

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
TUESDAY 28 JULY 2009

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Debate No. 7 of 28 July 2009

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SPORTS ACTIVITIES - PROMOTION

(No. B/118) Mr. N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports & Others as regards the item vote ‘Promotion of Sports Activities’ under the Recurrent Budget he would for the benefit of the House -

- (a) table the amount of money allocated and spent by each Regional Committee for their different activities for financial year 2008/2009;
- (b) state whether his Commission has already earmarked/allocated financial estimates for financial period July to December 2009 to the different Regional Committees, and if yes -
 - (i) state the criteria considered for the allocation of same;
 - (iii) table the amount allocated/earmarked for each regional Committee, and
 - (iv) state whether the Regional Committees have submitted their calendar of activities for the same period so far;
- (c) state whether as a result of the amount earmarked/allocated, there has been/would be any disruption on any activities of any Regional Committee.

The Commissioner for Youth & Sports (Mr. J. C. Agathe): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a budget of Rs4.4 m. was provided under Recurrent Item 06-101-154 for the promotion of sports activities for financial year 2008/2009. Nevertheless, as at 30th June 2009, the total amount spent under this item was Rs5, 882,000 m.

I am tabling details concerning the quantum earmarked for each discipline together with the amount spent.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (b), the answer is yes. The allocation has been made on the following criteria -

- (i) “*Priorité des priorités*”: the quantum of finance made at our disposal by the Commissioner responsible for Finance;
- (ii) level of significance of the discipline to the Rodriguan sports;
- (iii) past financial performance;
- (iv) calendar of activities;
- (v) number of “*Ecole de Sports*”/participants.

I have already tabled the tentative amount allocated for each regional committee. Some of the Regional Sport Committees have already submitted their calendar of activities.

As regards part (c), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the Commissioner for Youth and Sports, I am the first one who would like to increase budgetary allocation for the promotion of Youth and Sports. We all know the contribution and potentialities of our Rodriguan sports communities in bringing the Republic in the forefront of regional and international sports events.

I must admit that the financial constraints we are facing will definitely have an adverse impact on the activities of the regional sports committees. Unfortunately, we cannot do otherwise simply because we cannot afford for additional fund which we do not have.

In this period of difficulty, I make an appeal to all partners, particularly to the Regional Committees, to adopt an attitude of comprehension and collaboration, to do our best with whatever we have and

to look for other opportunities of fund raising and not to depart from our main objective.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner for Youth and Sports aware of the general “*malaise*” which is happening in the sports sector since he has made the different allocation to the different regional committees?

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Being aware of something as Commissioner is a question of opinion and, of course, the Commissioner is aware. But he has just explained that he has financial constraints; and asking this question again is making; first, the Commissioner repeating what he has just said and second, making the Commissioner give his opinion about whether he is aware. It is a question of opinion; it is not a question of fact, it is not a question of figures. The figures have just been given. And asking him whether he is aware of the feeling of the sports’ representatives is a question of opinion.

Mr. Chairperson: I think that the Chief Commissioner is right on one point, that if you ask the feeling on this side, this won’t comply to the Standing Orders. But of course you can rephrase your question.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since the allocation of the funds or grants to the regional committee, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Sports whether there has been any protest which has reached his Commission.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said I am the first person who will come forward to increase the budgetary allocation to all sports committees, but unfortunately I can allocate what I have received from the Chief Commissioner.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, but as regards this supplementary question?

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the question remains as to whether there has been any protest that the regional committees have made with respect to the allocations at the level of his Commission. The question remains, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: It is not a protest, but a request made to my Commission.

Mr. Chairperson: So, the answer is no?

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, prior to the presentation of the budget in this Regional Assembly, have there been any consultations made by the Commissioner with all stakeholders of the sports sector?

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

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how far has the Commissioner for Youth and Sports taken into account the different requests of the regional committees with regard to the priorities of the different disciplines?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said earlier, the budget granted to my commission is Rs2.6 m. What I can do is only to share the amount of money that I have in my Commission to the sports committees.

Mr. N. Lisette: The question remains, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Did the Commissioner take into account the priorities especially those which were sent to him in the calendar activities while he was making the allocation to the different sports disciplines?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: The answer is yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether, during the consultations that were made, any consensus was reached with regard to the sum that the Commissioner was allocated and the way that the allocation has been decided?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will repeat again for the Member. Consensus or not, I have to cut our coat according to the cloth that I have received.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Youth and Sports, with respect to the allocation made for period June to December 2009, whether the amount allocated to the regional committee also includes activities with respect to “*Ecoles de Sports*” and “*Centre de Formation*”?

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

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the small amount of grant given to the regional committees, is the Commissioner aware that there is the possibility that some disciplines will be short of fund by the end of the month of August?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have received directives from the Chief Commissioner to stick our budget according to what we have received from the Commissioner responsible for Finance. What can we do, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? We have to manage with what we have. And we must take into consideration that examinations are held during the months of September, October and November.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is clear from the answer of the Commissioner for Youth and Sports that within two months' time, there may be difficulty with respect to financial resources granted to the...

Mrs. M. T. Brault: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is hypothetical. He is guessing about what will happen.

Mr. Chairperson: There is no need for me to give a ruling. I think this is clear.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Maybe I would rephrase the question. I would like to ask the Commissioner, according to sub-section (c) of the main question, whether he confirms that there can be possibilities of disruption in any of these regional committees as far as activities are concerned.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Member enlighten us about which discipline she is referring to?

Mr. Chairperson: Member Perrine, the Commissioner wants to have a clearer view of what you want to ask. Do you mean all the disciplines or one or two disciplines?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: That is why I asked the question about consensus. Having a related sum of money and having a number of people to benefit from it, there must be some consensus, in the sense that there is an envelope and it has to be tailored according to what he says. That's why I have come forward with the other questions as to whether, during those consultations, the Commissioner informed the members of the relatively small amount of money that he had for these activities. Did the members realise that and also put forward the fact that there might be disruption in any particular discipline? It is for the Commissioner to inform the House whether this state of affairs might happen.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have only received complaints as regards the amount...

Mr. Chairperson: Requests. This is what you said earlier.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, requests regarding football only, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. But if you have a look at the figures that I have just laid on the table. For football, a sum of Rs500, 000 has been earmarked for the year 2008/2009, but Rs1, 155,000 have been spent on football, that is, a shortfall of Rs655, 000. And I have been very generous, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because I have given Rs254, 000 for this financial year. This makes a sum of Rs909, 000, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I don't know whether the Member is referring to football or any other discipline...

Mr. Chairperson: Don't guess, you can ask.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner stated that there have been requests only from the football regional committee. May I ask him, with respect to the budget allocation, whether there have been any requests made or any meeting held with the regional volleyball committee?

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

Mr. N. Lisette: May I know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the meeting that was held, what was the outcome, how was a consensus reached between his Commission and the Rodrigues Regional Volleyball Committee?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they have apprised my Commission of their financial difficulty that they will encounter in the future.

Mr. N. Lisette: Is it right, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that during a meeting the Commissioner asked the Regional Volleyball Committee to set up a Rodrigues selection to participate in the National Masters in Mauritius and that he is going to provide the necessary fund for that activity?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, this has been discussed, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. N. Lisette: In light of that question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner how he is going to cope with the promise that he made to this Regional Committee with respect to the financial allocation made by him?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have talked to the Chief Commissioner as to whether funds can be made available and, at this stage,

the answer is hypothetical; and up to now I can't say whether funds will be made available.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the answer cannot be hypothetical because if a team is to participate in Mauritius, it will have to start training as from now and onwards. So this is, I think, the duty of the Commissioner to inform the regional committee whether they are going to participate or not, given that the league is already over, so if there is the possibility for them to participate in Mauritius in the National Masters Cup, I think that it is the duty and the responsibility of the Commissioner right now to inform them, so that they can start the training, as it should be. What is the view of the Commissioner on this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether they should participate or not, training must carry on; and the request is still under consideration.

Mrs. A. Perrine- Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when we look at the figures that have been provided and at the two major regional committees, that is, athletics and football, we see that for year 2008/2009, the regional committee for athletics spent more than half of a million rupees during that particular year, that is, nearly Rs600,000. And here we see that for half of the financial year that is half of that period because we know that we are catering for only July to December, not even half of that money is being given to them, Rs150,000. How will those persons be able to mobilize funds? Does the Commissioner think that in Rodrigues, where we have a very small private sector, these persons will have the opportunity to mobilize the remaining funds? We see also for football as well, Rs1,155,000 used last year and this year only Rs254,000 have been granted to these persons. How would they be able to cater for the remaining funds? Surely these are questions that have been discussed when the money was being distributed to those regional committees. What was the response of the Commissioner to that?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have to say to this Assembly that sports is not only a matter of money. We have a lot of things related to sports; for example, we have friendship, organization, exchange, and socialization. We can do all sorts of things in sports. We do not have only the aspect of money even if money is important here.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner is saying that money is not a problem but, at the same time, we know that

regional committee for athletics or for football have to move quite frequently to Mauritius; they have a number of requirements which the former Commissioner for Youth and Sports just mentioned. And the Commissioner has said that he has agreed with the Chief Commissioner to sacrifice the sport sector for other priorities. Can the Commissioner...

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The Commissioner gets a budget for his Commission according to what is granted by the financial estimates. The Commissioner cannot account for other choices which are made at the level of the Commission for Finance. So this question, I think, should be a substantive question put to the appropriate Commissioner/Commission which is the Commission for Finance, about financial choices, why money has not been put to such item and why it has been transferred to another item. This is a question of choice.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, regarding the choice made during the budgetary allocation, may I ask the Commissioner for Youth and Sports, whether he took into consideration the fact that sports activities are mainly concentrated in Rodrigues during the second half of the year so that we can better negotiate with the Commissioner for Finance?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: M. le président, je suis un peu navré aujourd'hui que le membre vient maintenant poser toutes sortes de questions par rapport au budget. Mais la fois dernière quand il a eu l'occasion pour poser la question qu'est-ce qu'ils ont fait, M. le président ? Ils ont fait un *walk out*. C'est maintenant qu'ils viennent poser toutes sortes de questions. Mais c'est seulement Jésus qui a fait des miracles en partageant cinq pains et deux poissons pour cinq milles hommes. Seulement Jésus. ...

(Interruptions)

Malheureusement je ne peux rien faire, M. le président.

TROPHEE INTERNATIONALE DE PORT LOUIS TOURNAMENT

(No. B/119) Mr. N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports & Others as regards the *Trophée Internationale de Port Louis*, he would, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) the number of times that Rodrigues has participated in that tournament/competition;
- (b) whether Rodrigues has been invited to participate in the above competition for the year 2009 and if yes -
 - (i) the date the completion will be held;
 - (ii) whether any selection has been set up for the different age group/s and, if yes, since when and the facilities being provided to them.

The Commissioner for Youth & Sports (Mr. J. C. Agathe):
Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Trophée International de Port Louis is a football competition organised every year by the “*Association des Educateurs de Football de Port Louis*” under the aegis of the Municipality of Port Louis. Its main objective is to provide a platform of competition, friendship and exchange between young football players of the Indian Ocean, aged between 8 to 11 years. The competition has been organised annually since 1999 and Rodrigues has participated each time.

As regards part (b), the answer is yes. The Competition will be organised from 7 to 12 August 2009. I am informed that the selection has already been set up on 16th July 2009. The team comprises 10 players in the category Poussin (9 - 10 years old) and 12 players in the category Benjamin (11-12 years old) plus four Coaches.

My Commission has provided transport facilities for their training sessions at La Ferme Football Ground on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 15.30 hrs to 17.00 hrs and on Sundays from 7.30 to 9.30 hrs.

I must inform the House that as highlighted in my reply to PQ B/118 and in view of the financial constraint my Commission is facing, there is no fund available under the estimate of my Commission for the participation of Rodrigues in this competition.

However, I have approached the Chief Commissioner to explore the possibility of reallocating fund for this purpose. I am glad and thankful to the Chief Commissioner, to inform the House that a sum of Rs200, 000 has been secured from the Chief Commissioner’s Office and reallocation procedure is under way. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chief Commissioner once again and his office for this.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, once again we are faced with almost the same problem and I understand that these selections were made on the 16th of July, as spelt out in the answer of the Commissioner for Youth and Sports. May I ask him, after the setting up of the selections, whether there has been any disruption in their training since at a particular point in time there was the issue of the non-participation of the team? And for how long has the team not done training?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, we don't have funds for such competition, but nevertheless we have received funds from the Chief Commissioner's Office. But at a point in time, I must admit that there was the probability as to whether Rodrigues will participate or not.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner whether there has been any letter emanating from his Commission to the Organising Committee stating that Rodrigues will no longer participate in that competition?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I am informed of that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following the decision for the reallocation of funds from the Chief Commissioner's Office, may I ask the Commissioner for Youth and Sports whether his Commission has already contacted the Organising Committee to reinstate the participation of Rodrigues in the tournament?

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

Mr. N. Lisette: May I ask the Commissioner then, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, who are those who are going to accompany the team and what is going to be the budget that is going to be allocated for the team in terms of accommodation and any transport facilities in Mauritius?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have said that Rs200, 000 have been reallocated; the reallocation procedures are under way with the Chief Commissioner's Office for the participation of the team in the tournament in Mauritius. But I am informed also that the football players will stay in *famille d'accueil* in Mauritius. So the cost for board and lodging in Mauritius will be borne by the *famille d'accueil* there.

YOUTH PROFILE SURVEY

(No. B/120) Mr. N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports & Others as regards the Youth Profile Survey carried out by his Commission in 2007, he would state -

- (a) whether the analysis and interpretation of the data collected has been completed and if yes, to table same;
- (b) actions taken by his Commission in line with the findings of the survey and any subsequent outcome/s, if any.

The Commissioner for Youth & Sports (Mr. J. C. Agathe): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this Assembly's sitting held in November 2007, I lengthily explained the objectives of the Youth Profile Survey which was mainly to provide baseline information to enable my Commission to effectively response to the needs of our youth.

The survey was qualitative and the data has been compiled to provide indicative information concerning the youth of Rodrigues and their major preoccupation. I must inform the House that there has not been a complete report, as the survey was not meant for publication. However, the information obtained is being used internally by my Commission to address some major youth issues in Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the survey has revealed that one of the major issues for the youth of Rodrigues is access to employment opportunities. The survey has also revealed that most of the youth are expecting a white-collar job from the public service, even those who have failed at primary school. My Commission has subsequently concluded that there is a need to strengthen our effort to sensitise our youth to change their mindset and to inculcate an entrepreneurial culture among them in view of enabling them creating their own employment by adopting an entrepreneurial and business culture.

With this objective in mind, my Commission has launched a sensitization campaign from July to October 2007 during which a series of 30 talks were delivered throughout the six regions of Rodrigues. Some 980 youths were sensitized and trained on the setting up and managing of business enterprises. These talks were followed by a two-day workshop on business plan preparation organised from February to April 2008 in each of

the six local regions of Rodrigues. Two hundred and seventeen (217) youths attended.

A technical committee comprising representatives of key stakeholders institutions (the Commission for Youth and Sports, Commission for State Land, Commission for Agriculture, Commission for Cooperatives, Invest Rodrigues, SEHDA, DBM, Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Co. Ltd, Trust Fund for Vulnerable Groups and the DCP) was subsequently set up to devise an action plan and strategies to empower further and facilitate these youths in their initiative to set up their enterprises.

Subsequently the Chief Commissioner's Office has taken over the programme with the funding assistance of the Decentralised Cooperation Programme. For the time being, fifteen youths have firmly expressed their interest to set up their enterprises. Their projects have already been defined. These youths will be given further practical training under the Decentralised Cooperation Programme implemented by the Chief Commissioner's Office to enable them to start their enterprises. At the same time, they will be referred for consideration for financial assistance under the Empowerment Programme.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, In addition, my Commission, with the collaboration of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, has recently organised a training course in youth entrepreneurship for some 40 participants whereby six participants from Rodrigues have submitted their business plans for funding consideration by the CONFEJES to the tune of Rs100,000.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, other outcome of the Youth Profile Survey are as follows -

- (i) the establishment of two Youth Advice Bureau one at English Bay and the other one at Maréchal respectively to cater for the needs and aspirations of youth of regions 2 and 5 and another one to be constructed at *Pte L'herbe* for youth of region 4 and to bring a service of "*proximité*" to them;
- (ii) the recruitment of seven additional trainers to meet the increasing demand of the youth for training in the field of Information Technology, Hairdressing, Aerobic, Music and Modern/Traditional dances;

- (iii) the recruitment on sessional basis of additional youth and leisure animators to cater the needs of the youth;
- (iv) the findings of the survey have enabled my Commission to define its policies in the process of the review of the National Youth Policy and to make proposals for the consolidation and strengthening of the Rodrigues Youth Council. I am informed that this could be addressed in the National Youth Council Act which is being presently finalised at the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner state to the House the *modus operandi* of undergoing such survey? Was it done by sampling and, if yes, can the Commissioner inform the House on the different *echantillons* of the youth targeted?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't understand the purview of this question. He is asking the Commissioner how a survey has been made whereas the main question relates to a policy in terms of youth and sports. Is the Commissioner going to come here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and give details about analysis collected? Is the Commissioner first competent to brief this House on the methodology of the survey? Do we expect the Commissioner to be a statistician, an expert in survey, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? But this is not from the main question. The Member has asked about the analysis and the results. Now he wants to know about the methodology, the sampling, whether it is by this method of sampling or another method. How will he recall this; and not being a professional statistician, how will he be able to give all these details? If the Member wanted to have all these details, he should have been included it in the main question. This is highly technical, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, you want to reformulate?

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner if all the youths of Rodrigues were taken on board, if all students in all schools...

The Chief Commissioner: Another point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. On a technical aspect...

Mr. Chairperson: Chief Commissioner, there is no need because the question is not allowed.

The Chief Commissioner: On one point, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if you would allow me. I want to say a word but I can't say it. From a professional education officer in Mathematics, how can a survey, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, concern the whole population? It is impossible.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Spéville, you have a population and from this population you get a survey. How can a mathematics teacher come here and say that a survey must concern a population?

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order! Order!

The Chief Commissioner: When you consult the whole population, it is a census. *Ou bizin coné ki ou pé pose questions, techniquement. Ene survey concerne ène parti la population.*

Mr. Chairperson: I suppose you don't want me to give a ruling on this. This is clear-cut.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: May I raise another point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? I see that the Chief Commissioner is not listening to your point of order. He is constantly disrupting and even if you give a point of order he continues on being on his feet. Is it the way that we should respect order in this House?

Mr. Chairperson: Of course, I stopped the Chief Commissioner because I told him that the question was not allowed. But then he asked for leave and I allowed him. Otherwise I would have stopped him.

Mrs. A. Perrine- Bégué: On the same line that my colleague, Mr. Daniel Spéville, asked the question, the Commission for Youth and Sports was the one who ordered that survey and the Commissioner said that it was a qualitative survey which means that the Commission deliberately chose a complex type of study, which is not a qualitative survey; it is a complex one, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, again. This Member is...

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I have not finished my question. Let me finish my question. *Laisse mo pose mo question...*

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: What I want to say to the Chair is that we must call things as they are. And there is a scientific basis, a statistics for calling things. You cannot distinguish between qualitative and ...

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order! Order please! Order, from both sides!

The Chief Commissioner: I am sorry, Mr. Chairperson, Sir...

Mr. Chairperson: Let me make order from the bench. Now you may proceed.

The Chief Commissioner: I am sorry to have to take the time of the House each time. Maybe it is my training and obsession for clarity and intelligence. The Member is saying first and is going from an odd point and is putting her question, which means that the question will be oddly formulated. She is saying that qualitative statistical analysis is more complex than quantitative analysis. This is not the case. This is not statistical science, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Both analysis are...

(Interruptions)

No, I am not defending Sports; I am defending science, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

(Interruptions)

No, you can't say that qualitative is more complex than quantitative; this is false. The choice of qualitative or quantitative depends on what you want to know, what you want to intervene. You know it better than me, unless you have not learnt your lessons.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please! On both sides! At this point, I can only say that if Members will insist on questions that will fall outside the ambit of the main question, then this won't give rise to order in this Assembly. This is what I am feeling now.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please! So, we move to other questions.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: No, we are insisting on this.

Mr. Chairperson: Ok, go ahead.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Ok, let me go ahead. So, I repeat, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that it was a qualitative survey - this was his word. My question is: in order not to offence the mathematical expert, he said that this is a qualitative survey. I would like to ask the Commissioner, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, who were the researchers who conducted the sampling, the implementation and the analysis of the survey?

Mr. Chairperson: No, I'm afraid this is not allowed. If you go over question B/120, you will see that you have perhaps involuntarily skipped that part. So, what I can advice you if you insist on it is that you come with notice next time. The only fact that the Commissioner mentioned a word does not mean that you can skip notice.

Mr. N. Lisette: In his answer, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to question B/182 of 30th November 2007, the Commissioner stated, as regards the analysis, that the finalization of the report is under way and this is going to be tabled in the Assembly, once studied and after having the approval of the Executive Council.. Now we hear today in this Assembly that there is no report, which has been prepared. May I ask the Commissioner for Youth and Sport, why there has been a change in decision with respect to the setting up of the report?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said in November 2007, the analysis has been sent to the Empowerment Programme and eventually it will be sent to the Statistical Office for interpretation. Up to now, we have not received the interpretation, but we have used all the data in order to continue our work. It is used as a baseline to continue our work and we have to address the problem of youth in Rodrigues.

Mr. N. Lisette: It is regretful that after two years there is still no report, Mr. Chairperson, Sir - *2007 à 2009, M. le président*. The Commissioner, he stated in his answer that the youth of Rodrigues are targeting mainly white-collar jobs. Has he made an assessment or analysis at the level of his Commission as regards jobs regarding agriculture within the survey?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, maybe when I was referring to white-collar jobs, one aspect that has come to this conclusion because of the level of education, the type of education that they have received in Rodrigues or in Mauritius. But I am referring to the survey, which has

revealed that most of the youth are expecting white-collar jobs. They are expecting to enter the public sector to become clerks, etc.

Mr. N. Lisette: What is the percentage of youth interested in agriculture, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to the survey?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't have the information.

(Interruptions)

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, one of the objectives of the survey was to enable his Commission to depart from routine activities and effectively respond to the needs of the youth - that was stated here in 2007. May I know from the Commissioner for Youth and Sports what are the new activities that have been created as a result of the analysis of the survey, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said in my reply, we want the youth to change their mindset and to inculcate an entrepreneurial culture.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that this is a youth profile survey which means that the survey caters not only for the economic aspect but that the data is going to be analysed as the Commissioner said. But I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the social issues were taken on board in this particular survey.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Maybe, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. But the major issue is about employment opportunities.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the Commissioner doesn't know whether social issues were taken on board when we are talking about youth survey and, at the same time, he is saying that he wanted to depart from routine activities and can I ask the Commissioner what was the mission statement of that youth survey?

Mr. Chairperson: This has already been answered.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this seems to be a "*boeuf sans corne*" project! I would like to ask the Commissioner for Sports whether originally there were researchers involved for the interpretation and analysis of the data and the publishing of the report? Whether in the whole project researchers were originally involved to do these things?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the light of the uncertainties around this report and the Commissioner has confirmed that the report was not meant for publishing. Can I ask the Commissioner to give a delay as to when a copy of that report can be - if it is not published - given at least, to all the Members of this august House?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will consider the proposal.

STUDENTS (NEEDY) – TERTIARY EDUCATION - FINANCIAL GRANT

(No. B/121) Mr. L. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the financial grant of Rs3000 provided to Rodriguan students pursuing tertiary education in Mauritius, will the Commissioner state -

- (a) the total amount disbursed to beneficiaries in the 2008/2009 budget and under which item vote; and
- (b) table a copy of the names and addresses of beneficiaries as at to date and by indicating the respective dates the different installments were disbursed, and the total amount paid to each student for the same period.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the last financial year, my Commission has come up with a policy of providing financial assistance to needy Rodriguan students in Mauritius to the tune of Rs3000 per month to alleviate part of their financial difficulties.

During financial year 2008/2009, a total sum of Rs189, 000 has been spent on financial assistance under vote item 03-101-422 RRA Scholarships and students sponsoring.

I am tabling the information as regards part (b).

Mr. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has said that this financial grant is given per month. But is he aware that today some students, amongst the list of 21 that he tabled in the Assembly of 10th March, that some of them have received only once this financial grant?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I would request the Member to consult the present table.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would ask the Commissioner for Education whether this financial grant is being regularly given on a monthly basis or has it happened that there are delays in providing this installment to the beneficiaries?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It may happen, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that sometimes there are delays, but this depends on, first of all, the authorities of Mauritius when these students must submit first their attendance sheet before payment is being effected.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like the Commissioner for Education to inform the House about the selection procedures for the beneficiaries.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are seven criteria to allocate this financial assistance to students. First, the financial level of the family should not be below Rs7, 500 monthly; and as from now it will go up to Rs10, 000. Secondly, the students should not receive any full paid scholarship to be able to benefit from this scheme and also they must follow training in a recognised institution in Mauritius.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know who is responsible for the selection procedures. Whether there is a committee or something?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: This is done by my Commission, of course, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, does the Commissioner mean that as from July this year there will be a new selection exercise for the beneficiaries?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Of course, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, new entrants will have to apply. My Commission will issue communiqués asking for those who are eligible to register at my Commission; then if they meet all the criteria, they will benefit from this financial grant.

Mr. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since last time, 98 applications were received, of which 21 were approved and 31 rejected. So, there

were 44 pending cases. From the list, I see that there are 22 beneficiaries so far. I would like to know what has happened to these other applications.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: What has happened, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that if they did not meet those criteria it means that they were rejected, that's all.

Mr. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have, for example, the name of one student - I can submit it to the Commissioner later on. I know that he meets all the criteria. So, I would like to know what steps would you take to ensure that all students who are eligible could really benefit from such facilities.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can assure the House that there is fairness and equity in applying the procedures. But I will ask the Member if ever there has been a case that we haven't been able to consider for one reason or another that person has to come and see me, making another request. If he meets the criteria why should we refuse him? I have also, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to inform the House that all the students in Mauritius who fall under these criteria, don't get assistance only from my Commission, there is another scheme which is under the aegis of the Ministry of Education under the Human Resource & Knowledge Fund where our students in Mauritius get much more from what we at the RRA level we are giving. That means that they receive Rs5000 monthly and get also return air-tickets to Rodrigues and maybe some of these cases have been considered in the Human Resource & Knowledge Fund.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner whether those students who have been benefiting for the past financial year will have to reapply for the scheme.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this will continue until they finish their study. As long as they are attending their institution in Mauritius they will continue to benefit.

Mr. N. Lisette: I understand, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the criteria will now increase to a *barème* of Rs10, 000. From Rs7, 500 to Rs10, 500, does the Commissioner not think that it will be necessary for a reselection exercise? Because the *barème* is changing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, "*sorti R 7,500 vine R 10,000?*"

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It will apply, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as from the next financial year.

Mr. D. Baptiste: I would like to know whether there was a letter issued to those concerned students whose applications have not been approved?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Of course, they have been informed, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. They can't just wait indefinitely.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as a question of clarity, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Education whether students who are benefiting from the scheme of the Ministry of Education can also benefit from the scheme of the RRA?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Of course, no, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. They can't benefit from both at the same time because our objective is to help needy students in one way or another. If they are benefiting from the RRA they can't benefit from the scheme of the Ministry of Education and vice versa.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN RODRIGUES

(No. B/122) Mr. L. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports & Others as regards unemployment in Rodrigues, will he, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) the number of registered unemployed persons, gender wise, to date and by indicating how many are aged:
 - (i) below 30 years; and
 - (ii) above 30 years
- (b) what is the estimated active/working population at present;
- (c) whether any unemployment benefits are paid and, if so, the amount paid per unemployed person and the criteria used for same together with the total amount disbursed for the financial year 2007-2008;

- (d) what measures/policies are being envisaged to increase job creation in the island.

The Commissioner for Youth & Sports (Mr. J. C. Agathe):
Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to data available at the Employment Office of my Commission, the number of registered unemployed persons in Rodrigues as at 22nd July 2009 is as follows -

Below 30 Years	Above 30 years
Male - 533	Male - 854
Female - 463	Female - 1100
Total - 996	Total - 1954

As regards part (b), I am informed that according to the continuous Multipurpose Survey of the Central Statistics Office dated 2008, the active population for Rodrigues is 17,400, out of which 16,200 are under employment.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that as at date, two hundred and fifty eight heads of household are benefiting from the Unemployment Hardship Reliefs Scheme in Rodrigues. The criteria of eligibility are as follows -

Every person under the age of 60 -

- (a) who is unemployed;
- (b) who has a wife or a child;
- (c) who satisfies the prescribed conditions relating to residence, and
- (d) whose resources are insufficient to meet his requirements.

Claimant must be registered at the Employment Office. The requirement of the claimant is computed as follows -

- (i) claimant's allowance Rs324;
- (ii) spouse allowance Rs324;

- (iii) child's allowance
 - (a) for every child under age of 10 Rs130
 - (b) for every child between the age of 10 to 15 - Rs156
 - (c) for every child between the age of 15 to 20 who is receiving full- time education – Rs218 or is unable to earn a living through any physical or mental disability Rs218
- (iv) Rent allowance: 50% of rent paid by claimants up to a maximum of Rs250.

For financial year 2007-2008, the sum of Rs2, 521,644 has been paid as unemployed benefits.

As regards part (d), I must inform the House that my Commission deals only with the registration and facilitation of jobseekers to the labour market. Policies for job creation are a matter, which falls under the purview of the whole Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The creation of employment is a priority of our Regional Government. Employment in the private sector can only be created through Investment. Our Government has implemented a wide range of measures to create employment by promoting an investment friendly climate. In this context, the application for operating licences is processed within a reasonable time. The Companies Division has set up an office right in Port Mathurin to register new companies.

We are quite aware that accessibility of State land for development and private sector projects are important. In this respect, the processing of lease for genuine projects is processed very quickly. Nowadays, residential lessees can do their small businesses at home without any amendment required in their lease.

Entrepreneurs now have easier access for loan from the Development Bank of Mauritius. However, we are quite aware that our emerging entrepreneurs lack some skills in entrepreneurship. We have organised several training programmes in entrepreneurship development. Recently in May 2009 and following Chief Commissioner's Budget Speech, my Commission, with the collaboration of the Commission for Public

Infrastructure and the Chief Commissioner's Office, has organised a training programme for small contractors to empower them and upgrade their skills in tendering abilities and management of their enterprises.

In order to encourage investment, we have invested heavily in road construction and water mobilisation. We are in negotiation with the Central Government for the extension of the runway to allow bigger planes to land in Rodrigues. The feasibility study of the project now lies with the Ministry of Finance. We are relying a lot on the development of tourism to create employment.

While we have promoted a friendly climate for big investors, we are also promoting self-employment. Many individuals have benefitted from land lease to start their project in the agricultural sector and SMES. These newly emerging entrepreneurs are getting support services from the following institutions: SEHDA, IVTB, Agricultural Services and the Invest Rodrigues Office.

The Government has recently signed a loan agreement with IFAD for the promotion of Income Generating activities. The MARS Programme will also intervene in Rodrigues. We also aim to promote self-employment in Fisheries. In this respect, we are investing heavily in infrastructure and training.

The Oyster Bay Marina will soon become a reality. Contracts have already been awarded for the dredging of the channel from Port Mathurin to Oyster Bay. I am informed that tenders for the study for the construction of the marina at Oyster Bay have already been received and the award will be made shortly. Moreover, in order to facilitate access of fishing boats to the high seas, we have awarded a contract for the EIA for the dredging of passes.

Moreover, I am informed that following a request from the Chief Commissioner's Office, the Ministry of Information Technology has agreed to include Rodrigues in the SEGANET project, which I understand is still under discussion with the Indian Ocean Commission and other partners. If implemented, this project will be a major breakthrough in the development of our information technology sector as it will enable the setting up of call centres that will inevitable absorb all our qualified jobseekers.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the low level of development in Rodrigues, the Regional Government has additionally intervened as follows -

(i) the setting up of private companies wholly owned by the RRA and which, as at date has created around 102 jobs as follows -

- Rodrigues Fishing Co. Ltd. : 2
- Rodrigues Water Co. Ltd. : 3

I am informed that this Company will recruit shortly about 40 additional staff for its field operations.

- (ii) training of 243 unemployed youth under the skilling of unemployed programme;
- (iii) promoting circular migration;
- (iv) the elaboration of a long term development plan for Rodrigues. In this context, the SIDPR funded by the UNDP is being finalised..

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, unemployment exists in all countries with a lower level of development. However, we are convinced that with the measures that we are taking, the benefits will be felt in the months and years to come.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that there are different types of unemployment in Rodrigues, I would like to ask the Commissioner what is being done to classify, to detect and to cope with the different categories of unemployment namely “hidden unemployment”? There is “hidden unemployment” in Rodrigues of potential workers that are not reflected in the official statistics.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, even if they are hidden, all these are treated at the Statistics by the Employment Service, that is, the statistical review.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has enumerated employment being created by the RRA owned companies. I would like to ask the Commissioner, apart from these, whether he has observed any increase or employment intake in any other economic sectors in Rodrigues. In which particular sector there has been employment intake?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *comme vous voyez, le nombre de postes* on the Rodrigues Establishment is around 1275 that are vacant. Unfortunately, for reasons that everybody knows, up to now there has been no recruitment. I will mention one of these; there are 1200 posts of general worker on the establishment. Unfortunately, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, through different discussions, wanted to recruit general workers.

(Interruptions)

The number of vacancies is 789. We have approached the Ministry of Finance to recruit general workers, but unfortunately up to now it has not been positive. But nevertheless, the Executive Council of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has come forward companies owned by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. And these companies have been functioning by absorbing a lot of unemployed in Rodrigues. And we have to put this on record in this Assembly.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: We are aware of this, because the Commissioner lengthily spoke about it. Being the Commissioner for Employment, apart from that, in which sector has he observed any employment intake? So far the Commissioner has not answered my question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can answer for only the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. And my Commission, as I have said in my reply, deals only with the registration and facilitation of jobseekers to the labour market.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: M. le président, je suis étonnée d'entendre ce que le commissaire dit. Il vient énumérer ici toutes les mesures prises pour faciliter l'*investment*, etc, et puis il vient dire que son rôle ici, M. le président est simplement de faciliter les *jobseekers*. *Which is which?* M. le président, j'ai une question; j'aimerais demander par rapport aux différentes questions *under the unemployment situation in Rodrigues, whether the Commissioner, while going through the file, has seen that the trend of unemployment has increased or decreased in Rodrigues during the recent months and years?*

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to raise a point of order. If you look at the main question that has been put, the Member had latitude, being given the purview of the question, to put specific questions on the trend. They have asked for static data, that is, data

for one year estimated active population at present. They did not ask for the past years and the estimates for the following years. And nothing in this question is asking about the trend. So, how do you think that a normal human being like the Commissioner, or me would have these figures when you have not asked for it?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: M. le président, le Chef Commissaire oublie qu'il a été *Minority Leader* et que c'était ces types de questions qu'il nous posait dans le temps. Et quand on ne répondait pas il nous traitait d'incompétents. Aujourd'hui vous trouvez que vous ne pouvez pas répondre. C'est ce qu'il disait tous les jours, M. le président. *This is clear*, on doit avoir honte un peu de ce qu'on dit et de ce qu'on vient dire ici. M. le président. J'aimerais demander au *Commissioner*, *being given that he doesn't know much about the trend...*

Mr. Chairperson: No, you cannot say that. He never answered.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: The Chief Commissioner answered in his place.

Mr. Chairperson: No, he said that he would give answers concerning the Regional Assembly only not outside. This is what he said.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Maybe on a note of explanation, I would like to draw the attention of the Members of the House that how many times...

(Interruptions)

On a point of order, then.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir,...

Mr. Chairperson: Let me deal with Mrs. Perrine-Bégué first. Do you still want to insist?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I want to insist.

Mr. Chairperson: I have to deal with you first. What is your point? Is it a point of order or a point of explanation?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: A point of explanation. As regards the type of attitude of Commissioners concerning questions. This is not the first time that...

Mr. Chairperson: No, this is not a point of explanation. I am sorry. This can't be explanation.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: On a point of order then, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This government has focused on employment. Each time we put questions on the unemployment trend, they do not want to answer; and this is not the first time.

Mr. Chairperson: You are rising on a point of order, but I have to draw your attention to the fact that the issue of interjection and the objections that are being made is that whenever you are outside the ambit of the question of which you have given notice, there is objection on this side, and objection is well taken. So, if Members will refrain from going too far.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: But then I think that we have to change the Standing Orders so that we can put a lot of supplementary questions.

Mr. Chairperson: Come with propositions for amendments.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Yes, I think we should do that, maybe we will come with a motion so that we can put, at least, one hundred subsidiary questions for the majority to answer our questions. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are speaking about measures and policy.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir,...

Mr. Chairperson: No. This is a point of order. Let me deal with the point of order first. I agree with you, but I have to deal with the issue first. One way to look at it is to come with amendments, but the other way is to put open-handed questions. If you restrict yourself on the question what can we do? I suppose the Chief Commissioner still wants to insist on his point of order.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what I wanted to say is that, I don't want to decide for the Chair, but I just wanted to draw the attention of the House that according to Standing Order 24 which guides us on questions, a Member may make a personal explanation although there is no question, etc. but there must be leave from the Chair. I didn't see...

(Interruptions)

No, I saw the Member rising up on a point of explanation and engaging her point of explanation. At times, there is need for some

education of our Standing Orders. When you ask for a point of personal explanation, you must wait for the leave.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Employment, as regards the different figures of unemployed that he has mentioned in his answer, whether there is a forecast that has been made at the level of his Commission to know how many of these persons will be absorbed during the next six months.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I'll ask the Member to come with a substantive question...

Mr. Chairperson: Have you understood the question? The Member asked whether there is a forecast. He can ask the question, if you do not have the reply, then you say it. The question is whether there exists a forecast.

(Interruptions)

Let us move to the next question.

SC/HSC STUDENTS (PRIVATE) - TUITION

(No. B/123) Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner with regard to tuition financed by the Commission to private students who want to sit for School Certificate and Higher School Certificate, could he for the benefit of the House -

- (a) state and table the number of students and educators, subject wise and level wise;
- (b) state the budget earmarked for the project for the period July 2008 to date.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since January 2009, my Commission is providing tuition after school hours and on Saturdays to students who will sit as private candidates for the GCE 'O' Level and GCE 'A' Level Cambridge International Examinations.

As regards part (a), the information is as follows -

GCE 'O' Level

SN	Subject	No. of students	No. of Educators
1	Maths	51	2
2	English	75	2
3	French	49	2
4	Principles of Accounts	32	2
5	Sociology	20	1
6	French Literature	17	2
7	Chemistry	9	1
8	Arts and Design	3	1
9	Business Studies	22	1
1	Economics	19	1
1	Biology	1	2

GCE 'A' Level

SN	Subject	No. of students	No. of Educators
1	Maths (Main)	6	1
2	Maths (Subsidiary)	7	1
3	French (Main)	37	2
4	Accounting	11	1
5	Sociology (2 batches)	29	1
6	Arts and Design	5	1
7	General Paper	33	2
8	Business Studies	5	1

I am also tabling the number of students and educators subject-wise and level wise as requested.

As regards part (b), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that a budget of Rs300, 000 under vote item 03-102-056 - Training has been earmarked for the project for period July 2008 to June 2009.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like the Commissioner to inform the House whether the educators are being remunerated for the project and, if yes, on which basis?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, tutors are paid Rs500 per one and a half hour session and the tuitions are being delivered one and a half hour a week for each subject.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will like the Commissioner to inform the House when was the last payment effected to the educators?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I don't have the information at hand, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, but I do know that they have recently been paid.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that the tutors have not been paid since four months? There is a great discouragement on their part and they want to seize this activity.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: In fact, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have just received recently a letter complaining that some of them have not been paid for one or two months, but this is a past subject. It is already cleared now.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that as from this morning I have been in contact with educators who have not been paid, their last payment dates back to March 2009.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if such is the case, instead of going and seeing the Member they should have come and see me. Nevertheless, I will look into the matter, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner who is in charge of the management of the courses, who are coordinating the courses. And at the same time I would like to know who is the person who is having a control on the syllabus.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Can you repeat the question?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I would like to know who is the person who is coordinating the courses to make sure that the syllabus is being respected by the teachers, being given that they are being paid from public funds.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: the Officer in Charge of the Human Resource Centre, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is coordinating everything.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: In that case, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he is aware that some tutors, maybe, because they have not been paid the required fees, do not come to give courses regularly during those recent days. Is the Commissioner aware of that?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will look into the matter.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: The Commissioner says that the course is being coordinated and that a sum of Rs300, 000 is earmarked for such a laudable project. I would like to ask the Commissioner also if he could look

into the question of books. At this point in time there are some students who are not having the required books such as Sociology, GP, etc. Can the Commissioner look into the matter to make sure that those who cannot buy books on the local market do get these books? Is it worth it to pay all this money to these persons?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the saying goes: *“Nou pas capave donne l’argent di beurre et boite di beurre tout en meme temps.”* Our objective, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the coming up with such a scheme because we have identified that there were many of our students who, for a reason or another, have left school and they have failed in their previous exams, they are there idle because to pay tuitions cost a lot of money, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is what the Executive Council has decided. In the last budget, the Chief Commissioner has rightly given us the required amount of money to address such problem. We are helping them to get access to private tuitions, so we haven’t provided to give them books or other materials. It is up to them, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to at least give a part of responsibility. So, I can’t give due consideration to that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I note that there are some students who are indulged in Science subjects like Biology and Chemistry, may I ask the Commissioner for Education, how regular are practical being done for these students?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can’t give the answer right now, but I do understand that there will be practical support as well. So, I will look into the matter with the Rectors of the different colleges as to whether these facilities can be put at their disposal.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: M. le président, dans le cadre de ce projet, le commissaire de l’éducation ne pense-t-il pas que c’est essentiel pour la Commission de veiller à ce que les prêts requis mis en place par la MES soient respectés avant d’admettre un élève dans une classe ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, notre objectif c’est de donner toutes les mesures possible pour un étudiant qui n’a pas les moyens de s’offrir des leçons particulières. Comment pouvons nous être aussi drastiques d’aller voir les *compliances of the MES* ? Pour nous le fait que cet étudiant ait accès à ce type d’aide cela suffit.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner who monitor...

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order. Can the Chief Commissioner withdraw the word “*couillon*” addressed to my colleague?

Mr. Chairperson: Once and for all, I will say this for all. I will not and I cannot draw attention to people speaking on the bench for interjections for this is not allowed. And then what is happening as a normal cause of business. Then proceed.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner who monitor the presence of the tutors for each session and who take stock of attendance for payment in due time at the level of his Commission?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I think I have already replied to this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Everything is being monitored including the attendance and so on by the Officer in Charge of the HRC.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know whether there are any criteria for a student to be admitted to the course?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It is open to everybody, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

ADVISERS - TRAVEL GRANT

(No. B/124) Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (First Local Regional Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Chief Commissioner with regard to the payment of travel grant to Advisers, he would, for the benefit of the House, obtain the following information -

- (a) whether the Advisers for Communication at the Chief Commissioner's Office and to the Commission for Social

Security and Women have been benefiting from same for the period August 2006 to date, if any; and

- (b) in the affirmative, table the amount paid for both with details regarding the months for which payments have been effected; and
- (c) table copies of relevant documents produced by them in view to benefit from same, if any.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed with regard to part (a), that the Adviser on Communication Matters has been paid travel grant as from period January 2007 to April 2009, whereas the Adviser for Women and Family Affairs has benefited from same as from period January 2007 to March 2009.

As regards part (b), I am tabling the amount paid to both Advisers.

As to part (c), I consider that the documents, which have been submitted by these persons to enable payment of their travel grants, are private documents. I can assure the House that all necessary documents needed to effect this payment have been produced and have been checked by my officers.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner what are the criteria for a person to benefit from travel grant?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this information is available easily from all government manuals. I think it is in the PRB Report and this is not a purview for me to answer this.

Mr. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner whether it is normal practice for Advisers to benefit from travel grants and, at the same time, using government vehicles from and to their place of work.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the management of these vehicles is under the Departmental Head as instructed by the Commissioner responsible in each Commission. If need be we can use a government vehicle for the general benefit of public service, government service and the Regional Assembly to vehiculate any person we may deem fit and at any time we may deem fit.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I know from the Chief Commissioner why payment has not been effected for the month of April for the Communication Adviser and for the month of March 2009 for the Adviser for the Commission for Social Security?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when the rain stops people close their umbrellas! The answer is that they have sold their vehicles; they are no longer owners of vehicles and, therefore, they were no longer eligible for this payment.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether any refund has been asked from any of these two Advisers and on what basis?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't have the information at hand. This should have been asked in the main question as to whether there has been any payment. I can't answer at this stage.

ENDING INJUSTICE TOWARDS SMALL CHILDREN

(No. B/125) Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis (Second Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner with regard to the project of Ending Injustice towards Small Children, he would inform the House whether the 4 years plus children will be benefiting from any financial assistance from the Commission as from July 2009 and, if in the affirmative, could he give details about the number of children who will benefit from same.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that, as regards 4+ children, my Commission is applying the same policy as devised by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources, that is, the payment of a *per capita* grant of Rs200 to all pre primary school children during their last year of schooling.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, 775 four years plus (4+) children are benefiting from this per capita grant of Rs200 in respect of school fees since January 2009; and this financial assistance will continue up to December 2009.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that in the Budget Speech, the Commissioner for Education mentioned about the difficulties of the parents of 4+ pupils to contribute the Rs200 beyond

the grant, I would like to know from the Commissioner for Education whether he is considering to help these parents.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As I have clearly stated, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I cannot depart from that policy which is clear-cut. However, since I mentioned that I would look into the ways and means of how to help these students, I held several meetings with the Trust Fund for Social and Vulnerable Groups, asking them for financial support to top up with what my Commission has already been paying. And in fact I met the Chairman last week and the matter was raised again because I had had two correspondences with him previously and up to now there has not been any positive answer. But I met him last week and he took the matter up seriously and I can assure the House that according to the terms and conditions of the Trust Fund, this matter will be taken up favourably by the Board of the Trust Fund.

CASCADE PIGEON – REHABILITATION WORKS

(No. B/126) Mrs. M. D. L Chan Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner with regard to the desilting of dams in Rodrigues, and with particular reference to works undergoing at *Cascade Pigeon* can he state to the House -

- (a) what stage has work reached;
- (b) when are works due to be completed, and
- (c) when will the dam be fully operational.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the desilting of dam and in particular to the rehabilitation works presently ongoing at *Cascade Pigeon*, I am informed that as regards part (a), the desilting works have been completed at 100%; whereas the rehabilitation works have been completed at 85%. The main outstanding works pertain to casting of a parapet wall, completion of the spillway, the construction of an intake well and reinstatement of the site.

As regards parts (b) and (c), all works are due to be completed by mid-August 2009 and thereafter the dam will be fully operational.

Mrs. L. Chan Meunier: Can the Chief Commissioner tell us which villages will be connected to this dam after being fully operational?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the whole northern region, it is all the villages from *Baladirou* to the whole of *Port Mathurin* and if we can connect up to Oyster Bay, we will benefit from this dam - an approximate capacity of 1500-meter cube of water. Fresh water will be made available and I believe that the different raining period and during the rainy season, this dam will have a very important role to play in the water production in the northern part of Rodrigues.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether there is any delay in the work at *Cascade Pigeon*?

The Chief Commissioner: I don't have time frame in front of me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I am telling the House that the works are expected to complete by mid-August 2009. But I may guess, without having the time frame in front of me on paper that is in my office and which I think is not included in the main question, there have been delays due to flooding of the site due to heavy rain several times.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House what measures have been taken to prevent rapid siltation of the dam from the erosive land of the dam?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, gabion dikes are being placed upstream the main river feeding the dam and on the boundaries of the dam.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House if ever there has been any test which has been carried out on the dam?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, around Rs17 m. have been spent for the works with some other minor works; and I believe being given the progress of the work, part of this has been made in the last financial year.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL - NEW MATERNITY WARD

(No. B/127) Mrs. M. D. L. Chan Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health & Others with regard to furnishing of New Maternity Ward at Queen Elizabeth Hospital

(Q.E.H), could he state to the House whether the exercise has been completed and when will the bloc be fully operational.

The Commissioner for Health & Ors (Mr. A. L. Emilien): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in my reply to Question B/54 and statement of sitting of 19 May 2009, I informed the House that contracts for the supply of equipment for the New Maternity Ward has a delivery period of 120 days as from the day of the award of the contract, that is, the 01 April 2009.

31 July next is, in fact, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the end of the delivery period. However, we have had discussions with successful bidders for early delivery of items, as there has been delay due to some challenges of some potential suppliers. Following these discussions, successful bidders have been very cooperative and this is why we are now in a position to operate the New Maternity Ward. All materials and equipment ordered had been received. The last treatment was on 21 of July last.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have set up a committee at the level of my Commission to coordinate activities in relation to the opening of the New Maternity Ward. In this connection, two meetings have already been held to work out the modalities of this opening ceremony. In fact, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the World Breath Saving Week will be celebrated from 01 to 07 August 2009 around the globe. As one and everyone in this House know, Breath Saving is an important component in emergencies worldwide. Breath Saving is a life saving intervention and an efficient protection from infance. This is why, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are coinciding the opening of this Maternity Ward with the celebration of this event. I have the pleasure, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to inform this House that by next week the New Maternity Ward will be operational.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner for Health, whether all commissioning of apparatus will be done prior to the opening of the Maternity Ward?

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Yes, of course, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY DAY 2009

(No. B/128) Mrs. M. D. L. Chan Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Women's Affairs, Child Development and Family Welfares, with regard to the International Family

Day 2009, could the Commissioner inform the House about the activities carried out by her Commission for this event.

The Commissioner for Women's Affairs & Ors (Mrs. M. T. Brault): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the International Family Day 2009 was celebrated on Sunday 14 June 2009 at the Passenger Terminal. The theme retained by the United Nations for the Day of Families 2009 was "Mothers and Families Challenges in a Changing World". In Rodrigues, our Organising Committee has chosen the theme "*La Famille Rodriguaise 2009, quel regard?*"

The activities carried out by my Commission are as follows -

- On Saturday 13, a debate was held. The theme of discussion was about the responsibility of parents towards children's education in its entire dimension.
- On Sunday 14, an official ceremony was held at the Passenger Terminal from 13.00 hrs to 15.00 hrs where a show was performed by a group led by Mr. Luc Clair, a slam by the young students of the Rodrigues College, a song on family, presentation on the outcome of the debate on the theme "*La famille Rodriguaise, quel regard?*", songs and dance by the group Le Solitaire, *Histoire lor la vie famille dans Rodrigues* by Mr. Ben Gontran, and dance performed by group *Perle du Jour*. Pamphlets were also distributed to those present. The pamphlets covered different themes related to the importance of families and to roles and responsibilities of each member and the various challenges ahead.
- In the same context, a *caravane de la famille* is also being organised in different villages to sensitize people on family. The first *caravane* was organised at *Mangues* on 21 July 2009 and the others will be organized in the different villages in the upcoming months namely *Graviers*, English Bay, *Mt. Goyaves* and *Anse Quitar* and will be reproduced in other villages in the near future.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner what was the object of the sensitization of the *caravane*?

Mrs. M. T. Brault: The aim of the caravane de la famille fait suite au debat qu'on a eu le 13 juillet où les personnes présentes, les stakeholders which I will cite here. Il y avait des personnes de ressources dont un sociologue, un psychologue ; un prêtre, M. Alex Perrine. Il y avait Madame Rosanne Milazar, accompagnatrice du Regroupement Femmes Carrefour; M. Aristide Emilien, Aids Coordinator ; Mme Noella Pierre Louis, Senior Probation Officer ; M. Margeot Roussety, Social Worker et Mme Marcianna Perrine, animatrice Action Familiale.

The debate was mainly on the issues related to families. We were focusing on how families should be vehicled pour l'encadrement de l'enfant surtout au niveau de l'éducation parce qu'on a remarqué qu'il y a beaucoup d'abandon d'enfant. La famille est divisée par des problèmes socio-économiques, on a voulu faire resserrer les liens de la famille et le débat a couvert beaucoup beaucoup de thèmes. Suite à ce débat, on a trouvé que la caravane de la famille était une solution ; pour amener des solutions il fallait qu'il y ait une caravane de la famille pour sensibiliser les personnes sur l'importance de la famille. D'ailleurs, je dois féliciter ici le groupe du Rodrigues College, que je salue bien bas, qui lors de son slam a fait ressortir beaucoup de points qui affectent la famille rodriguaise et aussi beaucoup de joie que la famille connaît et suite à ça la caravane de la famille qui est composée de ce slam, et une pièce de théâtre qui présente les deux cotés, le coté positif et le coté négatif de la famille, pour sensibiliser les personnes.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué : M. le président, j'aimerais demander à Madame la Commissaire si cette caravane est inopinée ou organisée ; et est-ce que toutes ces personnes ressources qui faisaient partie du débat sont dans cette caravane et où cette caravane est arrivée actuellement ?

Mrs. M. T. Brault: I just said, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the first *caravane de la famille* was organised on 24 July at *Mangues*. Not all the persons participating in the debate would of course be able to be present at the *caravane*, but at least one out of the persons who participated in the debate would be there. For example, Mrs. Noëlla Pierre Louis was present for the launching of the *caravane*. She explained the outcome of the debate and discussed issues with the people present at the *caravane de la famille*. The next *caravane de la famille* will be held at *Graviers*; we would seek another person to be present there, the person who is of course in the region nearby, namely Mr. Aristide Emilien.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: M. le président, je voudrais savoir de la Commissaire quelle était l'audience visée pour le débat organisé le 13 juillet.

Mrs. M. T. Brault: The audience, which was targeted on that issue of the debate was stakeholders, presidents of NGOs, representatives of village committees, women's committees, trade unions, representatives of fishermen associations and other associations dealing with the families in general.

Mrs. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis: M. le président, je voudrais savoir de la Commissaire si elle est satisfaite de l'audience qui était présente au débat parce qu'il paraît qu'il n'y avait pas plus de dix personnes dans ce débat.

Mrs. M. T. Brault: Of course, I am satisfied, although on that particular date there was a demonstration at *Port Mathurin* and almost all the stakeholders were engaged there. But at least the organization that received a letter sent at least one person to be present on that day; and the debate was really fruitful, I must say.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: One more question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir: what was the cost of this international activity?

Mrs. M. T. Brault: The cost which has been incurred so far for the organisation of this event is Rs124,000 and we will need an additional sum of Rs72,000 for the *caravane de la famille*, which is available under the promotion of family welfare and women development.

WESTERN PART - WIND FARMS

(No. B/129) Mrs. M. A. Perrine-Bégué (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure, Housing, Environment & Others as regards the wind farms installed in the western part of Rodrigues will he, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) their number and their exact location;
- (b) who financed them and whether the Rodrigues Regional Assembly contributed to the project in any way;

- (c) whether any of them is situated near/on or next to an official building at Petite Butte and if so, did it undergo the same procedures as the others installed in that part;
- (d) the expected results of the different wind farms;
- (e) the name of the contractor(s) who undertook the work and the selection procedures.

The Commissioner for Public Infrastructure & Ors (Mr. F. A. Grandcourt): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, no wind farm has been implemented in the western part of Rodrigues. I would like to remind the respected Member that the western part of Rodrigues is in this direction and the eastern part of Rodrigues is in that direction. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to answer...

(Interruptions)

The member asked me a question, this is a shame, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rodriguan people not knowing geography in Rodrigues, Mr. Chairperson, Sir and confusing the eastern part of Rodrigues to the western part of Rodrigues!

However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will answer part (c) of the question. My Commission has procured one domestic wind turbine of capacity 1 kW from Marine Wave Electronic Ltd. as per the request for sealed quotation procurement method.

I wish to inform the House that my Commission, in line with the present government's vision to make Rodrigues an ecological island, has commissioned studies to assess the potential and feasibility of renewable energy options. The report from ARER, *Agence Régionale de l'Energie de la Réunion* has stipulated that wind energy represents the favoured option.

In that respect, one domestic wind turbine was purchased to be used as a pilot project. This has been installed at the Fisheries Post of Petite Butte and is actually under commissioning stage.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the fact that I put Petite Butte at part (c) means that I know where is the western part of Rodrigues.

(Interruptions)

Je n'ai pas envie de poser des questions sur Grenade et Trèfles. J'ai posé des questions sur l'ouest de Rodrigues and I know what it means. I am happy that he knows that Petite Butte is in the western part; otherwise of course he would not have answered my question. My question is about the western part, whether it is yes or no. You are not here to give lesson to people. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner what is the cost of this particular project and whether it is entirely funded by his Commission.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered that question. I said that my Commission procured one wind mill and it is around Rs350,000 one. But referring to wind farms, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, means many windmills of capacity, according to a technical point of view, exceeding one kW, this is 1kW. So it cost us, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rs250,000 approximately.

Mr. D. Speville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner if private stakeholders are engaged in energy Aeolian

Mr. Chairperson: No, the question is not allowed. You wrongly started the question. You started your question on a hypothetical basis.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I haven't heard about the contractors and the selection procedure for the buying of this wind turbine at Petite Butte.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered this question in the first paragraph of my reply. Members have to listen well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Can the Commissioner kindly repeat what he has said about the cost...

Mr. Chairperson: I have not understood your question.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: I was asking about the cost and he said that he has already given the answer. We have not heard about the cost of the wind turbine, as there were noises. I will ask the Commissioner to kindly give us the cost of this wind turbine.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already given the answer.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Now that I am reflecting it seems to me that the Commissioner said that it was around Rs250,000. With a capacity of one kW, does the Commissioner consider this project to be viable? Has there been any...

(Interruptions)

He says that he is commissioning which means that he has arrived to a result. That's why I am asking him what is the conclusion of this, since he is lining up the programme.

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

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Being given that this is a pilot project, can I ask the Commissioner what's the way forward as the conclusion is a positive one?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this project will be dedicated to those who are interested. And I would like to add, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, two experts from the UNDP have recently been to Rodrigues to further assess the renewable energy options and work out a other small scale renewable energy options project. The report from the experts is expected shortly and after which we are going to have meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister for the way forward.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Can the Commissioner also say what were the selection procedures?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the wind turbine has been installed by the contractor himself.

FISHERS - MAURITIUS - STUDY TOUR

(No. B/130) Mrs. M. A. Perrine-Bégué (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards the study tour organized by his Commission for a delegation of fishers in Mauritius, will he for the benefit of the House -

- (a) state the outcome of same together with the names of institutions/counterparts they met with there and the nature of the discussion;

- (b) table names of the members of the delegation and their occupations;
- (c) state the cost of the project and table a breakdown of same?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the study tour, which has been making a lot of noise, I am surprised, for both fishers and potential investors in Mauritius, I wish to inform the House of the outcome of the different visit.

- (i) Meeting at Fisheries Training and Extension Centre (FITEC) where the functioning of the centre was exposed, followed by talks on FAD's fishing. There was also an interactive session with Mauritian fishers presently involved in FAD's fishing.
- (ii) Representatives from the Fishermen Investment Trust and Fishermen Welfare Fund also gave an overview of the role of these two institutions.
- (iii) Visits were paid to a boat yard at Grande Rivière to assess the different type of outer-lagoon fishing boats that are available at this business.
- (iv) The Albion Fisheries Research Centre was also visited whereby the vessel monitoring systems were demonstrated and explained to the fishers/investors.
- (v) The group also carried out sea trials in an outer-lagoon fishing boat.
- (vi) A fish-processing factory was also visited. The fishers were able to assess the potentials of deriving additional revenue from the processing of fish.
- (vii) Finally, the group visited the Blue Bay Marine Park and a fish farm.

All the fishers/investors have expressed their satisfaction as regards the lessons/experiences learnt from the tour and have expressed their wish to invest further in purchasing an outer lagoon vessel and developing their fishing businesses.

As regards parts (b) and (c), I am tabling the names and occupations of all members of the delegation as well as a breakdown of the cost involved.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that he said that there have been discussions between the Mauritian fishers and the Rodriguans and as well as FADs, can I ask the Chief Commissioner in which way is the FAD being differently being disposed of in Mauritius for the Rodriguans to reap benefits out of this particular experience in Mauritius?

The Chief Commissioner: In Mauritius, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Mauritian fishers are keener to go and fish around FADs and they have different techniques of fishing around FADs that we have here in Rodrigues. From my presence there, I have learnt that Rodriguan fishers most of the time only stroll around the FADs whereas in Mauritius they also do drop line fishing around the FAD which is very productive.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, whether there was a public invitation to cater for the interest of fishers to participate in that particular mission.

The Chief Commissioner: The answer is yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this was made through the radio.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: In that case, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there was a short list. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner how was that made and how many applications did he receive?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am sorry I don't have the information at hand now. This should have been put in the main question if she wanted to know the number of applicants and the number, which was chosen. In any case the criteria used was the seriousness of each applicant and whether or not they have been trained and whether or not they have a project or are involved in the fishing business in Rodrigues. And I believe that next year, this study tour will be replicated because it has been very instructive and those who have participated in it are unanimous to say that it is going to help them in their businesses and fishing activities.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when you look at the list that the Chief Commissioner has given to us, you will see that there is at least thirty fishers who have gone, but we also see that consideration has

been given to potential investors. Can the Commissioner inform the House in which way do these three persons who top the list that he has given to us are potential investors? Have they submitted any project, which has been proved viable?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware whether they have any project. I am aware that Mr. André Wouex is a fisherman who wants to reconvert, he is not only a potential investor. Mr. Steeven Roussety is working in a seafood business here in Rodrigues and Mr. Frankilen who I also meet sometimes at sea is a fisherman who wants to put his money in fishing business. When the applicants applied, they had to say whether they were applying as a fisherman or as an investor. We didn't have many persons who applied as investors and from those who applied we chose those we deemed fit to participate in this mission.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, has there been any debriefing at the local level or in Mauritius after this particular mission? And what is the way forward with this group?

The Chief Commissioner: Debriefing will be done shortly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because we've all had time constraints and I have not been able to debrief. Debriefing will be done either this week or by next week.

At 12.30 hrs, the Chairperson suspended the Assembly for 45 minutes.

The Assembly resumed at 13.15 hrs with the Chairperson in Chair.

RETAILER OF MANUFACTURED TOBACCO - LICENCE-

(No. B/131) Mrs. M. A. Perrine-Bégué (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards the licence of Retailer of Manufactured Tobacco granted to M.P.B.G* at *Pointe L'herbe* on the 13th July 2007, he will state -

- (a) why same was cancelled on the 30th June 2008;
- (b) whether the licence was granted along with a lease to allow her to operate effectively at the address mentioned, thereon;

- (c) whether there is any difference in the address she specified in her application and the one mentioned on the licence given to her; if not why;
- (d) whether there were any procedures taken by any department under his Commission regarding her application for commercial land lease at *Accacia*;
- (e) when will M.P.B.G's* licence be renewed, and
- (f) whether her licence only or any similar licence has been cancelled by his Commission since August 2006 and if so, to state the number and table their names along with the reasons for cancellation..

*Mrs. Marie Priscille Beatrice Gontran

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as per records available at my office, M.P.B.G. was granted a licence for "Retailer of Manufactured Tobacco/Non-Alcoholic Beverages/Pastries/Confectionery & Cakes" at *Pointe L'Herbe* on 01 December 2006 and not on 13 June 2007. Her license was not renewed since 30 June 2008 given that the latter was not operating at *Pointe L'Herbe* as per the licence, but instead illegally operating at *Accacia*.

As regards part (b), the answer is no.

As regards part (c), the answer is no. The address mentioned in the licence is same as the address specified in the application made by the applicant, that is, *Pointe L'Herbe*.

As regards part (d), the answer is no.

With regard to part (e), the issue of renewing the licence of the person does not arise as the latter did not operate at the address mentioned in her licence. Further, I am informed that the Licensing Unit under my office had received a new application from the applicant on 03 June 2008 for a licence to operate in *Accacia*, however, after site visit was effected by the Fire & Health Services it has been noted that the person neither has a lease nor an authorization for the land nor is there any building on the site for further processing of her application.

As regards part (f), I am informed that 49 licences have been cancelled from August 2006 to date. The names of the 49 licensees and the reasons for cancellation are being tabled.

It should be noted that the licence of Mrs M.P.B.G was not cancelled, but not renewed. During the same period, one other licence has not been renewed, namely for night club keeper at *Baie Aux Huitres* following complaints and report from the Environment Unit as regards noise level.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Chief Commissioner aware that as soon as she received her licence in 2007, the licensee went to the...

Mr. Chairperson: In 2006.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Ok, in 2006. As soon as that person received her licence she went to the related authorities to say that the application she made was for *Accacia*, that she had a previous application for commercial lease far back when she arrived in Rodrigues and, in this particular case, she made an application for retailer of tobacco licence at *Accacia* and that there was an error in the address that was put on the licence. The authorities told her that on the renewal of her licence the necessary corrections would be made. Is the Commissioner aware or has he been made aware of it?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of this fact. In any case she should have written officially to the Commission. What I am aware of is that the first licence was granted on 01 December 2006 for her to operate on the site of her residential address at *Pointe L'Herbe*. She does not have any site at *Accacia*, she has no site lease there. There is no physical element in that application. We cannot grant a licence where there is no premise confirmed.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, then if she hasn't made any application for *Accacia*, how come officers from his office and those of the Fire Services visited that village subsequently?

The Chief Commissioner: The Member should listen well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I am informed that the Licensing Unit under my office has received a new application from the applicant on 03 June 2008 for a licence to operate in *Accacia*. And in *Accacia* there is nothing physical for granting a licence. There is no building, there is no land lease, and there is

no property, which is rented for business. Where does she want to set up her business? Is it on a tree? Is it by the side of the road? Is it in the sky?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, but in that sense I would like to ask the Commissioner whether she has a site or a commercial lease at *Pointe L'Herbe*.

The Chief Commissioner: I am not aware, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. What I am aware is that the initial licence, that is, Retailer of Manufactured Tobacco, Non-alcoholic Beverages, Pastries, was granted to her on 01 December 2006 to operate on the site of her residential lease at *Pointe L'Herbe*.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether his officers have made a site visit to see where that person lives. She lives at the top of the hill. And that person will be operating a business up there? Is it feasible?

(Interruptions)

She has not asked for that. She asked for *Accacia*. The Chief Commissioner is saying, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the fact that she does not have a site at *Accacia*, any commercial lease on her name, that's why, her application was cancelled. That's why I am asking....

Mr. Chairperson: No, that is not related.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Yes, he said that she was operating illegally, she doesn't have a site; she doesn't have a lease at *Accacia*. I am asking, being given that the same licence has been given to her to operate in another region, does she have a commercial lease and a site there?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not supposed to know where each and every retailer of tobacco is situated. If a person wants to set up a business at the top of a hill and has a residential lease there, it is his problem. They are free to choose the location of their business; we are in a democratic country. In the application form that that person filled at the Licensing Office, is for *Pointe L'Herbe*. I see here in a letter communications the different places where our services have been; there is no physical location of this. The problem may have arisen from the application form. I see here, for example: trade address - she has not mentioned her trade address. Is it the problem of the Commission for Licensing? I see the form of application signed by the applicant. In the form

it is written: address and situation of premises on which the applicant is proposed to conduct a trade and name of landlord; if it is rented, written evidence from owner to be produced. Address and situation of premises on which the applicant is proposed to conduct the trade, it is written here, *Pointe L'Herbe* and signed by the person on 07 of November 2006; she has put her identity number and she has signed.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether assistance is given to persons who come to the Licensing Office to apply for licences if ever they do not understand the exact meaning.

The Chief Commissioner: There is no specific assistance, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. But I think knowing my personality the officers at this office help people.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if I am made to understand, there has been a new application for a site at *Accacia* as far back as 03 June 2008. May I ask the Chief Commissioner how much consideration is he giving to this application?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are, according to my knowledge and information, not less than four or five shops operating at *Accacia* for a very small clientele. And it will not be suitable to grant additional commercial leases in this village being given that there are already a number of existing shops and there are persons who have commercial leases and who may start their business at any time. The Policy of our Commission is not to put an unlimited number of shops retailer of tobacco in such a small location.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that we are in a national and international trend of business facilitation, - and we know that Mauritius has just won the prize for the African Region - does the Chief Commissioner not judge that such a business initiative should not be closed and that other alternatives, if not for *Accacia*, be given to persons who want to invest just like the Commissioner for Employment said?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we just can't judge to do business as we wish. I can tell the Member that everyday the applicant's husband who is also a public officer is selling cooked food without licence as the entrance of a public garden, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. People are throwing these bowls of soups everywhere along this garden and

thus creating a very dizzy atmosphere in this place. Can we do business as we want or should we do business according to norms? If in a locality of 10 families, there are nine shops do we add another shop? Business facilities should be looked into according to the clientele that exists. And we have authority to limit the number of shops operating in a particular village. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what I can say is that that person will not get any commercial lease to do Retailer of Tobacco at *Accacia*.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has not listened to my question. It is a fact that countries nowadays are thinking about business facilitation and in this way the countries progress. That's why I am asking whether alternatives could be given to that person instead of cancelling her licence. That person in not hearing any news from the Commission as to whether there is any possibility of renewal. That person was already operating and we know that in Rodrigues there are so many persons who are operating in the condition that the Chief Commissioner is saying. We are not speaking about her husband; we are speaking about this woman entrepreneur who wants to go further in her initiatives; and her initiatives have been purely cancelled. She obtained her licence before the Commission even checked whether she had a commercial lease or not. I am asking the Chief Commissioner whether an alternative of another village can be given to her near *Port Mathurin*. We see that there are so many licences that are being given inside *Port Mathurin* or in *Baie-aux-Huitres*, for example.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is not my duty to go and tell that person what she has to do or where she has to do business. I am telling the House my decision is that there are no physical premises at *Accacia* to enable the processing and the granting of this licence. And the Commission for Land is not prepared to give any new commercial lease for tobacco shops in this location. The person is insisting that she should get this, but she will not get it. If she applies for another site, for another place, another trade, for example, hairdresser, cinema or anything and if she meets the criteria then, of course, we will be very glad to give her the licence.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't get the Chief Commissioner. She already had a particular licence. Why is the Chief Commissioner insisting on another trade? Maybe an alternative of another village but why an alternative of trade? That person is already specialised in that type of retailer in tobacco.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the information for the Member if she wants to have a look and she will understand that there is a logic. The place of business applied for is *Pointe L'Herbe*, the licence has been granted for *Pointe L'Herbe*, I am sure that she has a copy of the licence. I am laying a copy of the licence. The address of the establishment is at *Pointe L'Herbe*. Now this person decides not to do her business at *Pointe L'Herbe* and to take on herself and to do her business at *Accacia*. And we have complaints from the villagers of *Accacia* that this person is disturbing the environment; she was granted electricity without approval and she has been telling around that she will be able to continue her business and that nobody can take appropriate actions to make the law be respected. Business making must be made according to regulations and to norms. As from 31 December at midnight, those who do not have their tourist enterprise licences will no longer be recognised as such by the Commission for Tourism. We have given them one year more for them to be up to the standard. If they don't apply for their business licence and if they don't meet the criteria, we will not recognise them as tourist enterprise licensees. We are working according to norms. If I adopt the logic of the Member, someone can apply for a shop in *Port Mathurin* and then open the shop in *La Ferme*. Is it correct according to the law and regulations? This is a very if we have to follow the logic of the Member.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a point of explanation. If you would grant me leave on what the Chief Commissioner has just said about my logic, if you would, please.

Mr. Chairperson: If you say on a point of explanation, I won't stop you, this means that I have given you leave.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I asked whether if there is a possibility, even if there have been errors here and there, for alternatives, that the Chief Commissioner follows my logic. If I say alternatives this means that I am not insisting, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. What I could not understand, however, was that the Chief Commissioner was insisting that there was a change, not only in address but also in trade.

Mr. Chairperson: What do you want to explain?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: If the Chief Commissioner follows my logic, it would be that I am still insisting at *Accacia*. This was not my subsequent question. My subsequent question was: why did the officers not explain to the applicant? Because that person has been to the Licensing Office so

many times. We are here to help; instead of harassing people, they should tell that person to make an appropriate application for a place, which would fit the administration conveniences.

Mr. Chairperson: You are not making an explanation. I don't see that. Well you may have chosen another word but you have asked your question now. Chief Commissioner, she tried to explain what she wanted to ask you. Will you respond to it?

The Chief Commissioner: Nobody is harassing anybody, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I don't think that the officers of the Licensing Office are harassing anybody. The problem is that some people don't know what they want or they don't know the procedures. You can't have a licence if you don't have a physical building or land or premises. If we didn't have the moon, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how could the Americans have gone to the moon? There must be a moon. Where is her moon? Where is her business? The physical premises where she wants to grow a business do not exist. The Member should be serious.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my following question regards the actual licence on which that person is operating now. She had priority to make an application for Retailer of tobacco licence in 2006. She had a hawker licence and she considers that she was not doing a profitable job; so, she asked for a fixed and permanent site. She has reverted back to her hawker licence pending that her licence be renewed. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner how many times his officers have been on site to control that person if not to say to harass that person?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards enforcement of laws and regulations, if need be every minute we will go and talk to the person.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Chief Commissioner aware that following the cancellation of the licence of that person, she had to leave all her family to go and work in Mauritius to pay her loans? Is the Chief Commissioner aware that following the regular control - only for her, not for other entrepreneurs just next to her - of harassment which she got, that person fell ill and is now being followed by specialists of psychiatry?

The Chief Commissioner: I am sorry to tell it, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that this is strictly not my business.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the Chief Commissioner now has been aware that the site where the business was to take place at *Pointe L'Herbe* is not appropriate will he consider another site for the same person within the village of *Pointe L'Herbe* itself through the same licence?

The Chief Commissioner: Of course, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are procedures for this. But what I have to tell the House is that what has happened, she took a mobile *tabagie roulant* and she put this on land, which is leased to another person, Mr. Amédée Fong Young for the running of a shop. And Mr. Amédée Fong Young was told that if he does not have **(Gap in cassette)**...Invest Rodrigues made by the applicant, the person whom I am talking about for a commercial lease in any region of Rodrigues and we have been looking for the last past three years, there is no record. So, should I take it on myself to grant a licence to that person? Is that person not aware that there is need for a formal application which is then processed? Should I take on myself and guess about *les malheurs de tout le monde et regarder dans la tête des gens pour agir?*

ST GABRIEL - ROADS & TRACK ROADS

(No. B/132) Mrs. M. A. Perrine-Bégué (First Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure, Housing, Environment & Others as regards roads and track roads at St. Gabriel, he will, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) whether he is aware of the deplorable state of the main road deserving the Cathedral up to Petit Gabriel Station;
- (b) why works regarding the track roads starting from the Church's Salle d'oeuvre just behind the *St. Francois Thevaux* building and that towards the *Bassin Gallard* village have been suspended after July 2006, and
- (c) whether any improvement is envisaged in those above mentioned three cases.

The Commissioner for Public Infrastructure & Ors (Mr. F. A. Grandcourt): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a), we

have an overview of the state of the road network in general, including the stretch from the Cathedral to Petit Gabriel Station. Patching works have already been undertaken in line with our established maintenance programme along the main road. In addition, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I further recall the House that 722m of the road leading to the Cathedral has been upgraded from Malabar to Cooperative by this government to a tune of Rs22.7 m.

As regards part (b), the House will recall that the track road from *St. Francois Thevaux* towards *Bassin Gallard* was implemented mainly on a self-help basis. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this mode of implementation by the volunteers has been far from being satisfactory. The works had to be halted in June 2007 due to the disinterest of the volunteers though my Commission contributed in the leveling of the proposed road base and the construction of 75 m of same. This also explains why my Commission has decided to implement the 4 km of track roads under the Decentralised Corporation Programme by local contractors. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that stretch of track road like many others around the island, could not be included in that list, due to financial constraints.

As regards part (c), the aforesaid cases have been duly considered by my office and included in the list of implementation.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a) of the question, as the respected Commissioner just said, the stretch nearing the Cathedral up to Petit Gabriel is very important not only for this particular village since it is a national village *à l'échelle de Rodrigues*. The Cathedral being the most common place of worship for Rodrigues in the biggest catchment area of the country and, at the same time, it is a tourist site where many persons come and see. So, will the Commissioner agree that a major development of the site is very important to cater for the traffic development in that particular place?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that the Member and her team during their mandate have had enough time to cater for this problem. But still, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have a priority list and we have put that stretch of road on our list but still we have made an effort, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have upgraded 720 m of road from Malabar to Cooperative, this is the first stage and the other stage will be upgrading of the whole stretch of road leading to Petit Gabriel Station.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since we have the opportunity to scrutinize this particular project, we see that the road near this Cathedral is quite narrow. There is a bus service there at every 30 minutes and it is not easy for a two-way traffic in the first instance; and also we see that there is a very high risk of accident when there are a number of persons during particular events, for pedestrians particularly. What does the Commissioner consider doing in the wake of the project he has just mentioned?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this problem existed long before. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being a respected government, there is someone coming from Mauritius, from the Traffic Management Unit; he will be called upon to examine the road and give his recommendations. We are thinking, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, maybe in the future since it is very narrow, if we can enlarge the road, we will do so. Otherwise we should see whether we could make it become a one-way road. We are going to finalise this. So, we are working on it; once we get the necessary recommendations, we will take the necessary decision accordingly.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether there have been any private stakeholders involved to continue the construction of the said track road and, if yes, whether there has been any agreement between same and his Commission, and, if yes, to table the agreement.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I don't see this in the main question. This is very far from the main question. How am I going to know? Let's take for example - this is a very good question - the access road going to Mr. Spéville at *Eau Vannée*, we have bituminous concrete on that road, if X Company wants to put bituminous concrete on that road, I cannot ask whether Mr. X or any other neighbour has asked for it. If someone wants to continue the track road, on the path leading to his or her house this is most welcome. This is a public road. The Member is asking whether there is any agreement, I don't see anything linked with agreement in the main question. If you come with another question, I will give you the answer.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I'll come back to the main road. We have proved here - and the Commissioners have agreed - that security is a problem. If, for example, the Commissioner does not dispose of funds for the moment, but we see that parking next to the Cathedral is a

major problem. Parking arrangements have been made *dans la cour même* of the cathedral, but there is not enough space. And as we have said the road is quite narrow. So, is there a possibility of doing something, at least, in the first instance before going to the next step of enlarging or improving the road?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will look into the matter.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards the track road which goes to the villages where most of the houses are found - we see that at *La Vanille* there are many persons who have left the village and at the *Larose, Izore, Edouard, Jabeemissar...*

Mr. Chairperson: Which place is that?

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: At *St. Gabriel* still. As regards part (b), the Commissioner has said that there was disinterest from people, but we know that he is going on another site on a contractual basis. We see that there is a foreigner who is constructing part of the track road upward which was the most difficult part of it. But this road is serving, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at least, six houses. But 20 houses, which are found on the core of the village, are still not being served, because the place is sloppy and very muddy. Does the Commissioner not consider it as a priority, at least, to put a footpath to join it to *Pas Jérôme* or Mr. Tino Gontran's place?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered this part of the question. As I have said the cases have been duly considered by my office and have been included in the list of implementation.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: The Commissioner has said for *Bassin Gallard*, which is another village next to *St. Gabriel*; and this is part (c) of the question. But what about part (b) then if the Commissioner is considering part (c)? *Bassin Gallard* caters for at least 15 houses, including two hamlets of *Pavillon* and *Bassin Gallard*; they must go to *Eau Vannée* to be able to get access to the road. Actually we know that ambulances cannot go up to search for the persons. Can we make a proposal that top priorities are given before any *revêtement* of any road is being done so that infrastructural facilities are given to those who are the most deserving?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a new government. As I have said there is a priority list. We know these conditions prevailing in these regions. The inhabitants there have been given the chance. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, government has given materials or 136 m of track road. The former government was able to construct only 61 m. of road. We constructed 75 m of road, some 14 more. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I repeat that I have already answered part (c) of the question. As I have said these cases have been duly considered and included in the list of implementation. We are going to give due consideration to these cases. My two colleagues, Mr. Guillaume and Mrs. Prosper, have already drawn my attention. So, we are going to look into the matter.

BAIE MALGACHE - NEW AGRICULTURAL PROJECT

(No. B/133) Mr. P. Francois (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture & Others as regards the valley of *Baie Malgache*, whether he would, for the benefit of the House, state on the new agricultural project which is being implemented there.

The Commissioner for Agriculture (Mr. L. A. Perrine): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the House is aware, my Commission is currently implementing various projects which have been approved under the Food Security Fund for Rodrigues. One of these projects concerns the rehabilitation of abandoned agricultural land with a view to boosting the production of staple foods such as maize and starchy crops that would help raise the level of food self sufficiency in these products on the island.

Baie Malgache valley has thus been selected for the implementation of this project because of its excellent potential for increase production of annual crops. The valley consists of an area of 310 ha of land detailed as follows:

Agricultural land	- 60 ha
Pasture	-150 ha
Forest land	-100 ha

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, after the completion of the EDF Project in 1988 there has been no monitoring and consolidation on site

and year after year the valley has been left unsupervised and abandoned. The presence of stray animals has led to overgrazing and land degradation. Presently the valley is being rehabilitated by the provision of adequate infrastructure such as access road, fencing, water storage and irrigation system, in addition to clustering of farmers and provision of targeted extension support. It is thus expected that maize production would be increased to over 300 tonnes per year in that region. The overall target for maize production in Rodrigues by 2015 is being expected to be 4000 tonnes. The total project value for the valley of *Baie Malgache* is to the tune of Rs21 m. to be completed by December 2010. Some 300 planters and breeders are concerned.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the following activities are currently being implemented at *Baie Malgache* -

- (i) the construction of 2.5 km of track road;
- (ii) rehabilitation of 6 km of drains;
- (iii) installation of 6 km fencing;
- (iv) rehabilitation of 50 ha of pasture land, and
- (v) maintenance of forest cover and tree planting.

Moreover, I am informed that the following works have been completed -

- Leveling and clearing of about 4.5 km of field access road.
- Rehabilitation of 1.2 km of drains.
- Thinning of *Pongamme* trees along the *Baie Malgache* river sides.

Mr. P. François: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I should like to know from the Commissioner whether meetings have been held with the planters and farmers of *Baie Malgache* and, if yes, what was the outcome?

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, three meetings have been organized up to now - two at *Baie Malgache* and one at *Mangues*. The planters say that their prayers have been heard and they all welcome the project.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that there are many farmers rearing animals in that region, I would like to ask the Commissioner what alternatives have been proposed to farmers in that region.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the valley there are about 77 plots of land; 55 will be allocated for crop plantation for planters and 22 to farmers. There are sites reserved for farmers.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner a question as regards the density of the land. The Commissioner said that 210 ha of land are available at this particular place. At the same time he talked about 300 breeders and planters. I am wondering how this land is going to be distributed. We know that doing breeding needs a quite extensive use of land. Are all those persons using modern techniques?

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have said that we have 60 ha. of agricultural land for crop production; we have 150 ha. reserved for pasture and 100 ha. which is forest land. I agree that not all the breeders are using good agricultural practices. There are some who are still using open grazing. But we have come with a regulation that we have to start using the cut and carry system. So the breeders will be informed and will be trained to shift from open grazing to the cut and carry system.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards the distribution of the land, I would like to know from the Commissioner whether there are some persons who were already occupying the land and who have not been provided with any portion.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said *Baie Malgache* has been left unattended with no supervision. It has become as if the Far West, people occupying land of their friends. We are going to look at it closely. We are going to effect a site visit with the officers of the Cadastral Unit and my Commission to see that all the land are properly distributed and that owners of the land are occupying the land. Those who have moved away, the land has to be taken up and given to other persons.

Mr. N. Lisette: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether before starting the project, he has surveyed the land and informed any ex-occupiers of the project and as to whether they are interested in taking a portion of this.

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before starting the project, as I have said, two meetings have been organized. On radio, we have invited all those holding land at *Baie Malgache* to come to the meetings. There has been site inspection; and I can assure the respected Member that all will be done in fairness. Those who are occupying the land will still remain there. But we have to take back the land from those who have gone away and give it to other persons.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said in this House some months back that tobacco would be planted at *Baie Malgache*; some people are doing it. What is the share of it inside the plantation programme?

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have said, if my memory is good, that tobacco is not in the policy of the Commission. We are not going to encourage the plantation of tobacco in Rodrigues. So, if people do it, they can do it, but my Commission will not encourage the plantation of tobacco. Those who want to continue with the plantation of tobacco will do it.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have gone through the SFC report and the chapter on Rodrigues; I see that the number of villages where agricultural development are said to be a priority areas but nowhere *Baie Malgache* is being mentioned. How come that, in the very small money out the Rs187 m. that the Commissioner disposes of, *Baie Malgache* suddenly become the top priority?

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the first action of EDF project in Rodrigues in 1983 was to start rehabilitating the land at *Baie Malgache* where we have fertile land and we have water. We have 12 valley bottoms in Rodrigues where we must look where we can produce and then to increase production in Rodrigues, there is nowhere else. And *Baie Malgache* is an important valley that we have to develop. And believe me, *Baie Malgache* could become the *grenier* of Rodrigues.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

(No. B/134) Mr. P. François (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huîtres) asked the Chief Commissioner as regards water distribution, whether he would state to the House the progress achieved so

far in relation to the construction of a major dam on the *Rivière Pistaches* to provide improved and sustainable water supply to the population living in the Eastern and Southern parts of Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am again surprised with eastern and western. The *Rivière Pistaches* is in the west and it is not expected to provide water to the eastern part. I think that they are losing their sense of orientation. I hope that it is only on paper not politically. I would like to refer the Member to the reply I made to question B/11 regarding the above subject.

As stated, the *Agence Française de Développement* will field another mission in Rodrigues in September/October to look at the economic viability of the project and also identify any alternatives.

An economic comparison between the construction of the dam and the installation of a desalination plant run by wind energy will be carried out. Thereafter, a final decision will be taken as regards which of the two projects or among other alternatives will be implemented as a matter of priority.

STRAY DOGS - CONTROL

(No. B/135) Mr. P. François (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture & Others as regards stray dog in the island, he would, for the benefit of the House state -

- (a) whether any survey has been made to determine their approximate number and if so, their number thereof;
- (b) the health hazard or any other danger they may represent, and
- (c) the measures that have been taken or will be taken for their effective control.

The Commissioner for Agriculture & Ors (Mr. L. A. Perrine): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as Members of both sides of the House would agree, stray dogs are becoming a real “*fléau*” in Rodrigues. If unchecked, stray dogs may represent serious human health as well as economic and environmental hazards.

With regard to part (a), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that since March 2006, the Veterinary Unit of my Commission initiated a Dog Registration Campaign through 55 community centres island wide. As at date, the total number of dogs registered amounts to five thousand seven hundred and ninety (5790).

As Members may be aware the registration of dogs is mandatory according to the Mauritius Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act 2003 and as subsequently amended. Upon registration, dogs should bear a collar and a disc bearing an identification number. Both the collar and disc are given free of charge. Registration of dogs is an ongoing activity at *Citronelle*.

With regard to part (b), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, stray dogs, if infected, have the potential of spreading diseases of bacterial and viral origins such as tetanus and rabies respectively to human beings. Dogs may also spread flies which cause annoyance as well as potential vectors of other diseases to human beings.

Stray dogs, when organized in groups, may have a very aggressive behaviour and thus cause damage to livestock. They may also cause damage to crops, noise and environmental pollution and road accidents and even injury to members of the public.

With regard to part (c), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in order to remedy the situation, my Commission is implementing the following measures -

- (i) placement of dog traps in regions with high population of stray dogs to prevent damage to livestock and crops;
- (ii) the setting up of a Dog Catching Unit and the construction of a dog impound at *Mt Plate* to keep caught dogs and eventually euthanize the unclaimed dogs;
- (iii) dog sterilization campaign, and
- (iv) continuous sensitization campaign through media, talks and personal contact methods.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me inform the House that my Commission will intensify its dog sterilization campaign by offering a permanent dog sterilization service to the public. In this context, a dog clinic will be operational soon.

Mr. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *le nombre de chiens errants qui augmente chaque jour est directement lié au degré de la misère dans ce pays. Les poubelles sont vides, il y a même des gens qui fouillent dans des poubelles. Ce qui rend les chiens agressifs, c'est pourquoi le nombre des chiens est en train d'augmenter chaque jour. M. le président ce problème épineux nécessite des actions concertées de la part des autorités mais il est également nécessaire de responsabiliser les propriétaires des chiens par une campagne de sensibilisation.* Therefore I would like to ask the Commissioner when the last *Info Chien* was broadcasted on radio. And what is being done to reduce the delay of broadcast so that to appraise the dog owners on their responsibility?

Mr. L. A. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Veterinary Officer was on radio last month; he does his monthly talk; and I can tell the respected Member that our Catching Unit is on the road everyday and up to 10 dogs are being caught everyday. And we have distributed about ten dog traps to breeders around Rodrigues. I'll invite the respected Member to visit with me *Mte Plate* and to see how many dogs are being kept there.

PUBLIC TOILETS

(No. B/136) Mr. P. François (Second Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure, Housing, Environment & Others with regard to public toilets in the recreational area in front of *Port Mathurin* Police Station, at the Bus Terminal and at the Granary, could he inform the House -

- (a) whether all the toilet blocks are operational on a daily basis, and if not, why, and
- (b) who is responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of same.

The Commissioner for Public Infrastructure & Ors (Mr. F. A. Grandcourt): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a), I am informed that the toilet blocks at the Green Space and the Granary in *Port Mathurin* are operational from Monday to Saturday. While the toilet unit located at the bus terminal is operational on a daily basis. However, these facilities need to be closed temporarily to carry out repairs when warranted.

With regard to part (b), Rod Clean undertakes the daily cleaning and sanitizing of the toilet units and the maintenance is effected by my Commission.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the following items have been replaced or repaired; and I am going to state them as follows -

At the granary

• Bowlcock ½ inc	-	1
• Silicone glue (white)	-	1
• Flexible hose 10 inches	-	6
• Cystern tanks and accessories	-	3
• Sit covers	-	2
• Caustic soda	-	1

Modification of pipe water line

• PVC pipe 20mm	-	2 bars
• Reducing PVC pipe x ½	-	1
• Union PVC	-	1
• Elbow PVC 32 mm	-	1
• Reducing PVC 32mm x 20 mm	-	1
• Siltape	-	7
• Stop cock ½	-	1
• PVC glue	-	1
• Elbow PVC 20mm	-	7
• Eaimail ½ inch	-	1
• Clip PVC	-	15
• Brand screws	-	15

- Wall plugs - 15

The toilet near the Green Space, near the Police Station

- Cistern tanks complete + accessories - 2
- Seat cover - 1
- Flexible hose - 5

Repair of the water line, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at the Baie Lascar Bus Terminal -

- PVC ...110 mm - 1
- Seat cover - 1
- Cistern tank complete + accessories - 1

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I am sorry, but we don't see how the answers that the Commissioner is giving are in line with the question put, that is, whether the toilet blocks are operational and whether cleaning and maintenance is being done.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: Does the Commissioner want to respond to what the Member said before I give my ruling?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: No.

Mr. Chairperson: I have said a couple of times probably during the first session of this Assembly that I cannot control the answers of Commissioners. This is true. If we look at the Standing Order, we see that when a question is asked, the Commissioner shall answer the question but there is no guideline which says that the Commissioner has to answer in this way. What I can add, consonant to the Assembly, the overall principles of the Standing Orders and Rules is that a Commissioner is called to answer a question; he is not given a licence to give whatever he thinks he has to say. He has a licence to answer the question and again I cannot say whether the answer is good or not. I am not a Quiz Master here to say whether the answer is correct. But I would invite the Commissioner to answer the question and to be relevant and brief.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, of course the question was about part (a) whether the blocks are operational. And I have said in my reply that we have carried out repairs where warranted and I am listing the repairs. So, I am going to restart for the Baie Lascar Bus Terminal.

- PVC ...110 mm - 1
- Seat covers - 1
- Cistern tank complete + accessories - 1

(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairperson: I'll ask the Commissioner to answer the question. Be relevant, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am answering, let me restart again. For Baie Lascar Bus Terminal -

- PVC ...110 mm - 1
- Seat cover - 1
- Cistern tank complete + accessories - 1
- Wash hand basin complete - 1
- Flexible hose - 3
- Screws - 224
- Wall plugs - 6
- Tap for wash hand basin - 1
- PVC 40 mm - 1

(At 14 hrs 20 the Minority Leader walked out of the Assembly)

Mr. Chairperson: Do we have any supplementary on this question? Members Lisette, Roussety and Spéville are not here.

End of Question time – 14 hrs 30.

Mr. Chairperson: Anyway question time is over and the Fifth Island Region Member would like to withdraw his questions. Leave granted. Mr. Lisette is not here, so time is up for questions.

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

CHAIRPERSON - DECORATION

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, upon the conferment on you of the distinction of Commander of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean, I would like to present our congratulations from this side of the House to you and your family of this great honorific decoration.

S.I.D.P.R PROJECT

The Chief Commissioner: With your permission, I would like to make a statement on the way forward of the SIDPR. As Members of this House are aware the project “**Support to the formulation of a Sustainable Integrated Development Plan for Rodrigues**” (SIDPR) is financed jointly by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government. The two main results expected from this project are firstly the establishment of an Economic Planning and Monitoring Unit (EPMU) and secondly the preparation of the SIDPR itself, that is, the future Strategy and Action Plan for Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to the project agreement, this project was expected to be prepared in close consultations with the population at the grassroots level and in line with the Integrated Development Planning approach. This is why during the last two calendar years 2007 and 2008, the project consultants of KPMG Consultancy Services Ltd have had wide consultations with the enlarged Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) and the officers of the Commissions. A local Core multi-sectoral and multi disciplinary team has also contributed in the final design of the report. Moreover, we obtained inputs for the SIDPR from the United National Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) office in New York. On our side, we had submitted our comments on the various versions of the report at each stage of its formulation aiming at a quality final product.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to inform the House that at the last Steering Committee of the project held on Monday 20 July 2009, the Draft Final SIDPR document has been approved subject to some minor modifications.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the desired outcome of the SIDPR project is a development process in Rodrigues, that is, promoting employment, enhancing social and economic empowerment that contributes to economic growth, poverty reduction and enabling a sustainable use and conservation of the environment and natural resources. It is expected that the realisation of that outcome would be reflected in Rodrigues satisfactory achievement of the MDG targets.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have recently witnessed three major crises - the food crisis, the energy crisis and the current ongoing recession which is already affecting our tourist industry. We are not immune from any international crisis. This situation is more serious for our island which like other small islands have many constraints which retard economic take-off. Rodrigues is not free from serious constraints to growth such as its small market, high transportation costs, disproportionately expensive infrastructure due to its small size, low incremental capital output ratio, low opportunities for gainful employment, adverse climatic conditions, and limited budgetary resources just to mention a few.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the SIDPR proposes a plethora of measures to increase economic growth. The Final Draft Strategy and Action Plan comprises the Draft Final SIDPR that is the long-term vision and Draft Final Short Term Action Plan with PBB matrices (the 5-year programme). We will now have to implement the plan.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the next steps for the SIDPR are as follows -

- (1) We will carry out a costing exercise to quantify the implementation cost of the priority project activities. This will facilitate the preparation of an Implementation plan that will necessitate Investment both from the public sector and the private sector. As we have just embarked on the preparation of the Public Sector Investment Programme, the PSIP and we will be guided by the SIDPR;
- (2) We have already initiated procedures and actions for the strengthening of the EPMU. Additional staff will be recruited

and posted in the EPMU so that the Unit support in the implementation and monitoring of the Plan.

- (3) The project document mentioned the proposal to hold a donors' meeting for the financing of the SIDPR. In this context, we will discuss with the relevant authorities so that consideration is given for the mobilisation of additional resources above our ceiling for the implementation the plan.
- (4) We propose to launch the SIDPR plan during the month of September when wide publicity will be given to the Plan. We will rally the population behind this important exercise.

TOURISM SPECIAL HOLIDAY PACKAGE

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission I would like to make another statement regarding the tourism special holiday package for Rodrigues. I would like to make a statement regarding the confirmation I received yesterday as regards the special holiday package that has been approved by Air Mauritius and the Central Government to encourage tourists from Mauritius to visit our island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in my Budget Speech in April in this House this year, I pointed out how our local tourism industry has been seriously hit by the global recession and financial crisis and how our tourist arrivals have witnessed a decrease by 15% in 2008, despite all our rigorous promotional efforts and strategies.

It is a fact that no country has been left unaffected by the worldwide crisis and the worldwide tourism industry has been one of the most affected. Our island being heavily dependent on its tourism industry, the effects of the decrease are being heavily felt in all economic sectors be it agriculture, fisheries, food processing and handicraft. With this unprecedented situation, we supported the request of the *Association du Tourisme Réunie* requesting the Central Government for a stimulus package to boost up the Tourism Industry.

After various rounds of negotiation this has been worked out and approved with effect from 1st August 2009 as follows -

- (1) Air Mauritius Ltd will apply for a period of 18 months a reduced fare of Rs5,430 per passenger as from 1st of August, 2009, to all Mauritian residents spending at least four nights in a paid accommodation;
- (2) A special fare will be sold either for packages or on a flight only basis by Air Mauritius for travel agents upon presentation of a proof of a four nights paid accommodation.

The package will be financed two-third by the Central Government and one-third by Air Mauritius. With the implementation of the above package, it is expected that the arrivals from Mauritius, which was the main cause of decrease in tourists, will be raised back to its own time peak. The Rodrigues Tourism Office and the local tourism operators have already worked out a promotional campaign that will be launched in Mauritius this week through the press, radio, television and the internet to promote the package. The above boost to our local tourism industry will be added up with the projected start of operations of a new airline company Solit-Air which will be operating daily flights as from 1st November 2009.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with respect to the general air tickets price to Rodrigues, I have been informed that the Central Government is setting up a Technical Committee to look into the fuel surcharge in the Rodrigues/Mauritius route that is being applied by Air Mauritius and the possibility of decreasing the air tickets price from the Rodrigues route across the board. I hope that this measure will not wait long to materialize.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to seize this opportunity here to congratulate the *Association du Tourisme Réunion* and the civil platform who have been able to make themselves heard and ultimately convince everyone of their request.

With these words, I thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Allow me, at this stage of the proceedings, just to enjoin you. I will thank you as Chief Commissioner and leader of this House for these kind words to my family and me. I know that you have been decorated earlier and you know what this means. I am also thankful to the President of the Republic of Mauritius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth and the Prime Minister, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, in awarding this distinction to me.

In fact, the Republic is drawing attention to the existence of this Assembly and the work that is being carried out here. I will add that this distinction is not personally to me, but in fact it will represent a lot to what we are doing in this House. I thank also all the Members of the Executive Council who I believe started all this. I wish to thank also the Secretariat and the Clerk, all the staff of the Secretariat, without them the work will not have been what it is.

Tank you.

HIS EMINENCE, CARDINAL JEAN MARGEOT – PASSING AWAY

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before moving to the next item, that is, the motion, allow me to address from this Assembly our heartfelt condolences following the passing away during the last week of the much respected, His Eminence, Cardinal Jean Margeot. I had the occasion to attend the funeral in Mauritius. I have addressed the official condolences of my office to the Bishop of Port Louis. May I invite you to support my request and to direct the Clerk to present the condolences of this House to the Bishop of Port Louis.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: In the name of the Minority Leader and Members of this Opposition side, I will also wish to join the Chief Commissioner in his heartfelt condolences to this eminent personality who has just passed away. We know how instrumental he has been to put Rodrigues on the international Christian as well as economic map. We know that Cardinal Margeot has shown in his different letters the programmes for Rodrigues and are still *d'actualité* today. We also know that it was because of him that the Pope came to Rodrigues; and this was maybe the first initiative for Rodrigues to be known worldwide; many cameras coming from different parts of the world came over to see this little rock in this part of the Indian Ocean. We are very sad that he has gone; we know that it is a time that happens to all of us. We know that he has been happy with the life that he has been able to live and how he has been a great leader to enable others to do great things.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: I will also enjoin the condolences expressed by the Chief Commissioner and Mrs. Perrine-Bégué and I will, of course, direct the Clerk to send written condolences to the family of Cardinal Margeot and to the institution in Mauritius.

Thank you.

MOTION

STANDING ORDERS - AMENDMENTS

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

'This Assembly resolves that the Report of the Standing Orders Committee, in regard to the amendments to the Standing Order 2 and standing order 55A of the standing orders and the Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, which was laid on the Table of the Regional Assembly on 30th June 2009 be approved, and that the amendments contained therein come into operation as from 01 September 2009.'

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as Members of this House are already aware, the Programme Based Budgeting has been introduced in Mauritius as from July 2008 and I presented the Indicative PBB for the Regional Assembly for period July-December 2009. The objective of the PBB is to integrate policy-making, planning and budgeting over a 3-year period based on policy priorities within a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). A fully-fledged PBB embedded in a three year Medium Term Expenditure Framework is currently being implemented by the Central Government. This forms the basis for appropriation of funds by the National Assembly and replaces the traditional line-item budget.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in respect of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, according to section 26(10) of the Additional Stimulus Package (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, the amendments to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act relating to the Programme Based Budgeting will come into operation on 01 September 2009 in respect of the financial year 2010 and in respect of every subsequent financial year.

The appropriation of funds as from the next financial year, January to December 2010, will be made by this House based on programme submitted by each Commission with predefined outcomes and performance indicators. This new method of budgeting will ensure better fiscal discipline, effectiveness based on priorities; and operational efficiency, that is, obtaining value for money.

The amendments proposed in this report on the Standing Orders are therefore important so that each programme can be approved compared to the past when each vote item required the approval of this House.

I wish to thank the Standing Orders Committee for its prompt consideration of the amendments which I submitted to this House at its sitting of 19 May 2009 and the timely submission of its report. I recall Mr. Chairperson, Sir that you personally headed a delegation comprising Members of the Standing Orders Committee to assist the Committee of Supply's meetings of the National Assembly during the last budget exercise to understudy the procedures adopted for the consideration and approval of the Programme Based Budget.

I call on all Members of this House to vote for the motion which will amend our existing Standing Orders and introduce the framework for consideration of PBB Estimates in our Standing Orders.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Does any Member want to intervene? Yes, Mrs Perrine-Bégué.

Mrs. A. Perrine-Bégué: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this motion for amendment, according to me, was a logical follow-up because the introduction of PBB was done in Mauritius and was passed in the National Assembly. So, Rodrigues had no other alternative than to follow the pace with mainland Mauritius. Like the Prime Minister himself said it, Mauritius itself was following the international trend. So, this is an international movement in the budgeting format. And Mauritius copied UK, Switzerland as well as the Indian models.

It became also automatic after the amendment of the RRA Act and the Finance and Audit Act in the Additional Stimulus Package Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2009 providing for PBB introduction in Rodrigues. The Opposition side constructively participated *dans les travaux*; so therefore we

go along the lines of those proposed amendments for we believe that a country cannot stay backward; it has to move forward institutionally as well as practically. The Rodriguan population naturally, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, deserves more efficiency in the conduct of the public affairs of Rodrigues. Therefore the new Standing Orders for PBB introduction will, according to me, render democracy more effective and, at the same time, for a number of reasons.

First of all, the Chief Commissioner himself underlined it; it is the executive arm of this Assembly which is a governing body; we will have no alternative than to be more accountable in the management of the public funds. For example, I can see that expenditures will be categorized, like the Chief Commissioner said in the main motion, in terms of programmes and in terms of sub-programmes requiring therefore the implementation within a year which was not mentioned before. This is absolutely strategic for it renders the Members of the Executive Council more accountable.

Then the Commissions will be required to focus on results and outcome. And their performances will be measured according to performance indicators. So, the population will absolutely be gaining from this side. *On n'entendra plus parler des projets, pour n'importe quel gouvernement qui arrive, M. le président, à moins qu'il y ait des changements de formats de budget encore, je ne dis pas ça seulement pour le gouvernement d'en face mais pour n'importe quel gouvernement qui viendra. On ne pourra plus aujourd'hui, M. le président, dévier les projets initiaux pour ensuite rêver d'un projet la veille et on ne pourra plus non plus, M. le président, faire beaucoup de internal re-allocations. Là, maintenant, people will have to stick to programmes and sub-programmes and I think that it is very important.*

The second reason, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to me, this new format of PBB will render the democracy more efficient and more lively; we will dispose of more information that we will be given not only items and activities, but we will be given programmes. So, in this House, on this legislative arm of the House, we will be given concrete information for enough scrutiny. The role of the House is to scrutinize the business of the House. We consider that we will have more information about what is being done with their money but also the PBB will give us more latitudes, more tools for the Opposition side as well to push the Executive Council towards more transparency, more accountability and absolutely more responsibility. And you, Mr. Chairperson, naturally have your role also. As usual you have

to be called upon to guarantee that these latitudes are being given and that these issues are respected in these new rules. I hope that these new rules will be strictly adhered to. Members of both sides of the House have been there; we have seen how for the first time the PBB format has been implemented and we have seen how extensive latitudes on possibilities have been given to Members to scrutinize and to question policies, strategies and the administrative role of the Government.

At this junction, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of Members to section 55 (a) subsection (b). And I quote –

“When the motion for approval of the draft estimates has been seconded and debates shall thereon be adjourned until the next sitting, etc”.

We see here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the motion is put before the House after the speech of the Chief Commissioner, then there is a special Assembly on a special date on Monday and not according to the Standing Orders, that is, for the next sitting; maybe we have an answer to that but at least I am drawing the attention of the Members to what is written here, that is, the debate shall be adjourned until the next sitting. We see in Mauritius also, they skip the Monday and it is on the next sitting, that is, on the next Tuesday. So, they are sticking to the rules; and I think that it would be good for us also because if we are speaking of analysis, of interpretation, we are speaking also now of programmes and sub-programmes. So, Members should have ample time to scrutinize, to analyze and to be able to voice out what they think of the budget so that it can be more in the interest of the population.

I would like also to draw the attention of Members to section 4 of the same section where it is said, I quote –

“there may be allotted a maximum number of days to be determined by the Chairperson after such consultations with Members as he may deemed fit for the discussion of the Draft Estimates in the Draft Estimates Committee.”

Qu'est ce qu'on voit ici, M. le président ? C'est le même jour sans consultation. On met le Committee Stage, M. le president, Members, even though those who have a first stake in the budget, that is, they are presenting it and they should give ample time for people to voice out. They themselves sometimes are dozing, they are going out to “dresser leurs” legs a little. So,

this is not efficient for us. I think that those who wrote those Standing Orders were wise enough in Mauritius. They have “*plus de 30 ans d’expérience*” and they know better than us. So it’s better that a number of days are given for discussion between Members and there is *une bonne consultation avec nous pour voir les jours*. Nobody is under stress not even the staff, not even the Majority side, not even the Opposition side and we have ample time to give a fruitful debate to what the population deserves.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before 30 September next we will be experiencing the new budget format and put to the test the new regulations that have been brought in the House; and I have no doubt that we will be up to the standard and we will deliver accordingly; like Mauritius, we will be able to go through that format and take the best of it.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: As there is no Member who will intervene? So, the Chief Commissioner can do his summing up.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that PBB is a very important tool and being given the new time frame that we have in this transitional period, we don’t have much time to present the budget. We have to present the Budget Speech here and have it approved before the 30th of September, this year. And we have to transmit it before the 15th of October to the Ministry concerned in Mauritius, the Ministry for Rodrigues for consideration by Cabinet.

As regards the points, which have been raised by the Member, as regards section 55 (a) of 5 (ii) of the Draft Estimates, it is, of course, necessary to give time to Members. We have given time to Members when the Budget Speech is presented; it is normally on a Friday and when we sit again on a Monday which means that you have two days, a whole weekend to relax and appreciate the Budget Speech, which I am sure you do and of course work out all the different figures. So, this is not a problem; the problem here is that I recognize that it may arise in the case that there is one sitting presenting the budget, one sitting for all the speeches which mean that we do not really understand what a Member may want to say because there is a lot of speeches, eighteen speeches during a day with all points of orders and all statements that are made; and then there is the Committee Stage. We have to see to it that there is enough time given to first, speeches of every Member and second, consideration of the Draft Estimates.

I have no doubt that the PBB will be a useful tool. May I ask all Commissioners as from today to start to work on their PBB? The PBB will not only be a blank document that we will produce for the sake of the Budget and then place it on a shelf and not consult it. Commissioners as well as Departmental Heads will have to know what are their long-term objectives, what are the objectives for the year, what are the quantitative objectives for the year and then use the budgetary means which are put at their disposal to implement their affinities and programmes.

I would like also to invite the House, *sous la présidence* of the Chairperson and Clerk to rework the whole Standing Orders because since the first publication of the Standing Orders, I think that there were two subsequent amendments. There were amendments in the first Regional Assembly; there were amendments in the second Regional Assembly and of course it is not practical to have one document and the amendments attached to it. It is better that we have a consolidated amended version of the whole Standing Orders which my office or the office of the Deputy Chief Commissioner can bind and then circulate it to all Members and Departmental Heads, officers of this House.

With these words, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I thank the Member for her intervention and assure her that we will do our best, better than before, aim higher and, of course, PBB will help us.

Mr. Chairperson: I wish to respond to what the Chief Commissioner has just said. In fact, we went to Tobago together and there they have prettily printed Standing Orders. I have instructed the Clerk to do so, but we are waiting for this amendment to be approved and then we will have it a whole lot. We are going to make a batch of it and have it distributed to Members and to people that you have just mentioned. All the debates are over on this motion, now let me ask the question.

On question put, the motion was agreed to

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that the House be adjourned to Friday 18 September 2009 at 15.00 hrs.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to

At 14.55 hrs, the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Friday 18 September 2009 at 15.00 hrs.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

COMMISSIONER FOR YOUTH & SPORTS - OFFICIAL VISIT/MISSION

(No. B/137) Mr. N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports & Others whether he would, for the benefit of the House, table the number of times he has travelled for official visit/mission on account of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to Mauritius and abroad since January 2008 to date, giving details per month, together with the reasons and objectives and the expenses incurred in terms of air tickets, accommodation, allowances/per diem/pocket money incurred with each visit/mission.

Reply: I am tabling the information requested.

ROCHE BON DIEU/GRENADE - DUMPING SITE

(No. B/138) Mr. L. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure, Housing, Environment & Others as regards environment in Rodrigues, whether, he is aware of the deplorable state of the *Roche Bon Dieu/Grenade* dumping site, and if so will he inform the House, what urgent measures he intends to take to remedy the prevailing situation.

Reply: The waste absorptive capacity of *Roche Bon Dieu* dumping site is nearing saturation. One gangman under the supervision of an Acting Environment Officer has been posted at the Dumping site to closely monitor the waste management. My commission has adopted a sustainable solid waste policy to reduce, recycle and reuse waste. In that respect a segregation of waste project is being implemented. After *Pointe L'herbe*, the project has been extended to *Anse aux Anglais* and thereafter will target some 1500 families.

Remedial measures have already been undertaken whereby Works Order has been allocated for the construction of a new landfill site – Phase 1 at Grenade on 14 July 2009 for the sum of Rs1.5 million (excluding VAT). The works are expected to be completed by September 2009.

RIVERS - CLEANING

(No. B/139) Mr. S.P. Roussety (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Agriculture & Others whether, as regards the cleaning of rivers at *Fond La Digue*, *Camp du Roi*, *Accacia* and Oyster Bay, he would, for the benefit of the House, state where matters stand.

Reply: In reply to a similar question on 27 May 2008, I informed the House that my Commission has recently embarked in a Natural Resources Rehabilitation programme, which includes cleaning and rehabilitation of rivers.

However, I here wish to make the distinction between cleaning of rivers and rehabilitation of rivers.

Rehabilitation consists of rehabilitation of drains on agricultural land, particularly in valleys, cleaning and construction of retaining walls, gabion-dikes in rivers. The objectives being to improve water flow for the irrigation purposes.

On the other hand, cleaning of rivers is carried out as and when required for example after the passage of cyclones, floods, torrential rains or when rivers have been obstructed by fallen trees, branches and other debris.

Furthermore, under the Natural Resources Management programme, my Commission has since November 2007, undertaken the cleaning and rehabilitation of the twelve rivers namely, Oyster Bay, *Fond La Digue*, *Port Sud Est*, *Anse Raffin*, *Rivière Citron*, *Nassola-Rivière Banane*, *Bebe-Vainqueur*, *Source Tigomme-Graviers*, *Rivière St Louis*, *Trèfles-Anse Ally*, *Quatres Vents-Pistache*, and *Rivière Bambou*.

Moreover, I am informed by the Commission for Environment that in the context of the flooding event which occurred in November 2008 desilting and cleaning works were undertaken under emergency procurement at *Camp du Roi*, *Accacia* and *Baie aux Huitres*.

Furthermore, following a request from “*Communauté Villageoise de Fond La Digue*” on 2nd April, 2009 cleaning was carried out in the same month and an area of 0.08 ha was cleared from *Accacia nilotica*, “*Piquant Loulou*” and *Derris indica* “Pongamme”.

I wish to inform the House that rehabilitation works are in progress and presently the rehabilitation of river Bamboo is in progress whereas construction of retaining walls and installation of gabion have been completed at *Crève Coeur*.

I am also informed that for this financial year, works have already started at *Baie Malgache* and will be started at English Bay in September 2009. The rehabilitation of the following rivers namely *Fond La Digue*, *Camp du Roi*, *Accacia* and Oyster Bay will be considered in the next financial year subject to availability of funds.

RODRIGUES TOURISM REGULATIONS 2007

(No. B/140) Mr. S. P. Roussety (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner with regard to the coming up into operation of the Rodrigues Tourism Regulations 2007, he will state -

- (a) the names and addresses of any successful applicant who has received an industrial lease or a letter of approval for the operation of a tourism accommodation as at to date;
- (b) who have been awarded a tourism enterprise licence as at to date;
- (c) the composition of the Tourism Advisory Committee and the allowance paid to its members, and
- (d) the different dates on which the Advisory Committee held its meeting since its set-up.

(Withdrawn)

STUDENTS (NEEDY) - EXAM FEES - PAYMENT

(No. B/141) Mr. S. P. Roussety (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner responsible for Women's

Affairs, Child Development and Family Welfare whether, with regard to the payment of examination fee to needy students, she will, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) the criteria set by her Commission for the payment of examination fees to those students;
- (b) the number of beneficiaries for which her Commission has paid for half and full fees;
- (c) the total amount paid; and table a list of the beneficiaries.

(Withdrawn)

DISEASES OF CANCER & NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

(No. B/142) Mr. S. P. Roussety (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner responsible for Health & Others with regard to disease of cancer and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), he will, for the benefit of the House, state -

- (a) the number of persons suffering from cancer;
- (b) the number of persons under treatment for Non Communicable Diseases;
- (c) the number of patients who died with cancer and with diseases bound with Non Communicable Diseases from February 2009 to date;
- (d) whether there has been any increase/decrease in those deaths; and
- (e) table a list of the number of patients attending Non Communicable Disease Clinic at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital per month since January 2007 to date, and
- (f) villages covered by the NCD Mobile Clinic and the number of persons who attended same since January 2007 to date.

(Withdrawn)

MONT LUBIN - MARKET

(No. B/143) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) whether, as regards the construction of a market in the vicinity of *Mont. Lubin*, he will inform the House where matters stand.

(Withdrawn)

ANSE BALEINE - RESERVOIR

(No. B/144) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the feeding of 1000m³ capacity concrete reservoir of *Anse Baleine* with potable water, he will state where matter stands.

(Withdrawn)

**EDUCATORS – SECONDARY SCHOOLS –
PGCE TEACHERS’ DIPLOMA**

(No. B/145) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the last PRB Report on the facts that as from 2010 Educators in Secondary Schools should hold a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), he will inform the House the procedures, if any, that are being triggered by his Commission in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE), to provide facilities for teachers in the Secondary Schools to have PGCE Teacher’s Diploma and other related courses.

(Withdrawn)

