

**RODRIGUES
THIRD REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Debate No. 03 of 2014

Sitting of Tuesday 08 July 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. 03 of 2014

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 08 JULY 2014

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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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) TRIBUTE TO LATE ROBERT AHNEE
- (ii) APPOINTMENT OF NEW CLERK, REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
- (iii) PARAGRAPH (2) OF THE SO 36 OF THE SO AND RULES OF THE RRA

Mr. Chairperson: I kindly request, Respected members to stand in their places to observe one minute of silence as a tribute to the memory of late Robert Ahnee, former Judge of the Supreme Court of Mauritius.

(All Members on their feet, one minute of silence observed)

Thank you.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, c'est avec un grand regret et de tristesse d'apprendre le décès de l'ancien Juge, Robert Ahnee. Ce grand tribun nous a quittés hier après midi suite à une longue maladie à l'âge de 78 ans. Il a connu une carrière distinguée dans la judiciaire. Après plusieurs consultations en juillet 2011 avec les différents acteurs de la société Rodriguaise, le Conseil des Ministres prend note des travaux de Robert Ahnee et rend public le rapport nommément, l'amendement à la Constitution et deuxièmement sur le projet de loi sur l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues. Excusez-moi je me suis trompé de page.

Après les élections générales de 2000, le gouvernement d'alors annonça la décision d'accorder le maximum d'autonomie pour Rodrigues. Il avait délégué l'ex-Juge, Robert Ahnee pour préparer un rapport et le projet de loi. Le Juge Ahnee entreprit un voyage à Tobago en compagnie d'Antoinette Prudence, décédé le 01 avril 2007. Après plusieurs consultations avec les différents acteurs de la société Rodriguaise, le Conseil des Ministres prend note des travaux de Robert Ahnee et rend public le rapport nommément sur l'amendement à la Constitution et deuxièmement sur le projet de loi sur l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues.

En novembre 2001, la loi sur l'autonomie de Rodrigues fut votée à l'Assemblée Nationale. Robert Ahnee a été un de mes très proches amis, je suis sure qu'une de ces plus grands fierté, c'est d'avoir planté la loi de l'autonomie dans la terre de Rodrigues et dans le cœur et l'esprit des Rodriguais et Rodriguaise.

Je tiens sincèrement a remercié mon ami, Robert Ahnee pour ce bon travail accompli. Le peuple de Rodrigues vous serez toujours reconnaissant.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I request on the name of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the Executive Council, the people of Rodrigues and on my own name to direct the Clerk to convey our deepest and sincere condolences to the family of the ex-judge. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, c'est vrai ce qui vient de nous arriver tous, nous touchent tous profondément. Le départ de l'ancien juge Robert Ahnee laissera certainement un vide irremplaçable dans l'histoire de notre Assemblée Régionale. Ce matin je voudrais au Chef Commissaire pour exprimer notre profonde sympathie au nom de la minorité à la famille durement éprouvait par ce décès. Je pense plus particulièrement à sa fille Catherine, à laquelle j'envoie personnellement mes sincères condoléances. Parce que dans la famille c'est elle que j'ai plus côtoyé, que j'ai plus connu. Mais permettez-moi aussi, M. le président, d'apporter une petite précision. Tout à l'heure j'ai pu comprendre que le Chef Commissaire s'est trompé en disant en juillet 2011 il y avait une consultation mais je pense c'est 2001. Voilà merci. Je vous remercie.

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Members, I associate myself, the Chief Commissioner and the Minority Leader and on behalf of all Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to extend our deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to the family of late Robert Ahnee, former Judge of the Supreme Court of Mauritius who passed away on Monday 07 July 2014 at the age of 78. I direct the Clerk to convey to the bereave family the condolences of the Chief Commissioner, the Minority Leader and of all Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and my own.

Respected Members, I have two announcements to make. To begin with, I am pleased to inform you that Mr. Navin Gopall who is known to most of us has been appointed by the Public Service Commission to be the new Clerk of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for two years. He has joined office on Monday 30 June last. On behalf of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and on my own name I welcome and wish him a good stay to shoulder his responsibilities with efficiency.

Now, I have got a second announcement. My second announcement is related to an incident, which happened at the second sitting of Tuesday 06 May 2014 during adjournment time when the third Island Region Member was addressing the House. While leaving his seat the Commissioner for Public Infrastructure uttered unbecoming words to the address of the Third Island

Region Member. There was a point of order but the Commissioner was already in the corridor of the House.

Paragraph (2) of the Standing Order 36 of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly provides that it is out of order to use unbecoming words or expressions or to use offensive language towards members of the Assembly. I therefore request the Commissioner to kindly withdraw these words.

The Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure & Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): I withdraw these words, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you. Now we come to questions.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

AWARENESS & SCREENING CAMPAIGN/OBJECTIVES, PARTICIPANTS & BREAST CANCER CASES

(No. B/69) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the Awareness and Screening Campaign held on the 29th and 30th May 2014, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) what are the short, medium and long term objectives thereof;
- (b) the number of participants registered in relation thereto; and
- (c) the number of cases of potential breast cancer identified during that campaign, if any?

The Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports (Mr. I. Valimamode): Mr. Chairperson Sir, Breast Cancer Care (BCC), a recently set up NGO in the field of breast cancer screening and care, contacted my Commission during the month of May last stating their interest to collaborate with my Commission in this specific field. They were invited to work in collaboration with "*Lumière et Vie*", our local counterpart in the field of cancer.

Breast Cancer Care effected a mission to Rodrigues from 28 to 31 May 2014 with a team of eleven members including eight medical professionals. On 29 May 2014, they met breast cancer patients and their families at Queen Elizabeth Hospital with a view to provide psychological support and counselling to the patients.

With regard to part (a) of the question, the objectives of such fruitful collaboration with NGO are:-

- (i) In the short term, to strengthen and empower our local NGOs so as to acquire more exposure and experience in order to be more efficient;
- (ii) In the medium term, Breast Cancer Care will provide the services of a Therapist on a quarterly basis to dispense psychological support to our cancer patients and their families. This has been made possible further to our discussions and it is to be emphasized that my Commission will bear the travel and accommodation cost for the Therapist.

Furthermore, they have agreed to follow up on our breast cancer patients sent to Mauritius for treatment upon our request. You will all concede that it is not easy for our patients to leave their family behind in order to follow such heavy treatments in Mauritius. Thus, following the request from my Commission, Breast Cancer Care will provide psychological care and support to our patients also in Mauritius henceforth; and

- (iii) Mr. Chairperson Sir, Breast Cancer Care will facilitate and sponsor breast reconstruction and prosthesis to our patients on a yearly basis. Moreover, "*Lumiere et Vie*" our local counterpart, will benefit from training on a regular basis so as to equip them in the field of project execution.

Lastly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Breast Cancer Care is in the process of renting a building for their head office in Mauritius and again upon request they have promised to provide a minimum of one or two rooms to cater for families accompanying our breast cancer patients in Mauritius during their treatment.

As regards to parts (b) and (c), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on 30 May 2014, my Commission organised a screening campaign at Mt. Plaisir Cultural and Leisure Centre in collaboration with Breast Cancer Care and "*Lumière et Vie*". The outcome was much above expectation as 275 women participated, out of which 17 suspected cases were detected. Consequently, all the 17 cases have been contacted by our Health Services for further investigations. So far, three cases have undergone biopsies during the month of June and are expecting their results shortly and others are being followed up by Surgeons.

In line with my Commission's policy to provide preventive measures with regard to cancer and other related pathologies, my Commission in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life is working on a cervical cancer screening project. This screening campaign will be carried out at least three times yearly with results being interpreted locally for prompt treatment.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, le cancer est un fléau mondiale. On voit à la télévision, il y a plusieurs campagnes qui se font actuellement pour combattre le problème de cancer ou bien l'accompagnement des personnes qui ont atteint déjà le cancer. A Maurice il y avait tout dernièrement la formation des infirmiers pour venir en aide aux personnes qui sont atteint du cancer du sein. Comme-ci ces infirmiers là, ils donnent des soins palliatifs à des personnes qui sont en phase terminale. Est-ce que la Commission de la Santé de Rodrigues peut se joindre à ce même élan et en même temps servir des personnes, des agents de santé de Rodrigues pour pouvoir aller dans les villages, parler avec la population pour donner des renseignements, des renseignements surtout par rapport au cancer du sein ou bien quel genre de soin on a à l'hôpital de Crève Cœur ou bien dans les centres à travers Rodrigues, qu'ils peuvent allait la bas et trouvait des soins à ce problème la. Ou bien en amont attention qu'il est le problème du cancer, en amont qu'est-ce qu'on est en train de faire pour aider ces gens là ?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I thank the Respected Member for his suggestion but this is already being done. I think I mentioned it in my answer to this question. As far as training of our Nursing Officers, this is being done. Especially, for those who will be working in the Chemotherapy Unit. So, this is being done and regular. As I mentioned also, there will be continuous screening program and counselling. So, this is why Breast Cancer Care will empower our local NGOs in that field.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as we talked about cancer, we do not have only the problem of breast cancer, we also have the problem of 'col' and the problem of prostate, *cancer du prostate*. Can I ask the Commissioner, how long it takes for the Medical Surgeon to have a medical biopsy in Rodrigues so that the person is aware of the problem?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, once biopsies are taken it takes specific times for the lab in Mauritius. This is being done only at Candos lab. So, there are no definite time. So, this is why I mentioned for the screening program we are having soon with the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. I have insisted that this will be done, in a first instance, on 4500 women and the test will be carried out in Rodrigues so that we have prompt results.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am sorry to call it to the Commissioner. I have one case, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, one person has gone through the cervical biopsy and here in Rodrigues and the Medical Practitioner stated that it will take three months in order to have the results but when the same person has proceeded to Mauritius it has taken one week, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Can the Commissioner see to it because we are speaking about cancer, see to it that these results are available in Rodrigues at the very moment so as the person, not to be so *agacé ou bien tout ça*.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have work in the Health Services for years and I have insisted myself and when I was at the hospital I have put in place such a method that whenever there is a case, for example, a biopsy sent to Mauritius and is positive, this come directly to the Principal Records Office. I am surprised to note that how come a Medical Officer has stated that it would take three months to have the results. I would invite discreetly the Respected Member to give me the name, if he can, also the name of the doctor or the name of the patient, I shall carry out an enquiry. But let me reassure one and all this is being respected.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I will give you.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the increased number of cancer cases sent to Mauritius for treatment during these past months and years, can I ask the Commissioner whether there are special arrangements made in Mauritius to accompany those patients and whether any special attention be given to those accompanying these patients in term of accommodation and financial support etc?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, accompanying relatives is given the same treatment as other accompanying relatives. They are also being paid, not the relatives, they are supposed to be for the patient. They are receiving a sum of Rs 200 daily during their stay in Mauritius. As I mentioned, Breast Cancer Care is working on this project. They are trying to put, at least two rooms for patients undergoing treatment for Breast Cancer Care. Nevertheless, we should look at the whole. There is not only breast cancer patients but we have also patients of cancer overall.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because I have met those accompanying their relatives to Mauritius saying that although the Commission is giving them this financial support but they have much difficulties in Mauritius in order to survive because these financial help is being given when

they return to Rodrigues. Can I ask the Commissioner whether this is so, and if no, what can he do to remedy same?

Mr. I. Valimamode: In fact, it is true and I have discussions with the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life together with all Socio-Medical Officers in Mauritius including the Higher Social Security Officer so as to accelerate procedures and we have decided that it will defeat its purpose should the relative receives the money afterwards. So, we are working together with the Social Security to at least give these people at least a sum of money before they leave Rodrigues, say Rs 1000 before they leave Rodrigues, irrespective of the number of days they are staying then this will be adjusted accordingly.

Mr. Chairperson: You have got two more questions. One for Respected Member Agathe.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, I will put two questions in one then. Can we know from the Commissioner whether Pap smear test is being carried out in the different Area Health Centres at La Ferme and Mont Lubin? And the second one, I want to know from the Commissioner he has purchased a colposcopy whether there is an experiment officer to work on this apparatus.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, depending on the Medical Practitioner they do Pap smears both at Mont Lubin, La Ferme and Queen Elizabeth Hospital. As far as colposcopy is concerned, the Gynaecologist, he is the expert. There is no need for the time being for someone to do the colposcopy examination. Yes, it is true.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Right now, who is doing the colposcopy examination? It is the Gynaecologist and no one else. And the Gynaecologist is trained for that.

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: Do not make any remark. You do not make any remark. To talk *careme* here. Last question.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner of Health inform the House whether for this specific activity there was public invitation for anyone who want to make a sort of *dépistage* or it was a pick and chose activities for those patients who ...

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I said it was beyond expectation. So, the Breast Cancer Care, this was advertised in a sense so much so that we had so many women and unfortunately, the Breast Cancer Care when the team was here they could not do the lot. This is why they are coming to catch up.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

PARENT'S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME/RATIONALE & METHODOLOGY

(No. B/70) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Parent's Empowerment Programme held during the month of May this year, she will, for the benefit of the House, state what is the rationale and methodology for same together with the outcome thereof?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is a fact that parenting is becoming more and more a challenge in today's society. It is on the other hand, a major millstone towards the development of a better society. This is why, as from the start, our government has taken several initiatives to help parents in the process of empowerment and capacity building. This is a long ongoing process of which results will be visible mostly in the long run. In this line, several empowerment programmes are being conducted in villages and at school level.

From 23 May to 16 June 2014, the parental empowerment was run at Terre Rouge. The aim of the programme was to empower parents to take their responsibilities mostly because it has been observed that there is a general increase in cases of child beyond control and with behavioural problems.

The sessions were held in the afternoon, from 15.30 to 17.00 hours and targeted some 50 parents. It is noted however, that most of the time those parents with much difficulties in their parenthood do not attend these sessions. This is why I requested concerned staff to try to develop new strategies so that these parents can be reached.

During the programmes, the following themes are covered:-

- (1) Estime de soi ;
- (2) Rôle des parents et leur responsabilité ;

- (3) La Famille – comment communiquer et prendre ses responsabilités au sein de la famille ;
- (4) Relation parent/enfants ;
- (5) Les droits et devoirs de parents/Enfants ;
- (6) Le savoir-vivre ;
- (7) Les méfaits de l'alcool et de la drogue au sein de la famille ;
- (8) Les infections sexuellement transmissibles ;
- (9) La nutrition ;
- (10) Le budget familial ;
- (11) L'hygiène corporelle et environnementale.

Resource persons from CRAC, Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs, the Child mentors, the educational psychologist delivered the courses through talks, and the participants therefore carried out group-working sessions.

As regards, to the outcome, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it has been according to the resource persons a fruitful experience. The group proposed that a sort of follow-up be done on a continuous basis. And to meet their request, it has been decided that a monthly session be done by a mentor. This program, being a continuous one, parents of Crève-Cœur, Grand La Fouche Mangles and Petite Butte will be sensitised during period July to August.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether her objective will be achieved when parents is being empowered apart from the child. Whether there will be a family empowerment programme which will be held in Rodrigues.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I think that we should, this is why I said in my answer, that we are meeting students and parents at schools. At schools level we have sensitisation and we have villages. So we think that some training, some empowerment programme should be conducted with the parents but of course, as we have been doing for the last two years children are also concerned and at the office of my colleague, the Commission for Youth, there are also activities between inter-generation activities where parents and the youths are concerned. So I think that this is being done already.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: May be the Respected Member has not understood my question; I will make it clear, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. If we conduct an empowerment programme separately, child on one side, the youth on one side and the parent on one side. Therefore, they have obtained different information when will a Family Empowerment Programme be conducted in Rodrigues together with all those parents, youths and children together.

Mr. Chairperson: I think that the Deputy Chief Commissioner has already given a reply.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: She talked about separate programme.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, juste pour répondre au membre Agathe. C'est pour dire qu'il y a des sujets, je pense que c'est normal que des sujets qui peuvent être traités avec des parents et des sujets pour les enfants. Donc, séparément et en même temps je dois dire que toute cette formation n'a pas été fait au hasard, ça a été fait en consultation avec les partenaires avec la Psychologue qui vient à la Commission. Donc, c'est un travail d'ensemble et je pense que c'est normal qu'il y a des sessions qui sont fait à part et il y a aussi des sessions quand je dis au niveau des villages et les parents, les enfants, les mamans et les papas sont aussi invités. Donc, à un moment tout le monde est touché par la formation mais chacun doit recevoir cette information concernant ces rôles au sein de la famille.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question please.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wanted to ask a supplementary question. May I?

Mr. Chairperson: The last one.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Je voulais tout simplement demander à la commissaire avant justement avec les consultations, avec les personnes concernées et tout pour décider de *methodologie to be used etc.* est-ce qu'il y a eu des recherches qui ont été faites au niveau de la Commission pour déceler exactement les causes de *this challenging role of parents* que nous sommes en train de faire face. Peut être que, est-ce que les thèmes identifiés lors des formations sont des thèmes appropriés pour justement *tackle the problem at hand or maybe we should carry out a study to find on what is the real problem and then from thereon decide on what will be the appropriate solutions.* Parce qu'on voit que malgré les *parents empowerment programme* et tout ça on continue à avoir des problèmes.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, pour commencer ma réponse, je dois dire que se sont ces mêmes personnes qui nous disent que nous faisons trop d'études et aujourd'hui on nous demande encore de faire des études. C'est la que je trouve un petit peu contradictoire. Mais cependant, M. le président, je pense que ce problème de *child beyond control* ça a toujours existé. C'est un phénomène grandissant. C'est vrai et je ne pense pas qu'il y a

une seule raison qui donne ces problèmes. Et comme j'ai dit aussi c'est un travail qui a été fait en consultations avec des travailleurs sociaux, avec les psychologues. Donc je ne vois aucune personne plus apte à venir proposer des formations. Bien sure que la formation seule ne peut pas résoudre tous les problèmes. Aussi il y a la volonté de la personne de faire l'effort pour utiliser cette formation.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question please.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY COMMEMORATION 2014/OUTCOME

(No. B/71) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Environment and Others whether, in regard to the World Environment Day Commemoration 2014, he will, for the benefit of the House, state what has been the outcome of the activities organized on the occasion thereof?

The Commissioner responsible for Environment and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the House is aware, the World Environment Day is celebrated every year on 05 June with a view to raising global awareness on the importance of taking positive actions to protect nature and the Planet Earth. The 2014 celebrations for the World Environment Day at the international level have focused on Small Islands and Climate Change, the theme being "*Raise your Voice Not Sea Level*".

At the local level, Mr. Chairperson Sir, my Commission has decided to lay emphasis this year on Waste Management, particularly with the coming into force of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags Regulations on 05 June 2014 which is widely regarded as a historic day for Rodrigues. The following activities were held for three days from 05 to 07 June 2014 in Rodrigues to mark the World Environment Day. *Je suis déjà dans l'histoire.*

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: I said no comment. Continue please. I said no comment. Carry on, please.

Mr. R. Payendee: The activities which were organised. We have an Expo Vente to show alternatives to plastic bags which were exhibited and sold. We have Exhibitions on climate change and impacts on small island states with emphasis on the local context. These included:-

/UNREVISED/

- (i) Sound Environment Practices;
- (ii) Coastal Zone Monitoring;
- (iii) Vision of Waste Management in Rodrigues; and
- (iv) Development Process of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags Regulations 2014.

A Message by the Commission for Environment was read in Educational Institutions during the morning Assembly on 05 June 2014 to sensitise the school population on the need to protect the environment and the actions taken by the Regional Government in that regard. We also had an exhibition of the glass bottle shredders at the Millennium Square.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the main outcomes of the activities held on that occasion are as follows:-

Sno.	Activities	Outcomes
1.	Exhibition	Sensitisation of the public on climate change issues, impacts and adaptations such as development of renewable energy, reforestation projects and coral farming, etc. objectives were reached.
2.	Film Show	Sensitisation people on climate change issues and the best environmental practices that need to be practiced.
3.	Demonstration of glass bottle shredders	Public demonstration on available options for the management of glass bottles. This constitutes the new strategy for the management of glass bottles following the waste segregation at source. The shredded bottles can be used for making decorative objects such as flowerpots, tiles and slabs.
4.	Selling of Alternatives to plastic bags	Some 7000 bags of different types were sold. The aim was to provide these alternatives to the public and at the same time sensitizing them on the availability of same.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, prior to the coming into force of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags Regulations on 05 June 2014, my Commission has conducted a massive sensitisation programme campaign in 92 villages throughout Rodrigues. People were asking questions, for example, how they will carry meat and fish, cakes etc. Those who visited the *expo-vente* could see the creativity of local Rodriguan entrepreneurs. For example, containers used to store fruit juice were used to make bags that can be used to carry fish etc. In a nutshell, the activities held in the context of World Environment Day 2014 were an opportunity to demonstrate that alternatives to plastic bags are available and that people can live without plastic bags.

Let me take this opportunity, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to thank all those who contributed to make the World Environment Day 2014 celebrations a success. My thanks also go to the population of Rodrigues at large for generally adopting eco-friendly practices by using alternatives to plastic bags. It is worth noting, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that Rodrigues has also been applauded at the national and international level. The Honourable Minister for Environment, Mr. Deva Virasawmy, in his Speech on 05 June 2014 congratulated the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for having the political courage or the political gut to come up with such initiatives. The Minister for Ecology of France has just (just listen to this one) announced that she is going to ban the use of plastic bags in France as from 2016. *On est en avance sur la France, M. le président.*

I would therefore, make an appeal to each and everyone including Members of the opposite side to put politics aside and think about the Sustainable Development of Rodrigues and support this Regional Government in its endeavour to make Rodrigues an ecological island where all our children can live peacefully and happily. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I understand that the Commissioner has used questions time to make a lengthy statement to give his answer pertaining to this question. However, I would like to ask him. He has been mentioning about reafforestation as being one of the activities that has marked the World Environment Day 2014. Can I ask him, how many hectares of land, if any, has been planted with the..

Mr. Chairperson: Address the Chair, please.

The Minority Leader: Yes, ...this year and if so, where?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this question is technical. I need notice.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I hope my question is not technical also. *Je voulais savoir* in regards to bottle shredding. To date how many bottles or tons of bottles have been shredded and what will the shredded bottles be used for? Is it available now? Where can people get it? And does it, glass bottles, of course, and is it going to be sold to public or how is it going to be used afterwards? Can we get access to it, where is it available and we may know how much have been shredded?

Mr. R. Payendee: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to glass bottles.* On a acheté les appareils. Les deux appareils sont là et on a formé des gens pour l'utilisation. Mon *Departmental Head* et moi, on est parti à Maurice récemment pour voir comment ça se fait. Qu'est-ce qui se fait. On ne peut pas se lancer aveuglement dans une chose pour le faire bien. C'est pour cela qu'on a déjà mit en place un système. Bon, ça allait venir mais puisque la dame veut, le membre de l'assemblée veut connaître. On a déjà mit un système en place. Bientôt on lance une grosse campagne de récupération des bouteilles en verre à Rodrigues et on va les écraser et les mettre dans un endroit spécial. Bientôt il n'y aura une seule bouteille..

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry to disturb you please. I would like to say it again but when you address on both sides of the House, please address the Chair. Thank you.

Mr. R. Payendee: *Excuse me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.* Donc, bientôt il n'y aura plus des bouteilles en verre qui vont partir dans les dépotoirs. Il n'y a pas que ça. Il y a tant de développement qui arrive. Ça, ça va venir bientôt. C'est la surprise. Dans quelques années Rodrigues va montrer le monde comment gérer les ordures. Merci.

The Minority Leader: *Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, je voudrai demander au Commissaire responsable de l'environnement. Etant donné que c'est vrai one of the mission of his Regional Government is to make Rodrigues an ecological island. Although there has been many measures that have been identified to mitigate the effects of different things on our environment one thing I did not hear him mentioned. It is about the effect of erosion on our marine eco-system. Est-ce que le commissaire est au courant. Puis-je le demander s'il est au courant. Quels sont les effets de l'érosion terrestre sur notre lagon. Est-ce qu'il a déjà identifié, mené une enquête pour savoir quelle est l'impacte de l'envasement de nos lagons par l'érosion du sol et si oui, est-ce qu'il peut nous donner d'avantage d'explication là-dessus.*

Mr. R. Payendee: M. le président, c'est une très bonne question. C'est une activité qui est très important pour ma Commission. D'ailleurs si vous avez

regardé la télé récemment dimanche dernier on a fait, une équipe est partie faire et en plus je faisais parti de cette équipe, et on est parti faire ce qu'on appelle un *survey* dans des endroits qui sont envasés. On ne peut pas dire que l'envasement, c'est vrai que ça fait des dégâts mais il faut pouvoir quantifié et mesuré. C'est pour ça on a mit ce qu'on appelle un *Network for Coral Reef Monitoring* et là ça englobe tous les plongeurs de l'île, les scientifiques et tous ceux, les pêcheurs qui veulent donner un coup de main. Et c'est pourquoi ce *network* est déjà naît et la première activité a eu lieu dimanche dernier où on est parti faire du monitoring en face de l'hôtel Mourouk sur Paté Reynieux. Parce qu'on sent qu'il y a eu un petit peu de dégât. Mais si vous voulez savoir si je sais ce qui se passe dans la mer. Mon expérience me dit que c'est pour ça que je suis aussi Commissaire de l'environnement et de la pêche. Je connais bien ce milieu et c'est quelque chose qui me touche à cœur et qu'on est en train de faire tous pour protéger.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner as regards, he spoke earlier about the good things performed in Rodrigues about plastic. Did the Commissioner know how many trees are we cutting down in order to have one ream of paper? And afterwards, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since the Commission has had a programme earlier in Rodrigues, namely Working for Water. Can we know where the project is? Whether the project is over or how many hectares of wood, of trees will he cut down to get water?

Mr. R. Payendee: M. le président, deux questions. La première question ça concerne le papier comme un alternatif au sac en plastic. Je dois rappeler le Membre que dans ma mission la semaine dernière, on est parti visiter un centre à Maurice que beaucoup de personne ne connaissent pas. D'ailleurs je le dis qui s'appelle Hetchell Papers. Je vais vous donner les coordonnées si vous voulez où là bas ils font le recyclage du papier. On n'a pas besoin de trop couper les arbres pour faire du papier. Parce qu'on recycle le papier. Et là j'ai vu une usine qui recycle des tonnes et des tonnes de papier et l'équipe qui fait l'entreprenariat pour finalement venir avec ces papiers, ces sacs en papier, que nous on propose comme alternatif, achète le papier recyclé. Donc, c'est tout un système de recyclage que ma Commission est en train de mettre en place. D'ailleurs, c'est un ingénieur Indien qui travaille dessus. Je lui ai proposé de venir faire un tour à Rodrigues pour voir comment est-ce qu'on fait. On a rencontré aussi une équipe qui fait un peu ce qu'on fait ici, à Maurice et eux aussi ils vont venir bientôt pour nous aider. Et là on met en place bientôt dans tous les villages de Rodrigues. Je ne voulais pas dire, je gardai le secret, mais si vous voulez je vais vous le dire. Dans tous les villages de Rodrigues on va récupérer tous les papiers. On a déjà un accord avec cette usine. Tous les papiers. Les bouteilles en verre, les papiers bientôt feront route sur Maurice

pour être recycler et pour finalement retourner à Rodrigues pour nous permettre d'avoir des sacs pour finalement, comme un alternatif au sac plastic.

Deuxième chose que le Membre voulait savoir, le projet de *Working for Water*. Beaucoup de gouvernement parle de projet pilote. Et nous au niveau de la Commission on a fait ce projet et ça s'appelle d'ailleurs *A Pilote Project for Working for Water*. Nous on ne se lance pas. Si on regarde comme d'autre projet comme, *la caze poisson* qui était pilote et qui veut faire beaucoup..

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: Please no comment. Listen first. I said do not disturb. You listen first and then you will ask supplementary questions.

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: I am not going to repeat. I said no comment and when several Members talked at the same time, it is a babble of languages. Continue.

Mr. R. Payendee: Ce projet pilote donc on ne peut pas se lancer. On a fait un hectare, donc on attend les résultats. En coupant des arbres on sait qu'il peut y avoir de l'érosion justement. C'est pour ça qu'on a refait le site. Et je dois vous dire. Je dois annoncer peut être ou peut être invité tous ceux qui sont dans la salle aujourd'hui d'aller faire un petit tour à Solitude parce qu'on a déjà des hibiscus qui étaient en voie de disparition et il reste seulement trois dans le monde entier. On a des dizaines qu'on a plantées là bas et qui a déjà commencé à fleurir.

Donc, le projet de *Working for Water* va très bien. Le projet de *Working for Water* se porte très bien et d'ailleurs on va aller bientôt. Bientôt on va refaire des hectares dans d'autres endroits pour justement parce que nous il faut qu'on montre, qu'on prouve que ça marche. Il faut montrer aux gens qu'il y a de l'eau aussi. Je voudrais inviter toute la salle, tous les membres à venir voir qu'il y a de l'eau. Donc, voilà.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question. Last question I said.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Commissioner what he intends to do with these hundred of trees which his Commission has cut down at Cascade Pigeon since months.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this question mostly relate to the Commissioner for Public Infrastructure but as the Commissioner for Forestry, I can answer. You know for every reservoir, there may be people that do not understand what it means by a buffer zone. You need a buffer zone..

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Member Agathe, please. You listen. You do not make comment. You listen if you have a supplementary question you will come later but do not disturb. I do not know what you have in mind today.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Faire moi en colère, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: I am sorry if you are angry but you listen. Please do not forget that we are in an August Assembly and I will not accept that you say anything at anytime and say it together and nothing is understood. Thank you.

Mr. R. Payendee: M. le président, si on a un réservoir, on ne peut pas avoir un réservoir. Un réservoir le but c'est pour donner de l'eau et de l'eau potable à des gens. On ne peut pas avoir un réservoir avec des arbres qui jettent leurs feuilles dans le réservoir et ce qu'on a fait à Cascade Pigeon ce n'est pas forcément le projet de *Working for Water*. Le projet de *Working for Water*, c'est à Solitude mais ce qui se passe à Cascade Pigeon c'est on a crée ce qu'on appelle un *buffer zone* pour empêcher que les feuilles tombent dans les réservoirs pour les gens de Fond la Digue, les gens de Port Mathurin aient de l'eau potable.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

HIGH LEVEL ROUND TABLE CONSULTATION/AGRICULTURE

(No. B/72) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the High Level Round Table Consultation on agriculture held on the 12th and 13th June 2014, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) the expected contribution of the different stakeholders involved therein; and
- (b) the rationale behind the holding of such event together with the outcome thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following the discussion I personally had with Dr. Patrice Talla, the Food Agricultural

Organisation, Representative of region of Madagascar, Seychelles, Comoros and Mauritius, during his first mission to Rodrigues in 2013. It was proposed and agreed that the Food Agricultural Organisation could field a mission to Rodrigues for a situation analysis of the agricultural sector and services as well as to assess the existing limitations and constraints of same.

This partnering consultation, Mr. Chairperson Sir, sought to develop a consensus on how partners can contribute to strengthen the institutional capacity and governance framework of the Commission for Agriculture, whereby non-state actors, private sectors, farmers and development partners were called upon to make relevant contributions to the sustainable development of the agricultural sector in Rodrigues.

The rationale behind such event, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is to give stakeholders the opportunity to work together to refocus policies and programs to support the growth and prosperity of the sector to maximize growth and profitability and unlock the sector's full potential by:-

- encouraging the youth to get back to agriculture and agribusiness as a means of livelihood;
- introducing legislation and regulations to meet the specificities of Rodrigues and enhance its resilience;
- enforcing the rule of law;
- encouraging production based on environmental friendly technology;
- promoting good health through food safety;
- enhancing women participation in agricultural development;
- improving Rodrigues bio-security preparedness; and
- improving Rodrigues resilience to safeguard its land and water resources.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards the outcome, this partnering forum has, as a landmark, harnessed the total commitment and determination of all stakeholders including the staff of the Commission for Agriculture, the farmers, the private sector and non-state actors to realise the potential of the agricultural sector in Rodrigues with a view to address the challenges facing food and agriculture.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a critical assessment of the functions and activities of the current Agricultural Services was carried out by the Food Agricultural Organisation with a view to determine the future needs of the Commission's customer's, that is, farmers, growers, livestock breeders, importers, exporters

and consumers were discussed the organisation's weaknesses with regard to technical functions, legislations, communication among intra-sector co-ordination stakeholders research, extension, technologies, economic analysis, statistic, planning, policy analysis, project and programme development, capacity building, institutional framework and human resources among others.

M. le président, il est impératif pour nous de changer la perception et l'image du service de l'agriculture. Les analyses nous ont démontrées que le présent système ne correspond pas aux attentes des planteurs et éleveurs. C'est dans ce contexte qu'afin de redynamiser ce secteur vital que le service d'Agriculture deviendra ainsi DARES (*Department of Agriculture, Research and Extension Services*).

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this re-engineering will be finalised during the forthcoming structural review of the Rodrigues Regional structures to be carried out by a Consultant following the recommendations made by the Pay Research Bureau. The proposed re-organisation will require the creation of a new post of Manager to be the Technical Head of the Department of Agriculture, Research and Extension Services (DARES) reported to the Departmental Head.

Research will be an integral part of Crop Division Production and Veterinary Division and Water Resources Division. The current Research Division will cease to exist. The Mechanisation component of the Research and Extension and Mechanisation Section will be transferred to the Land and Water Resources Management Division. The Research Quality Control and Laboratory will cease to exist as such. It will be an integral part of Extension Services, Crop Division and Animal Production and Veterinary Division.

The current Infrastructure, Transport and Land Resource Section will cease to exist. Instead, the Workshop, Infrastructure and Transport Unit will be transferred to the Administrative Section.

Workshop, Infrastructure and Transport Unit will be under the purview of an Agricultural Engineer in a new post created to oversee all the engineering works including agricultural and water resources engineering of the Department of Agriculture, Research and Extension Services, to provide support to the Extension Services. The Agricultural Engineer will report directly to the Department Head but provide support to all the Divisions.

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry to disturb you, Chief Commissioner. Could you please shorten your answer?

The Chief Commissioner: One, two, three, four, five.

Mr. Chairperson: I said no comment. I do the ruling in the Assembly.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the new structures for anew Agricultural Services. I see whether I can shorten. Excuse me.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, an Agricultural Working Group comprising of senior managers of Agricultural Services, farmers federations, Central Statistic Office, private sector and Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Company will be set up to:

- ensure Agricultural Services work programmes are in harmony with Rodrigues Regional Assembly strategic objectives for Agriculture;
- identify solutions for constraints/factors hampering the effective operation of Agricultural Services;
- review ways to enhance stakeholder participation;
- provide a forum for planning, programme and project development. Identify policy issues for consideration and action;
- monitor budget and work programme implementation.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is the first such forum covering the transformational change process and in particular how to make the agriculture of Rodrigues play its vital increasing and vital role to maintain the sustainability of the sector and securing its role as a key pillar of the rodriguan economy.

Mr. Chairperson: Minority Leader, please.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I understand according to the answer of the Chief Commissioner that the Agriculture Sector is going to go through a major institutional review. He has been mentioning about mid and long-term approaches but in the meanwhile, we know that this sector is facing great challenges and planters and farmers are particularly faced with many problems. In Budget Speech this year, during the Estimate Committee, a question was raised with regard to programme 802 where there was Rs 7 m earmarked for Improvement of Food Crop. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner how far has this fund been used up to now in order to improve food production in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Agathe, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in Rodrigues we have got many reports. Now we have Dr. Poonit report, we have Dr. Tonta report. Can we know from the Chief Commissioner which report are we going to use in Rodrigues since we have several structural review, which report are we going to use? And secondly, is he aware that Dr. Poonit came to Rodrigues and he has mentioned during the seminar that he has come in Rodrigues but he was meant to come only for Mauritius, whether the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has borne the cost for his coming to Rodrigues?

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry, but I think that this cannot be accepted. It is not relevant to the main question. Next, question please. Sorry, one question for Respected Member Spéville and then we will have no question. Yes, Mr. Spéville?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: No. I have two questions in one. First of all, we have different reports in Rodrigues, namely Dr. Tonta and now Dr. Poonit. Which one are we going to use?

The Chief Commissioner: The report of Dr. Poonit is a very good one. It is for the future. To change the actual structures and the mentality of the Agricultural Service in Rodrigues, this is for 10, 20 and 25 years time. This is why we accept this report because there is a total change in the different structures so that those structures can work very well for the future of Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner enumerate on several institutional changes in the Agricultural Services organigram. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether the issue of land, which is very important, was taken on board and what is the way forward concerning a judicious share of this resource for those who what to go towards modern agriculture.

The Chief Commissioner: When we came to power in 2012, the first thing we made in the Agricultural Service is after how agricultural lands will be used and we have rendered a report on different agricultural permits given to rodriguan, whether they are working on this land. That is why we do not give a lease, an agricultural permit and if those people are working on these lands so we can give them a lease. The problem is that we are having a sort of survey on agricultural land in Rodrigues and this is being done. We have already found out that a lot of agricultural land is being abandoned and we will not like to see

those lands abandoned but to be used by rodriguans for agricultural development.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question for Mr. Emilien.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has been talking about a delegation of a Food and Agricultural Organisation in Rodrigues. In a recent critical assessment of the Agricultural Sector in Rodrigues by the Food and Agricultural Organisation, it was mentioned one of the issues was concerning lack of support to planters. And it was mentioned that technical officers do a lot of work in Rodrigues except the one for which they are paid for, except the one for which they have been trained for. If this is true, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner tell the House what has been done or what is being envisaged as remedial action to this problem?

The Chief Commissioner: This is being done, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. We have a structure now which exists and we are working on those different technical services in Rodrigues, ploughing of the land, extension services, we are working on it. But I think there is a great problem concerning the future of Rodrigues. The agriculture, what we call Rodrigues Ile Durable. There is a problem with the mentality of our Agricultural Officers. We are asking them whether you are integrated in this Rodrigues Ile Durable. This is a great problem. I think they need to have a change of mentality and new support concerning training for the future. And that is why in the Poonit report, it is being mentioned, a reorganisation of the structured agricultural lease services in Rodrigues. Just to show that you can just for the future of Rodrigues.

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

At 11.46 hours, the Deputy Chairperson took the Chair.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

PROMOTION – RODRIGUAN PRODUCTS/MAURITIUS & ABROAD

(No. B/73) 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?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, with the objectives of fostering local production and encouraging local SMEs to thrive, my Commission has elaborated and implemented several measures to better reach and tap both the Mauritian and the foreign markets. I wish to point out that the Rodriguan market is relatively small and does not allow our SMEs to grow and flourish to the maximum of their potential. However, targeting new markets requires also that the quality and standards of our products be improved and maintained. In addition, it demands that the mindset of our entrepreneurs and the way business was being done in the past, be radically improved.

The promotion of Rodriguan products cannot be done in a vacuum but should rather be done in a structured manner with the collaboration of valuable partners including the RTMC, Enterprise Mauritius and other international agencies such as the FAO amongst others. It is however, understood that, it will take us some time before a sustainable export-oriented industry can be created in Rodrigues. This is because of several logistics and phytosanitary impediments which are disincentives to the exportation of our products to Mauritius and overseas. To counter these obstacles, the Regional Government through my Commission is doing its utmost so that such barriers to trade and export are alleviated and our entrepreneurs are better equipped through capacity building programmes and soft incentives to face the export challenges.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, some of the measures implemented by my Commission is as follows:-

The Creation of a Permanent Selling Outlet in Mauritius following the “Semaine Rodriguaise” in Mauritius in April 2014, which was a very successful event, the management of Société de Cépage, Grand Bay Cœur de Ville agreed to put at our disposal, three stands dedicated solely to the selling of Rodriguan products. These stands are currently being managed by the RTMC whereby products of 15 entrepreneurs are being sold. It also serves as a permanent focal point for the RTMC where potential buyers can obtain information on Rodriguan products and place orders in larger volume. It is expected that this project serve as a catalyst so that the model can be replicated to other supermarkets of the island.

With regard to the Freight Subsidy on Local Products with the view to encouraging production and export of local products, all ...

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order. I think the Deputy Chief Commissioner is making a statement. This answer as you can see is too lengthy. Please.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Can you try to shorten your answer, please.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the question has been put. We have to give details what we are doing to promote the product. So, I will try to be shorter but I am..

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is statement time to do that.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: To the Freight Subsidy on local products where all registered SMEs are eligible for a 100% refund on shipping freight to Mauritius and products concerned are the:-

- Handicraft;
- Agro-products;
- Fruits and vegetables;
- Dried seafood; and
- Honey.

We also have access to the pre-market certificate and despite the fact that our local entrepreneurs have been involved in the agro-processing sector for several decades; it is nevertheless, observed that our products have no access to supermarket shelves and other fine boutiques in Mauritius because of the high cost and complex procedures associated with the obtention of pre-market certificates. Therefore, my Commission, through negotiation with the Small Farmers Welfare Fund and other Ministries have developed a revised set of procedures so that the entrepreneurs can benefit of same.

Also, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have provided lots of support for entrepreneurs to participate in international and national fairs so that they can make their products known. And to mention a few of these fairs, so entrepreneurs in Rodrigues since 2013 have been able to go to SAITEX in South Africa where handicrafts and agro-products were sold. Also, they have been able to participate in Mozambique in Anuga Fairs in Germany, in the Smartfish Trade Event in Uganda for seafood and in a Bilateral Trade and Investment Forum, which was held in Seychelles in April this year.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I should also point out that, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, les défis sont multiples dans ce secteur. S'il y a un grand travail à accomplir c'est avec les entrepreneurs eux-mêmes par rapport à la standardisation de leurs produits, les calculs des prix et leurs capacités de production. Cependant avec la volonté de toute un chacun nous croyons fermement que nous y arriverons ensemble. Donc, je ne voudrai pas parler de

label en ce moment. A la fin il y aura une autre question. C'est aussi *one of the objective, one of the major measure we have been taking to enhance and to promote local products.*

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, c'est dommage que nous avons une session parlementaire après deux mois et demi et que sept commissaire viennent chacun avec un statement. C'est vraiment dommage.

Now I come to my question. The Deputy Chief Commissioner has been talking about measures to protect our products and to enhance our local products on national and international markets. All this are very good for our local products but there is a great threat to these especially agro-products. We have in Rodrigues itself and in Mauritius which I called fake rodriguan products. False rodriguan products. False honey. False chilli. Everything is being done just for *pour noyer, pour tuer le marcher rodriguais en ce qui concerne les produits agro-alimentaires. Ce que j'aimerais dire, demandai au Chef Commissaire Adjointe ou plutôt lui demander. Qu'est-ce qui a été envisagé ou qu'est-ce qui va être fait pour protéger nos produits agro-alimentaire surtout parce que ça devient de plus en plus difficile d'écouler nos produits sur le marcher parce que les gens surtout à Maurice deviennent très méfiant parce qu'il y a des produits falsifier, des faux produits rodriguais qui sont mis sur le marcher à Maurice et ailleurs.*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, that is why the Regional Government because we feel concerned about this and we are aware about this great problem that is why we came with the elaboration of the label for Rodrigues and which I will have the opportunity to give a clearer picture of how it will function in the question which will be coming by the time at the end of the question time I suppose.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner. I have been able to attend different *foire* in Rodrigues organised by different artisans and *j'ai eu de la chance, peut être les autres ont eu de la change de boire du vin fait à Rodrigues, vin de citron et vin de banane. Il y a plusieurs types de vin qui est fait à Rodrigues. Mais le problème avec ce vin là, on ne peut pas mettre ce vin là sur le marcher parce qu'il y a le problème de Custom and Excise Act.* Can we ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner, whether she can accelerate the procedures with the Minister of Finance so that these wines made locally can be commercialised in Rodrigues.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, en effet il y a quelque, pas beaucoup de personne qui le font. Seulement deux personnes qui ont essayées de faire le vin avec les fruits locaux et effectivement

donc on a prit connaissance des problèmes qu'ils font face pour que ce vin soit tester et reconnu. Mais en même temps je dois dire que le vin vraiment n'est pas une grande priorité pour notre gouvernement. Il y a tellement d'autres produits agro-alimentaires que les gens font à grande échelle mais si ça peut aider, puisque ça peut aider à diversifier aussi les produits. Personnellement, j'ai discutée avec l'ex-ministre des Finances, il était là, l'Honorable Duval en décembre. On a eu l'occasion d'en parler parce qu'on avait un forum avec les entrepreneurs et effectivement, il y a des procédures bien spécifique à suivre et en tant et lieu on le fera.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we talking of the label and for these products in Rodrigues to have accreditation norms, to go beyond Rodrigues on international market, test, physical, micro-biological are very important. I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether for the time-being tests are being performed in Rodrigues, if yes, where and if not when laboratory will be set up in Rodrigues to perform these tests with new qualified personnel?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, c'est vrai aussi que j'ai dis d'ailleurs dans ma réponse, une des raisons pour laquelle nos produits non pas été encore sur les rayons des supermarchés, c'est la question de *pre-market certificate* et pour avoir un *pre-market certificate*, il faut en amont faire des tests bien spécifique selon le Food Act. Il a été discuté et c'est aussi *agreed by one and all* que certains tests peuvent se faire ici mais il y a des tests que si on va investir dans ces tests là se ne sera pas rentable pour Rodrigues. Parce que les consommables sont tellement cher qu'au lieu de faire ces tests là c'est beaucoup mieux d'aller les faire à Maurice. Et c'est la raison pour laquelle aussi que j'ai aussi dis dans ma réponse que personnellement j'ai eu des rencontres avec le *Small Farmers Welfare Fund* à Maurice qui ont été désigné comme un peu l'institution qui facilite les tests des produits sous un *Scheme* bien précis que le Ministère des Finances a mit sur place et on a vu que les conditions, les pré-requis pour que l'entrepreneur puisse avoir accès à ces tests ne sont pas adaptés à Rodrigues. Par exemple, si on prend aujourd'hui quelqu'un qui est dans *l'agro-processing* n'est pas nécessairement un planteur or pour que cette personne bénéficie de ce test là, il faut que la personne détienne une carte de planteur et tout ça on a discuté. On a proposé que nous au niveau de Rodrigues on va mettre une carte pour les agro-processeurs qui ne sont pas nécessairement des planteurs mais qui peuvent être aussi des planteurs et en même temps aussi on a discuté d'un *fast track* parce qu'il y a tellement d'entrepreneurs à Maurice pour que notre produit comme-ci on ne fait pas la queue. On va attendre notre tour pour faire des tests et tout cela a été agréées. Donc certains tests vont se faire ici, *humidity* ainsi et autres mais il y a d'autres

tests qui vont se faire à Maurice sous un *fast-track* et bien sûr ça va répondre aussi à la question de *pre-market certificate* mais aussi du label.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House at the end of each test when the test has already been made which authority will give accreditation to these products for marketing.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, peut être c'est bon que je précise. Déjà le prix en moyenne pour faire le test d'un produit, par exemple, le aigre-doux c'est Rs 80,000 par test. C'est pour un produit. Et pour un entrepreneur, ce qui fait c'est vraiment très cher. Puisque c'est le Food Lab de Réduit que le test va se faire. Les mêmes institutions qui donnent l'accréditation pour le *quality control* se sera le même pour Rodrigues mais par contre pour le label il y a d'autres institutions que tout à l'heure je donnerai des informations là-dessus.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: M. le président, bien souvent à Rodrigues on voit que les produits Rodriguais, tels que les manguiers, limons et tout cela, ça tombent et pourrissent par terre. On a vu que même à Rodrigues on reçoit des tamarins bien emballer dans des sacs en plastiques venant du Maroc etc, etc. Il y a même quelqu'une à Rodrigues qui a pu faire des bonbons à base de miel. C'est comme-si tout le temps on ne peut pas vendre du miel en bouteille mais comme-si transformer ces produits là, par exemple, quelqu'une a fait des bonbons de miel et autres choses encore avec le miel de Rodrigues. Est-ce que sa Commission est en train de travailler sur le système de trouver un moyen de faire d'autre chose à base des produits qu'on a à Rodrigues surtout les limons et les manguiers etc.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, je dis que oui, le gouvernement régionale, nous allons avec le développement des filières, le Chef Commissaire a parlé de ça et les limons c'est une de notre priorités. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous avons investis dans un *processing plant* à Gravières où des produits, d'autres produits que le achard, le piment, le aigre-doux vont être fait dans cette petite usine et je dois dire aussi qu'on a sollicité là l'expérience et l'expertise des gens qui s'y connaissent. On a la collaboration du Verger de Labourdonais pour nous aider dans le développement des produits et c'est vrai on va aller sur la diversification. On a vu, par exemple, le *lemon peel*, qui peut se faire à Rodrigues. On a vu, qu'il y a, pourquoi pas l'essence à base de limon. Donc, beaucoup de produit et surtout nous visons la diversification pour que nous permettions à beaucoup plus d'entrepreneurs de gagner leurs vies à travers les produits qu'ils font. En même temps aussi le Membre Agathe a parlé des produits qui sont importés, qui sont fait ailleurs. Ça

aussi on a remarqué, et là je dois dire que j'ai vu - j'étais au Seychelles avec les entrepreneurs, on a eu des discussions, des échanges avec l'institution qui est l'équivalent du RTMC à Rodrigues, et on a vu que les Seychelles pour protéger leurs produits. Si par exemple, ils produisent le miel, peut importe le miel qui sorte dans un autre pays, il y a un genre de taxe qui est mit sur ce produit là pour privilégier, favoriser ces produits locaux. Et ces dans ce sens la un peu que nous comptons aller pour protéger la production locale.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

MUSIC DAY 2014/ACTIVITIES ORGANISED

(No. B/74) Ms. M. D. S. Perrine (Ninth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture and others whether, in regard to the Music Day 2014, she will, for the benefit of the House, state the activities organised by the Commission in the context of the said event?

The Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture and others (Ms. M. R. L. Edouard): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, the music festival is an international phenomenon celebrated on the same day in more than 460 cities in 110 countries, including Mauritius and Rodrigues.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, in the context of the World Music Day a working session was organised on Saturday 24 May 2014 as from 13.00 hours at the Cultural and Leisure Centre of Mon Plaisir with all the stakeholders, including the active participation of local musicians/authors/composers/interpreters/choreographers/dancers among others and in all the fields of traditional and modern music and dance, and sound/light contractors on the theme, I quote: *"ki nou pe fer pou lavansman lamizik dan Rodrigues"*.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, a written resolution has been produced and I am proud to announce that my Commission will ensure the strict monitoring of the recommendations made by the artists and cultural groups who were present in the workshop within the available resources.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am also very proud of the Rodriguan artists who on the occasion of the World Music Day on 21 June 2014 broke the record this year with the participation of more than 37 groups who were officially registered and who were participating freely and voluntarily on the occasion of this world event. The activities were divided as follows:-

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- (i) A Blues/Jazz concert, which was a very first in Rodrigues and which was organisation in the Public Market of Port Mathurin with the participation of some nine jazz/blues groups of Rodrigues. This very first concert (Concert de proximité) saw an interesting crowd flop around them.
- (ii) The second activity was organised at the market of La Ferme and it was mostly traditional show which centred around the participation of around nine traditional groups and interestingly the sound system was provided free of charge by group Mannyok, an acoustic musical group who performed on the occasion.
- (iii) A cultural show illustrating the cultural and musical diversity of Rodrigues was held at the reclaim land of Mt Lubin from 08.00 to 13.30 hours and it saw the participation of some more than 20 groups on this event.

I had the great pleasure to launch the CD of Gan, a local singer from Camp Pintade who was granted the new Artist Assistance Scheme of Rs 30,000 in 2013. You heard well my dear.

It was noted with great appreciation that all groups participated free of cost in the event and in that respect my Commission has provided transport facilities, refreshments and logistic support to participating musical and cultural groups on all sites for the successful holding of the World Music Day 2014.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, moreover, an exchange programme was also scheduled on Sunday 22 June 2014 at the public beach of St Francois. Unfortunately, due to unfavourable weather conditions, we had to postpone the event and the artists are yet to decide when same will be held again.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, you will note the collaboration of the Rodrigues Council of Social Services which was sought for the celebration of that event in villages and the organizing Villages were exempted from the arrangements for MASA and Police clearance which were made by the Commission to facilitate the activities in the 24 participating villages.

In a nutshell, therefore, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, it can be said that “*la fête de la musique 2014*” was a real success, all artists who were conveyed for the event welcomed the idea with great enthusiasm, and appreciation and they came from all the spots of Rodrigues. The Rodriguans themselves on their part were over delighted with the initiative for this event. As for the working session, which was held in that context, it was a fruitful one and I hope that the

collaboration, the proximity between the Commission for Arts and culture and the artists of Rodrigues will be enhanced. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I thank the respected Commissioner for having been able to organise such an activity during the Musical Day, things which was not done before. I am happy for her but she said that she was proud of the Rodriguan artists. Is she aware, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, that other complaints of the artists around Rodrigues, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, namely for one activity. The Rodriguan artists were not paid but for those who have come from abroad were paid on the very day, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Is she aware about this grieves among the different artists/groups and still during the Independence Day some artists are still waiting for their payments?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I think that this question relating to the Independence Day, the question that the Member is putting forward. Anyway this issue was raised in the working session of 24 May and things are being corrected and being done swiftly for the betterment of this. But if things were raised on the 24 May, it was not in the way that the respected Member put it forward just to create sensation. Unfortunately, it was more in a comprehensive manner that issues was raised. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

(No. B/75) Ms. M. D. S. Perrine (Ninth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to gender-based violence in Rodrigues she will inform the House about the action/s taken at the level of her Commission to fight against same?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, being concerned about the Gender Based Violence (GBV), the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in collaboration of the UN Women has designed a strategy and costed action plan to address GBV in Rodrigues for the period 2013-2017. The plan was launched on 25 November 2013 by the Chief Commissioner and a gender policy was also presented.

The costed action plan consists of five pillars:-

Pillar 1: Legislation and Prosecution

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Pillar 2: Capacity Building of service providers of survivors and perpetrators

Pillar 3: Prevention-awareness raising

Pillar 4: Media Education and Advocacy

Pillar 5: Coordination, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

A steering committee has been set up to fight against GBV and a technical committee for each pillar has been identified.

The Commission for Family Welfare, Women's Affairs and Child Development, is also organising a one-year campaign against GBV as part of its costed action plan, that is, in the Pillar 3: Prevention-awareness raising. The theme of the campaign is: *Un monde sans violence ça commence par toi*.

The main objective were to:

- Create awareness of what gender-based violence is;
- Educate people on what actions to take if there are victims of GBV or they know victims of GBV;
- Prompt behaviour change amongst the perpetrators and victims of GBV;
- Curb the increase of GBV through concrete actions at individual and community level; and
- Reduce social acceptance of GBV in Rodrigues.

There has also been the creation of a communication team, which is responsible for the preparation of the communication strategy of the GBV campaign where the team has developed several slogans based on the different types on violence.

A one-stop shop has, also been set up at the Family Integrated Centre at Malabar and it is known as "*Service de Soutien et de Protection aux Familles*". It consists of the *Police Family Protection Unit*, the *Brigade Pour La Protection des Mineurs* and the *Child Protection Unit*, all under the same roof to help assisting victims of violence. Cases are referred to a Counsellor and a Clinical Psychologist for counselling and follow up.

Based on pillar 1, that is, Legislation and Prosecution of the costed action plan, the Commission is developing a protocol of assistance to adult and children victims of sexual assault in consultation with different stakeholders. The protocol will define the role and responsibilities of all the stakeholders concerned namely, the Commission for Family Welfare, the Commission for Health and the Police Department.

For the Family day, the Commission organized a debate on theme “*zom boner to fami dan to lamin*” to lay emphasis on the role and responsibilities of men and how they are contributing to promote the welfare of family, to fight against GBV for the betterment of the Rodriguan society. A sensitisation campaign in primary and secondary schools and in villages has been carried out and is ongoing.

Other activities are yet to be implemented, such as:-

1. Creative drama at community level to raise awareness on GBV; on 19 and 26 July 2014, six theatre troupes will be performing at La Ferme and Grande Montagne respectively;
2. Working session will be held with primary teachers/support staff with the theme of “*Teachers as ambassadors of peace*”; and
3. Working session with students of Standards IV and V, with the aim of getting onboard all teachers to participate in the awareness campaign, to train young people to vulgarize awareness on GBV and to create awareness among the primary children.

I would like to point out that the one-year campaign is financed by the UNDP and CSR Fund of Mutual Aid and with the help of Luxman Bhai. Thank you.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether following the implementation of GBV action plan has she at the level of her Commission observed increased reduction in the rate of Gender-Based-Violence in Rodrigues. Whether there has been any observation made, positive or negative. And I would also like to know whether there has been any mechanism or approach/specific approach taken by her Commission to encourage more men to come forth and *pour dire qu'ils ont été victims* of violence to them. *Parce qu'on sait que les hommes ils sont un peu plus réticent de venir de l'avant* when gender-based-violence is concerned. Because when we talked about gender, it is not only women. It also concerned men. Whether in Rodrigues we have noticed *plus d'hommes qui osent venir de l'avant pour dire que voilà* I have been a victim of violence.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, donc il y a eu depuis toute cette campagne une hausse dans le nombre de personne qui vienne au bureau, ça veut dire, au service de soutien et protection aux familles, la question reste est-ce que les gens sont plus sensibilisés et ils savent que c'est

important de dénoncer. Donc, la question reste posée mais le fait demeure qu'il y a un nombre grandissant de femme et d'homme qui viennent au bureau et qui cherchent du support et qui cherchent des conseils au niveau de GBV. Et j'ai mentionnée l'importance qu'on a accordée cette année pour la journée de la famille de sensibiliser les hommes. Parce qu'on a remarqué aussi que dans les sessions qui se font au niveau des villages, il y a principalement des dames qui viennent et là on a sensibilisé les hommes. On continue à faire un travail surtout avec les deux personnes qui ont eu la chance de partir au Niger où au Niger il y a toute une école de formation pour les maris qu'il appelle « l'école des maris » et qui ont vu comment ça fonctionne. Et nous nous avons un devoir d'adopter et d'adapter au niveau de Rodrigues. Donc, ça va se faire. Mais je dois dire aussi que le fait d'avoir mis tous les bureaux qui concernent ce problème ensemble ça va faciliter aussi la vie des gens et c'est peut-être une des raisons aussi qui fait que les gens viennent plus facilement au niveau du centre.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I will ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether she has come across cases of bullying at school whether she has come to cases where teachers, where there has been violence towards children at school, and if so, what her Commission has done for these children so that they can educate correctly.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I think that this question is not related to the main question. It is about Gender-Based-Violence. So if you want to.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, effectivement on a eu des cas où on a eu des enfants qui ont rapportés qu'ils sont victimes des *bullying* et ça ce n'est pas quelque chose qui date d'aujourd'hui. Ça a toujours existé et peut-être encore une fois que les gens savent aujourd'hui que c'est quoi le *bullying* qu'ils viennent dénoncer et en même temps aussi. C'est vrai qu'il y a eu des cas qui ont été rapportés, qu'il y a eu des violences des profs envers des enfants et je suis une enseignante comme le membre, M. Agathe aussi, donc on sait que la violence au niveau de l'école entre les profs et les enfants ça a toujours existé. Mais on condamne ce genre de violence et nous ce qu'on veut c'est la raison pour laquelle j'ai parlé tout à l'heure là d'un programme pour accompagner les enseignants et n'est pas là pour juger, pour blâmer. Ce qu'on veut il y a eu des problèmes on veut accompagner ces professeurs afin qu'ils peuvent mieux encadrer les enfants et c'est pour cela qu'on va mettre en place ce programme en collaboration avec la Commission de l'Éducation, Teachers and Ambassadors of Peace. Donc, ça répond à la question.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CULTIVATION OF BEANS IN RODRIGUES

(No. B/76): Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the cultivation of beans in Rodrigues this year, he will, for the benefit of the House, state the:

- (a) total area currently under cultivation and how much in terms of percentage does it represent for the normal beans plantations;
- (b) regions where beans are mostly grown and the expected yield region-wise for this year;
- (c) problems encountered by planters and what measures his Commission has taken to overcome same, if any; and
- (d) percentage in terms of revenue this cash crop represent for the agricultural sector in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that with regard to the cultivation of beans in Rodrigues, field surveys have revealed that the total area under production as at the end of May 2014 was about around 85.5 Ha.

It is usual practice that planters grow beans over the recommended season of February to June. However, some planters are expected to go for additional planting in the months of July and August. As at date, the cultivated area so far represents the average percentage of the normal beans plantation for the past few years.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the regions where, beans are commonly grown and respective expected yield in ton per Ha is being tabled. Mr. Chairperson Sir, the main problem that bean planters are encountering in 2014 is irregular rainfall pattern due to climatic change, pests and diseases. Regular fields monitoring are being carried out by officers of the Extension Unit to ensure early detection of pests and diseases.

Farmers have been trained prior to the start of the season on ways and means to identify pests and diseases. In 2014, 14 technical and theoretical training sessions were delivered on bean cultivation and processing. Farmers associations have been empowered through donation of insecticide sprayers and respective training to control the pests and diseases problems of their members

in a timely manner. The Pest Control Unit of the Commission closely monitors and intervenes in cases where, pest and disease problems reach level that farmers cannot cope with.

With regard to part (d) of the question, I am informed that this figure is not available to date. However, the Central Statistics Office in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organisation will run a survey on Agricultural activities as from July and this information will be tapped by the survey.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, apart from the different problems that farmers, planters encounter, especially those bean growers, one of the main problems is the high cost of pesticide. And, this has a considerable impact on the output and also on the cost of the production. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, his commission has taken into account such problem and whether, his commission envisages to come up with any accompanying measures in order to help planters, bean growers to increase their production and lessen the cost?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, we have already raised this problem at the level of the Commission for Agriculture. And, we are studying the ways and means how to reduce the cost of insecticides on plants in Rodrigues. We are even now talking with the Mauritius Shipping Corporation or the government can help, especially at the Ministry of Finance can help to subsidise the transport from Mauritius to Rodrigues. Thank you.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, some planters, who have already done their harvest, are complaining of heavy losses. Is the Chief Commissioner aware of that and whether, his commission envisages to compensate them accordingly?

The Chief Commissioner: We are not aware of that but I take notice of the question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, being given that the season, the Commission for Agriculture advises the bean growers to start cultivating the beans during the period February to June. This is a serious problem, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. Being given that this year, I think that the bean growers have been misled. They have not been advised as it should be because there have been many losses. How is the commission reacting to this problem? Will it still be February to June or after what has happened this very poor harvest this year, they are going to react and study what will be the best season to grow beans?

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

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, Agriculture is a dynamic process. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether on the phytosanitary point of view, what is being done at the level of this commission for technical research concerning new disease. Because as the Minority Leader has said, planters spent huge amount of money to buy pesticide. But now, at the time being, there is a new disease, which is attacking beans.

The disease does not attack the plant of bean, the disease attack the pod. The disease is inside the pod, attacking the seed of the bean and the flowers. Can the Chief Commissioner enlighten the House on this to say whether, technical research will be done or is being done to investigate on these new diseases?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, we are aware of these diseases, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. That is why we are asking our scientific officers instead of sitting in an office, is to go on... *ale dan caro*, yes. And, that is why we are encouraging them not to sit in an office but to go with planters and see and find out who are those diseases. You know? And, this is the role, the duty of scientific officers and not to sit in an office and to make administration.

This is that is why, we say that in the new structure recommended by Mr. Poonit, there is a real work to do with planters, following them everyday even night and day if you want, so that already those planters, those scientific officers can know, can make research and find out how to treat those diseases.

The Minority Leader: M. le vice-président, je ne sais pas si le Chef commissaire est au courant mais il y a une grande menace qui guette la variété de notre haricot rouge local. Je ne sais pas comment c'est arrivé. Mais on sait que le haricot rouge dans le temps de Rodrigues, ce n'est plus le même aujourd'hui.

À moins que là où on achète ça dans les restaurants etc., ils nous donnent des *fake* haricots représentant un haricot de Rodrigues. Mais à mon avis, il y a eu des changements au cours de ces dernières années. Est-ce que...

Je voudrais demander au Chef commissaire, est-ce qu'au niveau de sa commission, il y a une unité qui closely monitor the variety, the type of varieties so that there is no cross breeding in the future? What does he intend to do to keep the standard, the quality of such commodity which is very important for our economy and an important aspect of our Agricultural Sector?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, nous sommes conscients de ces menaces qui peuvent arriver à nos produits Rodriguais dans le temps. Il faut dire que le control, quand je suis arrivé en 2012, j'ai dit à l'agriculture : *« Contrôlez tout ce qui rentre dans le pays ! Il y a un gros problème au niveau de l'organisation. Contrôlez même les semences qui arrivent dans des boîtes, d'où ça sort »*.

Et c'est pourquoi là, je suis en train de travailler, signer, ça a été signé avec le gouvernement. La CIRAD de la Réunion, travaillais avec la CIRAD pour sauver justement tout ce qui est dans notre patrimoine vraiment agricole à Rodrigues pour empêcher. Et nous avons même vu il y a des haricots qui sortent de Madagascar et qu'on plante ici.

Alors, tout ça, il faut voir. Et peut-être ces haricots rentrent avec des microbes, avec toutes sortes de maladies et c'est peut-être ça qui créer des haricots qui sont avec des fleurs qui causent des problèmes. Vous comprenez là ? Il y a tout ça ! Il y a tout un travail pour protéger tout ce qui est Rodrigues ; notre maïs, notre haricot, tout ce qui est ici. Alors, c'est ça justement. Il faut mettre en place des structures plus solides pour pouvoir contrôler tout ça.

À quoi ça sert de travailler avec la CIRAD qui sorte de La Réunion ? Et on va signer bientôt le MOU avec là, Rodrigues, on va signer avec le gouvernement à Maurice. Mais il faudrait quand même protéger tout ce qu'il y a. C'est comme notre café. Il y a eu l'étude par M. Descroix de CIRAD qui a vu que notre café avait une valeur extraordinaire mais il faut faire bien attention par rapport à l'importation des cafés d'extérieur. Alors, tout ça, c'est l'important qu'il faudra créer, qu'il faudra protéger, que ce soit l'aéroport, que ce soit ici.

Alors, quand vous voyez ces légumes qui rentrent ici, alors, on ne peut pas... Ces légumes, qu'est-ce qu'ils peuvent apporter, ces légumes comme microbes, comme maladies ? Et tout ça, il faut les voir. Il faut être sévère. C'est pourquoi mon collègues, là, on est en train de voir justement comment avoir ceux qui viennent ici, qu'ils aient des permis d'importation.

Hors, là, il me semble qu'ils n'en ont pas mais il faut insister qu'il y ait des permis d'importation. On ne peut pas accepter n'importe quoi. Et pourquoi l'aéroport peut dire à quelqu'un : *« Ouvert ou bagaz ! »* ? Pourquoi ici, on ne peut pas dire, tout ce qui arrive dans des containers, on ne peut pas contrôler, voir qu'est-ce qu'il y a dedans ? Il faut le faire ! Si on ne le fait pas, que sera Rodrigues dans les années à venir ?

Il faut protéger. Et ça, je suis d'accord avec les messieurs de la CIRAD justement. Protéger tout ce que nous avons de richesse, ce que nous avons, comment puis-je dire ça ? Vous avez le mot ? Protéger tout ce qu'il y a de Rodrigues, de culture, de tout ce qui est du pays. Et c'est ça justement. *Sé sa ki fer la différence*. Et c'est pourquoi nous disons que tout ce que nous exportons, il ne faudrait pas qu'on exporte des choses qu'on peut manger à Maurice pour qu'on peut sentir de Maurice, qu'on peut voir à Maurice. Il faut que ce soit différent. Et c'est ça justement.

C'est un gros travail, M. le vice-président. C'est un gros travail que nous sommes en train de nous lancer dedans. Et c'est pourquoi en même temps aussi, il faut refaire comme j'ai dit tout à l'heure-là, la mentalité des officiers de l'agriculture et des planteurs aussi pour qu'ils fassent bien attention parce que voilà, toutes ces semences, ces semences d'oignons qui sortent d'ailleurs, on ne sait pas. On ne sait pas comment sont ces semences-là, qui viennent dans des boîtes où ceci, ou cela ; le Baie La Rose, de ceci, de cela.

Alors que j'ai vu quelqu'un l'autre jour qui me dit il faut revenir avec l'oignon "*Toupi*", l'oignon "*Toupi*", revenir avec tout ce qui est normal, pas avec tous ces gros oignons rouges, là, et puis, qui pourrissent après un certain temps. Vous comprenez là ? Alors, et en même temps, moi je pense que le RTMC est en train d'acheter des haricots du pays mais tout en essayant de voir s'ils sont des bons haricots pour pouvoir ensuite revendre aux planteurs d'haricots pour qu'ils continuent à produire un vrai haricot, haricot rouge Rodriguais.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Yes, thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir.* Je suis d'accord avec le Chef commissaire mais en même temps, M. le vice-président, les planteurs font face à des problèmes de conservation. Il y a le problème de conservation parce que le haricot est un *born disease plant*. Parce qu'à l'intérieur même, les bactéries sont à l'intérieur même dans la graine même, M. le vice-président. Alors, est-ce qu'au niveau de la commission, on a trouvé des solutions comment faire pour aider les planteurs à conserver les graines d'haricots, les semences ?

The Chief Commissioner: Oui, tout ça, tous ces problèmes, nous avons. Même ceux qui récoltent des oignons, comment peuvent-ils ? Et là, justement, il y en a qui garde ses oignons dans leurs maisons et ainsi de suite. Et c'est pourquoi nous, au niveau de RTMC, on est en train de réhabiliter ce bâtiment de La Citronnelle pour pouvoir vraiment conserver et acheter avec les planteurs d'haricots le plus de semences et les conserver à Citronnelle ou dans des chambres froides. Et c'est vrai, il y a des problèmes du côté des planteurs eux-mêmes.

Alors, ça, il faudrait voir comment arriver à aider ces planteurs. Alors, là, tout ça, justement, il faudrait voir dans les années à venir comment les aider à créer vraiment une sorte d'endroit pour conserver leur les fruits de la plantation et ainsi de suite. Nous sommes en train d'étudier dessus comment peut-on apporter des subventions à ces planteurs-là en construisant un petit bâtiment vraiment typiquement pour garder les semences et les haricots ou les oignons ou ainsi de suite. Et tout ça est à l'étude, M. le vice-président.

The Deputy Chairperson : Mr. Spéville.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: *Mr. Deputy Chairperson*, Sir, on est en train de parler de la sauvegarde des produits des terroirs. But what are the modus operandi for that? I think that a strong policy decision should be taken on this. And, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether, we are talking of imports, Rodrigues is found in the Republic of Mauritius, whether, an agreement or consultation has been made with the Ministry of Agriculture in Mauritius. *Peut-être pour revoir les Plant and Animal Act* so as to prevent crossbreed and disease that is now attacking our products.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, nous avons le pouvoir de faire des règlements qui sont des lois. Comme j'ai expliqué tout à l'heure-là, mon collègue va faire une loi pour pouvoir contrôler les produits qui rentrent. Et de notre côté aussi, on peut, ces personnes qui viennent avec des produits, le Ministère de l'Agriculture aussi, a devoir de donner des certificats à toutes ces personnes. Alors, ça aussi, c'est tout un travail qu'il faut prévoir pour les années à venir. Et à mon avis, c'est absolument important.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I understand that the Chief Commissioner is aware of the different problems affecting our Agricultural Sector. D'après sa réponse, je l'ai entendu à chaque fois dire il faut, il faut. C'est vrai, il faut. Mais moi, je voudrais demander en ce qui concerne le control de tout, les produits qui rentrent et qui ne sont pas contrôlés, il déviait y avoir un service phytosanitaire dans le pays.

Si ce service est efficace, certainement, on aurait détecté ou saisi des produits qui sont néfastes pour le pays. Alors, la question est : est-ce que ce service existe actuellement ? Et sinon, quand est-ce que le Chef commissaire compte le mettre ne place ?

Et puis, pour deuxième partie de ma question, c'est : il vient de le dire, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly can take actions by means of regulation and so on. That is, to come up with policy decision. When will the Chief

Commissioner come up with a policy decision regarding all the problems that he has just mentioned concerning our Agricultural Sector? Is it soon or is it in the next? When? I do not know when.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, nous l'avons dit, nous le ferons. En préparation des règlements concernant les animaux, la fixation des prix, tout ça, c'est en préparation. Ça va venir. Quand nous disons quelque chose, il faut le faire. Et nous ne disons pas ce que nous ne faisons pas. Et nous allons le faire. Mais malheureusement, quand on va le faire, il y aura toujours des gens qui vont dire : *'Ah bon ? Pé blok nou ? Pé empes nou ?'*

Alors que dans ce qu'on va prévoir pour les animaux, on a parlé de l'environnement, l'érosion, ces animaux qui sont lâchés partout. Et puis, au lieu de clôturer les animaux, qu'est-ce qu'on a fait dans le passé ? On clôture les jardins des gens. Vous comprenez là ? Alors, demain, on va venir, on va dire il faut que vos animaux... des parcs, il faut aller couper de l'herbe pour venir les donner.

Alors, tout ça, on va trouver ça difficile. Mais si on ne le fait pas aujourd'hui, si on ne se lance pas dans cette discipline, que sera Rodrigues dans dix ans, 20 ans, 25 ans, 50 ans ? Alors, tout ça, il faut le faire. Créer, développer dans la population, une discipline, une mentalité pour la protection du pays. Et c'est ça ce qu'il faut faire. Nous pensons à cela mais pas quand on fait des trucs, on va dire il faut faire déclaration, il faut tirer ceci, tirer cela, telle affaire. Merci, M. le vice-président.

The Deputy Chairperson : Question for Mr. Emilien.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: M. le vice-président, le Chef commissaire, au tout début de son intervention, a dit : « *Quand nous sommes arrivés en 2012, j'ai dit à l'agriculture de vérifier tout ce qui rentre au pays.* » C'était en 2012. Aujourd'hui, on est en 2014. Ce qu'il faudrait savoir, M. le vice-président, c'est qu'il y a une grande menace sur Rodrigues par rapport à la qualité de nos produits.

On a mentionné le haricot rouge. On a mentionné l'oignon et il y a également le petit piment. On ne voit plus le petit piment typiquement de Rodrigues, M. le vice-président, parce qu'il y a eu ce qu'on appelle... Le Chef de la minorité a parlé tout à l'heure "*cross breeding*" avec la pollinisation, les abeilles, le vent etc., il y a des produits importés qui sont plantés à Rodrigues.

Il y a des gens qui plantent des haricots venant du Brésil, de je ne sais où. Et il ne suffit pas de constater. Il ne suffit pas de constater, on a constaté ceci, on a constaté cela, on va faire ceci, on va faire cela. Le temps qu'on le fasse, M.

le vice-président, ce sera peut-être trop tard. Je demanderais au Chef commissaire s'il pourrait au niveau de sa commission, faire activer les choses parce qu'il y a un gros danger qui guette notre produit local, notre produit du terroir. Il se pourrait qu'on arrive un jour à ce qu'on ait plus ce produit typiquement Rodriguais.

D'autre part, M. le vice-président, la Commission de l'Agriculture a fait une promotion pour une association à Maurice : le *Mauritius Planters and Farmers Association*.

I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner what help the planters in Rodrigues get from this association because they contribute Rs 400 yearly to this association.

The Chief Commissioner: *Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir*, je l'ai dit et nous l'avons fait. Depuis un bon bout de temps, nous travaillons avec la CIRAD qui vient vérifier, qui vient voir la qualité de nos produits, ce que nous produisons. Le petit piment, par exemple, le petit piment, les caractéristiques de notre petit piment, il est reconnu par rapport à Maurice.

Vous comprenez là ? Alors, c'est ça justement. Regardez la coopérative Saint Marie à Grand La Fouche Corail. Regardez la plantation des plants des petits piments. Donc, il y a déjà, M. le vice-président, il y a des gens qui travaillent déjà avec nous : la CIRAD. Il y a déjà quelqu'un ici, des gens qui reviennent régulièrement.

Je parlais du café. Là, je parle du petit piment. Il y a d'autre chose encore qui vont venir. Mais on travaille avec des gens qui connaissent. Et quand ce M. Descroix est venu concernant le café, il a comparé le café de Rodrigues par rapport au café de La Réunion, le café de Madagascar, le café des Seychelles. Tout ça et c'est absolument important.

Alors, nous le faisons parce que nous avons une vision des choses. Nous avons une vision des choses, de nos produits Rodriguais. Parce que nous disons que tous nos produits doivent avoir des goûts ; le goût de notre viande, le goût de notre poisson, pas ces poissons nourris avec des concentrés dans le lagon.

Alors, tout ça ; le goût de notre poisson, le goût de notre viande, de nos poulets, le goût de nos légumes, de bio, tout ça, de nos fruits. Alors, M. le vice-président, alors, voyez un petit peu, on est déjà loin. On est déjà loin ! On veut nous faire retourner 50 ans en arrière !

[Interruptions]

The Deputy Chairperson : Order ! Order !

The Chief Commissioner: On est déjà loin, M. le vice-président ! *Vrai, pas vrai ? Vrai !*

Mr. A. L. Emilien: M. le vice-président, excusez-moi, une partie de ma question n'a pas été répondue. Le Chef commissaire est en train de faire un meeting. Je lui ai demandé quel est l'aide de l'association à Maurice par rapport à la contribution des planteurs à Rodrigues. Il n'a pas mentionné ça.

The Chief Commissioner: La deuxième question en rapport là, *Farmers Welfare Fund*, oui, mais on a discuté avec eux. Là, ils vont... Par rapport à quoi je me suis... Comment ? Oui, les facilités qu'ils donnent tout ça. Ils étaient là la fois dernière, on était avec eux, on a discuté des facilités qu'ils donnent, les bourses et ainsi de suite. Et aussi, pour le *Pre-Market Certificate*, tout ça, on a discuté avec eux. Mais on travaille, M. le vice-président. On travaille ça, M. le vice-président. On travaille avec eux. Et tout ça, justement, de temps en temps, ils viennent et on travaille avec eux. Merci.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: Le Chef commissaire est en train d'induire la chambre en erreur. Je ne parle pas du *Planters Welfare Fund*. *Employees Welfare Fund* qui donne des bourses, etc. Je ne parle pas de *Planters Welfare Fund*. Je parle de *Mauritius Planters and Farmers Association*.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le vice-président, mais ça, on n'a jamais entendu ça, nous. Mais Maurice, ils ont changé peut-être le nom, je ne sais pas. C'est la première fois j'entends ça, là.

The Deputy Chairperson : Order ! Please, listen to the Chief Commissioner, please.

The Minority Leader: *A last question. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir,* tout à l'heure, le Chef commissaire a mis du doigt sur un aspect très important. Il a parlé de la qualité de nos produits. Il a parlé de notre viande; le gout. Puis-je lui demander s'il est au courant qu'actuellement, à Rodrigues, et ça, depuis un certain temps, les consommateurs se plaignent de la qualité de la viande de porc.

Parce que d'après nos renseignements, certains éleveurs utilisent les aliments concentrés pour les bœufs pour nourrir les porcs. Et puis aussi, bien sûr, d'autres aliments, peut-être, qui ne sont pas compatibles avec les aliments qu'il fallait donner aux porcs. Alors, s'il n'est pas au courant, je demanderais

de faire une enquête. Ma question est est-ce qu'il est au courant et qu'est-ce qu'il compte faire ?

The Chief Commissioner: I take notice of the question.

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

At 12.46 hours, the Assembly was suspended.

On resuming at 13.46 hours with the Chairperson in the Chair.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question!

**CAPITAL PROJECTS IN
– PROGRAMME BASED BUDGET 2014**

(No. B/77): Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to capital projects in Programme Based Budget 2014, he will for the benefit of the House:

- (a) State and table the list of projects already completed as at date together with the amount already paid for each project;
- (b) State and table the list of outstanding projects, if any, together with their completion dates; and
- (c) State the delays encountered by any projects and the length thereof and, if so, the reasons thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, as this House is aware, a provision of Rs 400 m. for Capital Expenditure was allocated for the implementation of several measures as announced in the 2014 Budget Speech. As at 30 June 2014, all projects enunciated are on track and a total of Rs 106.9 m. has been disbursed so far.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, I take this opportunity to inform this House that further to discussions, which I personally had with the Honourable Prime Minister and the Financial Secretary, financial clearance has been obtained for the completion of a second phase of the road Coromandel to Graviers to the tune of Rs 90 m. The additional funds will be made available by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development once the RRA will have effectively disbursed the voted sum of Rs 400 m.

Amongst the budgetary measures, three major projects of this Regional Government on which delays are being encountered are:

- (i) Construction of four desalination plants of 1000 m³ daily at Pointe Venus, Caverne Bouteille, Pointe Coton and Anse Goeland. The delay in the completion of same is assignable to the Contractor. Mr. Chairperson Sir, there is already a question on this specific project on which my colleague, the Commissioner for Water Resources will give further details later on;
- (ii) Construction of a Community School at Montagne Goyaves;
- (iii) Construction of Phase II of Terre Rouge College.

For those last two projects, delay is due to Tender Procedures, which are beyond our control. However, I am informed that both sites have now been handed over and works have already started on site.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, as regards to other budget measures, delays accumulated in their completions are mainly due to either lengthily Tender Procedures or final delivery of sites by the Contractor. The detailed information as requested for each and every project is actually being compiled and will be tabled shortly.

INTERFERING ON A WORK SITE – DISMISSAL OF SOME WORKERS

(No. B/78): Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, he is aware of any complaint which has been lodged against a Commissioner of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly who has allegedly been involved with a case of interfering on a work site for the dismissal of some workers on or about the month of May 2014 and, if so, he will, obtain information from the Commissioner of Police as to if an enquiry has been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that on the 28 May 2014, one Mr. M. J. L reported a case of pre-measure at Port Mathurin Police Station.

In his statement, he allegedly stated that one Commissioner has intervened with the Manager of the construction company they were working for in order to sack them on account of their political affiliation.

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On the 22 June 2014, in a statement to the police, the Job Contractor confirmed that he has obtained a contract from the Commission for Public Infrastructure, Rodrigues Regional Assembly, for the renewal of pipeline in Port Mathurin Phase I. He further stated that he had engaged the said M. J. L and five other persons to help in the performance of the works.

On several occasions, he reprimanded the said M. J. L that his men were not performing to his satisfaction. Consequently, on the 27 May 2014, he sacked them from work. He has denied having done so under the instruction of any Commissioner but purely on a professional basis.

The Commissioner of Police has also informed that the matter is still under investigation. Since the matter is still under police enquiry, I will not further comment on same.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, he is aware that this same person has also lodged a case in the same matter to the Equal Opportunity's Commission where, he confirmed he has been sacked down in his job due to political ground?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I do not have this information in my reply. And, I will only reply from the information coming from the Commission of Office.

The Minority Leader: Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been many witnesses who have heard the Commissioner concerned stating that he will inform the Chief Commissioner because the then Contractor did not cooperate on... May I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, he is aware of that? Because the Commissioner concerned informed the then Promoter that he would go and see and talk to the Chief Commissioner about that. These people are prepared to come and state facts. The question is whether, the Chief Commissioner is aware of this fact. And if so, what is his stand on that?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, no further information can be given on the issue as the matter is still subject to enquiry by the Police. Whenever there is any person who will go ahead, please go to the Police Station and make a statement.

Mr. Chairperson: Please, next question!

**PAYMENT OF CHEQUES
– NHDC SLAB GRANT SCHEME**

(No. B/79): Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (Third Island region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and others whether, in regard to the payment of cheques under the NHDC slab grant scheme to beneficiaries in Rodrigues, he will:

- (a) obtain, for the benefit of the House, information from the Company the date of the last payment thereof and stating the number of beneficiaries concerned; and
- (b) state the number of applications received at his Commission including those which have already been approved and awaiting payment to date?

The Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the last payment under the National Housing Development Corporation (NHDC), Government Grant for Casting of Roof Slab scheme was effected on the 28 February 2013 for an amount of Rs 530,010 in favour of 19 beneficiaries.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, from the start of the scheme, 2,634 applications have been approved by the NHDC of which, 93 are awaiting payment as at 24 June 2013.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, you know, this money, the NSDC Slab Grant Scheme, it comes from the Central Government. And, it is a grant, which is given to those having housing difficulties, especially, those who are going to cast their slab or those who have had their slab damaged.

So, I would like to ask the Commissioner, 28 February 2013 to 08 July 2014, more than one year, and we know that the RRA, the Commission for Public Infrastructure only acts as facilitator in the matter, in that matter, in the process of granting these beneficiaries with their grants.

So, what has happened, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? What is the Commissioner doing? What is he doing at his commission? How can he explain the fact that more than one year has lapsed? One and a half year, to be more précised, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. One a half year has lapsed since the last payment of Government Grant for Casting of Slab. How can he explain this?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Government of Mauritius changed the system for granting of slab since last year. The National Housing Development Corporation sent the 93 approved applications, which have been approved, here, to the Ministry of Social Security and Reform Institution for

Social Register of Mauritius errands in three batches: 30 July 2013, 12 December 2013 and 29 May 2014 respectively. And to date, no report has been received from the said ministry.

But, moreover, at its meeting of the 30 June 2014, the Cabinet has decided to wave the procedure because it takes too long time for the Ministry of Social Security to send these applications to the Ministry of Finance and this was waved due to undue delay caused to applicants. Consequently, the NHDC has confirmed that the 93 cases are now being processed for payment.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner, as Commissioner Responsible for Housing, it is his attribution; housing. He cannot wait until the Cabinet takes a decision and then, to come here and say that the Cabinet is waving such and such procedure.

This is not our problem, Mr. Chairperson, Sir! The problem lies on what has he been doing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. What has he been doing all this time? Has he had meetings with the Managing Director? Has he been having meetings with the Minister?

What has happened? What has he been doing? One a half year, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. One and a half year! Do you know how much cases are pending, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? He has been talking only about 94, 2,000 applications are being... I do not know where it is being processed or whatever. What has he been doing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? From our part, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we know how it works. We do not accept this.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not afraid of people laughing. But I cannot... Je ne peux pas m'ingérer dans les affaires du Cabinet de Maurice et du Ministère de Finance. Si, lui, il peut mais il n'a rien fait auparavant.*

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : M. le président, je ne parle pas des affaires du Cabinet. J'ai été dans le Conseil Exécutif, je sais comment ça marche. On n'a pas le droit. Mais en tant que le Commissaire Responsable de *Housing*, il peut aller voir le *Managing Director* comme moi, je l'ai fait avant. Oui, je l'ai fait. On a été voir le *Managing Director*. On lui a expliqué. Mais si on s'assoit à Rodrigues, on ne fait rien, mais alors, il faut aller voir le *Managing Director* dont le bureau se trouve à Rose Hill. Il faut qu'il aille là-bas. Il faut qu'il aille voir le ministre pour voir qu'est-ce qui se passe. Il ne faut pas attendre le cabinet. Je ne parle pas du cabinet.

Mr. Chairperson: Can you put the question, please ?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : I am putting the question. I am coming, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Come straight to the question, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : I am coming straight out. What I would like to ask him; whether, he has had meetings with first of all, the Managing Director of the NHDC or the Minister for Housing or Social Security. And, what has been the output?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, this is a new policy of the Government of Mauritius. I cannot change this policy even if the respected Member is saying that we can do it. But we cannot interfere in the... By the NHDC, we cannot interfere in the policy applied by the NHDC and the Government of Mauritius.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me...

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I give you the last question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : One last. One very last. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, at times, for the applications of the beneficiaries to get approved, we need to have someone from the NHDC to come here and either, someone from the technician or even an engineer. The person has to come here to see the files. I do not see if ever there is a problem.

Mr. Chairperson: Please, listen. Please! Come with your question!

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : I am coming! They are disturbing me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, this is why I intervene.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Yes. Si vous allez me dire que la personne est venue, comment se fait-il que sur 2,000, seulement 94 a été approuvé ?

Mr. Chairperson: Address the Chair.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : *Mr. Chairperson, Sir*, oui, il suffit d'aller voir ces gens là-bas, là, on ne parle pas de politique. On connaît la procédure. On

connait les critères. Nous connaissons les critères, M. le président. *Pa vinn cachiette dir policy. This is wrong! This is not... We will not accept this.*

On ne peut pas venir nous dire facile, on a changé la *policy* à Maurice. Non ! Je demande au commissaire s'il a été voir le MD ou bien le ministre. *Dir moi oui ou soi non. What has been the output ? Not policy. What policy is he talking? He has his own policy as far as Housing is concerned. Now you are not autonomous in Housing!*

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Je crois que l'élève a compris ce que le professeur n'a pas compris. Tout a été changé, les procédures à cause du *Social Register Mauritius*. Et ça, c'est le cabinet qui a mis ces règlements-là en place pour que toutes les applications aillent dans le *Social Register Mauritius*. *The respected Member has not understood what I have said.*

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, sit down, please.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have got a supplementary question on that. Can I ask the Commissioner, by the time all the process is under way, does he know in what condition these beneficiaries are living? That is why my colleague was asking him whether, it was just a question of wait and see or did he have any move towards those concerned in Mauritius so as to speed up the matter. And if so, what has he done? This, he has not replied, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I have already replied to all these supplementary questions. The problem comes with the Social Register of Mauritius where all applications should have gone to Social Register in Mauritius. And, I will not answer to any question more on this.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, okay. Now, we come to next question, please.

AWARD OF CONTRACT – WATER PIPELINE NETWORKS

(No. B/80): Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (Third Island region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and others whether, in regard to the award of a contract for the improvement of water pipeline networks in the North, he will:-

- (a) table the list of the bidders indicating the price quoted by each;
- (b) give a brief description of the scope of work; and

- (c) state the item vote under which payment thereof will be effected by his Commission?

The Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the list of bidders and the price quoted in respect of the Contract Renewal of Pipelines at Port Mathurin – Phase I. The contract has been awarded to the lowest evaluated substantially responsive bidder namely B. Hurreeram & Sons Co. Ltd.

As regards part (b) of the question, the scope of works includes carrying out topographical survey and longitudinal profiles along the proposed pipe routes and submission of existing and proposed longitudinal profiles, laying, connecting, testing and commissioning of HDPE pipes and fittings in trenches and/or overground complete with allied works comprising but not limited to:

- about 1,700 m of 110 mm diameter HDPE pipes.
- about 2,800 m of 90 mm diameter HDPE pipes.
- pipe fittings and accessories
- concrete works including chambers, thrust blocks, support blocks, etc.
- asphaltic concrete works in reinstatement to existing roads disturbed.

Payment will be effected under the Programme 21601 – Water Production Item 31113005 – Water Supplies Development Project – PSIP A0116 under which, there is a balance of Rs 10 m.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House whether, purchase of accessories of pipes and other accessories are included in the whole contract?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No. The pipes and accessories are not included in the contract.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House whether, there have been meetings? And, if yes, how many meetings have there been between the Contractor and officers of this commission to see where the project stands?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are regular meetings and even site meetings which are being held with the Contractor.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House who is supervising this work at the level of his commission?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this work falls under the supervision of the Engineer Senior and the Officer in Charge of the West Division.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Can the Commissioner inform the House what is the official completion date for this project?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: The official completion for this project, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is the 14 August 2014.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as far as payment is concerned, I would like to ask the commissioner the fact that he is saying that pipes are not included in the contract, so I guess that the pipes have been bought. So, and we see that the contract is about 12.2 m. So, I would like to ask him whether, the sum, which is earmarked for this year, whether, this will be sufficient to pay for the payment of the pipes and the work, which are being carried out.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the fund will not be sufficient but funds will be reallocated to Programme 21501 – Water Production: Item 3111005: Water Supply Development and from savings available in other capital project of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House what, at the time being, what is the percentage completion of work? And, can he inform the House whether, he is aware that sometimes, the Contractor is having problem to have the necessary accessories to go ahead with the project? And, if he is aware of this information, what is he doing at the level of his commission so that a better comprehension between the Contractor and his commission is being done for the go forward of the project?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not in a position to give the percentage of work done and even for the materials, the fittings that the respected Member is saying. I am not aware of that but I will look into the matter.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, can we know from the Commissioner whether, the materials which will be used by the Contractor, first of all, which will be used by the Contractor, are according to norms? And, if yes, state what mechanism he has at the level of the commission to certify same. This is the

first question and the second one, whether this project can be subcontracted to another Contractor.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the materials have been ordered by the Commission for Water. So, it is in the norm. But regarding the second part of the question, I cannot answer it because it is the Contractor whoever he has subcontracted the works but I do not know.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House whether at this point of time, he can say that there will be a delay in the execution of this project?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: This question cannot be answered, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because now, we are on the 08 of July and there is more than one month left. What will happen, I do not know.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can we know from the Commissioner whether, he has a time frame? A time frame for all the projects, a time frame duly planned. Time frame for all the project from the commencement to the end, to the delivery of the project. And, if yes, to table same.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I need notice of this question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : M. le président, j'aimerais demander au Commissaire, premièrement, combien de familles sont concernées par ce projet ? Si c'est un projet à long terme et à la fin du projet, combien de familles vont être concernées ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I do not understand this question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, about what families... Families who are working with the Contractor or the families....

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry, please. Could you, please, rephrase your question?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : M. le président, c'est un problème. Il y a des gens qui n'arrivent pas à comprendre. On a expliqué ce projet, à la fin du projet, c'est-à-dire, je parle du machin *networking* pour mettre *Water Pipeline Network in the north*. Combien de familles ? Combien de familles, ça veut dire...

C'est-à-dire, allez, admettons que j'ai mal dit familles, familles bénéficiaires plus tout, *tu dimoune* ! Combien de familles ? Ceux qui

travaillent, ceux qui *lote*. Vous aurez dû comprendre. Maintenant, je redis. Familles, *tu familles*. *Fami travay, fami ki ggn dilo, tou fami ! Ou pa compren ?*

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, come with your question! Come with your question, please!

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : I am coming! I am coming!

Mr. Chairperson: No! No! Come straight with your question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : I am coming! I am coming.

Mr. Chairperson: You are intelligent.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Yes, I know.

Mr. Chairperson: You are not childish!

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : No, I am not....

Mr. Chairperson: Do not be like that!

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : I am intelligent but at times, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, when you meet people who are not that...

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, please, your question?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Yes. Oui, M. le président, j'aimerais demander... *I am rephrasing the question*. Les familles qui sont concernées, ça veut dire les bénéficiaires, c'est-à-dire, ceux qui auront de l'eau à la fin de la journée, de l'eau dans leur robinet. *Korek ? À travers les tuyaux*.

Mr. Chairperson: Please, *robinet ou pé dir moi ?*

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Oui.... Combien de personnes seront touchées ? Combien de familles vont bénéficier de ce projet ? Combien de familles auront de l'eau de leurs robinets ?

Mr. Chairperson: Okay. Please, this is the question. Now, put the answer.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le président, la connexion aura être fait par abonné par *customer*. Parce que si dans une famille, il y a dix personnes, je ne

peux pas répondre pour combien de familles vont servir de cette eau. Il a dit qu'aussi, ceux qui travaillent sur le projet. Mais ça, je n'ai pas de réponse à ça. Mais oui... Non, je ne peux pas répondre à ce genre de question-là, M. le président.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please !

DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING MATERIALS – BENEFICIARIES

(No. B/81): Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (Third Island region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and others whether, with regard to the distribution of housing materials to beneficiaries around the island, he will:

- (a) state the criteria used by his Commission to designate the beneficiaries; and
- (b) table the names and addresses of the beneficiaries indicating the social profile for each of them, including the total number of materials distributed to each beneficiary?

The Commissioner Responsible for Public Infrastructure (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, upon application for assistance for housing materials, a social enquiry has to be effected by a Social Security Officer accompanied by an Inspector of Public Infrastructure Commission who will have to assess the materials required to be issued. It is the Social Security Officer who will confirm the eligibility of applicants. Housing materials are delivered to beneficiaries on merit.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the part (b) of the question, it would be unethical to disclose the information regarding the names, address of the beneficiaries indicating their social profile.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first of all, I have heard the Commissioner saying that there should be a Social Security Officer and an officer from the Commission for Public Infrastructure to visit the person before granting him or her housing materials. Does this mean, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that those beneficiaries who have already been granted housing materials, there has been no survey carried out?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the respected Member has not listened to the part (a) of the question where, I said that... The number, I will not give it and the information of the given names due to unethical reason.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as far as the names of the beneficiaries are concerned, where is the problem? This is government money! This is government money! We used to table names of people. How come? What is... I do not know what exact word he used. This is not ethical. You should be glad to help people!

When you, in your commission, you are helping people, you come to this House, you table the names: *'I have been able to help Mr. X, Mr. Y, Mrs. Y'*. Where is the problem? I do not see where is the problem, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. So, does this mean that the Commissioner is hiding some information? We know some people who have been granted housing materials. We know who they are. Rodrigues is very small. We know who they are. Does this mean that some people do not fit in the criteria?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all materials not have been delivered by my commission after social inquiry by the Social Security Officer, all persons who merit these materials have been delivered with same.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Commissioner whether, those people who have had damage in the cyclone Amara, all those who have applied for buildings, those victims who have applied for building materials, they have been granted same?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, now, next question, please.

WATER UNIT SECTION – LA FERME

(No. B/82): Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and others whether, with regard to the Water Unit Section of La Ferme he will, for the benefit of the House, state the:

- (a) number of officers per grade posted thereat;
- (b) amount of overtime paid to officers per grade, if any, since February 2012 to date; and

- (c) number of vehicles attached thereto specifying their running conditions and the mode of control for their displacement?

**The Commissioner Responsible for Public Infrastructure and Others
(Mr. S. P. Roussety):**

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the number of officers posted at the South Section of the Water Unit including La Ferme is as follows:

SN	GRADE	QUANTITY
1	Assistant Inspector	1
2	Foreman	2
3	Senior Field Supervisor	2
4	Field Supervisor	3
5	Plumber and Pipe Fitter	1
6	Driver	2
7	Operator Pumping Station	6
8	Filter man	2
9	Water Supply Attendant	15
10	Lorry Loader	3
11	General Workers	21

The amount of overtime paid per grade is as follows:

SN	GRADE	2012 (Rs)	2013 (Rs)	2014 (Rs)
1	Assistant Inspector	Nil		
2	Foreman	Nil	3236.54	Nil
3	Senior Field Supervisor	Nil	7700.85	16940.26
4	Field Supervisor	Nil	7071.71	
5	Plumber and Pipe Fitter	Nil	1738.34	Nil
6	Driver	85887.53	165176.41	127947.46

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7	Operator Pumping Station	Nil	18980.55	107500
8	Filter man	Nil	16323.58	45871.11
9	Water Supply Attendant	23265	1035.26	Nil
10	Lorry Loader	Nil	56199.47	32679.39
11	General Workers	Nil	39300	56250

As regard to part (c) of the question, there are four vehicles attached to the Water Unit South Section comprises of:-

- Two lorry water tankers bearing registration Nos. 37 RRA 07 and 02 RRA 12; and
- Two double cabs 4 X 4 bearing registration Nos. GMR 583 and GMR 645.

These vehicles are in good running conditions and their maintenance is being done as it is scheduled. It is the Inspector of Works of the section who is responsible for the overall supervision of these vehicles and their preparation of the related programme.

The control of the running of the vehicles for the relevant registration of logbooks is done by the Transport Account Clerk.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Spéville, I saw you first. My eyes fall on him first.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Bé guet moi osi impé.*

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Your question.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first, can the Commissioner inform the House, following the network *Conduite en Crête*, which reservoirs fall under the purview of the La Ferme Section? And, secondly, whether, it exists at the La Ferme Section, an emergency team to cater for problems after odd hours. And, what is the modus operandi of the operation?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the first part of the question, it is irrelevant to the question, itself. But for the second part of the question, in facts, there is the one Supervisor, which looks after the good smooth running of the La Ferme Water Unit.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please. Mr. Agathe.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Thank you. Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (b) for overtime, I heard the Commissioner mention of three years; 2012, 2013 and 2014. Can we know from the Commissioner what the workers are doing at La Ferme exactly so that overtime for 2014, up to now, we are in the month of July, is almost treble compared to the other years? What specific one?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the payment of overtime for 2014, there is a part of overtime of 2013 included in it. And, at the end of 2013 and beginning of 2014, we experienced severe drought. So, we have to cater for distribution of water through water tanks because we are not paying any private lorry tankers to distribute water to the population.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt : Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as far as vehicles are concerned, one thing we have to ask the Commissioner to enlighten us, at times we see the Driver driving the 4 X 4 pickup, at times, we see the Foreman, at times we see the Gangman, the reservoir pickup. What is happening, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? We would like to know what is happening to these vehicles. These are government vehicles. And, the government pays for the diesel and so on. So, I would like to ask him can he enlighten us on the fact that we see other grades, other persons other than the Drivers driving these pickups.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le président, ce que je remercie à ces gens qui conduisent ces voitures parce qu'ils font un travail formidable, dans la région sud et ouest. La distribution en eau a été améliorée, beaucoup améliorée sortant d'un mois pour venir à 10, 15 jours. Mais là, ce que tout le monde, toutes ces personnes qui conduisent ces voitures, ils ont un *service licence*.

On a seulement deux chauffeurs *lorry driver* alors que les autres ont des *assignments* pour conduire et les autres ont un *service licence* pour aider à la bonne marche de la gestion de l'eau dans le sud. Et le sud, la gestion s'est bien améliorée jusqu'à maintenant. Ce n'est pas une question de pluie. C'est une question de *management*.

Mr. Chairperson: Let me inform you that we have got only 20 minutes left. Come to the last question.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, since the Commissioner is stating that the officers of the Water Unit of La Ferme are doing a good job, can I ask him whether, he is aware that since weeks, some pipes have been laid idle on the road from Corail leading to Petite Butte? Is he aware of that? And, can he inform the House what are these pipes meant for?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am aware that the Water Unit Section of La Ferme is doing a good job. But I am also aware that there will be a little droughts in the future.

Mr. Chairperson: Please continue. Continue with your answer.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I am also aware we have to renovate some pipeline but we cannot do it every day. We have to do repairs work but this work will be done. Do not worry.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay. Next question, please!

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have a last supplementary question on this. Can I? Last one. Yes, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether, I am referring to the two 4 X 4 vehicles, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the two 4 X 4 vehicles, whether, these two 4 X 4 are in good running conditions? Because I have got some information that, the board of one of these vehicles is not working correctly. Can the Commissioner inform us about this situation?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered this in my reply.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please!

ALLOWANCES/SOCIAL AIDS

(No. B/83): Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to allowances and Social Aids, he will state and table the different categories thereof paid to beneficiaries in Rodrigues and, for the period January 2014 to date, state:

- (a) if any applications for Child Allowance and Carers Allowance have not been considered and, if so, to give reasons therefor; and
- (b) whether there are beneficiaries still awaiting for recommendation from Medical Board to have their allowance/Social Aid and, if so, since when?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner?

The Commissioner Responsible for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that Social Aid and other related allowances are being granted under the Social Aid Act 1983 and its subsequent regulations.

I am tabling the list of different categories of Social Aid and Allowances paid to beneficiaries in Rodrigues for the period January 2014 to date as requested by the respected Member. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, part (a) of the question relates to part V of the Social Aid Act which states, I quote:

‘A Carer’s Allowance in lieu of child’s allowance is being paid to a child between the age of 6 months and 18 years and suffers from a disability of at least 60% and in need of a constant care and attention as certified by the medical board.’ End quote.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as at January 2014 to date, there have been 24 cases which have not been considered due to non-recommendation by the Medical Boards.

As regard to part (b), I am informed that all claimants examined by the Medical Board are made aware of the outcome through the Higher Social Security Officers of the Regional Offices concerned.

Subsequently, if there has been positive recommendation and if the applicant satisfies all the other conditions governing Social Aid, their applications will be processed for payment. Therefore, the answer is no as regard to part (b).

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have come across some beneficiaries who have reported to us that especially the Carer’s Allowance. Especially the Carer’s Allowance, which has been disrupted by the Commission for Social Security. I am referring to a case at Montagne Cabris/Corail. A woman of 95 years old, her Carer’s Allowance has been disrupted. Does the Commissioner aware of this case?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: First of all, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, if I refer to the Standing Order 19 – Content of Questions, there is written: *‘No question shall cover more than one subject’*. Here, the Member, in his main question, is talking about Social Aid and Allowances.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: I am referring to Carer’s Allowance.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Carer's Allowance according to Social Aid Act, Carer's Allowance is related to child. Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Carer's Allowance you are talking about relates to pension: basic pension. Here, you have not talked about basic pensions. I do not have the answer for this particular question, as it was not related to this one.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you. Next question, please!

DONIA FESTIVAL – MADAGASCAR

(No. B/84): Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Commissioner for Arts and Culture and Others whether, in regard to the Donia Festival held recently in Madagascar, she will?

- (a) State the composition of her delegation and in which capacity they represented Rodrigues;
- (b) Table the detailed costs incurred per person/group in the delegation; and
- (c) State the outcome of same?

Mr. Chairperson: Commissioner?

The Commissioner responsible for Youth and others (Ms. M. R. Edouard): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, before indulging in the detailed composition of the delegation, I wish to draw the attention of the House that, it is Rodrigues first participation in the 21st Edition of the Donia Festival Nosy Be. The delegation was composed of myself and five other artists and their skills are detailed below.

There was one artist who was Accordeonist. He was also playing tambour and the guitar. The others were playing the percussion, bango, *triangle*, the *fameux triangle qu'on a vu dans les journaux*, lead vocal, back vocal, *goni*, *caisse manyok*, *mandioline*, etc.

So, what I wish to highlight, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that the abovementioned artists, the five artists are polyvalent artists. And, they represented Rodrigues as a musical group in the *Nosy Bé Donia Festival* in Madagascar as from the 31 of May 2014 to the 10 of June 2014.

The group had the opportunity to show a new style of Rodriguan music. That is, a fusion of traditional instruments of Rodrigues, African musical instruments and contemporary musical instruments namely:- the *Accordéon diatoniques et chromatiques*, *Kes mannyok*, *Baliékoko* among the long list of instruments that form part of the Rodriguan culture in the culture of the group itself.

En somme, le groupe « *Mannyok* » et sa musique a représenté Rodrigues avec rythmes et ses voix aux timbres uniques et a permis l'éveil de la mémoire Rodriguaise et notre identité profonde.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in view of the proximity of the musical rhythm and the style performed by “*Mannyok*” with the African musical style, they were invited by the “*Comité d'Organisation du Festival de Nosy Bé (CONFESTIN)*” represented by Mr. Daniel Boisson to participate in the Donia Festival 2014.

As regards to part (b) of the question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, an assistance of Rs 35,000 was granted to the group to enable them to participate in the festival representing three air tickets Rodrigues/Mauritius/Rodrigues to three members of the group and a financial assistance of Rs 12,520 as financial assistance as mentioned below.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as several then Commissioners, then Chief Commissioners have made it clear to the house *et je crois que je ne vais pas réinventer la roue sur ce sujet-là*. I quote:

‘The amount of subsistence allowance paid depends on the country in which the mission is carried out and the cost of living of the country is governed by the Ministry of Finance guidelines. As per guidelines set out by the Ministry of Finance, a subsistence allowance of \$ 2,322 was paid to the Commissioner to cover all costs of boarding, accommodation, inland transport amongst others.’

It is also important to note that a personalised invitation was sent to me as Commissioner for Arts and Culture of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we congratulate the laudable effort and commitments made by the group to cater for two air tickets Rodrigues/Mauritius/Rodrigues and the five air tickets from Mauritius/Madagascar/Mauritius amounting to some Rs 121,000 in other words: “*le groupe a payé leur billet de leur poches*”.

In the light of usual practice, local hospitality, that is; transport facilities from and to airport and during their stay was provided by the Organising Committee to the group.

As regards to part (c), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the aim of this festival was to promote musical performance of African origin and included the participation of artists and cultural musical group from the Gabon, Comoro Island, Reunion Island, Seychelles, Rodrigues and Malagasy Republic.

It was an opportunity for the delegation to develop and promote cultural exchanges in the field of music and vocal with other participating musical groups and on top of all, to make Rodrigues better known in this region of the Indian Ocean.

In the same respect, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the group has had the opportunity to share how they established experience of the Donia Festival in a workshop organised by my Commission on the 24 of May and performed freely for the La Ferme Music Day on the 21 of June. This tour has, therefore, been a unique occasion to strengthen the ties with friendly countries and further enhance multilateral cooperation and exchanges with these countries which was made possible through a meeting with the Minister of Arts and Crafts of Madagascar.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am also proud to witness the open-mindedness, the positive attitude and the “*esprit du corps*” showed by our local participating group after participation in such regional festival and we must say that the performances of Rodrigues were highly appreciated by the foreign audiences and were beyond the expectation of the Organising Committee that is, the CONFESTIN.

We can also, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, be proud of our cultural identity demonstrated by the group in their performance. In addition, the group “*Mannyok*” had the chance to meet well-known artists in the Indian Ocean in the abovementioned countries, which I detailed earlier. And, also, the outcome of the mission was beyond expectations since it aimed most precisely at ensuring the representativity of different islands like Madagascar and Mayotte in the coming 15th Edition of the Festival Kreol 2014.

Hearteningly, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is important to note that islands like Madagascar has never participated in the Kreole Festival in Rodrigues under the former government. And, we had to ensure that they came back.

And, then, also, M. le président, j’aimerais attirer l’attention de cette chambre suite à un article apparu dans un hebdomadaire local disant que la Commission des Arts et de la Culture ‘*nou batte tambour*’. Donc, ça en dit long sur la culture journalistique de ces derniers. Mais, aussi, ça en dit long de leurs perceptions de nos batteurs de triangle à Rodrigues qui font un travail

formidable pour que la musique de Rodrigues soit de l'avant, pour que les personnes d'ailleurs puissent apprécier ce que nous faisons.

Donc, ça, je trouve ça regrettable. Je ne vais pas mâcher mes mots pour expliquer aux artistes et montrer cet article-là aux personnes concernées. Mais notre action au niveau du gouvernement, M. le président, vise à professionnaliser le secteur culturel et à créer toute une économie autour de cette culture. Je suis fière de dire que nous sommes en bonne voie et avec la bénédiction du Chef commissaire, je suis sûre que nous allons dans la bonne direction et nous allons encore plus loin. Merci.

Mr. Chairperson: May I inform you that you have got only two minutes left for question time. Three minutes left question time. At the same time, I have to inform you that Question B/92, B/95, B/97... There are so many questions. I repeat; start with B/86, B/87, B/88, B/89, B/92, B/93, B/94, B/95 and B/97 have been withdrawn. You have got only one and a half minutes left. You may ask your question, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes. Can the Commissioner enlighten the House? Since I have met many artists from Rodrigues, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *je ne suis pas gro leker, gro poumon* but I have to say it here. You will see that in different mission abroad...

Mr. Chairperson: If you do not come with your question, your question time finishes.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: In the same mission abroad, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in Mauritius, in Reunion, in Seychelles, Madagascar and so on and so on, you will see one person accompanying all these missions. I will not name the... I will not give the name. But you will know the name. You know the name. Can we know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whether, this person promote only his music or for the Rodriguan population?

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry. May I inform you that B/85 also is withdrawn. B/85. Yes, please?

Ms. R. L. Edouard: M. le président, permettez-moi d'attirer l'attention de cette chambre. Parce que ce que le membre met de l'avant aujourd'hui, on a expliqué le 24 mai lors de la rencontre avec les artistes. Vous savez, il y a des choses qu'il faut que le gouvernement fasse pour les artistes. Et ça, ils l'ont compris. Mais il y a des choses aussi qu'il faut que les artistes comprennent qu'eux-mêmes, ils doivent prendre des initiatives.

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On leur a fait comprendre. Moi, comment j'ai su que c'est le groupe qui a été choisi ? Parce que moi, je vous ai dit, j'ai eu une invitation personnalisée. On m'a envoyé la lettre pour demander une aide. Voilà, le groupe a reçu son invitation personnalisée de l'organisation qui organise l'activité. Il faut noter, M. le président, lors des manifestations culturelles, il y a des délégations de l'Amérique qui viennent, il y a des délégations de la Chine qui viennent. Il n'y a pas beaucoup d'artistes qui viennent.

On les a encouragés de venir et de prendre contact avec ces personnes. Et c'est comme ça qu'on se fait connaître dans les différents pays et comme ça, les gens contactent. Mais sinon, si quelqu'un a son argent dans poche pour partir, il part. C'est simple.

FOUR DESALINATION PLANTS – RODRIGUES

(No. B/86): Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Commissioner for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the setting up of four desalination plants in Rodrigues and which were to be operational since April 2014, he will give a description of progress of the projects to date?

[Withdrawn]

PAYMENT OF ALLOWANCE

(No. B/87): Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and others whether, in regard to the payment of an allowance of Rs 750 per child per month for families earning less than Rs 6200 per month, he will state the number of applications received therefor and beneficiaries thereof, since its introduction to date?

[Withdrawn]

POWDERY WILDEW - (ICERYA SEYCHELLARUM)

(No. B/88): Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, whether, in regard to the massive problem of Powdery Wildew (*Icerya Seychellarum*) commonly known as *cosny* attacking plants and which is adversely affecting agriculture with

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negative impacts he will state if consideration will be given for the possibility of having an islandwise action to eliminate same and if not, why?

[Withdrawn]

STRAY DOGS - RODRIGUES

(No. B/89): Mr. J. D. Spéville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to stray dogs in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) the number of stray dogs caught islandwise since February 2006 to date;
- (b) the ways and means available at the level of his Commission to catch these dogs; and
- (c) the procedures and modus operandi involved when these dogs are caught, if any?

[withdrawn]

CREATION OF LABEL - RODRIGUES

(No. B/92): Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the project for the creation of the label for Rodrigues, she could enlighten the House where matters stand in relation thereto?

[Withdrawn]

**INTERNET AND COMPUTING
CORE CERTIFICATION (IC3)**

(No. B/93): Mr. D. L. Guillaume (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3) run under the Universal ICT Education Programme (UIEP) in Rodrigues, she will, for the benefit of the House, state the number of participants who were enrolled for same and who have completed the course for the period January 2012 to date?

[Withdrawn]

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STRAY DOGS

(No. B/94): 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 January 2012 to date, state the number thereof caught and spayed, in each case, indicating their place of impoundment?

[Withdrawn]

TERRITORIAL SEA AROUND RODRIGUES

(No. B/95): Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the territorial sea around Rodrigues, he will state and table copy of any survey/s carried by different authorities in mainland and by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in relation thereto and to give details thereof?

[Withdrawn]

RODRIGUES DISASTER COMMITTEE

(No. B/97): Mr. J. C. Agathe (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Rodrigues Disaster Committee, he will state the:-

- (a) number of times the Committee has met for the period 2013 to date and to table same;
- (b) amount of money paid together with the names and duty performed by each member of the Committee for each calamity for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 to date and to table copy of same; and
- (c) working arrangement, if any, established with the Disaster Committee in Mauritius and, if so, to give details thereof?

[Withdrawn]

Mr. Chairperson: Question time over.

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

ICT DEVELOPMENT IN RODRIGUES

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to make a statement on the ICT development in Rodrigues. In fact, as you are aware, the Chief Commissioner announced that the actual Regional Government has as objective to “*Développer le secteur des Technologies de L’Informatique comme un nouveau pilier de l’économie*”.

M. le président, nombreuses initiatives sont prises par le gouvernement à travers la Commission pour l’informatique en vue de préparer la population en vue des développements majeurs dans ce secteur.

Pour rappel la formation des jeunes, au nombre de 400 à ce jour a déjà été complétée au « *ICT Centre for Excellence* » de janvier 2013 à ce jour. La formation des fonctionnaires et des entrepreneurs.

La mise en place de dix « *learning corners* », à travers toute l’île a déjà complété et la réalisation de 11 « *learning corners* » additionnels dans 11 villages avant la fin de l’année avec la collaboration de la NEF. Ce qui ramènera le nombre de village à 21, a été muni de trois ordinateurs chacun, connecté à l’internet 24 heures sur 24 heures gratuitement, dans les centres communautaires respectifs, à la disposition de tous les villageois indistinctement.

Après l’augmentation de la bande passante de 37 Mbps à 145 Mbps à ce jour pour le besoin domestique principalement.

Nous avons organisé le « *ICT Road Show* » en avril 2014 à Maurice dans le but d’attirer les investisseurs potentiels dans ce secteur à profit ces 40 Mbps de connectivité additionnel réserver pour le développement du secteur comme un secteur porteur d’emploi à Rodrigues. Ceci ramènera l’augmentation de la bande passante de 37 Mbps à 195 Mbps comme annoncé précédemment.

Dans ce « *Road Show* », nous avons énoncé des mesures tels que la mise à la disposition d’un bâtiment par le RRA aux potentiels investisseurs pour les « *Business Process Outsourcing/Call Centre* » et autres.

Dans ce contexte, j’ai le plaisir d’annoncer que l’appel de candidature pour le « *upgrading* » du DBM building a déjà été complété et le contrat sera alloué dans les jours qui viennent.

En parallèle, un « *Request for Proposal* » sera publié cette semaine en vue de confirmer la venue des opérateurs/compagnies dans le domaine de l’informatique à venir s’installer à Rodrigues.

M. le président, en vue de continuer à sensibiliser la population sur les développements dans ce secteur qui ne cesse d'évoluer à vitesse grand V, nous collaborons pleinement avec la *National Computer Board* (NCB), sous l'égide du Ministère de l'Informatique pour renouveler l'expérience de l'Infotech cette année. En effet, j'invite toute la population à participer à la 31^{ème} édition de l'Infotech le 02/03 août prochain à l'école du gouvernement Basile Allas.

- 2 ateliers de validation à Maurice avec les stakeholders
- À Rodrigues avec la population
- Avec la présence des Consultants.

Mr. Chairperson: I would like to rectify one question. B/85 is not withdrawn. The Member requested a written answer.

The Chief Commissioner: Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please. I wanted to say it. You listen to the statement. Yes, you do not make any comment now but you listen to the statement. Thank you.

PROJET DE LACAZ POISSON

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): M. le président, j'aimerais aujourd'hui apporter une petite réflexion sur ce projet que le Ministre de la Pêche qualifie comme un super projet qui peut être bien pour Maurice mais pas forcément bon pour Rodrigues.

M. le président, je vais élaborer sur les raisons pour lesquelles le Gouvernement Régional n'est pas d'accord avec la mise en place de ce projet à Rodrigues.

Sur le plan technique, M. le président, d'après le Project Write-Up qui a été soumis à ma commission par le Ministère de la Pêche, ce projet doit être exécuté sur une profondeur de sept à neuf mètres. Qui ne sait pas qu'à Rodrigues, qu'à marée basse on peut jouer au football dans la majeure partie du lagon, ce qui indique qu'il n'y a pas beaucoup de profondeur.

M. le Président, il y a que quelques endroits où on peut avoir un peu de profondeur dans le lagon. C'est dans quelques passes, quelques bassins et le port. Tout le monde sait, que les passes facilitent la navigation et ne doivent en aucun cas être obstruées.

En ce qui concerne les bassins, ce sont des bassins très importants pour l'écosystème marin parce qu'ils permettent aux poissons et autres animaux marins de se réfugier à marée basse. Nos aînés les appellent les réserves et on n'a même pas le droit de pratiquer même la pêche à la seine dans ces bassins. Il n'y a pas beaucoup de ces bassins ou réserves qui ont la profondeur demandée par ce projet.

Concernant le port, où il y a de la profondeur et de l'espace, et c'est considéré comme le Port Area. Et normalement, on n'a pas le droit de faire de l'aquaculture dans cet endroit.

M. le Président, on a un énorme lagon, c'est vrai, qui fait notre fierté mais il n'est pas profond. Il ne faut pas penser que tout ce qui se fait à Maurice, peut aussi être fait à Rodrigues. Rodrigues est différent de Maurice dans tous les sens du mot.

M. le président, pour appuyer ce que je viens de dire, je vais citer quelque chose. Un projet, un rapport qui a été écrit par le PNUD GEF. En 2008 d'ailleurs, reprenez bien la date, la période. Et le titre, c'est "*Feasibility Study of Potential Aquaculture Resources in the Rodrigues MPA and the Lagoon*". Ce rapport a été écrit par M. Lewis Le Vay en le 15 février 2008.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: 2014 la boss.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: 2008, la mer n'a pas changé, mon frère.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, please!

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Bon, c'est en anglais. Donc, je vais le faire en anglais. Je vais citer ce qui a été écrit.

Mr. Chairperson: I said question time is over. Now, you listen!

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I quote. It is on page 17 of this report, Section 5.5 regarding Water Depth.

'Rodrigues lagoon is characterised by extremely shallow waters with the vast majority of its area having a mean depth of less than 2m. A tidal range at spring tides of 1.35-1.65... Not even 2m. ...means that very large areas of the lagoon are either exposed or extremely shallow at low water. The only areas of mean water depth greater than 5m are found in the two channels, at Port Mathurin in the north and Grand Passe, off Port Sud Est, in the south.'

As the pass at Port Mathurin is maintained as a shipping channel, this would be an inappropriate setting for aquaculture development. This leaves Grand Passe, which lies within the proposed MPA, as the only region of deeper water in the entire lagoon, with depths greater than 20m.

However, this southeast stretch of coast is exposed to risk of damage from storms. Some isolated areas of intermediate depth (2.5-5m) are found off Baie du Nord on the north shore of the island, in the bay at Anse Quitor in the south, also within the proposed MPA.'

Another technical side is said about salinity, which is very important as well because all these fish will be stuck in a cage and they cannot move to get better salinity. As there are few permanent... Again, this is part of the report.

'As there are few permanent rivers on Rodrigues, salinity in the lagoon waters is fairly constant throughout the year, reflecting oceanic conditions within the range of 34.5 to 37.0. However, during periods of heavy rainfall, there are likely to be episodes of high freshwater run off from the steep watershed, resulting in short-term drastic reductions in salinity in estuaries and nearshore embayments. Such events could be very detrimental for some farmed marine species.'

Ça, c'est le rapport. M. le président, regardons maintenant le volet économique. Ce projet pilote... Pilote, d'ailleurs, c'est écrit sur le projet. Ce projet pilote a déjà été initié à Maurice depuis un bon bout de temps. Jusqu'à maintenant, on n'a pas pu nous dire combien il coutera à ces pêcheurs pour produire 1 kg de poissons.

Sachez, M. le Président, qu'il y a les frets de l'essence, la nourriture journalière pour les poissons qui coûte Rs30 le kg. Le coût de main d'œuvre n'a pas été budgété comme si ce n'était pas important. Alors que pour connaître le coût de production d'un produit, pour finalement connaître le prix à la vente, il est très important de connaître le coût du *labour*.

Cet élément est très important, M. le président, mais le Ministère de la Pêche n'a pas trouvé bon pour budgéter cela. Ce projet est exactement comme le projet « *Ti Poule* », on donne des poussins, un peu de nourriture et à la fin quand les éleveurs doivent acheter de la nourriture, ils se retrouvent sans les sous. Ils n'ont pas assez puisque c'est trop cher et n'arrivent pas à répliquer le projet. Finalement, c'est un projet qui meurt même à court terme.

M. le président, on voit à la télé des gros...

Mr. Chairperson: Do not disturb, please.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: M. le président, on voit à la télé des gros cordonniers dans une cage et cela ne veut rien dire, si on ne connaît pas la marge de profit ou de perte pour savoir si cela vaut de la peine de s'investir.

M. le président, sur le plan écologique, le projet devait commencer avec l'introduction du « *béri rouge* » dans la mer de Rodrigues. Cela veut dire introduire une nouvelle espèce de poisson dans le milieu naturel du lagon de Rodrigues et c'est grave. Notre gouvernement ne prendra jamais un risque pareil.

Puis, ils sont venus avec le cordonnier. On leur a posé la question depuis novembre 2012 d'où allait venir ces petits poissons, ces petits cordonniers, ces « *fingerlings* ». Puisque notre question est restée sans réponse, j'imagine qu'il allait venir d'Albion de Maurice et encore une fois, cela ne se fait pas de nos jours. On appelle ça de l'introduction de poisson dans le milieu naturel, que ça vient de Maurice ou d'ailleurs.

M. le président, toujours sur le plan écologique, on a demandé la composition de cette nourriture qui allait être jeté en mer tous les jours. On n'a pas eu de réponse depuis 2012. On a posé la question « quels sont les risques d'impacts sur notre environnement marin », zéro réponse.

M. le président, encore sur le plan écologique. Une mauricienne qui travaille comme chercheuse à la MASA a alerté les Mauriciens sur un éventuel problème de santé car ces poissons qui vivent entassés dans une petite espace risquent de développer des maladies et des microbes qui peuvent sévèrement affecter l'environnement marin.

Par contre, M. le président, sur le plan politique, cela a sûrement un bon effet parce que l'auteur de ce projet en question veut montrer que lui, il veut faire quelque chose pour Rodrigues que le Gouvernement Régional ne veut pas.

M. le président, si c'était quelque chose qui allait être bon pour Rodrigues, je suis sûr que le Gouvernement Régional, sous notre Chef commissaire, aurait accueilli le projet à bras ouvert. On aime cette île, « *nou pas envi casse leker sa zil la* », M. le président.

Je confirme qu'on est actuellement en pourparler avec des investisseurs qui voudraient faire de l'aquaculture responsable avec les pêcheurs Rodriguais, comme l'élevage des « *bambaras* ».

M. le président, ce projet est un projet pilote. Et normalement, un projet pilote est mis en place comme un test afin de tirer de leçons pour ensuite voir s'il faut répliquer ou pas. Avant de répliquer, tous les paramètres doivent être testés.

M. le président, même si le titre du projet est pilote, il paraît que le fait de voir quelques gros cordonniers dans une cage, des gens pensent que c'est un succès. Mais, M. le Président, l'apparence est souvent trompeuse. Et nous, on se base sur des « *facts and figures* » et cela on n'a pas trouvé jusqu'à maintenant avec ce projet.

M. le président, ce gouvernement accueillera tout projet d'aquaculture qui ne causera pas de dégâts à ce petit paradis, Rodrigues naturellement. Merci, M. le Président.

Mr. Chairperson: Commissioner for Youth, please.

OUVERTURE – SALLE DE DANSE – CENTRE CULTUREL MONT PLAISIR

The Commissioner responsible for Youth and others (Ms. M. R. Edouard): Merci, M. le président. Je vais faire un *statement* sur l'ouverture d'une salle de danse à Mont Plaisir. Le samedi 28 juin 2014, au Centre de Loisirs et de Culture de Mont Plaisir, a eu lieu l'ouverture de la première salle de danse à Rodrigues.

Le Chef Commissaire, M. Louis Serge Clair et moi-même, Commissaire des Arts et de la Culture, en présence des officiers de la commission, des musiciens, des chorégraphes, des danseurs et danseuses traditionnels et modernes, et de nombreux invités, nous avons procédé avec fierté et émotion à l'inauguration de cette nouvelle salle de danse.

Cette salle de danse a été créée dans ce qui était, jusqu'à présent, une des salles polyvalentes situées au bas, au Centre de Mont Plaisir. Quand nous sommes revenus au pouvoir, en février 2012, M. le président, nous savions que ces deux salles étaient une bonne base. Nous savions aussi qu'elles étaient un peu bruyantes par manque d'insonorisation, et non équipée bien sûr, l'est resté trop longtemps l'ensemble du Centre de Loisirs et de Mont Plaisir, ignoré pendant des années par l'équipe gouvernementale précédente, qui n'a rien fait pour continuer l'installation, l'équipement technique, et même la maintenance.

Je voudrais faire ressortir, M. le président, que c'est sous la vision du gouvernement actuel que ce centre a été fait et j'apprécie le sarcasme du

membre. M. le président, ce Centre Culturel, longtemps dédaigné par l'opposition, est devenu au cours de ces trente derniers mois, ou ces deux ans et demi, un véritable espace culturel, fréquenté par un nombre grandissant de Rodriguais et de Rodriguaises, qui se sentent chez eux quand ils viennent aux nombreuses et diverses manifestations de loisirs, de culture, de rencontres, de formation, de débats et de conférences sur des sujets qui touchent de près la vie de Rodrigues autonome.

Disons pour être plus précis, que le Chef commissaire et moi-même, nous avons procédé à l'ouverture d'un véritable studio de danse, aux normes professionnelles, pour l'enseignement, la pratique et le développement de la danse et de la création chorégraphique, à Rodrigues. C'est important pour le bien être, l'imagination, la créativité et la santé de la jeunesse rodriguaise. C'est aussi, soyons sûr, un excellent moyen de transmission du savoir et de la pratique de la danse et du chant traditionnel rodriguais, éléments fondamentaux de notre histoire et de notre identité.

Le sol magnifique de ce studio d'environ 150 m², est maintenant couvert d'un joli plancher de couleur miel, les vitres et les ouvertures donnant vers l'extérieur peuvent être masquées par de grands rideaux de lin de couleur écru qui participent à l'insonorisation de la salle, et parfois à la quiétude nécessaire pour une bonne concentration.

Enfin, le mur faisant face aux vitres et ouvertures donnant sur les collines de Saint Gabriel, avec au loin, un bleu de l'océan... *Mo pé fer enn petit poème*. Un grand miroir de 15 m de long et de 2m 50 de hauteur a été installé. Ce miroir de presque 40 m² permet aux danseurs traditionnels et modernes de corriger, de répéter et de parfaire leurs mouvements et leurs chorégraphies, et aussi d'aborder les bases de disciplines de la danse classique, grâce à deux «Barres», outils de travail incontournable dans un studio de danse professionnel.

Ces deux barres vont permettre à nos danseurs modernes de faire leurs exercices d'assouplissements et d'échauffements du corps, des muscles, et de la concentration d'esprit. Cette salle de danse, véritable outil professionnel, est probablement l'une des plus belles de cette région de l'Océan indien. Nombreux sont les danseurs et les chorégraphes qui rêvent de travailler dans un espace équipé de la sorte, où le calme et la beauté du lieu sont une invitation au travail et à la création.

Il faut savoir, M. le président, qu'en plus des nombreux groupes de danse et de chant traditionnel, nous avons maintenant plus de 70 jeunes qui pratiquent la danse moderne, sous la direction de plusieurs chorégraphes. Il faut savoir que

ces jeunes répètent plusieurs fois par semaine. Il faut aussi savoir que de nombreux musiciens viennent les observer et songent aux musiques qu'ils vont créer pour leurs nouvelles chorégraphies.

Il faut savoir aussi que nos slameurs s'intéressent aussi à la danse, évidemment. Et ils auront leurs places dans ce studio. J'aimerais bien faire ressortir que la population rodriguaise se passionne de plus en plus pour les diverses expressions culturelles, traditionnelles et modernes.

La musique et la danse sont des disciplines inséparables. C'est pourquoi, nous allons poursuivre l'équipement de la seconde salle polyvalente, qui sera une salle de musique, équipée et insonorisée pour l'enseignement et la pratique de la musique; notre musique rodriguaise, mais aussi la découverte d'instruments, et de musiciens venus d'ailleurs.

Nous sommes convaincus, M. le président, par la pratique, que Rodrigues est, et sera de plus en plus le centre d'intérêt des artistes, des animateurs culturels, des formateurs et des professionnels de la Région, et au-delà.

Nous sommes convaincus de la dynamique culturelle rodriguaise et de son impact sur la population, sur les visiteurs et sur les touristes. «Rodrigues Naturellement» est un lieu de détente et de tourisme culturel. Les artistes rodriguais, musiciens, danseurs, peintres, sculpteurs, slameurs, auteurs dramatiques et artisans produisent des œuvres, et ces travaux de productions les protègent des tentations néfastes de la drogue, et de l'alcool. Nous sommes convaincus, M. le président, que l'ensemble des disciplines culturelles et sportives organisé et forme l'esprit et le corps.

Ainsi, comme il est dit partout dans le monde, et depuis toujours, dans les sociétés en marche pour le développement économique, social et culturel: «*Mens sana in corpore sano* ». Autrement dit, il n'y a rien de mieux pour chaque Rodriguais autonome que d'avoir «une âme saine dans un corps sain». Merci, M. le président.

[Applause]

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 26 August 2014 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

*At 15.10 hours the House was, on its rising adjourned
to Tuesday 26 August 2014 at 10.30 a.m.*

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CONSTRUCTION OF COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS – PORT MATHURIN

(No. B/85) The Sixth Island region Member (Mr. J. L. R. Perrine) asked Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure and others:-

Whether, in regard to the construction of commercial buildings in Port Mathurin, he will, for the benefit of the House, give information on the buildings under construction at one La Rue Solidarité (Mutual Aid building) and another at the intersection of Ronald Ghandi and Max Lucchesi Streets and state if application for the permit/s for the constructions thereof have complied with all legal requirements and, if so, to table copy of the building permits together with site plans thereof, respectively?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the construction of the Mutual Aid Building is not at Rue Solidarite but at Rue Francois Leguat. Both promoters namely the “Mauritius Civil Service Mutual Aid Association” and “*Société Hee Hong Whye Ltd.*” complied with all the usual requirements and their applications for Building and Land Use Permit were accordingly approved for industrial and commercial purpose respectively.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, details of the buildings of the two promoters are included in their respective Building and Land Use Permits, together with their site plans, which I am tabling.

“RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY – (PROHIBITION OF USE OF PLASTIC BAGS) – REGULATIONS 2014”

(No. B/90) The Second Island Region Member (Mrs. M.D.L.C. Meunier) asked the Commissioner responsible for Environment and Others whether, in regard to the implementation of the “Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2014” to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) the number of businesses/enterprises/tourist enterprises and other institutions which have made written request at the Commission for Environment for authorisation to import/stock and use plastic carry bags and pocket type plastic bag of any size or colour; and
- (b) What is the response time of the Commission following receipt of a request and the length of time the authorisation granted is due to last?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson Sir,

- (a) With regard to part (a), I inform the House that the number of written request received at my Commission for authorisation to import/stock and use plastic carry bags and pocket type plastic bags of any size or colour is 212 as at to date.
- (b) With regard to part (b), Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the authorisation lasts for three months and is renewable thereafter. There is no established response time to approve the application. Response time is related to processing of the application.

ERADICATION OF “*ACCACIA NICOLITA*”

(No. B/91) The Second Island Region Member (Mrs. M.D.L.C. Meunier) asked the Commissioner responsible for Environment and Others Whether, in regard to the eradication of *Accacia Nilotica* commonly known as “*Piquant Loulou*”, he will inform the House as to if any tender procedure has been carried out in relation thereto and, if so, to give details thereof?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the House is aware, the proliferation of “*Acacia Nilotica*” is a major challenge for the Regional Government and needs to be addressed effectively. As such, Mr. Chairperson Sir, the policy of my Commission is to eradicate invasive species such as “*Acacia Nilotica*” and replace them by more useful species to have a proper balance in the biodiversity of Rodrigues.

The question put by the respected Member is quite vague and does not relate to any specific period. Most of the time, Mr. Chairperson Sir, the eradication of “*Acacia Nilotica*” is carried out by woodcutters of the Forestry services.

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Due to unavailability of woodcutters, last year, a contract was awarded to one sole registered private woodcutter through direct procurement in Rodrigues for the cutting and removal of invasive species (mostly consisted of “*Accacia Nilotica*”) under the Rodrigues Marine Conservation project being implemented by my commission at Jeantac.

The contract was awarded on 28 November 2013 and consisted, to begin of the rehabilitation of the entire lower section of Jean Tac river valley and beach covering an area of approximately 2,600 m².

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I also have to inform the House that the GEF Small Grant Programme has granted Rs 1.5 m. to the Athletic Trail Nature Club for the removal of “*Acacia Nilotica*” at Grenade and Rivière Banane and their replacement by more useful species such as “*Vacoas*” and mango trees.

My commission is providing technical support for the successful implementation of the project, which is of 18 months duration. Being given that my commission alone does not have the resources to eliminate “*Acacia Nilotica*” throughout Rodrigues, we shall assist more NGO’S to embark on similar projects in the future.

BASALTIC ROCKS (RUSTED ROCKS) – BAIE TOPAZE

(No. B/96) The First Island Region Member of Maréchal (Mr. J.C. Agathe) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, he will, for the benefit of the House, state if consideration could be given to cause a survey to be conducted on the basaltic rocks (rusted rocks) situated in the region of Baie Topaze to know both its extent and the possibility of its eventual use?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have to inform the House that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly does not have the expertise to conduct studies on the basaltic rocks situated in the region of Baie Topaze. Moreover, no funds have been earmarked to contract out the services of a team of experts for the survey during this Financial Year. Consideration may be given to conduct a survey in the future subject to availability of funds and after prioritisation of projects to be implemented.

RADIO BROADCAST – RODRIGUES

(No. A/1) The First Island Region Member (Mr. J. Roussety) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, whether, in regard to radio broadcast in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation and any relevant authority, information as to:

- (a) Why Radio France Internationale (RFI) which was formerly broadcast on FM frequency 93.20 has ceased to emit in Rodrigues and if he will use his good office to request the restoration of the broadcast thereof; and
- (b) Whether the non-broadcasting in Rodrigues of all radio channels such as Radio Plus, Top FM, Radio One and others at the national level is in conformity with existing laws?

Reply: I am informed by the Director of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) that the Authority has been made to understand that the Parabolic Antenna used to receive RF1 Radio Services was donated to the MBC by the RFI.

The antenna was damaged during the recent cyclone in December last. A new parabolic antenna is being awaited and same has already been shipped to Mauritius. The service will therefore be restored soon.

As regards to part (b), I am informed that the existing laws for broadcasting apply to Mauritius and outer islands and dependencies. However, in the absence of a local network, the Independent Broadcasting Authority has so far not opposed to holders of Subscription Television Direct to Home Satellite Broadcasting Service Licence to broadcast radio programmes including local FM Commercial Radio via internet and same are easily accessible in Rodrigues and worldwide.

OFFICERS – HEALTH SERVICES

(No. A/2) The First Island Region Member (Mr. J. Roussety) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the Officers of the Health services, he will, for the benefit of the House, state as to if there is any provision for the payment of a “Lying-in-Period” therefor and, if so, to give details thereof and its application to Ambulance Drivers and Ambulance Attendants, respectively?

Reply: An authority has been issued recently from the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms with regard to payment of “Lying-in-Period” with effect from 01 January 2013. All officers in the Health Services eligible for same will be considered. The following procedures are being applied:-

- (i) authority is being sought from Island Chief Executive’s Office on the specific grades eligible for this payment;

- (ii) information will be compiled as from January 2013 following (i);
- (iii) once information compiled, it has to be vetted and certified by immediate supervisors prior to submission for payment.

**“THE RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (PROHIBITION OF
USE OF PLASTIC BAGS) REGULATIONS 2014”**

(No. A/3) The First Island Region Member (Mr. J. Roussety) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, whether, in regard to the coming into operation of the “The Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2014” he will, for the benefit of the House, state if he is aware of any civil action which has been lodged against the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in relation thereto and, if so, to give details thereof?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am informed that as regards to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2014, on 30 May 2014, an application was entered before the Honourable Judge sitting at Chambers in the name of 32 applicants deemed to be shop owners and traders in Rodrigues against the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, praying for an interim order in the nature of an injunction to restrain the Rodrigues Regional Assembly from implementing the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2014 scheduled for commencement on 05 June 2014 pending the determination of the main action for constitutional redress which applicants undertook to lodge before the Supreme Court of Mauritius.

Alternatively, the Applicants further prayed for summons to be served to the RRA to be and appear before the Honourable Judge to showcase why an interlocutory order should not be issued against the RRA to prevent the latter from implementing the aforesaid regulations pending the determination of the main action for constitutional redress.

On 02 June 2014, the Honourable Judge sitting at Chambers, declined to grant the interim order prayed for by the 32 Applicants and instead issued a Summons as mentioned before.

Following the decline to grant the interim order by the Honourable Judge in Chambers and following the issue of the aforesaid summons, the RRA resisted, in law and on the facts, the application for the interlocutory order prayed for by the Applicants and filed its counter affidavit rebutting the erroneous averments made by the Applicants’ representative against the RRA.

/UNREVISED/

On 25 June 2014, the Honourable Judge sitting at Chambers, after hearing legal advisers on both sides, set aside with costs the application made by the 32 traders.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am further informed that a second case has been lodged by way of a Complaint with Summons before the Supreme Court of Mauritius on 04 June 2014 by 31 out of the 32 Applicants which lodged the first case against the RRA. The Complaint with Summons was first called on 26 June 2014 and the case was subsequently postponed to 16 September 2014.

As the said case being still under consideration by the Court, hence “*sub judice*”, it would be inappropriate to comment publicly on this matter which could be an offence in itself, leading to Contempt of Court.

DESALINATION PLANTS

(No. A/4) The First Island Region Member (Mr. J. Roussety) asked the Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and Others whether, in regard to the four desalination plants presently under construction around the island, he will, for the benefit of the House, table hard or soft copies of the contract agreements in relation thereto?

Reply: With reference to above question, I have to inform you that in accordance with Section 51 (1) (e) of the Public Procurement Act, the contract agreement cannot be tabled.