

**RODRIGUES
THIRD REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Debate No. 2 of 2014

Sitting of Tuesday 06 May 2014

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. 2 of 2014

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 06 May 2014

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ADJOURNMENT

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- The Minority Leader: Accumulation d'eau de Pluie
- Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Secteur de la Construction
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- (No. B/65) - Missions/The Deputy Chief Commissioner – Mauritius/Overseas
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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), State Lands, Town and Country Planning, Fire Services, Prisons and Reform Institutions (Administration), Agriculture, Food Production, Plant and Animal Quarantine, Statistics in respect of Rodrigues, Registration, Postal Services (Administration)
Mrs. Rose Marie Franchette Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K.	Deputy Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible Child Development, Family Welfare, Women's Affairs, Handicraft, Vocational Training, Information Technology and Telecommunications, Industrial Development, Cooperatives
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,
Ms. Marie Rose de Lima Edouard	Commissioner responsible for Youth, Community Development, Library Services, Archives, Museum, Arts and Culture, Historical sites and Buildings

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Mr. Chairperson - Sooprayen, Mr. Soopramanien, G.O.S.K.
Clerk - Gopall, Mr. Navin
Deputy Clerk - Legentil, Miss Marie Lyndia Yannick
Serjeant-at-Arms - Constant Perrine, Mr. Stenio

Debate No. 2 of 06.05.2014

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to know because during our last session, the Clerk announced that might his last mission here. And, now, I see him present again but I am surprised that you did not announce anything in that respect. Can you please enlighten the House of his presence again in Rodrigues?

Mr. Chairperson: Oui.

The Minority Leader: Merci.

Mr. Chairperson: You know, this is an administrative issue. And, I have been informed that there has been arrangement between the National Assembly and the Island Chief Executive Office, to have a here Clerk today with this.

Mr. J. Roussety: I have one question also on this issue if you would allow me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because as far as I know, the Clerk is a public officer. Being given the nature of this Assembly, it could happen tomorrow that decisions of this House which have been taken may be challenged in the Supreme Court or elsewhere if officers of this Assembly were not properly put in charge of the affairs of certain matters. For example, the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly.

I believe Section 67 (2) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act states that the Clerk of the Regional Assembly shall be a public officer. I would like to whether, the present Clerk is a public officer first (a). And, it says, if yes, whether he has been assigned duties of Clerk as per existing laws and regulations, for example, as per the Public Service Commission. The Clerk has nothing to do with the specifically speaking, the Island Chief Executive. We cannot just take an officer from another section in Mauritius and put it here as our Clerk. We need a full-fledged Clerk.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes. I have already given an answer for this. I have just said that has been an arrangement in writing. Thank you.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**SALARIES PAID
– PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

(No. B/39): The Minority Leader (Mr. G. Jabeemissar) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to salaries paid to Pre-Primary school teachers in Rodrigues by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) the recommended scale thereof, indicating if all teachers concerned are being paid the same salary and, if not, why; and
- (b) the conditions attached for the payment thereof indicating the item vote for its payment ?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, one of the key measures announced in the budget speech for financial year 2014 was to provide free pre-primary education to all children in Rodrigues. The aim of this measure was to increase access to pre-primary education as from the age of three and at the same time, harmonise the salaries to be paid to pre-primary teachers in the 30 pre-primary schools operating under the aegis of the *Association des Écoles Maternelles de Rodrigues*.

I have to inform the House that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly came forward with the measure to cater for the disparity that existed between the salaries among those employed by the *Association des Écoles Maternelles de Rodrigues*. I am informed that some teachers were drawing a meagre salary of Rs 3,000 per month prior to the implementation of this measure; consultative meetings have been carried out as follows.

A first meeting was held under my chairmanship on the 14 November 2013 with the Island Chief Executive, Departmental Head, Manager, Financial Operations, Acting Head of Education, Acting School Inspector and President *Association des Écoles Maternelles de Rodrigues*.

A second meeting was held on the 19 November 2013 with all managers, teachers of the pre-primary schools. All of them agreed unanimously on the modalities which are as follows: a grant of about Rs 480,000, Rs 8,000 per month to 60 teachers is being allocated to the *Association des Écoles Maternelles* on a monthly basis to meet the expenses relating to the monthly salary of the teachers employed by the association.

It is to be noted that teachers who reckon more than 20 years of service are being paid a monthly salary of Rs 8,000 whereas teachers reckoning five to ten years and teachers reckoning less than five years of service are being paid a salary of Rs 7,700 and Rs 7,400 respectively. As at to date, only one

pre-primary school teacher is drawing less than Rs 8,000 as she reckons less than ten years of service.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this measure is a transitory one pending. The setting up of the Rodrigues Pre-Primary School Trust Fund. I have to further inform the House that the Executive Council has also agreed to cater for the payment of the contribution to the National Pension Scheme for the teachers of the *Association des Écoles Maternelles* to allow them to have a peaceful retirement.

As regard to part (b), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the measure is being implemented since January 2014. The conditions attached for the payment of fees to pre-primary school teachers involve the provision of

- (1) Free education to all the children and,
- (2) The payment by the teachers of 6% of their salary to the National Pension Scheme.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to the reply of the Chief Commissioner, I see that it is just but a continuation of what we started since 2007. Because when I heard him in his budget speech mentioning about coming up with free pre-primary education and harmonising the salary of school teachers in Rodrigues, I expected him to do much more than that. I am a bit surprised, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that this measure is just to harmonise the salary among the 33 pre-primary schools falling under the *Association des Écoles Maternelles*.

But, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, there are other pre-primary schools which are operating in Rodrigues, whether these teachers working with these pre-primary schools, do they have the same salary as those of the teachers working under the *Association des Écoles Maternelles de Rodrigues*. And, if yes, to inform the House of same.

The Chief Commissioner: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I said, formally, parents were paying fees for pre-primary schools. Formally for 2012. Avant 2012, les parents payaient les enseignants des écoles maternelles. Et c'est avec cet argent que les professeurs recevaient le salaire. Je ne vois pas, alors que le Minority Leader dit ça existait depuis avant. Mais ce n'est pas possible ! Ce n'est pas possible !*

Alors là, maintenant, c'est que les parents ne payent pas. C'est ça, la grande différence. Les parents ne payent pas. Et c'est l'Assemblée Régionale qui payent aux enseignants au lieu que les parents payent les enseignants.

Maintenant, est-ce qu'il y a d'autres écoles ? Nous payons les écoles qui tombent sous l'Association des Écoles Maternelles de Rodrigues. D'après notre renseignement, toutes les écoles de Rodrigues, maternelles, sont associées à l'Association des Écoles Maternelles de Rodrigues.

Ne parlons pas des écoles maternelles dans les écoles primaires. Ça, c'est différent. C'est différent. Ces enseignants dans les écoles primaires sont payés selon la loi. Alors, les écoles maternelles, donc, nous savons qu'il y a d'autres écoles maternelles ici à Rodrigues. Pour l'instant, d'après nos informations, toutes ces écoles maternelles font parties de l'Association des Écoles Maternelles.

Mr. J. Roussety: M. le président, je ne sais pas si le Chef Commissaire sait de quoi il parle. Mais cette année même, j'ai été dans une réunion de parents dans une école maternelle après l'implémentation de la mesure. Et il y a toujours des frets à payer par les parents. Ça, c'est la réalité. Il n'est pas juste de venir ici et de dire que les parents ne payent pas. Un.

Est-ce qu'il peut confirmer que les parents ne payent pas et qu'il peut revenir, il peut aller enquêter dans sa commission ? Deuxièmement, je voudrais savoir où en sont les choses avec cette affaire de *Rodrigues Pre-Primary School Trust Fund*.

The Chief Commissioner: Nous parlons des parents qui payent l'écolage pour leurs enfants. Mais il y a d'autres. Il y a les enseignantes de l'école maternelle dans toutes les réunions sont d'accords que c'est à eux de contribuer et de demander aux parents une petite contribution pour par exemple, une personne qui peut aider ou ceci ou cela.

Nous parlons ! Excusez-moi, s'il vous plait ! Excusez-moi ! Nous parlons des parents qui payent l'écolage. Les Rs300 ou les Rs500, c'est de ça nous parlons. Et en plus de ça, nous payons à ces enseignants justement les frais de la Sécurité Sociale. Et l'Association des Écoles Maternelles doit vouloir vraiment soit demander aux parents une assistance pour pouvoir payer les autres personnes.

Concernant le *Trust Fund*, c'est parti. C'est à Maurice, c'est en plusieurs mains. Ça va venir bientôt. Et c'est différent dans le *Trust Fund*. Dans le *Trust Fund*, c'est mis que le *Trust Fund* va prendre en charge toutes les charges des écoles maternelles. Que ce soit *helper* que ce soit ceci ou cela, le *Trust Fund* va prendre en charge tous cela.

Dans le *Trust Fund*, ce sera différent. Mais *in the meantime*, en attendant, et bien, que les parents contribuent un peu justement aussi et même, il y a des enseignants qui ont été de payer de leurs salaires une petite somme pour pouvoir payer un *helper* ou quelqu'un d'autre qu'ils peuvent employer.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner announced clearly in his budget: "*Travail égal, salaire égal*". C'est tout à fait normal, M. le président. Ce problème concernant les professeurs des écoles maternelles de Rodrigues ne date pas d'aujourd'hui. Quand tout à l'heure, j'ai dit au Chef Commissaire ces mesures qu'ils sont en train de prendre actuellement, c'est une continuation des mesures qui ont déjà été prises !

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please.

The Minority Leader: Vous voyez, M. le président. Il m'a contesté là-dessus. Si travail égale, salaire égale, il vient de mentionner lui-même il y a des professeurs qui tombent sous la responsabilité du *Early Childhood Care Education Authority* qui travaille à Rodrigues dans les écoles du gouvernement. Ils font les mêmes travaux que ces professeurs qui travaillent dans les écoles, les 33 écoles de l'Association des Écoles maternelles. Vous savez quelle est l'échelle de salaire, M. le président ? Sortant avec le *new PRB Report, starting from Rs 12,425 up to Rs 27,425*, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

In the trust that the Chief Commissioner has just been mentioning, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask him whether, prior to the preparation of this budget, he has had consultation with the Parent Ministry in Mauritius and with the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, concerning the eventual salary that would be earmarked for the coming up of this Trust Fund in Rodrigues? And if yes, to inform the House of same, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, j'ai l'impression qu'il y a une confusion. Nous ne parlons pas des salaires des enseignants dans les écoles primaires qui sont payés différemment. Nous ne parlons pas de salaires, qu'il faut donner le même salaire que ces personnes, les enseignants dans les écoles primaires du gouvernement qui sont sous une loi.

Mais si demain le *Trust Fund for Pre-Primary* est voté, donc, il va y avoir une échelle de salaire avec ça pour dans la chose. Mais là, concernant là, ce n'est pas pareil. Ce n'est pas pareil. C'est une subvention donnée aux parents pour que les parents ne payent pas. Nous ne faisons pas, nous ne parlons pas des enseignants des écoles primaires, pré-primaires.

Mr. Chairperson: Wait, please !

The Chief Commissioner: Ça, ils ont déjà une loi. Ils sont déjà sous une loi. Nous ne pouvons pas le faire. C'est une subvention qu'on donne. Donc, dès que si demain arrive le *Trust Fund for Pre-Primary Education*, ce sera différent par rapport justement à la loi qui va être votée, les salaires vont être différents.

Mr. J. Roussety: M. le président...

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry, respected Member.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, thank you. As regard to money disbursed by the government, there are rules that govern the disbursement of funds. Now, I have in front of me the Government Notice published by the Minister for Education on 09 May 2013. And, we have here inside, according to the first schedule, what are the salaries, what are the categories of employers that we have in pre-primary school? What is the number of years of service, the monthly basic wages also? It is according to the end of the National Remuneration Board (NRB).

And, in primary school, we have Teacher Supervisor, Teacher Grade A, Teacher B, Teacher Grade C, Non-Teaching Staff, Cook. We have Gardener, Handyman, School Attendant. And, we have the salary. For a Teacher Grade A, for the first year, it is Rs 7,901. These, in order to disburse fund, we must abide to these rules. We cannot go beyond. And, what the Chief Commissioner is stating here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is...

Mr. Chairperson: Please, put your question now!

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I am coming with the question. Can I know from the Chief Commissioner? And, I have not heard from the Chief Commissioner from what Vote Item the disbursement will be taken from. Can I know from what Item Vote? And, secondly, whether the workers, the pre-primary school teachers will be paid according to the NRB. And, what will happen also to the non-teaching staff also?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je suis désolé que ce que nous proposons, c'est une mesure transitoire à partir d'une subvention qu'on donne à une association. Il ne s'agit pas de loi, là. Il ne s'agit pas de loi. Lorsque vraiment j'ai dit tout à l'heure, lorsque le *Trust Fund for Pre-Primary School* va arriver, il doit y avoir dedans toutes sortes de conditions même pour les personnes qui doivent être employées, le *gardener* ou ceci ou cela.

C'est différent, M. le président. Et alors... Mais ça va venir, ça va venir, c'est dans la loi ! Ce sera dans la loi ! Mais là, il y a une question de loi, il y a une question de subvention et des rencontre à travers des réunions qui ont été acceptée par les enseignants. C'est une formule transitoire. Enfin !

[Interruptions]

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir...

Mr. Chairperson: Minority Leader, please. You have the floor.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is an Item Vote in the PBB: Programme 302 – Pre-Primary Education. Can the Chief Commissioner tell the House whether, this grant that is proposing, is it paid from this item or is it paid or is there any other item in the budget which is called Grant to Pre-Primary Schools? Because as far as I know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is a budget measure. Before we prepare a budget, he needs to have the approval of the Ministry of Finance to put an item in the budget. The item should be Grants to Pre-Primary Schools!

The Chief Commissioner: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir,* nous ne pouvons pas retirer de l'argent du budget sans l'accord du Ministère des Finances. S'il y a un item pour *Grant to Pre-Primary*, ça vient dedans. Ou bien si le Ministère des Finances justement a ajouté avec les discussions pour pouvoir selon les cas venus présentés, qu'ils nous ont aidé de ce côté-là, c'est quand même pas mal. Alors, moi je dis que rien n'a été fait illégalement. Tout a été fait selon les consultations avec le Ministère des Finances et selon les lois. Merci.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question, please. Last question.

The Minority Leader: Yes, last one.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner just mentioned that there is a grant which is being paid to these pre-primary schools. But at the very beginning of his reply, he stated that features reckoning ten years' experience are drawing salaries of Rs 8,000.

I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner to clarify the situation whether it is a salary or it is a grant being given to these schools. And, secondly, he has been asked to tell the House, to inform the House where matters stand in so far as the Trust Fund is concerned. And, he has not replied to this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry, the second answer has already been replied.

The Chief Commissioner: *Well, I said that it is a grant to the Association des Écoles Maternelles. Et cette association des écoles maternelles a fait des réunions entre les enseignants. Et ce sont eux qui ont discuté tant de salaire par les personnes qui ont fait plus de dix ans et ceux qui ont moins. Donc, ce sont eux qui ont décidé. C'est une assemblée des enseignants. On n'a rien fait sans eux. Vous comprenez là ?*

*Bé alors qu'est-ce qu'il faut répondre ? Mais qu'est-ce qu'il faut répondre ? Je dis la participation de l'école maternelle. Ils ont des enseignants. C'est l'association qui discute entre elle, entre les enseignants. C'est l'association qui discute entre les enseignants et qui nous dise ça, ça, ça, nous sommes d'accord. C'est un *grant* donné à cette association. Ils discutent entre eux.*

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please !

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I had a last supplementary. The Executive Council on its decision of 04 April this year decided to pay the monthly contribution of the National Pension Fund (NPF) for the *Association des Écoles Maternelles de Rodrigues*. Being given it is a non-profit organisation, as far as I know, this association will never be a profitable organisation. So, in taking this decision, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, does it mean that the Executive Council will always pay the National Pension Scheme for this association or will it be for a certain period of time only? Can the Chief Commissioner enlighten us on that?

The Chief Commissioner: C'est une assistance donnée. Le fait qu'elle commence à recevoir un salaire en attendant que le *Trust* arrive. Quand le *Trust* arrive, tout ça, ça va être inclus dans le *Trust*. C'est une question de loi. Vous comprenez, M. le président ? Alors quant à... On a tellement répondu. On ne sait plus quoi répondre. On ne sait plus quoi répondre. Ou ils ne comprennent pas. Ils ne comprennent pas ! C'est une association enregistrée ! L'Association des Écoles Maternelles, association enregistrée à statut légale ! À statut légale !

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please!

DEMONSTRATION PLOTS/BREEDING CENTRES

(No. B/40): The Minority Leader (Mr. G. Jabeemissar) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to demonstration plots and breeding centres owned by Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will state the:

- (a) number under operation in each case indicating their locations;
- (b) number of Public Officers posted on each site and how these sites are being managed; and
- (c) amount of money spent yearly since 2012 to date for running of these services indicating the policy of this Regional Government regarding same?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that seven demonstration plots and breeding centres are in operation located at Citronnelle, Oyster Bay, Grand La Fouche Mangue, Saint Gabriel, Île aux Crabes, Grand La Fouche Corail and Port Sud-Est. 17 public officers are posted at Oyster Bay, 10 at Grand La Fouche Mangue, 10 at Port Sud-Est, 16 at Baie Topaze, 19 at Saint Gabriel and 15 at Île aux Crabes whereas at Citronnelle, 10 officers work on a semi full-time basis.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this Regional Assembly as mentioned in my budget speech, decided to put some plots at the disposal of Agricultural Cooperatives Societies. As such, the agricultural plot at Mourouk Station has been put at the disposal of Young Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited since March 2013 for the production of onion and vegetable seeds and seedlings. In the same vein, the Grand La Fouche Corail demonstration plot has been vested into Saint Marie Cooperative Society for the production of chilly seedlings and other crops.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, more than 2,000 chilly seedlings have already been produced and sold to Saint Marie Cooperative Society compared to an average annual production of less than 500 chilly seedlings. The Commission for Agriculture is offering technical assistance to all these cooperatives, and the vision is to empower these agricultural societies to produce substantially and sustainability while at the same time, reducing running cost. The exact amount spent yearly since 2012 is being compiled and will be tabled.

However, the preliminary calculation reveals that not less than 25 m. is being spent on salaries, personal emoluments. Hence, they need to review the model of operation of the agricultural plots.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in providing these demonstration plots with all the facilities on offering them to those cooperatives

that the Chief Commissioner has just mentioned, can he inform the House whether, there has been any agreement, which had been signed between Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) and these cooperatives? Under what terms and conditions and for what length of time, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

The Chief Commissioner: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir*, ce n'est pas une question de signer n'importe quoi. C'est que les officiers de l'agriculture apportent leurs connaissances et leurs soutiens à tous ceux qui se lancent dans l'agriculture. Et ces jeunes ou ces adultes se sont lancés dans l'agriculture et il est du devoir de la Commission de l'Agriculture à travers ces techniciens d'aider ces personnes afin que vraiment ils puissent découvrir la nécessité de se lancer dans l'agriculture et ce que ça rapporte.

Donc, nous ne trouvons pas quelle signature qu'il faut faire ou accord avec ces coopératives. Mais ce que nous savons c'est que ces coopératives sont des agriculteurs. Et c'est le devoir des officiers de l'agriculture de les aider, d'apporter le tout ce dont ils ont besoin pour réussir dans lequel ils se sont lancés.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir*, we all know that land is a very sensitive issue in Rodrigues. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, talking of agreement, whether there has been at least a lease agreement between the RRA and these associations. And, if yes, whether these associations, they are paying a nominal rent or the rent is being paid at establishment.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, quand nous apportons notre assistance à des groupes de personnes, nous ne voulons pas que dès le début, on leur fasse signer un bail ou un accord. Nous voudrions que d'abord, que c'est dans lequel ils se lancent, ils réussissent. Combien de gens à qui on a donné des permis agricoles et qui ne travaillent pas la terre ? Et c'est pourquoi nous disons aujourd'hui, avant de donner un permis agricole à quelqu'un, il faut que cette personne puisse montrer qu'elle est en train de travailler, de cultiver cette terre.

Alors, c'est pourquoi nous étions en train de faire des expériences avec ces personnes. Et des réunions sont en train de tenir régulièrement entre les techniciens agricoles et ces personnes. Et à partir de là, à ce moment-là, des discussions pourront être vues et voir comment on peut arriver à signer un contrat avec eux. Merci.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether, prior to the vesting of this agricultural plot to the *coopérative*, whether there has been a project plan by the project planning. First, whether it is ongoing. And, secondly, whether there are other

commissions who are, I mean, officers of other commissions who are helping the conversion of this plot into an agricultural plot.

The Chief Commissioner: Évidemment, M. le président. Si cette coopérative n'a pas un plan pour développer la terre, si elle n'a pas un projet planifié pour pouvoir développer la terre, on leur donne comme ça ? Aujourd'hui, il faut faire les choses avec beaucoup de comment dirai-je, d'expérience. Et c'est de formation qu'il y a tout cela. Vous comprenez là ? Et c'est ça justement. Je leur ai dit : « *Mais dites-nous qu'est-ce que vous allez faire* ». Il y a ça. Il y a ça. Il y a tant de coopératives. Il y a tant de personnes, ceci de cela. Comment est-ce qu'ils faisaient ? Quelle est leur professions et ainsi de suite ?

Moi je vous dis, M. le président. D'après mes informations, les auditeurs quand ils étaient ici, ils ont été voir là-bas, ces coopératives. Ils ont été émerveillés, émerveillés au moins justement, émerveillés. Et là, je félicite ces personnes qui vraiment, n'ont pas écouté ceux qui disent : « *Au lieu ki Serge Clair donne nou enn travay, li dir ou ale travay la terre* ».

Heureusement qu'ils n'ont pas écouté ces personnes. Quand à ces coopératives, ils sont suivis par les officiers de coopératives. Et ces officiers de coopératives découvrent de plus en plus ce domaine agricole. Ce ne sont pas des associations. C'est des coopératives. Et ces officiers, justement, découvrent de plus en plus comment ces jeunes-là sont en train de travailler leur sérieux. Eh bien, c'est ce qu'il faut pour l'avenir de ce pays. Merci.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Chief Commissioner what is the purpose, what is the main objective of a demonstration plot? What is the main objective of this? We want to know this.

The Chief Commissioner: The demonstration plot exists a long time ago since at the time of Mr. Ochin just to demonstrate so that you... Vous exercez quelque chose et ensuite, une personne vient voir. *A success-story* pour que les personnes voient. Parce qu'il y a des gens qui ne croient pas.

Zot bisin voir pou zot croire ! Zot bisin voir pou zot croire ! Aler ale gueter ! Aler ale gueter ou pou trouver ! Il faut voir pour croire. Et c'est ça, justement, le *demonstration plot*. On fait des choses pour aller voir, pour voir que c'est possible de le faire, que ce soit l'élevage, que ce soit une plantation, ça, c'est possible de le faire. Et c'est ça le rôle de *demonstration plot*. Mais aujourd'hui, ce n'est plus ça. Ce sont les gens, eux-mêmes qui font des *success-stories*.

Mr. Chairperson: Minority Leader, first.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at Grand La Fouche Mangue Demonstration Plot, formally, on this plot, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, one could see demonstration activities. There were plantation of seedlings such as onion seeds and vegetable seeds and so on. Can the Chief Commissioner confirm, as at date, whether this plot is still operational? Because he has mentioned some 17 officers posted to that plot. What are these officers actually doing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

The Chief Commissioner: The officers, there are also, what we call, General Workers and so on, you know. And also, the officers, the technical officers, they are not posted here only for that. They look or see around the plot. It means they look around the different... They go and visit the different planters and so on. Well, I agree that that is why now, not even Grand La Fouche Mangue. You are also looking about Oyster Bay.

A lot of plot like that has been abandoned. That is why we have noticed that putting these plots of land in the hands of the planters or young people or planters who like themselves to experience on this plot and to produce seedlings or anything else.

C'est pourquoi nous disons que tous ces *plots* ont besoin d'être revus dans une direction dans les années à venir. C'est pourquoi ces *plots of land demonstration plots* ont besoin.... Nous pensons aussi à Baie Topaze, au niveau de l'élevage. Tout ça, nous pensons. Parce que très souvent, ces *demonstration plots* comme j'ai dit là, on verse tant de salaire, Rs25 millions par an alors que même *the input is much more than the output*.

That is why, c'est pourquoi nous sommes en train de voir comment ces *demonstration plots* peuvent justement en mettant ça entre les mains d'autres personnes, d'autres groupes de personnes, peuvent donner vraiment une preuve qu'un *demonstration plot*, le *output can be more than the input*.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question, please. Mr. respected Member, Johnson.

Mr. J. Roussety: M. le président, est-ce que le Chef commissaire, Commissaire Responsable de l'Agriculture n'est-il pas en train de se donner la blâme à la Commission de l'Agriculture en disant avec tant d'officiers, 17 officiers ici, 10 ici, Rs25 millions de salaire ? Ils sont incapables de faire gérer, de produire, d'avoir des résultats de ces *demonstration plot* qui par nature, de par leur importance stratégique, doivent rester dans le gouvernement.

On est en train de prendre des bijoux que lui-même, il a dit *Ochin* etc., tant de gens, d'officiers de l'agriculture qui ont fait leur travail ont mis en place pour justement le mot le dit, *demonstration plot*. Les officiers de l'agriculture, si on leur donne... Moi j'ai parlé à un officier de l'agriculture la semaine dernière. Qu'est-ce qu'on fait avec les officiers de l'agriculture ? *Dan computer, dan bureau* au lieu d'être les terrains.

Mr. Chairperson: Come to your question !

Mr. J. Roussety: La question. La question est : n'est-il pas en train, lui-même, de dire dans tout ce qu'il a dit sur cette question que la commission d'agriculture est en train de ne pas faire son travail vue les moyens etc. ? Premièrement. Et deuxièmement, qu'en est-il de la gestion, ce qu'on dit, stratégique de l'agriculture à Rodrigues ? Par exemple, à Port Sud-Est. Port Sud-Est, c'était le seul endroit où on produisait les plants de fruits à pins.

À l'heure où on parle de *food security*, est-ce qu'on va continuer à produire les arbres de fruits à pins ? Est-ce qu'on n'est pas en train, M. le président, de brader ce patrimoine agricole au lieu de le rénover, de remotiver les travailleurs de l'agriculture ? On ne dit pas qu'il ne faut pas mettre des travailleurs en dehors pour qu'ils viennent voir. Mais de là, à prendre ces *plots*, à donner à des gens pour qu'eux, ils travaillent, on sait comment la chemiserie, la boulangerie au CTR etc. à terminer avec coopérative. Où est-ce qu'on va ?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, l'honorable membre ne sait pas ce qui est en train de se passer depuis 2012. Quand nous sommes arrivés, nous avons vu l'état de l'agriculture, le nombre de terres abandonnées. Nous avons commencé à remettre les officiers de l'agriculture sur le terrain. Ils ne sont pas dans le bureau. Ils sont dans les différentes régions de ce pays à la disposition des planteurs.

L'autre jour, j'ai été dans un village. J'ai vu un officier de l'agriculture avec un planteur d'haricot. Je l'ai vu. Il est là sur le terrain avec lui. Et c'est ça justement. C'est ça qu'on est en train de voir que l'officier de l'agriculture est au service des planteurs. Je ne les accuse pas au lieu de... Mais ceux qui sont là dans ce *plot* à Mangue, eh bien, ils ne sont pas juste là mais ils sont autour d'eux aussi, des planteurs qui travaillent et qui, justement, vous comprenez là ? Et c'est ça, justement. Il y a aussi toute une mentalité à changer. Il y a aussi toute une mentalité à changer.

Alors, c'est pourquoi moi je dis que quand nous, nous pensons que les officiers de l'agriculture ne doivent pas s'asseoir dans un bureau ou on dit de l'autre côté que nous les accusons de ne rien faire, au contraire, nous leur

donnons, nous sommes en train de leur donner un rôle où ils peuvent vraiment demain, dans cette île Rodrigues, montrer aux Rodriguais qu'ils sont aussi capables dans l'agriculture, aussi capables qu'un technicien et que vraiment, par eux-mêmes et avec l'aide de ces techniciens, ils peuvent aller beaucoup plus loin. Merci.

The Minority Leader: I have a last question.

Mr. Chairperson: Question, please.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House what his commission intends to do with the Saint Gabriel Breeding Centre? Because in his budget speech, he announced that 20 hectares will be used. Right? And, he mentioned to grow *haricot rouge*, *pistache* and so on. Can he tell us right now, how many hectare of *haricot rouge* can be seen growing at Saint Gabriel Breeding Centre, Mr. Chairperson, Sir?

The Chief Commissioner: *Miracle pa fer dan enn semaine.* He is talking about Saint Gabriel. We have just made a plan for Saint Gabriel. We have just made a plan. And, the plan will be going ahead: *café, pour les haricots rouge ainsi de suite.* Mais M. le président, on est sur la bonne route. Alors qu'il vient nous dire *bé ki li pé fer laba?* Vous comprenez là? Alors laissez-moi vous dire, M. le président, nous sommes sur la bonne route. Nous avons la conscience tranquille et nous voulons voir Rodrigues dans les 10 ans, vingt ans à venir.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT – CROP SEASON 2014

(No. B/41): The Minority Leader (Mr. G. Jabeemissar) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to agricultural development for the crop season 2014, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) the different cash and food crops under cultivation and the area cultivated for each;
- (b) the region(s) which normally grow crops but which are now not under cultivation and to give the reasons thereof; and

- (c) the percentage of agricultural lands in Rodrigues which are currently under cultivation as compared to the last five years and to table a copy of same?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Chief Commissioner? B/41.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling a list of different cash and food crops under cultivation and the area planted for the first quarter 2014 January to March. According to the reports from the Acting Officer in Charge this year, no report whatsoever has been received on any such case.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as we all know, Rodrigues has not been spared by the phenomenon of climatic change. Planters are and have been suffering from longer periods of drought and experiencing heavy rains over a short time commonly known as flash floods.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, summer rains started in Rodrigues only during the month of March 2014. Normally, according to records, Rodrigues received its first summer rain during end October beginning November when the planters usually grow maize, cassava, sweet potatoes, groundnuts and mixed vegetables. This delay in summer rain has prompted planters to refrain from growing maize as first crop. They have shifted directly to the growing of red beans as it is the growing period for beans.

Planters are wise and experienced people, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. As such, they have changed the planting calendar and adapting their cropping period with the rainfall pattern. The extension services of the commission are accompanying our planters accordingly. I am tabling a copy of the percentage of agricultural lands in Rodrigues, which are currently under cultivation as compared to the last five years.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, according to statistics that are available from the Central Statistical Office, it is found that during the last five years, pulse bean, beans pulse which is one of our main cash crops has considerably declined over these five years. Although the area cultivated in 2008 was 45.1 hectare, the production was 96.3 tons whereas, in 2012, according to available statistic, over an area of 100.6 hectare, the yield was only 86.3 tons, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

According to the trend, we can clearly see that there is need to be specific measures to be taken by the commission concerned in order to help our planters in this specific field. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House what

measures his commission is being taken in order to help beans' planters not only to grow more but to grow in better quality and also to have a better output?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since 2012, we have noticed that a lot of agricultural land was not planted. But, now, we have asked our expenses officers to make a sort of survey and to have a special information on each planter why they have not cultivated the land and so on. This exercise is being done. Because we like to know how many hectares of land are being cultivated in Rodrigues. Sometimes we say 5,000 hectares of land, sometimes we say 4,000, sometimes we say 3,000.

So, we are now going ahead since 2012 with a sort of enquiry on the land, those who have received the agricultural land, the agricultural permit whether, they are working on the land. This is being done. This information, we need it so that in the future, those who are on an agricultural land, we will take the land from them and give them to agricultural people who like to work on the land.

On the other side, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have noted that we have faced a lot of drought. I would like to remind people here, in 2005, we have started a project of desalination of water at Mourouk. And, we are going as in 2006 to launch the tender for this desalination plant. But unfortunately, even we have already received the tenders from the Pavé La Bonté Dam, all these after 2006.... not be done.

Now, if this project of desalination has continued, we should have today, 12,000 cubic metres of desalinated water. And, this would have helped a lot of planters to cultivate their land. But unfortunately, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, but unfortunately, what happen? We have faced a lot of drought. And, that is why those who like to cultivate their land have not done it. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Member Spéville and then...

Mr. J. Roussety: I was on my feet first. Each time it is the same story with you.

Mr. Chairperson: I beg your pardon? I beg your pardon?

Mr. J. Roussety: I told you I was on my feet first. Each time it is the same story with you.

Mr. Chairperson: No, no, no! Let me tell you. I saw the Minority Leader first and then, Spéville and then, you. You cannot make such comment on me, please.

Mr. J. Roussety: Sorry?

Mr. Chairperson: You cannot make such comment on me because I am doing my work as it should be done.

Mr. J. Roussety: I do not believe.

Mr. Chairperson: You do not believe, I do not care. But I am just telling you everyone can see, can judge. So far, as a human being, I am doing my work with great impartiality!

Mr. J. Roussety: Do your work, my friend!

Mr. Chairperson: This is my work, yes! You are right! Now, please quiet, there! Quiet there! Because I saw, again I say, I saw the Minority Leader, then, respected Member, Spéville and then you. And, then, even Mr. Grandcourt. So once again, do not make such comment.

Mr. J. Roussety: I saw myself standing first!

Mr. Chairperson: Yes! You saw yourself standing first! You are right. Maybe it was a mirage. Your... Mr. Spéville.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: *Mr. Chairperson, the Chief Commissioner was talking on those who possess agricultural permit and do not work. Mais, M. le président, il y a beaucoup de terres agricoles which were considered as unit farm in the past et sont en friche maintenant pour de longues années. Il y a des gens qui ont des moyens, qui cherchent un terrain pour travailler mais n'arrivent pas à avoir.*

Car à Rodrigues, quand ils vont vers ces terrains, il y a beaucoup qui disent que ces terrains en friche appartenaient à leurs parents auparavant même si à leur tour, ils ne travaillent pas. Parfois il y a des ingérences aussi quand quelqu'un veut avoir ces terrains-là, ils n'arrivent pas à avoir parce que ces terrains-là appartenaient à X personnes auparavant. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House on his policy on this state of work?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, j'ai dit plusieurs fois ici que nous sommes en train de faire des enquêtes sur les terres agricoles. Et justement, il y a des personnes dont la terre agricole a été abandonnée et pas de renouvellement. Il y a aussi des personnes qui ont eu quand on voyait la liste, *mix farming*. *Mix farming*, cela veut dire la personne peut en clôturer la terre et faire ce qu'il voulait avec ça.

Mais il me semble que cette politique va mettre Rodrigues en danger. C'est pourquoi aujourd'hui, nous avons décidé tout ce qui s'appelle *mix farming*, on ne va pas renouveler parce que nous allons beaucoup plus vers des pâturages communautaires et que les personnes doivent pouvoir. Il y a la loi, les règlements qui vont venir concernant justement enfermer les animaux dans des parcs et qu'à ce moment-là, on va chercher le... Alors, il y a tout un travail qui a été fait dans le passé qu'il faudra revoir. Revoir pour libérer ces terres agricoles, pour libérer ces *mix farming* ainsi de suite.

Alors, c'est pourquoi, M. le président, donnons-nous un peu de temps et vous allez voir dans quelque temps, ça, on va réussir. Parce que vraiment, il y a boulot d'étranglement concernant les terres agricoles pour ce *mix farming*.

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Member, Johnson Roussety. Your turn as...

Mr. J. Roussety: I will ask questions when I stand up.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, then. Thank you.

The Minority Leader: Oui, M. le président, je comprends un peu l'état d'esprit du Chef commissaire. Mais il ne se rend pas compte qu'on est en train de mener une course contre la montre. Il faut voir durant chaque bateau qui vient à Rodrigues, combien de produits de bases, produits alimentaires que Rodrigues normalement aurait dû pouvoir produire rentre dans le pays.

Donc, Rodrigues, aujourd'hui, est devenu non pas un pays indépendant en termes d'aliments, indépendance alimentaire mais on coule de jour en jour dans la dépendance totale, M. le président. Là, j'ai devant moi, par exemple, encore toujours les statistiques même s'il y en a qui ne sont pas d'accord, moi je me base sur les statistiques.

This is official statistic from the sources Agricultural Services - Rodrigues Regional Assembly: manioc (cassava), which used to be one of our main staple foods, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. In 2008, there was an area of 15.3 hectares of land under cultivation of this crop with a production of 94.3 tons. Do you know what happened in 2012? The area was only 0.4 hectare with a production of only 5.4 tons, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Et étant donné, M. le président, que Rodrigues, dans la production agricole de Rodrigues, on ne produit pas seulement pour le besoin de la *consumption* humaine. Il y a aussi les animaux, M. le président. Aujourd'hui,

les éleveurs se plaignent que les aliments pour les animaux coûtent très, très cher.

Mais moi, je pense qu'un des moyens que la Commission de l'Agriculture aurait pu mettre en place pour comme si diminuer le coût de production des *manzé zanimo*, c'est d'aller dans ce sens, c'est-à-dire d'accroître la production de la patate douce, du manioc. Parce qu'il y a beaucoup de terres marginales, des terres abandonnées, M. le président. *The question is: is the Commission of Agriculture prepared to go in that direction by helping those planters and those farmers in going in that direction?*

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, c'est ce que j'ai dit depuis qu'on est là. Nous avons constaté en 2012 beaucoup de terres abandonnées. Et la mentalité des personnes à Rodrigues a changé aussi. Et ça, c'est très important. Même ceux qui vont à l'université vous disent d'autres choses. Et c'est pourquoi nous avons voulu dans les écoles habituer les enfants à la terre.

Et c'est pourquoi il y a des jardins scolaires, habituer l'enfant à la terre. Et c'est pourquoi moi je dis qu'il y a toute une mentalité à changer par rapport à un travail de la terre. Mais puisqu'on a vu dans le passé, au lieu *ki Serge Clair donne nou ene travay, li dir ou ale travay la terre*.

Alors tout ça, M. le président, il y a tout un travail à faire, de formation, d'éducation de la population, des enfants dans les écoles que ce soit dans les collèges. Mais il y a tout cela. Il y a tout un travail à faire si nous voulons que vraiment demain Rodrigues puisse produire puisque la patate, le manioc et ainsi de suite. Parce qu'aujourd'hui, nous parlons d'introduire le cochon noir qui autre fois, se nourrissait de la patate, du manioc, de l'herbe, d'arouille ainsi de suite.

Mais il faudra revenir avec ces plantations. Et c'est pourquoi nous, nous disons nous sommes en train de le faire avec les nouvelles techniques, avec la formation des planteurs à travers les techniciens agricoles. Nous sommes en train de le faire comment une terre agricole doit produire, doit être exploitée à 100% dans cette île Rodrigues.

Mr. J. Roussety: Yes, each time, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we hear the same rhetoric. We are giving people the means to produce. We want the youth to go towards agriculture etc. What about the facts? I ask the question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Only one fact regarding the provision of tractors. *Mécanisation* for planters, *pour les planteurs*. And, I will give examples. I have an agricultural

plot and he said encouraging people to go to cultivate the agricultural plots. This is I am showing my experience and put the question. I asked for tractor's service in October 2013. It came in February start of March 2013. February – four months.

I give two names, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And, I will ask the Chief Commissioner to look into the issue. I give the name of Mr. Ramchad Carpenen of Baie Topaze. I give the name of my neighbour, a very good agriculture but I am pity for him. He stood in the sun with his family ploughing the land with his own hands. Mr. Aladin Begue also known as Goutouille.

These people, they have never got tractor to plough their land. One has had access, got tractor from a private person. And, the other one has ploughed his land at 70 years old. He has nearly one *arpent* of agricultural land in Baie du Nord.

Mr. Chairperson: Please, put your question.

Mr. J. Roussety: The question is what is happening? What is happening with all the tractors that government has? Why is it that the tractors are not operating? We see tractors in Port Mathurin at 10 a.m., at 11 a.m. During the day – tractors in Port Mathurin. What is happening? Why is it that there is a failure in the provision of mechanisation services to the agricultural people despite all the talks, despite all the rhetoric?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, nous savons qu'il y a des problèmes au niveau de la mécanisation. Mais quand on voit dans le passé, le type de tracteurs qu'on a acheté, des tracteurs qu'on utilise dans des carreaux cannes à Maurice. Il faut voir ces monstres de tracteurs. Et c'est pourquoi, à mon avis, il faut savoir quel type de tracteur acheter. Et alors ? Et alors ? *Eh ou la ! Eh ou la ! Alor ene gro zistoire comsa lor la route, ou labour la terre la !*

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Please, quiet !

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: I said you keep quiet, you listen and then, you will have the floor.

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, proceed, please, if you have got something to say.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je suis en train de parler des qualités de tracteurs qu'on a fait venir dans le passé.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: This is nonsense!

[Interruptions]

The Chief Commissioner: ...qu'on a fait venir dans le passé. Avec ce tracteur, on...

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Rosaire, please !

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *li pé déranze moi.*

Mr. Chairperson: No, No ! Yes ?

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: You are talking nonsense! This is nonsense!

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: I will not accept anything! Please, Chairperson, continue if you got something to say. Chief Commissioner! Sorry, Chief Commissioner.

The Chief Commissioner: Je suis en train de dire, M. le président, dans le passée, on a acheté des tracteurs qui ne conviennent pas pour le labourage des terres Rodrigues. Il fallait aller sur des tracteurs bien moyens et des petits tracteurs qui ne peuvent pas aller partout. Alors, c'est pourquoi nous nous disons, nous connaissons, savons qu'il y a des tracteurs qui sont très souvent en panne et qu'il faut aller chercher les pièces de rechange et ainsi de suite.

Nous travaillons dessus. Et d'ailleurs, nous avons un comité qui se réunit régulièrement sur la question du labourage. Et nous faisons le travail dans la mesure du possible. Mais seulement, on a dit aussi à des planteurs : « *Ce n'est pas tous les ans qu'il faut labourer la terre. Si on laboure la terre tous les ans, cette terre va perdre sa fertilité* ».

Dans la terre, il y a des choses qui gardent vraiment la fertilité de la terre. Alors, c'est ça. Il faut faire attention avec ces tracteurs qui labourent la terre profondément et qui soulève la terre et qui la mette au soleil. Et ça, c'est dangereux. Alors, tout ça, il y a toute une question de labourage de terre que nous sommes en train de voir et voir s'il y a possibilité d'acquérir d'autres tracteurs pour pouvoir faire le travail comme il faut.

Mr. J. Roussety: *Quel est le problème, M. le président ? Quel est le problème avec...* So, you allow me to start and then, you cut me. But you have to do your job as Chairperson! I am sorry! You are paid for that, you have to be *performant*! But he stood first, tell me to...

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Point of order! Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that the Member cannot talk like this in this House!

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Kifer?*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The term incompetent is not good.

Mr. Chairperson: I request the respected Member, Johnson Roussety to withdraw his word.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Which word?

Mr. Chairperson: You know that word.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Incompetent.

Mr. J. Roussety: I withdraw the word that I do not know.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: 'Not *performant*'....

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Please, sit down! Wait! Could you please, withdraw your word?

Mr. J. Roussety: I withdraw.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : M. le président, je dois revenir sur un point dont le Chef commissaire a parlé. C'est révoltant, M. le président ! C'est

révoltant d'entendre dire, de dire qu'on ne va pas renouveler les personnes qui ont des permis pour le *mix farming* à Rodrigues. M. le président, mais presque tout le monde fait le *mix farming* à Rodrigues. *Élever enn ti poule, ti canard, ti cabris....* Ça, c'est du *mix farming*, M. le président, avec ce qu'on plante tout ça. Comment est-ce qu'il va s'arranger pour faire tout ça ? Est-ce qu'il ne s'est pas trompé dans sa politique ? Ça, c'est une partie de la question.

Deuxième partie, est-ce qu'il y a des cas à Rodrigues où les gens travaillent la terre ou bien payent, emploient d'autres personnes pour travailler la terre où ces personnes-là, en ce moment, sont considérés comme des squatteuses et sont contraintes à vider le lieu ?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, il y a des centaines de personnes qui ont reçu des permis de *mix farming* – 5,000 m² jusqu'à même 10,000 m². Qu'est-ce qu'ils font ? Ils clôturent la terre. On a eu des cas comme ça un peu dans Vangasaille et ailleurs. Ils clôturent la terre. Ce qui veut dire on ne peut plus passer. On ne peut plus passer.

Et c'est pourquoi ceux qui veulent faire l'élevage, le *mix farming* tel qu'il est compris aujourd'hui, c'est-à-dire, on clôture la terre et on lâche les animaux dedans. Or, nous nous disons, vaut mieux clôturer des terres comme pâturages soit mettre ces parcs d'animaux autour de ces pâturages. Et ça devait se faire dans le passé mais on n'aura pas pu le faire. Et c'est pourquoi nous disons qu'il faut arriver à une autre méthode d'élevage.

Cette méthode d'élevage, c'est justement, enfermer des animaux dans les parcs et aller couper l'herbe et ensuite, et même dans ces pâturages, on peut planter des arbres pour attirer l'humidité de la terre. Alors, c'est ça justement qu'on veut faire. Il faut arriver à voir que sera Rodrigues dans 10 ans, 20 ans, 50 ans. Il faut voir ça de cette façon-là. On ne peut pas donner à quelqu'un 10,000 m² et qui clôture et on ne sait plus où passer, ou ceci cela. C'est ce que les gens, même les simples éleveurs disent qu'ils ne savent plus où passer tellement il y a des pâturages partout.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question for Mr. Agathe, please.

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

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Member, Agathe.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, thank you. J'ai écouté religieusement le Chef commissaire parler, M. le président. *Mais* there is one question that I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner asking young people, everybody from Rodrigues

to plant, to grow crops. And, the words have reached all the ears of Rodriguan people. Can we know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? In the past we have a heavy mechanical pool that we have borrowed somewhere in Mauritius. Can we know what is the whereabouts of these heavy mechanical pools that we have brought in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, toutes ces affaires de... Ces problèmes de labourage de terre, nous sommes en train de réfléchir beaucoup dessus. Il faudrait arriver à trouver une solution qui peut satisfaire tout le monde. Et même là, nous avons mis dans le budget : commencer avec des jeunes, faire une coopérative avec des jeunes pour les financer au niveau des petits motoculteurs, pas nécessairement des gros mais des petits motoculteurs qu'ils peuvent louer à des personnes ou eux-mêmes, ils peuvent aller labourer la terre.

Alors, il faut commencer petit et ensuite, au fur et à mesure on arrive. On arrive à quelque chose qui peut satisfaire tout le monde. Et je pense qu'on peut y arriver. Si demain on arrive vraiment à regarder, à savoir le nombre de terre qu'il faut labourer, et ça aussi, il faut savoir s'il n'y a pas des terres qui ont été labourées cette année-ci qu'il ne faut pas labourer l'année prochaine.

Et c'est pourquoi nous demandons aux techniciens agricoles de bien noter. Et ils ont des papiers pour ça, noter des personnes qui ont labouré la terre aujourd'hui, qui on ne peut pas labourer demain. Il y a tout un travail scientifique à faire. Et c'est un travail méthodique qu'il faut faire.

Mr. Chairperson: I invite the Deputy Chairperson to take the Chair, please.

At 11:47 hours the Deputy Chairperson took the chair.

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question!

CT SCAN

(No. B/42) **Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sport whether, in regard to the CT Scan installed at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) the date, if any, for the launching thereof and, if not, to state the reasons therefore;
- (b) the number of patients who have benefitted from the CT Scan since its installation to date; and

(c) if the apparatus is fully operational and, if not, the reasons thereof?

The Commissioner responsible for Health and Sport (Mr. I. Valimamode): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, with your permission and the concurrence of my colleagues, I would wish to answer the questions, B/42, B/57 and B/64 simultaneously as they are cognate.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, we have not yet accepted or agreed that our questions be answered together. That is first. I would like also, if we agree that the questions is answered together, I would like to make a special request that additional time be given for supplementary questions because there will be three persons intervening on these questions. So, we must agree first whether the questions should be answered together.

The Deputy Chairperson: Do you all agree that he answers all the questions together, questions B/42, B/57 and B/64. I think that the Commissioner can answer all the questions. It is the practice that the questions can be answered together.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the official launching of the CT scan by Hon. Lormus Bundhoo, Minister for Health and Quality of Life and the Chief Commissioner Mr. Louis Serge Clair was scheduled for Saturday 15 March 2014 at 10.00 a.m. Unfortunately, as you are aware, there was torrential rain warning on Rodrigues from 13 to 16 March 2014 and thus the official ceremony as well as all other activities in relation to the visit of the Minister was cancelled due to the above-mentioned reason.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, since the coming of operation of the CT Scan in March 2014, two Radiology Consultants have manned the equipment supported by local staff on the following dates respectively:-

- From 11 to 15 March 2014; and
- From 9 to 12 April 2014

Twenty-nine patients have benefitted from the CT scan so far and the apparatus is fully operational.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the performance of the equipment, I wish to inform the House of some examples of pathologies confirmed and uncovered via our CT scan. They are as follows:-

- Ischaemic Stroke
- Hemorrhagic Stroke

- Subarachnoid Haemorrhage
- Meningioma
- Suprasellar tumour
- Hydrocephalus
- Head injury amongst others

As such, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that since the coming of the operation of the CT Scan, two trauma cases due to accident have been diagnosed even in the absence of a Radiologist in Rodrigues. The images were sent to Dr. A. G. Jeetoo Hospital for interpretation within 12 hours prior to sending the patients to Mauritius for further treatment.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the system being implemented in Rodrigues is a modern one, making use of “*avant-garde*” technology to bridge the geographical isolation of Rodrigues when it comes to saving lives.

Mr. J. Roussety: Can we know, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, being given we understand that there is no Radiologist on a full-time basis here, if there is an emergency or in any case where there are people, patients being scanned by the CT Scan, the time taken for the medical practitioner here in Rodrigues to get the results of the scan.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the CT Scan is equipped with a Pack System with a two megabytes line connected to the Radiology Unit at Dr. A.G. Jeetoo Hospital in Port Louis. It has just been connected this week. With this connection finalized in May 2014, scanned images will be sent to A.G. Jeetoo Hospital for instant interpretation. The Pack System is equipped with a storage capacity of five millions images which will facilitate follow-up of patients for a maximum of three years. This Pack System is a new system, which we do not even have in Mauritius for time being.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, as we know the CT scan, it is important to have a Radiologist in Rodrigues to operate the CT scan because here it is a question of diagnosis. Can the Commissioner inform the House whether other specialists other than the Radiologist can use the CT scan and whether the use of same fall under his scope of work?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, we have had talk with the Ministry of Health and usually the CT scan is performed by Imaging Technologists whom we have here in Rodrigues and with the coming next week, with the senior most Principal Imaging Technologist, this will not be an issue. Nevertheless, following a request for the posting of a Radiologist in Rodrigues has already been made to the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.

Based on the recommendations of the Consultant in charge of Radiology at Dr. A.G. Jeetoo Hospital, the Radiologist will not only operate the CT scan but also the setting up of an ultra sound unit in Rodrigues using the already existing high performance equipment which we do have. But to answer precisely to your question let me tell you that these imaging technologies they can perform the CT Scan right now. However, if need be for injection of what we call a contrast in specific cases, it is then and only then that the Radiologist is needed. But nevertheless, we have already asked for the posting of a Radiologist in Rodrigues.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, je voudrais demander au commissaire est-ce qu'il y a eu depuis la mise en route du CT scan à ce jour. Est-ce qu'il y a eu des arrêts dans l'utilisation de ce CT scan ? Si oui, vous me donnez les raisons pourquoi ? Deuxième question pour ne pas me remettre sur les pieds. Est-ce qu'il y a eu des patients qui ont été transférés à Maurice concernant l'arrêt qui non pas pu être scanné à Rodrigues.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, it a common practice here to hear things around the island, whereas my Commission and myself are not aware of these things. Officially, there has never been any stop in the CT scan. Yes, I am saying officially. Yes, I take notice from professional from the hospital, at the hospital level, not from newspapers, not on Face Book or anything like that. There are things that have been said concerning the CT scan that before its installation there were talks in town that *Maël so scan pé tir film noir*. All sorts of things that *dimun pé gagne la peau pé brulé*. The CT scan was not even installed at the time but let me reassure the Respected Member there that there has been no stop in the CT scan.

As for the next question, patients are still being transferred to Mauritius and will still be transferred to Mauritius. These are specific cases where for example they have already diagnose something that further treatment will be needed in Mauritius and instead of doing the scan here, they prefer to do it there. But for these the treatment will be needed in Mauritius. We have two or three cases that we have sent concerning stroke and also head injuries that I have mentioned earlier.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner with regard to the newly acquired technology *où on peut envoyer les images, Dr. Jeetoo à Maurice* to be analysed, examined and send results back. *Combien de temps ça prend parce qu'il nous a dit que ça a été fait déjà dans un cas et vue que c'était quand ça le cas. Parce que vous nous aviez dit que this has been implemented this week.* When was it done for that specific

case? And how long does it take to go to Mauritius the pictures and results send back to Rodrigues? That is one.

Deuxièmement, je voudrais aussi savoir du commissaire de nous rassurer *is this technology that he is talking about is going to be efficient* parce qu'on sait qu'avec le X-Ray Department there was the same technology. Je ne sais pas si c'est pareil mais il y avait le technologie ou on pouvait envoyer les images à Maurice pour avoir les résultats mais on sait que ça ne fonctionne pas bien au niveau du X-Ray. *Is it going to be the same thing or is it going to be different for scan.* Par rapport à internet *are you still going to be needing/requiring additional bandwidth* pour la connexion pour que ça puisse fonctionner mieux. Là j'ai pu comprendre que *from now on we will not have Radiologist coming to Rodrigues unless there is an emergency. So, we will not have a Radiologist posted in Rodrigues anymore. We are going to use the Imaging Technicians to do the scans. So, is this correct? Can I know from the Commissioner?*

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, this is not what I answered. I said I will answer the last question. I said that, formerly, when the CT scan was introduced we are going to use the pack system, which needed to be installed, and meanwhile, we have already done 29 CT scans to date. And last time, we had a severe head injury, this is what I said, this is prior to the installation of the pack system and it was put on a DCD and sent to Mauritius and within 12 hours... We were waiting for the installation of the pack system. Now it is solved. I mentioned that following the report from the Principal Radiologist from Dr. A. G. Jeetoo Hospital, he advised that we have a Radiologist, not only for the CT scan but since we have other ultra sound equipments to set up an ultra sound unit. This is what we are going to do and we have already asked the Ministry to send us a Radiologist.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Can we know when will he be coming to Rodrigues?

Mr. I. Valimamode: I expect it will be very soon because I want to do it before the official launching.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner actually how the image of the CT scan have been sent to Mauritius. Is it by internet or by on CD on DVD. How?

Mr. I. Valimamode: I said that we have not done any CT scan these few days because we have just installed the pack system and this will go through the pack system now. Formerly, we sent one especially an accident emergency case we sent that by DVD and we got the result. We got a special line now. I forgot

to answer the question of the Respected Member concerning... the pack system will still be used even if we have the Radiologist. Why? Because he will be in touch with the Neuron Surgeon in Mauritius who will decide whether to send the patients to Mauritius or not and in the same line we are considering how to improve the operating theatre instead of transferring the patients to Mauritius if the Neuron Surgeon can come over here.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner tell us what precautionary measures have been taken during installation and in the aftermath of the installation concerning emanation of radiation? And what emergency plan has been set up if ever same occur?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I think I have already answered to that question. Formerly, whereby people from the Radiation Unit they have come over here and they certified that everything is correct in that sense.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner how the reception of patients is being done actually in the vicinity of a CT scan?

Mr. I. Valimamode: I do not quite understand the question. I can read between the lines. What he is saying is that right now people comes from the wards so they come directly in the unit they are not coming from outside. Nevertheless, we have a waiting room, for example, outpatients. It is led proof. Do not worry!

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Commissioner whether there has been a survey prior to the purchase of the installation of the CT scan and what has been the tendency of the number of patients who needs the scanning/to be scanned through these apparatus?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, from my point of view, the health of the population here, you do not judge it by the numbers. We do not judge it from the numbers. For example, I mentioned the several pathologies we have had. May be he is not understanding what I am saying concerning the pathologies. But nevertheless, more than 12 patients are being sent to Mauritius for CT scan with all the problems encountered and all this.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY – PUBLIC OFFICERS

(No. B/43) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Public Officers falling under the

Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will, for the benefit of the House, in each case, state and table the list of Public Officers under leave without pay and under interdiction since January 2012 to date and to give the reasons thereof together with the date of their resumption of duty and indicating if any of them have not yet resumed duty and, if so, why?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I have to inform the House that as from period 2012 to date 25 officers proceeded on leave without pay either for private purposes or to take employment in private sector or study purposes. Ten officers have already resumed duty. One officer has resigned. Two officers have retired and three others have been transferred to the Mauritius Port Authority and one officer's post has been declared vacant. Presently, eight officers are still on leave without pay and have not resumed duty as their periods of leave have not yet been expired.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am further informed that 20 officers were on interdiction after arrest by Police or ICAC. Three officers have been reinstated. One officer has been dismissed and another officer has retired in the interest of the public following Court conviction.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I consider that it will be inappropriate to table the names of these officers and details thereof.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner to inform the House, this August Assembly, whether there are several demand from Public Officers for leave since 2012 and if yes, to give reasons thereof as it was the case in the year 1980's?

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

AIR MAURITIUS – FLIGHTS CANCELLED DELAYED 2012/OUTCOME

(No. B/44) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Air Mauritius flights to and from Rodrigues, he will:-

- (a) for the benefit of the House, obtain, from Air Mauritius Ltd., information as to the number of flights cancelled or delayed since February 2012 to date and the reasons therefor;
- (b) state-

- (i) the outcome and impact of such a recurrent problem on the tourism and other related industries in Rodrigues; and
- (ii) if the matter has been discussed with relevant authorities in Mauritius and what is the way forward?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed by Air Mauritius that for the period 01 February 2012 to 30 April 2014 the latter has operated 4669 one-way flights from either Mauritius to Rodrigues and vice versa. 55 one-way flights were cancelled and replaced the next day due to cyclonic conditions, 40 due to cyclonic conditions and 15 due to technical reasons. 286 one-way flights were cancelled and not replaced as follows:-

- 242 due to low levels of bookings with the booked passengers' transferred to other flights on the same day;
- 44 due to cyclonic conditions and technical reasons since passengers could be re-accommodated on other operating flights;

The flights cancelled and not replaced represent 5.8% of the total planned flights. I am further informed by Air Mauritius that during peak periods a number of flights are planned as buffer and not opened for the sale unless warranted by demand. Such cancellations have no bearing on passengers and traffic level.

I am further informed that some 619 flights have been delayed by more than 15 minutes due to load connection, aircraft maintenance, airport sections and airport rotation. Out of these 619 flights, 477 were operated within one hour of the scheduled timing and 573, that is, 93% within two hours of the scheduled timing.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I agree that flights delays may cause a major inconvenience to the passengers. Despite cancellation of some flights, it has to be noted that tourists arrival for the years, 2012 and 2013 have increased from 52,043 to 53,619 respectively, compared to 50,437 in 2011. It is to note that the tourists' arrival may have been on a higher side if the flights have not been cancelled. I have personally briefed the Prime Minister on this issue and the Commission for Tourism has also raised the issue at its different meetings with Air Mauritius. The latter has promised to review the situation and come up with firm proposals. Matters discussed at Prime Minister's Office who will take up the issue.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the time is limited I will ask two questions at one go. First, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, we note that technical problems regularly occur on the Air Mauritius aircrafts coming to Rodrigues. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether this matter, especially the security of passengers travelling to Rodrigues has been discussed to Air Mauritius and if yes, what have been the outcome.

Secondly, may I ask the Chief Commissioner whether the air space of Rodrigues is opened to any other airlines interested to deal with passengers' service in Rodrigues. And if this may be contemplated in case that Air Mauritius aircrafts fail in satisfying our needs being given that their life span will lapse in the near future and taking in comparison the example of Mauritius Pride. Has he considered this possibility?

The Chief Commissioner: All discussions have been with Air Mauritius and the Prime Minister concern mainly security of passengers and this has been considered by the Air Mauritius and the Prime Minister will look into the matter. Concerning other aircrafts, this is not our main duty. It concerns the Prime Minister and Air Mauritius for other aircrafts to come to Rodrigues. This is not our duty to look into that.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Chief Commissioner, being given at several times the panic among passengers, travelling through the airplane from Mauritius to Rodrigues while landing, the panic. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, you can notice it while landing at Rodrigues. Whether this also has been discussed about the security. We all know that either the plane land in the position, that is, from the sea breeze or in another way, even from the east to the west or west to east but we get also what we called cross breeze. We all know the panic that this cause to passengers. I would ask the Chief Commissioner whether this also has been taken up because due to the length of the field at Plaine Corail. Whether this issue also has been discussed with higher authorities in Mauritius?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, as I said all the questions of security have been discussed and concerning *la piste nous avons lancés des appels d'offres pour le feasibility pour l'allongement de la piste. Nous attendons justement les réponses.*

ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECT - GRAVIERS

(No. B/45) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and

Others whether, in regard to the road construction project at Graviers, he will give a description of progress of the project to date?

The Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I wish to reply to question B/45 and B/59 at the same time as they refer to the same matter.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Proceed.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr Chairperson Sir, a work order was issued on 17 October 2013 for the upgrading of the first phase of the road from Graviers to Batatran over a length of 1.31 km at an estimated cost of Rs 37,959,191.38 including VAT. The works have been completed on 03 May 2014 with major delays, as the contractual completion date was 27 December 2013. The delay was mainly due to bad weather, variation identified during upgrading works and problem of shipment of materials from Mauritius. Phase II of the roads from Batatran to Coromandel would be upgraded subject to the availability of fund.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House whether the tarring of the road by a wearing course in *couche d'usure* forms part of the initial work order?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Of course, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the first phase of the road.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has not answered my question. I asked the Commissioner whether the tarring of the road by a wearing course, *couche d'usure, deuxième couche* forms part of the work order for the initial work order for Graviers.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, there is a wearing course on the first phase of the road.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, on the road there is only the first coat. There is no wearing course. *Il y a seulement une couche d'usure sur la route.* There is no course. That is why I am asking the Commissioner whether in the scope of work the tarring of road consisted of only one *couche*, first course or two *couches d'usures* also.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I have already answered this question.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I repeat my question again, whether the tarring of Graviers road consists of the base course and the wearing course.

The Deputy Chairperson: The Commissioner has said that he has already answered. I must insist.

Mr. J. Roussety: If the works have been completed on the 03 of May whereas it should have been completed on 27 December 2014. We will come with question on availability of funds at the time when the order was placed also. I am asking the questions with regard to the works order which was issued on 17 October 2013 and the completion of the works on the 03 of May whether the works have been completed as per the works order which were issued.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, as I have said the delay was due mainly to bad weather, variation in identify and problem from shipment. Yes, the works have been completed for the first phase.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, being given the delay in the completion of this work, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he has applied any penalty as stipulated by the contract and if yes, how much money does this represent.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the work has just been completed on the 03 May. This will be studied and penalty will be applied if need be.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, once the road has been certified, the bill has been certified you have to calculate the penalty, if any, if it is applied. The Commissioner should have the figure, first of all. He should have the figure because this is government money, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. This is public fund and then you come here and say there is no fund when you could have applied penalty, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. This is not correct. He should have applied penalty, first of all.

Secondly, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner when we go down towards the beach we see *X-Centré* structure. I do not know what does this represents. I would like to just to ask him whether this is a roundabout and if yes, confirm to this House.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the final claim from COLAS has not been submitted yet so we cannot apply a penalty to calculate it and for the part of at the down of Graviers yes it is a roundabout.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, when we go to Mauritius you see roundabout just in front of you either you go to the left or to the right. In Rodrigues when you go down to Graviers you see the roundabout there. This is not a roundabout. Is this Rodriguan roundabout, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir? Can you pay for such works in this country, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir? This cannot be considered as a roundabout because it has been ill designed. I will ask the Commissioner whether he is taking the responsibility of paying such portion of road because if we do not agree with this. If he is confirming that it is a roundabout, this is not correct, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. You cannot go and you see a roundabout to your right and to your left. We do not know, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, where to go, there is any direction, any signs to indicate the traffic, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is the opinion of the Respected Member. For him perhaps it is a *squareabout*. I do not know.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, concerning the environment on the road sides, can the Commissioner inform the House whether reinstatement works concerning the environment will be entertained and if yes, whether it forms part of the contract as snag work to be performed on the part of the contractor. First question concerning reinstatement works about environment on roadsides.

Second question concerning the turnabout at Graviers, I will be clear on that at Graviers at the extremity of the road in the direction of the sea, there is a sort of turnabout as has been said by Mr. Franceau *qui est X-centré* and which is not in alignment to the road axis being given that there is no road marking and no road signs since sometimes confused road users. Can the Commissioner inform the House whether it is a real turnabout or a bus-turning bay? And what is the way forwards for a better recognition of one ... both.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, environmental works is not in the contract for the contractor but for the roundabout I maintained that it is not for a turning-bay for buses but for all vehicles.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I do not agree. I beg to disagree with the Commissioner because reinstatement of the immediate environment of the road falls under the responsibility of the contractor. It is not true to say that, the immediate environment of the road does not form part of the contract. This is not correct, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. He has to learn more about his contract. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner, being given that this area it is on a sloppy, it is on slope. This

road is prone to be damaged by heavy rain. The fact that the first phase has stopped where it is so I would like to ask him what measures has he taken to limit any damage, if any by heavy rain?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, we have already worked on the rainfall, on the heavy rain system. We notice it during the month of March and we will work on the drainage system for the better.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner state to this House whether he has received complaints from the inhabitants living nearby the roads leading exactly at Cité Batatran. Whether he has received complaints as regards old houses built during, we called it *la kaze Celine 2*, whether he has received complaints as regards to vibration of heavy rains.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, there has been complaint regarding one person living in one house. We requested the contractor to stop the work because the Housing Unit at Batatran with structural defects were likely to be destroyed by the operation of heavy road construction equipments.

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. Roussety: I would to know from the Commissioner whether at the time of the issue of the works order on 17 October 2013, whether funds were available under the relevant budget item for the project Batatran to Graviers because I see at page 91 of the budget – PBB, Construction of road Grande Montagne to Graviers is zero for 2013. How come he has issued works order for which there was no provision? Whether he has got approval. We hear often authority to incur expenditure etc. and certificate of availability of funds. Whether all these were available? Or whether this project was a sort of scapegoat so that funds could be used up in the budget? They did not pay for the *dessalement* or I do not know what, CT Scan etc. and this Graviers road was a scapegoat and now they found themselves that they need to pay for this and this is why you see that the company and the workers are all without job. My question is whether there was funds and whether this project in 2014 due to bad management has not impacted negatively on other project for this year?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, all the population, the villagers of Graviers is very proud of this road that is being constructed. Regarding the funds negotiation has been done with the Ministry of Finance and the Executive Council has approved the construction of the first phase of the road from Graviers to Batatran. And regarding the problems that we met with

the House Unit with structural defects we moved the persons to another house and we are paying a rent for this person. Materials such as iron sheets, timber for the construction of a new house has already been delivered to that person.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know, from the Commissioner, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, whether we have only one case, official case or almost all houses nearby are having these problems?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, there is only one case and there has not been any other official complaint.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, this year we see that it has been said that the contract was awarded for Rs 37 m. and we see here in the PBB Rs 25 m for the construction of road Grande Montagne to Graviers. I would like to ask the Commissioner, being given that you have to pay, apart from construction of road, you have to pay other fees so whether this Rs 25 m is enough for the payment of this road and if not, give details.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the Rs 25 m will not be enough but as I have said negotiation has already been started with the Ministry of Finance and all bills will be paid.

Mr. J. Roussety: We see that in 2013 under the PBB that they themselves voted, the amount for construction of road for Graviers/Grande Montagne was zero. Despite that he said he had authority etc. from the Ministry of Finance they decided to issue works order and in 2014 at page 91 we see that there is Rs 25 m and he is now saying that this will not be sufficient. My question is with regard to this project which fits for the overall project for the road for Rodrigues for 2014 how much money is there left at this date, how much is left being given that the Graviers road, when the Graviers road will be paid he said it is not already paid up. How much money will be left for road projects and whether if there is money left which road projects he intends to put in place this year?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, we have written a project and we will complete it to the second phase and we have money to pay the contractor and all the workers who are working there.

Mr. J. Roussety: We are today the 06 of May; I repeat my question may be he did not get it right. He is turning around the turnabout. We are the 06 of May, the financial year will end the 31 December next, that is, in about seven months. Will there be enough money, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to implement other projects. We need to know in this House which projects are coming. Which

roads project, major construction, roads, bridge are coming because these projects not only have road aspect project but the economy of Rodrigues turns around this. We have JCBs, we have lorries, we have all these working behind workers etc.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are here to work. Nous sommes la pour travailler dans la transparence et nous avons beaucoup de projet à faire et nous les ferons jusqu'à la fin de l'année et l'argent ont l'aura pour payer tous comme j'ai dit. Tous les projets qu'il y a vont être mis en chantier et la route de Gravières aussi continuera pour avoir une bonne route pour les habitants de Gravières, les touristes etc.*

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: One last question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, according to FMM kit prior to the issue of the works order, the Accounting Officers should have the money. The availability of funds should be here, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, and in the PBB, we have only Rs 25 m earmarked for these roads. How come that Rs 37 m have been earmarked for Gravières road. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, is this according to FMM kit.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, how many projects in the past the budget have been exceeded. As I have said, there are variations in the roads that need to be done. That is why the cost has been increased to Rs 37 m.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I suspend the House for one hour for lunch.

At 12.37 hours, the Assembly was suspended.

On resuming at 13.35 hours with the Chairperson in the Chair.

TORRENTIAL RAINFALL – IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE/COMPENSATION

(No. B/46) Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the last heavy torrential rainfall in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) if his Commission has made any survey on the impact thereof on agriculture and, if so, to table a copy of same;

- (b) the number and nature of grievance(s) received region-wise, if any; and
- (c) if his Commission will consider the possibility of proposing any form of compensation/help to those planters and farmers who have suffered substantial losses?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is the practice for the extension services of the commission to be responsible for agriculture to undertake a rapid assessment after each and every torrential rain in Rodrigues. The report is under study and will be made public shortly. 21 planters reported damages in their fields in regions 4, 5 and 6 whereas for region 1, 2 and 3 another 35 cases were reported. No complaint was received with respect to livestock.

The bulk of the nature of complaint was due to water logging and surface run off. Most cases are due to bad maintenance of drains in the fields. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the planters around the island including those who have suffers loses were already benefitting from the Seeds Subsidy Scheme which was, of course, extended to new comers. Initially the subsidy scheme was put in place by the Commission for Agriculture through the RTMC on onion and potatoes seeds only. Following the flooding, it has been extended to beans and vegetables seeds as well.

Today, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am inform that about 50 kilos of local onion seeds and 1500 kilos local red beans have already been sold. As far as vegetables are concerned subsidy on the cost of seeds was at the rate of 75 percent of the cost price.

I am also informed, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that an amount of Rs 4,000 as subsidy has already been disbursed to date. Other essential services that are being offered by the Commission like free mechanization of agricultural land, free counseling and accompaniment by officers of the Agricultural Services.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the aftermath of torrential rain, we note that subsidized prices for seeds are given to planters via the RTMC. We note that many planters have not been able to acquire same because the stock was limited.

First question, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House what was the criteria to obtain seeds at subsidized prices and what has been the way forwards to ensure availability of seeds.

Second question, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether this facility was also directed towards those doing backyard agriculture, *c'est-à-dire agriculture à fonction sociale qui n'a pas d'économie d'échelle*, whether this facility was directed also to those doing backyard agriculture as I said and to other planters who do not possess planters' cards. Whether this facility was also directed to these persons?

The Chief Commissioner: *Désolé*, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the RTMC has got the list of planters who habitually regular buying seeds at the RTMC. This means that RTMC has got a list of planters who regularly buy seeds at the RTMC.

Concerning backyard gardens, we are not aware, whether I do not know whether people can come to buy seeds at the RTMC. Perhaps some have the possibility of buying seeds at the RTMC and according this question, I will try to have much more information about that.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are many planters who come to buy seeds at the RTMC on a temporary basis but as I am saying as there has been torrential rains it will be good that this facility be extended to all the planters in Rodrigues because there are many of these planters who are doing backyard agriculture at their dwelling.

Next question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, just after the rain, the Commission was on the move to mechanize land of planters which were fully saturated with water. This was impossible and has resulted in lateness to help planters to prepare their lands to better benefit from the ideal season for agriculture. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House, whether there is a well-established plan, chronological plan for the mechanization of land before rainy seasons in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: As I said in my replied Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all planters around the island including those who have suffered losses were already benefitting from the Seeds Subsidy Scheme, which was of course, extended to newcomers. New comers can come and buy the seeds at the RTMC.

Concerning the ploughing of lands, there is a program for that. People have to make an application for ploughing of lands and this is being followed by the technicians in different regions. I will also like to find out there is some shortcomings in the mechanization of the land. I will find out. Thank you.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we note that the Small Planters Welfare Fund from Mauritius regularly visit Rodrigues and some years before there has been negotiation with them to set up a Crop Insurance Scheme for Rodriguans planters. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether *les choses ont évolués dans ce sens* and if yes, where does matter stand?

The Chief Commissioner: Nous avons reçu le représentant du Small Planters Welfare Fund mais malheureusement, ce sujet n'a pas été évoqué par ces personnes à Rodrigues.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would ask the Chief Commissioner being given Rodriguans contributed to the Small Welfare Farmers Fund and these programs, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is meant for people who are growing crops or rearing animals. And whenever there is a calamity happening either in Mauritius or in the island of Rodrigues, we have a certain sum that are being disbursed by the Small Welfare Funds in order to compensate the farmers or the livestock rearers. Can the Chief Commissioner mention to this House whether a single cent has been received by the people of Rodrigues who has faced heavy torrential rainfall in Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware but I will find out.

Mr. J. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, buying seeds at a subsidize cost is a very good things for every planter but I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner whether a mechanism has been put in place to ascertain that no planter benefit from more than once or may be, twice these seeds at subsidized cost. Because it has been reported that some planters benefit from, at different times they come and buy whereas other people when they come they do not have any seeds to buy. Can the Chief Commissioner inform this House if there has been a mechanism put in place to ascertain this?

The Chief Commissioner: I have been told that for other seeds a good quantity of seeds but especially for the red beans there was a strict control. There was also a limit of number of kilos of red beans could be bought. This control has been going on for red beans and only for red beans; there has been a strict control on the persons for number of kilo bought.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT - 'LA CONTINUITÉ TERRITORIALE'

(No. B/47) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to future development of Rodrigues and in view of the island's geographical isolation

from the principal national growth centres, the absence of the multiplier effect from expenditures and investments (private and public) as in mainland Mauritius and the restricted opportunities for employment and career fulfilment in Rodrigues and other financial and development needs, he will consider reinforcing the issue of '*la continuité territoriale*' in Rodrigues and, if not, to give the reasons therefor?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the vision of this regional government is to work towards the sustainable development of Rodrigues. *Le concept de l'autonomie de Rodrigues est un élément majeur qui vise à la concrétisation de cette vision. Une autonomie qui signifie avant tout la responsabilisation de la population. Une autonomie que l'on cherche à construire et à consolider à travers l'implémentation de nombreuses mesures et actions préconisées dans le discours-programme de ce gouvernement ainsi que dans nos discours budgétaires.*

M. le président, nous avons été mandatés par le peuple pour justement consolider et réussir cette autonomie tout en faisant l'image de Rodrigues en reconstruisant la grande famille des rodriguaises dans un esprit de confiance, de solidarité et de fraternité pour que chaque habitant de notre île Rodrigues puisse jouir d'une vraie justice sociale et d'un vrai bonheur.

M. le président, permettez-moi de donner une définition de la continuité territoriale selon le site Wikipedia qui est comme suite : un principe de service public qui se donne pour objectif de renforcer la cohésion entre différents territoires d'un même état. En compensant les handicaps liés à leur éloignement, un enclavement ou un accès difficile.

Le concept de continuité territoriale n'est pas nouveau pour ce gouvernement. Par ailleurs l'implémentation de ce concept a déjà débuté depuis 2012 de par les nombreuses actions entreprises par mon équipe. Permettez-moi, M. le président, d'en citer quelques unes.

La mise en application de subside sur les produits de base, tel que la farine, le riz, l'huile comestibles, le lait, le thé et le ciment afin qu'il y ait point de disparité entre les prix pratiqués à Maurice et à Rodrigues. Une mesure promise depuis belle lurette par certains qui avaient même promis de régulariser les prix de ces commodités grâce à la recette qu'ils auraient réalisé à travers la vente de tous les Pajeros. Les subsides sur les aliments pour animaux qui reflètent un allègement des dépenses des éleveurs. Cette mesure permet aussi à plus de personnes à s'engager dans ce secteur. La mise en place très prochainement d'un subside sur les produits pharmaceutiques afin de permettre à la population d'acheter des médicaments au même prix qu'à l'île Maurice.

L'augmentations de la bande passante à Rodrigues afin d'attirer les investisseurs privé du secteur des TIC et ainsi créer des opportunités d'emplois pour nos jeunes. Les bourses d'études, les aides sociales et financière ainsi que le logement pour les étudiants Rodriguais qui désirent poursuivre leurs études tertiaires à Maurice.

Au niveau de la santé, la prise en charge complète des patients qui doivent se faire soigner à l'île Maurice et les facilités offertes aux familles les accompagnant tel que les billets d'avions et l'argent de poche. Les modalités du logement social avec le NEF qui est encore mieux qu'à l'île Maurice.

M. le président, la liste de mesures implémentées depuis 2012 pour démontrer la mise en application de ce concept afin de réduire l'écart entre Maurice et Rodrigues est exhaustive. Malgré toutes ces actions déjà entamé, il nous reste certes un long chemin à parcourir. M. le président, nous poursuivons nos actions en ligne avec notre moto qui est de renforcer et consolider l'autonomie.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: A entendre le Chef Commissaire, il me semble que tous va en rose à Rodrigues. Alors, M. le président, il y a un slogan qui est cher au Premier ministre il ne faut pas que dans la même république qu'il y ait deux qualité de citoyen. La dette publique en mars 2014 pour la république de Maurice est chiffrée à Rs 178,000, veut dire par tête d'habitant. Si on compare la population, veut dire si on compare la population de Rodrigues c'est autour de Rs 14,833 par tête d'habitant mensuellement. Mais si on fait un calcul, M. le président, est-ce que le coût de la vie à Rodrigues est plus correct. Est-ce qu'il fait mieux vivre avec le coût de la vie Rodrigues qu'à Maurice ? Est-ce que le chef commissaire peut dire ça ? On peut dire aussi que l'autonomie ce n'est pas l'indépendance c'est la continuité territoriale. Tous ce qui se fait à Maurice doivent être fait à Rodrigues. Est-ce que le chef commissaire peut dire dans cette chambre que le coût de la vie à Rodrigues est moins cher qu'à Maurice ?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, c'est ce que j'ai dit tout à l'heure. Nous sommes en train de continuer pour faire disparaître cette différence entre Maurice et Rodrigues concernant les produits concernant les articles importés. Le travail continu. Et c'est vrai que le Premier ministre a dit qu'il n'y a pas deux qualités de citoyen dans la même république. Il est conscient de ça mais le travail continu. Nous continuons. Nous avons vus les subventions donnait ici et là et tout cela ça va continuer. Ce n'est pas terminé, M. le président.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Vous avez préconisé, M. le président, dans le PRB, vu que le coût de la vie est plus élevé à Rodrigues que tous les travailleurs ainsi

bien que la population de Rodrigues méritent un rodriguan cola. Est-ce que le chef commissaire adhère à cette idée ?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, il me semble que j'ai jamais lu ça dans le PRB. Qu'il faut donner un Rodriguan Cola. Le Rodriguan Cola a disparu depuis bien longtemps. Maintenant, M. le président, vous donnez le Rodriguan Cola à qui ? Des fonctionnaires ?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: A la population.

The Chief Commissioner: Ah ça c'est différent le Rodriguan Cola c'est par rapport aux fonctionnaires et c'est pourquoi nous nous disons que ce n'est pas simplement les fonctionnaires qui doit recevoir le PRB, le Rodriguan Cola. La boîte de lait est achetée par tout le monde. Les pauvres, comme tout le monde alors pourquoi donner à certains dans la population beaucoup plus d'avantages que les autres. Alors s'il faut lutter il faut lutter pour tout le monde. Que tout le monde ait la justice sociale. Que tout le monde puisse jouir de tel prix de marchandise importé de Maurice au même prix. Et c'est là-dessus qu'il faut y aller.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: According to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act Section 46 in order to allocate budget to Rodrigues all the components that I have mentioned in the main questions are included while allocating funds for Rodrigues. Has the Chief Commissioner discussed this issue with higher authorities in Mauritius prior to the granting the funds to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly?

The Chief Commissioner: Mais bien sûr, M. le président, à chaque budget nous mettons devant le gouvernement centrale les problèmes qu'il y a Rodrigues, le coût de Rodrigues, les possibilités justement de produire d'avantage. Qu'il soit consommé à Rodrigues. Tous ça nous ne discutons pas juste des petites choses ici et là bas. Vous comprenez là ? Et aussi il faut dire il y a toute la question du *freight*. Ça aussi joue. C'est pourquoi nous avons demandé il me semble que depuis quelque temps on a diminué le *freight* mais nous demandons que vraiment le subside sur le *freight* à l'avenir soit presque à cent pour cent. Donc, il y a tout cela, mon ami, M. le président, qu'il faut continuer à discuter, à négocier et à faire l'île Maurice comprendre que l'île Rodrigues même si elle fait parti de la République de Maurice mais le coût de la vie ici est différent et c'est pourquoi il faut continuer à lutter, M. le président.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

SALE OF FISH

- PRICE FIXING MECHANISM/LICENCE/FISHERIES OFFICERS

(No. B/48) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the sale of fish in Rodrigues, he will:

- (a) state if his Commission will consider the possibility of establishing a price fixing mechanism, to both fishmongers and fisherman, for the control thereof;
- (b) table a list of persons month-wise who have applied for fishmongers' licence/permit for the period 2012, 2013 and 2014 to date, together with a list of registered fishmongers delivered accordingly; and
- (c) state the number of Fisheries Officers attached to each section and per fish station for the control thereof indicating the means provided to them for the discharge of their duties.

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, at the outset, I have to inform the House that the fixing of prices of goods including fish falls under the responsibility of the Commission for Consumer Protection, Trade, Commerce and Licensing. But since the Executive Council has already approved the go ahead with the amendment of the Regional Assembly Consumer Protection Fixing of Prices Regulations 2008 on the sitting of 11 April 2014, to firstly, cater for the various shortcomings that have been noted, making it difficult to enforce by the enforcement by Officers of the Consumer Protection Unit and the Fisheries Protection Service, I will answer the question.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since the beginning of this year, my colleague the Commissioner for Consumer Protection, Trade Commerce and Licensing in collaboration with me has already initiated necessary actions to review and consolidate the regulations after consultations with different Stakeholders such as the fishermen community, fishmongers, and the Fisheries Protection Service inter alia.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the amended Regulations are currently under draft stage. The amendment of the regulations will make necessary provision to fix the wholesale and retail prices of the different categories of fish in view of better control.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when the Respected Member said to consider the possibility of establishing a price fixing mechanism for fish, *il est en train de défoncer une porte déjà ouverte parce que c'est déjà fait.*

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (b) of the question, I consider that it is not ethical to disclose the list of persons who have applied for fishmongers' license. Such information should remain confidential. However, I am tabling the list of registered fishmongers delivered licences for period 2012 to 2014.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, with regard to part (c) of the question, the number of fisheries officers attached to each section and the means provided to them in the discharge of their duties are as follows:-

Fisheries Post	No. of officers	Means provided
Pointe Monnier/Anse Goeland	16	One vehicle, 5 boats, 7 pairs of binoculars, 3 torches
Petite Butte	12	One vehicle, 2 boats, 9 pairs of binoculars, 7 torches
Graviers	8	One vehicle, 2 boats, 7 pairs of binoculars, 7 torches
Baladirou	2	One boat, 3 pairs of binoculars, 3 torches
SEMPA	3	One vehicle, 3 boats, 3 pairs of binoculars, 6 torches

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, apart from these facilities, thirty Fisheries Protection Officers draw mileage allowance for inland patrol. A mobile team consisting of three Fisheries Protection Officers has also been set up since February this year to do regular patrols throughout the island to control the sale of fish by fishmongers. They have checked seventy-eight fishmongers, established two contraventions and seized undersized fish.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have to draw the attention of the House that my Commission will extend any other help or facility that may be necessary for the control of illegal fishing to the Fisheries Protection Service as and when required and of course upon request by same.

In addition, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, combined operations are being performed by Fisheries Protection Officers, Consumer Protection Officers, Health Inspectors and the National Coast Guard to control fishmongers for bad practices such as selling undersized fish and selling prices above fixed by law.

My Commission is currently working on a project to upgrade places where fish can be sold by fishmongers. Such places will be included as new conditions attached to fishmongers' licence. Restricting places of sale will definitely facilitate control by enforcement officers and will help to improve the conditions under which fish is being sold to protect the health of the consumers.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will come first with part (c) and later on if I have the possibility I will even to (b) and (a) because part (c) is the most important one. Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Do you know, it has come to my notice that at some fish landing station, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as if they are using a Vespa in the 1960's, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Now we have fishermen who have speed boats. Speed boats with heavy engines, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Can the Commissioner state to the House the number of engines that have been purchased by his Commission in order for the Fisheries Officers to discharge their duties. The number, when exactly these motors have been purchased?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Member should have included this in his question because this is technical but anyway I see what he means. He is saying that some boats are like Vespa. You know the technique it has changed, the world has changed and the way of people looking at things has changed. You know in the past, the Traffic Branch of the Police used to have motorcycle at 700cc, 750cc, now they have only 100cc. Why? Because you do not have to run after, you do not have to chase the people. You have to use your mind, the Fisheries Officers used their mind and the arrest of people at time. You do not have to chase. What the point of chasing people? We have got binoculars. You wait for them. They will have to come back at shore. When a fisherman goes to do illegal fishing, do you think they will sell the fish on the sea? They will have to come to the shore. So, just used your mind instead of using capacity and speed.

Mr. J. Roussety: What will happen, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to the FPS if they do not have the appropriate engines, boats to run after illegal poaches?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is not a point of not having appropriate. We do have appropriate. What will happen if tomorrow a fisherman buys an out boat motor about 200cc, will the Fisheries Officer buy another one with 400cc. That is not the point. We do have the necessary but in another question I would better express on this we have bought two out boats motors of 60cc. So, it is not the question of speed that you go. You do not have to chase. When you chase someone doing illegal fishing, do you think the person will keep the chain or whatever in the boat? They will throw it at sea. You will chase the thing and then you come to the sea there is nothing. So use

your mind. We are intelligent people now. So we use our mind. We use our brain to stop poachers. The technique of running after is over.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we can clearly see that the Commissioner is defending himself. Nevertheless, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner whether he is satisfied with the way he is or has equipped his Enforcement Officers dealing with fraud at sea. Is he satisfied that his officers are fully equipped, that he has the necessary equipments they need in order to track fraud and illegal fishing at sea?

Mr. R. Payendee: If you are talking about out boats motors, yes. You know Fisheries Officers even asked for guns. Do I have to give them guns? Are you talking about this type of equipment? What I will tell you again. I will stress on that we have given... you know you have been Commissioners you know that, there is procurement system. When you ask for out boats motors, do you think that Commissioners goes and asks the Fisheries what sort of out boats they need? They are the one to tell. They are who asked for these out boat motors. They are the one who sat on the tender committee and they approved it. When they get it they say it is not good. It is a reason and just to hide behind it and not to do the work. So stop with this.

Mr. A. F. Grandcourt: M. le président, je pense que la mer notre ressource est très important. Ce n'est pas la peine de venir jouer sur les mots ici car nous savons bien à Rodrigues comment ça se passe. Il y a des problèmes. Le commissaire, nous aussi nous étions commissaire. Le commissaire ne peut pas venir ici nous dire ceci nous dire cela car la réalité est autre à Rodrigues. Nous rencontrons ces Fisheries Officers. Il y a beaucoup de problème. C'est une question de motivation. S'il demande si c'est important d'avoir des *bigger out boat motors* on leur donne s'il fasse le travail et puis venir dire, prétexte pour ne pas faire le travail. On va leur dire qu'est-ce que dit le commissaire. On va aller rapporter ça à ces gens là parce qu'ils risquent leurs vies. J'aimerais demander au commissaire combien de fois il rencontre ces Fisheries Officers pour qu'il puisse entendre leurs doléances et combien de fois il fait le tour des Fish Landing Stations à Rodrigues.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this question should not be asked because I always go and see the Fisheries Officers and not later than last week we have started lots of meeting. We have done meeting with the officers at Pointe Monier and there is one schedule for tomorrow at Petite Butte. There is another one scheduled for next week. We keep talking to these people but the Member just said something, which is right. He said that the Fisheries Officers talked to them, talked to him. They do not come and talk to me. I am the Commissioner. May be they think you are the Commissioner. They come and

talked to him. Come and talk to me if you need something. I am the Commissioner. I am the one who should change thing. The problem that we are having now is that there is a lot of political interference. The Chief Commissioner always said there is this thing to press people to go slow. There is a big go-slow. That is it.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a thing that every day on the radio we hear that nets has been seized and that there has been no arrest. The number of times that nets has been seized. The ratio of the number of times nets have been seized to the number of arrest made is about one is to ten thousand. Therefore the methodology of control is wrong. There is something wrong. Every day on the radio, we hear that nets have been seized and there has been no arrest. I think that this type of thing should not be published on the radio. There is no arrest. Every day there is no arrest. How does the Commissioner account for this that there has been seizure of nets and no arrest has been made? How does he account for that?

Mr. R. Payendee: You know it is not the first time. I do not thing that between 2012 and 2014 that people they got arrested. Next time I come to this Assembly I will come with figures from the past. How many nets, you know. The thing is that the fishermen they are that silly to let you come and arrest them. Of course, they throw the net then they go. If you look at the legal part of it, if you look at the legislation if you do not seize the nets in the hand of the people you cannot arrest them. They throw it. It is typical unless they are very silly to let you come and hold it. The most important thing for us is not to arrest the person. When we get the net is very important because this is the tool. This is the thing. This is the implement that is used to destroy the eco-system.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, even yesterday, this morning we heard the Commission for Fisheries asking people to come, to meet and to discuss about the closure of octopus. Do you know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, who will attend this meeting? The Fisheries Officers, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The Fisheries Officers will attend these meeting and it is they who will go in front of all dangers, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Even at sea, we have Fisheries Protection Officers, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, who have been molested. Do you think, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, someone with an engine *qui tombe en panne en mer a chaque fois, M. le président, et sa vie est en danger et les pêcheurs ont des speed boat, la fouine, tous les équipements, M. le président, même fusil*. Can the Commissioner contemplate to give these Fisheries Protection Officers, first, better equipments in order to better discharge their duties. Secondly, since they are at risk if an allowance could be granted to these officers.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered to this question. I have said that we, the Commission provide things, tools, whatever to the Fisheries Division on request. They are the one who did not come and ask and whatever they have been asking we have been giving apart from the guns unless you are the Fisheries Officers but I have said in my answer that the Commission. Let me read it again for you. My Commission will extend all facilities to the Fisheries Division to do their work properly. So, they have to come to say they need this and this. There is a budget. This is why we put a budget. If they do not come and ask and talking about going security at sea, so that is the job of a Fisheries Officer. You want the Commissioner to go and do their jobs for them.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am sorry but I wish to come back to the main issue in the question, that is, concerning price fixing mechanism. But I am surprised that the Commissioner mentioned the need to contravention. You may have torches, binocular, etc. but if the officers are not motivated to do their job nothing will be done. Concerning price fixing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner because in Rodrigues everybody knows that people like to eat fish *et on sait aussi que les banyans font la pluie et le beau temps à Rodrigues. Ils vendent leurs poissons à des prix vraiment exorbitant au dessus des moyens de la classe moyenne mais il n'y a pas que les prix, M. le président, il y a également les poissons « manque dimension comment nous dire »* undersized and also fish which is not safe for human consumption because it has been exposed in the sun for hours. Can the Commissioner inform the House if the mechanism will take on board all these issues?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered to quite a lot of this. One is apart from the price fixing it is because we know that there is problem this is why we are amending the Regulations and my colleague Commissioner has already come to the Executive Council and got approval to go ahead and the Regulations is actually with the Legal Adviser. It is being worked out. That is what I said. *Zot pé rod défonce la porte ouvert. La porte la déjà ouvert zot pé rode défonce li encore.* What about the price fixing? About the contravention, I never said that the whole Fisheries have made only two contraventions. I said we set up a new team in February, that is, February last to look only fishmongers not the whole team. I will give you. You have a question. I will give you all the answers about contravention later but this, the specific things I was talking about was about this team controlling the fishmongers. We have three officers doing daily watch on fishmongers and they had already had two contraventions. They have checked 78 fishmongers.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: I am sorry, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has not replied to my question. He is informing the House that there is a draft Regulations. He knows what is in the draft. I do not know. Nobody here knows the draft. You inform the House whether it will be taken on board the issue of fish not safe for human consumption. You have not measure it.

Mr. R. Payendee: May be fish for human consumption. This is again *défoncé la porte ouverte*. This is already in the Regulations. We already have a list. We already have a list of the fish. This is not new. This is already known for years. We know what fish are not good for human consumption. And concerning undersized fish I told you that we have a team controlling this and it is in the Regulations. About the new Regulations or the one we are working is about. I told you also in my answer that we have a team comprising of people from people from Health Division, from Price Control Unit. A team, you called it a squad and we keep watching this at Mont Lubin and everywhere and also we are doing something which is more important. We are educating the public about this. So it is not just law you have to arrest people. We need to become an educated population. We are educating the people. We are telling them this fish is not good for you. Do not buy it. Why do you buy something? And also I said also in my answer we are working on safe place as it used to be. Safe place to sell fish, like in St. Gabriel we have a small thing and we are also, if you want me to tell you, this is a secret but I will tell you. If you want me to tell you we have even, watched on the internet, it exists now, freezers, which work with solar panel, and maybe we will go towards this and put this so that the people can sell. The Chief Commissioner said before we are here. We have been elected by the population to look after them and this is what we are doing.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a last one. We have received many complaints. Even myself I will complain on this issue. Long ago, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we do eat what we called licorne, there is another fish, I forget the name, let say licorne and now, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these fish, there are two fish but I gave only the name, licorne. And now this fish is not consumable because we have bad smell coming from this fish. Can the Commissioner conduct an enquiry in order to know why these fish may leave licorne from the north; these fish are now not consumable because we have got this problem with licorne.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we know this problem. We have done some enquiries and we are still working on it because it is not over yet but I give you one of the reasons why fish is becoming like this. It is because recently fishermen they are using, mainly fishermen who fish octopus,

they are using all sorts of oil just to increase the visibility so that they can catch the fish and the licorne being an herbivorous fish means *li manze zis ban algues* and normally these algues floats and oil floats, the oil gets stuck in the algues and then the fish just eat it and of course when you eat it stays inside. This is one reason and we are still working on it to know what is the other reasons. You asked me for reasons I gave I to you then you take it.

Mr. Chairperson: Now before coming to next question. Wait please. Before coming to next question, may I inform the House that questions B/58, B/60, B/67 and B/68 have been withdrawn and we have only ten or some twelve minutes left for question time. Next question, please.

INVITATION/MEETINGS – PRIME MINISTER

(No. B/49) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to matters of interest and pertaining to Rodrigues, he will inform the House as to:

- (a) if any Chief Commissioner of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, since 2002 to date, has been invited by the Prime Minister to attend any cabinet meeting/s as laid down by section 39 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001 and, if not, why; and
- (b) the formal meeting/s held, if any, with Minority Leader of Rodrigues and Dr the Honourable Prime Minister, from 2012 to date, to discuss matters in relation thereto and indicating the number of meetings held together with the outcome thereof in each case?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Section 39 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act part 3 provides that the Chief Commissioner shall if invited by the Prime Minister to do attend meeting of the Cabinet in order that he may:

- (a) Apprise Cabinet of decision taken by the Regional Assembly in the exercise of his powers under this Act; or
- (b) Represents the interest of Rodrigues in any matter having or likely to have an adverse effect on Rodrigues.

Since 2002 to date I have once attended a Cabinet meeting on invitation of the Honourable Prime Minister. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the Prime Minister is also responsible for Minister for Rodrigues I have had

the opportunity to make the latter on not less than 15 occasions either at the latter's request or my own request to discuss on matters pertaining to the social, political and economical development of Rodrigues. It would be unethical to disclose the tenure of any conversation I have with him as well as the matters discussed.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (b) of the question, no formal meeting has been held to date with the Minority Leader of Rodrigues. However, in line with our motto of *Democratie Participative* should any issue of matter arise in the future whereby there is the need for consultation and or debate, this present Regional Government would consult not only the Minority Leader but all the political parties as well as any independent member and the civil society.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to sports matters we all know that the sports committees intend to set up what we call cross for Rodrigues in order that Rodrigues participates as an entity for the Jeux des Iles, Jeux de COI and so on. These matters, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, should be taken up between government and government. Can the Chief Commissioner says to this House whatever this issue has been discussed at a political level or an administrative level?

The Chief Commissioner: The Commissioner himself he has not spoken this matter to the Prime Minister but my colleague, the Commissioner for Sports is going to have meeting with the cross and perhaps probably with the Minister concerning sports in Mauritius.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Since the inception of the Regional Assembly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, no single fund, I do not know, but as far as I know, no single fund was allocated from the National Development Unit to Rodrigues. Despite we have a PPS for Rodrigues no single fund is being allocated for Rodrigues. Can we know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, why no fund has been allocated up to now for Rodrigues through the NDU and whether this issue also has been discussed higher?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, concerning the NDU according to the report made to the Prime Minister and the question put at the National Assembly by my colleague Francois, there has been a delegation of the National Development Unit but we have what we called here a LIF, Local Infrastructure Fund from the NDU, which is being allocated to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Sometimes try to have millions, Rs 14 m and this sum is being used for different development around Rodrigues, football grounds and so

on. I think this LIF is very interesting for very small projects and it helps the population a lot. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: One last question, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Is the Commissioner aware that the territorial sea around Rodrigues has been enlarged and this proposal will be transmitted later to the United Nations. Is the Chief Commissioner aware of this issue or whether Rodrigues has a say in this matter?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, during my last visit to Mauritius I was made aware of this by the Prime Minister and the next visit, I think they will sign this essential continent of self for Rodrigues in July this year. I think it will be very interesting for Rodrigues. We will see, we will discuss with the Prime Minister first before the flight for New York for that. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I want the Commissioner to table the answer.

Mr. R. Payendee: I will answer the question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I will not move the question.

Mr. Chairperson: No other question then.

Mr. J. Roussety: I think it is my turn. With your permission, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like not to move B/61 and B/62 and move B/63. Thank you.

MISSION EFFECTED – FISHERIES SECTOR/2012, 2013 & 2014

(No. B/50) Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to missions effected in relation to the fisheries sector, he will, for the year 2012, 2013 and 2014 to date, state:-

- (a) the number of missions effected by him or any Commissioner/s, Advisers and the officers of his Commission both abroad and in Mauritius together with the detailed amount of per diem paid to the each member of the delegation in each case by the Rodrigues

Regional Assembly or Donor Agencies and the time schedule thereof;

- (b) how the selection exercise was carried out for the determination of the composition of the delegation in each case; and
- (c) the outcome of the different missions effected?

[Withdrawn]

**WATER DISTRIBUTION/RIVIÈRE COCO, ILE MICHEL,
GRAND VAR & PETITE BUTTE – SAFE/TEST**

(No. B/51) Mr. J. Allan Ladd Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the water distributed in the southern part of Rodrigues namely Rivière Coco, Ile Michel, Grand Var and Petite Butte, from the reservoir of Rivière Coco, he will state:

- (a) if the water is safe for human consumption; and
- (b) the test/study carried out, if any, to determine same and, if so, when, indicating the outcome thereof and, if not, why?

[Withdrawn]

**PUBLIC ROAD/ANSE RAFFIN & ANSE BALEINE
– MEASURES TAKEN**

(No. B/52) Mr. J. Allan Ladd Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in regard to the public road between Anse Raffin and Anse Baleine, he will, for the benefit of the House, state if any measures have been or will be taken to remedy the problem of frequent falling of boulders thereat and, if so, to give details thereof?

[Withdrawn]

**DUSTBINS – NO. PURCHASED/AMOUNT DISBURSED/
CRITERIA/COMPLAINTS**

(No. B/53) Mr. J. Allan Ladd Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Environment and Others whether, in regard to dustbins recently purchased by his Commission, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) the number thereof purchased together with the total amount disbursed therefor;
- (b) the criteria used for their issue to villagers; and
- (c) if any complaints have been made by the public to the Commission as to the distribution thereof and, if so, the nature thereof?

[Withdrawn]

ILLEGAL FISHING

(No. B/54) Mr. J. Allan Ladd Emilien (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether in regard to illegal fishing in Rodrigues, he will, for the period January 2013 to date, state:-

- (a) the number of cases thereof reported and indicating the different categories of fishing;
- (b) the number of offenders being prosecuted and the outcome thereof; and
- (c) if there is any strategy from his Commission to bring down this illegal fishing and if so, to name them and if not, why not?

[Withdrawn]

“JEUX DE L’ESPOIR”

(No. B/55) Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the recent participation of Rodriguan athletes for the “Jeux de l’espoir” in mainland Mauritius, he will inform the House as to the number thereof who participated in same indicating where they have been staying during the event?

[Withdrawn]

STRAY DOGS

(No. B/56) Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to stray dogs in the island, he will, for the period 2012 to date, state the number thereof caught and spayed, in each case, and indicating their place of impoundment?

[Withdrawn]

CT SCAN

(No. B/57) Mrs. M.D.L.C.Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the coming into operation of the CT Scan in March 2014 at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) if a radiologist has been posted to Rodrigues and, if so, indicating the length of stay;
- (b) the number of scans performed to date; and
- (c) if any breakdown or mal-functioning thereof has been reported and, if so, the nature thereof?

(Vide Reply PQ B/42)

TOURISTS ARRIVAL – JANUARY 2014 TO DATE

(No. B/58) Mrs. M. D. L.C. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Tourism and Others whether, in regard to tourists arrival in Rodrigues for period January 2014 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, state whether there has been any decrease noted as regard same for this period and to table a detailed breakdown of statistics on the issue from the main niche markets?

[Withdrawn]

ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECT - GRAVIERS

(No. B/59) Mrs. M.D.L.C. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in regard to the construction of the Grande Montagne – Graviers road, he will, for the benefit of the House, give a detailed status of work from the date of start thereof to date?

(Vide reply PQ B/49)

PROGRAMME BASED BUDGET (PBB) – ITEM 31113022/CONSTRUCTION OF BRIDGES

(No. B/60) Mrs. M. D. L. C. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others whether, in regard to Programme Based Budget (PBB) Estimates 2014,

item 31113022 – “construction of Bridges”, he will inform the House as to the number of bridges his Commission intends to build during this current financial year indicating their respective locations, if any?

[Withdrawn]

TEACHING ANY SUBJECT – PRIMARY LEVEL

(No. B/61) Mr. J. Roussety (First Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the teaching of any subject at Primary Level in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) the decision taken, if any, by the Executive Council recently in relation thereto and, if so, to give information as to the number of students and teachers involved in relation to the subject(s); and
- (b) if there has been any objection from Central Government in relation thereto and, if so, the nature thereof and indicating the position of the Commission for Education?

DESALINATION PLANTS – ANSE AUX ANGLAIS & POINTE COTON

(No. B/62) Mr. J. Roussety (Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the desalination plants presently under construction at Anse-aux-Anglais and Pointe Coton, he can give the full details, including drawings of the layout of pipes, pumps and exact place of brine release/disposal in the sea or else at the sites thereof?

[Withdrawn]

PENSIONERS/PERSONS - SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS, FOOD AID

(No. B/63) Mr. J. Roussety (First Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to pensioners or persons in receipt of social security benefits, he will state if they are being offered any sort of “Food Aid” to date as is being provided for in mainland Mauritius, if any?

The Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Food Aid Scheme was

introduced in 1993 for the purpose of supporting needy Mauritian citizen for the purchase of rice and flour when government subsidy on rice and flour temporarily discontinued. As from July 2006 with the government discontinuation of subsidy on rice and flour and Income Support Scheme was introduced for the same purpose. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all social security benefits, which are provided in the mainland Mauritius, is also being provided in Rodrigues to eligible applicants. Therefore, the answer to the question is, yes.

Mr. J. Roussety: How come, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have heard all the story about former government. We have stolen the money of fishermen etc. etc. Now the Commissioner comes here and state that this Income Support Scheme is in place in Mauritius since 1993 and it is only last week when we have asked the question that they have rushed up to the radio and to everything to ask pensioners to come to register for this pension. I would like to ask, it is good that we have asked the question and now we are trying to implement the Scheme. What happens to all the money, which should have been paid from 1993 to date to these pensioners in Rodrigues?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when this scheme was implemented in 1993, there was in fact a mass registration in Rodrigues and there are people, in fact, all beneficiaries of social aid of UHR, they are already benefiting from this scheme. But only some people who are benefiting from National Pension, Basic Pension are not benefiting from it. But in 1993 when there were mass registration people were registered, this government, before the autonomy of Rodrigues. But the Income Support Scheme was introduced just like fishermen. There is a direct link, I believe. It was introduced I said in July 2006 and no one since 2006 has applied for the Income Support Scheme but this issue in fact, was raised on 08 January this year when I had a meeting with officers of the Social Security Division. May be you have had insight information that we were going ahead with this mass registration that is why you come up with this question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. But in 2006, your government should explain why nobody apply for this scheme.

Mr. Chairperson: Last supplementary question, please.

Mr. J. Roussety: As far as I know you are in government now, it is up to you to answer. My question is, let us say there is a Regulation or a Law has been gazette/decided by the government because we only administrate Social Security that as at such date all pensioners, he did not even give the criteria of how much money, of how much is paid, all pensioners under certain condition should register and receive Income Support Scheme. It is only last week, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when my question was already on the Order Paper that they

invited people to come forward and to register. My question is, answer my question. What happened to the money which is due? The money, which is due to all these persons who are fully eligible but who has never been considered for the evocation of this scheme. Would the Commissioner reimbursing, backdating, back paying all these people because this money is due to them. Just like you did a big saga with backdating fishermen allowance. Would he backdate the payment, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? This is what the people are asking for. Rs 300 or Rs 365, this is their due to them. Would he back pay these people?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I think that the Respected Member is not well versed with different regulations. In fact, this is just like Social Aid because Basic Pensioners who would have qualified for social aid in the absence of this basic pension, therefore, upon application from the different beneficiaries on the date of application then if they are qualified. If they are eligible, then they will start to earn this income but there is nothing such as back pay but this is your government in 2006 when this scheme was implemented should have been in a better position to give a mass awareness campaign about it.

Mr. Chairperson: Question time over. May I inform the House that questions B/50, B/51, B/52, B/53, B/54, B/55, B/56, B/61 and B/62 have been withdrawn.

Mr. J. Roussety: Just one small request, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Standing Order provides that questions which are not answered, which have not been moved be forwarded with their answers, be forwarded to Members. It is to be noted that most of the time we received the questions months after. It would be appreciated if you could arrange that the questions be sent the weeks following the question have been put. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: We will look into the matter.

CT SCAN

(No. B/64) Mr. J. Roussety (First Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the newly installed CT Scan equipment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will inform the House about the performances thereof, indicating the number of patients who have been scanned to date and state if there is any problem regarding same?

(Vide reply PQ B/42)

WORLD THEATRE DAY 2014

(No. B/67) **Ms. M. D. S. Perrine (Ninth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Youth and Others whether, in regard to the World Theatre Day 2014, she will, for the benefit of the House, state the activities that have been organized to mark the event and to promote the Rodriguan artists and the genre?

[Withdrawn]

PROMOTION OF RODRIGUAN PRODUCTS

(No. B/68) **Ms. M. D. S. Perrine (Ninth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the promotion of Rodriguan Products in Mauritius and abroad, she will, for the benefit of the House, elaborate on the measures being undertaken by her Commission in relation thereto and state the expected outcomes?

[Withdrawn]

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

STIPEND TO STUDENTS

The Deputy Chief Commissioner (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard Pierre Louis): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to have a small statement on the payment of stipend to students for period 2012 to date. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for period 2012 to May 2014, a total of 123 students have been awarded the Monthly Financial Assistance. Students are applying for the financial help as soon as they registered for the post-secondary and tertiary studies. As at date, 108 Rodriguan students studying in Mauritius are benefitting from a Monthly Financial Assistance of Rs 3,000 from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The Monthly Financial Assistance is payable within three months advanced based on the previous three months' attendance of the students in classroom lecture at a rate of at least 80% per month. However, for this current fiscal year, payment has been effected for period January to March 2014 has already been paid for an amount of Rs 1,083,000. For period April to June, a batch of 21 students who submitted their attendance for period January to March have already been paid together with a new batch of six awardees who recently submitted their applications.

Students who have not submitted their attendance for period January to March have been contacted via phone by the Commission and the reminder has been addressed to each institution where, the students are actually studying so as to remind the latter of the submission of the attendance of each student so that payment of the Monthly Financial Assistance could be finalised for period April to June 2014.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the scheme is actually defined, the monitoring of attendance is of utmost importance as there have been previous cases where, attendance was delayed and in some cases, overpayment was effected. Hence, after confirmation from training institutions concerned, students who left the course without informing have been requested to refund the amount paid.

It is to be noted that new applications for Monthly Finance Assistance are being screened as and when required by the Screening Committee. A broad communiqué for call of applications for monthly financial assistance is issued in August each year as more of our students are enrolled at universities during that period.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it seems that in a press conference of a certain political party prior to 01 May, it was said that since January 2014, students have not been paid. I would like to reassure the House and the parents that this is not true. This is false information. Moreover, what I have gathered from some student is that some institutions take long to provide the attendance. And, this has been confirmed by officers at my office.

In this line, my office is working on new conditions upon which the stipend will be paid to eligible students whose application has been approved by the Steering Committee. This, the change in condition will be approved by the Executive Council and will take effect as from August 2014 since discussion about the procedures will be done together with the different institutions. Thank you for your attention, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 08 July 2014 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

MATTERS RAISED

ACCUMULATION D'EAU DE PLUIE

The Minority Leader: Oui, M. le président, je voudrais saisir le temps que m'accorde la chambre cet après-midi pour attirer l'attention des autorités concernées sur les problèmes liés à l'accumulation d'eau de pluie dans certaines régions de Port Mathurin. Il n'est un secret pour personne que ces derniers temps parce qu'il pleut plus fréquemment dans beaucoup de rues à Port Mathurin, il y a de l'eau qui stagne pendant plusieurs jours. Et cela cause beaucoup de problèmes non seulement pour les passants mais aussi pour les automobilistes.

Mais la région qui est plus marquante par ce phénomène, c'est surtout à Baie Lascar vis-à-vis de la Commission de l'Infrastructure Publique. Et là, je ne sais pas si dans cette chambre, il y a certains qui savent lire dans la boule de cristal. Parce que juste au moment où j'ai pensé venir de l'avant avec ce *statement*, je vois qu'ils ont commencé par faire certaines réfections.

Mais cependant, M. le président, toujours est-il que dans l'emplacement de la compagnie RodOil, j'ai personnellement vu que l'eau reste là pendant toute une semaine. Alors, il y a les risques des moustiques. Il y a aussi que c'est très inconvenient aussi pour ceux qui utilise ce site.

Mais il y a aussi, M. le président, les jours du marché. Les samedis surtout, sur le comblage, devant l'administration allant jusqu'au bazar. Les samedis, il y a pleins de voitures là. Mais quand il pleut, c'est très, très inconvenient pour les passants. On ne sait pas où passer parce qu'il y a des flaques d'eau qui restent et c'est très boueux et c'est très, très sale. Ça devient un véritable *eyesore*.

Il y a aussi, M. le président, juste à l'entrée du bazar, faisant face au *Mauritius Telecom Building*. Quand il pleut, j'ai été personnellement témoin. Il y a eu une gouttière qui est défectueuse, l'eau qui tombe, qui s'éparpille sur le trottoir. Les gens n'arrivent pas à marcher parce que là aussi, il y a l'eau qui reste stagnante. La dernière fois, j'ai vu quelqu'un. Je crois bien que c'était un maraicher qui a eu l'ingénieuse idée de mettre une cuvette pour collecter cette eau, M. le président.

Par contre, les gens se plaignent tous les jours qu'il y a un manque d'eau dans le bazar, il y a un manque d'eau dans les toilettes. Et quand il pleut encore, si vous allez dans les toilettes des hommes, vous allez voir qu'il y a l'eau qui tombe depuis l'ancien bâtiment *Putt Putt* qui tombe sur les toilettes des hommes.

Mais par contre, dans ces toilettes, il y a un manque d'eau. Mais on aurait pu. Parce qu'on dit qu'il faut que Rodrigues soit une île écologique, qu'il faut savoir ramasser, utiliser l'eau de pluie. Mais on regarde impuissant, M. le président, toute cette eau qui dévale sans qu'on la récupère afin d'utiliser dans les toilettes d'à côté.

Alors, il y a tout ça, M. le président. Mais par contre, les gens aussi se plaignent là où le premier cas que j'ai mentionné vis-à-vis des infrastructures publiques dans l'entrée qui va vers... À l'arrière, il y a un atelier de vulcanisation à côté-là. Mais il y a plusieurs commerces à côté. Ils disent que le problème, ce n'est pas juste quand il y a de la pluie, quand il fait sec aussi, il y a beaucoup de voitures qui font le va-et-vient. Et elles sont inondées par la poussière.

Donc, cette portion de rue, si c'est une rue, M. le président, mérite d'être prise avec beaucoup de sérieux par la commission et les autorités responsables. Alors, j'espère bien que le message a été entendu cet après-midi, M. le président. J'espère que d'ici dans un proche avenir, ce problème sera sort du passé. Merci de votre attention.

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

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Agathe!

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes?

Mr. Chairperson: *Grandcourt avant.* Let me tell you that the Minority Leader, Mr. Grandcourt and Mr. Rosaire move to me this morning for adjournment. Yes, please.

SECTEUR DE LA CONSTRUCTION

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : *Yes!* Je ne vais pas être long, M. le président. J'ai un petit point concernant le secteur de la construction à Rodrigues. Qu'est-ce qui se passe, M. le président, à Rodrigues? Nous avons un gouvernement qui est supposé avoir la vision, la jeunesse d'esprit. Mais tout le monde, beaucoup de personnes se trouve au chômage aujourd'hui.

[Interruptions]

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Point of order ! Point of order! Point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir! This is not correct. This is not correct. I move for a

point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is not correct. I am on my feet. I am addressing the House and the Commissioner Roussety said that I am a...

The Minority Leader: Qu'est-ce qu'il a dit?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : You heard quite well. You heard quite well what he said. Okay? So, I wait for your ruling before even though he is not here.

Mr. Chairperson: I will come with my ruling next sitting. Believe me.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : So, and I... Mr. Chairperson, Sir, and I would ask the Commissioner to apologise. Thank you. Very good.

Concernant le secteur de la construction à Rodrigues. And, I want to put this on record, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Each time I am on my feet in this House, I am talking about something and the Commissioner for Public Infrastructure, he leaves the House. Each time, it is like this, Mr. Chairperson, Sir! Is he afraid, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? Is he afraid?

The Minority Leader: *Li peur la vérité. Li aler. Continier toi.*

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Peur la vérité.*

[Interruptions]

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : *Mr. Chairperson, Sir... They are disturbing me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, concernant le secteur de la construction à Rodrigues, qu'est-ce qui se passe, M. le président? Qu'est-ce qu'on a vu hier, M. le président ? Manifestation des employés d'A. J. Maurel. Comment est-ce qu'on a pu préparer un budget ? C'est leur responsabilité, M. le président. C'est la responsabilité de ce gouvernement.*

Comment se fait-il, M. le président qu'on a fait un budget, on a préparé un budget, on a discuté ici. Et après, *works order* commencé, travaux pour cette année-ci commencés depuis février terminé fin avril. *Pénan l'argent.* Donc, pour cette année-ci, commencé février, reprise depuis février et là, fin avril, *tou travailleurs out.*

Qu'est-ce qui se passe, M. le président ? Où est la responsabilité du commissaire, du Chef commissaire et de ce présent gouvernement, M. le président ? Concernant les autres secteurs de la construction, zéro ! Zéro à

Rodrigues. Et vous savez combien c'est important pour nous, combien c'est important pour les Rodriguais de travailler dans le secteur.

Nous savons, M. le président, qu'on ne peut pas tous travailler dans le secteur public. Il n'y a pas assez de place. Nous savons cela. Mais il y a un grave problème. J'attire l'attention de ceux concernés, de ce gouvernement, qu'ils prennent leur responsabilité. Il n'y a rien. C'est pour ça, M. le président, nous avons parlé de la construction de l'aéroport. C'est un très, très gros chantier même le développement du port. Ce sont des chantiers importants parce que ça génèrent de l'emploi.

Qu'est-ce qui a... Trois ans, zéro. *La route fer par exode*. Et tous les jeunes, qu'est-ce qui se passe ? Ils se tournent, ils vont à Maurice. Et dites-vous bien, M. le président, à Maurice, là-bas aussi il y a des difficultés, gros difficultés. Mais c'est votre responsabilité.

On vous a alloué un budget. C'est à vous de faire, de voir ce que les Rodriguais, surtout ceux qui sont au bas de l'échelle puissent avoir leurs parts. C'est ça nous venons, M. Baptiste dire, comment s'appelle ? Food Aid Scheme. Food Aid Scheme... Parce qu'il y a problème ! *Enan problem dans pays!* This is why you are coming here and say: « *vous n'avez rien fait en 2006* ». On n'avait pas besoin.

[Interruptions]

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : 2006, tout le monde était content. Il y avait des gros chantiers, M. le président. Il y avait des gros chantiers ! Maintenant, on vient avec le *Food Aid Scheme sipa ki zistoire income support. Bé ale gueter ki pou fer ek bann dimoune la astere !* Malheureusement, ça pose des problèmes sociaux. Il y a aussi ceux qui tombent dans l'inégalité. Je ne veux pas en parler mais on a tendance à voir. Vous pouvez rire mais c'est une menace. Allez voir les statistiques et vous allez me dire.

M. le président, il est grand temps qu'on réagisse. Nous, nous sommes solidaires avec ces gens, surtout ces gens d'A. J. Maurel et nous comptons que même si le commissaire n'est pas là, même si le Chef commissaire n'est pas là, j'espère qu'ils auront le message. Merci.

LE SYSTÈME PENITENCIER DE RODRIGUES

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: M. le président, à l'heure où on parle du développement infrastructurel pénitencier, la formation et la réinsertion des prisonniers dans la société, l'organigramme du personnel dans le système

carcéral de notre île est laissé pour contre. Dans la gestion du milieu pénitencier, le maillon le plus important reste les officiers responsables de cette institution.

Malheureusement, ces derniers sont démotivés par la non-permanence d'un responsable d'un *Assistant Superintendent of Prison* (ASP) à la tête de cette institution *which is a funded post by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA)*. Le changement constant à la tête de cette organisation provoque une discontinuité dans la planification d'un travail dynamique, permanent concernant la discipline, la motivation et le bien-être de tous.

Chaque officier en charge de la prison de Rodrigues a sa propre méthode de gestion. Chacun ses lois, chacun ses manières, ce qui déstabilise profondément les garde-chiourmes qui doivent personnellement s'adapter à la personne d'abord et ensuite à sa façon de travailler. Rodrigues avec son autonomie, a forgé au fil du temps des fonctionnaires capables en termes de bravoure et de méritocratie.

Alors, ne serait-il pas plus ingénieux de renforcer le système pénitencier de Rodrigues par un fils du sol ? Nous ne sommes pas contre personne. Mais ne serait-il pas plus ingénieux de renforcer le système pénitencier de Rodrigues par un fils du sol ?

Deuxièmement, n'est-il pas temps de promouvoir des Rodriguais qui ont acquis de longues années d'expérience au sein de cet établissement en guise de reconnaissance de leurs services rendus dans ce domaine ? À bon entendeur, salut. Merci, M. le président.

Mr. Chairperson: Five minutes. Be quick.

DISCRIMINATIONS ENVERS LES 'MIDWIFES' DE RODRIGUES

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: M. le président, merci de me donner l'opportunité de faire deux *statement* sur d'abord, la discrimination envers les *midwives* de Rodrigues et deuxièmement, concernant la situation de nos aînés et les plus vulnérables de la société à Rodrigues qui est jugés inacceptable.

M. le président, le Premier ministre, le Docteur Navinchandra Ramgoolam, a lors de sa visite ici, à Rodrigues, déclaré qu'il ne veut pas qu'il y ait deux catégories de citoyens dans notre République Arc en Ciel. Malgré l'éloignement de Rodrigues, nous sommes convaincus qu'il veut veiller à ce que chaque citoyen reçoit les traitements ce dont il aura besoin pour s'épanouir dans la vie.

Or à Rodrigues, il y en a beaucoup de situations révoltantes qui démontrent clairement que certains Rodriguais sont considérés comme un autre grade de citoyens dans cette même République. La situation des *midwives* semble être contrariée ici à Rodrigues. Ces femmes n'arrivent pas à subvenir dignement au besoin de leur famille et se sentent laissées car il semblerait qu'il y ait une attitude discriminatoire envers eux comparés à leur homologues de Maurice.

M. le président, nous avons évoqué à plusieurs reprises les soucis de nos frères et sœurs qui ont été à l'hôpital ou un Centre de Santé pour retrouver une meilleure santé. Je vais venir maintenant directement sur cette situation qui dérange ce secteur ainsi que ces *midwives* qui depuis longtemps font face à des situations de discriminations à Rodrigues.

Hier, nous avons célébré la Journée Mondiale des Sages-Femmes. Et pour marquer cet événement, ces femmes, ces Sages-Femmes ont tenu une conférence de presse au Centre de Carrefour en collaboration avec le regroupement du Centre du Carrefour à Port Mathurin. M. le président, les Sages-Femmes à Rodrigues sont considérées comme des citoyens d'un autre grade comparés à leurs homologues de Maurice comme je viens de dire. Rodrigues compte actuellement 22 *Midwives* avec différents années de service variant entre 11 et 29 ans.

M. le président, c'est une pratique courante dans la fonction publique. Après un certain nombre d'années de service, les employés sont promu de par leur compétence, leur expérience, leur qualifications entre autres. Or depuis bon nombres d'années, les *Midwives* ne perçoivent aucune promotion malgré divers représentations qui ont été faites au niveau des autorités que ce soit locales ou nationales.

En plus de cela, certains parmi ont entre 11et 29 ans de service mais ne perçoivent aucune promotion alors qu'elles le méritent tout comme leurs homologues de Maurice dont certains ont été promu après seulement cinq années de service. Le Rapport du *PRB Errors, Omission and Clarification of 2011 recommended that a grade of Senior Midwife be created*. Ça s'est dit à la page 211 du *PRB Errors and Omission and clarification Report*.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, as per information that we obtained from these Midwives, it seems to them that there is no will from either the Ministry for Health nor from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the implementation of the PRB report whereas same has been done in Mauritius for the Midwives over there. Meetings with the Chief Commissioner and the ICE and even the

Commissioner for Health have been unfruitful until today. Negotiations, representations have been made also by a *Syndicat* but the situation is still the same in 2014.

M. le président, we, on the side of this house would like to make a plea to the Executive Council, the Minister for Rodrigues and the Ministry for Health and the Ministry of Civil Affairs to consider the case of these Midwives who are doing quite an exceptional work to improve the life of our citizens in Rodrigues. They deserve due considerations and respect for the work they are doing in the health sector.

M. le président, ces *Midwives*, méritent notre attention à tous à l'occasion de la Journée Mondiale des Sages-Femmes. Leurs familles et leurs entourages ont droit, eux aussi, à une vie meilleur et un meilleur traitement pour qu'elles puissent mieux servir la population, le peuple et faire avancer d'avantage la qualité de la vie avec de nos enfants et de leurs mamans partout où elles sont.

M. le président, au sein de cette minorité, nous tenons à féliciter ces Sages-Femmes pour l'excellent travail qu'elles abattent depuis plusieurs décennies et souhaite que cet appel faite ici sera entendu et pris en considération et que les choses vont bouger dans la bonne direction pour eux et pour notre société.

Je voudrais, ici... Donc, je voudrais terminer ici avec ce premier *statement* en félicitant encore une fois ces Sages-Femmes qui font un travail extraordinaire et que les autorités compétentes fassent le nécessaire pour que ces personnes-là aient leur dû.

M. le président, la situation de nos aînés à Rodrigues...

Mr. Chairperson: Please, your statement should be on one matter only.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Okay.

Mr. Chairperson: Give time to others.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Okay.

LA DIGUE REPOSOIR

Mrs. J. Ravina: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will draw the attention of the House on the very dangerous situation regarding a reservoir found in Reposoir, commonly named as '*La Digue Reposoir*'. Lately, after several days of rain, the

reservoir is full and it represents a very big danger for the villagers especially for the kids of the village. Yes, for the road users also.

I drew the attention of the House last May when the roof was removed. And, this is where the problem lies. And, now, I am asking the responsible commissioner to seek into this matter before any catastrophe occurs. I mean before any human life take away. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Oui, M. le président.

Mr. Chairperson: Nine or ten minutes left.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Okay. I will be very short.* Oui, M. le président. Je suis estomaqué.

Mr. Chairperson: May I remind you that your statement should be on one matter only, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, it will be. It will be.

CASERNE DES POMPIERS

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Je suis estomaqué, M. le président, de voir dans 'Weekend' du 04 mai 2014, la situation qui prévaut autour des casernes des pompiers. M. le président, ça paraît une honte pour l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues malgré que les doléances ont été transmises vers le Commissaire Responsable des Services de Pompes, jusqu'à maintenant, rien n'est fait pour trouver une solution à leur travail.

Ici, M. le président, il est mentionné que les pompiers travaillent dans des véhicules qui datent des années, dans les GMR. Veut dire dans les GMR 568-526 qui est vieux, plus de dix ans. Et ces véhicules-là, M. le président, tombent en panne bien souvent. Et en même temps, ils ont à louer, un *breathing apparatus* de l'hôtel Pointe Coton pour pouvoir exercer leur travail.

Qui est plus grave, M. le président ? Qui est plus grave – la situation dans la caserne, M. le président. Les pompiers, ils disent que les conditions de sécurité et sanitaire, autres allégations sont formulées à l'effet que de la présence de punaises dans les matelas de la caserne des pompiers à Rodrigues, M. le président.

Alors, M. le président, je pense que pour l'Assemblée Régionale, c'est une honte pour nous que ces travailleurs-là travaillent dans de telles conditions. Et j'espère qu'à travers le journal 'Weekend', vous avez pu lire un petit peu

qu'est-ce qui manque au niveau de la caserne des pompiers et que la commission va remédier à cette situation. Merci.

Mr. Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

*At 15.04 hours the House was, on its rising adjourned
to Tuesday 08 July 2014 at 10.30 a.m.*

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MISSIONS/THE DEPUTY CHIEF COMMISSIONER – MAURITIUS/OVERSEAS

(No. B/65) The Second Local Region Member of La Ferme (Mrs. J. Ravina) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to missions undertaken by the Deputy Chief Commissioner in Mauritius and overseas from January 2014 to date, she will, for the benefit of the House, in each case, state:-

- (a) the scope thereof and to table their respective itinerary; and
- (b) the composition of her delegations for each mission and table a copy of same together with detailed costs incurred respectively in terms of amount of per diem paid to each participant?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) and (b) of the question, I hereby table in the House a paper containing all missions undertaken by myself in Mauritius and abroad as well as detailed information requested in relation to all the missions from January 2014 to date.

NEW COPYRIGHTS ACT RECENTLY PASSED – THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(No. B/66) The Second Local Region Member of La Ferme (Mrs. J. Ravina) asked the ask the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture whether, in regard to the new Copyrights Act recently passed at the National Assembly, she will inform the House if the Rodrigues Regional Assembly was consulted prior to the passing thereof and, if so, to state the proposals of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in relation thereto?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the draft Copyright Bill was circulated amongst all stakeholders since 2011. The Bill was made available on the web site of the Ministry of Arts & Culture for stakeholders to put forward their views and recommendations.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that the bill was publicly circulated through the Ministry's web site, even the respected members on the Minority side could have submitted their inputs pertaining to the matter under consideration.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, you will note that the contents of the Bill was discussed and explained to artists in May last year when a delegation from the Ministry of Arts & Culture and Mauritius Society of Authors (MASA) visited Rodrigues. The proposals made by Rodriguan artists have been taken into consideration when the final version was drafted.

I wish to highlight also Mr. Chairperson Sir, that since the delegation from Mauritius have come forward with consultative sessions in view of collecting data, my Commission collaborated in this consultative session. Hence Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the voice of the Rodriguan artists in view of preparing of the Copyright Act and the information was collected directly by the above mentioned parties.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the House that the major preoccupation of Rodriguan artists are that they were not paid their royalties on a regular basis. It is important to note that only artists who are MASA members who benefit to this advantage.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, consequently it must be pointed out that the issue of artists is not limited by territoriality and has international implications and the provisions of the Copyright Act 2014 safeguards the rights of all artists including those in Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by the Ministry of Arts and Culture that from this main Act will emanate Regulations that is being worked out by the MASA to review the tariff that is actually being paid to MASA members, in view of increasing same and contextualizing future actions.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the MASA has paid about Rs 2 m. royalties to all local and Mauritian artists who are MASA members last week. It is to be noted that the payment of Rodriguans artist who are MASA members has been effected and will reach Rodrigues by Post in the forthcoming days.

In addition, MASA, will review the tariff paid to Rodriguan, MASA members being given that 50% of local music is played by MBC Rodrigues. In this context, a Regulations is being worked out by the MASA to review the

tariff, that is, to increase same. Therefore, the Rodriguan artists will enjoy a greater share from MASA.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these Policy measures emanate from the consultations with the Rodriguan artists who are major stakeholders of the Act. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission proposed to have further consultations with the Ministry of Arts and Culture and the Rights Management Society which replaces MASA to have specific Regulations for Rodrigues so as to better protect the rights of its members.