

**RODRIGUES
THIRD REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Debate No. 6 of 2012

Sitting of Tuesday 21 August 2012

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

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

Debate No. 6 of 2012

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 21 AUGUST 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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before I move question B/77, I have an important information to reveal to this House as regards to replies to questions. I have in my hand here. I refer B/66, a question that has been asked by the Member Perrine, the Sixth Island Region Member relating to officers using official vehicles ...which is contradictory to

Mr. Chairperson: You cannot make a statement.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I am not making a statement.

Mr. Chairperson: We will proceed with the questions.

“CENTRE D’ACCUEIL” – MALABAR - RENOVATION

(No. B/77) Mr. J. C. Agathe (The First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth and Others whether, in regard to the ‘Centre d’Accueil’ at Malabar, she will state if any renovation has been undertaken or will be undertaken this year and, in the affirmative, to table the list of tenderers and who has undertaken the works?

The Commissioner responsible for Youth and Others (Ms. M. R. L. Edouard): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the “*Centre d’Accueil*” at Malabar, I wish to inform the House that renovation works have been undertaken under this present government.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when the first Commissioner for Youth and Sports was in office, invitation to tender was done in June 2006 by the Central Tender Board and four tenderers were invited to bid at that time.

Heartrendingly for the country, the former government took office the next month and that bidding process was cancelled, supposedly due to budgetary constraints. Despite the urgency of the situation, the-then government did not find it necessary to implement the project the following financial year. Six years have elapsed, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, six years, and nothing has been done in that sense to cater for the need of youth and those non-governmental organisations and other bodies to have their residential sessions in a conducive environment.

More importantly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following numerous complaints received from persons accommodated at the centre and following numerous reports from the officers in charge of the centre, the former government in place launched some quotations here and there to have some filling ins (*some colmatage or en creole some bouche trou*) done.

Unfortunately, no concrete action was taken and when I took office in 2012, the centre was still in as bad a state, if not worse than when the first Commissioner for Youth initiated procedures for its renovation in 2006.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that is why when the present government took office in 2012, my Commission made this project one of its priorities. Since there is a high demand to use the centre, structures for maintenance as well will be put in place to ensure an efficient and optimal use of the centre. We have undertaken works to make the centre a high standard guest-house; the centre has been re-painted, new tiles laid, electrical networks and plumbings have been put anew and the centre has even been fitted with a solar water heater.

Still with a view to have the centre renown as a high standard guest house, the centre is being refurbished to the contentment of many. Those who have stayed at the centre recently expressed their satisfaction in using same; even those coming from Mauritius have noted the great difference, hence showing a difference in this present government's approach, in ensuring the well-being and betterment of the population.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, tenderers were invited to bid for masonry works at the centre and three tenderers responded. I am thereby tabling the list of tenderers who responded. I also wish to inform the House that the contract was awarded to Mr. J. J. G. who undertook the works. **(Appendix I)**

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner whether the tender committee is published publicly?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the necessary has been done. Contracts are awarded according to the Procurement Act.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is there any tender committee as regards to this process?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: One last question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I have so many questions to ask.

Mr. J. Roussety: Can I know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether the Commissioner was present or has got involved with any issue on the award dealing with this tender procedure.

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: No, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have not been involved in any of these because we are a responsible government.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can the Commissioner...

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order. You gave your ruling only a last question on this question.

Mr. Chairperson: This is what I am saying. Next question please.

**REHABILITATION, UPGRADING AND CONSTRUCTION
– DAMS/RESERVOIRS**

(No. B/78) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the 245 General Workers employed by the Public Service Commission on contract of a month to month basis, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) The number of vacant post for General Workers on the Civil Establishment Order for Rodrigues?
- (b) If official discussions are still ongoing with the relevant authorities in Mauritius for their employment on a permanent basis?
- (c) The number of workers who have been laid off and the reasons thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the 245 General Workers employed on a month to month basis, I wish to inform the House that the powers vested to the Public Service Commission under Section 89(1) of the Constitution it is only for appointment of persons to hold or act in any public office and to exercise disciplinary control over such persons. It is the duty of the recruiting public body to make the offer of employment not the Public Service Commission.

I am further informed that the number of vacant funded posts for the grade of General Workers who are employed on the Civil Establishment Order for Rodrigues is 108 as at 10 August 2012.

As regards part (b) of the question, allow me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to bring some clarifications to the house regarding the employment of the General Workers on a month-to-month basis. I would like to refer to the recommendations of the Director of Audit in his report for fiscal year December 2010 with regard to the recruitment of the 245 General Workers. I quote: *“Recruitment for employment should be carried out according to a proper set of criteria so that the selection is done in a fair and equitable manner”*. Moreover, the employment of those workers has been the subject of enquiry by the Independent Commission against Corruption and of several queries by the Director of Audit.

My regional government has made a submission in the new Human Resource Proposals for provision of funds to recruit additional General Workers in the year 2013 against established posts. Should funds be made available, established procedures will be followed similar to what is actually being done to fill vacancies in the same grade. These General Workers now employed on a month-to-month basis will definitely have the opportunity to compete, subject to their eligibility.

With regard to part (c) of the question, I am informed that:-

- (1) two workers have submitted their resignation and same have been approved;
- (2) three workers have had their contract terminated due to frequent absences without authorization;
- (3) one worker has passed away;
- (4) one worker has been offered employment as Senior Prisons Officer;
- (5) two workers have had their contract terminated by the Public Service Commission after conviction by a Court of justice.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner state what are the performance indicators achieved by the

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of that question.

Mr. J. Roussety: Is there, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, presently a selection exercise being carried out for the recruitment of any workers and if yes, what is the stage of the process if ever there is a process?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order. The main question is related to the 245 General Workers and not to any selection procedures.

Mr. J. Roussety: Before you give your ruling, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that I have much more experience than the respected Member in dealing with question and with the Standing Orders, may be she has forgotten her experiences lastly. If you look at part (a) of the question, it relates to number of vacant post for General Workers in the Civil Establishment Order for Rodrigues meaning that it concerns General Workers. I have no lesson to receive from the Deputy Chief Commissioner on this issue. Thank you.

The Chief Commissioner: Let me answer to the question. With regard to the 245, General Workers employed on a month-to-month basis I wish to inform the House that the powers vested to the Public Service Commission under Section 89(1) of the Constitution is only for appointment of persons to hold or act in any public office and to exercise disciplinary control over such persons. It is the duty of recruiting public body to make the offer of employment not the Public Service Commission. I am further, informed that the number of vacant funded posts in the grade of General Workers who is employed under the Civil Establishment Order for Rodrigues is 108 as at 10 August 2012.

As regards to part (b) of the question, allow me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to bring certain clarification to the House regarding the employment of General Workers on a month-to-month basis. I would like to refer to the recommendation from the Director of Audit in his report for fiscal year December 2010 with regard to recruitment of 245 General workers I quote: *“recruitment for employment should be carried out according to a proper set of criteria so that a selection is done in a fair and equitable manner”*.

Mr. J. Roussety: I repeat my question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission and be clear to the Chief Commissioner. He is responsible of the Chief Commissioner's Office and it is at this level that recruitment under the Island Chief Executive is made. Is there presently, today an ongoing meaning that it has already been started, recruitment exercise for General Workers in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly whatever be the mode of recruitment, terms of contract etc.

The Chief Commissioner: There has been as I said the 108 posts and there has been recruitment for those 108 posts.

Mr. J. Roussety: Would the Chief Commissioner confirm here in this House whether at a meeting held in La Ferme at the office of the Water Company, the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure did invite the workers who are going to be fired to apply for this post and did promise these workers these posts.

The Chief Commissioner: There is a question, B/101 question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the 245 General Workers, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he intends to continue the renewal of the contract of these General Workers on a month-to-month basis for the next financial year.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said in my reply, the regional government has made a submission in the new Human Resource Proposal for provision of funds to recruit additional General Workers in the year 2013 against establishment post. Should funds be made available an established will be followed similar to what is actually being done to fill vacancies in the said grade? Those General Workers now employed on a month-to-month basis will definitely have the opportunity to compete subject to their eligibility.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I refer to the circular from the Ministry of Finance dated 20 September 2011 addressed to all Heads it stated as regards to General Workers for this financial year that funding will not be provided for the filling of vacancies in the grade of General Workers. Will the Chief Commissioner states whether there will be recruitment in that grade this year?

The Chief Commissioner: I have already answered to that question. It is clear, as I have said.

Mr. J. Roussety: General Workers who are on contract they understand they will have the opportunity to compete. I understand there is a recruitment process ongoing. We do not know for how many workers. Can we know by which mode a person willing to compete for a job as General Worker suppose I want to resign here and I want to apply as General Worker, can the Chief Commissioner enlighten all those youths, fathers and mothers, head of families how this person will proceed if he wishes to compete for the selection exercise?

The Chief Commissioner: Usually we go to the Employment Office and this person whether he frequently go there to stamp his card, the Employment Office will send us a list of persons for interview for the General Workers.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, has there been any special case as far as this recruitment procedures is being concerned, the actual one. Has there been any special case for any group of youths or workers, who will be losing their jobs shortly?

The Chief Commissioner: We will see after. What we have done just as for the Water Company I think there is a question later and the Commissioner for Public Infrastructure and Water will explain what exactly will be done.

**OCTOPUS CLOSED SEASON REGULATIONS 2012
– ALLOWANCE/RATE –NO. OF FISHERMEN REGISTERED**

(No. B/79) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Octopus Closed Season) Regulations 2012, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) If any closed season allowance or compensation will be paid to the fishing community and in the affirmative, what is the rate and the number of days to be paid accordingly and the conditions attached;
- (b) The number of fishermen/fisherwomen registered at the different landing stations and to table the said list of such fishermen /fisherwomen.

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before answering the question I would like to seize the occasion to thank all respective Members here for the contribution of the success of this Octopus Closed Season Regulations and to all the fishermen who have understood the vision behind this and who has adopted the Regulations. Now I come to the question, first part of it.

I would like to inform the House that in line with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Octopus Closed Season) Regulations 2012, duly voted by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on 03 July 2012 an alternative livelihood compensation of Rs 250 will be paid to the octopus fishing community per day for work done between 07.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. (which means four hours of work). The payment will be for 15 days' work per month during a period of two months.

The conditions to the alternative livelihood compensation are as follows:-

/UNREVISED/

- (i) Payment will be made in cash on the Friday the following week during which work assigned has been satisfactorily performed;
- (ii) A worker who arrives on the working site after 07.00 a.m. will be considered absent;
- (iii) A worker caught fishing octopus during the closed season will be considered to have given up the job;
- (iv) Any act of misconduct will lead to termination of this agreement;
- (v) All equipment provided by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the performance of assigned work shall remain the property of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly; and
- (vi) The Rodrigues Regional Assembly will not be held responsible for any injury sustained at work through the fault/negligence of the worker.

With regard to part (b) of the question, the total number of fishermen/fisherwomen registered at the twenty-three (23) different Fish Landing Stations amount to 1427. I am tabling the list as requested.
(Appendix II)

Mr. J. Roussety: Can the Commissioner tell the House under which financial authority the allowances payable to these workers that he has recruited will be paid and from where will the fund come from.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have an answer to this question in another question later on.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner enlighten the House how are the different sites organized; I mean have there been any arrangements between the fishermen themselves. Are there public officers involved in the monitoring of the different works going on the different sites?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the Member has already seen this is well organized. We have public officers supervising the work. We promised the fishermen community that some of them will become Gangman or Gangwoman. We have done this as well and all the works are also being done in the villages. We have consulted the Rodrigues Council of Social Services

to do most of the job that is being done but again there is an answer of this question in another question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the arrangements, he has just mentioned that some of them have become gangmen. How has his Commission gone through this exercise, has there been criterias or has there been pick and choose “*petit copain*” involved in this process.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can assure the House that this has been done again in a very democratic way. We asked all the people, all the fishermen community who could at least read or write because you cannot be a gangman and not being able to write the names of the people on paper. This is the first step to this and then we did it in a democratic way in front of the fishermen community themselves and I was myself involved in one these exercise at Baie du Nord.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner what control mechanism has been put in place in order to ensure that those fishermen who previously were themselves fishing and now they are acting as watchdog to ensure that they effectively watch the lagoon which of course need to be protected by the fishermen themselves. Can he ensure the House that the way he has done can effectively give a good result to this process.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can assure the respected Member that this is the best way to protect the sea to use the people who knows at what time the people normally do their illegal fishing or do whatever bad things to the lagoon. The reason why we chose these people is definitely/exactly what you said is that we think they themselves will beneficieate from this octopus-closed season. If they do not watch it, then someone else will take it then at the beginning; they will be the one to suffer that is why we took them to protect their sort of good.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner state at which time, work is scheduled to start because everyday at 08.00/08.15 hours the workers are walking in a queue searching for a site of work to work. *Nous sommes sur le terrain on les voit il y a des pêcheurs qui sont présent dans des réunions 08.00/08.30 heures avec les membres de l'Assemblée. A quelle heure est-ce-que ces travailleurs là is scheduled to work everyday.*

Mr. R. Payendee: I have already answered to this from 07.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. but you know if you see people, walking around it does not mean that they are not working. The first step of this job was to clean the island. If

they walk and they do not see rubbish what can they collect. I have to remind the House, clear the mind of the respected Member that what is the objective of this project. Until now, unfortunately, they help us in this but they have not understood the objective of this project. The objective of this project is to prevent these people from going fishing. The alternative livelihood compensation is to prevent these from going at sea and fish octopus so that the female octopus can go and lay their eggs nicely in a protected way so that fishermen community can benefit from this process.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on the very day, there are conditions attached to obtain the closed season allowance, I saw people putting their thumb, and they have not been able to call these people to discuss with them. They have not been able to explain to these fishermen what is the condition attached and one of these conditions is that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is not responsible if ever there is injury happening on a site.

Mr. R. Payendee: We said the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will not be held responsible for any injury sustained at work through the fault and negligence. I think the respected Member did not understand the meaning of these words because all the people working with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, that is why, we made them sign the contract, and also I myself the first day I was at Baie du Nord. People said I cannot go to Baie du Nord and I went there the first day and I can go again and will go again. I saw the respected Member around there but unfortunately, he came late. The work was supposed to start at seven. If he had come at seven he would have seen me explaining one by one the condition and telling them that they can sign. If they do not agree with it, they do not have to. This process has been done all over the island.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Can I have a last supplementary on this question. I just wanted clarification concerning the 1427 fishermen concerned. Are they, those who were concerned with the bad weather allowance if we were paying these 1427 fishermen?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the first step was to register. We could not know who was a fisherman and who is not. Then the second step was to do a sort of scritinization. We remove all those who were supposed to be getting bad weather allowance because they are registered as off-lagoon fishermen. Off-lagoon cannot be twicely paid because they are getting the bad weather allowance for the same sort of thing. This is why it is not the same list. The registered list is the list where all these fishermen came but our normal list of people working is a list where we have removed of the people who could not be considered as octopus fishing.

DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS IN RODRIGUES

(No. B/80) **Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the development of sports in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) Where does matter stand as regards the participation of Rodrigues '*a part entière*' in the different games to be organised?
- (b) What his commission has done for the participation of Miss Christianne Legentil in the Olympic Games 2012 in London?
- (c) If all the regional sports committees are acting in accordance with the rules of the Registrar of Association?

The Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports (Mr. I. Valimamode): Mr. Chairperson Sir, as regards to part (a), I wish to inform the House that during my last visit in Mauritius from 28-30 June 2012, my Departmental Head and myself had a meeting with Honourable Devanand Ritoo, Minister of Youth and Sports in the presence of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry during which amongst others, preliminary discussion was engaged as regards to the possibility for Rodrigues to participate in games such as CJSOI (Commission de la Jeunesse et des Sports de l'Océan Indien) and Indian Ocean Games as an island.

Furthermore, during my recent mission to Comoros Island in the context of CJSOI Games, I attended the Ministerial Committee of the CJSOI Games on 14 July 2012. I had the privileged to be introduced as the Commissioner for Sports of Rodrigues to the Ministerial Committee by the Honourable Minister Ritoo.

The fact that I participated in such high-level meeting alongside Ministers of Sports of Indian Ocean Islands and their representatives is a major step in the right direction. During discussions with Ministers of the CJSOI Games on the issue, there seems to be consensus on the legitimacy for Rodrigues to participate in the Games as an island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that the issue of the participation of Rodrigues as an Island is a long-term negotiation process and requires first, the approval of the Central Government and then the recommendations of a majority of other member islands concerned.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, unless we obtain the Central Government blessing, I propose not to make any further statement on this matter and I would praise all members of this House to bring their support to this issue which should be above politics.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (b) of the question, I wish first of all, to congratulate Miss Christianne Legentil for her remarkable performance at the Olympic Games 2012. Indeed, we should all be thankful to her for putting our island on the forefront once again. Thanks also to her family and technical staffs who have accompanied her in training and her career.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, once an athlete is selected or invited to participate in the Olympic Games, he or she is fully taken charge of by the Olympic Committee. In addition, during the games, participants are fully taken in charge in terms of board, lodging, sportswear, transport and other relevant benefits.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, Miss Christiane Legentil was sent to France for a training camp in mid-January 2012. This was possible after the intervention of the-then Commission for Youth and Sports with the Ministry for Youth and Sports. During this period, she participated in a Commonwealth Games where she obtained the Bronze Medal in the less than 52 kgs category. She returned to Mauritius for a short period in March 2012. Being given that her performance was excellent as reported by his coaches in France, I personally intervened and my request to Mr. Michael Glover, Director of the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports to extend her scholarship, to prepare her for Olympic qualifications was entertained. The outcome speaks for itself.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports that Miss Christianne Legentil receives a monthly stipend of 200 Euros for her subsistence. As the cost of living in France is quite high, my Commission is considering giving her a monthly stipend for her to meet the ends.

Furthermore, to show our commitment towards the development of elite sports and in recognition of her excellent performance, the Executive Council has, in its session of 10 August, approved a cash prize of Rs 25,000 for Miss Christianne Legentil. A prize giving ceremony is scheduled for Sunday 26 August 2012.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (c) of the question, I wish to inform the House that all Regional Committees function under the aegis of their

respective sports federations. However, as stipulated in the Sports Act, the regional committees also have to be registered to the Registrar of Associations.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that most regional committees here and even in Mauritius are not registered with the Registrar of Associations. This situation has been prevailing even long before I took office. In fact, the only regional committee registered here is the Boxing Committee, which exists under the name "*Association Rodriguaise de Boxe Amateur*".

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is committed to regularise those Regional Committees which are not functioning in accordance with the Sports Act to ensure that good governance and management practices prevails in their different operations. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to (a) Rodrigues to participate *à part entière* in the different games since this is an important issue. Have the Commissioner been able to discuss this matter in the Executive Council first and you know that the outcome of the Executive Council should be sent to the Prime Minister. Have this been discuss first in the Executive Council?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this issue will be raised by the Chief Commissioner when he meets the Prime Minister shortly.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to Miss Christianne Legentil, up to now this is to confirm that Rodrigues Regional Assembly has done nothing prior to the participation of the Rodriguan athlete in the Olympic Games.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I said, once we were informed that Miss Christianne Legentil was about to take part in the Olympic Games I mentioned that she is fully taken on board by the Olympic Committee. We have talked to her. She is in close contact with the Sports Officer here and arrangement is being made to increase her stipend.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the participation of Christianne Legentil in the game as you know that each athlete has a coach and the best coach is the coach who coach her almost everyday. Has the Commissioner taken the decision in order to send at least one coach to accompany this *lady*?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the ex-Commissioner for Youth and Sports should know that selection of athletes or their coaches' rest on

the Olympic Committee and not even the Ministry. Nevertheless, I have had the opportunity to voice my opinion to the Ministry of Youth and Sports concerning the non-participation of the local coach, who knows better the athletes. I agree on this point with the respected Member.

RENTAL OF BUILDINGS

(No. B/81) Mr. J. Roussety (First Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in regard to the rental of buildings and other amenities by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will:-

- (a) Table the list of buildings or other amenities rented, stating (i) the purpose to which the rented premises are put to, (ii) the surface area, (iii) the location, (iv) the name of the owner/lessor and (v) the monthly rental;
- (b) State what is the policy of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly as regards the renting of premises from external non-governmental parties and if there are prescribed procedures or established practices in government for the procurement and bidding of same;
- (c) State if any procedure has been launched or building/premises rented by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly since the beginning of this year and give all related details thereon as requested in (a) above?

The Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, regarding part (a) of the question, I am tabling the requested information.

As regards part (b), there are established procedures under the Public Procurement Act 2006 for the procurement/bidding process for renting of premises/office, by customize the standard bidding document already available for the requirement of the public body.

This can be done through the Standard Bidding Document (SBD) of Request for sealed quotations for non-consultancy services – other than security/cleaning for procurement values up to Rs 5 m. – Procurement of non-consultancy services for values exceeding Rs 5 m.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (c), a letter of award was issued on 24 January 2012 to Mr. Ahmad Ismael Mackoojee for the renting of an office space of 109 m² at Port Mathurin at the rate of Rs 25,000 monthly.

Mr. J. Roussety: Can we know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the answer to part (c) for which purpose the building has been rented? When was the call for quotations made because we have not seen it in the press? I used to see invitation to bids, for example, in Mauritius renting of office space etc. I want to know for which purpose the Commissioner is going to rent 109 m² at Port Mathurin for Rs 25,000 and whether there has been a duly commission, that is something which is in order regarding the bidding process. Because there are other persons who may be would have wished, who have private building etc., to compete.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this building was to be rented to house the Civil Status Office. Request for sealed quotation for the provision of renting of office space was launched on 10 November 2011 and was sent to the following:-

- (i) Manager Pharmacy
- (ii) Salim Mackoojee
- (iii) Jane Foundation
- (iv) Ah Sin Hung Sik Yan

The closing date was fixed for the 16 November 2011. A letter of award was issued on 24 January 2012 to Mr. Ahmad Mackoojee, the father of Salim Mackoojee for the renting of office space at the rate of Rs 25,000 monthly.

The successful bidder was requested to hand over the office space on 02 February 2012 but the building was handed over on 16 February 2012. However, in March the Officer in Charge of Civil Status informed that they have not been consulted prior to the partitioning of the offices and could not move there. The following partitioning of works would have to be carried out:-

- (i) To be partitioned in three small booth to accommodate birth and death section, national identity section and application and delivery section;
- (ii) An office for the Officer in Charge to be partitioned to accommodate a marriage booth;

- (iii) Since the above mentioned works were not included in the specification, the Central Administration was consulted and thus requested the Commission to do the needful.

A survey was carried in April 2012 to determine the requirement of the Civil Status Office. The following works were required for the smooth running of the offices, partitioning works, additional electrical works, installation of air conditioner, setting up of an archive section and computerisation.

Upon receipt of financial clearance in May 2012, the approval of the lessor was sought to undertake works at the building. The lessor gave his approval to undertake works at its building in June 2012. Action has already been taken to implement the above works which are expected to be completed by the end of August 2012.

Meanwhile, the office space is being used to accommodate stores of the Civil Status Office. The Civil Status Office will be transferred by the end of August 2012.

Mr. J. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I must say that by the way that it is a very good thing to try to house the Civil Status Office in an appropriate building. Because I have been there for some research and the states in which extremely important paper on the population of Rodrigues are kept is not good. From the reply of the Commissioner, it can be concluded that the tender procedure was wrong as far as the specification are concerned. Now the Commissioner has mentioned that there has been request for sealed quotation. From my knowledge, sealed quotations for an amount of Rs 25,000 can only be sent to pre-registered suppliers/bidders. Can he confirm, whether these persons to whom requests for biddings/tenders were sent, how did they chose to send to Mr. X, Mr. Y and Mr. Z. This is my first question. Secondly, can I make a proposal in the interest of the whole business community of Port Mathurin and Rodrigues everywhere? Can he ensure that in the future that all request like this, to rent building for government use be made through the press to give one and all the opportunity to bid. Thank you.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware because this request for sealed quotation were done by the previous government but for the second of the question of the solution that the respected Member has asked we will abide to.

PROGRAMME BASED BUDGETING (PBB) - CHANGES

(No. B/82) **Mr. J. Roussety (First Island Region Member)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Programme Based Budgeting (PBB) data relative to financial year 2012, he will state if it is the same to those approved in this House in 2011 for the year 2012 and if not, if he will state:-

- (i) which changes have been made;
- (ii) by whom;
- (iii) when;
- (iv) how;
- (v) under what authority; and
- (vi) if he will cause fresh updated copies of the PBB actually giving authority for expenditure in the different Commissions and as indicators of performance to be tabled and circulated for the information and benefit of the House?

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that no changes have been made to the PBB data relative to financial year 2012 as approved by the House. However, as I stated in my statement to this House in February last, regarding over commitment of funds by the outgoing regional government, there was a need to ensure payment of past commitments in order not to tarnish the reputation of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

In that context, the Executive Council at its meeting held on 06 April 2012 has decided to approve the *virement* of funds to meet the financial commitments of fiscal year 2012. The new ceilings of expenditure following proposed *virements* have been worked out and communicated to all Departmental Heads.

Those *virements* are being carried out as and when required and strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Management Manual. In so doing, some identified projects as per PBB 2012 have been put on hold and the voting provision have been or will be reallocated to other item votes as a normal practice.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is the policy of this Regional Government to come out with a proper financial management framework as well as a proper financial regulation to favour judicious use of public funds.

Mr. J. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am a little confused. In the beginning, the Chief Commissioner stated that, there have been no changes. Then he stated that there has been *virement*. I have never heard of this word in my experience as Commissioner for Finance. What does he mean by *virement*?

The Chief Commissioner: This is a new word employed by the finance for reallocation.

Mr. J. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a new cake on the table, if I understand. The cake, which has been baked by former government, has been repolished/reworked/cut/redecorated and there is a new cake. The Chief Commissioner has said that there are new ceilings of expenditure, which have been communicated to Departmental Heads. Meaning grossly that there has been new budget estimates. This is what we need in this House. Can we know on which budget estimates each Commission/Vote Item of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is working? Because otherwise we will be working in the dark. We will not know who is working on what, how much money they have at their disposal and how we could, for example, ask question and do our job as Members of this House. I insist whether we put this, the items of expenditure item wise be circulated in this House.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as at to date more than Rs 70 m. have been reallocated to the monthly obligations under the committed items votes. This means we have to be very careful. This is not a change; this is only what we mean to arrive to be careful to all those commitments. We have to pay to all those commitments and I must say that commitments have been made as I mentioned in my speech and this is not a question of change. Change means the policy of the budget. This is only what we called reallocation to pay for what has been done.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner enlightens on the projects he mentioned which have been put on hold and why these projects have been put on hold?

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice to this question.

Mr. J. Roussety: I repeat my request, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and I beg to disagree on the issue of policy and reallocation. Reallocation cannot be made, unless, there is change in the policy. It is change in policy, which will guide reallocation. I fail to understand the logic of the Chief Commissioner because there has been a new executive and therefore new policy. We all know that when there is a new government they will reallocate the funds, take money from such items, which we think is not a priority, there is a sort of cross cutting in the budget. That is okay but what we need is the final document. On which are you working? We cannot be kept into the blue as if we are putting our hand in a bag and then saying that this is a project, the money is in the bag. We need to know in this House as far as I am concerned, for example, as a member of the Public Accounts Committee how much money has been put in such and such item.

Would the Chief Commissioner in a spirit of fairness and to facilitate the work of Members, journalists, reporters, members of the public and for the sake of transparency tabled the new budgetary estimates on which they are working.

The Chief Commissioner: We reallocate/virement to commitments made in 2011. There is more than that, more on a project. We have to commit ourselves concerning those projects.

WATER CONNECTIONS – WATER METERS

(No. B/83) Mr. J. Roussety (First Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to water connections, he will state for which purpose or use, if any, the Commission intends to put the water meters installed since years?

The Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that 8,000 flow meter boxes have been purchased in November 2002 and the installation of same was completed in 2009. The installation of the flow meters was to monitor the volume of water distributed to consumers in Rodrigues. There is need for a complete survey on these flow meters to enable further actions.

Mr. J. Roussety: Can we know what is meant by survey, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this case? I am in the dark. 8,000 flow meters have been installed, so we know where they are, is it not at the Commission at least. Do you know or you do not know where they are? They are in nature! What is the purpose of survey? Why do you need a survey? My question is clear. For what purpose of use the Commission intends to put, this has cost millions of rupees, to government, so what is the use? What is Commission going to do with this? All these meters! Let them lie in the grass!

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these meters was installed since 2009 and nothing has been done by the previous government. Since the installation no follow-up has been carried out and no tender have been collected up to now. We need an assessment to verify whether these meters are still in good order.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: The installation of meters is a dynamic process. We have bought the flow meters, we have installed and the way forward for these meters to serve the population, it rests on the actual Commissioner, he should continue with the work. Work has begun, the installation has begun, the installation has been made, it is a dynamic process and now he cannot wait and see he should work.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the respected Member was the Commissioner of Water Resources last year and he did nothing about the 8000 flow meters but we are going to work on it.

Mr. J. Roussety: One small clarification is that when I took office in 2006 the installation of these flow meters has already started. It was the first regional government who installed this. My question relates to the policy being given they are closing down the Rodrigues Water Company. He is saying that we had no plan to use the meters. It is the Water Company, the workers of the Water Company in the different zones. The recruitment which should have been completed and all modernization process which should have been completed and they have not been able to do it and now we see that the Water Company is closing down and the meters in fact will have no effective use. I repeat, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we will not be able to supply water infinitely in Rodrigues. Will the Commissioner ensures, being given, it is his responsibility that the monitoring of these meters start, for example, on a pilot basis for 1000, 2000, 3000 water users so that we can get value for money out of these meters.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what has not been done since the last five years, it will be done in the near future!

***‘PLAN POUR L’EMPLOI’/‘ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE
STIMULUS FUND’ – STEPS TAKEN***

(No. B/84) Mr. J. Roussety (First Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the *‘Plan pour l’emploi’* and the creation of an *‘Economic and Infrastructure Stimulus Fund’* mentioned at paragraph 32 of the Discours Programme 2012-2017, he will state what steps have been taken to date and where does matter stand?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, given the current status of development of Rodrigues characterised by an insufficiently developed private sector, employment problems and a low ranking in terms of Relative Development Index at national level, my government is giving a high priority to development of jobs and infrastructure in its five year programme.

My government has a two-pronged approach to solve the problem of unemployment. Its first approach is to strengthen the micro and small business sector. Several initiatives have already been launched to promote an entrepreneurial culture so as, to generate employment, develop exports for niche products and encouraging the population to become more self-reliant. Among these initiatives: *“the Salon de l’Emploi et des Métiers”* held in May 2012,

commercial fares for SME's, partnership with FAO for the development of the value chain addition for our *ti-limon*. Further measures and initiatives will be announced. in the forthcoming first and subsequent budgets of this government. We have a long way ahead to go.

The second approach will consist of developing major infrastructures vital for the economic and the overall development of the island. Despite, the progress registered since 1982 onwards, the need for infrastructural development is still very important in Rodrigues. The development of an efficient road network to support the economic development and promote the welfare of the population, the construction of building to provide public services, administrative block, headquarters for firefighters, extension of the prison, youth rehabilitation center, the development of the port and of the airport and the development of water production and distribution. It is generally admitted that the capital budget allocated by the Central Government to Rodrigues is very insufficient to meet its vital needs in terms of infrastructure development. This is the reason why my government is constantly negotiating with the central government for the setting up of an Economic and Infrastructure Stimulus Fund in order to catch up in terms of infrastructure development but also to boost the economy and create jobs. The idea of having this fund is to mobilise fund external to the capital budget to finance development in Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since my government has taken office in February this year, various initiatives and negotiations are underway in order to have access to external funding and financing to the capital budget. You will note the organization of the United Nation Country Team and other Development Partners meeting at the beginning of May, which has led to the opening of various avenues of development.

Early June this year, the Financial Secretary from the Ministry of Finance has had a two-day working session with the Rodrigues Regional Government to discuss its top priorities so as to find ways to meet them.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House where is the fund now. Whether the fund will be created under a budgetary item under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly budget and if yes, which item and whether external non-governmental parties or agencies will be concerned with the fund as both beneficiaries and donors?

A second question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the Discours Programme, it has been said that such fund will be created for the actual urgence economic. Seven months has lapsed can the Chief Commissioner inform the House

whether he is aware of the *morosité économique sans precedent qui se vit dans le pays* and whether he intends to trigger the creation of such fund after such a long and under explain delay?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, are we in an Assembly to express our anger. Is it a way to speak in this Assembly? As I said in my reply, there have been discussions going on with foreign agencies, there has been also discussions going on with the foreign *buyeurs de fond* and there will be discussion with the Ministry of Finance. As I said, we had a meeting with the Financial Secretary. We have talked a lot about them. This means we have to put in mind that in order to create an economic and structure stimulus fund there must be lots of discussions, I must say that and we are carrying on all discussions. Before the budget, there will be also discussions on this stimulus package.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *hier en regardant la télé, Télé Réunion, j'ai constaté et j'ai vu qu'on dit le chômage parmi les jeunes à Maurice est supérieur à la moyenne mondiale. C'est choquant, en même temps, M. le président, en parlant de plan pour l'emploi on voit qu'il y a un problème surtout là en ce moment il y a pas mal des jeunes qui sont au chômage. Il y a le problème des contracteurs qui est en train de mettre la clé sous les paillassons. Comment est-ce que le Chef commissaire va pouvoir pallier à ce problème surtout avec l'Economic Infrastructure Stimulus Fund.*

The Chief Commissioner: J'ai mentionné tous ça dans ma réponse, M. le président. Tous le monde parle du chômage. Pour nous il n'y a pas que les constructions des routes, des bâtiments il y a aussi construire l'économie d'un pays, l'entrepreneuriat et la pêche, il y a tout. L'économie doit pouvoir avancer avec le secteur privé. Il faut créer un bon secteur privé solide. Evidement il y a le gouvernement qui va faire tous son possible pour arriver justement avec les moyens à la disposition du secteur privé et aussi discuter pour que vraiment on puisse arriver justement à résoudre le problème de chômage. Le chômage n'est pas nécessairement ceux qui n'ont pas d'emploi mais aussi il faut créer des emplois à travers la formation d'entrepreneuriat, l'agriculture et il me semble c'est à quoi il faut viser. Il faut sauter beaucoup plus haut pour atteindre ce but.

Mr. Chairperson: I invite the Deputy Chairperson to take the chair.

At this stage at 11.50 hours the Deputy Chairperson took the chair.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

(No. B/85) Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the setting up of an office of the Human Resource Development Council in Rodrigues since 01 June this year, he will state to the House what actions have been initiated so far by either the local office or the one in mainland Mauritius in so far as unemployment is concerned?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, at the outset, let me make it clear that the mission of the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) is to facilitate training and promote human resource development in line with social and national objectives. The Human Resource Development Council is therefore not entrusted with the responsibility to address unemployment directly, though many of its facilities and projects do contribute in promoting employment and job creation opportunities.

Through various facilities made available to employers contributing Levy, the HRDC encourages employers to take advantage of incentives provided under the HRDC Levy/Grant Schemes and thus creating jobs for unemployed people.

The HRDC office at the Human Resource Centre is operational since 01 June 2012 and is manned by an officer who has been recruited by the HRDC. The office will be officially launched in September 2012.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that so far, the HRDC has initiated several actions in Rodrigues. In line with its mandate to take appropriate measures in view of reducing the mismatch between the demand and supply of labour, the HRDC conducted a Labour Shortage Survey in 2012 with over 125 employees of the private and public sector. A Validation Workshop is scheduled for 07 September 2012. The aim of the workshop is to apprise stakeholders of the findings of the survey and to debate on the recommendations. This will ultimately constitute a basis for the formulation of sound training and HRD strategies for Rodrigues in line with immediate and future labour requirements.

I am pleased to inform the House, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, that with a view to empowering Rodriguans, re-energise the core sectors of the economy and promote job creation and entrepreneurship development, the HRDC in consultation with my commission has worked out some projects that are being considered for funding very shortly. These include:-

- Expertise for the development of a strategic plan for SMEs;
- Expertise for the development of new agro-processing products;

- Women empowerment;
- Circular migration for the youth;
- Pre-job training and job placement; and
- High profile training courses for women entrepreneurs.

It is expected that the implementation of these projects will facilitate job creation and income generating activities in Rodrigues.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner said earlier that the HRDC is not directly concerned with unemployment and then she comes up to say that they initiate actions to promote job creation. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner what has been done concretely in so far as unemployment is concerned in Rodrigues as stated in my question for unemployed people in Rodrigues. There is a project that has been launched in Mauritius – pre-job training project. Rs 160 m. have been earmarked for this project for this year. What has been the quote part for Rodrigues. *La part du gâteau national de Rodrigues M. le Vice président. Quelle a été la part de Rodrigues.*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I mentioned in my reply that one of the avenues of cooperation with the HRDC in consultation with my Commission is to promote exactly pre-job training and job placement for the youth. This is coming very soon.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, this have already started in Mauritius. I drew the attention of the House and the special attention of the Deputy Chief Commissioner that *à un moment ou il y a plein de licenciement à Rodrigues, à un moment où on parle de l'exode de jeune Rodriguais vers Maurice quelle a été l'apport de ce projet pour soulager la misère la misère des chômeurs à Rodrigues. Quelle a été les actions initié par la commission part rapport à ce projet ?*

M. le vice président, je voudrais renvoyer la question au membre respecté depuis quand l'exode a commencé ce n'est pas hier. Qui était là mais on commence le travail. On a un travail à faire, on avait rien fait nous les jeunes comptent sur nous et on va le faire et on va le faire incessamment.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: M. le vice président, c'est trop facile de sauter sur un mont. La question demeure qu'est-ce qui a été fait concrètement pour que Rodrigues est sa part du gâteau nationale par rapport à ce projet de HRDC.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Les discussions sont en bon chemin. On a déjà là Rs 3 m. *earmarked* jusqu'au 31 décembre pour implémenter tous ces projets que je viens de mentionner.

ONION PLANTERS – LOSS ENCOUNTERED

(No. B/86) **Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to onion planters in the region of Port- Sud-Est, Mourouk and others, if any, who have encountered severe loss with a specific variety in 2011, he will inform the House:

- (a) If any refund has been made to them;
- (b) If yes, specify (i) the names and addresses of each planter, (ii) the amount of money spent by each planter of these seedlings, and (iii) the total amount of money refunded to each planter; and
- (c) If not, to give reasons thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I inform that in December 2011 the Commission for Agriculture refunded 50% of the cost incurred for the purchase of onion seeds of *Red Creole* and the varieties to 240 planters. The refund was approved by the Executive Council following complaints from onion growers regarding the poor yield obtained from seeds of these two varieties, which were purchased from the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company. A survey carried out by the agricultural services confirms the complaints of the planters and it was approved that the 240 planters whose names were obtained from the RTMC be refunded 50% of the cost of their seeds. I am tabling a list of the 240 planters in favour of whom the refund were approved in November 2011. (**Appendix III**)

It appears that the planters concerned were convened by the RTMC to call at the Finance Section of the Commission for Agriculture to collect the relevant payment. However, for unknown reasons 38 planters as indicated in the list did not collect the said payment representing a total amount of Rs 20,000, which was refunded to the Consolidated Fund on 17 February 2012.

Fresh arrangement will be initiated for payment to those planters who have not received their refunded amount. All procedures will be carried out by my office to ensure that all the beneficiaries are effectively refunded.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner mentioned that the planters have been called by the RTMC to collect their refunds. Can we know from the Chief Commissioner what has been the mode to convene these planters?

The Chief Commissioner: We were not there. It should have been the Commission for Agriculture which should have invited these planters to collect the refunded money. It was not their job. The RTMC give only the list to planters and it was the job of the Commission of Agriculture to call the planters to refund them but I must say that since we are here every fortnight we have a briefing with officers of the Commission for Agriculture. One of these officers has neither raised this point. That is why we are taking decision, the Commission to call those planters to refund them the 50% lost on the seeds.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner states whether there has been correspondences between his Commission, the Commission for Agriculture and the Meteorological Services to apprise planters about the forthcoming weather projection before plantation, if no whether he intends to establish same?

The Chief Commissioner: I just said in my reply you were not there. It was only complaints received by the planters. It seems that this was put in the hands of the RTMC, which had to buy the onions of these planters.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, prior to the fund to be credited into the Consolidated Fund has the office of the Chief Commissioner contacted these planters before crediting the amount into the consolidated fund.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said the RTMC who sent... I do not know how this was done, was the RTMC as it should have been the Commission for Agriculture and we are now looking forward for those 38 planters to contact them and to tell them either by letter or through our technicians on site to come to address themselves to the Commission for Agriculture to receive their refund.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, it is known to everybody that the reason to refund for the purchase of these variety of onions seedling is that due to the poor yield, it is known to everybody. Rodrigues being so small, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, that everybody knows the reason for such a situation. How come that the RTMC as just mentioned by my friend Mr. Agathe, before refunding the money to the Consolidated Fund has not deemed it important/useful to know the reasons from the planters why they did not turn up. Because everybody in this island knows that the reason is to help them to recover part of the loss, the severe loss they encountered in this variety of Red Creole.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I think that the Chief Commissioner has already answered this question. Next question.

**INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)
DEVELOPMENT - RODRIGUES**

(No. B/87) Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development in Rodrigues, she will state if any new company has made any request to operate in Rodrigues and, in the affirmative, to state where matters stand, specifying the types of services proposed and the packages to be offered to Rodrigues, if any?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson Sir, with your permission I will come later with a statement to give an overview of the development in ICT sector in Rodrigues.

CLOSED SEASON FOR OCTOPUS FISHING

(No. B/88) Mr. J. A. L. Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the closed season for octopus fishing, he will inform the House:-

- (a) If there has been any contraveners so far;
- (b) What measures have been made by his Commission to enforce the regulations;
- (c) Has there been any control in hotels, restaurants and other places where octopus, be it dried, chilled or fresh, is usually served and/or sold;
- (d) What is being done to control dried and/or chilled octopus exported to Mauritius; and
- (e) Whether any export of same has been reported so far?

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by officers of the Fisheries Protection Services and the South East Marine Protected Area (SEMPA) that there has been two contraveners as to date with regard to octopus closure period.

Apart from the services dispensed by the Fisheries Protection Services and the SEMPA, some two hundred (200) workers are involved in the surveyance operation all around the island. A surveyance plan has also been prepared by the Fisheries Protection Services. Moreover, the services of a Police and that of the National Coast Guard are available at any time. Patrols on sea are carried out on regular basis at low tide with a view to prevent fraudulent fishers to pick octopus.

We are aiming at prevention measures because the objective of the project is to prevent the fishermen from killing mainly female octopus to allow same to reproduce in order to replenish the stock. No control with regard to part (c) has been effected in hotels and restaurants for the time being. However, checks have been carried out at two wholesalers' supermarket. Controls have also been effected in some of the premises of the people who has declared octopus before 13 August and this will continue as it is ongoing process. Control will be done during the time of closure as a monitoring procedure. Thank you.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has mentioned that no check/control has been done at restaurants and hotels. On the other hand, he mentioned that checks have been effected at places where people have declared that they got octopus in their custody. When people declare we have checked, those who do not declare you do not have check you have said so far. Do you mean, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, does the Commissioner mean that checks will done shortly or when the checks will be done?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I mentioned that this is an ongoing process. The closing of the octopus fishery has just started. So far, we have checked some of the people who have declared the octopus but the process is an ongoing one. Mostly all the people, especially those who had declared big stock of octopus. We will continue definitely to control all the octopus that have been declared.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Can the Commissioner enlighten the House on how the work is made, mainly concerning the weight of octopus presents at the householder.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, my Commission before closure of the octopus fishery, we bought four balances which is in line with the Regulations and we are going to use these to monitor. But especially the process is like this – somebody has declared, say 50 kgs of octopus and then the Fisheries noticed that he is drying some of his octopus, the Fisheries Officers will go there asking how many kilos he has been drying and then we weigh the

rest to make sure that he is not buying new octopus. That is the plan. Thank you.

Mr. J. Roussety: We are speaking of contraveners so far. I think that the Commissioner is also responsible for tourism. Is he aware of inconveniences that have been caused at the airport especially to Mauritian visitors who have been asked or have been seized of their dried octopus and products, pickles made out of octopus and what does he intends to do because the tourism sector is already on regression and it would be a disadvantage again, a disincentive to come to Rodrigues if such practices keeps going.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am fully aware of the problems and we have a list of all these people who have unfortunately been arrested. Normally according to the Regulations no one is supposed to have in his possession between these days. Ignorance of laws is not an excused but nevertheless my Commission has taken the decision when I heard about the problem we took the decision for the next morning to have, especially because of the tourism sector, to have a Fisheries Officer based at the airport itself so that this problem do not occur again. But as I said at the very beginning of this Regulations we have got a lot to learn from this. It is the first time we have got to learn from this and the next time/year this Regulations will be like “béton”. Thank you.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the contraventions I am quite astonished. It is not a good sign to see that people are fishing octopus even in the SEMPA. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he is aware that people are fishing octopus almost all around the island and what he is doing.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am very sad to hear this from a respected Member because the aim of this project everybody should help to protect this. If the respected Member is saying this what is he doing? I can give him my phone number if you want if you do not have it, you can phone me or phone the Fisheries. We have given different phone numbers for people. I think the respected Member is also a member of this island and his job as a respected Member is to help in this project. I feel really sad to hear this from a Member who has been elected by the people of this island.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries whether prior the date of the coming in force of the Regulations notices were fixed at the airport to appraise people coming from abroad of the danger of exporting octopus?

Mr. R. Payendee: I have already answered to this question, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. As I said this problem arised and it is a fact, we are not here to hide behind facts but we took the necessary action the next morning and I myself have got a list of all these people who have got these problems and as a careful government and as a government which prone *democratie participative* I have phoned these people to explain, not to excuse because they were not right to take this, not even to apologise but to phone them, to explain to them what happened to them. The plan is we have already discussed with these people. All these octopus at the government/fisheries custody and we are working towards giving back those octopus to these people.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner for Fisheries, he has to admit that “*il a mit la charrue devant les boeufs*”. May I ask him being given the importance of tourism as an economic pillar of the island and also to be able at the same time to address this problem of octopus fishers it is high time to establish a protocol with the tourism promoters namely, Air Mauritius, Tourism Office and *Associations du Tourisme Réunies* (ATR) so that if you want everybody to be taken on board I think this is the only way to get out of this. May I request him to look into this, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I think this is also the job of the respected Member to come forward with positive stuffs to make this project work. I welcome the suggestion.

Mr. J. Roussety: It has been reported, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, that among the contraventions which have been taken that the Fisheries Protection Officer has also seized the boat of the fisherman who was contravening/fishing. Can he confirm whether this is true that a boat has been seized during the process?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of this I will enquire.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir,

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: I am sorry, I am the mover of the question part (d) and part (e) has not been replied.

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question, please.

[Interruption]

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, in my list I do not have part (d) and (e).

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know whether you will pay attention to these two parts.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mr. J. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, we have here an Order Paper which has been dispatched by your services and I think you have also the same Order Paper and on page 5 on which question B/88 has its parts (d) and (e) and the respected Member, my colleague Mr. Alan Ladd Emilien has raised your attention to the fact that the questions have not been answered and the Commissioner has said that he has not got these parts of the question. I think you should be fair and it should be obvious to you that we need an explanation from the House. Where have the question gone?

Mr. R. Payendee: I will answer the question. As regards to part (d) – what is being done to control dry octopus export to Mauritius? Again, this is part of the legislation. The people will have to declare. Anyone who wants to export the whatever dried or... it is well spelled in the law/regulations.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: On a point of order. There has been a point of order on the side of Mr. Roussety and we are waiting for your ruling first.

The Deputy Chairperson: According to Standing Orders, a Member cannot insist if a Member refuse to answer a question. Your point is out of order. Next, question please.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2012

(No. B/89) Ms. M. D. S. Perrine (Ninth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth and Others whether, in regard to activities organized in the context of the International Youth Day 2012 by her Commission, she would elaborate on (i) the activities carried out, and (ii) the outcome of the said event?

The Commissioner responsible for Youth and Others (Ms. R. D. L. Edouard): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, in the context of the International Youth Day 2012 whose theme this year is “*Building a better world partnering with youth*” and put into the local context as “*Jeunesse to ene*

partenaire clé dans développement to pays” and after discussions and consultations with youth stakeholders the following activities were carried out:-

- A girl friends debates on the theme “*International Youth Day*”;
- On the theme referred earlier “*Building a better world partnering with youth*”; and
- “*Jeunesse to ene partenaire clé dans développement to pays*” which was held on Tuesday 7 August 2012 at Mon Plaisir Centre.

The aims of the activity was to provide a platform for our young people to interact with professionals on youth related issues and other socio-economic issues of Rodrigues and to give them an opportunity to voice out their concerns, opinions and suggestions in contributing in the building of a better future for Rodrigues. The following persons both from Rodrigues and Mauritius acted as resource persons for the conference debate for a greater exchange and *partage*. They are as follows:-

- Dr. Henri Agathe, Advisor in Economic Development of the Chief Commissioner’s Office and Officer in charge of the EPMU, who lengthily talked on the economic prospective for youth in Rodrigues;
- Mr. Vale Director of Youth Affairs at the Ministry of Youth and Sports who explained on the different activities and programmes organised in Mauritius for the youth and on potential partnership that may be established between youth of Rodrigues and Mauritius;
- Sister Roseline Larcher, Trainer in Human Values who talked on human values in Rodrigues;
- Mr. Kuduruth, Associates Professor at the University of Mauritius who talked on how youth could be partners in the socio-economic development of Rodrigues; and
- Mr. Lindley Couronne, Consultant in Citizenship and Human Rights at the Prime Minister’s Office who talked on citizenship and on protection and promotion of human rights.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I have to point out that the conference debate provided an excellent platform where youth were able to voice out their

concerns about their future, their career perspective and the future of Rodrigues. Many of them also seized the occasion to talk about the problems they faced as youth when they want to start their enterprises among others. More importantly, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, it was also an interesting occasion as they were around 300 youths to have some inputs from them for the upcoming budging and hence showing the government will to promote the *democratie participative*.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, a caravan d'animation was for the first time organised in Rodrigues on Wednesday 8 to Friday 10 August 2012. The activity aimed at sensitising youth on issues, such as, youth entrepreneurship, responsible sexual behaviour and HIV/AIDS and other youth related issues through artistic mode like songs, slams, sketches, and dances among others.

During the three days the animators and others went throughout the island in the main villages of Rodrigues to sensitize the youth on the above mentioned issues and afterwards recreational and cultural activities and programmes were held at Quatre Vents, Grande Montagne and Anse Aux Anglais respectively to allow youth groups in different regions to perform and demonstrate their talents and skills.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the third activity which was of a high calibre was the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the music youth band. Following consultative meetings with staffs of my Commission and myself have had with the artists who youth have performed in the youth band since 1992 to date, a gala show was held on Saturday 12 August 2012 at Mon Plasir to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the music band. The activities comprised of:-

- The projection of short video clips on the four generation of the band since 1992 to date and of the actual trainees of music at the Youth Centres of Citron Donis, Grande Montagne and English Bay.
- Musical performance of four music band generation and young musicians and trainees and the delivery of commemorative plates to all artists and a shield to Mr. Leong Tim, music instructor who started the music course at the-then youth services in 1992.

M. le vice président, on peut dire que l'objectif de célébrer cette journée internationale de la jeunesse à Rodrigues a été atteint à travers la participation massive des jeunes dans toutes les activités organiser. Pour la conférence débats plus de 300 jeunes étaient présent sur 250 attendue. Les caravanes d'animation ont été assisté par des nombreux jeunes et pour la soirée de

célébration du 20^{ème} anniversaire, la salle du centre de Mon Plaisir à fait salle comble. Toute les personnes ressources de la conférence débat ont été impressionné par la qualité des questions posés et suggestions émises par les jeunes présents. Les jeunes ont même proposaient que d'autres forum semblable surtout concernant l'entrepreneuriat jeunesse soit organiser dans les diverses régions de Rodrigues.

Pour conclure, M. le vice président, le succès et la fluence qu'à connue cette activité organiser dans le cadre de la journée internationale de la jeunesse était incommensurable et au dessus de notre espérance à un tel point que même la presse Mauricienne et Rodriguaise ont donné une large et spéciale couverture aux activités que nous avons organisé. Merci, M. le vice président.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: In question B/90 and B/101 PRB appears instead of PBB. The attention of the Chief Commissioner to whom the questioned are addressed has already been drawn to the matter so as the Members concerned. Next question.

At this stage, at 12.26 hours Members of the Front Patriotique Rodriguais walked out of the Assembly

FORTHCOMING BUDGET PRESENTATION

(No. B/90) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the forthcoming budget presentation for Estimates January to December 2013, he will for the benefit of the House state:-

- (a) if consultations with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) have already been undertaken, and in the affirmative, to inform the House of the outcome thereof; and
- (b) table any correspondence from MOFED regarding the quantum for budget allocation for PRB 2013?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the forthcoming budget presentation for the 2013 estimates, I wish to inform the house that consultation with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has already started and is still ongoing.

It would be premature at this stage to disclose the details of the ongoing discussions. I am appealing to the respected Members to be patient until the presentation of the next budget to this House in about one month.

The Minority Leader: Therefore, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner that part (b) does not arise, is it not?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes part (b) does not arise because the consultation is still ongoing.

The Minority Leader: Therefore, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, in his recent reply concerning the *plan pour l'emploi* may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether he intends to make a strong plea with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development so that in his next budget presentation, at least, the Economic Infrastructure Stimulus Fund holds high in his budget speech or is budget quantum.

The Chief Commissioner: I have already that in a former reply to a question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to PBB, we all know that PBB is a forecast for three years. Can the Chief Commissioner state to the House whether.... negotiation has already been... we all know that PBB aims at three coming years. Has the Chief Commissioner worked out the budget accordingly?

The Chief Commissioner: What I said in my reply is clear.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

RODRIGUES EDUCATIONAL COMPANY LTD. (REDCO)

(No. B/91) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to REDCO (Rodrigues Educational Company Ltd), he will inform the House of his policies concerning same and table the composition of the new Board of Directors specifying their respective responsibilities.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with respect to question B/91, I would like to draw the attention of the Minority Leader that the Rodrigues Educational Company Ltd. is a private company and though the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has a majority of shares, my Regional Government does not interfere in the day-to-day management of the REDCO Ltd.

However, Mr. Deputy, Chairperson, Sir, I would like to point out that I have met with the board of REDCO Ltd. to share my regional government's vision to have an education system which is more responsive to the

development needs of Rodrigues and that promotes an entrepreneurial culture as well as values and attitudes amongst students that will enable them to become responsible Rodriguan citizen.

I have also highlighten the need to enlist parental participation and all the stakeholders concerned in the promotion of education in Rodrigues. As the Minority Leader may be aware having held the portfolio of education, the objective for which REDCO was established are:-

- (i) to provide education, including vocational and technical;
- (ii) to run secondary schools, including vocational and technical;
- (iii) to undertake the construction of buildings and related amenities for schools; and
- (iv) to promote extra-curricular activities related to education.

Subsequently, it is the responsibility of the board of REDCO Ltd. to devise policies for the efficient and effective service, delivery of these colleges in line with the vision of my government and in the best interest of the population of Rodrigues. Hence, the board of REDCO Ltd. has decided to set up a School Development Committee in each REDCO college in line with the participatory approach being adopted by my regional government. The committee comprises a Director as Chairperson, Manager of REDCO, Rector and representatives of teaching and non-teaching staffs, Student Council and Parents Teachers Association of the college. The aim of the committee is to develop a school development plan for overall improvement of the school.

Mr. Deputy, Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the composition of the new Board of Directors including their respective responsibilities, which are in line with the Company Act 1984. **(Appendix IV)**

**PROGRAMME BASED BUDGETTING
– ITEMS VOTES 31113434/31113007**

(No. B/92) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the Programme Based Budgeting of 2012, he will state if items 31113434 (Airport Development) and 31113007 (Port Development) under Programme code 204 and 214 respectively have been used to date, and in the affirmative for what purpose and if not, why not?

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as stated in my reply to question B/82 earlier, when we took office in February 2012, a financial audit of the situation was carried out and this House has been aware of the chaotic situation thereof. As stated before, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has further given clear indication that all commitments will have to be contained under the 2012 Estimates due to the tough economic situation prevailing in the world and in Mauritius. As such, the Finance Section has had to proceed through reallocation to be able to settle outstanding commitments of last year. Up to now the Rs 7 m. earmarked under the “Port Development” has been reallocated to the item “Construction and rehabilitation of dams and reservoirs” where there was an over commitment of as much as Rs 40 m.

Out of a provision of Rs 8 m. Rs 6 m. under the item “Airport Development” has been reallocated to meet costs under item “Construction and extension of secondary school” where there was an over commitment of Rs 8 m.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether he is aware that for item relative to Airport Development in his approval for budget allocation to Rodrigues Regional Assembly last year the Minister of Finance stated I quote: *“That the project value for airport development is Rs 8 m. and is in relation to the relocation of the houses found at the airport for security results”*. May I ask the Commissioner whether he still consider the relocation of those houses near the airport of Rodrigues in view of security reasons as mentioned by the Ministry of Finance?

The Chief Commissioner: Those decisions has been taken concerning the development of airport, there have been consultancies studies here, there are many options and we have to point out the development of the airport with different agencies/consultancies, the *Aviation Civile* and even why not the Tourism Sector. No decision has been taken yet concerning the development of the airport. When I said it is not the priority of the priority. This has to be studied very well because there must be a geological study at the airport of Rodrigues. We must be very careful not to go ahead with big projects and trying to opt for first option or second option but we have to look for what option should be better for Rodrigues and the development of the airport.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may be the Chief Commissioner has misunderstood my question. I was not asking about the airport development project as such but precisely to the relocation of those houses are near the airport because in any way all buildings/structures found within the airport area has to be removed for security reasons. Being given that these houses are found in a village, which is deprived of different amenities,

such as, good road structure, good water supply and so on. That is why we have sought of relocating them. My question again is to ask the Chief Commissioner whether if he did not intend to do it now whether he intends in the near future, in the next budget, whenever it is, intends to relocate these houses in view of security reasons.

The Chief Commissioner: Of course, this is regulated to the development of the airport. We have not yet decided which option we are going ahead with, especially for the airstrip. This is decision we have to take concerning the airstrip and the relocation of the houses, the families there will be according to the option, which we have to decide.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether he is aware that in the recent future the two ATR 72 which are now operating at reduced load which caused a lot of problems to passengers and cargo to and from Rodrigues and Mauritius. Whether in the near future one of these options has to be chosen in view of ensuring a better flight communication between Rodrigues and Mauritius and what is he completing to do?

The Chief Commissioner: I have already replied to the question, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. What we are going to do, there have been consultancy report we have to study the different report. There is also something that has not been done, the geological study of the airport itself, the Plaine Corail concerning *“caverne sous la piste d’atterrissage qu’on proposes justement pour balayer une colline et ensuite déplacer les familles qui sont à Ste. Marie.* We are aware of that but we have to discuss first what option from their conception of their we are going to take.

OCTOPUS CLOSED SEASON

(No. B/93) Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the octopus closed season which has become effective as from 13 August 2012, he will for the benefit of the House:

- (a) state the number of fishermen concerned and table the number of fishermen per region;
- (b) table a copy of the agreement/contract between his commission and the fishermen regarding same;

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- (c) state the duties/activities assigned to the fishermen including the conditions attached thereto;
- (d) state under which item vote or any sources of fund to be made available for the remuneration of these fishermen.

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the total number of fishermen concerned with octopus closed season is 1315. As requested, I am tabling the information. For the sake of registration, Rodrigues has been divided into 38 distinct zones. **(Appendix V)**

- (a) I am tabling a copy of the agreement/contract between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the fishermen.
- (b) The activities assigned to the fishermen are grouped as follows:-
 - (i) Surveillance all over the island;
 - (ii) Eradication of invasive alien species;
 - (iii) Cleaning of public beaches;
 - (iv) Re-opening of small passes to facilitate navigation at low tide by fisherman;
 - (v) Re-installation of gabions at Pointe Monier;
 - (vi) Pasture rehabilitation;
 - (vii) General cleaning all over the island;
 - (viii) Cleaning and rehabilitation of rivers;
 - (ix) Social activities in villages;
 - (x) Different training will also be given to the Rodriguans involved in the closed season; such as, swimming, good environmental practices, good health practices, entrepreneurship, biodiversity and biology of octopus.
- (c) With regard to the remuneration of the fishermen, funds will be disbursed as follows:-

- Contribution from SMARTFISH/Indian Ocean Commission
- Contribution from SMARTFISH/Food & Agricultural Organization (FAO)
- The rest will be funded by Rodrigues Regional Assembly under the Rodrigues Consolidated Fund.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, as regards one of the activities the Commissioner has mentioned, that is, cleaning. All of us can see that all around the coast and then inland most of these fishers they are dealing with cleaning activities. One question I have to ask the Commissioner is one week since work started we can see piles of plastic bags all around the roads and up to now it had not been removed. Can I ask him first who is responsible for the removal of same and where will these wastes be carried to and whether in the dumping site at Roche Bon Dieu? Or whether they are going to be processed?

Mr. R. Payendee: The fact that for all these years we have had cleaning operations this Commission we were not expecting to get as much wastes as this. The amount of wastes that was on the roads everywhere was beyond our control. The fact that we have only the Rodclean to help but my Commission has also taken the decision to ask for help from the private sector. The UBP in the weekend has helped, Allied Builders. Again, I was really surprised, just as the Member that so many wastes were on this island but I am glad let say that yes let some waste be on the road for the time being but in the near future all the wastes will be removed.

As regards to the second question, we also explained to the fishers that the plan for removal of waste was segregation so we wanted them to be trained in this aspect. Most of them are really doing the job but unfortunately not of them are doing it rightly. I do not know if it is against their will or they do not want to do it properly. But what I know is we have engaged ourself in training of these people with regard to the segregation of waste. The fact that we have some people here, some organisations, some companies which are dealing with the recycle, I mean sending back to Mauritius bottles, glass bottles, plastic bottles and cans, that was the plan. Again, we are surprised that so much is still around on this island. But one thing I am glad about is this year is going to be the year when Rodrigues is the cleanest island for all the years ever.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner whether in this octopus closing season he has prepared a kit *de*

communication and if yes, to whom is this kit destined to and whether all fishermen are being provided with this guide.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the respected Member is well aware that we prepared a guide which has been prepared in collaboration with SMARTFISH which is being to all stakeholders. The operation has just started. Most of the guide has been given to all schools, all libraries and will be given also to all fishermen community. This is very important because then they can better understand the system.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, luckily I have been able to get access to one of that. As you can see the front cover is very illustrative and it is in creole. However, when I looked inside I found everything in French. Do you think if your main target is the fishermen community, do you think what is being put in this will be easily understood by the fishers community. Is it not right to review it? It can be done in *bande dessinée* and in our local language so that everybody can understand, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I do not understand this question because normally someone who cannot read French cannot read Creole because I myself cannot read Creole. If I sit down you give me a piece of paper written in creole I will not be able to read it but I am sure the idea of giving to the fishermen and even if it is in French is that these fishermen have kids, children from the school and also you know the fact this guide is imported not just for the fishermen because all the fishermen have understood the system that is why the sort of manifestation which was done here there was only 25 people where most of them were not even octopus fishermen. It is not the time for us to go and convince the fishermen but they are already convinced. The plan is with this guide, the plan is to make the whole community understand the importance, mainly the kids because the children of today are the parent of tomorrow. We want all the people to be informed and also if they know what is going on they will better understand. The children they heard about the octopus closure and this guide is mainly for them. You know that I am happy that most of the fishermen, I have a figure 99.7%, only 0.3% of people did not understand the system. And these they did not even understand the system they were mainly unfortunately bad politician who are trying to push them in the cascade. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: On these words I suspend the assembly for one for lunch.

At 12.50 hours, the Assembly was suspended for one hour for lunch.

On resuming at 13.50 a.m., with the Chairperson in the Chair.

PORT DEVELOPMENT – PORT MASTER PLAN

(No. B/94) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the development of the port, he will inform the House about his policy for the future development of the port and table a copy of the latest Port Master Plan for Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling a copy of the last Port Master Plan for Rodrigues prepared by Halcrow Group Limited in year 2009 (**Appendix VI**). The report is a review of the 2003 Master Plan and it shouts out the policy concerning the port of Port Mathurin. It is to be noted that according to existing legislation the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is responsible for administration of Marine Services whereas the Mauritius Port Authority (MPA) is responsible for the formulation of policy including the preparation for port master plan and the provision of Marine Services in Rodrigues. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the Mauritius Port Authority to address the overlapping between the provision of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and those of the Port Act.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Memorandum of Understanding provides among others that the Mauritius Port Authority shall prepare, implement and update periodically the Port Master Plan for Rodrigues in consultation with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and I shall accordingly take up the matter with the Mauritius Port Authority with a view to supporting semi-industrial of off-lagoon fishing. Our regional government intends to develop appropriate borrowing facilities for fishing boats.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is to be deplored that contrary to the recommendations of the Port Master Plan and the need to set up such essential facilities with different possible options proposed the outgoing Executive Council failed to implement the related recommendations in spite of the fact that a dredger was mobilize in Rodrigues in 2010 thereby constraining the development of the fishing industry. The safe mooring of existing fishing vessels remains a source of serious difficulties for their owners while potential investors would be less inclined to embark in new fishing project being given this major hindrance.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, je voudrais demander au Chef commissaire ce matin on a entendu à la radio à Maurice le développement

du port avec l'arrivée des paquebots au moins 26 par ans, est-ce que le Chef commissaire pourra nous éclairer concernant s'il y a un projet future dans ce sens pour pouvoir faire venir des paquebots à Rodrigues pour cadrer ce problème de chômage.

The Chief Commissioner: I will find out with the Mauritius Port Authority and discuss with them.

COMMERCIAL LEASES – PORT MATHURIN

(No. B/95) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to commercial leases in Port Mathurin, he will:-

- (a) Table the list of commercial leases including their owners and the area allocated for each lease?
- (b) State whether a commercial lessee can be authorized to reside on same?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the lease is being compiled and will be table shortly. I am further informed, that a commercial lessee can be authorized to reside on the land leased only if approval has been conveyed for the conversion of the lease from a Commercial one into a Commercial cum Residential one

Mr. Chairperson: May I inform the respected Members that we have only 40 minutes left for questions time.

DISTRIBUTION OF WATER - SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS

(No. B/96) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the distribution of water to school institutions in Rodrigues, he will inform the House of:

- (a) the volume of water distributed in each school institutions?
- (b) the time frame for distribution of water?
- (c) whether the water is potable and is within prescribed norms?

The Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, regarding to part (a) of the question the information is being compiled. Each school institution is supplied with water according to the frequency of water distribution of the region. Whenever there is a shortage of water, the school informed the office of the Water Section of their locality and they are supplied by water lorries to ensure water availability at each school.

As regards to part (c), the answer is yes.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner states whether rain water stock at schools in water tank are treated and if this water is being treated and if so by which means and at whose request.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: The water distributed by the Water Unit but for rainwater collecting at schools I do not know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the village of Grand La Fouche Corail where there is a primary school in that village water has not been distributed to the immediate environment since almost three months. Can the Commissioner states what was the last date that this school was provided with water.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I need notice for this question because I do not have the information.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner states to the House whether there is a secondary school, which depends on the direct functioning of a borehole to have water.

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

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Can the Commissioner states, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether there is collaboration between schools and the Commission for Water Resources. If this collaboration is maintained in the field of promotion of rainwater harvesting and other advices such as, cleaning of roofs of the building and other activities associated with water hygiene. Is there a collaboration as now on the issue of water between the school and his commission?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: As usual, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when a secondary school is deprived of water we are made aware by the Rector or another person at the school and they are being supplied with water tankers.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that at a secondary school, there was a breakdown at a borehole and this school was deprived of water for four days. Four days with no water in toilets no water for the pupils and no water for the teacher. Now we are saying that water lorries give water to school when there is no water. Is he aware that a secondary school was deprived of water for about three days?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is the role of a director/rector to inform the commission. We have not received any request as such.

TOURISM SECTOR

(No. B/97) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Tourism and Others whether, in regard to the tourism sector, he will table:

- (a) the list of all Tourism Enterprises registered with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly together with the name(s) of owner(s) and director(s) of each enterprise and their respective licence fee(s) thereon?
- (b) the names of the enterprise registered with Tourism Office who beneficieate from the Special Holiday Package agreed by the Office of the Vice Prime Minister & Ministry of Finance and Economic Development?
- (c) the name(s) of potential enterprise, the director(s), their address(es) and their respective date of application made to have a licence from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to operate in Rodrigues?

The Commissioner responsible for Tourism and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling of all the tourism enterprises registered with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly together with the respective names, owners, directors and their respected fee paid. The names of the enterprises registered with the Tourism Office who beneficieate from the Special Holiday Package agreed by the Office of the Vice Prime Minister and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development is also in the list. The names of potential enterprises, directors, their addresses and their respective date of application made to have a licence from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to operate in Rodrigues is also attached. **(Appendix VII)**

PASSES, CHANNELS – CONDITIONS – ACTION TAKEN

(No. B/98) Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to passes, channels around the island, he will inform the House if all beacon lights of these vicinities are in good running conditions, and if not, what actions are being taken to remedy this situation?

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed that the Fisheries Protection Services that none of the beacon lights situated at Port Sud Est, St. François, Grenade, Grand Bassin and Grand Pointe is good working condition since four years. Equipments were bought in 2009 by the former government to fix the problem. All the batteries have even died out. The fact that the equipments were not used and had to be replaced on 04 August for the sum of Rs 158,872.50, the former government has been playing with the lives of the fishermen for all these years. I wish to inform the House that bids for the installation of beacon lights around passes in Rodrigues were launched as far as 22 March 2010. The Departmental Tender Committee, which met twice-on 26 May and 28 October 2010, decided to award the contract the awards of beacon lights. However, for unknown reasons the procedures were stopped. I have also been informed that due to irregularities in the dossier it was even sent to the Independent Commission against Corruption for enquiries. This is still under investigation. In a correspondence dated 21 February 2012, the Officer in Charge of Fisheries had drawn my attention to the fact that the five beacon lights, together with all accessories purchased about three years ago, need to be installed in a view to allow fishers to move safely in and out the passes at night thus reducing the risk of accident at sea. This government is working on the dossier to fix the problem as soon as possible.

BREEDING STATION

(No. B/99) Mrs. J. Ravina (Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Saint Gabriel Breeding Station, he will inform the House of:

- (a) the on-going activities carried out there?
- (b) the number of animals present on the site per category?
- (c) his policy regarding the management of the site?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Saint Gabriel Livestock Production Unit including its 21.6 hectares of pastures is used as

breeding station for the production of beef and dairy cattle and goat are being pre-breed for sale to farmers for the improvement of their health. However, as the results obtained so far is below expectation being unable to match up with farmers demand. The Executive Council has approved that the dairy station will be put at the disposal of a cooperative society to convert it into a milk production enterprise with the objective of supplying pasteurize milk and other milk produce like yogurt and cheese for the local market. The dairy herd of the 20 animals comprises of 12 cows, 2 goats, 5 calves and 1 young bull. The beef herd of 13 cattles consists of 7 cows, 3, 2 bulls and one young bull. There are 9 goats comprising of 3 goats, 1 buck and 3 kids.

Mr. A. F. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am made to understand that the Executive Council has already taken the decision to give the site to a cooperative society. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether there has been request for same from the society. Secondly, why is it that to give a chance to anybody to compete whether he has not come with an impression of interest from the other parties in Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, our policies to encourage cooperatives, Cooperatives means business. In 2006 when there was a cooperative, which has been allocated part of the building for meat production was a cooperative, and then afterwards the Commission for Agriculture has asked this cooperative not to continue in the breeding centre. Our policy is mainly based on cooperatives everywhere even in agriculture, in cattle breeding, in cows breeding so that cooperatives must be a business for the future so now they can processed milk into yogurt and cheese or any products. We have only one cooperative in milk producing in this country. I do not know whether another cooperative, we will find out and see what we can do.

Mr. A. F. Grandcourt: This is not my question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. There may be other people who would wish to use this station. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner that this building be also a site for demonstration. This is very important for Rodriguan farmer. Will there be any alternatives or other sites being chosen for demonstration or will he simply close this site or the demonstration exercise.

The Chief Commissioner: We are working on the issue. I think that Saint Gabriel will be also, what we call in the future a site for training of young people in milk production and agriculture. We will find out under the site for breaking to have different races of animals but I must say that there is a problem to import animals from other countries. The Food Security has mentioned that and said that it is impossible to import cows from other countries.

**CASES OF “GANDIA” IN RODRIGUES
– NO. OF CASES/MEASURES TAKEN**

(No.B/100) Mrs. J. Ravina (Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the cases related to “Gandia” in Rodrigues, he can obtain information from the Commissioner of Police regarding:

- (a) the number of cases reported since March 2012 to date, including the number of plants uprooted by the police?
- (b) the measures taken by the authority to combat this social problem?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by the Divisional Commander that 49 cases related to drug offences have been detected by the Police since March 2012 to date. 14 persons have been arrested so far and 947 gandia plants have been uprooted. The cases are still under inquiry.

I am further informed that Police has taken the following measures to combat this social problem:-

- (i) regular targeted sweep at drug prone areas all over the island;
- (ii) Execution of search warrant with respect to drug offences;
- (iii) Stop and search of suspect persons and vehicles;
- (iv) Sensitization of the Community through Community Policing Forum;
- (v) Arrest of persons indulged in drug offences followed by their prosecutions; and
- (vi) Control of entry and exits in the Port and the Airport.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if we have a look at the number of gandia plants, which have been, uprooted 947; this seems to be alarming from January to August 2012. For me it is very alarming mainly for the youths. Can the Chief Commissioner work out with the Commissioner for Youth and Sports in order to combat these *fléau* around Rodrigues and the Police also?

The Chief Commissioner: This has already been done by my colleagues. The training and the sensitization of youths in his Commission and this is being done.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner from the 947-gandia plants, which have been uprooted see to it in what region it

was most concentrated and to go in these region to tackle these problems at source.

The Chief Commissioner: What does he mean? That we should go in that region and to tackle the problems in the region. We? I think it is the duty of the Police with the Community Policing project.

Mr. Chairperson: May I inform the respected Member that for the next question there is a typing error it is PBB instead of PRB.

RECRUITMENT OF GENERAL WORKERS

(No. B/101) Mrs. J. Ravina (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether with regard to recent interviews conducted by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for recruitment of General Workers, he will inform the House of:

- (a) the number of candidates called for interview?
- (b) state and table the criteria used for selection of candidates?
- (c) the number of posts/grades available under the Civil Establishment Order for Rodrigues in PRB 2012 for such selection exercise?
- (d) table the names and grades of the different interviewers of the panel?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regards to the recent interviews conducted by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the recruitment of General Workers, I wish to inform the House that 364 candidates have been called for interview. The list of the 364 candidates has been asked from the Employment Office and was called for interview. Those candidates are those who have regularly undated their registration for employment at the Employment Office and those names have been submitted by the Employment Office accordingly to provide date of registration.

I am tabling the criteria adopted for the selection of candidates.
(Appendix VIII)

As regards part (c) of the question, I am informed as follows:-

- 1198 established in the Civil Establishment, Rodrigues Regional Assembly Order No. 2 of 2011.

- 108 vacant funded position are available as at 10 August 2012.
- The Selection board was composed of the following senior officers:-
 - Mr. Marie Antoine Davilla Cupidon, Agricultural Superintendent as Chairperson
 - Mr. Joseph Wilmode Edouard, Senior Inspector of Works and Mrs. M. C. Sergine Roussety, Higher Executive Officer as Members

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to the 300 prospective candidates from the Employment Office, will the Chief Commissioner state whether the 245 General Workers posted on the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on a month-to-month basis whether they have been selected. All of them have been selected or part of them has been selected to attend this interview.

The Chief Commissioner: I am not aware because I have stated this morning in my reply those who are on the month-to-month contract whenever there will be interviews for General Workers post to be filled they will be invited for interview but they should be registered at the Employment Office and regularly stamp their card there.

Mr. A. F. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as far as the criteria are concerned it is quite vague when we look at it. Knowledge, interest in the job and physical appearance; look at someone if he looks ok if he do not like him? What about marital status? I think we should give priorities to those who are married, having children. This is very vague, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether he is satisfied, who design this sheet, and who decided on the setting of these criterias?

The Chief Commissioner: I take notice of the question.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Chief Commissioner whether the list for Rodrigues to the Board of Interviews as regards to the Employment Office whether it is according to priority, that is, first come first serve.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said, the person should continuously stamp his card at the Employment Unit. If the person stopped, it means reregistration. So, we should give priority to those who are very regular to stamping his card at the Employment Office.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since the General Workers on contract have been interviewed by the Service Commission since they are now on contract will they be given the opportunity not to go through an interview but for selection purposes.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I said this morning why there is a case before the ICAC and what they did the report said.

VISIT - COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS

(No. B/102) **Mr. J. S. Swee (Seventh Island Region Member)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the recent visit of the Commissioner of Prisons in Rodrigues, he will state the outcome thereof.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with respect to Question B/102, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that the Commissioner of Prisons, Mr. Jean Philippe Bruneau was on mission to Rodrigues from 06 to 11 August. The aim of his mission was to effect the annual inspection of the Rodrigues Prison as well as expose the nitty gritty of the prison administration to the staff of the Rodrigues Prison and interact with detainees.

During his mission to Rodrigues, a ceremony was organized to present the President Long Service and Good conduct medals to seven (7) staff of the Rodrigues Prison on 09 August at 10.00 hours at the parking space in front of the Human Resource Centre at Malabar. It is to be noted, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that such a ceremony was organised for the first time in Rodrigues and included a parade of Prison Officers which was led by a Police Band comprising of Rodriguan policemen who have just been transferred to Rodrigues last July. In addition, during his mission, the Commissioner of Prisons had had working sessions with various stakeholders with a view to discuss matters pertaining to the development of the Prison in Rodrigues.

The Commissioner of Prisons has once more drawn attention to the need of extending the existing Prison so that it is in line with Geneva Convention and the need to promote the rehabilitation of detainees.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to point out that my first Regional Government being fully aware that the conditions of incarceration at the

Rodrigues Prison are not according to Geneva Convention for the treatment of detainees decided in 2006 to have an extension to the present building so as to ensure the safe custody of detainees whereby remand and convicted detainees are kept separately.

As such, an amount of Rs 3 m. was provided in the budget and the plan for the new block was approved by the-then Central Tender Board. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when the former Regional Government took Office in 2006, they decided to reallocate the earmarked funds to other projects and to freeze the extension of the Prison. To date, after almost six years that they have been in Office, no improvements works have been undertaken at the Rodrigues Prison. Subsequently, the Commissioner of Prisons has agreed to extend full collaboration and assistance to my Government so that development is brought to the Rodrigues Prison.

Pending major infrastructural development at the Prison, it was agreed to initiate necessary action for the training of Officers and the rehabilitation of detainees in the meantime. As such, officers of the Rodrigues Prison will be provided with the opportunity to follow one month refresher course in Mauritius so as to keep them abreast of development in Prison matters. The training is being organised on a cost sharing basis whereas the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will meet cost of return air tickets and disturbance allowance and the Mauritius Prison will provide board and lodging to the officers.

Moreover, the Police Department has agreed to provide assistance to Prison Officers in terms of drill, physical training, radio communication, escort duties, dog training and reinforcement in case of riots of Prison. Furthermore, necessary arrangements will be made to fence the prisons compound and enhance the front wall. Technical assistance will be provided by qualified labour of the Mauritius Prisons Service.

In view of the rehabilitation of detainees, a network comprising various non-governmental organisations will be set up so as to ensure that a holistic and coordinating approach in the organisation of the rehabilitation programmes for detainees

In addition, necessary action is being taken so that detainees be given the following exposure, such as:-

- (i) Working on agricultural land inside the prisons to produce vegetables;

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- (ii) Working in an egg laying production unit within the Rodrigues Prison Compound; and
- (iii) Numeracy/literacy courses dispensed by Dev Virahsawmy on a new programme called M.A.C. which includes modules on Mathematics, English and Accounting.

In addition, during discussions held with the commissioner of Prisons, it was agreed to look into the strengthening of the Rodrigues Prison through the creation of new posts such as a Cadet Officer so that the latter can assume the post of Officer in Charge, of Rodrigues Prison in the future and additional posts so as to ensure minimum security requirements for the proper control and manning of the prison.

It was also agreed to work out a plan for optimizing and consolidating the existing Prison infrastructure and at the same time make provision for additional accommodation and space so as to enable the Rodrigues Prisons to operate in the best security conditions.

Furthermore, in order to encourage detainees to engage in useful and productive activities geared towards their rehabilitation and health production, an Enhanced Earned Scheme similar to that put in place in Mauritius Prisons will be introduced next year at the Rodrigues Prison.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to express my appreciation for the fruitful meetings and working sessions held with the Commissioner for Prison and the collaboration being extended by the Mauritius Prison to ensure the smooth running of the Rodrigues Prison.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have no doubt that this collaborations and actions that are being taken now and future ones will enable the proper upkeep of the Prison of Rodrigues and promote the proper rehabilitation of detainees.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question, please. There is only 12 minutes left for questions time.

MARECHAL SWIMMING POOL

(No. B/103) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the re-opening of the Maréchal swimming pool, he will state where matters stand?

The Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports (Mr. I.Valimamode): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to question

MEDICAL UNIT – MISSION/OBJECTIVES/FUNCTIONS

(No. B/104) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to the setting up of a Medical Unit under the aegis of the Commission of Social Security, he will state its mission, objectives and functions.

The Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first of all I would like to inform the House that the setting up of a Medical Unit at my Commission form part of a programme of the present regional government as announced by the Chief Commissioner. This demonstrates our top priority consideration to offer a better care and service to the needy and the vulnerable segments of our society. Indeed, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when I took office as Commissioner for Social Security it was pitiful to note that there were no proper management and control of Medical Boards and domiciliary visits. I am informed that there is even a case now under investigation by ICAC. There was often political interference. The works were done in a chaotic way, often leading to very long delays of up to six months before a person could be boarded to determine his claim for pension.

As a caring regional government, we had to act promptly and in this perspective, the mission of the Medical Unit is to provide services of a medical and paramedical nature in order to assess disability of persons applying for social benefits as the provision of the National Pension Act 1976. The unit aims at promoting the health of the elderly at large and the disabled persons in Rodrigues.

The main objectives of the unit are as follows:-

- To institute a proper mechanism for the assessment for disability for pension purposes and other benefits;
- To run injury boards;
- To coordinate the hearing of medical tribunal;
- To organize domiciliary visits for people with severe disabilities and for elderly persons aged 90 years and above;

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- To organize rehabilitation services for severely handicapped persons; and
- To run programmes and projects for the improvement of health of the elderly and disabled persons.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the main functions of the unit is to prepare and scheduled medical board session for persons applying for the following financial assistance:-

- Basic Invalidity Pension for persons aged 50 and 59 years
- Carers Allowance for claimant benefitting BIP and persons aged 60 years and above who are in need of constant care of another person for their daily activities

The Medical Unit will also be responsible for:-

- scheduling and preparing medical examination for recipient of social aid;
- organization of monthly domiciliary visits by doctor to bed ridden and severely handicapped persons below 90 years; and
- organized vaccination campaigns for elderly and disabled as well as training session for carers to ensure that bed ridden and disabled persons received an appropriate care.

In this context, I am pleased to inform the House that my Commission is canalizing procedures for the selection of five candidates to be sent to Mauritius for a six months training programme leading to a national certificate for care of the elderly and the disabled at the Mauritius Institute of Health in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Security.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I must also inform the House that in view of operating the unit two officers of my commission in the grade of Executive Officer and Clerical Officer have already undergone a two weeks training programme at the Ministry of Social Security in Mauritius during the month of July. It is also good to note that for the time being we will continue to have recourse to Medical Officers from the Commission for Health over and above their normal duties pending the finalization of necessary procedures for the

recruitment of at least two Medical Officers to be fully dedicated to the unit attached to the Social Security.

FENCED SYLVO PASTORAL AREA

(No. B/105) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Environment and Others whether, in regard to the fenced sylvo pastoral area at Grenade (next to the dumping site), he will inform the House of:

- (a) the number of animals seized and contraventions taken for stray animals within the perimeter for the last 3 months?
- (b) any decision taken by his Commission to allow animals to graze within same and the reasons thereof?

The Commissioner responsible for Environment and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by officers of the Forestry Services that there have been no animals seized within the said region during the past three months. Eight (8) contraventions for allowing animals to graze within the perimeter have been established during the same period.

With regard to part (b) of the question, representations have been received from '*Association des Eleveurs*' of the Eastern Regions to the effect that the closure is restraining the movement of their animals. I have been on the field on Monday 09 July 2012 and I could not remain insensible to the request of the '*Associations des Eleveurs*'. As someone who has a lot of experience in forest management I am of the opinion that awaiting next planting season where planting activities will be organised in the said perimeter, access may be allowed for the animals to graze freely because of the prevailing dry season.

Also no management plan for the reforestation of the said perimeter was available and the forestry services have been advised to produce same before the next planting season. The Executive Council at its meeting held on Friday 13 July 2012 has decided to approve that animals be allowed free access to the Grenades perimeter for grazing until the rainy season and until a management plan is produced for the perimeter concerned.

Mr. A. F. Grandcourt: M. le président, c'est un crime qui a été commit par le commissaire qui a amené ce papier au conseil. M. le président, il y a eu *no animal seized*, ce qui veut dire que les animaux ont compris qu'il ne fallait pas aller dans le périmètre. Les personnes, nous humains comme toujours....

Mr. Chairperson: We are within time limit please, there is two minutes come to your question.

Mr. A. F. Grandcourt: I am coming to my question. After a representation from the farmers '*Association des éleveurs*' you should talk to them, sensitize these people about your wish to make Rodrigues become an '*île écologique*'. How can the commissioner reconcile together with the meet target, *île écologique*.

Mr. Chairperson: You are making a statement. There are only one minute left now.

Mr. A. F. Grandcourt: I am half way to my question. How can he reconcile the fact that his wish to make Rodrigues an '*île écologique*' and he is allowing on the other side animal to graze within a sylvo pastoral area given that this was a project by the Decentralised Cooperation Programme who spent some Rs 4 m. in doing this project.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as a technician as an eco as well I am well placed to answer to this question. Technically fencing an area does not mean that the area will regenerate. Fencing an area alone means doing bad to the environment because there will be proliferation of ..

Mr. Chairperson: Question time lapsed please.

Mr. R. Payendee: Can I finish it. Let me finish it because technically this is very important. Fencing an area does not mean that the area will regenerate. It means giving, grasses, *piquant loulou* and other exotic, invasive species to grow freely in the area. The best management is natural regeneration and this can only happen if we manage the plot. Managing the plot means using animal as grazers.

[Interruption]

*At this stage, at 14.35 hours Members of the Majority Group
walked out of the Assembly*

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

NEW DEVELOPMENTS - ICT SECTOR - RODRIGUES

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House about the new developments in the Information

Communications Technology (ICT) sector in the short and middle terms for Rodrigues. In fact, Rodrigues is in the way to be connected to the fibre optic cable but this project though procedures started in March this year will be concretised in some months. As I recently said in reply to a question, expression of interest for consultancy services for sub-marine fibre optic connectivity in Rodrigues was launched on 05 April 2012. The closing date was 11 May 2012.

We have been informed, by the National Computer Board (NCB) that the evaluation report with regard to the expression of interest had already been sent to the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD), the selected consultancy firm for the procurement of services for the laying of the fibre optic cable will be engaged for a period of 12 to 15 weeks. Same will start around September or October 2012. In the meantime, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is the need to start preparing the population for the advent of the cable, which will bring along side job opportunities for our youths.

In this context, I am pleased to inform the House that by the end of September this year, Rodrigues will be doted by a training centre for ICT with a capacity of 60 seats in view to prepare our youths for the forthcoming development in the sector. The training programme will not be based on ICT only but all the other subjects that are related to the demands for call centres and Business Process Outsourcings (BPOs). We are actually finalising with the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology to develop a scheme for the training. The said project is being implemented with the concurrence of various institutions at national level working in the ICT sector such as, the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA) who is providing funding for the equipments, the Business Parks of Mauritius Ltd. (BPML) for the refurbishment works of the training centre, the Ministry for Information and Communication Technology, the State Informatics Ltd. (SIL), the Outsourcing and Telecommunications Association of Mauritius (OTAM) are also greatly involved in the project.

The Development Bank of Mauritius building at Douglas Road, Port Mathurin will be put at the disposal of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on a rental basis to house the ICT training centre. A status report and implementation schedule have been prepared with responsibilities of each partner defined and the ICT training centre will be launched in October 2012.

In the line with these developments, my commission is also in discussion with the National Computer Board for the review of the Memorandum of Understanding that exists between the National Computer Board and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Same will be finalised very soon.

In addition, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the National Computer Board together with the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology in collaboration with my commission is planning to organise an ICI expo with the aim to create a momentum for ICT development for Rodrigues. The SIL from its part is planning for the opening of an office shortly in Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the actual bandwidth capacity in Rodrigues it is a fact that the internet service is becoming more and more difficult. In this line, Mr. D. Manraj the Chairman of a special committee, set up to monitor the ICT development in Rodrigues under the Prime Minister's Office convened a special meeting with the internet service providers in Rodrigues and prospective providers in order to identify ways and means to address problems related to bandwidth issues as a short term solution for the connectivity problem. It is to be noted that Rodrigues Regional Assembly is represented in the same committee by the Island Chief Executive and myself as Commissioner responsible for ICT.

Moreover, with regard to the question asked in this session there has been no official written request from any new company to operate in Rodrigues. I am informed by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology that ICTA normally received applications for licence in accordance with section 24 of the Information and Communication Technologies Act as per the terms and conditions of licences issued to successful applicants, the holder of any commercial licence is authorised to supply its services throughout the territory of the Republic of Mauritius, which include the outer islands mainly Rodrigues and Agalega. In case the company wants to set up a branch in Rodrigues it has to amend its business registration card at the Registrar of Companies. I am informed that no new company in the field of ICT has made any request for amending its business registration card in Rodrigues recently.

However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by the Prime Minister's Officer that a new operator, that is, Bharat Telecom Ltd., a public limited company incorporated in August 2010 and listed on the development and enterprise market of the stock exchange of Mauritius since July 2012 is envisaging the possibility of extending its services to Rodrigues. If this materialises, it will essentially provide additional bandwidth for Rodrigues within the next month. This will also address the situation of monopoly that prevails actually and it is also good to note that the actual internet service provider, Mauritius Telecom (MT), they also explained before the committee that they are working towards the upgrading of the bandwidth in Rodrigues and are contemplating to extend the ADSL services to other clients.

To conclude, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as to date, no official request has been submitted by any company to extend its operation in Rodrigues.

RE-OPENING – MARECHAL SWIMMING POOL

The Commissioner for Health and Sports (Mr. I. Valimamode):
Mr. Chairperson Sir, the Maréchal Swimming Pool is by far, one of the most high-level sports infrastructures of this region of the Indian Ocean and we all have to be very proud of it. As mentioned in the “Discours Programme” of this government, it is our priority to re-open the swimming pool so that it serves fully the purpose it is meant.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am very proud to announce that the swimming pool is now operational. With a view to familiarise the public and prospective athletes with swimming pool activities, an Open Day is scheduled on Sunday 26 August 2012 as from 10.00 a.m. I am thankful to all staff and people of good will who have collaborated to make this a reality.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, as soon as I took office, negotiation was started with the Ministry of Youth and Sports to send a swimming coach on a temporary basis to supervise training at the pool. The responsibility of the coach is also to train prospective Rodriguan candidates who wish to be enrolled as swimming coach so that we reach full *rodriguanisation* of the swimming pool personnel as soon as possible.

Moreover, during recent PRB consultations, recommendation has been made to create four posts of Swimming Pool Attendants to cater for professional maintenance of the pool. Mr. Chairperson Sir, in the same vein, an in-service training course for the Pool staff will start soon. This is an example of the close collaboration between my Commission and the Ministry of Youth and Sports in the field of training.

With regard to technical team, regular training course will be organised every year to build up a pool of highly qualified coaches and officials capable of forging young swimmers and ready to organise competitions of varied standards.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, as we live in a tropical island, we expect all citizens in the long run to have basic skills to swim. Moreover, we have had some good performing swimmers since start of activities at the pool. This means that we can also contemplate to produce high-level athletes in this field. My staff is currently working on a comprehensive development plan for the swimming pool to cater for its optimum use. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that the Assembly do now adjourn to Friday 28 September 2012 at 15.00 hours.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

At 14.45 hours, the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Friday 28 September 2012 at 15.00 hours.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTION

EXTENSION OF WATER NETWORK – NORTHERN REGION

(No. B/106) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in regard to the extension of water network in the northern region of Rodrigues, he will table and give a breakdown of the total length of polypipe(s) of diameter 63 mm or more installed including their localities, length as well as the cost incurred by the Commission?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Since I took office as Commissioner for Water Resources on 12 February 2012, there has been no extension of water network in the Northern region of Rodrigues, however part of the existing network has been upgraded and improved at the estimated cost of about Rs 225,000. I am tabling the requested information.

RODRIGUES WATER COMPANY

(No. B/107) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether with regard to the eventual closing down of the Rodrigues Water Company, he will for the benefit of the House:

- (a) table a copy of any correspondence sent to the employees following his meeting with them at La Ferme this year?

- (b) confirm the possibility of his Commission to go ahead with the closing down of the Rodrigues Water Company and, in the affirmative, to state the reasons thereof?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I will come with a statement concerning this issue.

**TWO 1000 M³ CONCRETE RESERVOIRS
- L'UNION & CAMP PINTADE**

(No. B/108) 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 the two 1000 m³ concrete reservoirs at L'Union and Camp Pintade, he will give a description of progress of the projects to date.

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Works for the construction of the 1000 m³ concrete reservoir at L'Union and Camp Pintade has been completed at 100% except for fencing works and associated pipe works (to be done in house) at Camp Pintade.

DESALINATION PLANT - SONGES

(No. B/109) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the desalination plant of Songes he will inform the House on the tendering procedures which were involved in the rehabilitation of same and its way forward since commissioning?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that tendering procedures for the rehabilitation of the desalination plant of Songes was made through Restricted Bidding Method to the following 8 (eight) Bidders on 25 August 2011:-

1. Aquaflo Limited
2. Cernol Water Solutions Ltd.
3. Water Science Ltd.
4. EDCC Company Ltd.
5. Blychem Ltd.
6. Aqualia DPI Ltd.
7. Pro-Civil Works Company Ltd.
8. Harling Company Ltd.

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At the opening of bids on 7th October 2011, 4 bids were received as follows:

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Aquaflo Limited | - Rs 4,096,760.00 | (Inclu. of VAT) |
| 2. | EDCC Company Ltd. | - Rs 6,022,175.109 | (Inclu. of VAT) |
| 3. | Cernol Water Solutions Ltd. | - Rs 4,752,859.54 | (Inclu. of VAT) |
| 4. | Blychem Ltd. | - Rs 6,880,765.10 | (Inclu. of VAT) |

Bids were evaluated by the Bid Evaluation Committee and the contract has been awarded to Cernol Water Solutions Ltd. for the sum of Rs 4,572,859.54 inclusive of VAT on 19 November 2011. The handing over of site was done on 05 December 2011 and the completion date for the works was set for 13 March 2012.

The pre commissioning was done on 25 July 2012 and the final commissioning is scheduled for the end of August 2012 with the supply and installation of a new submersible pump.

OUTCOME - WATER GALLONS

(No. B/110) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, he will inform the House on the outcome of the water gallons bought by his Commission in year 2011 and which were to be given to vulnerable groups to stock water for domestic purposes?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Executive Council has decided that the 350 water gallons of capacity 25 litres bought by the Commission of Water Resources on the 16 November 2011 will be distributed to needy families soon.

It will be a Non Government organisation who will be responsible for the distribution of these water gallons.

It has not been decided yet what is the NGO. Water gallons are being stored at Mourouk. Payment to Cernol has been effected.

**ILLEGAL NETS/DATE CAPTURED/NATURE OF CONTRAVENTION
- SEMPA**

(No. B/111) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the South-East Marine Protected Area (SEMPA), he will inform the House on the number and lengths of illegal nets and the date on

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which same were captured/identified together with the number and nature of contravention(s) attached therewith, if any, since February 2012 to date?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

Since the information asked for is quite lengthy, I am therefore tabling same for the benefit of the House. **(Appendix IX)**