Manager's Office is operated on an *ad hoc* basis.

I am further informed that ships enter the Port only during day time except in emergency cases. The Port radio remains available for communication as long as the office of the Mauritius Ports Authority is open.

I am further informed that there is a working relationship between the office of the Mauritius Ports Authority and the Rodrigues branch of the National Coast Guard, where information is relayed to each other when calls are coming through.

PSSA/MIE – TRAINING WORKSHOP

(No. B/84) Mr D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether his Commission received any correspondence from the Private Secondary Schools Authority (PSSA) and/or Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) inviting Business Studies Educators from Rodrigues to participate in a training workshop held on 16 April 2009 in Mauritius and, if so, will he state -

- (a) who carried out of the workshop, in which capacity and what was its purpose;

- (b) the number of Educators in Rodrigues who were eligible to attend same;
- (c) the number of Educators who were selected to attend it and the reason why others were not selected, if any;
- (d) what measures he intends to take in the future to ensure that Educators from Rodrigues are not deprived from such workshops, and
- (e) table a copy of the correspondence.

(Withdrawn)

CENTRE DE LECTURE ET D'ANIMATION CULTURELLE (CLAC)

(No. B/85)Mr D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards to facilities provided in the different *Centre de Lecture et d'Animation Culturelle (CLAC)* in Rodrigues, will he, for the benefit of the House state -

- (a) whether newspapers are regularly supplied to them, and if so, which newspapers;
- (b) after how much time are they delivered to the different 'CLAC' after their publications;
- (c) whether any 'CLAC' has been deprived from internet facilities and, if so, since when, giving the reasons thereof.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a), newspapers are regularly supplied to the different *Centre de Lecture et d'Animation Culturelle (CLAC)* in Rodrigues. The following newspapers are delivered -

- Week-End;
- Le Mauricien;
- L'Express;

- Le Défi;
- 5-Plus;
- L'Equipe, and
- Ici Rodrigues.

As regards to part (b), newspapers are delivered on a weekly basis. However, for the month of April 2009, there has been a slight disruption in the delivery of same due to the breakdown of one of the vehicles attached to my Commission.

Remedial actions have been taken, so that the newspapers could be collected on a daily basis and distributed to all *CLAC* in the shortest delay.

With regard to part (c), currently we have four *CLAC* in Rodrigues, namely Rivière Coco, Grande Montagne, Mont Plaisir and La Ferme.

The *CLAC* at Rivière Coco and that of Grande Montagne were temporarily disconnected, but necessary actions have been taken to restore the service.

CLAC Malabar has moved to Mont Plaisir Cultural and Leisure Centre on 22 February 2009. A new line has been provided to *CLAC* Mont Plaisir, and necessary arrangements are underway to use same for internet purposes.

CLAC at La Ferme has not yet been provided with internet facilities, but decision is being taken to implement same in the mini Budget July to December 2009.

Mr Chairperson: Time is over! Next item!

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

COMMISSION FOR AGRICULTURE– TCP FACILITY

The Commissioner for Agriculture (Mr A. Perrine): Mr Chairperson, Sir, as the Assembly is aware, my Commission was granted a TCP facility by the FAO to review the current situation of agriculture with specific reference to identifying the

areas, programs and projects where the services of my Commission would need technical support from the FAO.

In this context, the FAO has appointed three national consultants, namely Dr. N. Govinden, Mr K. Boodhoo and Dr. Y. Ismael to draft the document supporting the TCP request. This consultancy is being implemented under the supervision of the coordinator of the multidisciplinary team of FAO's sub regional office for Southern Africa, Departmental Head of my Commission and the technical guidance of Mr Francois Leonardi, FAO Policy Officer.

The national consultants have made two missions to Rodrigues on 12 to 14 February and 09 to 14 March 2009 to identify data sources and collect information, carry out consultation with officers of my Commission, focus group meetings with key stakeholders, including farmers.

My Commission is now organising a one-day workshop with all stakeholders on Thursday 21 May 2009 at Cotton Bay Hotel to validate the interim report of the consultants and prioritize the TCP that would be submitted to the FAO for funding.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL - NEW MATERNITY WARD

The Commissioner for Health & Ors (Mr L. Emilien): Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to make a statement in response to PQ B/64 of this morning. Mr Chairperson, Sir, earlier in my reply to PQ B/64, Members from the other side gave the impression that nothing has been done at the level of my Commission to expedite matters in respect to provision of equipments and furniture to the New Maternity Ward.

As from the approval of budget allocation in this House, a committee headed by the Acting Health Director comprising of the Gynaecologist, Nursing Administrator, Nursing Supervisor and Charge Nurse worked upon the quantity and types of equipments and furniture required to get the new maternity functional. Upon the submission of a first list of requirements in August 2008, the list was forwarded

to the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life for vetting and specifications of equipments and furniture by the Biomedical Technician, Mr Sungkur.

In December 2008, the latter conveyed his approval with the corrected specifications for some items.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as mentioned in my reply, the New Procurement Act came into force in January 2008, and the release of standard bidding documents by the Public Procurement Office was received in mid February 2008. For recall, all tenders have to be made on prescribed standard bidding documents.

Between February 2008 and 23 April of the same year (the date of submission of first draft to CPB) officers of my Commission were engaged into the preparation of tender documents, which is a new type of documents which takes time for familiarity.

It is, therefore, not true to state that my Commission has done nothing during these five months before the submission of a first draft to Central Procurement Board.

In Addition, Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the letter of 13 January 2009 from CPB, confirming the notification of award to successful and unsuccessful bidders, my office was informed that there were nine bidders and only two have been selected for notification of award. The other seven bidders are unsuccessful bidders, and they were also informed of the potential outcomes.

The steps to lodge a challenge are as follows -

- (i) Upon notification of award on 15 January 2009, an unsatisfied bidder/s lodged an application under section 40 of the Public Procurement Act 2006 within seven days. In this case, Robert Le Maire and FTM Ltd lodged their challenges on 15 January and 19 February 2009 respectively.
- (ii) The CPB provided response to the challenge on 22 January 2009.

- (iii) On 05 February of this year, Robert Le Maire informed that it is not satisfied with the response of the CPB, and the matter was processed further by the Public Procurement Office and the Independent Review Panel.
- (iv) On 17 March 2009, the Procurement Policy Office gave its ruling on the matter and the Independent review Panel on 25 March 2009.
- (v) Following the ruling of the Independent review Panel on 25 March, the CPB conveyed its approval for award of contract on 01 April 2009.

Mr Chairperson Sir, I am informed that no split of tenders has been made, and the whole set of equipments and furniture is under only one bidding but in two sets, two different lists; list A for equipment and list B for furniture. The equipments received at QEH, which are presently mounted, are for the Orthopaedics Surgery and Mont Lubin Area Health Centre. It may be possible, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that some of these furniture could be ultimately used at different sections of the health services, including the New Maternity Ward.

Concerning the number of tenders referred to in a supplementary question earlier, in fact, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is only one tender, comprising two lists; one for equipment and one for furniture.

Whenever one or more items are being challenged, upon query from my Commission, the Central Procurement Board advises not to proceed further and the Procurement Policy Office advises us to go to the Independent Review Panel for advice. And here, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will read an extract from a letter emanating from the Procurement Policy Office dated 17 March 2009 in response from a letter from the Departmental Head of my Commission dated 13 March 2009. At paragraph 4, I quote –

“In view of the long delay that has lapsed and the fact that you have received no communication from the Independent Review Panel, you may assume that

there has not been any application for review in respect of this procurement. You may, if you so wish, check with the Independent Review Panel before proceeding with the award of contract in respect of those items which have been cleared from challenge and review”.

All the referring correspondence, Mr Chairperson, Sir, is available at my Commission.

Thank you for your attention.

MOTION

RRA STANDING ORDERS & RULES - AMENDMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move the motion standing in my name, which reads as follows -

“This Assembly is of opinion that in view of the amendments brought to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and the Finance and Audit Act in the Additional Stimulus Package (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 for the introduction of Programme-Based Budgeting in Rodrigues and the Regional Assembly, it is necessary and expedient that the Standing Orders Committee be and is hereby empowered to look into the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Standing Orders and Rules presently in force, more specifically Standing Order 55A, to make recommendations for the necessary changes to be brought to the provisions relating to the procedures in connection with the Draft Estimates.”

Mr Chairperson, Sir, Members of this House will recall that, in the context of the introduction of the PBB in the accounts of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, there was the need to amend the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act to enable the shifting of the Programme-Based Budget as from calendar year 2010. As you are aware, following the conference convened by this House at the Sitting of 10 March 2009, necessary amendments have been brought to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act through the Additional Stimulus package (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. These

amendments have allowed the presentation of the transitional budget for the period 01 July 2009 to 31 December 2009, which was introduced and approved by this Assembly last April.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, following government decision in the amendments of our law, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, as from next year, will move from the traditional line item budget, which focuses on an input-based annual activity, to the Programme-Based Budget. With the adoption of the annual Programme-Based Budget, more emphasis will be laid on performance-based annual exercise that links the funds appropriated by the National Assembly to outputs and outcomes.

In this context, along with the transitional budget for period July to December 2009, I also submitted an indicative PBB for the same period. It is believed that the introduction of the Programme-Based Budget will contribute to the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector, particularly through the development of a new mindset for developing and implementing the programmes in their activities. It is also expected that performance, transparency and accountability will be enhanced in the various Commissions towards the efficient achievement of objectives within an agreed framework.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the forthcoming fiscal year, starting from 01 January 2010 to December 2010, we will make necessary recommendations as regards amendments that need to be brought to the provisions relating to the procedures for consideration of the draft estimates.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in that connection, I am tabling a copy of the proposed amendments that need to be brought to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Standing Orders and Rules which have been circulated to Members of this House.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as my colleagues are aware, with the adoption of the Programme-Based Budget from 2010, draft estimates of revenue and draft estimates of expenditure will have to be introduced in the Regional Assembly not later than 30

September of every year for the succeeding financial year, as amended in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act. Thereafter, I shall not later than 15 October of every year transmit the draft estimates approved by the Regional Assembly to the Minister of Rodrigues for consideration of Cabinet. In addition, same will have to be transmitted to the Minister for Finance and Economic Empowerment.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to thank all my colleagues for their assistance in facilitating the adoption of the Programme-Based Budget, and rely on the cooperation of the Standing Orders Committee to come up with recommendations at their earliest convenience but before September, so as to bring the required changes to the Standing Orders, with a view to enable this House to consider the forthcoming draft estimates for fiscal year 2010.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank you and the Members of this House for your attention. I commend the motion to the Assembly.

The Deputy Commissioner rose and seconded.

Motion agreed to.

Motion referred to Standing Orders Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I move that the House be adjourned to Tuesday 30 June 2009 at 10.30 am.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

COROMANDEL RESERVOIR - WATER SUPPLY

(No. B/86) Mr D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to water supply from the reservoir of Coromandel, he will, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) the number of villages getting water from this reservoir;
- (b) when each of these villages was supplied with tap water (for each separate network) from February 2009 to date;
- (c) the frequency at which tap water is actually supplied to them, and whether there has been any change in same since August 2006;
- (d) if there has been any delay in water distribution and, if yes, state the reasons thereof, and
- (e) the steps taken to remedy the situation.

Reply: With regard to the water supply for the reservoir of Coromandel, I am informed that -

- (a) Eleven villages are receiving water from Coromandel reservoir.
- (b) I am tabling the dates when each of the villages was supplied with water since February 2009.
- (c) Water is being supplied at a frequency of about 15 to 20 days.
- (d) There has been a slight delay in water distribution due to the breakdown of Anse Raffin and Nassola borehole pumps. Water has then to be equally shared among the Central and the Southern region.
- (e) A new pump has been ordered for Nassola, and two desalination plants have been installed at Songes. The water distribution is scheduled to return to its original frequency within one month.

***“ECOLES DE FOOTBALL” – TEAMS, EQUIPMENT, ACTIVITY
PROGRAMME***

(No. B/87) Mr D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth and Sports & Others whether with regard to the different '*écoles de football*' in Rodrigues, he will inform the House -

- (a) when the last football tournament took place, who won in the different categories and whether each winning team has been awarded their prizes and the nature of same, if any;
- (b) whether there is any ongoing tournament and, if so, give the names of participating teams, the prizes to be awarded and table a copy of the fixtures/activity programme for same, and
- (c) when the last time different types of equipments were distributed, giving details on the number and types of equipment delivered for each '*école de football*'.

Reply: As regards to part (a), I am referring the Respected Member to reply given to question B/37, parts (a) and (b), dated 10 March 2009, that is, two months back.

As regards to part (b), the answer is yes. A copy of the fixtures is being tabled and includes the names of the different teams involved in the League. The prizes are in kind.

As regard to part (c), the answer is February 2009. Types of equipment: sports equipment.

NASSOLA - WATER PUMPING SYSTEM

(No. B/88) Mrs F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the Water Pumping System situated at Nassola, he could inform the House -

- (a) if same is actually not functioning and, if so, since when;

- (b) the measures taken to remedy the problem, and
- (c) the different villages which are actually affected in terms of water distribution by this problem.

Reply: I am informed that the borehole pump at Nassola has broken down since 09 April 2009. Action has already been taken to purchase a new one and the Water Resources Unit is awaiting the delivery of same.

I am tabling the list of villages affected in terms of water distribution by this problem.

PUBLIC OFFICERS - PETROL ALLOWANCE

(No. B/89) Mrs F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the entitlement of public officers for the payment of petrol allowance, he could obtain the relevant information and inform the House if any adviser who has not been possessing any car for the period October 2008 to date, has been/is actually benefiting from same and, if so, give the reasons thereof.

Reply: No Adviser of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is in receipt of Petrol Allowance.

SCHOOLS - RENOVATION

(No. B/90) Mrs F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Regional Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to schools in Rodrigues, he could state if any renovation/upgrading project is actually underway in the different primary school institutions of the island and, if so, would he provide information regarding -

- (a) the scope and the cost of the project;
- (b) the item budget from which same is being done, and
- (c) whether any contract will be allocated for the project, if any.

Reply: In the quest to provide a conducive school environment to teaching, my Commission has a budget for renovation/upgrading of all government primary schools.

Currently, we are in the process of casting tiles for Stds II and III and painting of schools (interior).

Concerning the casting of tiles, I am submitting a breakdown of the cost incurred for same. As for interior paintings of schools, procurement procedures have already been initiated.

The Vote Item which is being charged for the abovementioned projects is 31-102-002 Education Infrastructure Development Project.

**BREAKDOWN OF COST INCURRED FOR THE CASTING OF
20,250 TILES & INTERIOR PAINTINGS OF SCHOOLS**

	Unit Price (Rs)	Total Price (Rs)
12150 units Tile 1ft x 1 ft	18.50	224,775
8100 units Tile 1 ft x 1 ft	18.25	147,825
324 bags (cement 50 kgs)	235	76,170
216 bags (cement 50 kgs)	235	50,760
135 bags Permofix (20 kg)	240	32,400
90 bags Permofix (20 kg)	240	21,600
Casting Per Tile	9	182,250
TOTAL		735,780

PRIMARY SCHOOLS – SUPPLY TEACHERS

(No. B/91) Mrs F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Regional Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner with regard to the recruitment of supply teachers for primary schools in Rodrigues, he could, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) the policy of the Regional Government on same;
- (b) whether any recruitment procedure is underway and, if so, submit the list of applicants, the eligibility criteria together with number of supply teachers required in the different schools.

Reply: The Rodrigues Regional Assembly proposes to create a pool of supply teachers to replace Teachers/Senior Teachers (General Purpose) for short periods in the Government Primary Schools in case of maternity leave, prolonged sick leave and pre-retirement leave.

In the Circular No. 12 of 2009 dated 07 April 2009, an advertisement was published by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the recruitment of supply teachers. 73 applications have been received by the Central Administration Office and submitted to my office.

A pre-selection exercise has been carried out based on the eligibility criteria listed below -

- (i) Retired Head Teachers, Deputy Head Teachers, Teachers/Senior Head Teachers (General Purpose) both in the Government and RCA Schools. Candidates should not have reached 65 years of age as at the closing date for the submission of applications.

- (ii) Candidates should have reached their 18th birthday but not their 40th birthday by the closing date for the submission of applications and should possess:
 - (a) Cambridge School Certificate with credit in at least five subjects including English Language, French, Mathematics obtained at not more than two sittings or
 - (b) Passes not below grade C in at least five subjects including English Language, French, Mathematics obtained at not more than two sittings at the General Certificate of Education ‘Ordinary Level’ provided at one of the two sittings, passes have been obtained either (i) in five subjects including English Language with at least Grade C in any two subjects or (ii) in six subjects including English Language in at least Grade C in any one subject or
 - (c) An equivalent qualification acceptable to the Public Service Commission.