

**RODRIGUES
THIRD REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Debate No. 04 of 2014

Sitting of Tuesday 26 August 2014

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

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

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**RODRIGUES REGIONAL
TUESDAY 26 AUGUST 2014**

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(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 and 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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

TERRITORIAL SEA – RODRIGUES

(No. B/98) 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, for the benefit of the House, obtain, from the relevant authorities in Mauritius, information as to the:

- (a) different survey/s, if any, carried out in relation thereto and to table the findings thereof;
- (b) mechanism put in place, if any, for its surveillance; and
- (c) amount of money generated for years 2012, 2013 and 2014 to date, if any, pursuant to its exploitation by the Republic of Mauritius?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by the Ministry of Housing and Lands that two surveys have been carried out at sea in Rodrigues. In the years 2006-2007, an Indian Naval Hydrographic Ship carried out Hydrographic Survey of Port Mathurin Harbour and its approaches. Subsequently, two Nautical Charts were produced and same are available on sale at the Ministry.

Furthermore, in the year 2011, a Hydrographical Survey was also carried out for transects off Rodrigues Island to facilitate the delineation of the Continental Shelf. The complete data of the survey has been submitted to the Head of Ocean Matters, Prime Minister's Office in April 2014.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am further informed that the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute is involved in the setting up of the Seismic Stations at Rodrigues for monitoring seismic activity and for the study of local seismicity around Rodrigues – Central Indian Ocean Ridge Region using Array Techniques.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (b) , I have to inform the house that surveillance of the territorial sea around Rodrigues forms parts of the National Policy of surveillance for the Republic of Mauritius and does not fall under the purview of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

As regards to part (c), no information has been received up to now from the relevant authorities in Rodrigues. As soon as all information are received, same will be tabled in the library of the Regional Assembly. Thank you.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am aware that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, it does not fall under the responsibility of Rodrigues for the surveillance of Rodrigues. But, I am seeking from the Chief Commissioner, whether, he will obtain information from the Republic of Mauritius so as regard to the surveillance of the Island of Rodrigues, to seek information.

If they have the information, they give us the information. If they do not have the information, I agree with him. But, here, I know that but I want some information as regard to the surveillance of Rodrigues to obtain information from the Chief Commissioner as regard for the surveillance of Rodrigues, whether, he has obtained information from Mauritius.

The Chief Commissioner: The Rodrigues Island has an expensive circular coral reef approximately 14 nautical miles in diameter surrounding the island and which is situated to the North East of Reef Centre. The shelf is doted with the 13 small islands. The Rodrigues Reef drives in the patches during low water springs tides. Therefore, the reef points were used to define the base line for measuring territorial sea and gaining maximum area as internal waters.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Republic of Mauritius has sent to the commission on the limits of the Continent Shelf. That is, CLCS to extend the Continental Shelf of Rodrigues up to 303,000 km². And, the idea behind, the objective behind is to develop Mauritius as an ocean economy. And, there have been different meetings in Mauritius dealing with the ocean economy including Rodrigues.

Can the Chief Commissioner enlighten the House what has been the outcome of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in the different forums held in Mauritius as regards to the extension of the Continental Shelf of Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed by the Prime Minister that the Continental Shelf of Rodrigues has been extended. Since now, we are waiting for the information from the Prime Minister's Office in order to give information to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has just mentioned about the responsibility of Central

Government in regard to the surveillance of Rodrigues. Can I ask him whether, during his different consultations with the Prime Minister concerning same, there have been discussions about the mechanism or any particular policy that is put in place in order to ensure a prompt intervention if ever Rodrigues has to face a terrorist attack or any similar risk? What prompt intervention, if ever it exists, how can Rodrigues be promptly defended?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this point has been raised with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is aware of the security around Rodrigues. Because not even terrorist but there are also boats, ships, from other countries, fishing in our ocean area in Rodrigues. So, the Prime Minister is aware of that and is going to take decisions concerning the surveillance of Rodrigues. As we know that the COI has already taken some decisions concerning ships from Madagascar, from Reunion Island to come to have surveillance around Rodrigues and in the Indian Ocean. Thank you.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner is waiting for the Prime Minister's Office to send him documents as regard to the extension of Rodrigues. I will state one thing here, important things here, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The Board of Investment, in his newsletter issued this year mentioned that there has been a national dialogue in Mauritius in July 2013, as regard a road map in order to know the prioritisation areas in order to export for the ocean economy. And, one of the main issue is seabed exploration and hydrocarbon and minerals.

This issue, this is why I am asking the question about the survey carried out in Rodrigues. We want to know what minerals, what do we have in the seabed or subsoil of Rodrigues, what do you have in the sea around Rodrigues. And, there has been a plan, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

A road map has been devised. And, in the speech of the Vice Prime Minister, in the debate for budget speech, in his budget speech, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Minister for Finance mentioned that one of their first priorities is to develop a petroleum and mineral exploitation and extraction framework agreement for Mauritius. That is, including Rodrigues, also. We want to know what do we have in the sea in Rodrigues. Because we want to explore petrol and mineral exportation around the island of Mauritius. What do we have in the sea of Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the question is under the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office which is responsible for the Territorial Republic of Mauritius. For the any survey, which will be done for

petrol and so on, this comes from the Prime Minister's Office, who gives to any company, you know.

We are not aware of that. That is why, we say, whenever, we are waiting for information coming from the Prime Minister's Office, you know, the Prime Minister is responsible and not our Regional Assembly. The Prime Minister is responsible for the Republic of Mauritius. And, this problem has to be tackled by the Prime Minister's Office.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the Member has just said, I think all the issues pertaining to the extension of the Continental Shelf of Rodrigues, which is very rich indeed in many the other minerals and so on, I think this should be of great concern to everybody.

However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I understand that the Chief Commissioner has not yet got any confirmation from the Prime Minister's Office as regards to what exactly has in this shelf and how itself, the Republic, itself, will be able to dispose of all these. But, I would like to ask him a question again regarding surveillance. In the past, there have been requests for a permanence of a helicopter in Rodrigues. Can I ask him whether, this issue, again, has been discussed with the Prime Minister so as to have a permanent Security Unit, here?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all these problems have been raised with the Prime Minister. It is a duty of the Prime Minister to discuss with people security services in Mauritius how Rodrigues will be in the future, will be responsible in this area for the security, you know.

As I know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a building at the airport built by the Police Quarters in Mauritius. And, there have also been near the airport, a sort of port whenever there is something happen to the plane in the ocean. I think what the Member is telling, all these have been discussed with the Prime Minister, whether, in the future, there can be a helicopter stationed here in Rodrigues or any ship.

So, that is why, we say, there must be a port for the surveillance of Rodrigues in Rodrigues. That is why, in the new, we met the members of the Mauritius Port Authority a few weeks ago. And, now, they are studying a new plan of the port development in Rodrigues. And, that is why we are waiting for that. And, the Prime Minister will be made aware of all these developments. Thank you.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, due to the presence of the Somalian Pirates in the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, the Red Sea Route was considered to be unsafe. Even nowadays, if we look from outside, we can see heavy vessels crossing over Rodrigues almost every day.

Can we know from the Chief Commissioner what does the Island of Rodrigues obtain from this negotiation? I also know that Mauritius earns certain sum of money from the United Nation. Can we know what part for Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Mauritius Patrol Authority Delegation was in Rodrigues a few weeks ago. All these have been discussed with the Mauritius Ports Authority. And, all these have been discussed also with the Prime Minister, all those ships coming around Rodrigues either from China or from India to Mauritius, to South Africa. We are aware of that. And, even the Prime Minister is aware of all that. You know, and, the Prime Minister's Office is looking forward for a ship to go for surveillance of the ocean. Surveillance means what is happening in the ocean.

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: Do not disturb, you listen first. Anyway, you do not make any comment to what the Member is speaking. You will have the time to ask another question if it needs be. Yes, continue, please.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, mais Rodrigues aura gagné par la surveillance au lieu qu'il y ait des bateaux qui viennent pêcher dans nos eaux, au lieu que des bateaux viennent, jettent leurs huiles dans nos eaux. Tout ça, on a pris en considération. Tout ça, justement, M. le président.

M. le Premier ministre est au courant. Et ça prend du temps, justement. Et je viens d'apprendre que temps-là, il y aura un bateau de surveillance qui sera à Rodrigues en permanence pour justement jeter un coup d'œil sur tout cela. Mais ça prend du temps, M. le président. C'est le bureau du Premier ministre de prendre des décisions. Et c'est à nous, ici, à Rodrigues, de lui mettre au courant qu'est-ce qui est en train de se passer dans les eaux territoriales autour de Rodrigues. C'est notre devoir.

Alors, qu'est-ce que nous avons à gagner ? Si demain, il y aura, je ne sais pas, des recherches autour de l'île Rodrigues, on découvre ceci, on découvre cela. Comme dans le passé, on a découvert je ne sais pas quel métal au fond de l'Océan Indien. Eh bien, tout ça, justement. Rodrigues faisant partie de la

République, Rodrigues aussi va bénéficier de tout cela. M. le président, attendons voir.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Roussety.

Mr. J. Roussety: There are two main fishing grounds; one to the East of Rodrigues, Shoals. And, there is also hawking banks to the West of Rodrigues. Is the Chief Commissioner aware, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that these fishing banks are completely depleted? – Causing a loss to local fishermen, here, professional fishermen who used to go there and come back with a good catch. Nowadays, this is gone because of illegal fishing on these banks.

Secondly, those who operate pleasure craft, big game fishing here have also noticed a very drastic fall in their catches. The problem of illegal fishing around Rodrigues is serious. And, I agree with the Chief Commissioner that it is up to the Prime Minister who is responsible for the sea around the Republic to act.

But, the question is whether, the Chief Commissioner will make it a matter of urgency to write, to make a report to the Prime Minister, to the Commission of Police who is responsible for the National Coastguard, to ask them to act before it is too late, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is a serious issue because we have for example, the five fishing boats, which are in Pointe Monier. They will have no profit because all the fish is gone by commercial, industrial fishing on these banks.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered to this question. All this, what is being said, here, has been discussed either with the Chief Commissioner of the Police in Mauritius, the Prime Minister and Mrs. Fong Weng who is responsible for Rodrigues at the Prime Minister's Office when she was here a few weeks ago.

You know, all this is being considered by the Prime Minister. We are aware of ships coming from Japan, Thailand or other country fishing in our seas around Rodrigues. You know, we are aware of that. Even the fishermen going to fish on the banks, they made us aware of what is going on over there. All this has been raised with the Prime Minister and the Chief Commissioner of Police.

That is why, sometimes, you have the Donier coming around here. And, now, we are waiting for this ship to be posted here in Rodrigues with the coastguard and some coastguards have been sent to Mauritius for special training, you know. That is why I say we are aware of that. We wish to protect

the territorial seas around Rodrigues from illegal fishing. We are aware of that, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: M. le président, moi, je vais revenir à la question principale de ce matin. Actuellement, Rodrigues est continuellement balayé par au moins, un minimum de sept satellites par jour continuellement. Et nous avons un logiciel disponible sur le web qui s'appelle le *Google Earth* qui nous donne des photos précises, des endroits précis du monde entier. En cherchant sur le web, il y a plusieurs mois de cela, j'ai remarqué un trou noir au moins quatre kilomètres à l'Est de Trou D'Argent. Cette photo a été publiée sur le net. J'aimerais demander au Chef commissaire s'il est au courant qu'il y a quelque chose de cette taille-là à Rodrigues. Si oui, qu'est-ce qu'il compte faire ?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, est-ce que l'honorable membre peut venir avec une question ? Parce que là, nous parlons d'internet, de ceci, de cela, *Google Earth*. Mais, j'ai parlé au Premier ministre pour Rodrigues dans 10 ans, 20 ans, 50 ans. Ne pourrions-nous pas justement, j'ai parlé de ça aussi au Premier ministre, de faire la surveillance de nos territoriales, de nos eaux par satellites ? Et tout ça, j'ai beaucoup discuté ça avec le Premier ministre, même le Chef de la Police et d'autres personnes qui viennent nous voir. Que sera Rodrigues dans 10 ans, 20 ans, 50 ans ?

La nouvelle technologie et justement, et nos jeunes qui vont étudier justement les nouvelles technologies vont pouvoir nous dire tout cela. Alors, c'est pourquoi nous aussi, nous pensons à l'avenir de la nouvelle technologie, comment la surveillance de Rodrigues, autour de Rodrigues pourra se faire par satellite. C'est possible aujourd'hui. Alors, même si c'est en dehors de la question, mais je dis quand même, tout ça a été discuté avec le Premier ministre parce que nous ne regarderons pas aujourd'hui. Nous regarderons demain. Et justement, tout ça aussi a été discuté avec le Commissaire de Police.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, come to the last question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: M. le président, j'aimerais demander au Chef commissaire vu qu'il a été dans un long temps à l'Assemblée Nationale, vu en donnant, en accordant l'indépendance à Maurice, si jamais il a pu mettre la main sur les traités, le traité qui a été signé par le Gouvernement de Maurice par rapport à Rodrigues concernant Rodrigues. Si jamais il a vu le document et qu'est-ce qui est dit dedans ? Si jamais.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, do you want to say something ?

Mr. J. Roussety: Now that you rule out that question. I want to ask another question.

Mr. Chairperson: A last one.

Mr. J. Roussety: You should decide a last one.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, I decide. Yes, put your question.

Mr. J. Roussety: There is an important issue, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given the position of Rodrigues. For example, between Rodrigues and Australia, there is no land. And, to the South of Rodrigues, there is no land. I know it might be hypothetical but we must think about it. And, it is the duty of Chief Commissioner to think about it and maybe to write to the Prime Minister to tell him about it.

There was the issue of a patrol boat for Rodrigues. Just look at the example of the MH370 – Flight of Malaysia Airlines which ended probably between Australia and Rodrigues. What will happen tomorrow if we have a sort of emergency at sea and, from Rodrigues, we have to call upon a ship or an aircraft, which has landed in emergency in the sea?

Will he seriously take the issue with the Prime Minister that we have a proper patrol boat here in Rodrigues? It should be. It is not necessary that it is a big ship but it has to be rapid and it has to be able to attend to emergencies. Okay, there is also, everybody here, occasionally, we take flights to Mauritius.

The ATRs of Air Mauritius, we know they are good but we have to plan for it. These aircrafts, if there is a problem, they have to land on the sea. I do not know if we say land on the sea. *Amerrissage en français*. What will happen if we have an emergency some 50 miles off Rodrigues? Who will go there to fetch these people?

Mr. Chairperson: If you have any reply, if you can reply.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have already talked about that. The patrol boat, there is a, what we call, not a harbour but a marina at the airport and also, perhaps a helicopter at the airport. In front of Port Mathurin, a marina also for a patrol boat, a coastguard. All these have been discussed and we are in good way. And, I think that in the future, not so far, this patrol boat will be in Rodrigues. That is why, we discussed with the Mauritius Ports Authority to revise its plan for the development of the port and

they will submit to us this new plan for the development of the port for the future. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

RODRIGUES DISASTER COMMITTEE

(No. B/99) 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 official 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?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I have to inform the House that the Rodrigues Disaster Committee has been renamed as the Rodrigues Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Committee. The Committee has had three meetings during the year 2013 and met twice since the beginning of this year. We are now in the process of setting up the Rodrigues Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre and the modalities are being worked out.

As regards to part (b) of the question, I have to inform the House that fees are being paid to officers whose nature of works warrants them to work during calamities. The officers have been paid the appropriate allowances as per prevailing rules and regulations for working during calamities. If ever any officer is feeling aggrieved by not having paid the relevant allowance, he has to make a representation to this respective Departmental Head or the Acting Island Chief Executive for remedial action.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (c) of the question, I have to inform the House that the Rodrigues Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Committee do liaise and coordinate with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre which is the main institution for the Republic of Mauritius for the planning, organisation, coordinating, and monitoring of

disaster risk reduction and management activities at all level, in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management of Activities in the Republic.

Moreover, the Rodrigues Regional Committee is also collaborating with the National Centre in Disaster Risk Analysis and Vulnerability Assessment with the respect to Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have also to inform the house that a delegation from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre was on mission to Rodrigues from 26 to 28 May 2014 with a view to assist the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in the setting up of the Rodrigues Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre and Emergency Operation Centre.

The delegation also:-

- (i) had working sessions with members of the Rodrigues Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Committee;
- (ii) visited the Disaster Operations and Coordination Room (Police and SMF);
- (iii) visited the Rodrigues Fire Rescue Service;
- (iv) visited the Health Emergency Services; and
- (v) had meeting with the Chairman of the Rodrigues Council of Social Services.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is shocking to hear from the Chief Commissioner that the Rodrigues Disaster Risk Reduction Committee has met only thrice since for this year, for the year 2013 up to date – only three times. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we all know that Rodrigues is a seismic prone areas. Rodrigues is a seismic prone areas, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Our citizens need greater protection from natural disasters. Natural disasters, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, may come in various forms.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, my question is in the...

Mr. Chairperson: What is your supplementary question?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, sometimes, they can be overwhelming. The natural disasters can be overwhelming. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Chief Commissioner what is being done in Rodrigues to prepare the citizens of Rodrigues? We are prone areas. We are seismic prone areas. What is being done in Rodrigues in order to overcome this?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are going to set up the centre in Rodrigues as in Mauritius. And, what has been explained to us, the centre, there will be different officers who will be responsible either for health, for fire and for the management of the population and so on. We have to set up this centre first. As from a delegation came here a few months ago, and that is why, we have information from this delegation. We are going to set up this centre perhaps with the help of the centre in Mauritius. Thank you.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am talking about the preparedness, the preparedness of the population. What is being done to prepare the citizens of Rodrigues? Not the centre.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have to set up structures in order to prepare the population. If you have not structures, how are you going to prepare the population? In this centre, there will be different services; fire service, hospital and so on. We have to set up the centre in order to get the services to prepare the population. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in Mauritius, we have different campaign that is being done there in Mauritius. We have the Health Services, we have Fires Services, we have the Prime Minister's Office, we have helicopters. We have all these facilities brought to the population of the...

Mr. Chairperson: Please, I think the Chief Commissioner has already replied.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Kinn reply? Kinn dir?*

Mr. Chairperson: He has already said about structures. Now, we come to next question.

[Interruptions]

Mr. Chairperson: You do not comment what I say, please. There is a democracy, yes.

Mr. J. Roussety: It is our right to comment.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, it is my right to decide also.

Mr. J. Roussety: Yes but we can comment depending if the comment is bad or not.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, this is what I am going to say. This is what I am going to say! How far you will comment! Yes, your question?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, in Mauritius, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a unit. What that is called, Land Drainage Agency that has been set up in Mauritius. And, a sum of Rs 1.3 b. was earmarked for the Republic of Mauritius. Can we know from the Chief Commissioner, what amount has been granted for the Island of Rodrigues? Because the Land Drainage Agency is responsible for the construction, cleaning and maintenance of drainage system.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a survey has already been done. And, in the next budget, we are going to apply to the survey. Now, I would like to say to the Honourable Member, the preparedness of the population, if you do not have the centre, which has been told to us by Mauritius, Mr., we will set up the centre and the centre will have different services.

I already said that. And, the different services, we are going to prepare to go to the population, not only the centre, the different services, you know. And, then, we have the structure and the what we call the finance for that. In the future, we are going to say.

But, what we endured in the last Cyclone Amara, even during the last flood, a study has been made by the National Development Unit to entertain all the rivers, the canals and so on, you know. And, this survey has been done. And, this will be done in the near future in our budget, you know. This, we have already taken. We are doing our work. We are there for the people, for the safety of the people, for the security of the population. Do not accuse us of not doing something.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether for...

Mr. J. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, please. On a point of order, with regard to the conduct of the proceedings in this House, one, we are not hearing what people are saying. And, there is a lot of interferences in the microphone, in the... This is not correct. Can we please have a good sound? Because even from this part where I am, I am unable to hear what the Chief Commissioner is saying. He is speaking, not speaking loudly but we are unable to... We have to *prêter l'oreille* to hear.

Mr. Chairperson: The Technician will see to it.

Mr. J. Roussety: *Sa bezer sa!*

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether, for those who are engaged to work during calamities? Who are responsible for these officials? Who are responsible for them, for their protection? Sometimes, we are informed that they do not have the necessary equipment to work at night or during the calamities, when the calamities are at peak period. Whether, there is an agreement, which is reached in writing after the calamity with the authority, with the concerned authority. Can the Chief Commissioner enlighten us on that?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there are different commissions. And, Departmental Head is responsible for all public officers in his commission. And, the Island Chief Executive Officer also is responsible for those officers. Therefore, there are the Departmental Head and the Island Chief Executive; all those people are responsible for the security of the officers working during a calamity.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we all know that Rodrigues, just as Mauritius, is a tsunami prone area. We are also exposed to climate change. At any time, we may expect to have flash floods just as it has been the case in Mauritius.

However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in Mauritius, we have been witnessing these past weeks, many different simulation exercises being carried out in order to help people in order to save lives during any of these calamities that I have just mentioned.

Can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, this is also a concern of this Regional Government to see to it that if any of these calamities arise in Rodrigues, be it a flash flood, be it a tsunami, there is simulation exercises being carried out in order to ensure that people are being rescued in due time? And, if

he is prepared to do so, does he have already a plan for it? And, if not, what is he going to do?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is a duty of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. We know the tsunami, we know there is a cyclone, we have the earthquake and so on. We are aware of that. As I say, there has been Mr. Montagnier has come here for the seismic weather situation in Rodrigues.

Recruitment has been installed here and there, you know. Even the meteorological services are going to expand their services around the island with the different new technologies concerning the wind. We are aware of that and we are going to set up a centre. Very often, this centre will take decision how to suppose. There was something...

The Minority Leader: Point of order. I do not think the Chief Commissioner is getting the exact gist of the question. He has just mentioned about the centre. We know he has to come up with a centre. Okay. But the problem is if ever anything happens now, there must be a preparedness plan of course. And, he has to carry out simulation exercises. What will happen if real things happen? How will people be rescued? If he has a plan for it, he just says it. If he does not have, he just says he has no plan, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. That is what we expect from him.

The Chief Commissioner: We have already this plan, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. The committee has met two or three times this year. We have this plan. We know what to do. Everything is ready even the different services; hospital, fire services, education and so on. We have this plan.

Mr. Chairperson: Last question.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the effect of global warming results in the rise of sea level. J'ai eu de la chance, M. le président, de parler à plusieurs pêcheurs. En ce moment, on est en hiver. Vous allez voir, autour de Rodrigues, la marée, comme si la mer reste toujours pleine. Ça reste toujours pleine surtout, pour les pêcheurs de sable dans la région de Corail.

Actuellement, M. le président, ils ne peuvent pas déposer leur sable sur le *Sand Landing Station* parce que vu la marée, la grosse marée qui prévaut dans ces endroits-là. Même autour de Rodrigues, c'est pareil. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire peut comme a si bien dit le *Minority Leader*, travailler un programme de préparation, M. le président ? Attention qu'un malheur arrive à ces pêcheurs-là, de faire, si jamais il a un plan, pour donner des solutions à ces

pêcheurs-là. Ou bien aussi, quel moyen il a à sa disposition pour pouvoir aider les gens de la mer ?

Mr. Chairperson: I think again, the Chief Commissioner has already replied to the Minority Leader. You said the same question more or less. You get the same answer. Question, please.

AGRICULTURAL PLOT

(No. B/100): Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the agricultural plot or any nearby compound at Oyster Bay, he will:

- (a) state if same has been granted to any group or association and, if so, to table a copy of a layout plan by indicating the area of land allocated to each beneficiary; and
- (b) table the contract agreement made, if any, between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the beneficiary/ries concerned?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that a group of unemployed women of Fond la Bonté submitted a request to the Commission for Agriculture to assist them in the setting up of a Cooperative of Farmers, to provide them with the training in fruit and crop production and to cultivate the free land in the compound of the Oyster Bay Seed Production Centre.

After consideration of their laudable request and being given the favourable climate, part of the uncultivated land at the compound was put at their disposal since July 2014 for training in food and crop and in seed production techniques by technicians of the Agricultural Services with a view to subsequently issue them with an agricultural permit and continued mentoring once their project setting up of a cooperative of planters which is under way is finalised.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is the vision of the Regional Government as spelt out in the Regional Government Programme and the Budget Speech for Year 2014 to encourage the young generation of planters to join the sector for producing crops in a more modern way while at the same time, encouraging farmers, planters and breeders associations, working in different productive sectors to convert into cooperative societies in order to open and broaden their perspectives in coaching, training and management of funds as is the case with

the flourishing SAMARI Cooperatives working at Grand La Fouche Corail Agricultural Plot.

It is along this line that this group of women is being trained at the Oyster Bay Agricultural Plot to equip them with the necessary skills, expertise and techniques required in Seedlings Production and Orchard Development. This meets perfectly well the government objectives of revitalising the demonstrating plots for seed production.

The Minority Leader: Can I ask the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how many... I did not hear whether he mentioned it. How many beneficiaries, how many women are being considered in this project? And, whether, it was just a policy like this to give people training. And, what will be the outcome of such a training? Whether, he has a plan, a definite plan for it after the training, what will become of them after that?

The Chief Commissioner: There are about 12 women. And, we have decided to create cooperatives in order to manage, to use those demonstration plots. This has already been done at Mourouk and this now at Oyster Bay and at Grand La Fouche Corail. There are also other cooperative, which is being finalised so that we can put at their disposal at Saint Gabriel, for cooperative for the plantation of coffee, and, this, under the supervision of the CIRAD from Reunion Island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is the way in order to encourage our people to the produces and to the people who like/love their land so that agriculture can be a pilot of our economy.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has not replied to part (b) of my question. I asked to table the contract agreement made if any. He did not tell me whether, there has been any contract or not between the two parties. And, can I ask him how has the decision been made? If there has been request for money, one group of person or whether, there have been, other people/groups who have made the similar request to occupy the same land.

The Chief Commissioner: We have only one request, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. And, we ought to have the MOU with the cooperative when the cooperative will be registered.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the...

Mr. Chairperson: Please.

Mr. J. Roussety: Thank you. We have witnessed since the coming into office of those who are in front of us, that there is a sort of dilapidation, giving away of government assets. We have started with La Fouche Corail, Mourouk. And, now, it is Oyster Bay. We have seen also that a private party, I do not know whom, has taken the boat yard and the six fishing boats, which were built, for fishermen. The boat François Leguat has been given to a cooperative. We do not say that we should not give to cooperatives.

My question is what is being done to ensure that one and everybody can get the opportunity to have access to these lands? Question here concerns the land and whether this is legal. We just pick and choose some friends, some political agents. We tell them you form a cooperative and we give them an agricultural plot. Is this a proper practice? I want to ask the Chief Commissioner, of giving away on an arbitrary basis; they choose who they want to give the land, to give such and such thing. Is this a proper mode of operation, whether this is in conformity with good practice?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the honorable Member is wrong. He is wrong! We do not put politics in development. This is not on our side. We are for the people of Rodrigues. When people write to us, they write to us. We do not know whether, they are politicians or agents and so on.

They are wrong, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. They are wrong. And, I say that, you excuse me for that word, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I withdraw that word. I withdraw it. Now, those women, they have written to us. They have grouped themselves. There has not been someone who is going to them to say whether you are and so on.

We do not put politics in the development of Rodrigues. This is our vision. Not even to give leases. We do not choose people who are on political side. No! We do not do that. We do not give water to people who are on a political side. No! We do not do that. This is not in our policy. This is not in our vision.

So, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, those women have asked us to come forward. And, we, we know that the Member is talking about output and so on. Do you know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the Report of the Audit, everything they say, the input in demonstration plot is more than the output? The input is more than the output. That is why, we are giving those demonstration plots in planters who like to produce, themselves, and so use this land for the better of the community.

Mr. J. Roussety: If the input, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is greater than the output, but I think you have a very big problem! Because it is the Managers, the Commissioners, the Chief Commissioner of the Regional Assembly, Island Chief Executive, Departmental Heads, all those persons responsible of these agricultural plots, people who are working there, who are wrong! It is a self-blame on themselves! Because they are putting money for nothing. And, the excuse is to take the agricultural plot and give it away. This is the wrongness, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is the destruction of a community.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, respected Member, please, take your seat. You have made your statement. You have already, as if there is a statement. Now, I think Minority Leader has got something to say. You want to say something more?

Mr. J. Roussety: I want to ask a question.

Mr. Chairperson: Ask your question.

Mr. J. Roussety: I am not making a statement. My question is whether, for example, tomorrow, we wake up, we hear that such and such government property has been given to such and such cooperative/companies...

Mr. Chairperson: But please, this is hypothetical. You cannot say tomorrow, what will happen and so on. Put your question in a right way if you want to set a question, please.

Mr. J. Roussety: I want to ask, there are hundreds of cooperatives in Rodrigues. This is not hypothetical. It is a fact. How does a cooperative proceed to get, for example, agricultural land on the plots? Okay? On which criteria is it allocated? He is saying it is not on political agents. Be it he is right but we see what we see. How does he select? Is it open? Does he give opportunity to one and all? Because this is community. This belongs to the community. What is the procedure? I want it for people to know.

Mr. Chairperson: If you want to give an answer, please.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we do not select. Cooperatives made an application. There are many like that. They make an application. We do not select. We go here and there to do that and that. We do not select. They make applications and we consider their applications.

I was talking the Audit Report many years ago, not now as from we come here, many years ago. Many years ago. No, not now. Not now, many years

ago. I said that. I read the different reports concerning the demonstration plots years ago. And, that is why we say the input is much more than the output. That is why we are going to the population and ask them, whether, you will like to have this demonstration plot at your disposal, you know.

Have you gone to the SAMARI at Grand La Fouche Corail? Have you seen there? Extraordinary! Extraordinary! And, this has been visited by people coming for the consultation, budget consultation, you know. And, they have seen here how the Rodriguans are working, how they like their land. No, we do not choose people. They come with a choice to do and they ask these and that. And, they ask for an agricultural permit. Many have been given agricultural permit, cooperatives, you know.

Mr. Chairperson: Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we cannot argue about the policy of this present Regional Government. However, if they decide to give to such and such community and so on, it is their business. But it has to be done, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in full transparency. Has there been any specific criteria that have been established when giving land to people?

The Chief Commissioner, himself, just confessed the MOU would be signed once these cooperatives have been registered. It means that by now, they are not yet registered, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, he, himself, his Executive Council is encouraging squatting of state land, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? This is a form of squatting.

Mr. J. Roussety: Dilapidation.

The Minority Leader: Exactly! If you do not want to name it like that.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a difference between squatting and training. Just before they have their cooperative registration, they have been trained by Agricultural Officers. This is not squatting. Now, there is enough land at Baie aux Huitres.

Whenever there will be another group of person who like to have some plots of land at Oyster Bay, they can make their application. They can make their application, even everywhere. You have at Grand La Fouche Mangue. There is a demonstration plot there. Even at Maréchal, there is a demonstration plot there, you know. But those people have chosen and they follow our policy to get back to the land. The wealth of the land, the miracle done by the land.

They are not people who are not waiting for a job as General Workers crossing their warm. *“If we win the elections, we will create a thousand General Workers in the government”*, this is not our duty.

Ce n'est pas politique. Non, Monsieur, la terre est à tout le monde. Mais seulement, ceux qui veulent vraiment travailler, nous sommes là pour mettre la terre de Rodrigues à leur disposition.

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Member, Spéville, please.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether, in the MOU which will be signed after, there will be a close in the terms and conditions which stipulates that the RRA can take over its resources if ever there is failure in the activities of the association? Secondly, what happens to the General Workers who were on site? Are they redeployed elsewhere? What is the way for it?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the honorable Member knows even if you have a lease or an agricultural lease, if you do not cultivate the land for about one year or six months, the government can take the land back, you know. And, all conditions will be put in this SAMARI plan. The MOU will be worked out by Agricultural Officers, by the Commission for Women and also by our Legal Advisor of the RRA, you know.

What I say is that how many lands in this country, how many people have received their lease or an agricultural permit and they are not working on that land? And, this permit, it is said if you do not cultivate the land; we can get back the land to the government and to give it to the person who would like to work in the land.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner mentioned that there is no political interference in the selection of members for the cooperatives etc. Can I ask him whether, there has been any meeting made by commissioners or other high officials of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on these plots at Oyster Bay?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, because it is a cooperative, coming cooperative, the Commissioner for Cooperative should meet them and Agricultural Officers. It is clear. The Agricultural Officers and the Commissioner had many meetings with those women, you know. This is the right way to do this.

Mr. A. L. Emilien: The Chief Commissioner mentioned that one of the reasons why these lands are being given to people is that according to the Audit Report, the input is higher than the output. I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner what is the main objective of either a demonstration or an agricultural plot.

Because Rodrigues is being une île à vocation agricole, M. le président. Nous tous savons dans quel but ces *plots* ont été mises en place. Les services gouvernementaux ne sont pas là pour faire des profits.

Si demain, le Commissaire Valimamode va à l'hôpital, the input is higher than the output, is he going to give the hospital to some people in Rodrigues? Can I know from the Chief Commissioner what is the main objective of the setting up of a demonstration plot in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, les techniciens agricoles, leur rôle, c'est de ne pas s'asseoir dans un bureau. C'est d'aller sur le terrain, rencontrer les gens, causer avec les gens, les conseiller. Mais que ce soit à Grand La Fouche Corail, que ce soit à Mourouk, que ce soit à Baie aux Huitres, les techniciens agricoles continuent à rencontrer ces personnes et leurs donner des conseils et leurs donner de la formation.

C'est comme ça, les techniciens agricoles doivent être partout et non pas juste là. Ils doivent être partout. Alors, c'est ça, justement. C'est une nouvelle vision de travailler, d'encourager les gens à l'agriculture. Le technicien agricole doit être un homme de terrain et doit connaître/savoir ce qui est en train de se passer. Et il doit même apprendre et parfois, ils apprennent des planteurs. Et ça aussi, c'est intéressant que le technicien agricole doit pouvoir apprendre des planteurs. Merci, M. le président.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Can I ask the Chief Commissioner and respected Commissioner for Agriculture as regard to agricultural plot at Oyster Bay, I want the Chief Commissioner... whether, there has been a SWOT Analysis as regard to this plot and prior to the granting of the plot to a group of cooperative, a group of women, whether there has been a SWOT Analysis. What are the main weaknesses about the SWOT Analysis?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, whenever we give the Oyster Bay plot to a group of women, it is to produce, to produce seeds as the SAMARI, the products "*Ti Piment*", plante "*Ti Piment*".

Et ces plantes « *Ti Piment* » sont vendues et distribuées à d'autres planteurs. C'est ça, justement. Que le Rodriguais reçoit aussi quelqu'un qui

reçoit une formation aussi bien qu'un agriculteur, un technicien agricole. Et ça arrive partout. Et quand vous avez vu, les consultations budgétaires, quand vous avez vu une femme planteur parler, impressionner ces personnes qui sont venues, vous savez qu'est-ce qu'elle a dit ? « *Nou besoin autonome.* »

Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire ? Elle a compris ce que c'est que l'autonomie. Elle a compris que tout repose sur elle, que l'agriculture, vraiment, elle doit montrer ce que c'est que l'agriculture, quels sont les avantages de l'agriculture. Alors, justement, ces personnes qui sont là, sur ce plot à Baie aux Huitres, vont continuer à apprendre, vont continuer à découvrir. Et peut-être, aussi, faire autre chose. Faire autre chose, c'est ça justement, M. le président.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

ANIMAL FEEDS – GOVERNMENT BREEDING CENTRES

(No. B/101): Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the animal feeds for use in government breeding centres in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state if any loss thereof has been reported to his office and, if so, to give details thereon?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that two cases of alleged irregularities in the storekeeping of livestock feed has been reported as follows:-

- (i) Shortage of 1,765 kg of sow at the Baie Topaze Livestock Production Unit Warehouse on 28 December 2012; and
- (ii) Shortages of 845 kg dairy feed, 346 kg ruminant feed, 184 kg of cow feed and 260 kg of calf grower at Saint Gabriel Livestock Production Unit on 12 August 2014.

The Baie Topaze case was reported to the Divisional Commander of Police on 28 January 2013 after investigation at Commission's level as required by paragraph 34 of the Circular No. 6 of 2012 from the Financial Secretary.

Subsequently, the two officers involved in the matter have been arrested by the Police on the 12 May 2014 upon different provisional charges and both of them have been interdicted from the powers and duties of their respective offices on the 19 May 2014, this in accordance with regulation 31 (1) of the Public Service Commission Regulations as amended. As the matter being now sub-judice, I will not further comment on this issue.

As regards to the shortages of the Saint Gabriel Livestock Production Unit is concerned, the matter was recently reported to the Departmental Head of the Commission for Agriculture on 12 August 2014 and an internal enquiry was carried out on the matter at Commission's level. As mentioned before, once the investigation and internal inquiry at the Commission's level have been completed and if the shortage is confirmed, the matter will be duly referred to the Police.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as we see, there are serious problems at these breeding centres where, so many stocks of animal feeds have been reported lost. Therefore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner what mechanism he has put in place in order to ensure that the stocks supplied to these centres are on a constant monitoring? How much daily feeds are being used so that we should not wait whenever big stocks are lost and then to come across to these problems? Can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, since these problems have occurred, he has put in place, a mechanism to have a better control over these animal feedstocks?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this has not happened just now. It seems that this has happened just in the past, also. And, that is why, we have been informed about that and the Internal Control very often goes there in those building centres elsewhere. And, I have noticed something after report by people there.

So, the best thing to control those feed from demonstration plots is to have a close check on those animal feed. And, that is why we have taken decision now, very often, from someone who is responsible for animal feed at the level of the Agricultural Commission has been delegated *justement* to look into the matters here in different... specially at Baie Topaze and Saint Gabriel.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether, any decision has been taken to recover all these losses? And, if yes, to say how.

The Chief Commissioner: It is under inquiry and we cannot go forward because it is sub-judice. And, that depends on what will come out of the case in front of the Magistrate.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Est-ce que je peux demander au Chef commissaire s'il est au courant des va-et-vient des livestock feed from Saint Gabriel to Baie Topaze and from Baie Topaze to Saint Gabriel on a regular basis?*

The Chief Commissioner: Nous sommes au courant de tout cela. C'est pendant ces transactions qu'il arrive que.... C'est ça, M. le président. Ah ben, oui. C'est ça. On a des gens qui remarquent. Il y a des personnes qui remarquent, qui nous informent. C'est à ce moment-là, on envoie quelqu'un pour aller vérifier le *internal control*. *Thank you*.

Mr. Chairperson: Have you got one question more ?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I want to know from the Chief Commissioner if he is aware of this, whether, there is a stock taking verification of stock at both centres to know whether, the direct entries is being entered in the different ledgers at the different stations.

The Chief Commissioner: This is why I said, now after those two cases, we have put a sort of a team in order to verify whether, those feeds are getting straight or are getting in or out, you know. This is why we sent very often the Internal Control what we have received and what we have taken for feed for the animals. The Internal Control is very important.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the Chief Commissioner has just mentioned, since it has been reported that many of these losses occurred during the *trajet*, the *va-et-vient*, does he find it, has he envisage the possibility of having *le convoi*, being escorted by Police Officers?

Mr. Chairperson: Have you got an answer?

The Chief Commissioner: Ce n'est pas seulement ici, là-bas. Parfois aussi, ça sort du *breeding centre* pour aller. Vous comprenez là ? Et c'est ça justement. Un tracteur qui vient et parfois nous a signalé ça, que sur ce tracteur qui a déposé ça et autres choses qui partent. Ils viennent déposer et d'autres choses qui partent. Vous comprenez là ? On a même signalé tout ça.

Mais, M. le président, je dois dire ici, les fonctionnaires de l'état doivent avoir une conscience propre. Ils doivent pouvoir savoir que c'est l'argent de l'état. Mais malheureusement, et c'est ça que je dis souvent qu'il faut continuer la formation des fonctionnaires. C'est ce qu'appelle la formation continue. C'est très important. Et on a remarqué ça justement durant les... Comment s'appelle... Je ne vais pas dire.

C'est ce qui a été dit pendant les budgets, les consultations budgétaires, justement, l'utilisation précieuse de l'argent de l'état. Ça, c'est très important. Et il faudrait quand même qu'il y ait et nous sommes en train de penser

là-dessus. On a parlé de ça avec le service civil et les finances tout ça que vraiment, il y ait une formation continue.

Peut-être pendant le passé, il y a eu un laisser-aller au niveau de la conscience du fonctionnaire. Donc, il faudra que ce fonctionnaire puisse regagner cette conscience propre dans son travail.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, I want to ask the Chief Commissioner whether, there is a mechanism put in place, whether, the exact amount of feed issued to a Stockman for different animals is being granted to the animals. Because several times, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we see, we saw some people coming to work in the morning with a small basket and going home with a basket full after work.

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, c'est le *mechanism* qui nous a permis de voir tout cela. Et c'est pourquoi je parle, justement, je ne vais mentionner les personnes, la responsabilité de la personne en charge. C'est ça, justement. La responsabilité de ce fonctionnaire. Il nous faut avoir des fonctionnaires vraiment responsables de l'argent de l'état, des produits de l'état, des matériaux de l'état...

Mr. Chairperson: Please, you said it. You said it, please.

The Chief Commissioner: Ça ne se passe pas simplement dans les *breeding centres* mais ailleurs aussi au niveau du ciment, de ceci, de cela, des macadams tout ça et du diésel même. On a appris que vraiment quelqu'un sort là de sa maison.... Tout ça existe.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

BREEDING CENTRE – BAIE TOPAZE

(No. B/102): Mr. G. Jabeemissar (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the breeding centre at Baie Topaze, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) the number of piglets produced yearly since February 2012 to date and to table a copy thereof; and
- (b) the other activities, if any, carried out thereat and how the centre is being managed?

/UNREVISED/

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the number of piglets produced on a yearly basis from 2012 to 2014 (August) are as follows:-

Sn	Year	Quantity/Head	Remarks
1.	2012	343	332 from February to December
2.	2013	159	Full Year
3.	2014	131	Up to 20 August 2014

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that other activities being carried out at Baie Topaze Livestock Production Unit are research work for the improvement of pig breeds.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in view of the recurrent losses encountered in the store keeping of Livestock Feed at Baie Topaze Livestock Production Unit, my Commission is reviewing the management of this unit through the signing of an agreement with experienced association of breeders grouped into cooperatives along with the local production of animal feed for local raw materials.

In that respect, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, an application submitted to the Mauritius Research Council for the funding to the tune of Rs 447,500, under the unsolicited Research Grand Scheme, of the project of Development of a Pig Feed Diets based on locally available feed resources for the Sustainable Pig Production in Rodrigues has been approved in May 2014.

The broad objective of the project is the formulation and testing of a balanced pig feed from locally available materials in view of providing pig breeders with an alternative low cost feed to improve their profitability. Upon conclusive results, the new feed is expected to trigger the production of pork and porker products of higher quality and lower price for local and export market and to foster pork processing into value added products.

My Commission will, over the next fifteen years, identify locally available materials with the potential of being used as components of the feed under formulation, determine the nutritive value and processing potentials of the selected materials, formulate the pig feed, assess the effect of the new feed in terms of growth rate and carcass quality of pigs and evaluate the processing quality and taste of porker products from pigs grown locally on the new local feed. The station will soon start the breeding of local black pigs for sale to interested breeders.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner what are the procedures currently put in place that piglets from this centre are being sold to the public?

The Chief Commissioner: For the last two years, there has been a committee to examine the application. And, the committee from the agricultural commission received the committee and they examined the list. And, we must examine the list. Sometimes, there are people who are big breeders of pigs. And, sometimes, they are small breeders of pigs. So, the committee which examine the list and from the list, the piglets are being sold.

The Minority Leader: Can I know, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, how many have been sold to pig breeders up to now? Yes.

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I remember the last time I raised an issue on the way some people, some pig breeders in Rodrigues are feeding their pigs. And, I asked the Chief Commissioner that because I, personally, view this as a very health concern. Because pigs, normally, they have to feed on pigs feed. But some people use different other feeds *pour nourrir les porcs*.

Alors, donc, est-ce que le Chef commissaire a pris en considération ce que j'avais posé, la question la dernière fois ? Est-ce que dans sa politique, justement, de faire augmenter le nombre de porcs à Rodrigues, il a dit, il a demandé de faire des recherches par le *Mauritius Research Council* ?

Have all these issues been taken into consideration ? And, how will his commission monitor the way pig breeders feed their pigs so that we get the expected good quality of pork?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, c'est ça, justement, cette recherche de la *Mauritius Research Council* où il y a des officiers du gouvernement qui sont dans cette équipe. C'est justement pour trouver une nourriture différente de ce qui sort de Maurice pour donner aux cochons. Et c'est ça qu'on est en train de voir. Et c'est pourquoi on est en train de penser sur le cochon noir.

Vous savez, ici, à Rodrigues, on fait, il y a un jambon avec la même, les cochons qui sont nourris comme à Maurice avec du concentré, ce jambon va aller à Maurice et on ne va pas voir ces jambons de Rodrigues. Et c'est pourquoi dans le passé, on faisait du jambon avec la viande du cochon noir. Ces

cochons noirs qui se nourrissaient des produits du pays ; la patate, le manioc ou de l'herbe, de l'Acacia et ainsi de suite.

C'est là-dessus que le *Mauritius Research Council* est en train de travailler quel type de nourriture de Rodrigues même qu'on peut donner aux cochons. Et ça, c'est très important. Par exemple, à La Réunion, ils aiment bien le cochon noir. Ils nourrissent le cochon noir. Et si demain, on fait un jambon avec ce cochon noir qui a un autre gout, et bien, ce jambon peut être vendu à Maurice ou ailleurs.

Alors, c'est ça un petit peu, M. le président. C'est que nous ne pouvons pas faire ce que Maurice fait ou les autres pays font. Il nous faudra faire des recherches pour proposer quelque chose qui sera différent. Quand les Réunionnais viennent ici, ils aiment manger la viande du cochon noir. Ils demandent parce qu'ils nourrissent le cochon noir à La Réunion.

À mon avis, c'est ça. Parce que nous, dans notre politique, nous pensons, nous disons le gout de la viande, le gout du poisson, le gout des légumes, le gout du poulet, tout ça, c'est le gout qui sera différent. Quand le touriste vient ici, le Mauricien, il voit la nourriture qu'on mange, c'est différent. Le poulet local, tout ça, c'est différent.

Alors, voyez-vous, M. le président, c'est ça qu'on devait chercher. Et qu'à Baie Topaze va être l'endroit qu'on va produire ces cochons noirs et qui vont être vendus aux éleveurs de porcs à Rodrigues pour que dans les années à venir, peut-être je ne serais pas là dans 5 ans, 10 ans, 20ans, on pourrait vraiment manger cette viande du cochon noir nourris avec les produits du pays.

Autre fois, le cochon noir était nourri, tout le monde sait, pas avec la patate, le manioc, l'Acacia, de l'herbe et ainsi de suite. Et c'était avec du *cornflour*. Alors, c'est ça, M. le président, cette recherche, c'est pour ça. Et à mon avis, il ne faut pas aller comme ça là appuyer ce cochon qui vient là et puis, on nourrit ça avec du concentré et puis, comme on veut nourrir les poissons de cages avec du concentré. Ces *poissons lakaz* là, avec du concentré.

Un jour, le Premier ministre m'a dit « *monn manz enn poisson ki na pa gout* ». Alors, c'est ça, justement. Il faudrait manger les choses qui ont du gout. Voilà, M. le président. Merci.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I heard the Chief Commissioner mention the management of LPU at Baie Topaze. Can we know from the Chief Commissioner whether, the LPU will be co-managed with the

Cooperative of Women or the government will be the sole manager of the unit or it will be granted to the cooperative?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, ce sera un *co-management*. Co-management, la coopérative, la FACER et la Commission de... Parce que là, ce n'est pas comme à Baie aux Huitres. Parce que là, ça relève de la recherche. Et c'est ça, justement. Ça relève de la recherche. Donc, il faudrait que la Commission de l'Agriculture soit avec tout ce monde-là et le MRC, tout le monde ensemble. Et d'ailleurs, avec le MRC, il y a un officier de l'agriculture surtout concernant le pâturage et ainsi de suite. Non, ce ne sera pas donné à la coopérative mais ce sera un *co-management* avec la coopérative justement.

Mr. Chairperson: Minority Leader first and then... Last question.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I want the Chief Commissioner to be more precise. Because up to now, it seems that it is just an intended policy. He is coming ahead with it. Can he during the next sittings, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner to come up with table the plan? Because there have been many confusions.

Some have been talking about breeding; the centre has a breeding place. And, he has also mentioned a Research Centre. Right? If it is a Research Centre, will it be a Research Centre that will produce? Yes but what will be the involvement of the breeders? Because there are many pig breeders in Rodrigues. They are grouped in different associations.

My colleague, here, mentioned about... I heard him mentioning women's association. Will it be intended for women's associations, for Pig Breeders Associations? Which associations? What are the procedures being put in place in order to get the corporation of all pig breeders?

Will there be a selection and so on? Yes. That is, things are not right clear up to now. If the Chief Commissioner cannot give all these answers right now, I request him whether, in the next sitting, he will come up with the definite plan in writing and table with the House?

The Chief Commissioner: Give you report on what the MRC is being done concerning the local feed for pigs. They have just started and we are going next time with the report because the main thing is this local feed. This is research, local feed. Is this local feed before ?

Les concentrés, tout ça venait, c'était utilisé par nos anciens, par nos grands-pères, nos grand-mères. Tout ce monde l'a utilisé. Il y avait pas mal de cochons noirs dans le pays. On connaît là. Alors, c'est ça, justement. C'est ça qu'on veut introduire. Il me semble que dans le *Food Security*, il y avait un item comme ça. Faire nos recherches au niveau de la nourriture locale. Il y avait ça dans le *Food Security*. Alors, voilà, M. le président, c'est juste simplement pour la recherche, je vais la prochaine fois déposer sur la table de l'Assemblée, un compte rendu de cette recherche ça est en train de se faire et qu'est-ce qui va arriver à l'avenir.

Mr. Chairperson: Question for respected Member Spéville, please.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether, there is a service, the service to rent a barn exist at Baie Topaze to rent on site or on farmer's site? If yes, how will same be entertained afterwards? And, if no, if they intend to give this service to the population.

The Chief Commissioner: On n'a pas décidé encore. On a décidé pour les taureaux, on a décidé pour les moutons mais pour les cochons, jusqu'à.... on n'a pas décidé encore. Nous allons tenir compte de la remarque de l'honorable membre pour l'étudier et voir si c'est possible. Merci.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question, please.

CREATION OF LABEL - RODRIGUES

(No. B/103): Mr. Jean Rex 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 as to where matters stand in relation thereto?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson Sir, there was a need to add value to and lay emphasis on the specificities of the Rodriguan Products. In this context, a Rodriguan label was developed which would differentiate Rodriguan products and increase their selling value and potential.

The Rodrigues Label, "*Rodrigues Naturellement*" was therefore developed and launched on the 16 of January 2014, following several workshops with the different stakeholders involved. This label will mainly be used in sectors such as handicraft, agro-processing, the hospital industry and others, and will act as an evidence of genuine quality of Rodriguan products, and thus, a major marketing tool for entrepreneurs.

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The next courses of action now are the registration of the label “*Rodrigues Naturellement*” with the Industrial Property Office and the implementation phases, which will comprise the various standards and labels tributary to the Rodrigues Label in the different economic sectors identified. For a smooth implementation of the label, a facilitator is needed to be in charge of the following activities:

- (1) Planning of the implementation phase;
- (2) Facilitation of the provision or sourcing out of expertise for the implementation of the standards and labels;
- (3) Coordination of the activities which will drive the implementation phase;
- (4) Facilitation of the search for funding for the cost of the related implementation activities.

The Label will be implemented in 2 phases. The three steps prior to the start of the implementation of the label will be carried out within 6 months of the award of contract and they are as follows:

Step 1: meeting with identified operators interested in the implementation of the standards and labels tributary to the Rodrigues Label to carry out the following:

- Identify the number of operators and relative sectors which will be involved in the implementation process; and
- Prepare schedule of implementation together with milestones and deadlines.

Step 2: organise meetings with potential donor organisations and the private sector to ascertain the potential of funding for the implementation process.

Step 3: source out necessary expertise for each of the standards and labels involved with the Rodriguan’s Label.

Facilitation of the setting up of the Label Team of the Commission shall be done over the period of Phase 1. During Phase 2 which a Pilot Project, we will have the implementation of the Rodrigues Label and the following sectors. The Rodrigues label will be implemented in each of the following sectors:

- (i) Organic Certification for three farmers or farmer organisations on a pilot basis...

The Minority Leader: On a point of order, I do not think whether, again, this time, the Deputy Chief Commissioner is making a statement. Because I know, the question has been put, she has to give an answer but I am following her. She has up to now read three pages. And, I do not know how many much more she has left but please, see to it that she does not make any statement.

Mr. Chairperson: Please, shorten your answer, Deputy Chief Commissioner.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there has been a question. I should give the details about the label. So, this is my last page. And, I think you should listen to the answers.

So, you will have Organic Certification for three farmers or farmer organisations who will have Fair Trade Certification for three operators or three groups of Handicraft operators on a pilot basis who will have also HACCP Certification for three food processing operators/restaurants. And, we will have '*Spécialités Traditionnelles Garanties*' for three producers; and Ms 165 for the three operators of the tourism sector. This is what I wanted to say.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House whether for Physical Chemical Test, Microbiological Test and other test pertaining to *agroalimentaire*, there will be an institution locally to do same or same will be forwarded to Mauritius? And, if yes, how? And, secondly, what will be the time limit for processors to have the outcomes of the test?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je reviens justement d'une mission à Maurice où j'ai eu l'occasion, j'ai pris le temps d'aller rencontrer le Ministère de l'Agro-industrie sur cette question de *Microbiological Test*. Parce que c'est une question de priorité pour les agro-processeurs. Et parce que comme j'avais dit dans une précédente session ici à l'Assemblée, il y avait des conditions fixées par le ministère qui ne répondaient pas aux besoins des agro-processeurs à Rodrigues. On a discuté avec eux. On a fait des propositions.

Et malheureusement, je dis bien malheureusement que juste au moment où tout allait démarrer pour les tests, il y a l'équipement au Ministère de la Santé qui est tombé en panne. Et donc, même à Maurice, depuis trois mois,

l'équipement est en panne et ça n'a pas pu nous aider à réaliser ces projets à faire certifier nos produits. Mais on a discuté aussi.

D'ailleurs, le Chef commissaire aussi avait auparavant discuté de ce même problème que Rodrigues puisse avoir un *fast-track*. Parce que quand même là, on a un *backlog*, je dois dire. Il y a plusieurs entrepreneurs qui sont prêts. Et ce qu'on a remarqué, on a discuté avec le PS aussi que le montant total pour un produit, ça coute tellement cher.

En fait, c'est les *consumables* qui coutent vraiment chers et que pour le petit volume que Rodrigues produit, ce n'est pas *cost-effective* d'avoir tous les tests fait à Rodrigues. Donc, certains tests vont automatiquement se faire à Maurice mais on va veiller que ça se fasse sur un *fast-track* pour que nous n'attendons pas trop longtemps. Mais c'est un fait que le petit volume que nous produisons, aujourd'hui, on ne pourrait pas faire tous les tests microbiologiques à Rodrigues.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: The Deputy Chief Commissioner says to the House that there is a backlog. Can she inform the House what is being done for products who have a short *Date Limite de Consommation (DLC)* before negotiation starts for testing these products?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Donc, en effet, M. le président, j'ai dit qu'il y a un *backlog*. Mais en même temps aussi, on travaille avec les coopératives principalement qui produisent. Parce qu'il y a des tests qui se font ici même pour voir le *lifetime* des produits. Donc, tout ça est en train de se faire maintenant.

Donc, aujourd'hui, valeur du jour, on ne peut pas venir dire, donner tous les détails parce qu'il y a des tests qui se font même par rapport à tous les produits qu'on a. On a le piment confit. On a les aigre-doux par exemple, on a le test qui se fait au niveau du Limon D'Or pour s'assurer, pour déterminer le *lifetime* de ces produits. Donc, tout ça, on est en train de prendre en compte.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Yes, I want to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner, she is mentioning for the creation of the label as a major tool for marketing. Can we know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner where does matter stand as regard to the SME Websites?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, je dois dire qu'aujourd'hui, avec le Ministère des Coopératives, il y a un *scheme* pour que chaque SME peut faire son propre *website*. Et on est en train de faciliter cela. On a eu des rencontres avec les entrepreneurs.

On a aussi eu des rencontres avec le Ministre des Coopératives qui étaient là. On a discuté de tout ça. Et donc, la question de SME, le *website* pour le SME, on n'aura pas qu'un seul. Chacun peut le faire. D'ailleurs, avec Emtel, il y a eu des formations qu'on a faites. Le Emtel a financé les formations pour 25 entrepreneurs où ils ont été formés comment développer leur *website*. Et tout ça, donc, il y aura une deuxième partie de formation. Et tout ça va être opérationnel très bientôt. Et bien sûr, le *website* de l'Assemblée Régionale va aussi, donc, prendre en compte tout ce que nous faisons pour l'entrepreneuriat à Rodrigues.

Mr. J. Daniel Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House under the umbrella of the label, what is the way forward to track defaulters who try to modify the content of agro-products even though these products have been tested?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, le label n'est pas une certification qui se donne à vie. Par exemple, nous, on n'a pas voulu créer un label qui est reconnu qu'à Rodrigues. Parce que Rodrigues n'a pas de normes de qualités. Il y a seulement des normes qualités qui existent au niveau international.

C'est la raison pour laquelle, par exemple, j'ai pris l'exemple de HACCP. Et, automatiquement, une fois qu'une organisation, une coopérative est certifiée HACCP, il y a des auditeurs qui viennent régulièrement et parfois, par surprise, qui viennent pour s'assurer que tous les cahiers des charges sont respectés à la lettre. Et c'est dans ce sens-là, et c'est seulement quand les cahiers des charges sont respectés à la lettre que le renouvellement de ce label est permis.

The Minority Leader: Oui, M. le président, l'Adjointe au Chef commissaire vient de dire justement que pour veiller au bon fonctionnement, des bonnes productions de nos produits. Et il y aura ce qu'elle vient de dire, des auditeurs.

Alors, je voudrais lui demander, ces auditeurs-là, ils ont quelles qualifications ? Ils se trouvent où ? Est-ce qu'il y a une unité à Rodrigues qui, justement, où ces auditeurs sont basées afin de permettre un meilleur fonctionnement et de veiller à la qualité de nos produits et répondre aux besoins de justement, de ce Label Rodriguais ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Non ! Ces auditeurs n'existent pas à Rodrigues. Justement, si on ne parlait que des auditeurs à Rodrigues, là, on avait parlé de qualité pour Rodrigues. Donc, HACCP, c'est international. Une fois que l'organisation est affiliée, automatiquement, de par le monde, peu

importe où l'organisation se trouve, les auditeurs se déplacent. Et à Maurice, c'est pareil.

Donc, tous ceux qui sont certifiés HACCP ont ses auditeurs qui viennent et qui font le suivi. Donc, les personnes ne seront pas ici à Rodrigues. Par contre, au niveau de notre bureau aussi, on va devoir s'assurer que les qualités, le standard est maintenu pour être sûr que quand ces auditeurs viennent, il n'y a pas de soucis pour valider le label.

Mr. Chairperson: Next question.

**OCTOPUS CLOSED SEASON 2014
– RECRUITMENT/SUPERVISORS/CRITERIA**

(No. B/104) Mrs. M. D. L. C. MEUNIER (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the recruitment of officers for the octopus closed season for 2014, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) if there has been any recruitment in the grade of Supervisor in relation thereto and, if so, to give details thereof;
- (b) the number of Supervisors who have been/will be recruited, if any and the selection criteria thereof; and
- (c) the item vote under which those Supervisors will be paid?

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am pleased to inform the House that in view to improving the supervision of alternative works provided to fishers during the closure of octopus season 2014, a number of persons, mostly youths have been recruited not by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly but by Village Committees under the Rodrigues Council of Social Services to help in supervision during the current seasonal fishery closure.

The octopus fishery closure, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is a collaborative project whereby the Rodrigues Regional Assembly actively collaborates with local NGOs, such as, the RCSS, the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation, Shoals Rodrigues and Terre Mer Rodriguaise inter-alia. Following the symposium held in December last to evaluate the previous octopus fishery closure, all stakeholders have agreed that the co-management approach should be undertaken to be able to improve the management of octopus fishery. It is in this spirit, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the RCSS has contributed for the recruitment of Supervisors.

The reason for electing the RCSS to take this responsibility are based on their presence throughout the island, the community oriented experience and eligibility for external funding. Zone Supervisor recruitment was carried out by Village Committees after the local advertisement of the post and selection was carried out by the village committee and members of RCSS Board, by a panel of village committee's Presidents in zones with more than one village. The EPMU actively supported the process.

Regional Supervisors were recruited from the Employment Office's list of graduates and interviewed by a panel composed of EPMU staffs and RCSS representatives.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (b) of the question I inform the House that 44 Supervisors are being recruited in total, of which 39 are Zones Supervisors and 5 Regional Supervisors, each responsible between six and nine zones. I am informed that the criteria for Supervisors selection were as follows:-

- Academic qualification;
- Project management skills;
- Group work and leadership experience;
- Post training received; and finally
- Knowledge of the fisher community.

Zone Supervisors selected are predominantly are School Certificate holders and Regional Supervisors selected are either Diploma or Degree holders or in the process of completing a degree.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (c), I have to inform the House that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is not paying the Supervisors instead the cost of the Supervisors stipends is being shouldered by co-financing of the National Empowerment Foundation, Training and Placement Scheme and Indian Ocean Commission Smart Fish Project Grant. The stipends will be paid by the RCSS through the grant that it is obtained.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: M. le président, j'aimerais bien savoir. *It is good that young people have been recruited for this job for a better supervision, better outcome of the octopus-closed season.* Qu'est-ce qui va se passer après? Est-ce que le RCSS finalement, lorsqu'on voit *the role of the RCSS in Rodrigues with regard to recruitment*, c'est bien d'avoir des organisations qui aident mais j'ai entendu parler de Shoals, de Terre Mer. *What has been the implication of these other organisations in the recruitment of these Supervisors* et qu'est-ce qui va se passer après, *following the reopening of the octopus closed season.* Qu'est-ce qui va se passer avec ces jeunes?

Mr. R. Payendee: M. le président, premièrement ces jeunes ont été recrutés pas seulement pour la période de fermeture. Il y aura aussi un placement après la fermeture pour faire un suivie, la suivie sur les pêcheurs, les pêcheurs d'ourite et aussi la suivie sur la statistique d'ourite qui va être collecté. Par rapport à Shoals et Wildlife, chacun à sa responsabilité. Comme j'ai dit, j'ai bien mentionné, tous les ONGs qui travaillent avec nous sont dans la

fermeture de la pêche à l'ourite. Le Shoals sous le financement de Smart Fish, eux aussi ils ont leur part de formation des pêcheurs par rapport à la natation, la biologie, l'écologie tout ça pour mieux comprendre l'environnement marin. Le Wildlife aussi, parce qu'on veut faire de Rodrigues une île écologique et on veut que ces pêcheurs, nous on veut, ce qu'on appelle *an integrated approach to eco system management*. Donc, on ne veut pas que les pêcheurs connaissent que la mer parce que le problème de la mer vienne de la terre. Donc, il faut que ces jeunes là, ces pêcheurs là aient la possibilité de travailler partout. Donc, tous les ONGs et au niveau de Terre Mer, Terre Mer est engagé plus au niveau de supervision. Cette année on a lancé ce côté pour dire que la supervision est aussi fait par les pêcheurs. C'est pour ça Terre Mer à un financement de Smart Fish pour veiller à ce qu'une partie de Rodrigues soit sous la supervision de Terre Mer pour surtout le côté Est où le récif il est tout près, où il y a eu pas mal des dégâts dans les années précédentes. Donc, Terre Mer. Tous les ONGs ont d'une façon ou d'une autre ont contribués et ont leurs part de travail.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, le Commissaire avait mentionné deux types de Superviseurs. Il a dit d'abord qu'il y a eu 39 zones Supervisors et 5 Regional Supervisors. Est-ce qu'il peut éclairer la Chambre sur *the terms of reference of each type of Supervisors ? Whether they have the same remuneration and will he please inform the House of all these*.

Mr. R. Payendee: Bon, au niveau des Zones Supervisors, qu'est-ce qu'on a c'est qu'on a plusieurs – Rodrigues est divisé dans la fermeture de la pêche à l'ourite en plusieurs zones. Donc, ces zones par rapport aux pêcheurs, quels quantité de pêcheur il y a. Les zones seront supervisées directement par les Zones Supervisors. Il y a 39 ou 40 zones. Donc, après qui dit l'aboureur, qui dit supervision, dit quelqu'un un petit peu plus haut. Donc, les autres superviseurs. Les cinq qu'on a recruté, ces superviseurs ont environ quelques villages, quelques zones que eux ils surveillent. Donc, pour s'assurer qu'il y a plus de supervision. Je dois aussi mentionner qu'on n'a pas que les superviseurs qu'on vient de recruter. Il y a aussi les superviseurs de l'état qui l'année dernière ou les deux années précédentes étaient dans le bain et qui sont aussi dans le bain cette année justement pour leurs donner un coup de main surtout du côté technique des travaux alternatifs.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: M. le président, est-ce que le Commissaire pourrait informer la Chambre, est-ce que ces jeunes ils ont été formés avant de commencer leurs travaux de supervision et j'aimerais avoir un petit peu plus de détail par rapport justement qu'est-ce qu'ils sont supposés faire ces Supervisors. *Supervising what exactly? Supervising that fishermen are not going fishing ? What are they supervising exactly in their work?*

Mr. R. Payendee: Bon, ces superviseurs comme le mot dit, il travaille avec un groupe de pêcheur. Donc, il regarde surtout, il note tout ce qui se fait par les pêcheurs et puis comme j'ai dit en partenariat avec un superviseur de l'état. Donc, une formation continue leur est donnée par ces formateurs de l'état, ces travailleurs de l'état qui travaillent avec eux. Donc, justement ces superviseurs ils ont été formés. On a mis en place un programme de formation parce qu'on ne peut pas – normalement on n'envoie pas des jeunes qui sortent de l'école superviser d'autres personnes ou bien superviser un travail. Donc, on a assuré que ces jeunes là soient formés. Il y a eu trois semaines de formation dans différents secteurs de management skill, dans tout ce qui est management pour que ces jeunes là soient mieux préparés pour ça. Donc, juste avant la fermeture en collaboration avec the Deputy Chief Commissioner's Office on a monté un cours très solide pour ces superviseurs qui d'ailleurs maintenant sont mieux préparés pour faire la tâche de superviseur.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire par rapport à la participation ? Concernant la participation vue que l'année dernière il y avait la participation du Commission de l'Océan Indien. Qu'est-ce qui se soit passé avec la Commission de l'Océan Indien parce qu'en ce moment je vois qu'il y a la participation de NEF plus en même temps il y a l'Association Terre et Mer. D'après les renseignements obtenus, M. le président, l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues n'a pas envoyé de rapport jusqu'à maintenant à la Commission de l'Océan Indien par rapport au *Closing season of octopus*.

Mr. R. Payendee: M. le président, ce qu'a dit le Membre je qualifie de n'importe quoi parce que ce n'est pas vrai qu'on n'a pas envoyé de rapport. D'ailleurs le Membre s'il a bien écouté peut être il ne sait pas ce que sait que Smart Fish. Je vais lui expliquer. Smart Fish c'est une branche de la Commission de l'Océan Indien. Donc, Smart Fish de la Commission de l'Océan Indien est présente dans le projet cette année mais bien sûr qu'il finance d'une autre façon. Tous les ONGs que ce soit RCSS, que ce soit Shoals, que ce soit Wildlife ou Terre Mer, ils obtiennent leurs finance de Empowerment Programme pour les superviseurs mais les autres c'est à travers de la Commission de l'Océan Indien. Je dois dire aussi que tous les T-shirts, tous les programmes de sensibilisation a été financé par le Smart Fish et pour dire la Commission de l'Océan Indien. (*Gap in recording*) Il y a la Commission de l'Océan Indien pour expliquer un petit peu ce qui se passe à la Commission, il y a la Commission de l'Océan Indien et puis il y a différents programmes. Et le programme qui s'occupe de Rodrigues c'est le programme Smart Fish. Donc, ce côté s'il faut définir Smart Fish il faut prendre deux heures pour le faire mais je préfère m'arrêter là.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: On a point of order. The Respected Commissioner is coming into this House with a reply. I want the Commissioner to ascertain to this House whether the reply that he is stating to the House is correct.

Mr. R. Payendee: I maintain, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that my reply is correct and I will read again what I said when I answered the question. I have to inform the House that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is not paying for the Supervisors instead the cost of the Supervisors, stipend is being shouldered by co-financing by the National Empowerment Programme (NEF) and an Indian Ocean Commission Smart Fish Project. This is what I said and I think it is clear that I mentioned the name of *la COI*, I did not say Commission for Océan Indien, I said the Indian Ocean Commission which according to me means the same.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Rosaire Perrine.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner one question regarding the recruitment of the Supervisors. Je souhaiterai demander au Commissaire est-ce qu'il y a eu des rejets concernant le recrutement de certains Supervisors by the RCSS. The RCSS accepts these Supervisors and then on the panel these certain Supervisors have been rejected. Have there been any cases reported to his office with relation to what I just mentioned?

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of this and I am not responsible whatsoever if this has been done because as I mentioned this has been done. The panel in the village committees, it is not the Regional Assembly's. So, we were not the one who selected the people so I cannot answer for something we have not done. So, this question has to be put the Rodrigues Council of Social Services.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner is not telling the truth. The RCSS is...

Mr. Chairperson: You cannot say not telling the truth. You do not have any proof.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, I remove this word, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. But the Commissioner mentioned that the RCSS is a partner of this project so he cannot state to this House, he cannot answer or reply or give answers from the RCSS. *Ou bizin dire mo frère soit ou responsable soit ou pas responsable mo frère.* I would like to ask the Commissioner again whether there has been any reject in candidature with regard to Supervisors. First, which have been

accepted by the panel of the RCSS and then rejected by the panel of members including RCSS, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I shall read again what I said. Zone Supervisors recruitment was carried out by village committees after the local advertisement of the post and selection was carried out by the village committee and members of RCSS Board and by a panel of village committee, Presidents in zone with more than one village. I did not mention. I cannot see where I mentioned whatsoever there was a member of the Commission for Environment or Fisheries on this Board. RCSS is free to do what they want. They are free to do. They are the one responsible.

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: Next question. Last question for Mrs. Meunier.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I want the Commissioner to remove his words.

Mr. Chairperson: Which words.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: RCSS is free to do whatever they want. This is not correct.

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: I think that the Commissioner has said he did not interfere. I cannot be wrong and you cannot go against my ruling. You want to set another question. Do you?

Mr. J. C. Agathe: I have a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. I heard the Commissioner mentioned the RCSS is free to do whatever it wants. This is what I heard.

Mr. Chairperson: You want to reply.

Mr. R. Payendee: I maintain. I said it and I maintain it because they are free to do it. They are the one on the panel. Tomorrow do you want me to go and change things in Mauritius Shipping or whatever? They are free to do whatever they want if they have been given the responsibility. And another thing I could have not answered this question at all because it has nothing to do. It is not government money but I was kind enough to answer and I maintain what I said RCSS is free to do the way they want to do their selection practice.

Mr. Chairperson: Since you asked the main question, you get the last question Mrs. Meunier.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: *Mr. Chairperson, Sir, je ne suis pas d'accord que le Commissaire vienne dire que le RCSS est libre de faire ce qu'il veut. At the end of the day what is RCSS ? The Rodrigues Council of Social Services or Rodrigues Council of Government Services. Il remplace le gouvernement maintenant. Le RCSS remplace le gouvernement!* Is the Commissioner responsible for Octopus Closed Season, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. He should know what is going on. He cannot come and tell us that RCSS does whatever they feel free to do.

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: So, you come with your question.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: I do not agree with that. I wanted to ask the Commissioner.

Mr. Chairperson: I will not tolerate certain things. Think of the decorum of the House first of all, and behave yourself, please. Continue Mrs. Meunier.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: *I wanted to ask the Commissioner, peut importe l'argent de l'état, l'argent qu'on a dans d'autre source de financement, empowerment, Smart Fish, COI, ce sont des organisations quand même très reconnues. Est-ce que he is happy since, I say it again, since it is his Commission which is responsible for octopus closed season, est-ce qu'il est satisfait que les villages committees, en quelle capacité les villages committees recrute des personnes maintenant. Est-ce qu'ils ont eu des formations, je ne sais pas moi, est-ce qu'ils sont devenus des PSC local pour recruter des personnes, M. le président ?*

Mr. R. Payendee: *This is a joke, Sir. It is really a joke. Dans quelle capacité les villages committees, qu'est-ce qu'on est en train de dire là ? Qu'est-ce qu'on est en train d'apprendre dans ce pays. Est-ce qu'on est en train de dire que les Rodriguais non pas les capacités de faire un travail ? Ils n'ont pas les capacités ? Nous on fait confiance à la RCSS et nous au niveau de la Commission c'est ce qu'on a fait. I maintain what I said.*

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *c'est vrai ce que le Commissaire a dit. A suscité autant de passion, autant de*, on sitting position intervention and this is not good for the House. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the way he gave the answer, it is as if, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *il se décharge de toutes responsabilités*. The policy for octopus-closed season is raised and not the RCSS. Is the RCSS accountable, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to his Commission or to any other public body. He has to give an answer, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, j'ai dit au niveau de recrutement ce n'est pas notre affaire. Le RCSS avait une certaine responsabilité. Mais qu'est-ce qui se serait passé. Je vais poser une question. Maintenant c'est moi qui pose une question. Qu'est-ce qui se serait passé si on avait...

Mr. Chairperson: Please, Commissioner. Give your answer that is all, please.

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Rosaire, listen to the Commissioner, please. Anyway you listen.

Mr. R. Payendee: Mais je pense que en voyant ce qui se passe aujourd'hui il me semble que la minorité aurait aimée qu'on mette quelqu'un de la Commission sur le Board de RCSS. Que RCSS soit géré par le gouvernement. Qu'ils s'ont pas d'autonomie. Et ce que nous au niveau de l'assemblée régionale on leur donne leur autonomie, leur responsabilité et ces même pas nous qui payons cela donc c'est bête et dommage. Mais je pense qu'est-ce se serait passé si on avait mis des membres. On aurait dit ah politique politique! Et là on laisse les gens tranquille. On les laisse faire leurs travaux tranquillement et on dit que ce n'est pas bon. De toute façon ce n'est pas bon. Donc, moi je dois dire que je maintiens ce que j'ai dit on a laissé le RCSS faire son travail comme il doit le faire.

[Applause]

Mr. Chairperson: Next question.

DISRUPTION - WATER DISTRIBUTION

(No. B/105) **Mrs. M. D. L. C. Meunier (Second Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will, for the benefit of the House,

state if any disruption in the water distribution and supply in the different wards thereof has been reported for the period 20 to 31 July 2014 and, if so, the reasons therefor and indicating the steps taken to remedy same, if any?

The Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports (Mr. I. Valimamode): Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am informed that on the night of the 24 July 2014 at 08.30 p.m., water disruption was reported at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and it lasted for less than one hour. I repeat, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that on the night of 24 July 2014 at 08.30 p.m., water disruption was reported at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and it lasted for less than one hour.

You want to answer in my place? If you want to answer in my place... Later on, you will ask me the same...

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: Listen please. Listen first of all. Commissioner continues. On the minority side, please do not disturb.

Mr. I. Valimamode: I am also informed that brief water shortages were reported on Thursday 24 and Friday 25 respectively again around 08:30 p.m – 9.00 p.m. and lasted for less than one hour. The Water Unit was contacted on both nights and it was reported that minor repairs had to be undertaken.

I have been further informed that on the afternoon of Monday 28 July 2014 around 4.00 p.m., there was another short disruption of water supply at Queen Elizabeth Hospital but was resolved after the intervention of the technicians of the Water Unit.

And lastly, on Tuesday 29 July 2014 at 06.25 a.m., it was reported that water supply was interrupted at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and at around 06.30 a.m., the Commission for Water Resources was informed promptly of the problem and the first water cisterns arrived at Queen Elizabeth Hospital at 07:17 a.m. and continued to deliver water for the next 12 hours.

The Commission for Water Resources after investigations informed the Health Director and my Departmental Head that there was a breakdown in the main water pump supplying the filter plant at Crève Coeur from where QEH is fed on a 24-hour basis. It is indeed worth mentioning Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that Queen Elizabeth Hospital is the only place in Rodrigues where water is supplied directly from the main line on 24-hours basis.

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Thus, all the Units of Queen Elizabeth Hospital were informed accordingly and cisterns supplied water continuously to all wards and units in order of priority. Thus, the Operating Theatre, Haemodialysis Unit, Intensive Care Unit, Out Patients Department and the Maternity Ward were supplied in priority followed by X-Ray, Laboratory and Catering Unit and respective wards etc.

By 10:00 a.m. on the same day, all the wards were supplied with water. It has to be emphasized, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the 29 July 2014 was a public holiday and that Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Commission for Public Infrastructure was operating with reduced staffs. Nonetheless, all efforts were deployed to remedy the crisis in the least time possible.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, on the following day at 05:30 a.m. again, there was a slight disruption and as from 06:00 a.m. the first cisterns were supplying water at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

My colleagues may wish to note that Queen Elizabeth Hospital is equipped with a back-up water tank of about 100 m³ capacity which can sustain the supply of water at Queen Elizabeth Hospital for an autonomy of about two days.

It is this specific tank that was being fed by the cisterns from 29 to early Thursday 31 July 2014 when the main pump at Fond la Digue was repaired and fully operational.

I wish to apprise the House that despite the water disruption at Queen Elizabeth Hospital for about four hours on Tuesday 29 July 2014 and about one hour on Wednesday 30 July, apart from the Catering Services, there were no major disruption. I repeat, no major disruption at Queen Elizabeth Hospital since the following lifesaving treatment were given to patients normally:-

On 29 July 2014

- Haemodialysis - 11 patients
- Surgeries - 06 patients
- Normal delivery - 01

On 30 July 2014

- Haemodialysis - 10 patients
- Normal deliveries - 02
- Caesarian section - 01

- Surgeries - 05

In addition to the following, laboratory and radiographic tests were also carried out normally.

However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I regret to inform the House that in spite of all efforts deployed, on 29 July 2014, lunch could unfortunately not be served on the usual time, that is, 11:30 a.m. owing to this water problem. Exceptionally on this specific day, the meal was served at about 1:15 p.m.

My colleagues would concur that in such a situation of crisis, priority had to be given to life saving and on this respect our services were maintained as elaborated earlier.

Moreover, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following this water problem at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, my Commission in collaboration with Commission for Water is working on a water distribution system at Queen Elizabeth Hospital which will be fed from Crève Coeur Filter Plant and backed up by the upcoming desalination plant and furthermore provide an automatic backup supply in case of any further interruption from the main line.

In the same vein, I wish Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to avail of this opportunity to once again express my gratitude to all the volunteers, private sector and personnel of the Commission for Water who helped the staff of Queen Elizabeth Hospital on 29 and 30 July during this water problem to solve this situation as promptly as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: *Merci, M. le président.* I am happy that the Commissioner gave us a really detailed situation of what happened. C'est vrai que d'après ces dires là il nous a dit que cela n'a pas duré longtemps. Mais malheureusement parmi les patients, dans la population ce n'était pas ça qu'on a ressenti. Ça a duré beaucoup plus de temps que cela. Il a aussi admit que la nourriture n'a pas été donné à l'heure *on one of these days, very good.*

He has also mentioned the steps taken to remedy same in the future. Fingers crossed! Back up avec désalination et alimentation de Pointe Canon. *Ouf mo espéré soon.* Donc, moi je voudrais demander au commissaire concerné c'est bon de back up with desalination *mais il y a déjà un projet de rain water harvesting qui a déjà été lancé à l'hôpital. C'est vrai qu'il y a eu des petits hics, il y a eu des problèmes. Il fallait revoir un peu pour utiliser les infrastructures déjà en place dans la cour de l'hôpital de Crève Cœur. Est-ce que avec cette crise qui est arrivée. Est-ce qu'ils ont pensés a réutilisé ce système de rain water harvesting if any. Et bien sure comme il a dit OT and all*

the other services continued running normally, thank to God there were no major operation going on these days. Mais qu'est-ce qu'il compte faire avec le *rain water harvesting project* ?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, *je crois que l'ancienne Commissaire de la Santé à la mémoire courte*. The water-harvesting project is a DCP project and was never meant to be a back up water system to Queen Elizabeth Hospital. As being stipulated by Members of the other side of the House. It is a water harvesting and filtration plant meant to be used by the Haemodialysis Unit and laboratory. However, with the increase in the number of dialysis machines on sessions the plant can no longer sustain the capacity required for dialysis. However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as mentioned in my main answer my Commission in collaboration with funding agencies is working on a project to upgrade and convert the actual DCP Project into a full fledged autonomous back up water system for Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the future. At times, we play with firecrackers and it explodes in your face. I wish to circulate this picture of the DCP Project. I will not say worst. It is an *elephant blanc*. Let me finish please. It is an *elephant blanc*. I was not the Commissioner then. I am the Commissioner now. I was the Nursing Administrator.

Mr. Chairperson: Address the Chair, please. Please keep quiet. Listen first.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Once the DCP Project, the water-harvesting tank was through. The fact that it is of fibreglass and it tends to burst. Thus, was representing a hazard to these people living next door and the tank was leaking all the way and they had to rush to put, yes *consolidé* inside. This I want to circulate this for my colleagues to see and to you people to see. And, this could not – it is not sustainable. So, we cannot use it. And, we are rehabilitating as I just said.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: I have three questions. Can the Commissioner responsible for Health inform the House from which nearby source does QEH obtain water? And secondly, who is responsible to follow the feeding pipe from the reservoir to the hospital to follow the level of water available at the hospital and also at the level of the reservoir at Crève-Coeur. Can the Commissioner inform us?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, kindly note that all water problems were due to distribution problem and this does not fall under the Queen Elizabeth Hospital or my Commission. So, water comes from as I have

already answered that it comes from the main tank from Crève-Coeur and that there was a break down in the pump at Fond la Digue. So, this is why.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, they are talking of desalination but we know that desalination plant can break down also. Can the Commissioner inform the House whether there is *en amont de ce problème*. There was a working arrangement between his Commission and the Commission for Water Resources so that a minimum threshold level of water be kept at Crève-Coeur 1000 m³ reservoir until further filling of the reservoir so that whenever there is break down no shortage of water is being felt at the level of the hospital until repairs. Whether there is this working arrangement to keep a threshold level of water in the reservoir until further filling to feed the hospital?

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not aware of what the Respected Member is saying. Nevertheless, I am repeating that this is not the first time that Queen Elizabeth Hospital has this water problem. This have been on and on. Recurring on and on in the past and I will relate to something to you. In 2011 someone said, I want you to bear this in mind because this stays in my mind. Someone said, I was the Nursing Administrator and not the Hospital Administrator, you should learn that. It is completely different. Someone said there was recurrent water disruption and someone said to me *“tou lé zurs mo ale dévan mo ale dan la sal de bain, lavabo énan, robinet énan, dentifrice énan, brosse à dent énan, lédent énan, délo pénan”*. So, this is not the first time that this is happening. I heard also in the media that there was supposed to be a, I do not know, *pour ouvrir un van de Mont Lubin, de Malabar jusqu’à Crève Coeur*. And I checked that and it is most unfortunate to say that half way of the pipe line have been removed prior to 2012 because there was a lack of poly pipes. So, it was removed completely. So it has not been used. *To pas ti coné*.

Mr. Chairperson: Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, however, I note a paradox in what the Commissioner said. He has been mentioning disruption of water since 24 to 29 July and in his reply, he said that there was a backup water tank with an autonomy of two days, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. What is a back up meant for? It is meant to be used when there is disruption. And he also mentioned that it is only during this lack of water that this backup tank was filled with water tank from Public Infrastructure. It means, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the backup tank did not serve its purpose.

Mr. Chairperson: So, what is your question, please?

The Minority Leader: Will the Commissioner see to it that in the future the backup tank is seen to be filled with water everyday *pour parer à toute éventualité. Le problème, M. le président, c'est que cela n'a pas été fait.* Can the Commissioner confess this?

Mr. I. Valimamode: It is not a question of confessing or paradox. Maybe the Minority Leader did not listen to what I said. The backup system is not functioning automatically.

Mr. Chairperson: Please, address the Chair.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Excuse me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. This is why I am saying that it will henceforth, it was run manually you have to put on the.. Henceforth, we are working for it to be run automatically.

Mr. Chairperson: Next, question please.

FOUR DESALINATION PLANTS

(No. B/106) Mr. J. D. Speville (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner responsible 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?

The Commissioner responsible for Water Resources and others (Mr. S. P. Rousssety): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the setting up of four desalination plants in Rodrigues is to improve the production of water, for it was at its lowest critical situation since the beginning of the last decade.

M. le président, le projet de dessalement de l'eau de mer ne date pas d'hier. Tout avait commencé avec le premier Gouvernement Régional en 2003.

It is sad to say that the project of desalination at Mourouk which was to produce 4000 m³ of potable water per day at Mourouk a été mis au placard par l'ancien gouvernement pour devenir une squelette. Ça a été fait en 2006.

En 2006, l'étude de faisabilité faite par le Consultant Fichtner avait pour but la construction d'une unité de dessalement avec la capacité de 4000 m³ et avec la possibilité d'augmenter cette production pour arriver à 12000 m³. L'appel d'offre n'avait pas été lancé par l'ancien Gouvernement Régional.

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: Please listen first and then you will have your supplementary question but listen first.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Cette production de 12000 m³ aurait été suffisante pour desservir la population de Rodrigues qui avait commencé à souffrir de la sécheresse. Mais on a vu le contraire. Quel développement en eau. On avait vu que les clôtures pour des sources et des soi-disant réservoirs comme celui de le Chou qui avait coûté plusieurs millions de roupies et pas de production d'eau. C'était cela leur développement en eau.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I had the opportunity to inform this Assembly on previous occasions, meteorological figures show that climate change is adversely impacting water production in Rodrigues. For instance, the months of January and February 2012 and July 2013 were amongst the driest months ever recorded in Rodrigues.

M. le président, je voudrais rappeler à cette Assemblée que de jour en jour, de mois en mois et d'année en année la pluviométrie est déficitaire.

[Interruption]

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Laisse moi terminer, s'il vous plaît, M. le président, je n'ai pas encore terminé. Excepté pendant ces deux derniers mois d'hiver, juin et juillet dû au changement climatique nous avons reçu une pluie au-dessus de la moyenne.

Tous les experts qui ont visités Rodrigues pour les études sur la production de l'eau ont été unanimes et ont conseillé que la solution à moyen et long terme c'est le dessalement de l'eau de mer.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: On a point of order. I think that the Commissioner is giving us too much detail, which is not related to the main question. We are asking about description of progress of the desalination project, he is talking about water shortage, climatic change, *ancien gouvernement, please.*

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am coming with the answer.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Come to the point.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Be patient, you will have the answer.

Mr. Chairperson: Please come with your answer and be more precise.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my answer is very long. So, if I will take too much of the questions time I prefer to circulate the answer to the Respected Members and then they can ask the supplementary questions. **(Appendix I)**. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

[Interruption]

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Can the Commissioner explain to the House on the routing of grand disposal for every desalination plant. Can the Commissioner explain to the House on the routing of grand disposal for every desalination site?

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

[Interruption]

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader you have the floor.

The Minority Leader: The Commissioner promised to the population and he made several interventions in this House especially during budget speech last year, that this year there will be four desalination plants under operation in Rodrigues. Can he confirm that by the end of this year, the four desalination plants will be operational in Rodrigues and if not, to give the reasons why?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the four desalination plants will be in operation by the end of this year.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, however, he himself mentioned that these desalination plants will become operational by April and now we are nearly September. How can he account for such a long delay?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it does not depend on my Commission but on the contractor. The completion date for the termination of project was in fact as per tender document on 10 April 2014. But there has been many delays by the contractor.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Can the Commissioner inform the House how many options exist for the operation of this plant? Can he inform this House how many options exist? Can there be complete shutdown of

the plant? Will there be partial shutdown or will there be full production by the plants? How many options exist for these plants?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this question is highly technical. I need notice of this question.

Mrs. M. L. C. Meunier: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have noticed that for the desalination at Pointe Venus, apparently the contractor has already left the site. I would like to know from the Commissioner whether the project there has been completed. And to give us an exact period or date when water will become available and will cover which region. How is it going to be used and by whom? *Comment ça va se passer?*

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the contractor has not left the site and now they are making test on the water and they are still have months to complete the test prior to commissioning.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the four desalination plants have accounted major delays. Can we know from the Commissioner what are the main reasons that up to now the four desalination plants have not been operational?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Once more, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, again this is purely technical regarding the equipments coming from Australia and from other parts of the country outside Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson: Well, we have got two more supplementary questions before the suspension of the House for one hour. Yes, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the plant at Pointe Venus, can the Commissioner inform the House at what distance from the symmetry is the borehole where the water is being pumped for desalination.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Once more, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, all the supplementary questions asked by the Minority side is purely technical. I need notice. I do not have the figure.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, being given that according to law in force in Mauritius a fluent has to be discharged at a distance not less than 300 metres outside reef. I would like the Commissioner to inform the House whether this will be made shortly concerning the four desalination plants.

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Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is not a fluent.

Mr. Chairperson: The House is suspended for one hour.

At 13.09 hours, the Assembly was suspended.

On resuming at 14.22 hours with the Chairperson in the Chair.

ALLOWANCE RS 750/CHILD/MONTH

(No. B/107) 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?

The Commissioner responsible for Social Security and others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that there is no such allowance of Rs 750 as described by the Respected Member.

However, I presume that the Member is referring to the SRM Child Allowance Scheme presently granted at Rs 778 plus an income support of Rs 267 which bring the total amount to Rs 1045 per child.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the said child allowance is being monitored and registered under the Social Register of Mauritius according to established eligibility criteria.

As at date, there are 1737 applications, which have been received in the three Social Security Offices of Rodrigues. Out of the 1737 applications received 1447 cases have been found to be eligible for the Scheme and the documents have been processed for payment. 2483 children have already benefitted from this allowance. 232 applications are still under processed and 58 cases were disallowed. The final determination of the applications and payment is done by the SRM Unit at the Ministry of Social Security in Mauritius.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House on the different criteria which are important for a child to obtain such type of allowance?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: The family should have a family income of less Rs 6200 and then they will have to apply at the Social Security Offices and all the information given by the applicant should be verified. So, there should be the visit of authorised officers to confirm the information. We also have the composition of the household, that is, the number of members in the family, the number of rooms and the Child Allowance also will be limited to maximum of three children per family. The children should have at least 90% school attendance rate for two months running. And, these are the main criteria and also we have, the measure will also apply to students between 3 and 23 years attending pre-primary to tertiary education, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner responsible for Social Security inform the House on the minimum school attendance for children with disabilities to be qualified for this allowance. What is the minimum school attendance required for this allowance for children with disabilities.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: 75% for two running months.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the revenue of the family of Rs 6200 is inclusive or exclusive of overtime earnings by the family.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in fact normally the original formula was that it has to be based on six previous months including overtime also and then on the average of six months it is less than Rs 6,200 then only they can be qualified.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: *Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I understand from different, les mandants dans la région, on dit qu'il faut faire des recensement maison par maison. Il faut venir voir si la maison est en tôle ou en béton sans prendre en compte les revenus mensuel de la famille. Est-ce que, M. le président, vu qu'on a amendé dans le cadre de casting of slab sur le social register, comme on a fait à Maurice. Est-ce que pour être éligible, pour cette allocation est-ce qu'on est sur le même social register de Maurice ou bien on a amendé ça pour venir comme si un petit peu plus flexible.*

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: The same criteria are being applied for Mauritius and Rodrigues. It is the same register but people living in Rodrigues have a small advantage as compared to those in Mauritius because, yes, it is true, because the region where the person lives, the applicants also is a determinant. So, people in Rodrigues have a small advantage as compared to those in

Mauritius and even in Mauritius itself between the different districts there are different, I mean a sort of waiting, for developed and less developed areas.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: M. le président, je connais des cas pour les pères de familles qui reçoivent moins de Rs 6,200 par mois, moins. Ils n'ont même pas un revenu, M. le président. Mais comme vous savez à Rodrigues toute la population à un toit. Il peut y avoir une maison de deux pièces ou bien trois pièces mais cette personne là n'est pas éligible pour avoir cette allocation là. Est-ce que le Commissaire peut confirmer cette information ?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I cannot confirm unless I know the case exactly but what I know is that I have said 58 cases have been disallowed and they have received a disallowance notice. Those who have been disqualified normally received a disallowance notice but there might be some technical problems but this is on a case to case. They have to call at the office of the Social Security at Port Mathurin to ascertain exactly what are the reasons because I have said the eligibility criteria it is not based only on the family income. There is what we called a proximine test. It is a technical term where they sort of convert the assets into the standard of living.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has been talking about some 242 cases which are under processed. Can we know for how long these cases are under processed and when exactly, if he has the answer, will the applications be confirmed?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I do not have the exact information about the differences stages but the main thing is that after the application there is to be the visit of the families. We are expecting that by the end of September all the cases will be at least, have the visit of the authorised officer but then there are also the factors, which will determine as I have said the final processing would be made at the Social Registry unit of Mauritius. So we cannot give an exact date because it is not only concerned with Commission for Social Security here but also partly it is processed in Mauritius.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner, he mentioned about 58 cases which have been disallowed. Can I know the main reason for this disallowance? This is my first question. My second question is there any tribunal or mechanism, which have been put in place, if ever someone is not satisfied with the decision of the Social Security where he can appeal? And thirdly, is this scheme online?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: The scheme is directly related to the Social Security System. It is online obviously. The reason for disallowance I have said there

what we called a formula which is known as the proximine test. So, all the cases which have been disallowed. Cases are due that they have failed simply the proximine test. There is a formula for it. It is highly technical and I cannot say exactly which one it can be because the number of rules there are mainly rooms that compared to the number of family living in this house. So, there is a sort of rating for each variable like housing, like household and so on.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, you have got one last question. May I remind the House that we have got only 15 minutes for question time left. Yes, please your last question.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he is aware that the number of one parent family's has increased and being given that the phenomenon of child poverty is a real problem in our society. Will he agree to review the point in consultation with Mauritius with the Ministry of Social Security to review the point in consultation with Mauritius whereby the amount of Rs 6,200 is inclusive of overtime? I am sure that the Commissioner get the point that a single mother who is trying to feed her children and who is sometime working overtime cannot be penalised for have Rs 200 or Rs 150 more than Rs 2,200.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: But anyway, I understand the point but I must say also that in fact single, parents, single mothers are still qualified for other social benefits. They are still qualified for social aid even if they are working and if they have a child of less than seven years old and less than Rs 7,200 per month, so they can top up say with other schemes, which are already exist.

Mr. Chairperson: May I inform you that Questions B/111 and B/112 are withdrawn. Next question please.

ELECTRONIC TABLETS – SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS

(No. B/108) Mr. J. D. Speville (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the electronic tablets to be donated to secondary schools students in Rodrigues for the year 2014, he will state where matters stand?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, With your permission, I would like to answer PQs B/108 and B 117 together since both questions deal with the same subject matter.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as announced in the Budget Speech 2013 of the Central Government, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources is

implementing the project which consists of the distribution of one tablet computer equipped with pedagogical contents relevant to Form IV and V Curricula, aligned with the teaching of Cambridge GCE O' Level Syllabus for Mauritius to each and every school boy and girl in Form IV. The project started in 2013 with the elaboration of tablet specifications and initiation of the procurement procedures.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in regard to the distribution of electronic tablets to secondary Schools students in Rodrigues, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources in a letter dated 27 December 2013 has informed the Commission for Education of the implementation of the Tablet PC project for Form V students 2014 and requested the Commission to facilitate a training program scheduled for 10 and 11 February 2014 for all Rodriguan Educators who will be involved in the teaching of Form V in 2014.

The training programme was finally postponed due to the fact that PC Tablets were not yet delivered. After a query from the Commission for Education in February 2014 as regards the delay in the delivery of tablets, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources has responded that distribution of tablets has not yet started and that the Commission will be kept informed of any development in due course.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, 610 tablets for students were effectively delivered to the Commission for Education in July 2014 and 156 tablets for Educators have been dispatched via Mauritius Trochetia Voyage MT 943 on 25 August 2014. In a correspondence dated 19 August 2014, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources has submitted the guidelines to the Commission for Education for the distribution of the PC tablets to secondary schools. The Commission was informed that the necessary steps to be carried out by Rectors of the colleges and the registration process of the PC tablets have to be completed prior to PC tablets being given to students.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources has furthermore, delegated two ICT Technicians to come to Rodrigues on Monday 25 August 2014 for the registration process and also to train educators for the following:

- (i) Registration of the student details on the Tablet Registration System provided by Mauritius Telecom;
- (ii) Configuration of Antivirus System on the Tablet PC;
- (iii) Configuration of the Parental Control on the Tablet PC.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, you may wish to note that my Commission is collaborating fully with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources to ensure that the necessary procedures are being followed prior the distribution of PC tablets to schools and for students to receive their tablets at the earliest possible, soon after the registration process is completed.

Distribution of PC Tablets in secondary schools:-

- Number of tablets received for Form V students 2014
(including Form V repeaters): 610
- Number of tablets to be distributed: 606 as follows:-
 - Rodrigues College : 135
 - Mt. Lubin College : 131
 - Le Chou College : 107
 - Marechal College : 136
 - Grande Montagne : 82
 - Terre Rouge College : 15

Registration of PC tablets has started on Monday 25 August 2014 in the Store Section of the Commission for Education by the two technicians delegated by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource. One Educator of Form V and one Educator teaching Computer Science of each college as well as two Computer Support Officers are being trained by the two ICT Technicians in Mauritius. Registration process of the 610 tablets is scheduled to be completed by Friday 29 August 2014.

Distribution of tablets to the Rectors of colleges is scheduled for today 26 August 2014 – it is today the 26, in the afternoon. Also to be distributed to Members of the Assembly with regard to tablet! Free of charge. And the configuration are conform by parents. As per information obtained from Ministry, tablets for Form IV Students 2014 will be delivered next year.

Training: As soon as distribution of tablets to students and educators will be completed, the MIE will be contacted for training of educators. A fee of Rs 650 for insurance purposes is collected from each Form V student except if the student is listed on the SRM-CA Scheme (Social Register of Mauritius-Child Allowance Scheme).

Security aspects: Security aspects pertaining to internet access and proper usage will be integrated in the form of parental control software on the tablet as well as Access filters through the network.

That is all, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, thank you.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have two questions. Can the Commissioner inform the House whether his Commission or the Commission of Education, whether they have had a communiqué with the Ministry of Education on the payment of Rs 650 per student as insurance fee for a two year warranty and when? And secondly, many students of Form V will leave school soon for the SC examinations and it may happen that some may not be able to pay the sum of Rs 650 being given that this have been announced too late. Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether his Commission intends to help these students depending on the cases?

The Chief Commissioner: Well we have received a communiqué from the Ministry of Education. Well concerning Rs 650, we are going to find and study every case if they have difficulties to pay this Rs 650.

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

Mr. Chairperson: One second, please. May I inform the House that questions B/113, B/114, B/115 have been withdrawn. Continue please.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Well, the Chief Commissioner is right when he mentioned that he has received a circular mentioning that the insurance for the tablet is Rs 650 per tablet except for children from families under Social Register of Mauritius. But, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is one thing missing in the Circular. There is the issue of granting free internet access. Where does matter stand as regards to this issue?

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question concerning the internet.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, last question. Can the Chief Commissioner seen to it that the colleges, the schools as from next year, some of the Form V students will be school leavers, they will not be students, can he sees into it that schools still act as intermediate between the supplier and these people because they have a two year insurance paid as warranty. The schools again act as intermediate even if the student is a school leaver.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are giving tablets to Form V students and next year also, I do not know what will be the decision of the government. Whether the government will give to Form V students next year 2015 tablets. We will found out with the Ministry of Education. Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: Questions time over.

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

LA TOURNEE RODRIGUAISE 2013

The Commissioner responsible for Environment, Forestry, Tourism, Marine Parks (Mr. R. Payendee): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as everyone here is probably aware that because of our last experience from the Organisation of *La Semaine Rodriguaise 2013*, this has been very successful and one month after our first attempt, we have received an increase in Mauritian arrivals of 29%. For 2013/2014 compared to 2012/2013 we have had an increased by 58%. This is an excellent progress, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Based on these statistics and also on the excellent business made by the Rodriguan Entrepreneurs during the *Semaine Rodriguaise 2013*, my Commission together with Commission for Entrepreneurship and Commission for Arts and Culture decided to organise *La Tournée Rodriguaise 2014*.

I just came back last night from Mauritius where *La Tournée Rodriguaise* is still on, and I would like at this stage to give my appreciation concerning the organisation of this activity.

A group of some 60 persons including officials, Tourism Operators and entrepreneurs moved to Mauritius on the 22 August to participate in the *Tournée Rodriguaise*. *La Tournée* is between 23 and 29 August 2014 and we are moving in three different localities, Quatre Bornes, Caudan and Grand Bay.

At this very stage, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I can say that I am very happy with the participation of Mauritians in the *Tournée*. After only two days, we have noticed that we will need more products from Rodrigues and Air Mauritius has agreed to help bringing more products for the Entrepreneurs free of charge in Mauritius. I have noticed that our products are very much appreciated in Mauritius.

Let me, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, add that a big team spirit has been built among all Rodriguan participating in the *Tournée*. The Tourism Operators are

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very happy with the feedback from Mauritians who have already visited Rodrigues and also there is a big demand for new potential visitors.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the President of the Republic of Mauritius who intervened during the official opening of *La Tournée* expressed how much he is happy with the direction Rodrigues is going. He said that he was very happy with the decision of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the Octopus Closure Regulations and the Plastic Bags Regulations.

Another great thing, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that is happening, in this Tourneé, is that a group of students actually studying in Mauritius have come together and formed a cultural group called *Créolina*. They are ensuring cultural shows during the whole week. This shows that “*La Relève est assuré*”, M. le président.

What is also great, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, is that the participants in the *La Tournée 2014* are not using plastic bags to pack their products even if the use of plastic bags in Mauritius is not forbidden. This is a great example, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to show that our people have strongly adhered to the Regulations.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wanted to share these great news to the Members of this House and would like to thank my colleagues of the Executive Council for having accepted to approve *La Tournée Rodriguaise 2014* as I am sure, *il y aura des retombés très positifs*.

Before ending, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me thank all the people who in one way or another in Rodrigues or in Mauritius who has helped to make this activity a success.

Je voudrais, M. le président, informer les Membres de cette Auguste Assemblée qu'on va répéter *La Tournée Rodriguaise 2014* à la Réunion en octobre prochain comme annoncer dans le Discours Budget. Merci.

[Applause]

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Friday 26 September 2014 at 15.00 hours in the afternoon.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

*At 15.10 hours the House was, on its rising adjourned
to Friday 26 September 2014 at 15.00 hours*

MATTERS RAISED

Mr. Chairperson: Adjournment time now, adjournment matters. Yes, Minority Leader.

SITUATION – HEALTH CENTRES

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have a small statement to do today with regard to the situation at our Health Centres in Rodrigues.

M. le président, il y a un an de cela, plus précisément lors de la session du 18 juin 2013, j'ai intervenu après l'ajournement pour faire part à la Chambre différents problèmes donc fait face notre service de santé à Rodrigues. Je me rappelle avoir attiré l'attention de la Chambre des difficultés dont fait fasse ce secteur d'après une lettre envoyée au ministère de tutelle par les employés de ce secteur. A savoir au niveau médical organisationnel, défaut de planification infrastructurelle. Cependant tout au long de cette année on a cessé d'entendre chaque semaine notre service de santé faisant la une des médias. Depuis on note avec tristesse que les choses loin de s'améliorer se sont encore empirés.

Prenons le premier point. Le côté médical. Malgré la bonne volonté de certains médecins et aides soignants à offrir un meilleur service. Toujours est-il que dans beaucoup de cas le service laisse a désiré.

Ces derniers temps on a beaucoup entendu parler des mamans qui disent avoir perdu leur bébé après l'accouchement dans des circonstances douteuses. Elles affirment toute qu'il y a eu négligence médical. Une première maman habitant Plaine Corail qui nous a dit, elle m'a fait venir chez elle, elle m'a expliquée son état d'âme. Elle dit qu'elle vit encore le traumatisme d'avoir mit au monde son bébé vivant mais quelques temps après le bébé est décédé selon elle, par négligence. D'où sa décision d'aller porter plainte à la police. Un mois après nous avons été en présence d'une autre maman qui attendait des triplés mais malheureusement elle aussi les a toutes perdus. Si je peux m'attarder sur ce cas, M. le président, c'est pour dire notre consternation après avoir écouté les doléances de cette maman.

D'après ces témoignages elle n'a pas eu les soins appropriés. En plus d'être enceinte des triplés elle est aussi épileptique. Pour ce cas particulier est-ce que les autorités médicales lui ont prodigués les soins appropriés ? Est-ce que ces bébés nés prématurément auraient pu être sauvés ? Tandis qu'un Gynécologue lui avait dit que son cas grave et qu'il compte l'envoyer à Maurice. Son successeur lui a préféré la garder ici lui disant qu'il y a encore du temps avant son accouchement. Et c'est justement durant cette période qu'elle a accouchée des triplés prématurément et qui malheureusement est arrivé ce qui est arrivé.

Par la suite j'ai entendu le commissaire dire lors d'un point de presse qu'un hebdomadaire avait écrit des propos qui portent atteinte à l'intégrité du corps médical et que sa Commission avait porté plainte. Bien moi, je demanderai au Commissaire au lieu d'être toujours sur la défensive je lui demanderai de mettre sur pied une commission d'enquête afin de faire la lumière sur cette affaire et sur d'autre cas de décès que je viens de mentionner. Parce que cette maman aussi cri à la négligence médicale et elle a aussi été faire une déposition à la police. Cette dernière maman qui a perdu ces triplés.

Durant cette même période, M. le président, on a appris qu'une autre maman qui attendait des jumeaux, les a tous perdus. Donc, le point commun derrière tous cela, c'est l'absence de permanence dans le service de gynécologie chez nous. Toutes les mamans qui vont accouchés ces derniers affirment qu'elles passent par plusieurs gynécologues avant leurs grossesses. On est tous d'accord qu'une telle situation n'est pas à l'avantage des femmes enceintes. D'ailleurs on avait déjà prit position pour dénoncer cela. Je me rappelle que le Commissaire si je ne me trompe pas, avait dit, avait annoncé qu'on allait avoir un gynécologue pour six mois. On voudrait savoir où il en est avec cette décision.

D'autre part, M. le président, il y a aussi eu des cas où des enfants qui souffraient des problèmes visuelles ont du être transférés vers Maurice ou en Inde à cause de la gravité de leurs cas et nous apprenons que la gravitation de ces cas aurait pu être évité s'il n'y avait pas eu de négligence. A chaque fois qu'un problème surgit dans le secteur de la santé, que nous savons tous d'ailleurs est un secteur très difficile à gérer. Mais au lieu d'assumer sa responsabilité et de trouver des solutions nécessaires, on entend toujours réagir sur la défensive. Donc à mon avis, c'est ce qui fait que les problèmes perdurent. Il faut prendre les taureaux par les cornes parce que nous nous sommes à l'écoute de la population et croyait moi la population n'a plus de confiance dans notre service de santé à Rodrigues. Pourtant, M. le président, comme je l'ai souligné plus haut, il y a des personnels soignants et aides soignants qui se

démènent corps et âmes pour nous donner un meilleur service mais le problème réside au niveau organisationnel et de planification par la Commission comme avait dit dans la lettre précédente.

Un autre problème très courant, M. le président, c'est au niveau des ambulances. Très souvent ces derniers temps on entend que certains ambulances font des accidents. D'après nos renseignements la plupart du temps ce sont les chauffeurs nouvellement recrutés qui en sont fautifs et la question que beaucoup se posent. La question vienne des chauffeurs de ce même département. Ils disent est-ce que ces nouveaux chauffeurs d'ambulances sont qualifiés pour occuper ce poste. Est-ce qu'ils répondent aux critères de la PSC pour conduire une ambulance ? D'où la question posée sur ce sujet. Ce matin il y a eu des questions. Oui pour être éligible au poste de chauffeur d'ambulance, il y a certains critères que la PSC demande, c'est-à-dire, avoir le First Aid Certificate etc. Il y a d'autres chauffeurs dans la fonction publique, M. le président, qui possède les qualifications et aptitude requise pour faire ce travail. Pourquoi ne sont-ils pas utilisés à la place de ces novices.

Un autre problème qui a beaucoup fait la une. D'ailleurs ce matin on a eu des questions là-dessus. C'était ce jour où on a eu un problème de l'eau à l'hôpital. Je ne vais pas m'attarder là-dessus, il y a eu beaucoup de débats, beaucoup de questions mais toujours est-il ce qui m'a frappé, M. le président. Quand les deux collègues de la santé et de l'infrastructure publique ont fait une conférence de presse conjointe tandis que le Commissaire de la Santé, il est venu s'excuser auprès de la population pour ce problème. Son collègue de l'infrastructure publique lui il a fait comme-ci ce problème n'existe pas. Pourtant, M. le président, dès que ce problème a surgi mon collègue Rosaire Perrine et moi nous avons été à l'hôpital. Nous avons été dans le Male Ward. Nous avons été dans le Female Ward. La collègue qui faisait l'intérim était là. Elle a été très surprise quand elle nous a vu mais croyez-moi, M. le président, il y a des problèmes c'est vrai. Il y a des problèmes, ce jour-là, il pleuvait. J'ai été personnellement témoin de voir que l'eau déborde des gouttières, des d'allos. Pourquoi ? Parce que ces d'allos étaient obstrués, d'où pourquoi il y a eu une question mais malheureusement on n'a pas pu arriver à cela pour avoir les réponses. Est-ce qu'il y a une *maintenance team* à l'hôpital pour veiller à ce que toutes ces infrastructures fonctionnent normalement.

Au niveau infrastructurelle, M. le président, je vais au QEH tous les jours. Je dois vous dire c'est inconcevable. Si vous allez derrière le laboratoire, le chemin qui mène vers, à l'arrière, mais il y a des trous aussi grosses comme Mare aux Vacoas si je ne l'avise pas de me dire qu'à la moindre pluie, il y a de l'eau stagnante qui reste et imaginait, M. le président l'inconvénient que cela comporte pour les piétons aussi bien que pour les voitures. Si vous allez

toujours derrière cette hôpital, là où il y a le X-ray Department, il n'y a pas de clôture, il y a des *slabs* qui recouvrent des caniveaux et tous ça sont en mauvaise état et ne comporte pas seulement un risque pour les passants mais aussi c'est un *eyesore* et c'est un gros problème de sanitation et c'est inconcevable, M. le président. Dans notre hôpital, notre unique hôpital de Rodrigues. La question est est-ce qu'il y a un *maintenance team* au niveau de la Commission de la Santé qui s'assure de l'entretien de toute ce dont je viens de mentionner ou sinon qui est responsable de tous ça ? Devant un tel état de chose, M. le président, la population est désespéré. Je suis navré de le dire la population n'a plus de confiance dans notre service de santé comme je l'ai dit. Donc, mais pourtant le gouvernement, d'ailleurs ça a été mentionné dans le Discours du Budget de l'année dernière que le gouvernement, le Chef Commissaire a dit qu'il prend le *commitment* d'investir massivement pour que Rodrigues, sa population est une santé qu'elle mérite. Alors si on reparte à ce que je viens de dire malheureusement il y a pas de *value for money*. Alors il faut se rappeler, M. le président, à Maurice suite au seul problème lié à la, je me rappelle ces derniers temps, il y a un groupe qui est monté à la tête du créneau pour demander au ministre de tutelle et moi je demanderai à mon ami, au Commissaire de la Santé, qu'il doit se sentir heureux qu'ici chez nous on n'est pas encore arrivé jusque là. Alors qu'il prenne bien compte de ce que je viens de lui dire et je lui demanderai de rectifier la tire pendant qu'il est encore le temps. Merci, M. le président.

Mr. Chairperson: Yes, please sit down. I think the Commissioner will refute.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am not used to reply to statements but I think I need to clarify certain things that the Minority Leader has just said. As regards to he mentioned problems of infants' death, yes and all this.

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry Commissioner. You should be short.

Mr. I. Valimamode: Okay. I shall be very short. And concerning these deaths and all this and alleging that it is due to negligence. People are free to complain, they are free to complain and as a Rodriguan, as the Commissioner for Health and as someone who has worked a lot for a long time at the hospital, I consider according to myself that we are investing in all these aspects of things. And, as the Minority Leader just said that there are cases of alleged medical negligence having been filed at the Police Station. So, I shall not comment on the matter but he referred to these problems are due mainly because of the non-posting of a gynecologist on a long-time basis in Rodrigues. It is true, I mentioned it. I personally contacted several gynecologists.

Unfortunately, for personal reasons or others they turned the offer. Nevertheless, I wish to remind the House that according to the population and vital statistics of Family Planning Demographic Year Book 2013 of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, the lowest ever mortality rate in the history of Rodrigues was registered in 2013. I repeat, the lowest ever-infant mortality rate in the history of Rodrigues was registered in 2013. For 2014, you will get the result in one year because it is based on the number of birth and death. So, you will have it in due course. The fact that I said the two cases are filed at the Police, I will not comment on the matter. And, just to say that it is not purely related to the presence of a gynecologist. It is true, I realised how true it is for a pregnant woman to see three, four or five gynecologists for an expecting mother to have to see so many different specialists. But we are recruiting soon. This has already been advertised for different specialists. So, we are recruiting.

The Minority Leader also mentioned about drivers. Let me remind him that these drivers we do have Ambulance Drivers and they have.. Whenever an Ambulance Driver is on vacation leave assignment is given to General Workers based on the following:

- If the person possesses a driving licence of vehicle 2.5 tons;
- Same have followed a First Aid Training course; and
- Have a Service Licence authorized by Police.

As at date seven accidents have been reported by Ambulance Drivers, out of which five from long experienced drivers.

Mr. Chairperson: Sorry, you have to stop now. Otherwise, you will have to come with a statement later. Give time to other Member.

[Interruption]

PROBLEMS – SECONDARY/TERTIARY EDUCATION

Mr D. L. Guillaume: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir. Let me make a short intervention concerning problems faced by students of secondary and tertiary education.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, great difficulties are being faced by Rodriguan students attending tertiary institutions since the beginning of August 2014 in main land. They have not received their student bus pass. My request is how long will these students wait for same and if the money paid for transport will be refunded. In addition, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, some qualified students are being faced with problems of lodging and so on. In this very context, I invite

the Commissioner responsible to look seriously into the possibility of the setting up of a Rodriguan desk at the Ministry of Rodrigues to report same.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the recent interviews done by the Public Service Commission (PSC) in June, July 2014 for the post of Trainee Primary Teachers and others. Many participants who have been enrolled in the Internet and Computing Course Certification ran under the Universal ICT Education Programme completed for the year 2012/2013. Many candidates have not received their completion certificates on due time before interviews and work disqualified for the post. My request is how long will participants who have completed same have to wait after the completion certificates? I do not whether the Commissioner is aware for same and to look into the matter. I thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, par rapport à ce que le Membre, M. Guillaume a dit. C'est juste pour rassurer que peut être aussi d'ailleurs son intervention est basé sur cette rencontre très fructueuses que personnellement avec mon collègue, donc le Commissaire du Tourisme j'ai présidé samedi dernier avec 220 jeunes étudiants qui sont à l'université de Maurice et dans d'autres institutions tertiaires où nous avons pris la décision d'aller vers nos jeunes pour aller discuter avec eux et pour aller prendre connaissance de leurs difficultés, pas seulement de leurs difficultés, de leurs joies quand même, ils sont contents aussi de pouvoir faire des études post secondaire et surtout pour voir surtout les opportunités pour leurs post études. Après leurs études qu'est-ce que nous pouvons envisager. Je dois dire que la rencontre a été très fructueuse et d'ailleurs le Chef Commissaire venait de me dire comment il a eu plusieurs messages des jeunes qui ont participé aux réunions et ont dit comment ils ont appréciés les réunions. Et bien sure, c'est vrai il y a eu une question par deux ou trois jeunes ont parlés de cette question de *bus pass* que toute suite dès qu'on est entré j'ai vu de mes yeux l'officier qui m'avait accompagné en envoyant un email à l'université pour s'assurer et pour avoir des informations quand est-ce que les jeunes vont avoir le *bus pass*. Donc, il y a eu effectivement un ou deux jeunes qui ont eu ce problème là mais quand même on a prit la peine d'aller vers eux et il y a eu des propositions qu'on leurs a fait aussi par rapport on leurs a expliqués les différentes conditions pour le *stipend*. Donc, tous ce que, mon collègue à la Commission de la Santé aime toujours dire : « *pé vine défonce ene la porte ouvert* ».

Mr. J. D. Spéville: M. le président, Rodrigues is part of the Republic of Mauritius. In spite of the main annual rainfall of about 1200 mm, water retention is very poor. To overcome any resulting water deficiency and to cater for the needs of the people, seawater desalination project has always been the

headlines of major projects since year 2000. It is in the document of Lux Consult.

Solution incontournable pour les uns, le dessalement de l'eau de mer est en effet très critiqué par les autres qui dénoncent les groupes énergétiques et les réseaux chimiques de ces unités. L'un des principaux problèmes causés par ce type de production de la production d'eau et la consommation énergétique. Les usines de dessalements sont essentiellement alimenté par des énergies fossiles or les combustibles présentes pour l'environnement l'inconvénient d'émettre des polluants atmosphérique notamment le CO², les oxides d'azotes, soufre et autres. Des pays comme l'Australie a déjà prit la mesure du problème et dans tous les grands projets de dessalement du pays, les autorités encouragent vivement à utiliser des énergies renouvelable.

Deuxième problème, les rejets des stations. Toute la chaleur des produits rejetés, ces usines produisent beaucoup de Saumur. Ajouté à cela quelques rejets chimiques et les risques n'est pas négligeable pour l'environnement. C'est pour cela que le gouvernement régionale devrait avoir des inquiétudes sur les quatre projets de dessalements mit en sentier à Rodrigues au lieu de s'en réjouir seulement. De plus depuis la mise en sentier des ces unités de dessalement l'exploitation de nos sources na-phréatique qui sont des alternatives et qui demandent encore d'être exploité sont restés nette mortes. Pourtant c'est dans ces sources traditionnelles qui nous ont alimentés pendant toutes ces décennies. Tous les villages, y compris l'Accacia. Tous les villages. Or depuis le début de cette année il semble qu'il y a un changement de saison à Rodrigues de part l'abondance de pluie qui résulte en une abondance d'eau qui part par la mer sans que rien ne soit fait. Même à Maurice un projet de barrage à Rivière des Anguilles, je crois, financer par le BAD, Banque Africaine de Développement viendra le jour dans quelques jours. On sent que la mise en sentier de ce projet à déjà eu des impacts conséquents et dangereux pour l'environnement, les places ont été labourées. Les rapports d'EIA ont été faits en catimini sans une vraie consultation par rapport au temps accordé pour que le public puisse donner leurs propositions. Ces pratiques, M. le président, sont en violation avec l'EPA qui étant de passage avec le concept Rodrigues écolo.

L'eau reste impayé à Rodrigues, M. le président, mais les coûts de ces unités de ces dessalements auront des coûts exorbitants. Et quand on voit le nombre de fuite dans nos réseaux et la gestion de l'eau elle-même, on se demande si ce projet est vraiment *value for money*. Tous projets, M. le président, je ne suis pas seulement là pour critiquer. Tous projets, M. le président, ont des avantages, des désavantages et comportent des risques mais devant tous cela, la population condamnent le mutisme du Commissaire et son

égard par rapport à la permanence d'état dans le secteur qui concerne la production d'eau.

M. le président, les pêcheurs sont inquiets, la population est inquiète. Le Commissaire aurait dû venir de l'avant, informer la population en utilisant la presse avec les consultant, les contracteurs et d'autres concernés pour répondre à des questions et l'arrivée des inquiétudes qui planent dans la tête des gens sont :

- (1) Where will the reject of brime – *hé arête faire tapaz, écouté, Deputy Chief Commissioner pé faire honté. Pé cause tous c'est ki dimune pé dire lor terrain. Moi ki lor terrain. Entendre céki dimune pé dire pou ale clarifié. Ale marsé ou a coné !*

Mr. Chairperson: Respected Member, carry on.

Mr. J. D. Spéville: The question are, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, where will the reject of brime, what about the routing of the brime pipelines. Will the brime be disposed in the lagoon or in the deep sea? Concerning EIA, they should have informed the population of the ancillary work associated with it. It may be lagoon dredging, reprofiling of seabed, and modification of existing coastline. They should have come and announced the population on the electricity tariff applicable in Rodrigues for these plants and whether the clients will provide for transformers if necessary and should it be brimed by the bidder. Will the CEB provide for step down transformer etc.? Do not forget that we have taxpayers in this country that everyone should be informed on the thought that he or she should be made aware about say the *coût d'opération*. Inform the population on the routing of the connecting pipes from the station *de dessalement* to the service reservoir. Inform the population what are the options for the plants operation at any time. Can there be complete shutdown, partial production and food production. Will the plant be operational during force *majeur* situation like, cyclone? Assure the population of the content of the seawater, namely, at Pointe Venus, which is near the cemetery and at what frequency? Will test be made on such water before and after treatment to ensure the population about the quality? Have any other solution been considered for achieving better water resource manager. Quelle est la politique de la solution pour redynamiser nos ressources conventionnelles, sources, eau de pluie, na-phréatiques, rivières, forages. Explain to the population how the four stations will be managed after putting into operation. Will it be maintained by the bidder, for how many years? What human resources have been envisaged to follow same locally and what types of training is in the pipelines to manage these desalination plants. What emergency plan has been set up if ever the station breakdown? How will commissioning for spare parts be done in the shortest delay and who will pay for the liquidated damage resulting from the

long delay, Mr. Chairperson, Sir? *Toutes ces questions restent poser dans la tête des gens mais il n'entend rien. Déjà, le projet a pris un sacré retard de six mois et là on croit que certains sont à 30% et qui risque de prendre encore deux mois et on peut conclure que la population a été mise à l'écart dans ce qui s'est passé et dans ce qui c'est passé par manque d'information qui résulte du mutisme, pas de l'incompétence, du mutisme du commissaire, qui n'a même pas osé venir avec une réponse ferme et directe qui d'écoule de la question posé aujourd'hui.*

On voit que la dessalination à un prix, un coût important dans la production d'eau douce mais aussi pour non-négligeable pour l'environnement. L'avenir nous le dira, M. le président, peut être les révolutions technologique permettront d'en améliorer la productivité en abaissant les risques. Merci, M. le président pour votre attention.

Mr. Chairperson: I give one minute for the Commissioner to refute and then one minute for Mr. Agathe. Not more than that.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le président, c'est triste de voir comment des gens peuvent changer de veste en ce peu de temps. C'est le membre de la minorité qui en 2003 avait initié le projet de dessalement de l'eau de mer à Mourouk. Aujourd'hui, il est contre ce projet, M. le président. La population doit savoir que de l'autre côté de la Chambre est contre le projet de dessalement et tous le monde peut avoir de l'eau à Rodrigues. Mais ne vous en faites pas, M. le président, la population saura ce qui c'est passé aujourd'hui. Mais moi je dis une chose pour terminer, M. le président. La caravane aboie et les chiens passent.

Mr. Chairperson: Wait for Mr. Agathe have now 58 seconds.

SUPERVISEURS - PAYES

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Merci, M. le président. M. le président, en ce moment les pêcheurs font fasse à plusieurs défis. Il y a la montée des eaux comme je viens d'expliquer ce matin. La montée des eaux qui emmènent dans son sillage l'augmentation de la température de mer, la dégradation des plages etc. etc., M. le président, et en même temps il y a un problème majeure qui avec la montée des eaux c'est les blanchiments des coraux. Lorsqu'il y a le blanchiment des coraux il y a des espèces marins qui partent sur les coraux vont être détruit. M. le président, avec le projet Close Octopus Season, cette année-ci on a vu le recrutement avec 44 Superviseurs mais les Superviseurs recevront leurs payes mensuellement Rs 8500, Rs 8000 ou bien Rs 8500 pour deux mois mais par contre les pêcheurs qui travaillent, M. le président, recevront qu'un

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mois et ils sont payés Rs 250 par mois, par jour. Je demanderais au Commissaire responsable de la Pêche de voir l'allocation qui est accordé aux pêcheurs au lieu de payer Rs 250 d'augmenter ça au moins Rs 450 par pêcheur. Merci beaucoup.

Mr. Chairperson: Only 15 seconds for you.

Mr. R. Payendee: M. le président, je voulais juste dire que la montée des eaux n'entraîne pas le blanchiment des coraux au contraire la montée des eaux protège les coraux. C'est la chaleur. C'est la température de l'eau qui fait des blanchiments mais pas la montée des eaux. Merci.

Mr. Chairperson: The House stands adjourn.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

RODRIUGES TRADING AND MARKETING COMPANY LTD.

(No. B/109) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Social Security and others whether, in regard to the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Company Ltd., he will:

- (a) state:
 - (i) the composition of the current Board indicating the names thereof;
 - (ii) if any case of alleged fraud has been reported to the Commission and, if so, to give details thereof;
- (b) table a copy of the financial statement of the Company for the last six months;
- (c) obtain, from the Company, information as to the overseas missions, if any, effected by the Member/s of the Board or staff thereof and, if so, to give details thereof together with all costs incurred therefor?

Reply: (not yet received from commission)

AMBULANCES

(No. B/110) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Sixth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner responsible for Health and Sports whether, in regard to the ambulances posted at the Commission for Health, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) if any ambulance was involved in a road accident on or about the 12th August 2014 and, if so, to give details thereof;
- (b) the persons present in the ambulance during the accident indicating if there were any patients involved also;
- (c) if the driver thereof was a full fledge Ambulance Driver; and
- (d) the amount of money incurred for the repair thereof and to table copy of same and indicating who will cater for the repairs thereof?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I have been informed that an ambulance bearing the registration 7RRA13 was involved in a road accident on 12 August 2014 around 7:35 a.m. at Mt Fanal. The accident occurred while upon official instruction, the Ambulance Driver had to fetch a severely handicapped patient residing at Mt Fanal. The said patient is not ambulant and the house is accessible only by a steep track road. It is to be emphasized that since it was a rainy morning, the track road was slippery.

On its third attempt to reach the residence of the patient, the vehicle slipped off the track road and was scratched on the right hand side middle lower panel.

The Ambulance Driver immediately reported the case to his supervisor and to the police. All procedures established for such *cas de figure* had been promptly and duly respected.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, with regard to part (b) of the question, at the time of the accident, the Ambulance Driver and the Ambulance Attendant were present in the vehicle and no patients were on board.

The Driver on board the said ambulance was an assigned Ambulance Driver satisfying all the required qualifications.

I am tabling a copy of the report from Mechanical Workshop indicating the cost of repair.

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I am informed that the normal procedure applied for such cases are being followed, that is:-

- A full statement from the Driver along with the report from the Mechanical Workshop have been sent to the Island Chief Executive.
- Simultaneously, a police enquiry is ongoing. Consequently the case will be referred to Court and it is the Court who decides whether the Ambulance Driver was at fault or not and if same will need to refund for the repairs or pay a fine accordingly.

YOUTH PARLIAMENT – 2014/INPUTS-OUTCOMES

(No. B/116) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Youth and Others whether, in regard to the holding of the Youth Parliament for 2014, she will, for the benefit of the House, state the inputs and outcomes thereof?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the second edition of the Youth Parliament was held from Tuesday 5th and to Wednesday 6th August 2014 at the Leisure and Recreational Centre of Mon Plaisir. Such an activity is a first in the Republic of Mauritius and its first edition was held in Rodrigues in December 2013.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Youth Parliament materializes the concept of “*democracie participative*” which has been put forward by this Regional Government and it is important that the youth of Rodrigues be leading partners in the development of the Island. The application of this concept today invites all young people to develop a thorough knowledge of their island, analyse our strengths and weaknesses, to explore opportunities most importantly to bring solutions to issues that are of utmost importance to our autonomous island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the objectives of the Youth Parliament were to allow youth in Rodrigues to participate in decision making processes and make proposals to policy makers with regards to the different sectors that make the life of the Island. Moreover, it aims at giving a maximum number of young people the opportunity to live and share parliamentary experience and develop their leadership skills.

The Youth Parliament also fosters youth empowerment and encourages a research culture among young people that they have a competent and open-minded youth.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Regional Government has left no stone unturned in view of providing platforms and forums to the youth, for them to put forward their ideas. Indeed, my Commission in an inclusive approach has opened the activity to both in school and out of school youth.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the themes discussed this year were as follows:

- (1) **Education** (Group 1 represented by Regions 1 and 2)
 - Education issues pertaining to the present education system
 - Regionalisation
 - Community school as a concept
 - Enhancement of communication and participation of different stakeholders
- (2) **Contribution of Youth in the Rodriguan Economy** (Group 2 represented by Region 3)
 - The Public Sector
 - Agriculture & Fisheries
 - Tourism
 - ICT and other emerging sectors
- (3) **Sports** (Group 3 represented by Region 4 & 5)
 - Sports as a Career
 - Sports as a means of Nation building
 - Sports for all
 - Sports Promotion and Development
- (4) **Gender** (Group 4 represented by Region 6)
 - Gender Equality and Equity
 - Gender Socialisation and Roles
 - Gender Based Violence
 - Gender and Media

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, four groups consisting of 20 members each from the six local regions participated. They were aged between 16 and 30 years. Apart from the different groups, the Youth Parliament was chaired by a chairperson (Mr. Winsley Augustin) and assisted by four Deputy Chairpersons. A press team as well as security team consisting of participants of the first edition were set up and I wish to put on record that two newsletters were released on the two days of the Youth Parliament.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish also to pay tribute to all the youths who prepared and participated in the 2nd Edition of the Youth Parliament, who devoted much of their time and energy to the realization and smooth running of the Parliament. Preparation work started one month prior to the event. Interestingly, they all made good use of internet facilities available at the different centres and CLACs and made many research work. Participants also showed their sense of initiative by contacting different institutions like the Commission for Education, Statistics Unit and other departments to have realistic data to support their arguments and formulate realistic resolutions. The work was done diligently under the supervision of Youth Officers.

The Commission for Youth and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly welcome their resolutions and are being studied in the context of pre budget exercise.

During the Closing Ceremony, each participant was offered a medal and each team a participation prize of Rs 5,000.

The outcomes of this 2nd Edition of the Youth Parliament are as follows:-

- Interesting and realistic proposals for the island were made by the different groups
- There was a good interaction and exchange among participants
- It was a great opportunity for youth from different backgrounds and institutions to meet and share experiences.
- There was a great cohesion and teamwork spirit among the different groups.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, overall the two-day debates proved that when given the opportunity our youth can show great capacity regarding subjects most will judge too serious, to be of concern to young people but this Youth Parliament has showed that the youth should be part of the solution not parts of problems.

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This Regional Government under the leadership of the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Louis Serge CLAIR, GCSK puts all young people at the centre of our actions and measures that are put forward and it is important that the young people of Rodrigues use the tools and the means that are made available for their development and upliftment.

(No. B/117) Mr. A. Edouard (Eighth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the distribution of tablets to Form IV and V students in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state where matters stand?

Reply: (not yet received from commission)