

**RODRIGUES
THIRD REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Debate No. 10 of 2012

Sitting of Tuesday 20 November 2012

The Assembly met in the Assembly House,
Port Mathurin, at 10.30 hours

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 20 TUESDAY 2012

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The Executive Council

(Formed by Mr. Louis Serge Clair, G.C.S.K.)

Mr. Louis Serge Clair, G.C.S.K.	Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Central Administration, Civil Aviation (Administration), Civil Status, Customs and Excise (Administration), Judicial (Administration), Legal Services, Marine Services (Administration), Meteorology (Administration), Education (Administration), Arts and Culture, Historical sites and Buildings, State Lands, Town and Country Planning, Fire Services, Prisons and Reform Institutions (Administration), Cooperatives, Agriculture, Food Production, Plant and Animal Quarantine, Statistics in respect of Rodrigues, Registration, Postal Services (Administration)
Mrs. Rose Marie Franchette Gaspard Pierre Louis	Deputy Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible Child Development, Family Welfare, Women's Affairs, Handicraft, Vocational Training, Information Technology and Telecommunications, Industrial Development
Mr. Simon Pierre Roussety	Commissioner responsible for Infrastructure including Highways and Roads and Public Buildings and Utilities, Housing, Transport, Water Resources
Mr. Louis Daniel Baptiste	Commissioner responsible for Social Security (Administration), Employment, Labour and Industrial Relations, Consumer Protection, Trade, Commerce and Licensing
Mr. Ismael Valimamode	Commissioner responsible for Health (Administration), Sports
Mr. Jean Richard Payendee	Commissioner responsible for Environment, Forestry, Tourism, Marine Parks, Fisheries
Ms. Marie Rose de Lima Edouard	Commissioner responsible for Youth, Community Development, Library Services, Archives, Museum

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Mr. Chairperson - Sooprayen, Mr. Soopramanien
Clerk - Parsooramen, Miss Marie Cristelle Joanna
Deputy Clerk - Legentil, Miss Marie Lyndia Yannick
Serjeant-at-Arms - Constant Perrine, Mr. Stenio

ANNOUNCEMENTS

QUESTIONS' LENGTH/CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Members, I have two announcements to make. Today Tuesday 20 November 2012 in our 10th sitting, from the Order Paper I have found that there are some questions, which really, by their length, might go against the practice of the National Assembly. I refer the Members to a ruling of this House on the 16 March 2004 whereby it was ruled that: *“The practice of the House is that questions should be limited to 75 words”*. I am afraid in future; I would have to follow more strictly Standing Order 19 (3) which says: *“The Chairperson may reject any question which he considers to be unduly long”*. I am afraid the Standing Order has to be followed most stringently as from now on: Respected Members, I have to add that I feel myself compelled to make the above announcements not to blame anybody in the House, but to draw your attention on the above issues for your future considerations in submitting questions to the Clerk. Also, during the previous sittings, my attention has been brought to some situations, which do not uphold the dignity of this House. I must remind the Members that our conduct must rise to the highest ethical standards and that Members are expected to act responsibly in a respectful manner with courtesy, dignity and positive regard to this House.

For security reason, it is an established principle that bags are not allowed within the premises of the Chamber. However, I wish to remind the Members that they have been allocated lockers, albeit not large ones, to put in their belongings and they are expected to use same judiciously since bags, suitcases are not allowed within the Chamber.

As far as refreshment is concerned, that is, food and drinks, may I refer you to the provisions of Erskine May to the effect that refreshment may not be brought into, or consumed in the Chamber.

Concerning the use of electronic or digital hand-held devices, including smart phones, laptops or tablets, I refer to the ruling of the National Assembly of the 30 October 2012 and again inform the Members that the use of smart phones, laptops or tablets is not allowed in the Chamber.

Thank you for your attention.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MANUAL, MINOR GRADES AND/OR GENERAL WORKERS

(No. B/112) **Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to manual, minor grades, and/or general workers employed on contract by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) the number of years that they have served the Rodrigues Regional Assembly;
- (b) what solution has been taken for their placement/employment on a permanent basis;
- (c) if his office has received any correspondence from within Rodrigues concerning them; and
- (d) if any correspondence has been received from or sent to the relevant authorities in Mauritius and, in the affirmative, to table same?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the two hundred and forty-three (243) General Workers were recruited on a month-to-month basis and not on a contract basis since 01 July 2010 and their employment have been extended until December 2012. It has to be pointed out in a letter dated 26 March 2010 the Public Service Commission has decided that the proposed employment shall not be against established posts but on a purely temporary month-to-month basis in order to meet the operational needs of the projects.

Allow me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir to quote paragraph 1 of the offer of employment to these General Workers recruited in 2010:-

“Your employment will be on a purely temporary month-to-month basis for a period of up to 12 months and liable to termination by one month to notice on either side and will not give you any claim to a permanent appointment in the Government Service. The employment may be terminated without notice or compensation in lieu of notice in the event of incompetence, misconduct or insubordination.”

May I also quote part of paragraph 2 of the letter of offer of the 187 employees as General Workers in 2004 which read as follows:-

“If you are favourably reported upon after one year’s service, consideration will be given to your appointment as General Worker in a

substantive capacity and you will be placed on the permanent and pensionable establishment. Your past services as from April 2001 on a contractual basis will not count towards your probationary period.”

As it is clearly spelt out, the terms of employment of those present General Workers are very clear. I have to further point out that the recruitment exercise has been the subject of inquiry by the Independent Commission against Corruption, a negative report from the Director of Audit.

In the light of the above, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has in a letter dated 24 September 2012, requested that the employment of the General Workers be ceased with effect as from 31 December 2012. Nevertheless, the matter is being taken up with relevant authorities in Mauritius and negotiation are still ongoing to find a solution to this problem. It would be inappropriate at this stage to disclose any information thereof. The House will be kept informed of any developments.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, even though the Chief Commissioner mentioned that the workers were not on a contract basis but as regards to the letter that the workers have received from the Island Chief Executive from the Chief Commissioner’s Office the first paragraph which read as: *“Pursuant to the power delegate by the Public Service Commission I am to offer you temporary employment as General Worker on a month-to-month basis”*. Can the Chief Commissioner state what difference he makes between employment and contract. Since he mentioned the workers are not on a contract what difference he makes between the two.

The Chief Commissioner: The letter to which the Respected Member is referring is number four of the letter. The employment will be on a purely temporary month-to-month basis for a period of up to twelve months and liable to termination by one-month notice. I have just replied the question because he is referring to the letter. On either side, I will give you any claim to a permanent in the government service. The employment may be terminated without notice of compensation in lieu of notice in the event of incompetence, misconduct or insubordination. The letter is clear and is a letter from the Public Service Commission and a copy was sent to the Director of Audit, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues, Departmental Head, Commission for Agriculture, Manager Financial Operations. The answer is clear, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the objective of my question is not to have a sort of quarrel. I want to have a solution for these workers. This is the objective of the question. I want to have a solution because we are today

on the 20 November, we are on the eve of December. All the workers, the 245 workers are in a sort of astonishment, confuse. I want this Assembly not to put these workers in a sort of confusion, we want a solution.

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. He is commenting, he is making a speech. He is not putting a question. I replied to his question. I said in the last paragraph of my reply. It is very clear. Nevertheless, the matter is being taken up with relevant authorities in Mauritius and negotiations are still ongoing to find a solution to the problem. It will be inappropriate at this stage to disclose any information thereof. The House will be kept inform of any developments. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I agree with the Chief Commissioner with what he has stated but we are on the eve of December, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: I think that the Chief Commissioner has already replied to the question.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether he can confirm that the services of the General Workers are tantamount to the development of Rodrigues and he has been talking about the negotiations which are under way. Can he confirm to the House that the negotiations are not mainly/solely about the problems of the General Workers but about the need of labour force if ever these General Workers are put off that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly needs labour force to continue the development of Rodrigues. Can he confirm to the House that negotiations is also going in that direction, that is, to keep up these General Workers so that to have their services going on.

The Chief Commissioner: I repeat once again, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it will be inappropriate at this stage to disclose any information thereof.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I want to add some more questions as regards to that issue.

Mr. Chairperson: Go straightforward.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I want to ask the Chief Commissioner whether the workers have been of great help to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The Chief Commissioner: They have been employed on a month-to-month basis for employment in the government. It is not my duty here to say if they have worked well or not. The question is the future of those 243 General Workers. As I have said, I replied in my answer. Everything has been said even letter sent to the workers. Even the answer from the Public Service Commission. I have also given the difference between those employed 187 who were on contract on Employee Development Funds (EDF) project with the difference of those employed now on a month-to-month basis. It is very clear a that.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I refer to the Pay Research Bureau Report Section 16 – Employment of contract and alternative mode of employment. Section 16 (6), I quote: *“It is understood that the implementation of the Programme Based Budgeting would be given more autonomy in terms of financing expenditure so that the overtime, so that we can have recourse to specific contractual employment”*. Can the Chief Commissioner adhere to that section of the PRB?

Mr. Chairperson: I am afraid that this question is not related to the main question. Last question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the workers have been working for more than twelve months, even more than twelve months since there has been a *tacite reconduction* at a point of time of employment. Will the Office of the Chief Commissioner be granted these workers a gratuity according to their length of service that they have served in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The Chief Commissioner: Allow me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to quote paragraph (1) of the offer of employment for these General Workers recruited in 2010: *“Your employment will be on a purely temporary month-to-month basis for a period up to twelve months and liable to termination by one month through notice on either side and will not give you any claim to a permanent employment in the government service. The employment may be terminated without notice of/or compensation in the event of incompetence, misconduct or insubordination”*. It is clear what has been said no compensation or anything else in that letter.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please.

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: I have just read an announcement. I think everyone of you have heard, understood what I have said in the announcement and this House is august and we have to comply with. Thank you.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

(No. B/113) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and others whether, in regard to water in Rodrigues to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) the distribution frequency per electoral region of Rodrigues;
- (b) table the distribution of water for the months of October to March for the year starting 2006 to date;
- (c) the volume of surface and underground water available from August 2012 to date;
- (d) the number of complaints received per water units sub section respectively; and
- (e) the number of households per reservoir?

The Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the distribution frequency per electoral region of Rodrigues is as follows:-

Region 1:	varies from 8 to 35 days
Region 2:	varies from 22 to 30 days
Region 3:	varies from 8 to 17 days
Region 4:	varies from 22 to 45 days
Region 5:	varies from 08 to 30 days
Region 6:	varies from 17 to 30 days

As regards to part (b), the information is being compiled.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (c) the volume of the surface water for the month of August 2012 is an average of 2,562 litres daily with a total of 79,422 litres. That of underground water is an average of 3,386 litres daily for a total of 104,966 litres.

/UNREVISED/

For the month of September the daily average of surface water is 2,335 litres and that of underground water is 2,767, thus for monthly average of 70,050 litres of surface water and 83,010 litres respectively.

The production for the month of October is an average of 1,542 litres daily and that of underground is 2,330 litres for a total of 47,802 litres and 72,230 respectively.

The surface water for the month of November is an average of 1,272 litres and that for underground water is 3,103 litres for a total of 25,440 and 62,060 litres for the month of November.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the number of complaints for the month of August 2012 to date is as follows:-

North region	-	236
Central Region	-	206
South Region	-	1001

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am astonished. Can we know from the Commissioner...

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have not answered part (b) of the question, the number of household per reservoir.

Mr. Chairperson: You may proceed.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: The number of household per reservoir:-

Montagne du Sable	-	127
Dans Limon	-	20
Manique	-	406

Mr. J. C. Agathe: On a point of order. Can the Commissioner table the answer for (b) please.

Mr. Chairperson: Let the Commissioner finish the last part of the question.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the question the Members has not mentioned to table the answer.

/UNREVISED/

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is my question. I want the Commissioner to table the answer. If ever, the answer will be long.

Mr. Chairperson: The Commissioner may or may not reply. Now it is up to you.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: The answer to (b), Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes proceed.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: The number of household per reservoir:-

Montagne du Sable	-	127
Dans Limon	-	20
Manique	-	406
Camp Pintade	-	147
Bengelique	-	16
Vangasaille	-	113
Grand la Fouche Corail	-	355
Citadelle	-	229
Mt. Cabris Oeust	-	216
Anse Quitor No. 1	-	148
Anse Quitor No. 2	-	142
Reposoir	-	64
Quatre Vents	-	946
Papayes	-	307
Rivière Cocos	-	414
Fond Banane	-	96
Anse Baleine	-	22
Parc Tortue	-	28
Tamarin	-	55
Hauteur Accacia	-	251
Allée Tamarin	-	303
Banane	-	68
Jardin Mamzelle	-	340
Grand Baie	-	113
Terre Rouge	-	708
Fond la Digue	-	57
Crève Coeur	-	590
Cascade Pigeon	-	39
Camp du Roi	-	51
Pavé la Bonté	-	352
Tindoye	-	43

/UNREVISED/

Citron Donis	-	306
Ste. Famille	-	181
Canne Paul Dam	-	195
Mourouk	-	209
Eau Claire	-	27
Cascade Victoire	-	53
Petit Gabriel	-	394
Malartic	-	947
Malabar 2	-	348
Mt. Plate Steel Reservoir	-	326
Mt. Plate Concrete	-	432
Deux Goyaves	-	188
Mt. Goyaves	-	224
Petit Brûlé	-	1048
Coromandel	-	466
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Grenade	-	119
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Source Tigomme	-	116
Marianne	-	73
Bassin Banane	-	31

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I want to ask the Commissioner as regards to Region No. 1 as regards to the frequency of water received in that region, can we know which places/reservoirs where we have water every eight days?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I do not have the answer but I will communicate later.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: It is very surprising that the Commissioner mentioned in Region 1 there is a place, which have water, which varies from 8 to 35 days. I am surprised to hear from the Commissioner that we have a region here in Rodrigues at that period of time which received water at the frequency of eight days. This answer, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that the Commissioner has to revise all the answers that he has given in this House.

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: He said he will give you an answer later.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I will give the answer later on. I do not have the answer for the moment.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources can you inform the House by what means data have been collected at the level of his Commission to ascertain the figures of volume for surface and underground water and whether he can inform the House again whether the volume of surface water informed in this House comprises also the water coming from the desalination plant of Songes?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the whole collecting figures have been the same as in the past. The figure concerning the water production should be analysed with great care. I have been informed that the flow meter at several boreholes is not reliable especially with the low flow rate so, this type of measuring has been as in the past.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I want to ask the Commissioner what is the demand in terms of potable water for the inhabitants of Rodrigues. What is the demand actually?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the demand for water for Rodrigues is about 10,000 m³ per day.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please last question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the demand for Rodrigues is 10,000 m³ per day and I want to ask the Commissioner, he has mentioned so many litres. I want the answer in meter cube to ascertain but I have no time to convert it into meter cube. The demand is 10,000 m³, what is the overall production of water daily?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered to this question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: What is the total, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question please.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner did not answer to my question. I ask the Commissioner to inform the House whether the volume of surface water in form just now comprises also of the volume of water coming from the desalination plant of Songes and serving the regions numbers 1 and 2.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the volume of water produced daily comprises the volume of water produced by Songes desalination plant.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, le commissaire responsable du secteur de l'eau à Rodrigues. Tous le monde est d'accord, M. le président, qu'actuellement Rodrigues fait face à une situation dramatique de l'eau. Tous les jours nous entendons dire à la radio qu'il ne faut pas gaspiller l'eau. Est-ce que le commissaire peut nous dire s'il a déjà été sollicité quand les gens de Baie du Nord concernant le problème d'eau, s'il a été à cet endroit et qu'a-t-il fait concernant cette situation parce que quand j'ai été là bas les personnes concernées ont déploré le fait que le commissaire n'a pas répondu à leurs appels. Il a promis de venir mais il n'est pas venu. Mais un tuyau *main* qui sort d'un batardeau et cassait depuis belle lurette et que l'eau est perdue durant toute la journée. Essayer de vous rendre compte de cette situation et qu'est-ce-qu'il compte faire ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le président, j'ai été à Baie du Nord il y a deux semaines de cela avec les gens de Baie du Nord. On a été voir les réservoirs dans Limon et aussi à Baie du Nord. Il avait eu un problème concernant la distribution et ça c'est réglé. Mais concernant ce que le Minority Leader dit qu'il y a des tuyaux qui sont cassés, je ne suis pas courant personne ne m'a appelé.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please.

The Minority Leader: May I request the Commissioner because he has just confirmed to see to it that the water network is being repaired at the earliest.

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry Minority Leader I have already said next question please. If the Commissioner wish to reply.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I wish to thank the Minority Leader for his suggestion we will do it tomorrow.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question please.

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION – PROBLEMS FACED/COMPENSATION

(No. B/114) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to livestock production in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) the problems the farmers are facing to date and what is being done to remedy the situation; and
- (b) as a result of the problems mentioned above, if any compensation is envisaged to them and, if not, why?

DROUGHT SEASON

(No. B/117) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the prevailing drought situation in Rodrigues, he can inform the House of-

- (a) the measures his Commission has taken or is contemplating to take with a view to alleviate the burden and sustain the livelihood of farmers and planters who are being affected; and
- (b) any reported case of losses both in crops and animals, and, if yes, to table the names of those concerned, specifying the nature of losses and their costs?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission I will reply to question B/114 and B/117 together as they are related.

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry to disturb you. Do please take your seat. I have heard something which the First Local Region Member said in "*patois or french*" about *arbitre* etc. I think you want to refer to someone or somebody. Please continue.

The Chief Commissioner: With the prevailing drought, both planters and livestock farmers like other economic operators and the population in general have to cope with the problem of water shortage. Moreover, as most farmers of cattle, sheep and goats are practicing extensive farming system whereby their animals rely mainly on grazing on the common pastures, it is expected that depending on the time of the onset of the summer rains these farmers may also have to cope with scarcity of fodder that can lead to loss of body condition of their livestock and under really extreme condition there may be death through starvation.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, water is being provided by cisterns to water troughs in the western part of the island (Camp Pintade and Mt Plate) where water

shortage is more drastic. The problem of water shortage has been recurring over the years; unfortunately, the previous regional government has taken no significant measures to address this issue.

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Do not disturb please. You will have time for supplementary question, please.

The Chief Commissioner: It is now that my government is initiating action to install regional water desalination plants at Pointe Venus, Caverne Bouteille, Pointe Coton and Baie Malgache to solve the problem of water supply in general and by extension to these two sectors of our economy. Besides fund has been provided in the PBB for next fiscal year for the construction of two “*retenues collinaires*” and the upgrading of the existing “*retenues collinaires*” for rainwater harvesting and storage for agricultural purpose.

In line with our policy to make Rodrigues an Ecological Island in the context of the national programme of Maurice Ile Durable, as announced in my budget speech we intend to advocate for the adoption of “*une agriculture écologique*” which according to the FAO is the solution to feed the increasing world population and to adapt agricultural production to climate change.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Small Farmers Welfare Fund has launched an Agricultural Calamity Solidarity Scheme (ACASS) to assist both registered planters and farmers who incurred crop or livestock losses by natural calamities. This scheme, which is being implemented on a pilot basis, is presently being reviewed in the light of planters/farmers representations. Agricultural producers both farmers and planters will be encouraged to join the scheme to avail of the assistance provided in case of losses due to natural calamities.

In the same process Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is setting up a desk at the level of our Extension Offices where planters and farmers can report any case of losses during the prevailing dry period. Extension Officers will attend all the reported cases and submit report accordingly to my Commission for further consideration.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with the collaboration of Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU) we have launched the sale of molasses block in Rodrigues on the occasion of the celebration of the World Food Day 2012 on 20 October 2012. These blocks are feed supplement, which allow ruminants (cattle, sheep and goat) to better utilize dry fodder even that of a very poor

quality. The FACER will import molasses block should there be a demand from the farmers who are being advised of the advantages of its utilization by the extension services.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am advised that there has been no specific report of loss of crop or animals reported to the Commission. However, it is unfortunate that many onion and bean planters have not reaped the normal expected harvest during this year due to erratic climate.

However, some 22 cases of weakness and recumbency in cattle have been reported to the Veterinary Services, which are being attended and treated by the Veterinary Officers. Farmers are being advised of measures of precaution to take during this drought period.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that we are facing severe drought period I will ask the Chief Commissioner whether being given that there is a high price on livestock feed and this affects the farmers greatly. I will ask the Chief Commissioner if he can see to it that there is as usual, as in the past also a rebate price as regards to livestock feed.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this question has already been raised with the Prime Minister and Ministry of Finance.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I agree with him that this issue has been discussed with the Prime Minister but what has been the outcome because now the farmers are facing this problem.

Mr. Chairperson: Please wait, Mr. Chief Commissioner. I think that in one way the Chief Commissioner said the question has already been raised. Now you want to know the outcome. It is up to him to reply if he wants to reply.

The Chief Commissioner: We are waiting for the outcome/answer from the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at the moment the farmers are facing with a lack of livestock feed on the market. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether there has been any correspondences with the Mauritius Shipping so as to prevent any penury of livestock feed in the forthcoming days during this period of drought?

The Chief Commissioner: According to information there is not only livestock feed which are not being embarked on the Mauritius Pride or the

Trochetia. Any other things also, containers of other goods also. There is the problem of transporting containers and my colleague is having contacts with the Mauritius Shipping Corporation so that there can be much more frequent trips from Mauritius to Rodrigues.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a problem as regards to farmers of the western region of Rodrigues. May be the officers of the Veterinary Unit have not been able to go up to "*de l'eau vert*" a place called "*de L'eau Vert*" in Rodrigues. There, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I myself I saw cows. The person...

Mr. Chairperson: Do not make a debate of the question. Put your question. You go straight forward, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, at these places, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I saw with my naked eyes that cattle were dead there. At least four, cattle were dead now, right now. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would ask the Chief Commissioner if he can call upon this service, Veterinary Service, not to go only on the road but to enter also in places where animals are being reared there so that he can have an idea of what problem the farmers are facing.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said in my question, the farmers should report to the Veterinary Service and whenever there is a report to the service, he will go on spot and see.

Mr. J. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner just informed the House that the scheme for relief for respected natural calamities is being reviewed at the level of his Commission. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner what has motivated him or his Commission to review the scheme and what are the specific issues that are being reviewed and why?

The Chief Commissioner: We have not yet worked on that question.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether apart from the severe drought which is prevailing now whether over grazing is also a problem which is impacting on our ecology and is also a sort of problem to the farmers themselves, and if yes what is he contemplating in order to sort out this problem.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we all know that we are in a drought season and over grazing, every animal go here and there to look for food but unfortunately there is no rain. We are in a drought season.

The Minority Leader: May be the Chief Commissioner has not well understood my question. My question is not only during drought period, in normal times the amount/stock of animals being reared in Rodrigues, has there been any assessment on the number of animals which are being grazed in Rodrigues and it is this cause over grazing and if yes what does he intend to do in order to avoid such problem on the ecology of the island.

The Chief Commissioner: The Commission has already worked on that since coming into function at the Commission of Agriculture. We have already worked on a plan of community pasture and see also that animal cannot roaming about here and there, grazing in the garden of people. We are working on what we call community pastures and what we have also noticed that there is a lot of damages caused to the fencing of the pastures, which already exist. We have already worked on that.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please.

UNEMPLOYMENT

(No. B/115) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to unemployment to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) the number of unemployed and the total amount of money paid as Unemployment Hardship Relief from February 2012 to date respectively;
- (b) the number of workers attending the office of conciliation and mediation and the number of cases attended to and reconciled to date;
- (c) the number of active population;
- (d) the percentage of unemployment over active population;
- (e) the number of workers on placement from February 2012 to date; and
- (f) the number of workers attending his office for labour dispute and number of cases settled by mutual agreement or through court of law and the number of pending cases?

The Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the number of registered unemployed as at September 2012 stood at 3135. The total amount of money paid as Unemployed Hardship Relief from February 2012 to date is Rs 8,667,022.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (b) of the question as far as I know there did not exist any institution in the name of “Office of Conciliation and Mediation” in Rodrigues, therefore the question does not arise.

As for part (c) and (d), according to information obtained from the Director of Statistics the active population for the year 2011 was 20,000 and percentage of unemployed of the active population is 11% and these figures are based on the continuous multi-purpose household survey. More updated figures for the year 2012 are not yet available.

As for part (e), a total of 25 registered job seekers have been placed by my Commission since February 2012 to date against only 8 in 2011. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Labour Office of my Commission has received a total of 144 complaints since February 2012 to date. 125 complaints have been settled through mutual agreement and 19 cases still pending.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to Mauritius, the island, the Republic of Mauritius, the level/rate of unemployment is 8% compared to Rodrigues, which is 11%. The Commissioner is now mentioning that he has placed only 25 unemployed in different firms of Rodrigues. I see from the figure that the number of unemployment is increasing, it is 3135. 25 people are on placement out of 3135, the figure is almost more alarming. What is the Commissioner doing to overcome this *courbe ascendante*?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I am a bit surprise by this question because if I see the result for 2011 it was not better, only 8 out of 2955. 25 are still much better. Let me tell you also that as at September, there were 3135 registered unemployed but the highest figure was registered in April 2010 where 3382 persons were registered as unemployed. By the way I should say that there has been an improvement as compared to April 2012 where the number of registered of unemployed stood at 3165.

As you must be aware, the Commissioner for Entrepreneuriat, the Deputy Chief Commissioner has already announced a lot of projects relating to small enterprises where we expect to employ a quite a large number of person and we also have a lot of infrastructural projects for the year 2013 such as roads, hospitals, extension of schools where we expect more job to be created to reduce this pledge.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner is comparing the figure from when I was in office. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, compared to last year, we have placed more than 1000 to 2000 including Water Company,

workers on contract and now you are going to sack them out. You mentioned that you have “*comme si oune casse ene grand paké*”.

Mr. Chairperson: What is your question, please?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to (b), the Commissioner mentioned that there is no office for the Conciliation and Mediation at the level of his Commission. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, where does the Chairman of the Conciliation and Mediation receive the public.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am once again surprised by the Member from the other side of the House. He was himself responsible for the Commission for Industrial Relation and when the Employment Rights Act was *promulguer en 2008* the section 99 of the Employment Relation Act make provision for the establishment of a Rodrigues Commission for Conciliation and Mediation. It is in the law, so it is not an office. It is something different, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can someone who has got a problem with his employer, where will this person go. Can we know as from now here where will the worker go?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: To the Rodrigues Commission for Conciliation and Mediation or the Labour Office at Port Mathurin, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: The number of workers, we want to know the number of workers attending this office.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: The Member should be clear about his question. Anyway, I could have refused to answer to this because this question goes against section 19 of the Standing Order. I am telling you...

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Commissioner please sits down. This kind of word I will not accept here. You cannot say “*remplace the Chairperson*”. Once again, I repeat you are intelligent and not childish. Do not be child like. Proceed.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: What the Commissioner is mentioning. At the very beginning, you gave your ruling to the length of question that we have to ask here and the Commissioner is still going on with this. This is why.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please.

**ACQUISITION OF NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS – RRA
- FISCAL YEAR 2012**

(No. B/116) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for fiscal year 2012, he will, for the benefit of the House-

- (a) state and table all the projects by programmes executed so far since February 2012, which are either completed or still on-going, together with the names of the contractors and the cost of each project;
- (b) state the bidding procedures used for each project; and
- (c) give a breakdown of expenses incurred with the projects and any outstanding balance thereon since February 2012 to date?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the projects by programmes executed so far since February 2012, as well as the other information requested, the information is still being compiled and will be tabled at the Library of the Assembly shortly.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner state whether he has received any fund from any organisation as regards to SMART FISH and so on. Whether we have received any fund from these organisations.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said, the information is being compiled. It is being compiled because there is a lot of information in what we are going to table.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner, I know he has said that information is being compiled but at least can he inform the House what capital projects under the acquisition of non-financial assets in PBB 2012 has he been able to execute up to now. Can he mention a few of them and tell us where matters stand as regards the progress of the work.

The Chief Commissioner: The answer to this question is in the information, which is being compiled and be laid in the Regional Assembly.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: We are not hearing what the Chief Commissioner is saying. I do not know if there is a problem with the microphone but every time he speaks, we do not hear from this side of the House.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I heard from the national television that the Minister for Local Government has granted money Rs 200 m for the Republic of Mauritius including the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and I understand that we have received Rs 50 m. Can the Chief Commissioner state what has been done with these amount received.

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question, Sir.

The Minority Leader: May I ask the Chief Commissioner whether the Executive Council took decision to implement any capital project during the course of this year and if so to give the names of these projects.

The Chief Commissioner: As I have said, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are compiling all these information, which will be tabled in the Library of the Assembly.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please.

DROUGHT SEASON

(No. B/117) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the prevailing drought situation in Rodrigues, he can inform the House of-

- (c) the measures his Commission has taken or is contemplating to take with a view to alleviate the burden and sustain the livelihood of farmers and planters who are being affected; and
- (d) any reported case of losses both in crops and in animals, and, if yes, to table the names of those concerned, specifying the nature of losses and their costs?

[Answered together with B/114]

RELINQUISHMENT - FISHERMEN CARDS

(No. B/118) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (The Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to relinquishment of fishermen cards, he will inform the House of:-

- (a) the number of applicants for such scheme since the beginning of the year to date and table their names, addresses, and mode of living;
- (b) the number of cases awaiting for outstanding payment and reasons for delay, if any; and
- (c) the mechanisms put in place to monitor the alternative livelihood projects of those concerned.

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that no fishers have relinquished their cards for the current year as stipulated in the question.

With regard to part (b) of the question, 135 cases are awaiting payment. Out of these 135 cases, 66 had some small problems with the Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM) which has been solved and has already been paid the sum of Rs 24,000 and have Rs 6,000 remaining and this will be paid in two months as it is being paid at the rate of Rs 3,000 a month.

The other 69 cases have problems with the DBM, 29 cases have not yet submitted certificates of liabilities and 40 cases have their certificate on the names of both spouses, which is creating some confusion. These cases are being dealt with on a personal basis.

As regards part (c) of the question no monitoring mechanisms was put in place when this scheme was put forward under the former government. The only mechanism which was there was a set of criteria to identify those fishers who were eligible for the alternative livelihood projects. The Commission for Agriculture was requested to conduct an enquiry on the issue of the alternative livelihood prior to the fishers relinquishing their cards. Those found eligible for the scheme by the former government are those who are receiving the compensation.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to the Commissioner it seems that he is still attending outstanding cases left by previous government but may I remind him that under Programme 215, Sustainable Fisheries Development, that is, Compensation to Fishers under the Redeployment Scheme there was earmarked a sum of Rs 5 m. and up to now the Commissioner said that he has attended to no case at all concerning that specific item. May I ask the Commissioner therefore, what is his policy as regards

relinquishment of fishermen cards, that is, the redeployment of scheme of fishermen.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I never said that no case has already been tackled. I said in the question, the question was about outstanding payment but there were 19 cases where the people have already been paid. So this is something, which was not in the question so I did not answer it. Just to clear my position is we still have got the money and these people will be paid but the fact that there is problem with these people, with the Development Bank of Mauritius and some people have got some cases both spouses are on the bank account and these normally the man owes money to the bank and this is causing a lot of problem and the wife does not want to cut the money from the bank. So it is very confusing and that is why I said in my answer that these cases have been dealt on a personal basis. I am not saying that we are not paying these people. I am saying that some cases have to be dealt on a personal basis because of the problem I have already mentioned.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has not replied to my last question. I asked him whether he intends to go ahead with the policy of redeployment scheme for fishermen. If not, what is his policy because in PBB 2013, I think he has still put money for that project to continue?

Mr. R. Payendee: We are working on this because our plan is to make this island an ecological island. As long as we can remove people from the lagoon, we will do it but of course we will have to work on it in a very scientific way to make sure that we are not taking people out of the lagoon just to get their card back and then these people goes back to the lagoon when everyday they go back to fish in the lagoon. It is a waste of time and money to remove people from the lagoon just to get their cards back. The idea, the main thing is not to get their card back the main thing is to have these people to do something else on the land so that the lagoon can breathe.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I fully agree with the Commissioner. He has said to get something done on land but fishermen can get their lives in other ways in the sea not only on land because you see how many problem they are facing now because the redeployment scheme has shown some weaknesses. There are not enough projects for people especially for fishermen who have spent all their lives at sea to do jobs on land. Therefore, may I ask him how long will it take. What is he doing right now so that by next year because one year is already over. He has not done anything on that and for next when is he going to implement the scheme whether early next year or I do not know when. May I ask him to tell us more about that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I do not want to reveal all our secrets here. This is coming but as I said anything that we can do, I am sure the Minority Leader is talking about aquaculture something like this but there is a question on this, which is coming. We will explain it when I get the question but just to be clear that this government is a government which prone really ecology, protection of the environment and the benefit and welfare of the fishermen. So anything that we can do to make them happy. You will see what we did with the octopus. The same type of thing will be coming in the future. So just wait you will see.

Mr. Chairperson: One last question, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the alternative livelihood projects. I heard from the television, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that one firm want to help Rodrigues as regards to “*L’Or Bleu*” as regards to our ocean, our lagoon, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, he want to invest in Rodrigues. I want the Commissioner, first of all, to state where does matters stand as regards to this project and secondly, if ever he himself or his office have been able to meet the Ministry for Fisheries in Mauritius so as to obtain more funds to help the people, the fishing community of Rodrigues.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this government is very careful. We do not jump on anything just coming like this and take it on board. We have to be very careful with the ecology. So let us take, for example, when the former government was there, there was a project with aquaculture or crab rearing at Baie Malgache. What has happened to this project? You can see these people are building houses there. They do not see a small crab. We just need to be careful. We will study whatever project. Whatever project coming we will give the chance. We will study it and make sure. Money is not important for us. What is important for us is the benefit of this island, the ecology of this island, the environment of this island and the benefit of the fishermen. We will do a combination on all these and we will make sure in the four years to come. Then you will see what will happen to the marine environment on this island. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question, please.

UPGRADING/REALIGNMENT – BRULE/PTE. COTON ROAD

(No. B/119) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (The Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in regard to the upgrading and realignment of the Brûlé to Pte Coton road, he will inform the House of-

- (a) the cost of the project, its scope of work and completion date;
- (b) any modification in the initial realignment/upgrading plan of the road; and
- (c) table the initial plan and the modified one for the benefit of the House, if any?

The Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the estimated cost of upgrading and realignment of Brûlé to Pointe Coton road is Rs 131,800,000. This amount is breakdown as follows:

- (i) Pointe Coton to Roche Bon Dieu road of length 2.95 m – Rs 69,779,506.57
- (ii) Roche Bon Dieu to Brûlé – Rs 62,036,466.87

The project comprises of the upgrading and major realignments of the road from Brûlé to Pointe Coton of a total length 5.2 km and consists of:-

- (a) Earthworks – cut and fill for visibility and to reach new project levels;
- (b) Masonry works for drainage and road edges;
- (c) Road works;
- (d) Asphalt work;
- (e) Safety equipment including road marking and traffic signs.

The project is being implemented in two phases.

Phase 1 of the projects, which are the construction of the stretch from Pointe Coton to Roche Bon Dieu, is ongoing and works for this phase, is expected to be completed by the 15 March 2013.

Phase 2 of the project from Roche Bon Dieu to Brûlé will be implemented in the next financial year.

As regards part (b), there has been no modification to the initial realignment/upgrading plan of the road.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the proposed design layout for the upgrading of Pointe Coton to Roche Bon Dieu. **(Appendix I)**

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure inform the House whether there will be a new main electrical network and telephone network alongside the road aerial or underground and if yes, whether the scope of works are included for both network included in the main contract and/or whether main same is separated? Whether the cost for new electrical and telephone network is included in the main contract or whether same is separated?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, of course, some poles of the Central Electricity Board network have to be realigned, to be displaced and the amount to be paid for the displacement of these poles is amount to Rs 1,125,000.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Is it included in the main contract or has there been a separated payment to the CEB to do this new electrical network?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No, it is not in the main contract, it is separated.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner state/inform the House whether there will be drain alongside the road on both sides of the road.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Of course, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when need be there will be drains.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner for Public Infrastructure inform the House whether there will be any relocation of houses during the construction of this road.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the moment no but if there is need be we will do it later on.

The Minority Leader: May I ask the Commissioner whether there is any hotel projects or any tourism relative project in or near the new road realignment and if so, to give the name/s of the promoters.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware whether there will be a hotel near the road that is being constructed but the Cadastre has been there to give alignment for the road. I am not aware of a hotel project.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the question, my colleague, Mr. Spéville also mentioned the telephone lines. Will this item also

be included in the price quoted or will it be separated and if yes, what is the price?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware about the realignment of poles of the Mauritius Telecom. This problem is being dealt with Colas and Mauritius Telecom.

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Members, I have a request from the Fourth Island Region Member who wishes to withdraw B/124 and before taking next question, I invite the Deputy Chairperson to take the chair, please.

At this stage at 11.47 hours, the Deputy Chairperson took the chair.

FREE BOOK LOAN SCHEME

(No. B/120) The Second Island Region Member (Mrs. M. D. L. C. Meunier) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the “Free Book Loan Scheme” set up in 2007, he will inform the House if same will be available for academic year 2013, and, in the affirmative, to state if the scheme will be applied same as in previous years, and, in the negative, to inform the House of the reason thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the “Free Book Loan Scheme”, I wish to inform the House that the scheme will be applied for academic year 2013 under the same terms and conditions as in previous years.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner therefore inform the House about the forecast cost of the re-scheme for next year and from which item vote the money will be taken.

The Chief Commissioner: This is the Programme 304 – Secondary Education item 22900925 – Books for Needy Students.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether a survey has been made at the level of the schools to see whether there has been any decrease in the number of books, in the stocks and if yes, what is being made to address same so that each student is in possession of all his books in January 2013.

The Chief Commissioner: All the exercises have been done with the REDCO and Rectors of different colleges. That is why we have decided to have

the same terms as it was done in the last years. Everything has been done with different colleges and rectors.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether there will be any change in the *manuel scolaire* in the different books and if yes, what is being done to address same for schools in January 2013.

The Chief Commissioner: Some books are not available on the local market. The Rectors have been advised accordingly and for a decision regarding alternatives.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Chief Commissioner therefore reassuring us that for academic year 2013 the students will get their books on time and not have to wait undue... he has to give us his answer now.

The Chief Commissioner: All arrangements have been made for the year 2013. Quotation launched on 01 October 2012 for the procurement of additional and new books and successful bidder "*Edition de L'Océan Indien*", B & Books Centre Ltd. Quotation launched anew on 25 October 2012 for books not offered by above mentioned successful bidders. There have been other bidders, successful bidder, Ernest Store, "*Edition de L'Océan Indien*".

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at times there are delays as regards to the availability of books. Since we are today 20 November, I think/understand that by the end of this month all the students of Rodrigues will obtain their books. What is being done at the level of his office so as to overcome the problem of delays?

The Chief Commissioner: As we said all the matters have been taken with the different Rectors by the Departmental Head of Education and unfortunately some books as I said are not available on the local market and the Rectors have been advised accordingly for a decision regarding alternatives.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will ask the Chief Commissioner whether he can inform the House if the Free Book Loan Scheme will also be applied for new subjects that will be introduced next year in school, for example, Entrepreneuriat, whether the Free Book Loan Scheme will also be applied to these new subjects?

The Chief Commissioner: Everything is included in the Free Book Loan Scheme even if there are new subjects to be taught at the level of secondary school.

**SLAUGHTER HOUSE AT BAIE DIAMANT
PERCENTAGE OF COMPLETION/BILLS PAID**

(No. B/121) Mrs. M.D.L.C. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of the slaughter house at Baie Diamant under the Food Security Fund, he will inform the House:-

- (a) of the percentage completion up to now; and
- (b) in detail of the number of bills certified and paid to now?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the contract for the construction of the Slaughter House was awarded to Como Construction on 05 December 2011 for the total sum of Rs 56, 212,885.50 (inclusive of VAT) and the contractual completion date is 15 January 2015.

As per assumption of the consultant, Atelier d'Architecture Diagonale II, the overall progress of the works is at date is around 70% as per detailed scope of works as follows:-

- Substructure – 90% completed
- Superstructure – 72% completed
- Plastering – 30% completed
- Boundary wall – 50% completed
- Tarmac – Not yet started
- Evaporation – Not yet started

In addition, as per the consultant, it is to be noted however that there will be an estimated delay of one month for the completion of the overall works, but the contractor has informed that all the works will be completed within the contractual period.

As regards to part (b) of the question, six claims for a total amount of Rs 12, 189, 968.68 have been certified and paid. I am tabling the details of these payments. **(Appendix II)**

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform us whether he is going to table bills certified and paid but are there other outstanding bills?

The Chief Commissioner: Out of the payment effected Rs 2,254,043 has been paid from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, funds the remaining Rs 9,935,000 have been paid under the Food Security Fund. The contract for the consultancy services has been awarded to Atelier d'Architecture Diagonale II Company Ltd. for a total sum of Rs 1,000,900 and to date Rs 665,000 have been paid to the consultant who has just submitted an additional claims for an amount of Rs 110,000. According to my information, some claims are still to be paid.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether there has been a changed in the scope of work of the initial project and whether that change has caused an increase or decrease in the whole project value, the total project value, whether there has been a change in the scope of work as initially?

The Chief Commissioner: It seems that there has been a change in the scope of work but unfortunately, I do not have the exact information here.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, being given that there has been a change in the scope of work of the slaughterhouse, can the Chief Commissioner state whether the slaughterhouse is really of European norms?

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has stated that 70% of work has been completed up till now and started in December 2011 and now in 2012 and it is due to finish in 2015. I just wanted to get some clarification about 30 persons work left why is it going to take so long to cover. Is there any specific reason?

The Chief Commissioner: I must say something very important. The Project Plan Committee (PPC) in its fourth report dated 18 October 2010 has made the remark that being given that the project has already started the Project Plan Committee approval is not required at the stage and as advised that financial clearance would be conditional to Project Manager processed being reviewed outlying clearly the scope of services of the consultant under Project Manager. Course recovery measures especially for export market could be explored. The Director of Audit in his annual report 2011 has emphasize on the lack of planning since the beginning of the project and has recommended that

the Commission should without delay seek expert advice on whether it is still cost effective to continue with the construction of the slaughter house which was definitely not properly planned and for this reason we have some difficulties to have finance from the Ministry of Finance. So we are going ahead to negotiate so that the building can be completed according to the completion time.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether the slaughter house will be rain water fed and whether they envisage to use sea water for some water use at the level of house.

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, because the Chief Commissioner has just said that the slaughterhouse is not financially cost effective. Can we have a confirmation from the Chief Commissioner that the project will keep on going, whether they will keep on doing, the project despite the fact that the Ministry of Finance or whatever has said that it is not cost effective? Since he said that he is going to negotiate for more money to complete the project. So there is a question there!

The Chief Commissioner: That is what I said we need money to complete the project.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2012 CELEBRATION

(No. B/122) Mrs. M. D. L. C. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to the celebration of Remembrance Day 2012 on Sunday 11 November 2012, he will inform the House as to the procedure to take the decision to hold same at the Quay of Port-Mathurin?

The Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the decision to hold the Remembrance Day at the quay of Port Mathurin on Sunday 11 November 2012 is a proposal of the organization committee under my chairmanship and same was approved by the Executive Council. I must inform the House the Quay more precisely at the *Monument aux engagés volontaires* is the site where the Remembrance Day has always been commemorated since long except for the year 2011. This is the place where those engaged in World Wars I, II embarked, and they left Rodrigues in 1914 and 1943 respectively.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform us about the composition of this organization committee of which he mentioned he is the chairperson?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Members of the ex-service man, the President and the Secretary of the Ex-Service Man Association as well as other officers from my commission.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform us whether he is aware that there is, as he mentioned himself, only last year we did not commemorate the Remembrance Day at the Quay because we commemorated it at another place. Is the Commissioner know where was that and for what reason we commemorated it there.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: *Nous n'avons pas voulu changer l'histoire, M. le président.* Anyway, I learnt that this was organised at Pointe Canon but no one was in a position to tell us for what reason because we could not find anything in any document or record as to the reason why this monument has been erected at this place. As from information gathered from Police officers, the Divisional Commander was also part of this committee, he said that they had a lot of difficulty for the parade last year and for this reason, it was not appropriate.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: I will not go into explaining to the Commissioner because it is question time why the monument was built/erected there, by whom or for what reason but I would like now to ask the Commissioner since there is this monument at the request of the Ex-Service Men Association what is it going to be used for in the future and whether there is any future projects with regard to ex-service man in Rodrigues?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I would like first of all to say that it is true that the president of the Ex-Service Men said that they wanted to have a monument but the monument was mainly to display the names of those who sacrificed for the World Wars not for the plate for Commissioners or Ministers or whatsoever. We will see with those people how to build a new one in line with what the members of *anciens combattants* want.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: The Commissioner just mentioned that the appropriate place to commemorate Remembrance Day is at the Quay. Why now is the Commissioner talking about another monument and I am, asking again is there any project that the Commissioner and the commission are envisaging for these ex-service men.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: There is another monument to be raised. It will be at the same place – *engagés aux volontaire*, with the names of those who worked these world wars, as I said earlier, not for Commissioners or Ministers.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that public money has been used to erect a monument at Pointe Canon and this monument was erected at the request of those concerned, that is, the ex-service men themselves. Now if the Commissioner finds something wrong with the monument, he has mentioned, for example, there is only plate of Commissioners and not those of the ex-service men, those who have sacrificed themselves in wars. Is he prepared to replace, for example, the actual plate by those of the ex-service man who has lost their lives at war at the actual place and not come up with a new monument?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: This was constructed *à la va vite*, as I know. I do not know for which reason but as I said the place is not appropriate, it is small, we do not have enough space, for example, for the parade, which is the main part of the ceremony, and as I said we do not want to *efface l'histoire*, it has nothing to do with this.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Next, question, please.

PROJECTS NOT IMPLEMENTED – COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

(No. B/123) Mrs. M. D. L. C. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure whether, in regard to fiscal year 2012, he will, for the benefit of the House, table a list of projects falling under his Commission which have not been implemented as per Programme Based Budget 2012?

The Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am hereby tabling the list of projects falling under my Commission as per Programme Based Budget 2012 which have not been implemented. **(Appendix III)**

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, what was the cause/main reason for not having completed the project?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Unavailability of funds, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, and some of the projects were not budgeted even if it was in the PBB.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Which projects is he mentioning?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Will the Commissioner answer this question?

[Interruptions]

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, out of these six projects mentioned here, can we know which projects. Why you have said unavailability of funds and these projects have not been in the PBB, we want to know which one?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: For example, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, provision of 5000 gutters, construction of three new reservoirs, construction and upgrading of 5 kms of road, creation of ten children gardens and green space, construction of 420 concrete basins, construction of three new reservoirs of 1 m³ concrete.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the first one construction of new 1000 m³ concrete reservoir, I understand, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, that we are going to obtain fund from the Ministry for Public Utilities from Mauritius. Can we know what has been done with this sum?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, there is only two 1000 m³ reservoirs, which have been constructed by previous government. This began in 2011 and construction was terminated in 2012. So, there is no fund in 2012 budget for construction of 1000 m³ reservoir and I have been informed that there has been no money that should have been received from the Ministry of Public Utilities for construction of reservoir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: As regards to creation of ten children gardens/green space, the project was started by the former government. You can see it all around Rodrigues the project was started by the former government and now I see here the creation of children gardens/green space appears on the list. Can we know from the Commissioner what ten more green space he is mentioning about.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, they inserted the project in the PBB but in the budget there is no money. Rs 70 m. were for the construction of roads, we had to pay Rs 110 m., Rs 29 m. for water projects and we had to pay more than Rs 40 m. So we had no money for construction of children gardens.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I think the Commissioner had not understood the question. The green spaces/children

gardens have already been done. When you go at Baie Malgache you will see, Montagne du Sable, Mangues, Maréchal and so on you will see all these. How come that these places now appear in the list of the Commissioner.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: These places do not appear on the list. It is new ones that were projected to be constructed this year by the previous government. We have not done any children gardens; there is no fund for children gardens in the PBB in the budget of 2012.

POTHOLES

- CAMP DU ROI TO ACCACIA/RIVIERE COCO TO CAMP PAUL

(No. B/124) Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in view of difficulties faced by vehicle owners, ambulances transporting patients to get access to the roads of Camp du Roi to Accacia and Rivière Coco to Camp Paul due to potholes, he will inform the House, what actions are being taken to remedy this situation?

[Withdrawn]

QUALITY OF FOOD

(No. B/125) Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in view to enhance the quality of food (milk, meat) in the island and improve local food production, he will inform the House of the number of piglets, goats, sheep and cows which are being sold to farmers at the level of his Commission?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, as at date, during this fiscal year only some 174 piglets have been sold to farmers, while 7 milch cattle, 3 beef cattle, 35 sheep and 70 piglets are available for sale. Last year the Commission sold 13 dairy cattle, 9 beef cattle, 356 piglets, 2 goats and 35 sheep to farmers.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, considering the limited capacity of the livestock production unit to meet farmer's demand for breeding stock, it has been decided that breeding rams will be rented to eligible farmers for short period of three months against payment of nominal fee and subject to the signature of an agreement between my Commission and the beneficiaries. Under this new arrangement, the breeding rams available will be able to service the herds of more farmers. The waiting list for the purchase of rams dates as far back as 2006. In the past renting of beef, bull to farmers was resorted and

farmers were fully satisfied with the arrangement. It is intended to renew this practice for the effective improvement of farmers' beef herds. Other types of livestock like ewes, piglets and heifers will continue to be sold to farmers.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, in line with our vision to boost up the Cooperatives Sector in Rodrigues, my Commission will encourage farmers' cooperative to produce quality piglet to meet the increasing demand from the pig farmers and the public in general. As such, my Commission will be in a better position to provide appropriate subsidies to the farmers' cooperatives to cater for the increasing cost of production.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether with regard to the limited number of livestock that has been sold to farmers whether his commission intends to go ahead with *asémination artificiel* in the farming sector?

The Chief Commissioner: We had web meetings on that question in artificial insemination and in Mauritius, this is being done. I think next year we are sending a mission to Mauritius in order to see exactly how this is being done and also our technicians should be trained on the question and I think in the future this will be done.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the same decision was taken since 2006 as regards to lend, animal to farmers and at that point of time there was problem that the Commission for Agriculture has obtained with the farmers even though if they have signed an agreement with the Commission for Agriculture. Will the Chief Commissioner see to it that the animals that have been lend to farmers are being done, monitored in a way so that every citizen of this country, the farmers can have the possibility to have these animals on loan.

The Chief Commissioner: This decision has been taken and we have all discussed. The extension officers will monitor this project.

POLICY/AQUACULTURE - FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT

(No. B/126) Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to fisheries development in Rodrigues, he will inform the House of his policy concerning aquaculture.

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, aquaculture can do a lot of good to Rodrigues and also can cause a lot of damage to our natural ecosystems

if not well thought through. This government is not against aquaculture but we will be very careful with any aquaculture project in order to make sure that such activity does not cause irreversible damage to our natural ecosystem. The fact that we want to have Rodrigues an ecological island.

Our vision is that for all aquaculture projects including government projects to be implemented in Rodrigues need to be accompanied by a descent project write up with clear section on its impact on the environment in the short and long term. This government will work on a strategic plan for aquaculture for Rodrigues in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House whether any study has been done on aquaculture projects in Rodrigues and if so to inform the House about same before he goes on with his policy in that sector.

Mr. R. Payendee: I have already answered this question, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. I have said that this government will work on a strategic plan for aquaculture in Rodrigues in the near future, which means looking at all, studies that have been done and see what can be done again in line with this aspect of being very careful with this type of project.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know from the Commissioner, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, how many groups/promoters has approached his Commission as regards to that project?

Mr. R. Payendee: Many promoters have approached our Commission for this type of project but again we are studying the projects. There are quite a lot of things that is being done. Just to give you one example, some people here approached the government of Mauritius, the Minister for Fisheries to bring the cages here, which is an aquaculture project and these cages were supposed to be put in the deep sea around Rodrigues even if it is in the lagoon but the problem is these fish will be introduced from Mauritius and ecologically speaking if we want to make Rodrigues an ecological island we should go for zero introduction because this in the short term can do good but in the long term can cause irreversible damage to the national ecosystem. Second point is these fish were supposed to be fed by food coming from Mauritius, like pig feed or whatever feed manufactured in Mauritius and what is the effect of these on our national ecosystem. This will create a new ecosystem, which does not mean that it can be good for the island. That is why, before we embark ourselves on any aquaculture projects this government is careful. We have got a team working on it and that is why I have said also that we will be coming with a strategic plan for this type of project. Thank you.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am a bit surprised by the attitude of the Commissioner he is talking about his vision to preserve Rodrigues as an ecological island. He is right to say we should not speed up. We have to take time to come up with study and so on but why is it that in the case of octopus. *Il n'a pas prit le temps qu'il fallait. Il a été très vite à l'action et avec ce qu'on connaît comme résultat. Maintenant pour l'aquaculture il demande du temps. En partant de ce raisonnement, M. le vice président, puis-je demander au commissaire combien de temps cela va prendre avant qu'il puisse venir de l'avant avec un projet spécifique d'aquaculture à Rodrigues.*

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, let me remind the Minority Leader that the action to close octopus fishery is not aquaculture. This is an action towards ecological protection. This is not aquaculture, as far as I know, my knowledge take me it is not aquaculture. This is an action to protect marine environment, marine resources but for aquaculture we need to be careful as I said it can be the same damage that has been by *piquant loulou* on the land can be caused/done in the sea if we are not careful. This one we cannot rush. There are quite a lot of projects that have already started, I mentioned before this crab thing. Where are the crabs? The person is using the land to build may be I do not know he is coming up with whatever. We do not give land to people as it was in the past. We are careful with this environment of this island. The fact that we say and we keep saying and we will always say this government want to make this island an ecological island. We will be careful. Better be late than sorry. We will not want to go like this and give whoever come with whatever project and say okay, this come money may be when were there it was like this but as long as we are here for this four coming years we are not going to do like this. Thank you.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I agree with the Commissioner when he does not want to introduce new species in Rodrigues. I myself when I was Commissioner I do transport in Mauritius *conocono* for research, for the Fisheries, for Albion. Now I am a bit surprised, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, and the Minister of Finance did mention this issue aquaculture in his budget speech and it is ongoing now. Being given that the Minister for Finance has already announced that this project will be implemented in Rodrigues now a Commissioner is stating that he will have to take time and this should have been implemented in 2013 budget. Has there been any exchange between the Ministry of Finance and your office?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, let me remind the respected Member that we are an autonomous island and that not whatever is said in Mauritius, this is what autonomy is all about. The fishery sector falls

under my responsibility and we have the Executive Council to decide in what direction we want to go. We are not going to copy Mauritius. We are autonomous and we will go in the direction that we think good with. Of course, after having contacted most of all the people that are on this island. So with these words I would say that whatever is done in Mauritius is not going to be done here, like this. It has to pass through the Commission for Fisheries, we have got a team of scientists, and I am one of them. That is why we will be very careful with the environment of this island and Rodrigues is not going to be worked as it used to be in the past. We are a careful government and we are looking at this island for the children of the future. That is why we will be careful. I never said that we are not doing aquaculture here I said that the government will work on a strategic plan with this sort of plan I am saying that we will come with projects. These cages could have been good if like algae were collected from the sea and put in the cages. In the case of herbivorous fish. As long as you take food from Mauritius, whatever food you can bring diseases to the sea. Let me give you another example, the algae stuff that started under the former government. It has been proved in Mauritius, that is algae kills corals. That is why we are going to cut this project soon. We are not continuing with this because in the tourism sector when tourists come from abroad do they want to see the lagoon when they go to Port Sud Est, for example, not on the high land around Port Sud Est and look at the sea and they see it all brown. Do you want to see this on this island? Do you want your kids to see this? That is why we will be careful and these types of project will never get the chance to survive as long as we are here and as long as I am the Commissioner for Fisheries. Thank you.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I want the Commissioner to be clear has there been any exchange between his Commission and the Ministry of Finance as regards to aquaculture in Rodrigues?

Mr. R. Payendee: When we come with other projects, when we have a real project then we will discuss. When we got the strategic plan for it the Mauritius government said yes aquaculture is good, we agreed but we need to be careful. When we get a nice project, which will be good for the benefit of this island, then we will contact the Minister and we will go forward with it. For the time being the answer is no.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner one question. Has there been any study in the past regarding aquaculture in Rodrigues?

Mr. R. Payendee: I have already answered this question, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has stated that Rodrigues is autonomous concerning fisheries and he has talk a lot about the cages introduced, new species from Mauritius and so on. I would like to know from the Commissioner whether in view of all these problems that may arise in the future, the impact on ecology has there been any communication between his office and the Ministry of Fisheries concerning these negative impact on the ecology of Rodrigues?

Mr. R. Payendee: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Ministry for Fisheries wrote to us to ask whether we can put these cages in the sea around Rodrigues and we wrote back to them and said we do not go like looking at the television and say there is a project and put it in Rodrigues like this. We do not want Rodrigues to be the *cobaye*. I said send us the project writer. How the thing is being written up on paper and I wanted to see whether there was this section on the impact on the environment but unfortunately, it is about now 20 days and I have not got any reply yet. Which means, according to me, that there is no project writer for such project? If there is no project writer then we cannot go forward with it. I am sorry for that.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

RENEWAL OF CONTRACT - RODCLEAN, GENERAL WORKERS

(No. B/127) Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to employees (Rod Clean, General workers, etc) on contract with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will inform the House if he intends to renew their contract in 2013 and, if not, why not?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I have already replied to part of question relating to the General Workers while replying to question B/112.

As regards employees of Rod Clean, I am informed that their contract will terminate on 02 February 2013. The board of Directors of Rod Clean Co. Ltd will decide in due course, as whether their contract will be renewed or not.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, est-ce-que le sort des travailleurs sont entre les mains du Board ou bien la commission a une stratégie part rapport au ramassage des ordures à Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, this question should be put to the Commissioner for Environment but I said that it is the board which is going to take decision and I do not know what the board will do. There is a commission and the board will see with the Commissioner whether as I said their contract will be renewed or not. This is not my concerned.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, being given that the company is a Rodrigues Regional Assembly owned company almost 100%. Can the Chief Commissioner state his policies as regards to Rod Clean itself and indirectly the employees?

The Chief Commissioner: As I said, the question should be put to the Commissioner for Environment.

**FACT FINDING COMMITTEE
- OBJECTIVE/MEMBERS/GRADE FINANCIAL
& LEGAL IMPLICATION**

(No. B/128) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether in regard to the Fact Finding Committee set up by his Commission, he will-

- (a) give the objective of same and define its terms of reference;
- (b) table the composition of the members and their grade, giving reason of the choice; and
- (c) inform the House about the financial and legal implication of same?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I have to inform the house that further to damning report of Director of Audit and due to the over-proportionate discrepancies mentioned thereof, the Executive Council has decided to set up a Fact Finding Committee to carry out an internal investigation with a view to improving aspects of project management in particular financial management within the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The terms of reference of the committee is to carry out an in-depth investigation to situate responsibilities on the shortcomings raised by the Director of Audit in the Chief Commissioner's Office, the Commission for Education, Arts and Culture Services, Prisons and Postal Services and the Commission for Public Infrastructure, Housing, Transport and Water Resources.

As regards to part (b) the financial implication of the committee, the members will be paid a fee as per established practices.

As regards to part (c) the legal implication of the Committee, the Executive Council is at a liberty to devise any control mechanism for the improvement of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly's performance. I have to further point out that two versions of the audit report relating to Project mainly those pertaining to the Housing and Cadastral Survey Rodrigues and the recruitment of General Workers are not being dealt with as Independent Commission against Corruption is presently conducting an enquiry into same.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, being given that the committee itself dealt with the Director of Audit Report how come that in the Assembly we have a Public Account Committee under Standing Order 63 how is it that we have another parallel committee to deal with the Director of Audit Report?

The Chief Commissioner: They require different issue. The Public Account Committee comes from the Regional Assembly but we as I said; the Executive Council has decided to set up a fact-finding committee to carry out an internal investigation with a view to improving aspects of project management in particular financial management within the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. We have the right to improve the financial management within the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. It is our duty to set up a Fact Finding Committee to help us in the financial management in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: May be, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I have got a problem as regards to (b) to table the composition. I do not see any paper tabled.

The Chief Commissioner: I am sorry I missed that part of the question.

The Minority Leader: Therefore, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, will the Chief Commissioner ensure that this paper is tabled in the House soon.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know from the Chief Commissioner whether since in the committee, we have the opposition side and the majority side and we are being assessed by the Clerk or by the Assistant Clerk to do our work. Can we know if apart from politicians in this House whether there are people

among the composition of the members whether there are members here in the House, which form part of the committee?

The Chief Commissioner: It is a committee without politicians.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can we know whether this Fact Finding Committee, when the Chief Commissioner said they investigate on internal matters do they do ongoing investigations or is it as and when required?

The Chief Commissioner: As I said, the committee will be set up to see the financial management of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. It will not be a permanent committee; it will be a temporary committee.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner mentioned something damning and in the report itself he mentioned the General Workers and in the reports it is stated that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly mandatory should see to it that the General Workers be on placement or be employed on a permanent basis. I want the Chief Commissioner whether he considered this on a point of view a damning issue.

The Chief Commissioner: I have nothing to do with the question. As I said, I think the Member did not understand very well. I have to further point out that two versions of the Audit Report relating to projects mainly those pertaining to the Housing and the Cadastral Survey, Rodrigues and the recruitment of General Workers are not being dealt in the committee as the Independent Commission against Corruption is presently conducting an enquiry into same.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether the report that will be produced of course by the committee will be made available to the public in this House here.

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I suspend the House for 45 minutes.

At 12.38 hours, the Assembly was suspended.

On resuming at 13.27 hours with the Chairperson in the chair.

EVENTS ORGANISED - COMMISSION FOR ARTS & CULTURE

(No. B/129) **Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to goods and services for events organized under the Commission for Arts & Culture, as from February 2012 to date, he will-

- (a) inform the House about the number of events organized;
- (b) state if there has been any bidding exercise, indicating the bidding procedure followed for each event, and table the list of successful bidders and the respective cost incurred for each.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question I would like to inform the House that as from February 2012 to date the number of events organized by the Commission for Arts and Culture is ten.

As regards to part (a), I am tabling the bidding procedure followed for goods and services requested for each event organized. I have a list of successful bidders and its respective cost incurred for each. **(Appendix IV)**

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know from the Chief Commissioner what is the amount of money, the estimated cost for these events?

The Chief Commissioner: Rs 1.5 m.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: When the Chief Commissioner mentioned Rs 1.5 m. can we know what events, at least give a breakdown.

The Chief Commissioner: First of all you have promotion of arts and culture - Rs 1 m., National Day Celebration - Rs 1 m., Journée de Rodrigues - Rs 1 m., Festival Créole - Rs 1.5 m but as I see here there has been also Abolition of Slavery on 01 February, Cultural Exchanges, Africa Day, Slam Competition, Donation of Musical Instrument by Emtel, World Music Day, Rodrigues Drama Festival and 10th Anniversary of the Autonomy of Rodrigues.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: When the Chief Commissioner mentioned Rs 1.5 m. about events organized, I am in a doubt, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how come that the Rodrigues Day, Independence Day and all these events, how come that only Rs 1.5 m. has been disbursed, I am a bit surprised.

The Chief Commissioner: The details on the money spent on the Rs 1.5 m. all the different events here, Africa Day, Slam Competition etc. these are events organized.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: As regards to Rodrigues Day, *if my Mathematics is good*, I see it is around Rs 300,000 - hiring of light, officials, supplementary, all these, *pain fourré*. Is it only the activities that have been carried out associated with the Rodrigues Day.

The Chief Commissioner: Unfortunately, I do not have the information.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to sound equipments itself, I was watching television and saw what was going on at Camp du Roi I am a bit “*agace*” when the President of the Republic was addressing the audience how come that these equipments, the sound equipments itself we have paid... I do not see the price in it. Can we know first of all, what is the price for sound equipments for this specific event?

The Chief Commissioner: It seems that you have it in the paper which we tabled. It is hiring of sound for concert Rs 175,000, hiring of sound for official ceremony Rs 140,675.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is something wrong with the figure. The hiring of light for concert Rs 50,000. Hiring of light official ceremony Rs 140,000. There is nothing as regards to the sound equipments itself.

The Chief Commissioner: Sound for official ceremony, it means sound equipment for sound.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know from the Chief Commissioner whether there have been two tenderers, two persons for hiring of sounds. Whether there are only one or two persons?

The Chief Commissioner: You have got it. Hiring of sound equipments in formal quotation: Robby Auguste - Rs 175,000. Hiring of sound equipments in official ceremony in formal quotation: Power sound - Rs 140,675.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, they have paid Rs 140,675 for power sound, for hiring of sound for official ceremony. Now I get it. Rs 140,675 we have paid and for such an important event, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how come that there are problems with the microphones, the sound equipments itself. What action has been taken? Have we paid the full sum or whether there has been a reduced in the sum as regards to that type of sound?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, anything can happen during a ceremony. What happened with the light? Even if the CEB

went there and try to take all precaution but unfortunately, the light was off. I do not know we have made an evaluation of the ceremony. I should like to find out what has come out of this evaluation meeting.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether for the 12 October 2012 a survey was made on the number of students to be present at school and whether he is aware that some students were deprived of refreshments/cakes with respect to the quota provided to the schools.

The Chief Commissioner: I am not aware. I need notice of the question.

SOCIAL AID – NO. OF BENEFICIARIES DISQUALIFIED/REASONS

(No. B/130) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to social aid (Basic Invalidity Pension, Unemployment Hardship Relief, etc), he will, for the benefit of the House-

- (a) state the number of beneficiaries who have been disqualified from February to date and state the reasons thereof; and
- (b) table the name(s) of same specifying their respective categories, age and addresses per group?

The Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, award of benefits such as Social Aid and Unemployment Hardship Relief and Basic Invalidity Pension are made to claimants to satisfy the eligibility criteria specified under the Social Aid Act, the Unemployment Hardship Relief Act and the National Pension Act and their regulations respectively. For Social Aid and Unemployment Hardship Relief the eligibility criteria determined by appropriate cadres are officers of Security Services through enquiry and means testing followed by a regular monitoring.

As regards to the award of Basic Invalidity Pension the eligibility of beneficiaries are determined by medical boards as laid down under Section 2 of the National Pension Act. Award for such pension is made for a minimum period of one year and is regarded for further determination of the pension. The officers have been disallowed, as they no longer satisfied the eligibility criteria

laid down under the law. Social Aid – 215 cases; Unemployment Hardship Relief – 46 cases; Basic Invalidity Pension – 269 cases.

I would also like to point out that the disallowance and discontinuation of claims are normal features that happened regularly as per the prevailing provision of the law. I should also note that new cases of benefits have been awarded by the Social Security Services from February 2012 to date and the number of beneficiaries of social aid including Unemployment Hardship Relief for the month of November 2012 is 2518 as compared to 2489 in December 2011.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know the reason behind ...

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (b) I consider that it is not appropriate to disclose the names and details of the disallowed cases, which are of confidential nature.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner whether he can inform the House of the number of new cases that have been given social aid/Unemployment Hardship Relief/Basic Invalidity Pension whichever it is since February this year to date.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have only the information for Basic Invalidity Pension which is 84 new cases but for the others information are not yet available at the Statistics Office of the Ministry of Social Security.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since the country is finding itself in a *morosité économique*, can we know from the Commissioner, if I have made a sort of analysis 526 cases have been disqualified for even Basic Invalid which is 269 cases. Can we know what the reasons are?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: As I said earlier, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they are no longer qualified according to the different laws. For example, for Social Aid most of the cases refer to the fact that they are no longer considered as abandoned women. In the case for Unemployment Hardship Relief most of them have taken up employment and for the Basic Invalidity Pension it is determined by the Medical Board as I said but it is important to note that people can still have recalled to the Medical Tribunal if they believed that they have not been boarded properly. This is how in some cases we can find people appealing and some are awarded accordingly.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, here from the figure I have these persons have been disqualified. Can we know from the Commissioner how many has got their aid diminished?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I do not have the information, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Even though you do not have the figure can we know from the Commissioner whether there are cases where people have their aid diminished.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, yes, it might happen, for example, if somebody was in full time education and he reaches the age of 20 or if he stops his schooling after the age of 15 then it might happen.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner tell us how many of these cases have made an appeal to the tribunal to have their cases be reviewed up to now.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I do not have all the information but as I know there was an appeal in August, there were 67 cases, and there will be another 90 cases in December. Out of the 67 cases about 15 were restored their pension.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know from the Commissioner how many Social Security Officers does he have at the level of his Commission and can we know what is the extent, the different, let say for example in the area of La Ferme, its boundary for so many officers.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: This is not connected to the main answer but I would just want to add as some people are saying that we are just “*coupe pension*” but if I go back to certain statistics from 2006 to 2011, I can say that for the island of Rodrigues for 2006 there were 1831 cases, for...

Mr. J. C. Agathe: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. My question was about the number of officers. I wanted it to be clear the number of officers that we have at the level at the Social Security Office.

Mr. Chairperson: I think that this question does not relate to the main one. Next question.

**PATIENTS – NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
– CARDIO VASCULAR DISEASES/RENAL FAILURE**

(No. B/131) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to patients suffering from non communicable diseases, he will inform the House and table the number of patients suffering from (a) cardio vascular diseases per sex, (b) renal failure under dialysis treatment?

The Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports (Mr. I. Valimamode): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (a) of the question, I am informed that 676 patients suffered from cardio vascular diseases. There are 244 males and 432 females.

As regards to part (b) of the question concerning renal failure under dialysis treatment I am also informed that there are 24 patients following dialysis treatments to date. There are 10 males and 14 females.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I ask the Commissioner for Health whether there has been any breakdowns in the machines at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and if so, why?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as to the reason why you have breakdowns in machines, I am not competent to say why. You do have breakdowns now and then in every machine. There was a break down in one of the haemodialysis machine on the 29 October, the board went off, necessary actions were taken, and it was repaired on the 10 November. Excuse me, on 2 November there was a breakdown in one of the dialysis machine and it was successfully repaired by technicians from IBL on the 10 November. I wish to add that at no time lives of patients were at stake because we do have three other machines running.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when I heard the answer of the Commissioner for Health it seems alarming that in both cases both the cardio vascular diseases and the renal failure women cases were a lot more than that of men. Is it a number of trends or is there something to be done to determine such reasons, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Can the Commissioner enlighten us on that?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, measures have been taken this is why we are called the '*zoumba government*' among other thing we are given the chance to practice sports. I wish to add that in the programme I mentioned that we are having a full time cardiologist in Rodrigues. It is coming soon together with a cardiac unit here.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner say whether he is talking of a cardiologist unit. Will it be fully equipped so that patients suffering from such disease will no more go to Mauritius for treatment and that all these cases will be dealt with here?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to add that the unit will be fully equipped, for example, we sent 17 patients for stress test in Mauritius only recently. These will no more be needed. The only thing that will be done in Mauritius in the future will be angiography and open-heart surgery. All the other things will be done in Rodrigues and I wish to add also we are acquiring a 2D cardiac echo with coloured Doppler and a stress test system very soon. Patients in need of these investigations will not have to be sent to Mauritius. Only those requiring interventions like angiography, angioplasty and bypass surgery need to be sent to Mauritius.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can the Chief Commissioner enlighten this House whether there has been a study about the trend and the reasons behind; he has made a study, how come that with the population that we have in Rodrigues, for me it is very high, as regards to cardio vascular. Whether there has been a study to understand what the causes are.

Mr. I. Valimamode: I have mentioned it before Rodrigues is mentioned from the report of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life as a record holder in high blood pressure. Which means that all the associated cardio vascular diseases is associated with it. There has been several surveys carried out by Australian Diabetes Institute concerning diabetes and also cardio vascular disease and the trend is worldwide people suffering from cardio vascular disease but as I said, we are tackling the problem.

EMBARKING/DISEMBARKING – CONTAINERS - MV MAURITIUS PRIDE & MV MAURITIUS TROCHETIA

(No. B/132) Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Trade, Commerce and Licensing and Others whether, in regard to the embarking and disembarking of containers on board of MV Mauritius Trochetia and MV Mauritius Pride, he will obtain, from the Cargo Handling Corporation or any relevant authorities, information concerning any problems, be it technical or not, affecting such embarking and disembarking, if any, and, in the affirmative, to state what measures have been taken or are being envisaged to avoid shortage of commodities in the local market?

The Commissioner responsible for Trade, Commerce and Licensing and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation that there has been a breakdown of crane on the Mauritius Pride at Port Mathurin on 04 August 2012. Subsequently, the Mauritius Pride has been sailing to Rodrigues for almost two months with a reduce slot capacity of 40 x 20 ft laden containers. In order to remedy the situation an additional trip of the Mauritius Trochetia was urgently programmed to Rodrigues on 10 August 2012 to allow the transfer of short lining containers, which could not be previously disembarked from the Mauritius Pride due to the breakdown of crane.

I am also informed by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation that the situation has further worsened following the out of service of another crane and this time on the Mauritius Trochetia in the beginning of October 2012. This has led to the dramatic reduction of cargo intake of the Mauritius Trochetia, which left Port Louis on 16 October 2012 whereby only 59 out of 25 balance units, which represents less than 50% of the vessel container carrying capacity, were shipped to Rodrigues. Priority was given to petroleum and dangerous cargo, such as, cooking gas.

The Mauritius Trochetia crane repairs have unfortunately taken some time due to the unavailability of spare parts and the need of foreign experts. I am informed that the repairs have now been completed and the vessel has sailed with full cargo load to Port Mathurin on 17 November 2012.

My Commission has been proactive to discuss the matter with the corporation in view of ensuring that priority consideration is given to basic and essential commodities particularly during this end of year period. No specific measures have been taken by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation as all the cranes are now fully operational and the number of ships already scheduled for Rodrigues are likely to be sufficient to restore the buffer stock of rice and flour as well as other basic commodities. Therefore, there are no shortages expected by the end of the year.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am happy that the Commissioner is saying that measures have been taken to avoid lack of commodities but everybody knows that at this particular period of time especially with the coming of the Christmas and the New Year, lot of commodities will be needed in Rodrigues and I do not know if the Commissioner is aware at the container park in Mauritius *il y a une pagaille actuellement, M. le président, pour faire embarquer ces conteneurs au dépend des autres. Certains sont même venus aux mains. Je voudrais savoir du*

commissaire s'il va s'assurer que les négociations qui ont été engagé à ce propos soient respectées par les autorités concernées.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Firstly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will consider what the Member has said. But may be for these past few shipment as I have said priority is given to basic commodities like food just to ensure that the buffer stock are refurnished and obviously with the schedule according to information that I have received with the schedule shipping programme for Rodrigues there will be no shortages.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not questioning the good faith of the Commissioner because this is the information he has gathered from the authorities concerned but with the breakdown of these mechanic crane or whatever both vessels, the Mauritius Pride and the Mauritius Trochetia it is more likely that there will be a backlog of containers in Mauritius. When the Commissioner is saying that the number of scheduled visits to Rodrigues of these vessels will be sufficient, I am rather doubtful but I am not questioning the good faith of the Commissioner. One thing I would like to be clarified from the Commissioner, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, he just mentioned that the vessel has been repaired and effected a trip in Rodrigues on 17 November. Can I know what vessel precisely please?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: The Mauritius Trochetia, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has said that priority will be given to basic commodities, I would like to know whether he is aware that many containers of animals feeds have been left at quay in Mauritius.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: So far, we have not been informed about same but I will look into the matter, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *rien que pour les deux derniers voyages du Mauritius Pride à Rodrigues plus de 30 conteneurs sont restés au quai à Port Louis. Renseignement - le Mauritius Shipping ne transporte pas des conteneurs non remplis.* Can the Commissioner see to it that a special arrangement be made between traders, the Mauritius Shipping and other stakeholders involved with the transportment of containers so that full containers are available on the quay from Mauritius to Rodrigues to prevent this problem?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will query about all these information to confirm their authenticity and we will take necessary decision accordingly.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the embarking and disembarking of goods. Now I will ask a question as regards to dairy products, like Yoplait and so on. These products, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, should be kept in a certain degrees of either chilled or freeze and at times, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we can see these dairy product which are prone to diseases are found lying in front of supermarkets here in Port Mathurin. Can the Commissioner see to it whether these dairy products are kept in well conditioned so that people of Rodrigues are not finding themselves...?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would request the Member if ever there are such problems to contact either the Health Inspectors or the Consumer Protection Unit they will look into the matter.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: I would like to request the Commissioner, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to see to it that these issues are attended to because with the coming of the end of year festivities if we had to make a survey most traders are in Mauritius right now. They are not relying on the agents because of this problem of container to be embarked on the vessels because we all know the win for gains that is coming ahead whenever a commodity is short in Rodrigues. I will make a plea to ask the Commissioner just kindly see to it that these issues are being attended to.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Obviously, I will see to it, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, but the information are based upon the actual demand but if ever there are additional demand certainly we will see to it that they are attended to.

OCTOPUS CLOSED SEASON 2012

(No. B/133) Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the Octopus Closed Season 2012, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) the percentage increase in octopus catch from 12 October 2012 to date compared to the same period last year;
- (b) the percentage increase in the export of same for the same period; and

- (c) measures already or to be taken to avoid exploitation of octopus fishers during the closed seasons envisaged for 2013?

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am glad to inform the House that 21 tons of octopus were caught for the whole month of October 2011 compared to 48 tons in October this year for only 19 days of fishing. This represents an increase of 128%.

With regard to part (b) of the Question, three tons of fresh octopuses were exported again for the whole month of October 2011 as compared to 19 tons in October 2012 for only 19 days of fishing, which represents an increase of 533%.

As far as dried octopus is concerned, 100 kg were exported in October 2011 as compared to 165 kg in 2012. This represents an increase of 65%.

With regards to part (c) of the question, I can say that we have learnt a lot from the implementation of the project of closed season for octopus and this will help us to better implement the project in the future.

The regulation is being reworked to make it more efficient and a team is working on better ways to enforce it. The report is not yet finalised and any suggestion is welcomed. But I can say that I am pretty much satisfied with the results obtained and I can confirm that octopus fishery will be closed again in 2013. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I do not think that the Commissioner has replied to part (c) of the question. I asked what are the measures already taken/to be taken to avoid exportation. I did not hear Commissioner mentioned the exploitation of fishers if may be I have heard wrong...

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I said that. The Regulations is being reworked to make it more efficient it means that with this new regulation/amended version, we will be more efficient to protect over exploitation or exploitation during closed season next year and I said there is a team working on better ways to enforce it. It means we will have better ways of enforcement, which will be put in place to ensure that during the closed season octopus are really protected.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner informed the House whether a study of the market in parallel to the closure of octopus was made being given that the prices have dropped during the first days

after the '*réouverture*' from Rs 55 to even Rs 25 the half kilo octopus. In the meantime, what is being done to prevent this drop because the fishermen are complaining that we have closed the octopus but the price has dropped from Rs 55 to Rs 25? They are not being protected with respect to this.

Mr. Chairperson: May I remind you that there are only 25 minutes left for question time.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I know the Respected Member has not studied economics but more science but economically speaking there is the law of demand and supply. Our plan was to bring octopus to a certain abundance. So what will have happened if we got two million tons? People are not really thinking about the real benefit. They are looking at the small thing. The real benefit is in three days an octopus fisher has got more than Rs 20,000. Three days of fishing and also...

Mr. Chairperson: Listen please. I am sorry I am just reminding the Member there, you know whom I am talking, the Second Region Member for Maréchal please mind your tongue, your words because I am not "*comme on dit muet, sourd*" thank you. After you, there will be last question.

Mr. R. Payendee: The people, the fishermen have not been thinking also the Members have not been thinking of the benefit of the people of Rodrigues. It is a good thing as a politician. It is a very good thing as a politician to see that the price has gone down so that poor people of this island can at least buy one or two kilos of octopus and also no one is trying to look at other ways of selling octopus. What they wanted was, the Commissioner himself comes to their place, take their octopus and go and sell it and this is really bad. People have to think what the benefits are. Even the Prime Minister, the President of the Republic said that this has been a great project. If it has been a great project and that, the Prime Minister himself said it then I have nothing to add.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question please.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the original reply of the Commissioner no mention was made for exploitation of fisheries. Following my supplementary question, he mentioned to avoid exploitation. I am happy that he recognized that there has been exploitation of fishers because the main objective of this decision, which is a very good one, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, good decision if we really want to regenerate the lagoon but the target was not to have the price going down. This was not the target that is why I am asking the Commissioner to inform the House whether this measure because we are

envisaging two closed season for next year. Whether the main objective has been achieved.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, yes, the main objective of the closed season has been achieved. The objectives were:-

- (1) To let female octopus to reach a certain size to go back outside the reef to breed. We have reach our objective from the figures that we have obtained 90% of the females octopus which were fished have reached this size;
- (2) We promised abundance, this was the second objective and abundance was there.

I am sure and happy that I said that the Member said that there has been some loopholes. Of course, I want to see law, a regulation or legislation where there is no loophole. Everybody knows that people have to wear helmets, security stuffs on the road but the policemen keep arresting people doing these bad things. Which means that there is no regulations, no law, which is enforced on a 100% basis, but I can assure the Member that next year it will be different we will also look into discussion of price because it is a new thing that has came up. Who knew that we, I knew that we would get abundance but I myself I was surprised to see that many octopus obtained.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House whether there has been any request from a group of fishermen in a sort of memorandum that has been sent to him to ensure that after the closure of the octopus season to ensure that the Commission see to it that the price of octopus does not go down even though it was a law of supply and demand.

Mr. R. Payendee: Yes, some fishermen expressed/has a sort of suggestion but this went beyond the control of Commission because all these people buy octopus are not people from the Commission it is private sector. The private sector, of course it is their money we try to come to them I went personally to see all these people to discuss about this but the final decision is their decision. Of course, unless the government has ways and means where to store these octopus. Next thing is, these fishermen octopus is a commodity where you do not even have to sell it. What would happen if people came and ask for Rs 5 or Rs 1, they sell it for Rs 1. They could take it back. The fishermen they know that they can dry it and get more with dried octopus. My colleague also the Deputy Chief Commissioner next will tell you, this is a secret again, but I am going to tell you that the coming year we are putting we are

coming with ways and means to better protect the fishermen and how dried octopus, modified in an entrepreneur way so that we will see. We will come again with the closing. *They said people will kill me but now everywhere I go people kiss me!*

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, did the Commissioner make any declaration on radio informing and ensuring the consumers that the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company will be one of the buyers to ensure that the price of octopus on local market remains at a certain level not “*au detriment des pêcheurs*”.

Mr. R. Payendee: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I did mention this on radio, on television and I will mention it again if the need be. The “*Maison des Pêcheurs*”, we need the study, the amount of octopus, we were getting about ten tons of octopus a day and this “*Maison des Pêcheurs*” where the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing was supposed to act was not even enough for one day. So really, there was abundance of octopus. You need to understand this. Abundance! So there was no means, all the places where we could put octopus was full. Even the *Maison des Pêcheurs*. The *Maison des Pêcheurs* do not belong to the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company. We gave it to the Federation des Cooperatives and two of these cold chambers were full of ice because these people were going fishing. So this could not come into action and may be next year we will try to do it.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please. There are only two minutes left for question time.

INCREASE - BROADBAND CAPACITY - INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

(No. B/134) Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to measures announced in the National budget 2013, she will inform the House where matters stand in so far as the time frame for the increase in the broadband capacity for internet connectivity in Rodrigues is concerned?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is common knowledge that the internet connectivity actually in Rodrigues is very poor and it is also known that Rodrigues is on the way to be connected to the fibre optic cable soon and same has been confirmed again recently in the budget speech of the Honourable Minister of Finance. Moreover, this is a process, which will take at least two years though some people promised it would be a reality in March 2012. It will at least take two years since there are inevitable steps that

should be undertaken to reach there and as a caring government and since we are conscious about the role of internet as an engine which is revolutionizing the world we propose to central government that necessary measures be taken from now up to the time when fibre optic cable will be a reality. This is why our proposition to central government and to Ministry for Finance was that internet connectivity in Rodrigues be upgraded from 37 MB/s to at least 100 MB/s. With this rate, we would be in a position to attract investors in the field of BPO call centres to invest in Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are very proud for having been successful in this negotiation process and we are thankful that central government will subsidize the connectivity of Rodrigues to internet via a satellite from 37 MB/s to 155, that is, much more than we requested.

[Applause]

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in line with Annex I of the budget speech the time lines for the implementation of the increase in the broadband capacity for internet connectivity in Rodrigues is due for June 2013. I am informed by the ICTA, the Information and Communication Technology Authority that a request for proposal is currently under preparation by a technical committee and same will be launched by the end of this financial year.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to BPO is concerned, Business Process Outsourcing, we have a problem with what we call the internet connectivity. For example, when we have someone in Rodrigues and someone in France, when we say “that” at the same time, at the same moment the same person in France must heard the sound “that” at the same time and Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is why there are delays in seconds between someone in Mauritius and someone in France. This is why the BPO is not a success story in Rodrigues. This is the reason why.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the problem itself, can the Commissioner enlighten the House whether there is a difference between broadband and connectivity by cable.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is known also that, I am an ICT teacher but I will not come here to make a lecture on broadband and connectivity. However, I should reassure the Member that for this measure for increasing connectivity, the broadband capacity has been fully discussed with people in the sector. This is why we convinced the central government for this and with these measures, this will help to have BPO up to a good standard. This has been discussed and we are convinced that we will not

have any problem with this and I am also astonished, to use the word of the Member, he has been using this word more than one time since this morning, I am not aware that there has been any BPO in Rodrigues up to now.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have heard the Deputy Chief Commissioner said that there is a time frame of June 2014? 2013? Okay. What I would wish to know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that at a particular point in time it was that Rodrigues would be connected to the optic fibre and now we are coming with upgrading of the broadband. I do not know if this is the way *"ban la bizin content nou ene lot manière"* but are we going to wait for the optical fibre for years whereas we are preparing our youths in this field so that *"l'exode va continuer, parceque après avoir preparer nos jeunes pour ce secteur il n'y aura pas de déboucher pour eux. Est-ce-que se serait ça?"*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Je pense que peut être je me suis fait mal fait comprendre. En effet le projet de câble optique va arriver mais ce projet il y a des étapes inévitables. Il y a déjà le comité. On est sur le comité. On va à des réunions chaque mois, on fait le suivie mais inévitablement il y a des étapes à prendre. Parce qu'il y a des études où va passer ce câble. Tout cela est important. Donc le câble optique va arriver mais cela va prendre encore deux ans à partir d'aujourd'hui/maintenant. Qu'est-ce-qu'on fait, M. le président, on s'assoit on attend deux ans ou bien entretemps on a cette subvention de deux années qui a déjà était approuvé par le gouvernement jusqu'à l'arrivée du câble optique. Donc, on a voulu nous justement entre aujourd'hui et ce deux ans à la réalisation du projet câble optique qu'il y a quelque chose qui se passe sinon on va s'asseoir et continuer à attendre encore deux ans jusqu'à ce que cela arrive. Donc, c'est pour cela que je voudrais assurer le Membre.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: D'accord, M. le président, il n'était pas question du tout qu'on allait rester assit à ne rien faire en attendant l'arriver du câble optique bien sure. Ma préoccupation c'est que *if there is not a delaying tactics from those people in Mauritius every time to delay the connectivity of Rodrigues to the optic fibre.*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je ne crois pas qu'il y a le *delaying tactic*. Je vais redire ce que j'ai dit. Je forme partie du comité, il y a des étapes inévitables à suivre. On a rencontré toutes les personnes concernés et c'est normale que cela va prendre autant de temps parce qu'il y a des étapes à suivre, il y a des études à faire. Le problème c'est qu'on a enduit la population en erreur. On leur a dit que cela va être une réalité en mars 2012. Donc, c'est inévitable que cela va prendre deux ans.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: M. le président, il ne faut pas brûler les étapes. Il n'y a pas que *setting up of BPOs* qui est important, il faut préparer aussi la population surtout parce que les gens auront à travailler le soir même fort tard dans la nuit. Il faut commencer à préparer les gens, préparer la population pour pouvoir entrer dans cette nouvelle technologie. *Est-ce-que le Deputy Chief Commissioner is preparing the population to enter into the new technology trend.*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Oui, M. le président, on est très fier qu'on c'est embarquer déjà dans ce processus de la préparation de la population et je pense lorsque le membre respecté a été témoin, il était là à l'ouverture du *ICT Centre for Excellence*. Je pense que la meilleure préparation c'est de donner la formation et non pas nécessairement faire des réunions avec des chauffeurs pour leur dire qu'ils vont devoir travailler. Ce n'est pas cela cette préparation c'est cette formation d'abord. On met l'accent là dessus. Donc, à partir de décembre les formations vont démarrer. Donc, oui on prépare la population pour l'arrivée du câble optique.

Mr. Chairperson: You have 10 minutes for question time. The Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel has requested to withdraw questions B/137 and B/138.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Je ne dis pas au membre de l'autre côté, le Chef commissaire adjointe en faisant quelque chose au BPO centre *at the DBM*, *Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have to prepare the population. We have to prepare the population since Rodrigues* il y a un problème de tradition, il y a le problème, que la famille possiblement il peut y avoir le problème que les parents n'acceptent pas que leurs enfants aillent travailler le soir. Je suis en train, M. le président, de demander à la chef commissaire adjointe si elle est en train de travailler sur un programme par rapport à la formation des parents ensemble avec les jeunes, par rapport *with the forthcoming of the BPO*.

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry I think that this question does not relate to the main one.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner being given that the ICT sector in Mauritius is going very fast. By the time Rodrigues will be connected because she forms part of the committee, will she see to it that the connectivity that Rodrigues will have will be at par with that of Mauritius. I have heard that Mauritius is trying to be connected with LION2 (Lower Indian Ocean Network). Either it has already I

do not know. Will she see to it that when Rodrigues will be connected we will not be far behind that we will be on the same connectivity length as Mauritius.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je pense que déjà cela a été clair aussi par rapport à la déclaration du Premier ministre et du gouvernement centrale de faire de l'internet un *basic human rights to Republic of Mauritius* donc je pense et je suis sûre d'ailleurs le projet même de câble optique c'est pour justement mettre les rodriguais *at par* avec les Mauriciens au niveau des services, au niveau de l'internet. Donc ce projet va essentiellement et surtout pour justement faire.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House whether the internet tablet which will be provided to Form IV students will be extended to Rodrigues and whether she can see to it that the tablet that will be given Rodriguan is compatible with the parameters which are *en vigueur* in Rodrigues now because at the Infortec many parents buy tablets for their students and arriving at home the tablet which used "Android" the tablet does not work being given that there is no compatibility between the tablet and the internet which is *en vigueur* in Rodrigues.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: La question est demandé si les tablettes vont être donné aux élèves à Rodrigues c'est loin du *main question*, mais oui cela va être le cas. On a déjà discuté avec le ministre. Personnellement j'ai moi aussi acheté une tablette je n'ai pas ce problème mais quand même je vais vérifier/assurer si c'est le cas qu'on prend tous cela en compte avec de donner ces tablettes aux enfants rodriguais.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

(No. B/135) Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to water distribution in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House-

- (i) table the daily production of water from 1st October 2012 to date;
- (ii) state the number of government lorries involved in the distribution of water and the daily average number of trips per lorry;
- (iii) table the amount in cubic meters of water given/sold to private lorries for the same period, stating the registration number of each lorry together with their respective owners; and

- (iv) state the places from which private and/or public lorries are allowed to fetch water for distribution?

The Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the requesting information for part (i) of the question. **(Appendix V)**

As regards part (ii) government lorries involved in Water Distribution are:-

- (a) 37 RRA 07;
- (b) 38 RRA 07;
- (c) 1 RRA 12; and
- (d) 2 RRA 12.

Each lorry is performing four to five trips daily.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (iii) water is not being sold to private lorries. However a permit has been issued, free of charge to private tanker to collect water. I am tabling the details. **(Appendix VI)**

Mr. Chairperson Sir as regards to part (iv) lorries are allowed to fetch water for distribution at the following places:-

- (a) Mourouk;
- (b) Source Tigomme (for private tankers on Saturdays only);
- (c) Grand Bay (government lorries only on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday); and
- (d) Anse Baleine (for construction purposes).

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to ask the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources whether he is aware that there has been a lorry owned by the *défun*t Rodrigues Water Company which was sent to the Mechanical Workshop for change in registration number and that at least two drivers refused to drive this particular lorry arguing that it was not fit to be on road whereas officers of the Mechanical Workshop has stated the contrary.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the lorry has undergone major repairs and as at today all the tyres are being changed on the lorry and it will be back on the road very shortly.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that some drivers having Heavy Duty Driving Licence and who are being paid as such to work in these particular lorries for water distribution.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I am not aware of this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, but I will look into the matter very urgently tomorrow morning.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am happy that you will look into the matter it is a very pertinent problem. Is the Commissioner aware that there have been numerous complaints about one particular driver who do not do his job according to schedule because he distributes water against payment from members of the public? Whether the Commissioner is aware, I can give him the name outside the House if he wishes.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like that the Member give me the name of the driver after the sitting and I will look into the matter. I would like that the public also *dénonce l'attitude de ce chauffeur pour qu'on puisse prendre des sanctions*.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: This means, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if the Commissioner is agreeable that I give him the name it means that he is not aware of this problem. It is a big problem known to everybody that this particular driver is having many problems with members of the public because he sells water arguing that "*gouvernement dans nous la main personne pas pou capave faire moi narnier*". Is the Commissioner aware that some drivers also, you mentioned in your reply that they do four to five trips per day? There are some drivers who make two trips and then they go to their returning place and sitting there idle with their family. Are you aware of this or will you enquire into the issue.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le président, j'aurai bien voulu que le public dénonce cette aptitude de chose mais moi à la dernière réunion que j'avais eu avec l'état major de la Commission de L'Eau qu'on va mettre un squad pour surveiller cette état de chose que le membre avait dit, pour contrôler un peu plus la situation à cette période de sécheresse.

Mr. Chairperson: Request from Members to withdraw their questions. B/136, B/146, B/147.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources inform the House whether the lorry, which was given to ARL, Airport of Rodrigues Ltd. has been re-vested to the Commission for Water Resources being given that ARL has bought a new standard lorry.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I am not aware of this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Can I remind you that there is only three minutes for question time.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following the recent winding up of the Rodrigues Water Company the organigram of Water Resources Unit has been strengthened with the following additional labour force. One Senior Inspector, two Inspector of Works, one Assistant Inspector of Works, eight General Workers involved in the water distribution and one posted at La Ferme Water Unit, one Foreman, one Acting Foreman, one Gangman, one Acting Driver (Heavy Vehicle about 5 tons), six Water Supply Attendants. There has been a transition period between the Water Resources Unit and the Rodrigues Water Company from 28 July to 31 August 2012.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that there is a transition period between Water Unit and the Rodrigues Water Company can the Commissioner inform the House whether he is aware that the last day the workers of Rodrigues Water Company went to work all water sites in the south was left unattended. This day no workers of the Rodrigues Water Company were on site. You said that there has been a transition period between the Water Company and the Rodrigues Water Unit but on that last day were supposed to work all the water sites, the reservoirs, water pumps in the southern region were left unattended. Is he aware of this?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I maintained that there has been a transition period and I am not aware that all the workers of the Rodrigues Water Company did not work.

Mr. Chairperson: Question time over, please. All items on the Order Paper being exhausted any motion for adjournment?

AVAILABILITY OF GROUND WATER

(No. B/136) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to water in the region of La Ferme/Citron in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) if there has been any study/report which has been carried out to determine the availability of ground water in that region and, if yes, to table same;

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- (b) if there is any borehole/wells which have been drilled by third party since 2006 to date in the above region;
- (c) if there has been any authorization/ licence(s) granted to any individual/person for the setting up of any borehole/wells for abstracting/using ground water in the same region for the above period and, in the affirmative, to state-
 - (i) the date(s) the application(s) were made;
 - (ii) the name(s) of the person(s) making the application(s); and
 - (iii) the condition(s) attached to the licence/authorizations.

[Withdrawn]

“SALON INFOTECH”

(No B/137) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the first edition of the “Salon Infotech” held on the 3rd to 4th November 2012, she will, for the benefit of the House, state the main objectives and the outcomes thereof?

[Withdrawn]

WIFI ZONES

(No. B/138) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the creation of WIFI zones in Rodrigues, she will inform the House where matters stand?

[Withdrawn]

“SPECIAL VACANCES”

(No. B/146) Ms. M. D. S. Perrine (Ninth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth and Others whether, in regard to the coming of “Special Vacances”, she will inform the House of the activities which her Commission is proposing for the youths during these holidays?

[Withdrawn]

MARKETING - LOCAL RODRIGUAN FOWL

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(No. B/147) Mr. J. S. Swee (Seventh Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Trade, Commerce and Licensing and Others whether, in regard to the marketing of local Rodriguan fowl by local producers, he will, for the benefit of the House, state what his Commission is doing or envisages to do to help them to sell/export their products?

[Withdrawn]

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn to Friday 14 December 2012 at 10.30 a.m.

The Commissioner for Public Infrastructure and Others rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

MATTERS RAISED

OCTOPUS CLOSED SEASON

Mr. J. A. L. Emilien: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for allowing me to make this statement concerning the closed fishing seasons of octopus. *M. le président, je voudrais attirer l'attention de la chambre sur cette question pertinente. Cela a été une première à Rodrigues* and at the very outset I must say that it was a very good decision if we really want to have our lagoon regenerated we needed decision like this to have things set straight. But however, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, where there is a very big weakness it is at the level of enforcement because we have officers that are not doing their duties, as they should. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has been talking about abundance of octopus. In fact, octopus grows very quickly because their life span is of only seven months. Being of such a short life span, of course, they have to grow to be able to generate to ensure the future generation. That is why we have experienced an increase in the size of octopus caught during the few days following the reopening of the octopus-fishing season. One thing, which is very sad, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that the price as mentioned by my friend there the price has gone down to more than 50%. Octopus at my place was sold at Rs 55 per half kilo; Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and it rank as low as Rs 25. What was the real problem, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? The Commissioner in his reply a bit earlier seemed not to be aware of that situation or he does not want to admit it in this House, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that during the supposedly closed season fishers went fishing everyday coming back home with considerable catch.

Those who have cold rooms, I do not know if all of them, those who have freezers they bought octopus for Rs 25 half a kilo and they filled all the capacity of storing of fresh octopus at their place. What happened when the season was reopened they had no space to store octopus that is why they refused to buy.

Certains acheteurs malveillant, M. le président, soient ils proposer un prix très bas ou ils refusaient catégoriquement d'acheter les pulpes que les pêcheurs avaient capturé. Donc ce qui fait que les pêcheurs, la communauté de pêcheur, je crois que le commissaire comprend un peu la communauté de pêcheur parce que ce n'est pas donné à tous le monde de comprendre l'état d'esprit de la communauté de pêcheur parce que se sont des types appart. Ils résonnent différemment, ils ont une mode de vie différent, ils travaillent au jour le jour, ils peuvent avoir Rs 1000 aujourd'hui demain ils n'ont rien en poche. Certains font des économies bien sûres. Alors les pêcheurs, qu'est-ce qu'on leurs demandent de faire avec leurs prises. Le commissaire a parlé tout à l'heure de faire sécher. Moi je connais des pêcheurs qui ont mit à sécher leurs prises d'ourites et qui se retrouve avec une quantité énorme d'ourites sécher sur le bras ne sachant pas quoi faire et là aussi ils devaient vendre leurs ourites sécher à un prix très bas. C'est pourquoi j'ai insisté, M. le président, sur le problème d'exploitation des pêcheurs. La pêche est un rude métier, M. le président, la pêche ce n'est pas comme un employer qui attend 9 heures pour entrer au bureau depuis 3 heures ils commencent à ce maquiller, à se coiffer pour partir chez elle/lui à 3hrs15. La pêche est dure il faut travailler d'après les marais. Certaines en plein hiver, sous la pluie qui quittent leurs maisons à une heure du matin dépendant du marais. Donc la pêche est un métier dure, un métier qui forge l'homme, qui crase l'homme, qui fatigue l'homme dans sa consistance, dans son organisme, c'est pourquoi moi je trouve que c'est un crime que d'exploité ces pauvres gens, ces rude travailleurs, M. le président. C'est pourquoi je fais un appel au commissaire et au gouvernement régionale en place à Rodrigues actuellement qu'on envisage d'avoir deux période de clôture l'année prochaine d'un mois et demi chacune. Donc, je fais un appel pressant au commissaire Payendee, au gouvernement en place, le conseil exécutif de bien voir toute les *ins and outs of this because it is the first time, of course, there have to be some fine tuning because whenever you do something for the first time inevitably we will have to make some fine tuning.*

That is why I am making a plea, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, so that fishers are being exploited and that the real targets are met because measures have to be taken to avoid exploitation of fishers. Exploitation of fishers means lack of revenue for the family, lack of milk for the children, lack of school materials for the children. This means different problems for the whole family. So, I make a pleas, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this Assembly today that these issues are being attended to and before ending, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I was very pleased this

morning when I heard that you are talking about the decorum of the House, that Members have to keep the decorum of the House so that this august assembly *maintient son statue, maintient toute sa valeur, toute sa splendeur pour qu'on a des galleries remplies comme ça à chaque session. Sinon à un moment donné on ne verra personne ici dans cette gallérie pour venir écouter des choses désagréables, des réactions infantile. Donc, je m'associe à ce que vous avez dit ce matin.* J'ai été très content, *I was very happy to hear that but unfortunately, there has to be* une continuité, il faut qu'il y est un enchainement, il faut que chaque membre, chaque partie prenante joue son rôle pour que notre assemblée attire des gens, pour que notre assemblée maintienne son niveau parce que c'est un joyau que nous avons il nous faut la préserver. Merci, M. le président.

«*PRODUCTION/DISTRIBUTION D'EAU A LA POPULATION*»

Mr. J. D. Spéville: M. le président, la situation dans laquelle se trouve le pays au niveau de la production et la distribution d'eau à la population et aux différents secteurs économiques est dans le rouge. La situation est inquiétante en raison de la baisse continuelle du débit d'eau dans nos rivières, forages, nappes souterraines et nous notons que ce manque se fait sentir partout dans le pays. Mais, M. le président, nous savons bien qu'il y a une sécheresse qui perdure et qui est indépendant de notre volonté mais pour au moins contrer la situation on voit que les efforts fournis par la commission de l'eau est très minime. Qu'advient-il si on n'avait pas acheté ces camions citernes, si on n'avait réhabilité la source Tigome, le système d'eau d'Eau Vannée, Citron Donis et dans l'Union etc. Pour l'année 2012 il n'y a pas une vraie *preparedness plan* pour contrer la sécheresse. Pour l'année 2013 on a prévue deux stations de dessalement dans le budget. Entretemps les bœufs meurent, les forages disparaissent, les dessalements peuvent être une roue de secours. Mais quand même il nous faut préserver nos acquis. Combien de villages à Rodrigues sont en train de procurer l'eau de leur source de la région. Maintenant, M. le président, il faut penser à une sorte *d'emergency procurement* pour aider Rodrigues. Le Premier ministre était là est je crois que la commission de l'eau a raté l'occasion de dire au Premier ministre qu'il y a un danger à bord parce que d'après la météo nous sommes dans une zone dégager et que la probabilité que la pluie tombe sur cette petite surface de 108 km² est très minime et qu'il nous faut avoir recours à la basse pression qui avec l'accroissement de la température ambiante peut descendre en altitude pour provoquer de la pluie. De plus, M. le président, le commissaire de ressources en eau est venue à la radio pour dire qu'ils reçoivent beaucoup de coup de téléphone il faut aller voir les gangmen et les foremen. Le niveau de l'eau dans les réservoirs est en baisse. Qu'est-ce-que les gangmen et les foremen vont faire ? Si on fait de la politique il ne peut pas reculer par le son du téléphone et puis il faut dire à la population que c'est le niveau des nappes, des sources, des rivières qui est en baisse. Les réservoirs est

la pour stocker l'eau. Il ne faut pas attendre que la minorité marche pour qu'on bouge comme à Camp Pintade. *You should see the future before target.* Pour terminer je ferais un appel au commissaire de l'eau et de l'environnement pour une action immédiate dans la vallée Bigarade et Rivière Cocos, il y a des éleveurs qui font de la pluie et le beau temps dans la vallée ce qui empêche un vrai écoulement d'eau du batardeau vers le réservoir de Rivière Cocos. Je profite aussi de cette occasion pour féliciter les villageois de Rivière Cocos qui ont pris bon volontairement pour aller nettoyer le système d'eau de la vallée. Mais quand même le problème avec les éleveurs dans la vallée perdure. Je demanderai au commissaire de prendre des actions nécessaires et immédiates parce qu'en ce moment pas seulement à Rivière Cocos mais dans beaucoup de régions les sources et les rivières sont nos atouts. Merci, M. le président.

At 14.46 hours the House was, on its rising adjourned to Friday 14 December 2012 at 10.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

RODRIGUES WATER COMPANY LTD.

(No. B/139) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the period following the winding up of the Rodrigues Water Company Ltd, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) if there has been any change in the organigram or management structure of the water unit and, in the affirmative, the nature thereof, stating all the transfers that have been done and that will be done in the different sections all over the island; and
- (b) if there has been a transition period between the water unit and the Rodrigues Water Company before its winding up and, if not, why?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following the recent winding up of the Rodrigues Water Company Ltd, the organigram of the Water Resources Unit has been strengthened with the following additional labour force:-

- (i) 1 Senior Inspector of Works
- (ii) 2 Inspectors of Works
- (iii) 1 Assistant Inspector of Works
- (iv) 8 General Workers (involved in water distribution) and 1 posted at La Ferme Water Unit

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- (v) 1 Foreman, 1 Acting Foreman
- (vi) 1 Gangman
- (vii) 1 Acting Driver (Heavy Vehicles above 5 tons)
- (viii) 6 Water Supply Attendants

Yes, there has been a transition period between the Water Resources Unit and the Rodrigues Water Company from 28 July 2012 to 30 August 2012.

GOVERNMENT LORRIES

(No. B/140) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the water sector in Rodrigues, he will inform the House-

- (a) on the number of government water lorries which are available and in good running conditions at the level of his commission and when same were purchased;
- (b) if since he has assumed office in February 2012, there has been any policy in so far as the use of government and private water lorries for water distribution is concerned; and
- (c) of the breakdown of all expenses incurred since February 2012 up to date, stating:-
 - (i) the amount of money spent on each government lorry in terms of fuel and overtime and the amount of money paid to private lorries, if any;
 - (ii) the number of trips effected by each lorry, government and private, if any, with dates and regions, villages concerned with the distribution?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, four (4) government lorries are in good condition at the level of my Commission. Lorries 1 RRA 12 and 2 RRA 12 were purchased in 2011 and registered at the National Transport Authority on 03 January 2012 whereas lorries 37 RRA 07 and 38 RRA 07 were purchased in 2007 and registered at the National Transport on 18 December 2007.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, the service of government lorries are being concentrated in regions where households are not connected to the water

network where there is long periods between successive water distributions and where water supply is difficult due to topography.

Government lorries also service government institutions, social institutions and vulnerable persons who are handicapped, ill or old aged and bed ridden.

With respect to private lorries water is being supplied to them at its minimum and in cases where institutions are in need of water.

As regards to part (c), I am tabling the information. **(Appendix VII)**

DISTRIBUTION - DOMESTIC WATER

(No. B/141) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the distribution of domestic water in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state-

- (a) if a preparedness plan was prepared to face the persisting drought prevailing on the island and, if yes, enunciate the different strategies and plans and, if not, why;
- (b) what immediate actions are being taken to ensure a fair distribution of water over the island in this dry period;
- (c) if all water distributed over the island satisfies the required physico-chemical and biochemical norms; and
- (d) the frequency of water distribution currently in force in villages of Rivière Coco, Ile Michel, Cité Patate, Mont Cabris Est and Maréchal giving the different dates of distribution since July 2012?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as in the past, during the past 6 years, Rodrigues experienced drought and no preparedness was prepared by the previous government. Our plan that is under preparation is to increase the production of water instead using huge sum of money for the fencing and covered springs and reservoirs not producing water today.

In order to face the persisting drought prevailing on the island, my Commission has conducted meetings and awareness campaigns with all stakeholders, that is Head of Departments/Divisions, Institutions, Private Operators, Rodrigues Council of Social Services RCSS and Presidents of

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Community Villages and all staff of the Water Resources Unit to sensitise them on the issue and also to seek their collaboration in this difficult time. At the Commission, we are constantly monitoring the distribution of water through regular meetings with the staff of the Water Resources Unit.

As regards part (b), Mr. Chairperson, Sir and to ensure a fair water distribution over the island, a meeting with all the workers involved in water distribution has been held to sensitise them on the importance of an equitable distribution. Regular water monitoring committee is effected to review all the aspects and to make all adjustments required to ensure a fair water distribution.

As regards part (c), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the water distributed over the island is within physico-chemical norms. As far as biochemical norms are concerned, the laboratory of the Water Resources Unit is not equipped with the required equipment. Action is being taken for the procurement of the materials to perform such test.

- (a) Frequency and date of distribution:
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Rivière Coco | - | 24.09.2012 to 29.09.2012 |
| (frequency in force
25 -30 days) | | 18.10.2012 to 23.10.2012 |
| Ile Michel | - | 01.10.2012 to 07.10.2012 |
| (frequency in force
30 -35 days) | | 03.11.2012 to 09.11.2012 |
| Cité Patate | - | 19.09.2012 |
| (frequency in force
45 -50 days) | | |
| Marechal | - | 01.09.2012 to 28.09.2012 |
| (frequency in force
(excluding 2, 9, 23, 25,
26, 27, 22 – 30 days)
29 & 30) | | |
| | - | 01.10.2012 to 31.10.2012
(excluding 5, 7, 14, 20, 27 &28) |
| Mt. Cabris Est village | | |
| <u>July 2012</u> | - | 16 – 20.07.2012 |
| <u>August 2012</u> | - | 14 – 18.08.2012 |
| <u>September 2012</u> | - | 4 and 06.09.2012 |
| | - | 20 – 24.09.2012 |

October 2012

- 03 – 06.10.2012
Frequency 30 days – 45 days

1000M³ CONCRETE RESERVOIR - CAMP PINTADE

(No. B/142) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the construction of a 1000m³ concrete reservoir at Camp Pintade, he will state:-

- (a) where matters stand;
- (b) if the reservoir has been connected to the brackish water treatment plant of the village and, in the affirmative, when; and
- (c) if during the month of October, there has been representation by the villagers with respect to this connection and to give details and reasons thereof with respect to dates actions have been taken?

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the project consists of:

- (a) the construction of 1,000 m³ reinforced circular concrete reservoir:
 - (i) the construction of 500 m of track roads;
 - (ii) masonry and fencing works;
 - (iii) works related to the project has been completed.

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the reservoir has been connected to the brackish water treatment plant on Friday 16 November 2012.

As regards part (c), Mr. Chairperson Sir, the Commission has not received any representation by the villages with respect to this connection.

BUS SHELTER - ACCACIA

(No. B/143) Mrs. J. Ravina (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in regard to the bus shelter at Acaccia, he will inform the House as follows-

- (a) when same was built;

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- (b) the amount of money spent on materials, labour and others to erect same;
- (c) if same has been dismantled and, in the affirmative, by whom and the reason thereof?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir:

- (a) The metal workshop has started the construction the Bus shelter of Accacia on a pilot project basis with effect from 30.08.2012. Due to other urgent works at the metal workshop, the construction of the bus shelter was put aside.
- (b) The amount spent in terms of materials, labour is Rs 42,150.00
- (c) In view, the bus shelter is on a pilot basis, the structure has been removed from the concrete base on 14.11.2012 to undergo a minor improvement regarding the gradient of the roof slope by the Commission for Public Infrastructure.

FIBRE GLASS WATER TANK - MARECHAL

(No. B/144) Mrs. J. Ravina (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the fibreglass water tank situated at Maréchal, he will inform the House on-

- (a) the way the water tank receives water;
- (b) the different frequencies that water reaches same; and
- (c) if the water which should normally be given to this water tank is deviated to other sources for other use?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the fibreglass water tank situated at Maréchal is supplied with water from Maréchal borehole on the pumping main leading to Mt. Cabris Reservoir.

- (a) water is being supplied to the tank as long as the submersible pump is in operation
- (b) the water tank is connected with a special water prise and therefore the water which is supplied to fibreglass water tank cannot be deviated.

ELDERLY DAY CELEBRATION 2012

(No. B/145) Mrs. J. Ravina (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and others whether, in regard to Elderly Day celebration 2012, he will inform the House-

- (a) as to why meals were not provided to the elderly citizens; and
- (b) of all the facilities provided to them on that day?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this year the International Day for the Elderly was celebrated in Rodrigues on Sunday 7 October 2012 through a Recreational Day, which my Commission with the collaboration of the Senior Citizens Association organized at Pointe Cotton.

An organizing Committee under my Chairmanship was set up for this purpose. After consultation with the Presidents of all the 73 Senior Citizens Clubs during a meeting held on Tuesday 18 September 2012 at the Senior Citizen Centre of Mont Lubin, both my Commission and the Senior Citizen Association have been unanimous to recognize that based on experiences of past years, the provision of meals to the Elderly on that day was not appropriate for the following reasons:

- (i) It is difficult to control the quality of the meal in terms of salt content, taste, palatability and food preferences;
- (ii) Every year, there has been considerable delay for the supply of lunch and has led to dissatisfaction and criticism by Senior Citizens;
- (iii) The elderly are vulnerable persons and their time of taking lunch differs. Consequently, it would not be appropriate to impose on them a specific time for lunch.
- (iv) There is a lot wastage of food as not all the elderly attend the event.

In view of the above reasons, it has therefore been decided not to provide meal but to refund the sum of Rs 100 per elderly present at Pointe Cotton on that day.

The following facilities have been provided to the elderly on this occasion:

/UNREVISED/

- (i) The provision of free transport to and from Pointe Cotton.
- (ii) Medical Services by a team from the Commission for Health and the Red Cross;
- (iii) Security Services through Police and National Coast Guards;
- (v) Provision of fruits and drinking water;
- (vi) Cultural programme and animation;

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to inform the House that in spite of the fact that lunch was not provided, the event was a real success so much that upon evaluation with Presidents of the Senior Citizen Clubs, they were very delighted and have expressed their wish to maintain the same formula next year.