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RODRIGUES

FOURTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 7 of 2017

Sitting of Tuesday 04 July 2017

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

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

Debate No. 7 of 2017

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 04 JULY 2017

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STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS:

- **The Chief Commissioner (Mr. L. S. Clair, GCSK):**
  "Vote historique aux Nations Unies – the CHAGOS

- **The Minority Leader (Mr. L. J. Von-Mally, GOSK)**
  Vote of congratulations

- **The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Ms. M. R. L. Edouard)**
  First Edition Port Mathurin Urban Trail – 25 June 2017

ADJOURNMENT

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The Executive Council

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

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

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PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Madam Chairperson	-	Spéville, Mrs. Marie Pricie Anjela
Clerk	-	Legentil, Miss Marie Lyndia Yannick
Serjeant-at-Arms	-	Constant Perrine, Mr. Stenio

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

EXTENSION OF PLAINE CORAIL AIRPORT RUNWAY

(No. B/27) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the extension of the Plaine Corail Airport runway, he will, for the benefit of the House, state the:-

(a) final decision taken by the Central Government and/or the Rodrigues Executive Council, as far as the preferred option is concerned, giving the reasons therefor;

(b) funds spent so far in geological surveys and soil sampling in regard thereto; and

(c) timeframe and the funds earmarked for the implementation of same?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as I have already stated in my various speeches in this House, the extension of Plaine Corail Airport runway is one of the priority projects of my Government. However, anyone should concur that such a sensitive and highly technical project cannot be dealt hastily and we are studying all the required parameters and implications thereof. Documents for the extension of runway at Plaine Corail Airport. The contract was awarded to GIBB (Mauritius) and TPS Consult Ltd. in April 2016 for the total sum of Rs 24,333,500 after having strictly followed all procurement procedures as per regulations in force.

With regards to part (a) of the question, Madam Chairperson, the preferred option is Option 3 as per the recommendations of the feasibility study carried out for…. and others in 2011. The Consultant is currently working on the preliminary design of the runway extension on these two options:

(i) Extension on concrete stains and,

(ii) Extension on field embankment.

I am informed, Madam, that the preliminary report as per the Contract Agreement is used shortly and based on the recommendations on the technical report and its findings. My Regional Government will take a final decision on the way forward. Thereafter, the Central Government will be advised accordingly.

With regard to part (b) of the question, Madam Chairperson, along with the Consultancy for the design of the extension of runway at Plaine Corail Airport, a contract for geotechnical investigations in the vicinity of Plaine Corail Airport was launched in October 2016. The contract was awarded to the successful bidder namely Water Research Ltd. for a total sum of Rs 17,166,440 exclusive of VAT and works started in March 2017. So far, Madam Chairperson, I am informed that an amount of Rs 3,879,580 exclusive of VAT has been paid to the Contractor.

With regard to part (c), Madam Chairperson, we are looking forward to have the final design and cost estimates of the extension of the Runway Project by December 2017 as per contractual agreement with the Consultant. Meanwhile, negotiations are still ongoing with the *Agence Française de Développement (AFD)* and with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for the funding of the project.

The Minority Leader : Yes, Madam Chair, the Chief Commissioner is saying that this, the decision to extend the airport in fact is very important and we need to do it urgently but he is saying that it will take time. I believe that we have wasted more than five years. He has said that we are going to… We are considering. They are considering two options. Can we know whether, these options, the decision to go for the two options has been taken by the technicians, by experts? Can we know who are these experts that have taken this decision, that have given these advices?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I have already said that we are waiting for the report of the Technical Survey and then, we are taking a decision, the Regional Government and the Ministry of Finance.

The Minority Leader : Can we have an idea when this report will be obtained from these experts?

The Chief Commissioner: I do not know, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

The Minority Leader : No, is this not true? We have some more questions because this is very, very important. Is it not true that those who are doing the preliminary works, the tests, they have seen that the Option 3, we cannot go along Option 3? Is it not true? Has he not obtained a report in that line?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, we have not yet received the report of the geotechnical study. How can we say, how can the people on the

other side say that decision has already been taken? We are waiting for the final report on the geotechnical study, Madam Chairperson. That is all, nothing else.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I ask the Chief Commissioner? He mentioned in his reply that there are considering two options. They are considering two options: it is you who mentioned they are considering two options. So, can the Chief Commissioner name the two options?

The Chief Commissioner: I have said it in my reply! The Consultant is currently working on the preliminary designs of the runway extension on two options. First option: extension on concrete stills, I have said it! And, second, extension on field embedment!

The Minority Leader : For the sake of transparency, are we talking about Option 3 and Option 4?

The Chief Commissioner: It is under Option 3; no Option 4. Option 3, I said, extension on concrete stills and extension on field embedment. *Remblai*. *Peut-être* they do not know what the name of embedment means: *remblai*.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

The Minority Leader : Sorry, Madam Chair, *peut-etre* it is of time limit….

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, I am on my feet. Next question, please!

The Minority Leader : I have more questions. You cannot stop us from asking questions. If for the sake of this…

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, I am on my feet. I have said next question! This is my ruling and it is final! Next question!

The Minority Leader : ….part of the question is we have come here to ask questions for the people of Rodrigues. You are not here to use your guillotine to prevent us to prevent us from asking questions!

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

The Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, he has said that you are going to protect the Chief Commissioner! It is the first time that I hear that in this Assembly!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members!

The Minority Leader : Yes, we have the right to ask questions!

Madam Chairperson: We are guided by the provisions of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. By the guidance and Standing Orders and Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, I would refer you to Standing Order 22. You know exactly how it works in the Assembly and what you have just said, you are attacking the Chair. You have said that the Chair is protecting the Chief Commissioner. Yes, you have to withdraw that because you cannot attack the Chair!

[Interruptions]

The Minority Leader : I have said nothing unparliamentary.

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, you have attacked the Chair; you have to withdraw!

The Minority Leader : …. That I have to withdraw.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Standing Order 36, the Conduct of the Chairperson cannot be attacked. That is what you have to withdraw.

The Minority Leader : I am not attacking the conduct of the Chairperson. I have said you must not try to protect the Chief Commissioner.

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, you are attacking the conduct of the Chairperson by saying that the Chairperson is protecting the Chief Commissioner. You have to withdraw. This is the last time!

The Minority Leader : Okay, so, you are not protecting the Chief Commissioner.

Madam Chairperson: You must say I withdraw.

The Minority Leader : Okay, I withdraw.

Madam Chairperson: Next question, please!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Wait a minute, Chief Commissioner. I would like to remind Respected Members that from a sitting position, you cannot make any comments. You are not allowed to make any comments.

ALLOCATION OF STATE LAND – HOTEL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS – 2016/2017

(No. B/28) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the allocation of State Land for hotel development projects in Rodrigues, for the period 2016/2017, he will, for the benefit of the House:-

(a) state the number thereof that has been approved by the Rodrigues Executive Council, indicating each project respective location, areas concerned and the estimated funds to be invested as well as the promoters concerned;

(b) give the track record/experience in the sector of the investors concerned; and

(c) state the potential benefits for Rodrigues and its population?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, with regard to the allocation of State Land for Hotel Development Projects in Rodrigues, I am informed that for the period 2016/2017, no approval has been granted for hotel development. However, I am further informed that two Hotel Development Projects have been approved in 2014 and 2015 respectively. Their respective status are as follows:

(a) A Four-Star Hotel and Reserve project presented by Rejuvenate Rodrigues Ltd. represented by Dr. V. Dewnarain located at St François, was approved in 2014. The extent of the land allocated is 31,768 m^2 and the lease was signed and finalised in April 2017. The estimated cost of the investment is about Rs 358 m.

(b) A Second Hotel Complex presented by Splendour Investment Rodrigues Ltd. represented by Mr. Willy August at Mourouk, was approved in 2017. The extent of land allocated is 29,810 m^2 and the lease is under process of finalisation.

As regard part (b), Madam Chairperson, I am informed that all applications are screened by Invest Rodrigues or Board of Investment when foreign investors are in concern in Mauritius in relation to the viability of the project and as well as track record assessment under investment capacity. All these investigations and the clearances were obtained prior to approval by Executive Council after recommendations by the State Land Committee.

Madam Chairperson, it is so obvious that any hotel development and tourism investment will contribute to boost the economical sectors in Rodrigues by creating direct and indirect employment. These two projects alone will contribute to about 150 new direct jobs when operational as well as other duly construction period. These hotel developments are aligned to the strategies spelt in the *discours programme 2017/2022*, that is, amongst others to achieve 100 tourists by 2025 while preserving and respecting our environment and biodiversity as well as aiming at a high value spending tourists. Hotel development will no doubt have a snowball effect with other economical sectors such as agriculture, small enterprises, service sectors amongst others.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner being given that very large plot of land is being given to this company: Rejuvenate Rodrigues Ltd., 31768 m2 of best tourist land in this country, can I know these credentials of these Rejuvenate Rodrigues Ltd. and this Mr. Dewnarain, the credentials of this individual?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, Mr. Dewnarain has asked for a lease to build a hotel to the value of I said, Rs 358 m. I must tell you, Madam Chairperson, before 2012, there were about 30 projects of hotels which have been given to the former Government. 30 projects. Unfortunately, I do not have the plan here but… Well, the only two projects are: Splendour, since 2012 and 2016, only two projects, Splendour and Rejuvenate. Only two projects. This means that they have accepted to go ahead with the projects and they will build the projects in Rodrigues for the tourism, for tourists and for the Rodriguans also.

The Minority Leader : We are not against good projects for this country because this is our country also. We have to make good use of the land especially, the best beaches of this country. What I would like to know whether this Mr. Dewnarain and his Rejuvenate Ltd., he said he will invest Rs 300 m. and I do not know how much more. Does he have the money? *Est-il solvable?* This is what I mean by the credentials. Have you enquired on his credentials? Do you know when his company has been incorporated? If you do not know, I can give you the answer.

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, if someone would like to build a hotel in Rodrigues and he has the finance and, this project has to be also examined by the Board of Investment (BOI). If this has been examined by the Board of Investment, that means that they agree with that Rejuvenate Project. And, I do not know whether Mr. Dewnarain would build a hotel if they do not have the money. You build a hotel, you go ahead and we have met him for many times and he is still waiting. He is fighting for his… I do not know what happened in the past. He has been fighting for the lease for the land and to go ahead with his project and he will start soon.

The Minority Leader : As I said, we are not against good hotel projects in Rodrigues. We are for investors; not for speculators. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he is aware that this group, Rejuvenate Rodrigues Ltd., is he aware that it has been incorporated on the 30 January 2014 and that it has only a share capital of Rs 10,000? This is a company that will invest Rs 300 m. in Rodrigues? This is why we have to be serious with that! We cannot play with the land of this country! I would like to…

Madam Chairperson: Come to your question!

The Minority Leader : *This is a question! I am asking the Chief Commissioner whether he knows about this. Well, we can…* On peut faire des erreurs mais on peut aussi les corriger. C'est pourquoi, notre travail du côté de l'opposition, c'est d'essayer de corriger cette erreur-là. Essayez de faire une enquête et de revenir sur cette décision si besoin.

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the Rejuvenate, it is a new name of the company and that is why it will be incorporated as such in such time. Well, I think the Member on the other side, I think, you know, it is a confidence. We also, we know that. We do not allow; we are not giving land to anybody who will just use this land for any other purpose, you know. We have our confidence in Mr. Dewnarain and we met him a lot of time! And, he came to see us a lot of time, you know. I do not know whether also in the past, before 2012, I think he had some difficulties with the former Government over there. He is now a man who has confidence in us; we have confidence in him and I think we have talked a lot on his project and he is going ahead.

The Minority Leader : The Chief Commissioner is saying that he has confidence in Mr. Dewnarain. Can we know what experience this person has in hotel project? And, can I know from the Chief Commissioner whether he has seen with the MRA, whether the Rejuvenate Rodrigues Ltd. has submitted his annual Statement of Account to the MRA? Because according to my information,

this has not been the case. Since this company has been incorporated, how can we give such a large portion of land to a company, that is, I can say, illegal?

The Chief Commissioner: The last question of the Minority Leader, I take notice of this question. And, Mr. Dewnarain has one or two hotels in Mauritius and he has sold one or two hotels here. This means that he is a person who has experience in hotels, in tourism. *Ça,* I must salute, Madam Chairperson. On the other question, that does not concern me. We take notice of the question.

The Minority Leader : It is good that the Chief Commissioner takes notice of this question and try to make some research on that. Because the best land in Rodrigues must be given to the best investors and I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether, he is agreeable to have a tender launched in order to see what are the best projects we can have for one of the best beaches in Rodrigues. I think this is the best way to go along.

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, if someone has chosen a place to build a hotel, it is his choice and we accept. It is his choice! They have not built hotels anywhere? Even in Cotton Bay, it is near a beach, you know. Mourouk hotel and so on, there have been hotels. Unfortunately, I do not have the list of hotels which have been given by the former Government. It is about 30 projects along beaches, you know. Unfortunately, I should have brought here a map of the hotels where land has been given for construction of hotels.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, the Chief Commissioner keeps on saying that before 2012, there has been so and so decision taken. Well, I said that if there have been errors done in the past, we must not….

Madam Chairperson: Come to your question, please!

The Minority Leader : My question is let us do things right. If we like this country, I ask the Chief Commissioner whether he will make an enquiry on this Rejuvenate Ltd.? – Because we are not here to play dice with the land of Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, I am making an enquiry. We have been …. with Mr. Dewnarain for years and everything has been done. I do not know why the Minority Leader is against this man. Why?

The Minority Leader : On a point of order, there is nothing personal. I am not against this man. He has to remove this. I am against a project that will be

of no value, of no help to Rodrigues. We are trying to protect our country, that is all. I would like to remove that. You cannot say that I am against….

The Chief Commissioner: I do not understand, Madam Chairperson. Protect the country? We also, we have been on the site!

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: There is a point of order, you have to sit down! There is a point of order, you have to wait!

The Chief Commissioner: *Kot point of order la?*

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: He has raised a point of order, you must wait!

The Chief Commissioner: I replied his question!

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Stop arguing! Sit down!

[Interruptions]

[Gap in recording]

Madam Chairperson: I would like to remind respected Members about the choice of their words in this Assembly. So, be mindful about the choice of words. We move to next question.

The Minority Leader : On a point of order, he has said that I am against this person. I am not against this person!

Madam Chairperson: This is my ruling! It is final.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I ask the …?

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Madame, mo ti demane ou ene question avant.* I ask for one question, one, only one. Can I have one question ?

Madam Chairperson: Next question, please! Time is running.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam?

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

[Interruptions]

LIVE BROADCASTING – PROCEEDINGS OF REGIONAL ASSEMBLY – RADIO AND TELEVISION

(No. B/29) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (The Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the live broadcasting of the proceedings of the Regional Assembly on radio and television and in the spirit of collaborative democracy prone by the Regional Government, he will state if he intends to present a motion to the House for the setting up of a Select Committee of the House to look into the matter and make such recommendations thereon as it deems fit?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as this House is aware, my Regional Government has since the last five years, prone the spirit of collaborative democracy. My Regional Government has always pledged to broaden our democracy's space and to conduct business of this Assembly on the principle of transparency, accountability and exemplary governance which is in line with the philosophy of the autonomy to ensure that business is carried out in a fair and democratic manner to all Members for the benefit of the Rodriguan people. Madam Chairperson, the main pillars of a successful good governance are accountability, fairness and transparency. These three pillars are critical for all public institutions. I believe that live broadcast of the proceedings of the Regional Assembly will bring the House nearer to the people and is in line with my Government's vision to further reinforce the motto of Government for the people and with the people.

Madam Chairperson, however, the question of a Select Committee is premature at this stage. Based on the experience of the recent Live Broadcasting Project in Mauritius, it would be uneconomical and a waste of resources to implement such measure now within premises of the existing Assembly in as much as we are planning to move to a new Assembly building in the next two years. Moreover, based on the preliminary information gathered at the National Assembly, the implementation of such project will cost at least Rs 4 m. to Rs 50 m. for Rodrigues. The technical as well as human resource aspect of live broadcasting will be taken up in the design of the new Assembly. Therefore, the setting up of a Select Committee might be considered at that stage eventually to define the parameters of implementing such decision and the subsequent amendments to be brought to the Standing Orders.

The Minority Leader : At least, we are agreeable on one point and I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether, we will have to wait for two years to see this live broadcasting or whether, in the meantime, he will arrange

with the MBC or you, Madam, if you can as Chairperson, arrange with the MBC to have a more impartial coverage of the work of this Assembly.

The Chief Commissioner: Well, we will see with the MBC.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

DISPOSAL OF WASTES – BASALT STONE QUARRY – MONTAGNE PLATE, BAIE DU NORD

(No. B/30) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (The Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to the disposal of wastes at the basalt stone quarry at Montagne Plate, Baie du Nord, he will state:

(a) If the site thereof is a legal dumping site, if so, since when;

(b) If any hazardous waste including broken asbestos sheets have been recently disposed thereat;

(c) The measures his Commission has undertaken for the safe disposal of hazardous wastes thereat?

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, with regards to part (a) of the question, the site at Montagne Plate is not a legal dumping site but a stone quarry. As a result of this activity, there are depressions which are being created further to the removal of stones. With the view to backfill these depressions, only inert wastes such as concrete debris and soil are authorised for disposal on the site, after careful examination of such requests and approval by the Environment Office.

With regards to part (b) of the question, I am not aware if any broken asbestos sheets have been disposed there and the Environment Unit will enquire into the matter. In case any hazardous waste is detected, necessary action will be taken according to the Environment Protection (Standards for Hazardous Wastes) Regulations 2001.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chairperson, I heard the Commissioner said that now, the Commission for Environment will enquire. Can we know why all this time this has not been done?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: All this time, there has been no enquiry because there was nothing official on that. It is only now when I see the question that it is becoming official.

The Minority Leader : I would like to know from the Commissioner whether he will ask the Dangerous Chemical Control Board to come and help because really, this is very, very, dangerous and if one poor shepherd gets cancer, lung cancer because of this, I think it will be one case to many and he will have to bear the consequences.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I said in my reply in case any hazardous waste is detected, necessary reaction will be taken, which means that we will look into… see the right person to do….

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the Commissioner is talking about official. What does he mean about official? Because I talked to him on the matter. We were going to Mauritius and I talked to him, I told him as a friend that there is asbestos, we think that there is asbestos at the… How official should it be, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the Member just said he thinks that there is asbestos there. That does not mean that there is asbestos. I do not see anyone on the other side who is an expert in asbestos or hazardous wastes. So, that is why now you put the question to the Assembly, there is nothing official! It is only now that that I will enquire on that.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Excuse me, will you leave the floor to the respected Member? – Because I think he has something to say.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Ah, sorry.

Madam Chairperson: You have something to say, Mr. Perrine?

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes.

Madam Chairperson: You have the floor now.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: I would like to ask the Commissioner responsible for Environment whether there has been any delegation who has been there after

the press conference that we, on this side of the House, made on this spot at Montagne Plate?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I do not listen to their conference and I do not read their newspapers. So, I do not know. There is nothing official. As Members of this Assembly, I think these people could have written a letter to my Commission to say about this. They expect me to listen to whatever they say in their newspaper or in their press conference? I do not listen to this unfortunately, thank you.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, we do not expect the Commissioner to listen to anybody but at least, he can listen to the Minister, the Minister who was in his party who said in the National Assembly that there are asbestos sheets in the Maternity Ward of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I put the question. This is what I got as answer. So, he must listen to that. This Maternity Ward has been completely destroyed/pulled down and all these sheets have been dumped there. So, which is which? Now, is he going to see for himself? Has he been there by himself to see? Do not do politics with that! This is about public health!

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I do not have to go there, Madam Chairperson. There are technicians at work on these. I am not an expert in asbestos. You can look at something and you say: is this asbestos? What is this? So, now they have put the question, we will enquire. We will send the right people, the person who can say if it is asbestos or whatever. And, also, you know, if this has been put in the hospital for years, maybe it is no longer… It can have become inert. You know, this is chemical. So, we need expert in that!

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, you know why he is defending that point? – Because he has not been referring to… His Commission has not respected the Environment Protection Act. This is one. The other part, my question is whether he is aware that the *Police de l'Environnement* went on the site. The *Police de l'Environnement* forms part of the Environment Committee and he, as Commissioner, he should know whenever there are….

Madam Chairperson: There is no need to….

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, I am coming to the question. I have to explain to make it clear for everybody. So, whether he is aware that the *Police de l'Environnement* went on the site under the request of the Contractor and the *Police de l'Environnement* they advised... Maybe they advised but they did not follow the disposal of this specific waste. So, whether he is aware of that and how come he comes here and say something which is completely different?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the Police of the Environment goes there very often because of a lot of illegal dumping there. Yeah, on this site, they go there very often to this site. They go to this site very often because there is a lot of illegal dumping going on there. So, they go there. And, also, I do not see even in the *Police de l'Environnement*, there is no expert in asbestos. So, who can prove that it is asbestos as they are pointing out? That is why I said we will enquire, which means that we will send the right people, the right person to say it is asbestos. If it is asbestos and it is strong, you are talking of public health, of course, we will take the necessary action!

The Minority Leader : The Commissioner is saying that he is not expert and he has no expert here in Rodrigues to say that this is asbestos. This is why I am asking him to officially ask the Minister for Environment, Honorable Etienne Sinatambou, because I have met him, if officially you asked for the Dangerous Chemical Control Board to send an officer here, then, we will be fixed. *Là, on sera fixé.* Will he do that?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the Minority Leader is trying to show me how to do my work. I know what to do! I will do the right thing! I know the right thing that needs to be done! He does not have to show me what to do but in my reply, it is clear: we will take the necessary procedure. We may have an expert in asbestos, not these guys! So, it does not matter as long as we see that it is asbestos and it is there. Then, we remove it and put it, dispose it as it should be. So, why do you have to push and push for me to go and see whoever? Is it your friends? Or I do not know what is happening there.

The Minority Leader : I think the Commissioner is imputing motives. It is not question of friend, not friend; it is a question of health hazard. We cannot play with the health of people. As I said, a poor child going there, he just breathes this asbestos and he gets cancer, will you be able to sleep well after that? This is what we are doing, our work at the opposition for the benefit of one and all. We are not showing how to do your work. We are not asking you, showing you how to do your work; we are just giving a hint. You just have to go to the Dangerous Chemical Control Board and ask them to send an officer and this will be done. – Because for several months, this has been right there and it is very, very, very dangerous. In France, people are… *Zot pe fer manifestation contre sa, ou koné, asbestos ?* In the meantime, if I can give another hint to the Commissioner, will he try to make a survey in all the buildings in Rodrigues where there is asbestos to have all these removed as this has been done in Mauritius? Will he do that?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I just said that no one is an expert here in this asbestos field. Asbestos is on sale on the market here. The thing that is put in the

exhaust is asbestos. This is what we call *l'amiante*. Yes, go to Ah Toc or wherever. So, we are talking… I know who it is. *Non, ils appellent ça l'amiante.*

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order, please !

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Second Island Region Member!

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam, excuse me.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner, you are allowed to proceed.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, I said that this asbestos is on sale on the local market here. So, we do not know what asbestos we have there. Maybe this one is okay but the other is bad. This is what I said and the Minority Leader pushed me to say yes I want to go there. I will see the right person! I am not going to give in to this. I am going to see the right person. We have started an enquiry and we will take the necessary measures.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the Commissioner is stating that there is asbestos on sale on the local market. This is, I think, according to the EPA which is considered as a very dangerous hazardous waste which needs to be taken with great consideration. So, I would like to ask him as the Environment Protection Act, he can as Commissioner, prescribe standards regarding all these wastes. So, I will ask the Commissioner whether he has prescribed…. He is stating that there is asbestos in Rodrigues, whether he has prescribed standards regarding hazardous wastes.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the Member who has been a Commissioner for Environment, knows that the Environment Protection Act, it is not the prerogative of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to set standards for this. It is a national law! So, unless we come with a regulation and saying that this should have…. but this is a national law. It is not my job. Well, next time you go… The Minority Leader said that Mrs. Sinatambou, Minister of the Environment is his friend. So, go and talk to him and ask him to modify or update

or amend the Environment Protection Act because this is not the prerogative of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Madam Chairperson: Next question, please!

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, he is saying that the Minister of Environment is my friend. Am I to understand that the Minister of Environment is not your friend? Well, if he is your friend, so, it is up to you to go and ask him. And, another thing, concerning asbestos, since we are talking of health hazard, can I ask the Commissioner to see to it that the norms are respected? – Because you can have old apparatus using asbestos, that is, old-fashioned, that is no more in line with the norms and has to be scrapped. I think he has to do his job. Will he do that? – Because asbestos in the world over, is being scrapped, had become illegal. So, if there is old asbestos on sale here and there, because for ironing, we used that formerly. Now, it is no more in use. So, is he going to adhere to these norms to see that all these regulations are being adhered to?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: This was in my answer. If everybody listened to what I said, then, we would have finished for a long time. In case any hazardous waste is detected, necessary action will be taken according to the Environment Protection Act Regulation 2001. So, I think it is clear. If there is asbestos, we will take the measure.

Madam Chairperson: That is it. Next question!

BARBECUE SET - SMALL ENTREPRENEURS

(No. B/31) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (The First Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Cooperatives and Others whether, in regard to the barbecue set granted to some small entrepreneurs by her Commission, she will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the number of beneficiaries thereof, indicating the cost price per set to the Commission and under which item vote same were brought, together with the eligibility criteria to obtain same and any other condition(s) attached thereto?

The Commissioner for Cooperatives and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) : Madam Chairperson, what the World Health Organisation (WHO) revealed in 2016 created waves…. the meat industry worldwide. The study revealed that there might exist a certain coloration between the consumption of processed red meat and cancer but the risk is thought to multiply when processed meat is cooked under high pressure such as an open air grilling and barbecuing in poor sanitary conditions. Yet, if no studies have reached conclusions that there is a direct association between this disease and

those activities, however, we as a caring Government, we have the moral obligation and the mandate to protect the health of the population. For these reasons, Madam Chairperson, my Commission took the firm decision to review the grilling activities in Rodrigues. Thus, we propose to set up a Committee comprising of the Nutritionist, a Principal Health Inspectors and officers of my Commission with the following objectives: to enable hawkers to upgrade their services and products through proper techniques and use of modern equipment where norms and conditions are currently applied to assist hawkers in the process of acquiring new, modern equipment to be used in their businesses and to establish a proper follow-up and support to hawkers.

It was pointed out in the meeting that actually, grilling and barbecue activities were carried out in open air where the risk of contamination with airborne pathogens and other pollutants was very high. In addition, the hawkers were using metallic drums and metallic frames that oxidise readily when heated. These combining factors represented a recipe for a public health disaster in the coming years. That is why we took the decision to develop a special scheme under the Technology Modernisation Scheme and after a field survey completed by the Health Inspectors, a list of 36 names of hawkers were given to the Commission. We took the decision with approval of the Executive Council to have a special scheme under the Technology Modernisation Scheme where the Government contributes 75% of the cost of a new grilling machine and the beneficiary 25%.

It is to be noted that among the 36 names given after the field survey by the Principal Health Inspectors around Rodrigues, only 23 beneficiaries accepted the conditions of cost-sharing the equipment that is, for a small barbecue, the cost was Rs18,400 and the beneficiaries' contribution, that is 25%, amounted to Rs 4,600. That is, RRA contributed Rs 13,800. For the big barbecue, the cost was Rs 57,500. The beneficiary contributed Rs 14,375 and the RRA contributed Rs 43,125. It is to be noted that the criteria were that first of all as I just said, the beneficiary:

(i) accepted the cost-shared formula,

(ii) holds the valid Food Handling Certificate issued by the Public Health Office and, actually those who are practising the activity.

It is also to be noted that Enovo System Ltd was hired by the individuals. The company was in Rodrigues. They proposed a machine. They discussed with the beneficiary and the beneficiary accepted to enter into a contract with the company and we gave the incentive to the beneficiary and the beneficiary paid the company. I am hereby tabling the requested information for the question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, if I have well understood the answer, this means that there was a company in Rodrigues who talked to the beneficiaries, the Enovo, and after which, the Government took the decision to give rebate on the apparatus. Is it true?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Non, ce n'est pas du tout ça, Madame la Présidente. En effet, la compagnie Enovo System Ltd., c'est la seule qui produit ces équipements dans la république et qui a produit ces équipements pour l'île de La Réunion, pour l'ensemble des personnes qui travaille dans la grillade au niveau de La Réunion. Cette personne, elle a eu l'occasion de travailler, de produire un équipement qui est fait à base de inox, …. *food grade, inox metal* et je vous assure que cette personne a fait un travail pour les coopératives qui produisent le jus de limon, le concentré de limon. C'est basé sur son expérience et je mentionne, je dis de nouveau : c'est la seule compagnie dans la république qui fait cette équipement, qui a un *track record,* et qui a travaillé. Il a des preuves qu'il a fait pour l'ensemble de La Réunion.

Donc, comment est-ce que Rodrigues peut se passer d'une telle expertise ? La personne a proposé cette idée. Ce n'est pas parce qu'elle est venue pour proposer l'idée qu'on a travaillé pour gril. Si on l'avait fait, il n'y aurait rien eu de mal aussi parce que le plus important, c'est que la santé de la population soit protégée et surtout, nous savons l'importance et la contribution de cette activité dans l'économie de Rodrigues et surtout par rapport à ces *hawkers* qui travaillent. Donc, le projet n'est pas venu parce qu'Enovo est venu mais si c'était le cas aussi, j'aurais assumé parce qu'il n'y a rien de mal dedans.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I made one apparatus. I made one too. There are many people doing Inox in Mauritius. How can she come here and say that only Enovo can do this? It is very simple. It is a rectangular shape; you just put the grill and…. It is okay. How can she come and say that there is only one company doing this in… Hey, come on! Has there been a tender for this, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, je maintiens que cette personne est la seule qui fait ce type d'activité et cette compagnie a travaillé pour l'ensemble des compagnies à Maurice qui sont dans l'agroalimentaire pour de gros équipements. Il est le seul aujourd'hui à pouvoir faire même la maintenance de ces équipements. Donc, non, il n'y a pas eu de tender parce que les personnes, les entrepreneurs ont travaillé directement avec cette compagnie.

Mr. J. N. Volbert : *Madam Chair*, est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous dire ces gens-là, quelles sont les licences qu'ils possèdent étant donné qu'ils travaillent en pleine rue ?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Ils sont *hawkers* et ils ont déjà leur *Food Handler Certificate*.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, can I ask the Commissioner for Industrial Development? I see that there were 36 beneficiaries, a list of 36 persons. Survey? 36. All around Rodrigues. But in the list, Madam Chairperson, I cannot see the village of English Bay. Since this village is a very touristic one, Mr. Payendee knows well because he is building a wall of Rs 3 m. there. So, can I ask the Commissioner Responsible for Industrial Development to see to it that English Bay, because it is a very touristic zone, to see that these barbecue *grilleurs* at English Bay, they are made aware of this facilities that are put at their disposal in order to secure health of the people there? *Thank you.*

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : En effet, Madame la Présidente, le *survey*, donc, qu'est-ce que j'ai en main là, révèle qu'il y a eu 36 personnes à travers Rodrigues au moment où le *Principle Health Inspectors* faisaient le *survey*, il y a eu 36 personnes en activité et il y a des gens de Grand Baie, de Mourouk, de tout village de Rodrigues. Mais comme j'ai dit au départ, la condition était d'abord qu'ils possèdent le *Food Handler Certificate* mais surtout qu'ils sont d'accord pour participer à ce *Cost-Sharing Formula*. Donc, les personnes, il y a eu 36. Donc, 23 ont bénéficié. Ces 23 sont ceux qui se sont porté volontaire pour participer à ce projet et les autres, les 13 qui restent, on les attend. D'ailleurs, il y a une rencontre régulièrement qui se fait et ils étaient bien partants. On les a bien rencontrés. On a compris aussi que certains n'ont pas la capacité financière tout de suite de rentrer dans ce projet mais on va les accompagner et éventuellement, quand ils seront prêts, on va les aider pour avoir leurs équipements.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam, we have nothing against those people doing this activity. We have nothing against but there are many people doing many activities in Rodrigues. But I would like to ask the Commissioner whether being given she has taken Government's money and give it subsidise these apparatuses to the beneficiaries, whether this activity is in line with the Food Regulation?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, c'est bien que le membre a commencé à dire qu'il n'a rien contre ces personnes. C'est vrai, on a discuté. C'est pour ça qu'on a mis un comité. On a discuté. Je suppose qu'il y a eu des informations, des discussions qu'on a eues. Il y a eu ces personnes, ces 36 personnes qu'on a rencontrées. L'idée c'est qu'on a besoin de les

accompagner pour rendre leurs activités légales. J'avais deux choix parce que la loi comme c'est aujourd'hui, ne permet pas cette activité. Je suis sûre que si l'Assemblée régionale avait pris la décision d'interdire cette activité pour raison légale, ils auraient été les premiers à venir avec des pancartes. Pour montrer la démagogie, Madame la Présidente.

Aujourd'hui, ce qu'on veut, c'est pour ça qu'on a mis un comité pour les former, pour les accompagner. Aujourd'hui, qu'est-ce qu'on veut ? *We are talking of empowerment ; we are talking about* franchir une nouvelle étape. On va les accompagner tout doucement. L'argent de l'état est fait pour ça : *to help people in need* pourvu que ce soit fait dans la transparence. On l'a fait, on va continuer à les accompagner et éventuellement… Je suis désolée, je sais qu'il y a des gens. Je connais qui sont ces personnes aussi qui sont contre qu'on encadre ces personnes. Nous, on est là pour travailler, pour encourager l'effort. On incite les Rodriguais à devenir débrouillards. C'est notre mission de les accompagner et on va continuer à le faire.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, this is one point. The point is the beneficiaries, they have hawker's license. So, I would like to ask the Commissioner when these people will get their victualler license?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, les conditions et les critères pour avoir peu importe quel permis, c'est bien défini. On va donner à ceux qui *fit into all the criteria*. Si ces personnes n'ont pas les critères qu'il faut, ils vont devoir attendre parce qu'ils savent qu'il y a un processus et qu'il y a des conditions à respecter. Quand ils seront prêts et ceux qui sont prêts, on va leur donner leur licence. Au contraire, c'est à notre avantage. On a investi en eux. C'est à notre avantage de les accompagner pour aller jusqu'au bout et on va le faire.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Madam Chairperson, Madam,* le fait que le Commissaire est en train de nous dire que nous, nous sommes des démagogues et que l'Assemblée, le Gouvernement du jour va encourager les mesures, va encourager les *incentives*, moi, je demanderais à la Commissaire responsable du développent industriel le fait qu'elle a commencé… C'était elle qui est le motivateur de ce projet-là et qu'elle aille jusqu'au bout de sa mission et qu'elle donne à toutes ces personnes qui n'ont pas les moyens d'avoir un barbecue, qu'elle fasse ces personnes-là avoir leurs barbecues et aussi tous les permis adéquats dans les plus brefs délais, le plus vite possible pour que nous et la population qui nous visite soient en bonne santé, une meilleure santé pour l'avenir. Merci, Madame.

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, nous croyons dans l'*empowerment*. Nous croyons que si quelqu'un est entrepreneur, il ne doit pas dépendre 100% de l'état. Si on commence à donner 100% aux barbecues, *hawkers*, mais on va devoir donner 100% à tout le monde. Je pense qu'il faut responsabiliser les personnes. C'est leur gagne-pain ; on leur responsabilise, on leur donne les moyens et ils sont conscients, ils sont d'accords pour participer à ce projet. C'est comme ça qu'on va continuer parce que ce n'est pas en donnant tout gratuit qu'on va *empower* la population.

Madam Chairperson: Next question, please !

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN RODRIGUES – NUMBER OF CASES REPORTED

(No. B/32) Mrs. M. T. Agathe (The Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Cooperatives and Others whether, in regard to domestic violence in Rodrigues, she will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the number of cases reported to the family welfare and protection unit of her Commission, from 2015 to date, indicating the number of repeated complainants, if any, and, the case follow-up procedures set by her Commission in regard thereto?

The Commissioner for Cooperatives and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) : Madam Chairperson, I am informed by the Family Support Bureau and the Divisional Commander that since 2015 to date, a total number of 4,096 cases of domestic violence for both institutions have been reported and there were 306 repeated complainants. Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I am also tabling the number of cases reported thereat from 2015 to date. So, the number of cases of domestic violence in 2015 is 182, in 2016 – 201, in 2017 as at June 30, it is 113. The number of repeated complainants – 126 for 2015, 138 for 2016 and the number of repeated complainants for 2017 as at 30 June is 42.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Je voudrais demander à la Commissaire qu'est-ce qu'elle compte faire pour les enfants qui vivent dans ces situations difficiles parce que nous savons pour que la famille puisse grandir en bonne santé, il faut que les enfants soient bien encadrés. Nous savons aussi que dans bien des cas, il y a des parents qui ont ce problème de *domestic violence* et les enfants qui ont à porter ça tous les jours et ce n'est pas facile pour eux. Je voudrais demander à la Commissaire qu'est-ce qu'elle compte faire pour ces enfants et qu'est-ce qu'elle a fait ou bien qu'est-ce qui se passe ?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, je suis contente que depuis 2017, depuis janvier, on a pu continuer à consolider le service

qu'on offre à des familles au niveau du *Family Intregated Centre*. Depuis le début de l'année, on a pu avoir le service d'une psychologue à plein-temps. On a pu avoir le service d'un *Family Counselling Officer* à plein-temps et on a d'autres jeunes stagiaires qui sont très formées dans la psychologie et qui sont attachées à mon bureau. Quand une personne vient au bureau pour faire part ou bien pour faire la complainte par rapport à sa situation de famille, que ce soit un enfant maltraité, que ce soit violence domestique, il y a tout un mécanisme qui est mis en place.

Bien sûr, avec l'accord de la personne, le support psychologique, s'il a besoin d'autres supports aussi, on a mis en place. Donc, les enfants, si ces parents qui sont victimes de violence domestique veulent avoir un support pour les enfants, ces parents ont la possibilité d'emmener leurs enfants pour être accompagnés par le psychologue, par le *Family Conselling Officer* et on a aussi tout dernièrement, mis en place un group de paroles avec les femmes qui sont victimes de violence domestique pour être sûr de les accompagner et bien sûr, comme on le fait tout le temps, on encourage les gens à venir dénoncer à la police, aux services qui sont offerts au bureau. Mais en même temps aussi, après qu'ils ont dénoncé, ils sont accompagnés comme il se doit.

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, would you put your question ? Next question!

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL DIFFERENT AREA/COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

(No. B/33) Mrs. M. T. Agathe (The Third Island Region) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the different Area/Community Health Centres around Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the sanitary measures taken in regard to public health and the mechanism set for compliance with established hygienic guidelines/procedures thereat, indicating the number of cleaners in post in each of these establishments as well as detailing the supervisory staff involved therewith?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): A team has been set up to deal with all sanitary issues at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Mont Lubin Area Health Centre, La Ferme Area Health Centre and Community Health Centres.

The team comprises of seven General Workers under the supervision of a Foreman as follows: five at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, one at Mont. Lubin Area Health Centre and one at La Ferme Area Health Centre.

In the Community Health Centres, the services of General Workers are provided once weekly and as and when required by Nursing Officers posted in the Community Health Centres.

Health Inspectors pay regular visits to the hospital and Area Health Centres for inspection purposes.

In addition to that, the following measures are carried out regularly:

1. Larviciding to destroy larvae of mosquitoes that are vectors of communicable diseases.

2. Disinfection to destroy pathogenic organisms and during the said process, odor nuisances are attenuated.

3. Regular cleaning of the manholes behind the maternity block which often gets obstructed.

4. Regular transfer of sharp wastes, septic wastes and human tissues without delay to the Incinerator for incineration.

The Minority Leader : Can I ask the respected Commissioner concerning contagious diseases, whether he is contemplating the possibility of setting up an isolation ward in Rodrigues.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: The question of the Minority Leader has nothing to do with the main question.

The Minority Leader : Well, we are talking of hazard, of health hazard. I would like to know. It is quite simple! Contagious diseases: are you contemplating the possibility of setting up an isolation ward? – Because if tomorrow, somebody having Ebola comes to Rodrigues, OTB patient, you should have an isolation ward. This is what I am asking for.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam, I have already answered this question. Should the Minority Leader come with another question, he will have the answer.

The Minority Leader : The question talked about the sanitary measures taken in regard to public health and the mechanism set for compliance with established hygienic guidelines. So, it forms part of the main question. So, I think he does not understand English then! Can I know, since he is talking about that, sanitary measures, can we know where we put TB patients in Rodrigues? Do

we have an isolation ward? Can I know from the Commissioner whether actually, there is one patient in the ICU? And, if there is a patient coming to the ICU, what do we do? This is why I am putting this question.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam, as I have said, the Minority Leader has not read the question well. Now, he is coming with TB patient, who have been contracted TB patient. But, if there are persons to go to another clinic ward, we will do it.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, je voudrais savoir du Commissaire s'il peut éclairer la Chambre pour nous dire combien de fois les toilettes sont nettoyées dans le *male ward* parce que très souvent, il y a beaucoup de personnes. J'ai déjà été là-bas, la salle était remplie et les toilettes sentent. Plus, il y a des guéridons qui sont rouillés et *there are the wastes paper, plastic waste paper baskets* qui sont dans un état déplorable. Les gens sortent de chez eux, parce que le Rodriguais maintenant, il a *un standard of living*, on sort de chez soi pour venir parfois dans l'hôpital, ce n'est vraiment pas accueillant. Qu'est-ce que le Commissaire compte faire de ça ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the toilets of the wards are being cleaned as and when necessary during all the day. Regarding the other furniture, we are looking after it to have all the *guéridons* renovated and to put new *guéridon*.

The Minority Leader : Can I know from the Commissioner being given that what we so-called isolation ward in the male ward, does this ward have toilet facilities, water facilities?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, all the necessary measures will be taken as and when required to have the…. in the isolated ward.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: J'aimerais savoir du Commissaire s'il sait que dans le *Maternity Ward*, il y a des petits *« matelas feuille papier »* parce que parfois surtout les femmes enceintes, c'est vraiment inconfortable. Qu'est-ce qu'il pense faire de ça ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, there is no *"matelas feuille papier"* in the Maternity Ward but to that effect, an order of 130 mattresses have already been ordered and will reach Rodrigues soon.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT - RODRIGUES

(No. B/34) Mr. J. R. Augustin (The Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to airport development in Rodrigues, he could state:-

(a) if the Regional Government has initiated any study in order to determine the tourism carrying capacity of Rodrigues, while further considering the island's surface and the current amenities available locally; and

(b) the government strategy in order to ensure that airport development is in line with the tourism development strategy, if any?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, it was clearly spelt out in my last *discours programme* that the vision of my Government is to achieve the goals of 100,000 tourists' arrival per year as from 2025. I am also informed that the last Tourism Development Plan was prepared in 2001 with some further refinements brought by the SIDPR of 2009 and the Ecorys report of 2011. I will not abuse the time of the House to quote all these significant recommendations of the report. However, may I point out that there is a quasi unanimity that among the recommendations of the different reports that 100,000 tourists annually would be the order of magnitude for the sustainable carrying capacity of the Island and that from 120,000 on once, instant environmental pressure may be expected unless carefully planned.

Madam Chairperson, I will refer to the respected Member, to the majors spelt out in the *discours programme* with regard to the boosting of tourism arrivals and its related infrastructural development which my Regional Government will over the next five years, implement to translate the recommendations of the various reports into conveyed action. My Regional Government is initiating actions to recruit a Consultant in the coming month to update the Master Plan for Tourism Development taking into consideration our policy to develop the Island as an ecological one and to thereafter, new strategies to reach our targets by 2025. Funds have been provided in the current financial year to recruit a Consultant for that purpose.

My Government is on a views tourism growth and its related infrastructural development as an integrated package whereby, water infrastructure, food security, waste and electricity amongst others are carefully planned and considered essential to sustain tourism sector without degrading its natural capital of placing competitive burden on the resident population. That is why my Regional Government is investing massively in road construction, agriculture,

training of entrepreneurs, increased water production and so on. Allow me to quote a paragraph from Ecorys' report. I quote:

"Airport Development in Rodrigues is clearly an important factor in reaping the full potential of the Island which does exists. It is expected that the current volume of tourists could grow from 50,000 to 130,000 in 20 years."

Madam Chairperson, this demonstrates that we are clearly within the projected development pace and we will put all means required to sustain the growth. Airport development alone is one of the multiple factors that would contribute to boost up tourism development in Rodrigues.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether, in the view of ticket, increasing air ticket, has this issue been taken into consideration to achieve the goals of 100,000 tourists?

The Chief Commissioner: This question has been taken up with the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. Last time also, we met Mr. Soodhun and next week, perhaps, we will go to Mauritius and meet the Prime Minister and Mr. Soodhun so that also, the ATR also has submitted a report concerning this increase in tickets. This, we are taking this problem with much interest for the people of Rodrigues and the tourists.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

PROMOTION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) – PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT

(No. B/35) Mr. J. R. Augustin: (The Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunications and Others whether, in view of the promotion of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to generate productive employment in Rodrigues, she could, for the benefit of the House, state the:-

(a) number of investors who are currently seeking to invest in the ICT Sector in Rodrigues, indicating the total number of direct jobs that will be generated thereby; and

(b) actual total project cost to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly of the newly established call centre project at Camp du Roi, the surface area that the centre occupies in the DBM Building, and the number of employees?

The Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunications and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) : Madam Chairperson, as regard to part (a), I am informed that currently, two more investors are seeking to invest in the ICT Sector in Rodrigues. For this financial year, an additional number of 110 youths are expected to be recruited for the two projects.

As regard to part (b) of the question, Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the cost borne by the RRA as at to date in respect of the newly established Call Centre Project at Camp Du Roi, amounts to Rs 26,283,888.20. The surface area that the centre is occupying in the DBM building is 6,735 ft^2 and the actual number…. in post is 20. In fact, the existing facilities make provision to cater for 115 employees. With the expected improved connectivity, the total number of employee is expected to reach 115 by December 2017.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can the Commissioner inform the House what is the connectivity speed at now?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: So, actually, we are connected with 163 Mbps.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, I would like to ask the Commissioner, well, we were made to understand that we have about 200 Mbps connection and this was supposed to be increased to 500 Mbps. But up to now, we have been told that we have only about 163 Mbps. Can we know what has happened, why the bandwidth has not been increased so far?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : In fact, we expected to have an amount of 200 Mbps as the Minority Leader rightly said and 45 Mbps were reserved for business activities. So, that is why we are 163 now and regarding the improved bandwidth as he might be aware for having been a Minister, so there are procedures. Two times, the tender has been flaunted and for two times, they have been cancelled. Actually, at the level of the CPB, they are evaluating the tender document and we hope that very soon, there will be another launching of the tender. We expect that if the calendar is respected by the end of this year, we will have the improved bandwidth up to 500 Mbps.

The Minority Leader : The Commissioner is saying that the connection in Rodrigues is sluggish but we are paying the same rate as in Mauritius. So, if we have to download a document in Rodrigues, it will take us 10 times or 50 times more than in Mauritius but we are paying the same rate. So, what I am asking the Commissioner, this is tantamount to robbery. Will the Commissioner arrange with the Central Government or Mauritius Telecom to have the tariff decreased

then for the sake of… to help the Rodriguan, for the sake of justice because we are being penalised in fact, all of us?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, c'est un fait de dire que la connexion/connectivité est vraiment très lente. C'est une expérience que tout le monde vit chaque jour et c'est le privé qui a le prix. Quoique dans un esprit de continuité territorial, les prix pratiqués à Maurice sont les mêmes qu'à Rodrigues. C'est pour cette raison qu'on a poussée pour qu'il y ait une meilleure connectivité et si les procédures auraient été passées mieux, on aurait déjà eu une meilleure connectivité. Donc, moi, je pense que ce qu'il faudrait faire… donc, malheureusement que les procédures n'ont pas été comme on souhaitait. Nous sommes les premiers à vouloir avoir cette connectivité plus rapide parce qu'on a promis ça à la jeunesse. Il y a des engagements au niveau de… Il y a des gens qui veulent venir investir. C'est une condition, c'est une prérequis pour que ces compagnies viennent investir. Donc, nous, ce qu'on veut, on pousse et chaque semaine, personnellement, je prends la peine d'appeler, de faire le suivi avec l'ICTA, qui est chargé de lancer cet appel d'offre, pour assurer que le plus vite, l'appel d'offre est lancé, on a le résultat qu'il faut et les gens ont une meilleure connectivité.

The Minority Leader : This having been said, for the sake of justice, will the Commissioner arrange with the MTO, the Central Government, to have the tariff reduced? I think we can ask for that.

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, moi, je ne suis pas pour de parler le tarif réduit ; je suis plus pour pousser pour avoir une meilleure connectivité, que tout le monde soit mieux servi. Donc, ce serait peut-être une raison après de dire on paye moins, on peut attendre. Autant attendre et avoir le résultat. Je ne pense pas que je peux aller négocier là pour que les privées baissent leur prix. Par contre, on doit continuer à pousser pour avoir la connectivité.

The Minority Leader : Madame la Présidente, je crois que l'un n'empêche pas l'autre. On peut, *in the meantime*, ask for a decrease in the tariff because the people of Rodrigues is being fleeced!

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, je ne peux que souhaiter que très, très bientôt, on puisse passer à 500 mégabits pour avoir un meilleur service.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la Présidente, nous savons clairement la détermination de Mme la Commissaire pour que Rodrigues soit connectée.

Malheureusement, nous avons pris du retard. Dans le budget de 2015/2016, on va passer de 155 Mbps à 200 Mbps.

Madam Chairperson: Come to your question, please.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, my question, I have to refer to this and then, I put my question afterwards, please. Dans le budget de 2017/2018, nous prévoyons l'augmentation de la bande passante à 500 Mbps. 2015 : 150 à 200, on n'a pas atteint. 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 – 500 Mbps qu'on n'a pas atteint incessamment parce que nous avons des problèmes. Moi, j'aurais demandé à la Commissaire responsable de l'informatique est-ce qu'il n'y a pas un système de… comment on appelle ça ? – L'embargo. Parce que j'ai l'impression que la dernière fois, on a installé un système de Wifi en dehors. A Baie Lascars, il y avait et à côté de EMCAR, il y avait trois points et ce Wifi-là travaillait à merveille par satellite. En attendant que tous ces promesses soient tenues, nous savons comment ça se passe, tous ces promesses soient tenues par X, Y et Z, pourquoi ne pas libéraliser cet affaire-là et prenons la possibilité d'avoir une meilleure connectivité à travers le satellite comme ça a été le cas il y a quelques mois de cela ?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, c'est exactement ce qui va se faire là. Le *tender document* qui avait été lancé et annulé, c'était *open to any private who wanted to quote*. Il y avait eu deux *bidders* et au cours de l'évaluation, il y a des problèmes qui ont fait que le contrat n'a pas été alloué. Mais que ce soit cette compagnie qui faisait le test à Rodrigues et que ce soit d'autres compagnies qui veulent, c'est libre à eux de coter et bien sur, les procédures administratives, il y a les procédures de *procurement*. S'ils respectent cela, le contrat leur sera alloué.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la Présidente, nous savons tous comment ça se passe. Il y a tellement de mains qui tripotent avec toute cette affaire de procédures. Arrivé à un certain moment donné, le Rodriguais, les jeunes de Rodrigues sont pris au piège. On n'a pas de connexion même dans les *Wifi corners*, dans les différents centres communautaires etc., il n'y a plus de connexion. Comment on va faire ? Ce n'est pas possible. Vous avez bien dit nous sommes dans la continuité territorial, sur la même République. Il faut que les mêmes facilités soient accordés aux Rodriguais qu'aux Mauriciens. Donc, il n'y a pas question de baisser les bras. Moi, je dis que s'il faut foncer, il faut foncer parce que enough is enough. We want value for money. We cannot pay for something that we are not using for ! This is unfair, Madam! They are *voling* us!

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, on n'a jamais baissé le bras. Au contraire, mais il y a les procédures comme j'ai dit, je vais le répéter et il y a cette semaine donc, le 30 juin, il y a eu la date butoir pour fermer l'appel d'offre pour le câble optique. Donc, là, j'ai appris qu'il y a trois *bidders*. Le plus important, c'est que j'espère encore une fois, que les procédures qui ont été entamées ont pu s'aboutir et une fois pour toute, ce contrat pour la connectivité au câble optique soit donné et que le projet soit réalisé. Donc, c'est le vœu de tout le monde ; on ne va pas baisser les bras. On connait le besoin et on va travailler pour ça.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, Rodrigues will be connected to the optic cable supposedly in 2019 but in the meantime, we will be fleeced again. And, even if the bandwidth will be increased to 500 Mbps and with more operators, the connection will be sluggish. I think you have a point to ask for a decrease in the tariff. This is a good point.

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Madame la Présidente, je vois que le *Minority Leader* insiste mais personnellement, je dois vous dire que je préfère pousser pour avoir cette connectivité le plus vite.

Madam Chairperson: Next question !

GRANT TO BREEDERS – FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

(No. B/36) Mr. J. N. Volbert: (The Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the grant to breeders who were affected by the Foot and Mouth disease, he will, for the benefit of the House state:-

(a) the number of beneficiaries thereof per local region including the number of animals killed per beneficiary and amount of money obtained and to table a copy thereof;

(b) the number of cases reported to his Commission still awaiting assistance from the Regional Government;

(c) if the vaccination campaign is over; and

(d) if the disease is under control and/or any case reported after vaccination?

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, with regards to part (a) of the question, I am informed that

the total amount paid was Rs 70,708,000. Compensation was paid for animals killed, those which died due to Foot and Mouth Diseases (FMD) as certified by Veterinary Officers and for post-FMD vaccination mortality mainly for weak animals. The total number of beneficiaries was 2,415 for a total of 5,863 animals. Madam Chairperson, for ethical reasons, it is not appropriate to disclose information on the amount of money obtained by each beneficiary.

Madam Chairperson, with regards to part (b) of the question, as per records of the Veterinary Services of my Commission, there is no pending FMD cases awaiting assistance from this Regional Government. All breeders whose animals have been killed or which died as a result of FMD as certified by Veterinary Services, have been duly compensated.

Madam Chairperson, with regards to part (c), I am informed that as per established protocol, the island wide vaccination campaign for ruminants have been completed.

With regards to part (d), following proper measures by my Commission, I am pleased to inform the House the disease is under control and now behind us. In fact, no clinical cases have been reported since October 2016.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Etant donné…. est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous confirmer la date de l'enlèvement de l'embargo ?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madame la Présidente, l'embargo est toujours là malheureusement même si on a prouvé qu'il y a très peu. Le dernier test qu'on a fait montre que c'est presque fini mais quand même, Maurice est prudent. Ils n'ont pas enlevé l'embargo complet mais ils l'ont fait pour les cabris et les moutons mais là, bientôt, et on a écrit au Ministère pour que l'embargo soit levé mais d'une façon un peu pareille comme pour les cabris et les moutons. C'est-à-dire, les bœufs vont partir pour Maurice mais ne vont pas partir partout dans Maurice ; vont directement à l'abattoir. Donc, c'est pour très bientôt.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam, let me have one question, please. The Commissioner mentioned that he cannot disclose the amount of money disbursed to breeders. Madam Chair, I know I am not… I do not understand that point. Since this money is my money, it is our money, I do not find any problem in disclosing the amount of money paid at least on average to these breeders! Because this is our money, this is public money! For the sake of transparency, I would invite the Commissioner to give us an average of money disbursed to breeders affecting from FMB diseases.

Mr. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I have done Mathematics at school, I think it is difficult for me to put average because one person may be getting Rs 5,000, another one Rs 80,000. So average in this case is not the right way to disclose but I did disclose the amount of money paid. I said we paid Rs 70,006,708. I think the member want me to tell what money was given to each person and also it is written in. From the question it is said the local region. I mean, there is a lot of questions like this, electoral region. Where will we register people? We do not say where you come from, from which electoral region you come from. I think that is what they called juicy business. They want to know from what region that gets how much money but this is not ethical to disclose this information.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: This was not my question, Madam Chairperson. Let him go, we will not waste time. Madam Chairperson, can the Commissioner inform the house, after the vaccination period of FMD diseases, he mentioned that there was no case, Rodrigues is may be free from FMD diseases. But unfortunately, there have been lots and lots of animals, especially in the region of Roche Bon Dieu and Pointe Coton in the south, in the south and in the west. There have been animals dying, all every day. Some breeders have lost at least 18 cows, 33 cows in the region of Pointe Coton and so on. Can the Commissioner see to it that these breeders they get accompanied whether it is from the financial support or whatever it is but these people have lost their animals? They have lost their bank. They have no money, Madam Chairperson. Can the Commissioner see to it that these breeders get consideration required with the question of FMD disease?

Mr. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the question is related FMD, so I answered the FMD part of the question. It means that there is no case for FMD. I agree with the member that some animals have died after FMD and this is something else. This is not in the question. I want him to come with another question next time; I will give him the answer.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

ALTERNATIVE WORK - OCTOPUS CLOSED FISHING SEASON 2017

(No. B/37) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to alternative work pertaining to the octopus closed fishing season 2017, he will inform the House on the: -

(a) number of fishermen concerned per electoral region and to table the list thereof; and

(b) eligibility criteria to benefit therefrom?

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, as the House is aware, I have recently introduced a second closure of octopus fishery per year. For the year 2017, the first closure started from 27 February and ended on 28 March 2017. During this period, a total of 1518 fishermen were involved. I consider that this is not ethical to table their names again.

The eligibility criteria to benefit from the alternative work as regards to part (b), programme are as follows:

(i) The fishers should be registered as an octopus fisher at the Fisheries Protection Service; or

(ii) Any person whose work is directly affected by the closing of octopus fishery; and

(iii) Any person who was registered for alternative works in past closing seasons.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Madam Chairperson, can the Commissioner inform the house how many fishermen who are involved in the octopus closure have fishing cards and how many do not have?

Mr. R. Payendee: I need notice of the question because this is technical, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. Z. Félicité: For the sake of democracy can the Commissioner inform the House whether there is follow-up or monitoring of the attendance of those fishermen who have no fishing cards during the octopus opening fishing season? If so, how they did?

Mr. R. Payendee: How many I can say. Again I need notice. But is there any monitoring? Yes, we keep monitoring the fishermen before and after the closing season.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Can the Commissioner inform whether he has made provision to grant new fishing cards to encourage fishermen to go off lagoon?

Mr. R. Payendee: Yes, this is being worked. We have already started. There are about 28 who have already finished their open water training. So, soon they will be getting their cards. We could have finished with this but

unfortunately, with bad weather the practical training is becoming a little difficult so it will take a bit of time. Yes, the answer is yes, to the question.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Dans le but de franchir une nouvelle étape, can the Commissioner inform the House whether he has made provision to increase the allocation of Rs 250 for the alternative workers? Since we know that it is not sufficient for a family to live with only Rs 250.

Mr. R. Payendee: Madame la présidente, augmenter le prix, ce n'est pas franchir une nouvelle étape. Franchir une nouvelle étape c'est autre chose. Je crois qu'ils n'ont pas compris vraiment.

Madam Chairperson: Order please. Respected Members, you allow the Commissioner to answer the question.

Mr. R. Payendee: Comme je disais ce n'est pas franchir une nouvelle étape en donnant un peu plus d'argent à ces gens. Mais quand on voit ce que gagnent les hommes, je ne sais pas, je n'ai pas vu un pécheur qui vient me dire à l'ouverture il faut diminuer le nombre d'heure qu'ils vont pêcher ou bien la quantité d'ourite qu'ils ramènent. Il y en a qui ramène jusqu'à 100 kilo en deux heures. Donc, il n'y a personne qui vienne parler de ça, malheureusement. Tout le tour que j'ai fait je n'ai jamais vu un pêcheur lui-même venir se plaindre de cette allocation. Je vois que des politiciens qui se plaignent de ça et je ne sais pas pourquoi.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Madam Chairperson, can the Commissioner inform the House when will be the next octopus closure season and its duration?

Mr. R. Payendee: It will be for soon. We are working on it. We will have a meeting soon. It will be for normally August but the date has not been fixed yet for a duration of two months and there will be another closure again in around February.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, we know that there is a nouvelle étape to franchir and we know how they intend to franchir this new step. Can I ask the Commissioner; I know cases in the village of Rivière Coco.

Madam Chairperson: Address the chair, please.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, madam, excuse me. I know cases, there are some cases but I know cases in Rivière Coco that they even not considered as fishermen, *ban madame teintire lor lédoigt, di rouge lor la bouche,* they come and have alternative work instead of fishermen waiting for that support, Madam Chairperson. Can I ask the Commissioner whether he is aware of this and if yes,

will he take remedial action to discourage these kinds of practices in this octopus closed season?

Mr. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, j'espère que le membre femme de l'autre côté n'est pas d'accord avec son collègue. Mais quand une femme n'est pas dans la mer, ce n'est pas un problème pour elle de mettre des, j'ai-je ne sais pas quand elle va pêcher elle ne met pas, je ne sais pas, je pense quand elle va pêcher, j'imagine elle va pêcher elle ne met pas des trucs. Mais de toute façon une femme est une femme. Donc, à ce moment-là..

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I am interested to hear the answer of the Commissioner and I am sure you too should be interested.

Mr. R. Payendee: Je pense que c'est une discrimination envers les femmes mais quand même j'espère que madame va pincer un peu son collègue de l'autre côté pour que la prochaine fois de faire attention. Il y a au moins une femme de l'autre côté.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: I would invite the Commissioner to remove the word 'discrimination', which I did not mention.

Madam Chairperson: The Second Island Region Member, I have heard your point. Your point of order is not valid.

Mr. R. Payendee: Madame Chairperson, donc c'est vrai que quand une femme quand elle n'est pas dans les l'eau elle peut faire ce qu'elle veut. Même si elle va dans l'eau, elle peut mettre des *dirouges et tous,* pas de problème. Mais concernant cette personne qui n'est pas supposé être pêcheurs, je crois que le membre n'a pas bien comprit les critères. *When I talked about criteria, I said any person whose work is directly affected. It is not only fishermen. There is not about 1500, is not all the fishermen. Some people worked in this fleld.* Par exemple, des gens qui font sécher, qui travail dans l'industrie où il nettoie les ourites, ils font sécher, cette personne est affectée par la fermeture de la pêche à l'ourite. C'est pourquoi, elle est dans le truc. Voilà pourquoi, il y a des femmes qui même qu'elles ne sont pas pêcheurs elles sont sur la liste. Et il y a les membres de leurs familles aussi qui sont dedans.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Monsieur le Commissaire m'a cité à deux reprises. Dans la question de Monsieur Perrine, il ne m'a jamais mentionné. Donc, je ne vois pas pourquoi il dit que je dois aller pincer le membre. Ça ce n'est pas le point. Pour qui me prend-t-il?

Madam Chairperson: I would ask the Commissioner to be careful with his words and to amend what he has just said.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

INTERNET CONNECTION – SPEED/CALL CENTRE-CAMP DU ROI

(No. B/38) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunications and Others whether, in regard to internet connection in Rodrigues, she will inform the House: -

(a) about the connectivity speed thereof as at date; and

(b) if the call centre inaugurated lastly at Camp du Roi is fully operational and, if not, to state the reasons therefor?

The Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunications and Others (Mrs. R. M. R. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): In fact, I should have sought a permission to answer to answer to this question earlier together with B/35. So, as regards to part (a), the connectivity is 163 MBPS just as I said earlier.

And as regards to part (b), the call centre was inaugurated on 01 March and is operational since then and the employees recruited are actually on training and are going through an evaluation process. Once evaluation is completed, they will start the operation. So, 22 employees have been recruited on a first instance for the project and as at date only 20 are in post and CSL foreseen the training will need to continue of the handholding for a period of six to eight months to ensure smooth running of the operation and the usage has already reached its peak of 11 MBPS during peak hours.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

ORGANISATION - FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

(No. B/39) Mr. J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the organisation of the fisheries department of his Commission, he will, for the benefit of the House: -

(a) state and table the full organigram thereof, indicating the actual strength of same together with the different duties allocated per grade;

(b) state the number of vacancies per grade, if any, and, in the affirmative, to indicate when same will be filled together with the dates of the last recruitment and/or promotion exercises in relation thereto;

(c) if this department is fully equipped for the optimal performance of its officers, and if not, why not, indicating if needful will be done therefor?

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madame la présidente, je ne veux pas prendre le temps de la chambre pour citer tous les gens qui travaillent dans le département de Fisheries, à moins que le membre veuille que je cite tout ça. Sinon, *I am table the information.*

As regards to part (b), the existing vacancies are as follows:

No. of post	Grade
1	Controller Fisheries Protection Service
1	Assistant Controller Fisheries Protection Service
2	Principal Fisheries Protection Officers
2	Senior Fisheries Protection Officers
12	Fisheries Protection Officers
1	Security Guard
2	General Workers

Procedures have already been initiated for the filling of these vacancies and are expected to be finalised shortly.

Madam Chairperson, the House will appreciate that no organisation can claim to be fully equipped. It does not exist, because a commission, a department is something dynamic. It is not static. So, it keeps changing, there is new equipment coming. So, no one can say that an organisation is fully equipped as this is dynamic. There is always need for updating and upgrading in terms of equipment. I think that is it for the question.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Etant donné qu'il y a un contrôleur, il y a un assistant contrôleur, est-ce que le commissaire peut nous dire s'il compte remplir le poste de deux Deputy Controller ?

Mr. R. Payendee: Oui il y a un poste, pas de Deputy c'est Assistant Controller. J'ai dit que les procédures sont en marche pour recruter.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam Chairperson, est-ce que le commissaire va faire le nécessaire aussi pour ce qu'il y est de remplir les postes vacants en ce qui concerne les *Females Officers* dans le département du Fisheries?

Mr. R. Payendee: C'est ce que j'ai dit, Madame la présidente. J'ai dis: *procedures have already been initiated for the filling of these vacancies and are expected to be finalised shortly.*

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (c) of the question, the Commissioner mentioned fully equipped or not but optimal for performance of his officers, of course, they have to have good equipment. Recently, there has been the purchase of irrelevant purchase of drone. Right? It forms part of equipment, is it not? Yeah? Purchase of drone. Madam Chairperson, can the Commissioner inform the House, firstly, who win the contract for the purchase of these drones? And secondly, have there been any transparent tendering exercise? And thirdly, whether these drones are fully equipped to work even at night with infra rouge? Thank you.

Mr. R. Payendee: Madame la présidente, on n'est jamais satisfait de ce qu'on a. Je dois dire que on parle de drone, c'est vrai que la commission a acheté trois drones et j'aimerai bien informé la chambre que même à Maurice on nous a demandé les spécifications. Le Ministère de la Pêche à Maurice a demandé les spécifications parce que, eux aussi ils veulent acheter des drones. La réponse est oui, pour la personne, les tenders tout ça, le membre doit venir avec une question pour que je puisse lui donner plus d'info là-dessus sur le drone spécifique. Parce que ça n'a pas de relation directe avec ma question. Sinon, oui le drone c'est quelque chose. On a fait un pas en avant. Pour le moment ce n'est pas équipé de camera infra rouge. Ce n'est pas équipé en ce moment, le camera infra rouge, mais on a déjà franchi une nouvelle étape. C'est ça franchir une nouvelle étape au lieu de s'asseoir au bord de la mer regarder les bateaux maintenant on va passer là-dessus, on va même regarder ce qu'il y a dans le bateau. J'inviterai même les membres à aller faire, quand on fait un petit exercice de venir voir cela. La capacité de ces drones. Je dois dire aussi qu'il y a même des drones du département de la Pêche, à même utiliser par le Service de la Police récemment quand il y a eu le problème avec le yacht qui s'est écrasé sur le récif. Donc, j'imagine que c'est quelque chose de très important. Je pense que dans l'avenir on doit acheter beaucoup d'autres drones mais l'idée d'avoir le camera infra rouge pour le moment ce n'est pas accessible à ma commission parce que c'est cher mais dans l'avenir pourquoi pas.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, the Commissioner mentioned that I have to come next time with a substantive question to reply specifically on the drone. But he answered some answers with regard to the drone. But my question is: since he opened the door, I will put question to him. Can the Commissioner inform the House, how much one drone cost to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly since these drones will be used does not have infra rouge at night? How much did it cost?

Mr. R. Payendee: *Madam Chairperson, I do not have the cost of one drone but I know the total cost, the money we spent on these three drones was about Rs 800,000 but it seems that we did not buy only the drone. This question have been* dans la population pour un bon bout de temps. Le prix des drones, je sais. Il y a des drones qui se vendent à Rs 25, il y a d'autre qui se vend à Rs 1,000 et il y a d'autre un drone qui se vend à Rs 1 million. Donc, nous on a acheté. Ce que je dois dire à la Chambre, c'est que les procédures pour l'achat a été fait dans la transparence. Je crois que c'est ça sa question et il y a une équipe qui a travaillé sur le tender. Tout a été fait dans la transparence et finalement le prix qu'on a eu et on n'a pas acheté que drone. Moi je veux bien éclaircir un petit peu. Si on avait acheté un drone ou trois drone s'aurait été peut-être moins cher mais sachant que le drone ça reste, la capacité de la batterie, c'est 25 minutes. Donc, on a acheté beaucoup plus de batterie pour que si on part en mer, on ne part pas en mer et faire un travail de 25 minutes. On doit pouvoir rester pour deux heures/trois heures. Donc, le prix, quand on a annoncé on a acheté trois drones, on a montré à la télé tout ça, on n'a pas dit qu'on a acheté beaucoup d'autres accessoires. Mais il y a même le truc qu'on peut regarder dedans là comme une petite caméra, un petit appareil. Donc, ce n'est pas le drone complet. Donc, quand on achète quelque chose, on peut acheter un vélo mais sinon on peut acheter le vélo avec le casque et les trucs mais nous on a acheté le complet. C'est pour ça que ça a couté Rs 800,000, sauf la caméra infrarouge, on n'a pas acheté.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la présidente, dans le but de franchir une nouvelle étape, *we are meaning business as you*. Madame la présidente, Rs 800,000 de l'argent des contribuables investis pour l'achat des drones alors qu'il n'y a pas d'infra rouge. *So, this means, can I ask the Commissioner to inform the House, does it means that at night there will be continuous illegal fishing?*

Mr. R. Payendee: Madame la présidente, il n'y avait pas de drone avant. Donc, la surveillance était là. On peut se servir des drones la nuit aussi, sauf qu'on n'aura pas la photo. J'ai omis quelque chose heureusement que le membre m'a donné la chance de retourner. Dans le prix du drone il n'y a pas que l'appareil, il y a aussi la formation. Parce qu'on ne peut pas avoir un appareil comme ça qui coûte aussi cher. Donc, on a donné la formation et dans le contrat c'était prévu

une petite formation pour deux ou trois officiers et nous on a étendu la formation à tous les officiers de la commission

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

EMPLOYMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS

(No. B/40) Mr. J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the employment of secondary school educators in Rodrigues, he will obtain information from the relevant authority and state to the House on the: -

(a) number thereof recruited on a permanent basis per teaching subject from June 2016 to date;

(b) eligibility criteria for selection thereas and detailing academic prerequisites;

(c) modus operandi and frequency of recruitment exercises, indicating any measure/s taken to avoid conflict of interest;

(d) criteria observed for assignment as Head of section in each secondary school and to table the list of all Heads of section together with the respective allowances drawn by each officer therefor?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, with respect to employment of secondary school educators, I am informed that there are two bodies namely, the Rodrigues Educational Development Company Ltd and Rodrigues College that are responsible for recruiting Educators under the aegis of the Private Secondary Education Authority. Both being private bodies, they are bound to follow the guidelines prescribed by the PSEA for the recruitment of Educators.

Furthermore, I am informed that the possible modes of employment are as follows:

(i) Temporary basis followed by permanent appointment after completion of at least one year of satisfactory service. I am informed that educators who are graduated in the field that they will teach usually recruited under this mode of employment

(ii) Casual basis for replacement of Educators to meet short term needs; and

(iii) Contractual Basis.

Madam Chairperson, with respect to part (a) of the question, I am informed that educator is recruited on a temporary basis and not on a permanent basis in the first instance. It is only after completion of at least one year of satisfactory service that an Educator is considered for appointment on a permanent basis. However, I am informed that there are 16 educators who have been confirmed in their post as Educators since the abovementioned period.

With respect to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the eligibility criteria are in line with the Pay Research Bureau (PRB) report and are as follows:-

(i) School Certificate with at least five (5) Credits;
(ii) Higher school Certificate;
(iii) At least a diploma in the subject to be taught; and
(iv) Post Graduate Certificate in Education is an advantage.

As regards to part (c), I am informed that recruitment exercise is usually carried out through the open advertisement mode at the end of each academic year, whenever the need arises. However, in cases of replacement whenever an educator proceeds on leave for at least one month during the academic year, the post may either be advertised or candidates shortlisted after the recruitment exercise carried out at the end of the academic year may be selected for replacement.

Madam Chairperson, it is the practice that an interviewer has to declare any interest before he/she sits on a panel of interview if ever he/she has a close relationship with a candidate applying for a post of educator.

Madam Chairperson, regarding part (d) of the question, I would like to draw the attention of the House that there is no assignment to date as at the level of Head of sections in all secondary schools in Rodrigues except for assignment at the level of Head of Departments and Section Leaders.

Madam Chairperson, the criteria for designation of Head of Departments and Section Leaders are as per guidelines submitted by the Private secondary Education Authority. Subsequently all Head of Departments and Section Leaders are paid according to the recommendations of the PRB Report 2016.

Madam Chairperson, being given that both the Rodrigues Educational Development Company Ltd. and Rodrigues College are private educational

institutions, we are consequently not disclosing the names of the Section Leaders of secondary schools falling under their purview.

Madam Chairperson, however, any educator feeling aggrieved may write to my commission to seek clarifications and we shall investigate into the matter.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madame la présidente, dans sa réponse parti (b), le Chef commissaire a dit que les critères c'est SC avec cinq crédits à SC et puis HSC et Diplôma au moins. Mais est-ce-que le Chef commissaire compte mener une petite enquête. Nous avons des informations un *Educator actually working at Pistaches* a été embauché sur la base avec quatre crédits. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire peut mener l'enquête dans ce sens-là.

The Chief Commissioner: I will find out. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: I suspend the House for one hour for lunch.

At 12.34 p.m. the Assembly was suspended for one hour.

On its resumption at 1.35 p.m. with Madam Chairperson in the Chair.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

PATIENTS TO MAURITIUS FOR TREATMENT WHO PASSED AWAY

(No. B/41) Mr. J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to patients sent to Mauritius for further treatment and who have passed away thereat, from August 2016 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, state: -

(a) the number thereof;

(b) how corpses were repatriated to Rodrigues and if same were through government services or private funeral company;

(c) the cost of each repatriation; and

(d) the procurement procedure in regard to state repatriation through private funeral company?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the number of patients sent to Mauritius for

further treatment and who have passed away thereat, from August 2016 to-date is 15. Corpses are repatriated either by Air Mauritius through private funeral company or by the Dornier Aircraft depending on the body size.

As regards to part (c) of the question, it costs about Rs 20,000 for the provision of an Hermetic Coffin, transport from the Hospital to the Airport and other associated services for the repatriation. Freight charges by Air Mauritius costs about Rs 8,000 depending on the weight of the corpse and it costs Rs 128,000 for the Dornier.

As regards to part (d) of the question, Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the procurement procedure was established well before the setting up for the autonomy.

According to the information gathered there was only one Undertaker who expressed its interest to offer this service. Being given that the amount paid to the Undertaker satisfies the procurement procedures we are continuing with its services.

Mr. F.A. Grandcourt: Does it mean that being given that the company, since there has been agreement before the setting up of the RRA, is it not good now to launch a tender? I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he intends to come with a tender with the repatriation of corpse from Mauritius instead of having the … as he said?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I will look into the matter for another procurement procedure if need be.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

DRAINAGE WORKS – PORT MATHURIN

(No. B/42) Mr. J. L. R. PERRINE (Second Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to drainage works being carried out in Port Mathurin, he will state if same is being done by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, if not, to obtain information from the relevant authority and inform the House on: -

(a) who is the executing contractor and to table the costs and detailed plans thereof;

(b) any complaint/s received from inhabitants as regards stagnant water increasing risks of proliferation of mosquitos and diseases;

(c) precautionary measures put in place to ensure a safe and consistent traffic flow in places where work is being carried out; and

(d) if there has been any damage to the water network and other amenities and what measures have been set to remedy same?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the drainage works in Port Mathurin is being undertaken by the National Development Unit following the approval of the Executive Council.

I am informed that the contract was awarded to Transinvest Construction Ltd on 17 November 2016 for the amount of Rs 20,766. The start and completion dates were at 09 December 2016 and 09 June 2017 respectively. There has been revised in completion date delay in completion of work. A copy of the detailed plan is being tabled.

As regards to parts (a) and (d), complaints were received from one Mr. S.A in letters dated 07 and 12 June regarding water stagnation and damage of water pipeline. The water pipe in front of the house of Mr. S. A was damaged during excavation works and same has already been repaired. The drain works in front of the complainant house are in progress and are due to be completed by 07 July 2017. I am informed that there will be no stagnant water after completion of the drain works.

Madam Chairperson, as regards to part (c) of the question, I am informed that all traffic diversions regarding full or partial road closures in connection with the drain works, have been carried out after necessary approval from the Police. Appropriate road signage and safety measures are put into place for the safety of all road users when need be. Full road closure was required at three road junctions namely Père Gandy/François Leguat Streets and Père Gandy/Fisherman Streets. I am further informed that in order to reduce the burdens of the traffic, works are performed as far as possible in the afternoon and during night so as to disturb to a minimum traffic flow in Port Mathurin.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, I would like to thank the Commissioner for his answer to that question. The problem of drainage in the town of Port Mathurin back date to 1960s. Since then, piece and piece of works have been done to remediate partially the problem of stagnant water. In the streets near the Mutual Aid building. This is not the only place in Port Mathurin. My question is whether there will be or there has been a complete survey of stagnant water in the town of Port Mathurin in order to solve all the problems once and for all because we are also facing the problem of Tsunami. And secondly, can I ask

the Commissioner since there has been accident produced here, there are no popping light at night. If you can assure the House that this thing will be taken into consideration in order to avoid fatal one.

The Deputy Chairperson: Madam Chairperson, as regards to the first part of the question, I think I am going to take it under question B/43. In fact, there has been a report and survey which has been carried out in year 2014 to look into the whole question of drainage in Port Mathurin. What is being done right now, is the first phase, Phase I of Port Mathurin and the NDU has already intimated that it is going to move forward with the Phase II of Port Mathurin. So this means after financial year 2017-2018, we are going to have the whole global drainage system of Port Mathurin which would have been rehabilitated.

As regards the question of accident which may happen, which has happened or which may happen, I think that the contractor should be taken at task because it is the task of the contract to see that necessary measures are taken to ensure that there is maximum precaution so as to limit the possibility of accident. Anyway, being given that my commission is concerned with road safety in Rodrigues, I will refer the matter to the Road Safety Committee and put the contractor at task also.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I know from the Commissioner the completion date of the period of this work?

The Deputy Chairperson: It was estimated to be completed as I stated in my answer on the 09 June 2017 but being given that there has been delay in the completion of the work, the revised completion date has been set up now for 31 July 2017.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, are we to understand that this drainage works form part of the global plan concerning Port Mathurin and the surroundings as far as drainage is concerned and whether we will have a *tout à l'égout* system concerning Port Mathurin and the surrounding?

The Deputy Chairperson: The question of sewerage itself, I do not think has been taken into consideration and this phase of the project which I consider is quite important but as will be given to B/43, I will give additional information as regards what is being done with respect to drainage system not only in Port Mathurin but in Rodrigues as a whole.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

REHABILITATION OF DRAINS, CANALS AND RIVERS - PREVENTION OF FLOODS

(No. B/43) Mr. J. L. R. PERRINE (Second Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to rehabilitation of drains, canals and rivers around Rodrigues for the prevention of floods, he will state: -

(a) what measures his Commission has taken therefor indicating if any work is due to start soon in regard thereto and, in the affirmative, to state when and where;

(b) if any contract has been awarded to any company in the past five years to do such work and, if so, to state the outcome thereof;

(c) if his Commission has caused for any study/report on the situation thereof and, if so, to table same?

The Deputy Chairperson: Madam Chairperson, following a request from the Chief Commissioner's Office, a technical team from the National Development Unit and Consultant Desai and Associates Ltd. carried out an investigation and survey to elaborate a rehabilitation programme to mitigate the flooding problems in specific areas in Rodrigues in April 2014. The visit aimed at taking cognizance of the areas that were adversely affected by flooding after the then torrential rainfall in Rodrigues as well as from previous storms events. A report was submitted thereof of which I am tabling a copy.

A second report was submitted in September 2014 following an extensive field topographic survey exercise which was undertaken from 30 August to 02 September 2014 which in fact was a follow up of the April 2014 visit. A set of recommendations were included in the report. The recommendations of the reports are being implemented as will be depicted under part (b) of the question.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to point out that as per agreement of the Commission for Agriculture and Environment with Rod Clean Ltd, the company is responsible for the cleaning of drains at many places around the island. Their scope of works consists of cleaning open and covered drains, gutters and canals in different villages around Rodrigues. However, in a view to assist and to accelerate the work, my Commission has set up a unit to deal with road drains not being maintained by Rod Clean Ltd and works was done. As regards, to rivers works was done along river from Malartic to Bassin Gallard in April and work is also due to start by next week along Grand la Fouche Corail road.

As regards to part (b), in the past five years, the following contracts were awarded to Transinvest Construction Ltd:-

Year 2013 - Cleaning of drains at Pointe L'Herbe, Pointe Monier, Accacia, Baie aux Huitres, Rivière Cocos and Ile Michel.

Year 2014 - Cross drain along Grand Baie to Baladirou road

Year 2015 - (i) Draining works at Max Lucchesi Street Port Mathuin;
(ii) Construction of drains along Rivière Coco access road

Year 2016 - (i) Construction of box culvert at Ile Michele, Port Sud Est and L'union
(ii) As depicted in Question B/42, the NDU awarded contracts for drainage works in Port Mathurin - Phase 1
(iv) Additionally, construction of drains at Allée Tamarin and Baie aux Huîtres
(iv) Construction of drains at Lataniers
(v) Construction of new bridge at Fond Baie aux Huîtres
(vi) Construction of drains at Petit Gabriel

Year 2017 - My Commission has already issued works order for the following box culvert to Transinvest at Rivière Coco, Mangues, Lataniers and La source Ti Gomme with a view to improve hydraulic flow of drainage water.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to further add that my Commission has recommended the Global Consultant (Lux Consult) to finalise the design and tenders for the Construction of drains at Fond La Digue and Camp du Roi. Additionally, as per projects submitted by and approved by the Executive Council in April 2017, the NDU intends to go forward with the 2nd Phase of drainage works at Port Mathurin and the raising of for *radiers* at Port Sud Est, Grand Bay, Baie Malgache and Baie Topaze. The National Development Unit has also intimated to my Commission that he intends to undergo cleaning of rivers and river mouths at Fond La Digue, Caverne Provert, Baie Lascar, Anse aux Anglais and rivers for financial year 2017/2018.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

The Minority Leader: One question. In line with what I have said before. Concerning the drainage works. I hope this form part of a global plan. And will this include *recyclage*, the treatment of waste water in the future because we are

talking about environment making Rodrigues eco-friendly, will this include *recyclage* and water treatment?

The Deputy Chairperson: Does the Minority Leader refer to the speech of the budget. The Commission for Environment has intimated the setting up of a sewerage treatment plant at Grenade and of course, whenever the treatment plant will be in operation we are going to make it a must that all sewerage be carried there and treated.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

GRADE OF SENIOR COACH - COMMISSION FOR SPORTS

(No. B/44) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to the grade of Senior Coach in the Commission for Sports for the current calendar year to date, she will, for the benefit of the House state: -

(a) if any vacancy therefor has been advertised and, in the affirmative, to indicate the opening and closing date thereof together with the eligibility/selecting criteria and the number of applicants to the post;

(b) if the post is currently filled and, if so, since when and by whom?

The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Ms. M. R. L. Edouard): Madam Chairperson, I am informed that vacancy for the post of Senior Coach was advertised on 20 September 2016 as per Public Service Commission Circular Note No. 47 of 2016. The closing date for application was set on Monday, 10 October 2016. The qualification for the post as per circulate note of the Public Service Commission was by selection amongst the officers in the grade of Coach with at least five years' service in a substantive capacity in the grade and who:

(1) Possess good administration and organizing skills;
(2) Possess good communication skills and interpersonal skills; and
(3) That has the ability to work effectively as a team leader.

Madam Chairperson, as you are aware the Public Service Commission is a constitutional body, that is, fully independent. The selection and interview of the candidates that have applied is carried out in strict confidentiality by the Public Service Commission. The Island Chief Executive who is the Responsible Officer was informed by the PSC that one G.N.A. was retained for the post of Senior Coach and an offer was made to him on 26 May 2017 and he assumed duty on 12 June 2017.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can the Commissioner inform the House when was G.N.A. recruited as Coach in the commission?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: I need notice of this question. I have not made any research in his personal file.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can the Commissioner inform the House whether the same criteria apply for the Youth Section?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: It depends on the duties and responsibilities that the said officer will have to undertake during the services. So, the Youth Officer's duties and that of Senior Coach are rather different.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can the Commissioner give us information for someone who was acting as Senior Coach from 2012 to 2017, why he was not selected?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: As I have already said, that the Public Service Commission is a constitutional body. And anyone who feels aggrieved, Madam Chairperson, allow me to inform the House that according to the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal Act 2009, any public officer feeling aggrieved by a decision of the Public Service Commission may make an appeal to the tribunal. So, there are legal channel for this if ever there is aggrieved officer or any person who feels that his rights or benefits has been left aside.

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION – NO. OF ANIMALS/CATERY, SEX & AGE

(No. B/45) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to livestock production in Rodrigues, he will state to the House: -

(a) the current number of animals per category, sex and age in the Livestock Production Units of St. Gabriel, Baie Topaze and Crab Island, respectively, and to table same;

(b) if there has been any study/report on the breeding program for these animals and, in the affirmative, to table a copy thereof?

The Commission for Agriculture and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a) of the question, the current number of animals on the livestock stations is as follows: -

- St. Gabriel, we have got 4 dairy young bulls, 6 weaner, 3 calves. For beef we have 6 sires, 7 young bulls. In total we have 26 animals there.

- For Dairy and Beef Cattle – Female we have 26 as well.

- For the Goat there is 22.

- For Crab Island, we have got a total of 145 animals/sheeps.

- For Baie Topaze, we have 78 white pigs and black pigs 64

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling a copy of same. As per practice, data on the age of animals are not kept.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (b), I have to inform the House that a study on the breeding program for animals in Livestock Production Units is still being carried out and has not yet been finalised as at date.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, can the Commissioner inform the House whether there are black little pigs at Baie Topaze for sale?

Mr. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, yes there are black little pigs but not for sale because we have got a lot of small animals which we need to keep for the scheme and also for the ERP program.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Since there has been lot of problems with regard to Crab Island, animals which have been brought directly to Crab Island, have the Commissioner already made provision or whether in process to review the situation of Crab Island and to put in place a quarantine in order to avoid dangers from animals coming from abroad?

Mr. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I think that Crab Island is already a quarantine area and also we are planning to upgrade. I made a visit there and we are planning to upgrade the site. And we are also planning that Crab Island becomes a sort of Gene Bank for animals.

IMPLEMENTATION/NINE YEAR SCHOOLING SYSTEM

(No. B/46) Mrs. M. T. AGATHE, PMSM (Third Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the implementation of the Nine Year Schooling system in Rodrigues, he will state: -

(a) the status of major changes introduced to migrate from the previous system;

(b) the respective measures set for each level requiring national examinations both in primary and secondary;

(c) the modalities for admission in secondary schools as from 2018;

(d) the measures undertaken by his Commission to sensitize the population on the different pragmatic implications being brought thereby?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as the House is aware, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Tertiary Education and Scientific Research has the responsibility of formulating policies with respect to Education in the Republic of Mauritius and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, Chief Commissioner's Office, Commission for Education is responsible for the administration of Education in Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research has since 2015 embarked on deep and comprehensive education and training reforms. One of the main components of these reforms includes the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education reform which has the following objectives:

(i) Equip all students with knowledge, foundational skills and attitudes that will guarantee success to all in the future learning;

(ii) Inculcate in all students a set of values and a strong sense of moral responsibilities and belonging to the country;

(iii) Promote the holistic and integral development of learners;

(iv) Provide learning opportunities to all students, including those with special education needs, for them to attain high levels of achievement according to their abilities and strengths;

(v) Achieve a smooth transition to and completion of secondary education; and

(vi) Give greater recognition to the value of TVET in building human capital that will spearhead the transformation of Mauritius and Rodrigues into a knowledge based and skills driven economy.

Madam Chairperson, the reform rests on six major pillars namely:

- rethinking the curriculum;
- fostering innovative pedagogies;
- making assessment more meaningful;
- continuous professional development of teachers and school leaders;
- modernising the learning environment; and
- spreading out greater accountability at all levels for improved learning outcomes.

Being given that the questions covers a wide spectrum of the Educational Reform and in order not to abuse and consume much of the time allocated to Questions, I am tabling a document which gives full details on the major changes involved, measures taken by schools, the modalities of admission and other pertinent information with regards thereof. You can make copies of this. It will be very interesting for you. Thanking you very much.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner since there will be an assessment in Geography, History and Science for Grade 6 pupils at the end of August, how are we proceeding since we know that when there are examinations there are teachers from Rodrigues who go for the correction in Mauritius. And what will happen to these pupils in Grade 6 if their teachers have to leave them to correct papers in Mauritius?

The Chief Commissioner: Grade 6 to Grade 7, we are not yet aware how the correction will be made. Perhaps there has been a delegation from Rodrigues to the Ministry a few days ago, so they will tell us how these are going to be done.

Mr. J. C. Agathe: Madame la présidente, une dernière question que je voudrais demander au Chef Commissaire. C'est que dans le passé quand les enfants ne réussissaient pas au CPE, ils avaient la chance au PREVOC de reprendre part à ces examens qui peuvent leur être utile plus tard pour leur emploi. Mais d'après ce que j'ai compris, ils iront directement Grade 6, ils ne peuvent pas

répéter la classe, ils iront directement *in extended stream*, ce qui veut dire s'ils n'ont pas atteint le PESAC, ils ne l'auront jamais. Est-ce que ça on ne peut pas voir à ce que ces enfants-là puissent avoir la possibilité d'avoir au moins ce certificat ?

The Chief Commissioner: Oui, c'est comme madame a dit, évidement moi aussi je vu ça un petit peu drôle. Que si l'enfant ne passe pas leur Grade 6 automatiquement il va en Grade 7. Il est prévu qu'il y ait une quatrième année après le PESAC. C'est là où nous sommes en train de travailler dessus comment dans les collèges on peut arriver justement à faire l'enfant entrer, dans ce qu'on appelle, les non-core subject, par exemple, l'agriculture va être un non-core subject et l'élevage et autres petits métiers. Nous aussi nous sommes préoccupés par ces enfants qui ne passent pas le CPE autrefois ou qui ne va pas passer leur Grade 6, attention qu'ils montent avec tout ça. Et c'est là aussi où il faudrait voir depuis le Grade 7, 8 et 9. Et justement c'est là il faudrait revoir complètement la formation des enseignants et même à l'intérieur du collège que faire pour suivre ces enfants. L'idée, Madame la présidente, c'est justement de ne pas laisser ces enfants dans leurs ignorances. Et c'est pourquoi, nous au niveau des écoles communautaires nous prévoyons que dans la classe il y a que 20 enfants. Alors là, je vois, M. Macron qui parle de 12 enfants. Je crois que c'est une bonne chose. Et aussi que les enseignants puissent suivent … enfant. C'est pourquoi j'ai même dit plusieurs fois à des enseignants 'aller rendre visite à cette enfant là aussi où il habite' pour connaitre son milieu social, son milieu économique. Il y a beaucoup de chose à faire dans ce *nine-year schooling*. Et que justement il faudra de tout prévoir. C'est ce que nous sommes en train de faire. Et vous savez que même en Grade 6, l'agriculture est non-core subject. Ce qui veut dire que l'agriculture peut être dans les résultats des enfants. En tout cas le *nine-year schooling* demande beaucoup de chose à revoir et comme j'ai dit par rapport à l'enfant il faut que l'enfant puisse arriver justement à avoir toutes les connaissances nécessaires. Et c'est là où justement les où enseignants doivent pouvoir travailler avec les parents des enfants. Ça c'est très important où il faut amener les parents à prendre leurs responsabilités par rapport à l'enfant tout comme nous au niveau des écoles communautaires, nous nous disons que les parents doivent assister à la classe pour que les parents puissent savoir comment on enseigne aux enfants et lorsque l'enfant retourne à la maison et que les parents prennent leurs responsabilités. C'est un gros travail, Madame la présidente, et je suis conscient, je félicite madame de l'autre côté-là, de justement de soulever cette question et je lui demande d'avoir des copies, de faire des copies de ce que j'ai dit. Excusez-moi, Madame la présidente, j'étais tellement concentrer dans ce que j'allais vous dire, je n'ai pas pu écouter de l'autre côté. Alors, c'est un gros travail mais c'est là où on demande la coopération de tout le monde dans ce *nine-year schooling*. Ce n'est pas si facile que ça, tout le monde croit que c'est facile. Une fois j'avais dit à Madame Dookun, qui est la ministre de l'éducation, je lui avais dit qu'il y a

quelque chose de très important qu'il faut faire auprès des enfants, la formation du caractère de l'enfant. Moi j'ai vu ça, ces jeunes qui sortent de l'université qui n'ont pas de personnalité, qui n'ont pas de caractère et qui ne veulent pas se lancer dans tel ou tel projet. Mais il faut justement et c'est ça, tout est mis dedans. Vous allez voir la réponse – former le caractère de l'enfant et aussi ce qu'on appelle les *holistics education* tout ça. Voilà madame, c'est une bonne question. J'espère que vous allez faire des copies et partager entre vous et même ici, je ne sais pas, et que justement nous puissions nous ici, apporter notre contribution pour que ce *nine-year schooling* réussisse à Rodrigues. Nous ne voulons pas non plus aussi, alors nous avons souffert de cela, Madame la présidente, du passé où on nous a imposé un system éducative de Maurice. Voilà ce qu'on a vu aussi le Form 6 college. Et qu'est-ce qu'ils ont fait ? Ils ont pris le bâtiment de Citron Donis où nous allions commencer, financé par le gouvernement Luxembourgeois, nous allions commencer un collège polytechnique. Et aujourd'hui on aurait été beaucoup plus loin. Mais là aussi il faudra repenser, il faudra revoir toute la question de TVET polytechnique et ainsi de suite. On nous a trop imposé un system d'éducative de Maurice quand nous fallait trouver quelque chose de spécifiquement Rodriguais et faire évoluer nos jeunes dans cette ambiance et j'espère qu'avec le *nine-year schooling* ça va nous permettre de le faire. Merci beaucoup, madame.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

ANSE RAFFIN DAM

(No. B/47) Miss M. R. COLLET (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Anse Raffin Dam, he will, for the benefit of the House, state the measures envisaged to secure the site thereof?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the Anse Rafin Dam is a very important water production site for the Southern Region of the island. The security of such a strategic site is therefore of great importance.

To that effect, my Commission has already launched tenders to secure the site. The closing date has been set for 21 July 2017. The works shall comprise of site clearance, construction of masonry wall of approximate length 520 m with fencing on top, installation of gabion units and manufacture and installation of a gates on the sites.

The Minority Leader: Can I know, Madam Chairperson, from the Commissioner, initially when the dam was being constructed, the road was to be tarred and fencing was to be put, there should have been terraces cut and built and reaforestation done. Will these be done now?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, as regards to the roads, we have already, as will be part of my answer for B/48, we have already given read contracts to the contractor for construction of a concrete road to the site. But as to the purpose to the question of the Minority Leader concerning the rehabilitation around it, this is why we are going ahead with masonry road instead of street fencing works. It will be masonry road at about 700 m in height with fencing at the top. But if you go on the site, you will also realise that there is already a fencing which have been elected and I think that there are villagers who have already constructed/rehabilitating a pasture around the site. So, I think it is going to meet the proposal that you are making.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

TRACK ROADS/FOOTPATH PROJECTS - ELECTORAL REGION NUMBER 2

(No. B/48) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to track roads and footpath projects in Electoral Region Number 2, he will, for the benefit of the House, state: -

(a) if work is due to start and, if so, when, indicating the executing contractor(s) to whom the project(s) has(have) been allocated, if any, together with the respective intended completion date thereof;

(b) the criteria for the provision thereof in the villages;

(c) the length thereof to be constructed for this financial year; and

(d) the total funds earmarked therefor?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the contract for construction of 24 km of track road in six regions have been awarded to Laxmanbhai & Co (Mtius) Ltd on 11 July 2016 for the sum of Rs 60,023,830 and the duration of the contract is 18 months. Work Orders have been issued for Regions No. 3 and 4 and works in these regions are in progress. A Work Order will be issued shortly for the construction of track roads in Region No. 2.

As regards, to the policy of my commission, my Commission Policy is to ease and facilitate access for the villagers and provide access to essential services such as ambulance and other transport. However, special attention is given to applications from vulnerable people including bedridden, handicapped, old aged

and ill persons. The length of track road to be constructed in Region No.2 is approximately 4 km and the sum earmarked is Rs 10 m.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Commissioner, whether the track roads that will be built include the one linking Rivière Coco uphill to Citron Donis. Because this is a very interesting short cut especially for ambulances and so on.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Rivière Coco to Citron Donis, I do not think it is included in the list but I think that it is going to be a main road and if I am not mistaken I think that in the program 2017-2018 it has been included that we are going to proceed with the tarring. It is going to be done. May be, I will look into the matter but we have proposed for the tarring of the road and it is in the program for 2017-2023.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

SCHEMES – NUMBER FROM FEBRUARY TO JUNE 2017

(No. B/49) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to agricultural schemes being run by his Commission, he will for the benefit of the House state the number thereof running from the period February to June 2017 and to table the criteria to benefit therefrom?

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, this Regional Government has come up with agricultural incentive schemes since 2014 in view of professionalizing the agricultural sector of Rodrigues and to have role models that can serve as inspiration to the younger generation.

The agricultural incentive schemes being run by my Commission are as follows:-

Sn	Scheme	No. of Beneficiaries
1.	Subsidy for the purchase of power tillers (75% and 90%)	22
2.	Assistance to farmers for the setting up of chilli farms	43
3.	Setting up of black pig model farms	10
4.	Creation of commercial poultry farms	24
5.	Setting up of Cattle, sheep and goat Integrated Farm	24
6.	Setting up of model orchards	05
7.	Fruits protection scheme	27

Sn	Scheme	No. of Beneficiaries
8.	Local red beans mechanization	123
TOTAL		**278**

I am tabling the requested information.

Madam Chairperson, all the Agricultural Incentive Schemes that I mentioned have already been allocated to beneficiaries after a selection exercise based on the established criteria. In view of the successful implementation of the schemes, as per Budget Speech 2017-2018, it has been decided to support 100 new projects during the current financial year.

Priority will be given to the six filières in which Rodrigues already has a niche market namely, Limon, ti piment, le miel, cochon noir, poule lacour and haricot rouge.

The different schemes will be advertised in the local media, detailing the eligibility criteria while inviting call for applications. Information will also be made available to the level of my Commission and at the Agricultural Extension Offices.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

PURCHASE OF TENT/MARQUEE - YEAR 2016/2017

(No. B/50) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Training and Others whether, in regard to the acquisition and/or purchase of tent/marquee by her Commission in the year 2016/2017, she will state: -

(a) the procurement procedure used therefor and to table a copy of the letter of award for the supply thereof as well as the claim from the supplier; and

(b) if any contention has arisen between the supplier and the Commission and, in the affirmative, to table any document from the supplier requesting payment including legal papers, if any?

The Commissioner for Training and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madam Chairperson, my Commission decided to purchase new tents/marquees to be used for the various … events organised by the Commission, by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in general.

In that respect, in view in providing a secure and well protected shelter and marquees, my Commission proceeded with the procurement of two shelters of 25 by 10 m each. Tenders for same have been launched on 08 June 2016 through request for sealed quotation and five bidders were invited to submit their quotations with closing date set for 27 June 2016 at 13.00 hours. At the opening of the bids, only four suppliers have quoted for the supply and delivery of the said marquees with flap and same was then referred to the Bid Evaluation Committee for evaluation. The Bid Evaluation Committee recommended to award the contract to the most responsive bidder and same was awarded to the successful bidder on 01 July for the total amount of Rs 2,760,000 inclusive of freight and VAT. All payments pertaining to such contract have been made to the responsive supplier on the 22 September 2016 amounting to Rs 2,732,400 after deduction of TDF, that is, tax deduction at source under Vote Item: ICT 310431112803 - Human Resource Education Centre and Renovation of HRDC Centre. In that regard, Madam Chairperson, I am advised that it is not legally correct to table the letter of award.

So, as regards to part (b), there is no contention as regards to the acquisition and purchase of tents by my Commission.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: So, it is not correct to table a copy of the letter of the award. Can we know from the Commissioner whether during the launching of this tender of acquisition of the marquees, there has been hiring or acquisition of other marquees pending supply of the marquees?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: I need notice of the question, Madam Chairperson, because the question here relate to the acquisition and purchase of the tents.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

GRAND VAR VILLAGE - ABSENCE OF BUS

(No. B/51) Mr. J. N. Nemours (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Grand Var village, he will state if he has been informed of the absence of bus shelter in the vicinity of the community centre located thereat and, if so, to indicate if urgent remedial measures will be taken by his Commission?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, in line with the policy enunciated in the Government Programmed 2017–2022, bus shelters on all roads around the island, it is proposed to construct 20 bus shelters during this

financial year. My Commission is actually carrying out a survey to finalise the 20 sites where these shelters will be constructed and the constructing bus shelters at Grand Var will be taken into consideration.

Mr. J. N. Nemours: Madam Chairperson, étant donné qu'il y a un bus shelter qui devrait être terminé dans la route de Plaine Corail, la Route de l'Autonomie à Cascade Jean Louis. Ça fait pas mal de temps que c'est resté comme ça. Est-ce que le Deputy Chief Commissioner va voir s'il va terminer ça ou on va attendre encore longtemps ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I will look into the matter and question as to why the bus shelter has not been completed. If the then contractor who was supposed to do it has not done its task as it should be then we will have to proceed to task. So, I will have to investigate first why is it that it has not been completed and it was under contract of that particular contractor.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION - NEW HEADQUARTERS/ RODRIGUES RED CROSS ASSOCIATION AT MON PLAISIR

(No. B/52) Mr. J. N. Nemours (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the proposed construction of new headquarters for the Rodrigues Red Cross Association at Mon Plaisir, he will, for the benefit of the House, state where matters stand as regards any state land lease granted therefor and indicating the extent thereof, if any?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the Red Cross Society being a humanitarian organisation working in close collaboration with my Regional Government has received funding from the Australian Embassy for the construction of a warehouse to shelter equipment to be used in the event of a disaster.

The Society has made a request to my office in November 2016 to allocate them with a plot of State Land for the construction of their warehouse. In line with our vision to set up a Rodrigues Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre at Mt. Plaisir, the Red Cross Society has been granted a plot of State Land of 270 m^2. My office will provide all support to the Society for the implementation of the project.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

SETTING UP OF AN INCUBATOR - ANSE BALEINE

(No. B/53) Mr. J. N. Nemours (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Others whether, in regard to the project of setting up of an incubator at Anse Baleine, she will state where matters stand as to the implementation thereof, indicating if:

(a) state land lease has already been allocated for same; and

(b) contract has already been awarded and, in the affirmative, to state the name of the successful bidder and the contract amount?

The Commissioner for Women Affairs and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a) of the question, the answer is yes. The State Land Lease has already been allocated for the project of incubator at Anse Baleine.

As regards to part (b), the contract has not yet been awarded. However, tender has been launched on 01 May 2017 through open advertised bidding and the closing for submission of bids was fixed on 02 June 2017 at 13.30 hours. The opening of bids was done on the same date at 14.00 hours whereby only five bids have been received. A Bid Evaluation Committee has been appointed and evaluation process will start as from Wednesday 05 July 2017, that is, tomorrow. The report of the Bid Evaluation Committee is expected on Monday 10 July 2017 for the approval to the Departmental Bid Committee, the DBC, prior to the award of the contract to the successful bidder or contractor.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

SLAB CASTING SCHEME/ELDERLY

(No. B/54) Mr. J. N. Nemours (Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Housing and Others whether, in regard to the Slab Casting Scheme for the elderly in Rodrigues, he will state, for the benefit of the House, if having regard to the state of certain houses, consideration will urgently be given to same so as to ensure the safety of our elderly?

The Commissioner for Housing and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Madam Chairperson, it has been the policy of this Regional Government since 2012 to give due consideration to our elderly. We have to acknowledge that they have sacrificed their time and energy to make of Rodrigues what it is today. Allow me to remind the House that when I was not responsible for the subject of

housing, I had already put in place at the level of my Commission, the casting of slabs scheme for the elderly persons. We are aware that some of our senior citizens are living in precarious conditions and it is our duty as a caring government to improve their living conditions.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to casting of slabs for the elderly I must say that it is an innovative scheme. These people who are in a hardship situation and would not otherwise have been able to secure a loan or benefit from a scheme from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly are to gather enough money to improve their houses are able to benefit from this scheme especially set up for the elderly. Moreover, if they had to apply for financial assistance under the normal casting of slabs scheme, their plights would not have been addressed as a priority. So, more many of them have an old structure without the appropriate residential lease and building permit. As a matter of fact, a call for this assistance was aired on the radio last year and a total of 189 elderly people filed their application to benefit from assistance either to repair their leaking roofs/slabs or to replace their severely damaged roof on a fast track system. A few teams comprising of engineers, inspectors and other appropriate technicians were set up … houses …. of the applicant and submit recommendations along with their costs. The states of houses are classified as follows:

Priority 1: Ceilings with exposed iron bars, water infiltration and pieces of plastering detaching;

Priority 2: Those with damaged ceilings and water infiltration; and

Priority 3: Those with water infiltration from the roof.

78 applicants have been recommended as Priority 1, 58 as Priority 2 and 38 as Priority 3. And the remaining 7 applicants have passed away or have already benefited from other assistance from the government.

For the first batch of 78 eligible applicants as set up in the Priority 1, as recommended by engineers were called for a meeting and they were inform of the conditions and criteria before benefiting from the financial assistance of up to Rs 75,000 for repairing their roofs.

Madam Chairperson, the 58 beneficiaries on the Priority 2 are expected to benefit from the financial assistance by the end of this month.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

DIFFICULTIES OF PLANTERS/PAVILLON

– MECHANISATION/IRRIGATION/STRAY ANIMALS

(No. B/55) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner of Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to difficulties encountered by planters of Pavillon concerning water for irrigation, access facilities for mechanisation and stray animals, he will:

(a) state if his attention has been drawn thereto and, if so, has he been on site in relation thereto and to enlighten the House about the outcomes, if any;

(b) obtain information from the Commissioner of Police on the number of complaints filed by those planters at Petit Gabriel Police Station from January 2016 to date, and to state the nature of same; and

(c) state measures contemplated, if any, by his Commission to help those planters?

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a) of the question, I have received complaint from a group of planters from the region of Pavillon concerning water for irrigation and problems of stray animals.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (b), I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that 15 complaints have been filed by planters of Pavillon from January 2016 to date. The complaints relate mainly to straying animals.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (c), the following measures are being contemplated:

(i) In the next budget under the item new irrigation projects, rehabilitation of a micro-dam and the irrigation network will be considered.

(ii) Fencing will be provided to planters to protect their fields from stray animals in the next budget as per established procedures.

(iii) The regulations on stray animals will be promulgated shortly where drastic measures will come in force to discourage farmers from allowing their animals to stray.

(iv) Regular patrol by enforcement officers of Forestry Services and Police de l'Environnement to establish contraventions for straying animals.

(v) The pen at Mt Plate will be converted into a proper place to detain stray animals.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

PRODUCTION OF SURFACE &UNDERGROUND WATER

(No. B/56) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the production of surface and underground water in Rodrigues, he will provide the House with a brief description of the present situation and giving details on the: -

(a) policy of the Regional Government with respect to same thereby stating the measures implemented or being contemplated, if any, in the short and long term;

(b) average amount of rainfall per month and the average volume of water produced per day per month from January 2017 to date; and

(c) expected results on water production in Rodrigues for the next few months?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, Rodrigues is much dependent on surface as well as its underground water for its daily use. Presently, 40% of our consumption comes from surface water and 44% comes from underground water.

As regards to boreholes, there are actually 21 out of which 16 are in operation. Their actual water production is around 2100 m^3 per day. My Commission intends to carry out a survey to identify potential sites for drilling of additional boreholes and to carry airlifting on the actual ones.

As regards to surface water, water is collected mainly at the following points for distribution to the population namely, Mourouk, Rivière Coco, Pavé la Bonté, Grand Baie, Cygangue, Source Ti Gomme, Fond Accacia, Cascade Victoire, Camp Paul spring and Anse Raffin. The actual water surface production is around 1900 m^3.

Madam Chairperson, the policy of the Commission remains to tap the maximum amount of surface water, treat and distribute same to the population. In this context, with a view to increase the surface production in the short terms, my Commission is presently proceeding with the desilting of Bassin Gallard reservoir, improving collection structures at Dans Banane Jardin Mamzelle, improving collecting structures at Baie du Nord with the help of the villagers. We are also rehabilitating the springs at Grand la Fouche Mangues, at Chateau de Fleurs, at Mangues and Cascade Jean Louis. Gabions have also been installed at Tindoye (Fond La Bonté) with the help of the villagers to prevent the silting of the dam during heavy rainfalls. Moreover, Tenders for the total upgrading of Cascade Pigeon Dam has already been re-launched. With all these projects, my Commission hopes of increasing the surface water production by no less than 700 m^3 per day.

My Commission is being solicited by many villagers to improve similar sources in their vicinity and many of such sites have been identified. In fine, the policy in the short terms remains the rehabilitation of the springs found in the villages around Rodrigues.

As regards, to the long term, my Commission intends to proceed with the desilting of St D'Or dams and provide consultancy for studying the feasibility of Pavé la Bonté and/or Anse Baleine dams.

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling the figures sought in part (b) of the question regarding rainfall figures and daily water production.

As regards to part (c), Madam Chairperson, you will appreciate that the water production for surface and underground water will be much dependent on the amount of rainfall for the coming months. However, as depicted above, my Commission is trying as far as possible to collect the maximum of surface water so as to reduce the sufferings of the population. We hope that by the measures being undertaken that the surface water production will be increased by no less than 700 m^3 of water per day up to December 2017.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Commissioner whether the dam of Morico will be taken care of because there is plenty of water there? For the time being, we have plenty of rainfall and we have plenty of surface water and why is it that we continue with desalination in order to provide water for the population. I think we have enough surface water to distribute to the population.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: In fact, Madam Chairperson, as I have stated in my answer, the policy remains to tap the maximum of surface water instead of getting it out from underground. There are reports which have been

carried with respect to the desilting of dams and with respect to the amount of water that can be tapped; we are proceeding progressively on this front line. So this why we have started with Cascade Pigeon, we have moved to Bassin Gallard, we will move to St. D'Or and, of course, we are going to consider with all other dams around the island so that we can tap the maximum so that the population is better off in the drought seasons. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Time over.

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

VOTE HISTORIQUE AUX NATIONS UNIES – THE CHAGOS

The Chief Commissioner: Madame la présidente, permettez-moi d'adresser ces quelques mots à la chambre en relation avec le vote historique aux Nations unies concernant le Chagos. Je tiens à saluer cette grande avancée historique que la République de Maurice a accomplie lors de l'assemblée générale de l'ONU. C'est une victoire dans la persévérance pour la république et la communauté Chagossienne. C'est une détermination exceptionnelle qu'a démontré la république de Maurice pour la reconnaissance du peuple Chagossien comme citoyen du monde et ainsi contribuer à compléter la décolonisation de la République de Maurice. Madame la présidente, ce combat me fait revivre les 22 ans de lutte que nous avons menée pour l'autonomie de Rodrigues. J'ai eu l'occasion dimanche dernier d'en discuter personnellement avec le Ministre Mentor, l'Honorable Sir Anerood Jugnauth. J'ai compris qu'à partir de maintenant ce combat prend une nouvelle tournure. Au nom de l'Assemblée Régionale et la population Rodriguaise je tiens à réaffirmer notre soutien à la République de Maurice et à la communauté Chagossienne. Nous leur disons que tous les Rodriguais de tous cœurs sont avec eux dans cette lutte et qu'ensemble nous allons franchir cette nouvelle étape.

Veillez, Madame la présidente, d'instruire au Clerc de l'Assemblée Régionale de transmettre une lettre d'encouragement et de félicitation au Premier ministre, l'Honorable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, au Ministre Mentor Sir Anerood Jugnauth, au leader du Groupe Réfugiés Chagosien, Olivier Bancoult et de leur informer de soutien de l'Assemblée Régionale et de toute la population Rodriguaise dans leur combat. C'est dans l'unité qu'on fait de nos rêves une réalité. Je vous remercie de votre attention, Madame la présidente.

[Applause]

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, I would like to associate myself to the Chief Commissioner on behalf of the Opposition. I would like to congratulate the Central Government, the Minister Mentor, Mr. Olivier Bancoult

and the Chagosians community in Mauritius and abroad for this historic vote at the UN. Indeed, this is an important milestone in the struggle towards the complete decolonisation of the Republic of Mauritius. So we wish them good luck because we know the Republic/Central Government will have to go in front of the International Court of Justice. We will like to wish them all the best and once again I would like to convey our heartfelt congratulation to all. That is, the Central Government, the Chagossian community both in Mauritius and abroad, Mr. Olivier Bancoult and the Minister Mentor. I thank you.

[Applause]

FIRST EDITION PORT MATHURIN URBAN TRAIL – 25 JUNE 2017

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, allow me to apprise the House that my Commission in collaboration with Rod Trail Association organised the First Edition of Port Mathurin Urban Trail on Sunday 25 June 2017 at the Millennium Square followed by the Music Day Celebration. The objective of the event was inter-alia to put Port Mathurin in the forefront as the capital of Rodrigues to promote trail as a healthy living activity for all and develop awareness of our cultural heritage sites located in the neighbouring villages in the northern region.

Madam Chairperson, I have the pleasure to inform the House that this activity has been very successful on all fronts beyond our expectations. The Port Mathurin Urban Trail has also the merits of addressing sport de masse and elite sports. In fact, we have targeted 800 participants for the first edition and 805 persons participated in the trail activities out of which, 216 in the kids race, 505 in the trail court, 60 in the long trail and 24 in the corporate and team race. In addition, 1000 persons came at the music day at the end of the trail activities. Based on the high motivation of the people of all ages for this type of activity, my Commission together with the Rod Trail Association is already planning for the second edition at aiming to double the number of participants thus providing greater opportunities for participation. We are therefore, exploring the possibility of organising same in the context of the World Monument Day each year.

I finally, Madam Chairperson, would like to express heartfelt thanks to my colleagues Commissioners who have encouraged me and supported me for the organisation of this event. Thanks our dear sponsors for their invaluable contribution for this event, heartfelt thanks goes to the Rod Trail Association and my staff for their devotion and commitments to realise this project in a very short time frame. Last but not least, we would like to thank the MBC for the coverage, all Commissions of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly who have collaborated, the Police Department and the members of the public at large. And, congratulation to

the winners. So long live the Port Mathurin Urban Trail. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the Assembly be adjourned to Tuesday 22 August 2017 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

At 2.39 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 22 August 2017 at 10.30 a.m.