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RODRIGUES

FOURTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 8 of 2017

Sitting of Tuesday 22 August 2017

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

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 04 JULY 2017

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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Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I have been advised that PQ B/81 addressed the Chief Commissioner has been withdrawn and that PQ B/73 addressed to the Chief Commissioner also has been transferred to the, Commissioner for Training and Others. In that regard, the Commissioner for Training and others has sought permission to answer to PQ B/57, B/71 and B/91 together, also PQ B/58 together with PQ B/73. Furthermore, the Chief Commissioner will answer to PQ B/60 and B/82 together. Members may stand guided accordingly. Thank you.

SCHOLARSHIPS – SUCCESSFUL HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE IN RODRIGUES, YEAR 2017/2018

(No. B/57) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (The Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Training and Others whether, in regard to scholarships proposed to successful Higher School Certificate students of Rodrigues by foreign countries for academic year 2017/2018, he will state:-

- (a) the number thereof being made available per donating country;
- (b) the number granted this year, indicating the field chosen in each case; and
- (c) if any problem arose as regards those donated by the Republic of India, giving the reasons therefor?

The Commissioner for Training and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Madam Chairperson, the capacity building process of our human capital remains a top priority of the Regional Government since it took office in 2012.

In this line, we are constantly doubling our efforts each year as to ensure a better guidance to our students in their choice of field of studies and also to enable more and more of them to undertake a professional development plan.

In this regard, I am pleased to inform the House that all our students starting university or attending any recognised post-secondary institutions for this academic year have been awarded a scholarship. Some are under part-scholarship while others are under full scholarship. Consequently, the number of scholarship awarded amounts to a total of 115 students for this present academic year. Among the scholarships, 86 are from Rodrigues Regional Assembly, where Rodrigues Regional Assembly has catered for the full payment of all fees (registration and

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tuition) up to a maximum of Rupees fifty-five thousand and four hundred (Rs 55,400) for first academic year as per announced by the Chief Commissioner in the Budget Speech, as well as the provision of a one-off grant of up to Rupees twenty thousand (Rs 20,000) for the acquisition of laptop to 93 students.

Madam, Chairperson, I wish to inform the that out of the nine assistance schemes, there are three new schemes which have been implemented as from the academic year 2017 -2018, namely:-

- the registration fees for all year one students up to a maximum of Rs 55 400;
- a grant for laptop for all students; and
- an availability of 45 additional rooms as accommodation facilities in the Rodrigues Student House which became operational as from Saturday 12 August 2017 at Vacoas in Mauritius.

The existing schemes are mainly:

- The monthly financial assistance of Rs 4 000;
- Payment of registration fees either 50% or 75% of the sum as from Year 2 and onwards based on parents' monthly income;
- The grant of Rs 1,000 for lodging;
- The setting up fees of either Rs 2,000 or Rs 5,000 to Year One students;
- Registration fees to students whose parents have more than one child studying at post-secondary or tertiary level in Mauritius; and
- The monthly Financial assistance to students whose parents have more than one child studying at post-secondary or tertiary level in Mauritius.

Established list of criteria are associated with each scheme.

Madam Chairperson, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly awarded the Rodrigues Educational Development and Co. Ltd. (REDCO) scholarships instated as from 2014, where the best performing boys and girls of Le Chou, Maréchal and Mont Lubin Colleges are fully sponsored for a maximum duration of four years of studies. This year the number of REDCO awardees amount to seven (Given that in Mont Lubin College two girls were ranked exaeco)

It is to be noted also that among the REDCO awardee one has decided to study abroad. Thus, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is providing financial assistance on the same basis as if the student was to study in Mauritius.

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The Commission has also launched the call for application for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Technical Scholarship for students attending any colleges and who have chosen to pursue his/her studies in an institution delivering technical program.

Among the scholarship offered by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, provision is made for 15 students who will start the BTS program with MCCI up to maximum of Rupees one million eight hundred and forty-one thousand and four hundred and sixteen (Rs 1,841,416) per year over two years. This new program is due to start on 24 August 2017.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to scholarship awarded at national level, the following are available for our locals:

1. Open Scholarships to two best performing boys and girls, that is, the Laureates amounting to four;
2. Scholarship based on Merit and Social criteria whereby one boy and one girl are concerned;
3. Scholarship under the Social Register of Mauritius being advertised but not awarded yet. And under this scholarship, Academic qualification is coupled with social enquiry made by the Commission for Social Security on behalf of the parent Ministry. Also, I would like to inform the House that the different banks in Rodrigues, Mauritius Commercial Bank just awarded two scholarships to our local, the Barclays Bank one scholarships and for the State Bank of Mauritius normally it varies from two up to six depending on the fields of studies. We also have the President Award, one per year, the Science Related Subjects scholarship, two per year.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to PQ/57, where it refers to scholarships offered by foreign countries, I am pleased to inform the House that for this present academic year, the number of scholarship donated by foreign countries amounts to eight. Successful negotiations with the French Embassy whereby the French Scholarship reserved for Rodrigues stopped since 2011. As from this present year, the French Government via the French Embassy is offering two scholarships for Rodriguan in the field of:

- Health, Waste Management, Environment and Hydrology
- Five scholarships from the Government of India more precisely, “Scholarships under the India Africa Scholarship Scheme

The fields concerned are three in Science subjects and/or Engineering and two in any other fields excluding medicine.

After screening exercise held on 22 February 2017 by the Scholarship Screening Committee, based on established criteria and procedures set by the Ministry of Education a firm and a reserve list were compiled and sent to the Ministry. As usual, the firm list together with their respective documents were sent to the Ministry of Education for onward transmission to the Indian High Commission. The reserve list also was sent on the same date to the Ministry, but, as usual practice again, no documents are attached. Up to now, the number of scholarship granted under this scheme, that is, the India/Africa Scholarships amounts to three. The fields of studies are Engineering, Biotechnology and Economics.

With regard to B/57 part (c), Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that no specific problem was officially reported to my Office. However, I was informed by my colleagues who were overseeing at my Commission that the parent of one applicant came forward to the Commission to enquire about the status of the application of his ward. The parent was received by the Departmental Head and the Acting Head, Human Resource Development Centre. He was provided with the appropriate information.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to inform the House also that under the People's Republic of China also offers one scholarship for the students from Rodrigues.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, *on a essayé de noyer le poisson*. Can I know from the Commissioner whether there has been any delay in forwarding the names of the award scholarships and whether all of the scholarships of India have already been awarded?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Madam Chairperson, à aucun moment on a essayé de noyer le poisson. C'est bon qu'on reconnaît, on avait déjà annoncé qu'on allait répondre trois questions à la fois sur le scholarships en général. Donc, en même temps je voudrais rassurer la chambre que oui, effectivement, les dates, à aucun moment les informations ont été envoyé en retard au Ministère de l'Education. On a respecté les dates comme toujours et en effet j'ai été informé que les bourses indiennes peuvent être alloué jusqu'en septembre. Donc, on attend toujours. On a eu trois sur les cinq. On espère que les autres étudiants vont avoir leurs *seats*. Peut-être que c'est bon que je mentionne aussi que dans l'application, dans le formulaire que le Ministère nous envoie c'est bien précisé que.. Donc, dans la partie, voilà paragraph 8, *mode of application*, c'est bien précisé que – *applicants are reminded that being nominated by the Ministry*

does not automatically guarantee final selection for an award. Indian universities, education institutions are autonomous and independent and hence, have their own eligibility criteria. Scholarship is awarded only when admission is confirmed by ICCR. Ce sont les informations qui sont importantes aussi donc, pour moi de divulguer ici.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner whether there is a specific officer who is in charge of this to see to it that the scholarships are awarded?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Oui, comme d'habitude, Madame la présidente, vous noterez que la Commission, il y a plusieurs Head of Division. Et au niveau du Human Resource Development Centre, donc effectivement nous avons un Head of Division. Mais elle n'agit pas seule. J'ai mentionné tout à l'heure-là, le Scholarships Screening Committee où on a quand même donc plusieurs officiers. Il y a le Chef de département de la Commission, de la Formation, le chef de département de la Commission de l'Education. Donc, il y a aussi bien sûr Madame donc celle qui est responsable aujourd'hui au niveau du Human Resource Centre, the Acting Head. Donc, c'est le travail de tout un comité, basé bien sûr sur toutes les conditions, les critères déjà décrites par le ministère et effectivement aussi elle a la responsabilité de faire le suivi suis pas seulement pour la bourse Indienne, pour toutes les bourses avec les ministères et les institutions concernées.

The Minority Leader: So, the Respected Commissioner is saying that there is no specific officer dealing with that. You have a group. So, we cannot pin point someone for the *cafouillage* that we have got here. Does the Commissioner know that the parents of certain students have had to go to Mauritius to try to secure a scholarship for their children, for their offspring?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Madam Chairperson, qu'un parent décide d'aller à Maurice pour accompagner son enfant pour avoir des éclaircissements, on n'a pas le droit d'être contre. C'est le choix du parent. Mais pour dire que le parent été là-bas pour dissiper cafouillage ainsi de suite parce que c'est important de noter que tous ces parents qui ont été là-bas, il n'y a pas eu d'*outcome* jusqu'ici. Donc, ce n'est pas leur présence qui vont faire changer les choses. Parce que les procédures ont été suivies à la lettre. Par contre, ce n'est pas une question de *nous dimoune ou pas dimoune*. C'est une question des Rodriguais, les bourses pour les Rodriguais. Qu'est-ce qui se passe Madame la présidente ? Il y a eu des gens qui peut-être n'ont pas bien compris aussi le processus d'allocation des bourses. C'est important que j'informe la chambre que l'enfant qui a réussi son HSC, qui postule pour une bourse, il y a toute une série de conditions. La première chose, comment comptabiliser les points pour être

classés pour ses bourses. Les parents croyaient, certains parents, ceux qui ont été faire beaucoup de bruit il croyait que seulement les points pour la HSC compte. Or, c'est clair, comme ça se fait au niveau du ministère de l'éducation, c'est bon que tout le monde soit informé, le système veut qu'il y a une cumulation des points des résultats du résultat du SC est une cumulation des points du résultat de la HSC. Ce qui fait que l'enfant qui a eu meilleure résultat HSC n'est pas nécessairement le premier à prétendre être éligible pour cette bourse ou bien pour n'importe quelle bourse. Il y a eu des jeunes-là, dans l'exercice, moi-même j'ai pris connaissance qui a eu des résultats moins bons en HSC mais avec son SC qui est de très bonne qualité, quand on ajoute les pointages l'enfant est donc devant ceux qui a eu des meilleurs résultats. Donc, il y a tout un système clair et transparent où les procédures sont faites. Peut-être je vais rectifier aussi, le Respected Minority Leader, il a mentionné qu'il y a pas d'officier, ce n'est pas ce que j'ai dit, j'ai dit qu'il y a un comité, a Screening Committee pour le scholarship mais il y a le Acting Head, Human Resource Development Centre qui est le focal point, qui est responsable pour faire le lien avec les institutions pour les bourses.

The Minority Leader: Madame la commissaire a dit qu'il n'y a pas eu de cafouillage tout ça et que les parents sont allés accompagner leurs enfants. C'est n'est pas le cas ici. Les parents sont allés parce qu'il y avait un problème. Parce qu'il y avait un problème. Peut-on savoir s'il y a eu un problème au niveau du ministère de l'éducation au niveau de la commission ? Parce que le ministère de l'éducation a dit que la commission n'a pas envoyé la liste à temps et la commission indique que c'est la commissaire de l'éducation qui n'a pas communiqué. *Which is which ?* On se renvoie la boule !

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Personnes ne se renvoient la boule, Madame la présidente. Je précise de nouveau que les applications été en... Par contre ses parents qui sont venus ou qui ont accompagné leurs enfants, il pensait que leurs enfants étaient sur le *firm list* or il se trouve que leurs enfants étaient sur le *reserve list*. Certains même bien loin sur le *reserve list*. Et la pratique courante, chaque année veut que quand on envoie les documents à Maurice, on envoie les documents de ceux qui sont, je l'ai dit dans ma réponse, *confirmed/firm list* et la liste et les applications. Par contre, le *reserve list* on envoie que la liste et pas les documents. *This is usual practice* qui a été là depuis des années. C'est ce qu'on a fait aussi. Et ce n'est que quand il y a quelqu'un sur *firm list* qui refuse la bourse, c'est là où l'autre qui est sur le *reserve list, subject to admission to a university*, et *subject to the approval of the ICCR*. Et c'est là que la personne, on envoie le document. Donc, il n'y a pas eu de cafouillage. Bon bien sûr des parents qui ont voulu donc plus d'information, c'est leur droit, ils sont venus au bureau, ils ont voulu insultés aussi les officiers, ça je le regrette. Ils ont parlé de magouille ainsi de suite. Il n'y a rien de tout ça. Et je vois que l'opposition veut faire un peu feu de toute paille.

The Minority Leader: *I think she is going astray. I would like to ask the Commissioner.* Elle a dit qu'il n'y a pas un problème, tout s'est bien passé. Je voudrais lui demander, est-ce qu'elle est au courant que les parents ont été à une certaine radio à Maurice. C'est à la suite d'un appel téléphonique que le *reserve list* est allé à Maurice. On a envoyé tout de suite par DHL. Est-ce qu'elle peut confirmer cela ?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: C'est exactement faux, Madame la présidente, faux, faux, faux et archi faux. Comme je l'ai dit, la liste est parti ensemble et ces les documents pour le *réserve list* qui vont partir après, seulement s'il y a quelqu'un qui a refusé tout ça. Et peut-être si quelqu'un veut aller à la radio, n'importe quelle radio dire n'importe quoi, on parle toujours de *freedom of expression*. Non, je persiste ici que ni le départ des parents pour le ministère, d'ailleurs on a eu la remarque aussi que les parents ont été faire des tapages. Ça ne fait pas honneur à Rodrigues. Que ce soit au ministère, que ce soit à l'Ambassade et ça ne nous donne pas de résultat parce que les procédures ont été suivi à la lettre. Ce n'est pas en faisant du tapage à la radio qu'on a les résultats. Il y a des procédures à suivre. C'est pour cela que moi j'ai demandé, d'ailleurs je souhaite, que ces enfants ont leurs bourses. On lutte pour ça. S'ils ont leurs bourses on est content. Mais ce ne sont pas leurs tapages, ce n'est pas la communication à la radio qui vont faire qu'ils vont avoir leurs bourses. Au contraire. Donc, si ça allait emmener des résultats depuis le temps fin juillet que cela s'est passé jusqu'à maintenant les enfants seraient déjà parti en Inde.

The Minority Leader: *Madam Speaker, there has been a sluggishness in the work. Very sluggish.* C'est pourquoi j'ai demandé s'il y a un officier spécifique qui s'occupe de ce dossier parce qu'il y a des étudiants qui postule pour plusieurs bourses.

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader please you have already put that question. Come up with another question please.

The Minority Leader: *I am putting the question, give me time.* Il y a des étudiants qui postulent pour plusieurs bourses mais après avoir obtenu une bourse, disons une bourse Française ou d'un autre pays, il laisse tomber les bourses Indienne. C'est pourquoi j'ai demandé, s'il y a un officier qui fait le suivi. A ce qu'il parait il n'y a pas eu de suivi. Ça a tardé. Et si les parents n'ont pas été faire des démarches, on aurait perdu ces bourses-là. Est-ce que c'est vrai ?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: C'est faux, parce que ces parents qui ont été faire d.es démarches leurs enfants sont encore à Maurice, Madame la présidente. Je ne comprends pas comment on peut insister sur une chose aussi

clair. Ces enfants n'ont pas été alloués leurs bourses encore. A ce matin on a des informations. On a eu trois élèves. Ce sont des élèves dont leurs bourses avaient été allouées depuis avant. Rien à voir par ceux qui ont été faire des démarches. Donc, c'est faux et en même temps je trouve aussi aberrant qu'on vient attaquer aussi les officiers de ce département de la sorte pour dire qu'il y a *sluggishness*. *Theire is no sluggishness*. Les gens travail, et moi je m'assure que surtout par rapport à la formation, l'éducation des enfants. Donc, nous avons à cœur leur formation. C'est pour cela que nous n'arrêtons de chercher les opportunités et les possibilités pour les Rodriguais. Donc, moi je maintiens que toutes les procédures ont été suivi à la lettre, comme il se doit, dans le temps qu'il faut. Maintenant on attend et qui c'est qui peut deviner si un enfant va refuser la bourse et même si un enfant refuse la bourse, les enfant qui sont sur *reserve list*, ça ne veut pas dire automatiquement, je dis ça au départ. Même si l'enfant qui est on *firm list* refuse ça ne veut pas dire qu'automatiquement que celui qui est on *reserve list* parce qu'on fait le suivi parce que c'est le ICCR qui détermine.

The Minority Leader: C'est ce que j'ai dit. Il faut qu'il y est un suivi. A ce qu'il parait il y a eu un cafouillage. Parce que la Commissaire ne veut pas accepter.

Madam Chairperson: This is question time, Minority Leader, you come up with your question, please. No statement, please.

The Minority Leader: We are here to put questions. She has been making a statement on other things which happen from the question that I have put and you have said nothing. Okay. I would like to ask the Commissioner, being given that she has said that all the scholarships have been awarded, can I know if certain of these Indian Scholarships, *quand on a postulé pour ces bourses, est-ce qu'on n'a pas envoyé les listes en retard. La date d'inscription au université Indienne est-ce que ça n'a pas été fait en retard ?*

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader please, you are repeating yourself. This question has already been put. Next question, please. Next question.

The Minority Leader: She has not answered whether she has...

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, I am on my feet.

The Minority Leader: Even if you are on your feet. We have the right to put question.

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader!

The Minority Leader: *Pénan baiyas ici! Ki a sak cou mem couyonade. A sak cou mem zafer. A sak foi li pou areter pou pas repone kestion.*

Madam Chairperson: I suspend the House for ten minutes.

At 10.56 a.m. the House was suspended for 10 minutes.

At 12.30 p.m. the Assembly was suspended for one hour.

On its resumption at 11.16 a.m. with Madam Chairperson in the Chair.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, it is most regretful, that I am having to make this ruling as regards to the procedures in this House for substantive and supplementary questions. As you all know Standing Orders 19 to 23 deal with questions and how same are disposed in this Chamber. Of these Standing Orders of which, I am sure, Members should be fully versed with, I wish to highlight in addition to the whole content of Standing Order 19, Standing Order 22, which I quote: *“Supplementary questions may only be put the further elucidation of the information requested and shall be subject to the ruling of the Chairperson both as to relevance and number.”* Ene of quote.

I also wish to remind Members of Standing Order 37(6), which states: *“The Chairperson shall be responsible for the observance of the rules of order in the Assembly or in any committee thereof and his decision upon any point of order shall be final.”* As such, it is most regretful again to note the tenure and aggressivity of the words of the Minority Leader against the Chair. Let me kindly remind the House that as guardian of THE Standing Orders, I will not allow any further flouting of same. I have been lenient and allowed fair few supplementary questions on these questions conscious that more than one question was being answered together. So, this my final decision on the matter. I am sure that the Minority Leader as a season politician is very much aware of the sacrosanctity of the decorum of the House and I invite him to uphold the dignity of the Regional Assembly. Therefore, I invite the First Local Regional Member of Maréchal to put her question.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: On a point of order, Madam Chairperson. I think that the Minority Leader who has been using unbecoming words in this House and I would like him to withdraw his words.

The Minority Leader: On the point of order, can the Chairperson...

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader please let me rule on the matter. Yes, I will come later on after lunch with a ruling on this matter. Next question.

**DISPENSATION/PAYMENT OF LICENCE FEES
& RESIDENTIAL LEASES**

(No. B/58) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Industrial Development and Others whether, in regard to the proposed dispensation of the payment of licence fees and residential leases, she will inform the House on: -

- (a) the list of relevant activities has already been established by her Commission; and
- (b) the procedure to be followed by a potential beneficiary?

The Commissioner for Industrial Development and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madam Chairperson, as enunciated in paragraph 20 and 21 of the Budget Speech 2017-2018 by the Chief Commissioner on 31 March 2017, necessary mechanisms are being implemented to waive licence and state land fees for SMEs operating on their residential leases as from 01 July 2017 for a period of five years.

The aim is to ‘ease doing business’ in Rodrigues as entrepreneurs often have to undergo and bear lengthy procedures before obtaining a commercial or an industrial lease to start their economic activities. Through the implementation of this measure, this time lag will be reduced and this will incite those operating minor activities to be encouraged to operate from their residential premises and formalize their home-based activities. This will also have a direct impact on the start-up capital of the entrepreneurs. Same is expected to decrease as the cost to be incurred for investment in building will be lower as they will be operating on their residential premises.

Madam Chairperson, following the Budget Speech, a working session was held with the stake holders of the different commissions as well as the different actors of the private sectors on the 27 April at my commission to gather their views and proposals on the subject matter. I must say that the workshop has been very fruitful and the proposals of the participants have been taken on board. Consequently, several meetings have been conducted between my office and the Cadastral Office to discuss the implication and administrative adjustments require to implement the measure.

In line with the Rodrigues Licensing Regulations of 2003 an initial list of 74 activities have been established by my commission as home-based activities.

However, we are not limiting ourselves to these activities. New activities may be considered at a later stage subject to the approval of the Executive Council.

As regards, to part (b) of the question, the beneficiary should be in possession of a Residential Lease in order to be eligible to apply for a home-based activity. The procedures will as follow:

- i. The beneficiary applies for his/her licence at the Licensing Unit and will have to submit all relevant documents for the business.
- ii. Once verified, the application is sent to the Public Health and Food Safety Unit, Fire Services as well as the Divisional Commander for recommendation/clearance.

Madam Chairperson, the House will apprise that the above mentioned institutions are all members of the Licensing Committee.

- iii. Once recommendations are received, approval for issue of Trade Licence is sought by the Licensing Committee.
- iv. My office will then send the relevant information regarding the licensee to the Cadastral Office and the IT Unit for the exemption of state land fees for the prescribed period.

Madam Chairperson, I am hereby informing the House that decision has been taken so that the measure be applicable as from 01 October 2017. We are also fixing the waiting time for a licence to be awarded at most one month as from the date of the application subject that the dossier of the applicant is complete.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Madam Chairperson, can we know from the Commissioner for the last mandate, people who were doing economic activities on their residential lease has been told to change to Industrial or Commercial. Will these people who has changed their leases will benefciate the same as stated in this budget.

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Yes, Madam Chairperson, we will gradually convert these activities into home-based activities. This is the decision we have taken.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

RENOVATION – SWIMMING POOL/MARECHAL

(No. B/59) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to the renovation of the swimming pool at Maréchal, she will inform the House about the progress of works to date and the expected date that same will be operational?

The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Ms. M.R.L. Edouard): Madam Chairperson, I have to inform the House that my Commission has awarded a contract for renovation of the swimming pool of Maréchal to Audax (Pty) for the contract value of Rs 15,714,826 excluding VAT. Works have started on 01 March 2017 and are near completion.

The scope of works consists of the following: -

- (i) upgrading of existing building and civil engineering works in general; and
- (ii) servicing, repairs and replacement of electrical and mechanical installation of the swimming pool.

Madam Chairperson, as from the handing over date, we are expecting that the swimming pool will be operational in two months' time. And, in view of the reopening of the pool, Madam Chairperson, my Commission is organizing meetings with the different partners and stakeholders that will be involved in the restarting of activities at the swimming pool. In this context I wish to inform the house that the following meetings have already been organized:

- (i) with the Coast Guard so that they can help in training and to propose alternative water activities like diving and life saving for the public;
- (ii) with the representatives of educational institutions which are located in the vicinity of the pool namely, Anse Quito, Grand La Fouche Corail, Mangles, St Esprit Primary Schools and Maréchal College to sensitise them to use the pool for training programme for our youngsters.

Another meeting is scheduled with the Swimming Regional Committee on Wednesday 23 August 2017 to discuss the reopening of the swimming pool, reviving of existing swimming clubs and the creation of new clubs.

Madam Chairperson, with the posting of a Swimming Coach and other qualified swimming cadres and animators, my Commission will create an '*Ecole de Natation*' and one '*Centre de Preformation*' after a mass detection campaign.

Moreover, the contribution of the Ministry of Youth and Sports has been sought to provide technical support for the training of swimming coaches and animators to ensure that training is done at a regular basis at the pool. We have also initiated actions to ensure the optimum use of annexed infrastructure of the pool, including the conference room and other rooms.

Madam Chairperson, my Commission is developing an integrated strategy for water sport in general and the main focus of this strategy will be inter alia;

- (i) To create seawater swimming pools in two or three regions to ensure that a maximum number of our citizens have access to basic swimming skills and other water sport activities;
- (ii) Promote new water related sports; and
- (iii) To Promote water life-saving activities for the population and improve access to kite surf and other swimming activities to local people.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner, being given that right at the beginning they are saying that it seems that the swimming pool has been ill conceived. Can we know how many times the swimming pool has been renovated and the sum that has been spent or earmarked?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, I cannot question the technicities around the swimming pool because there are experts that have been there to construct the swimming pool and other amenities. And for long we have known that that there have been excuses put forward to close down the swimming pool and since 2012, it has been our priority to reopen it. And, indeed it is the third time that it is being reopened. And after strong assessment we are planning to ensure continuous operation of same. So, as at date, I do not have the exact sum for the total review of the swimming pool from the past closure. But we know why this swimming pool has been closed for that long.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner as far as the filling of the pool is concerned, what arrangement has been made in order to have water to fill this pool?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Indeed, Madam Chairperson, the water issue has already been addressed with the Deputy Chief Commissioner who is also responsible for water resources. And, parallelly we are working; we have put in place a rain water harvesting system. But what we can assure the Respected Member is that, care will be taken so that all parameters are respected and that everybody is bettered off. And as I told you we will not use water issue as an excuse to close down the swimming pool for a second time. Thank you.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madame la présidente, est-ce que le commissaire est au courant qu'il y avait vol de sable qui se trouvait dans les quatre cylindres du.. ?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, I am not aware of it. It is the first time..

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, is there any query, any report regarding the loses of materials at the swimming pool of Maréchal?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, I have not been answered, the contractor has been working there, I would not know, we are not aware of any such things.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, is there any officer which is responsible for the coordination of supervision of this swimming pool when it is under repaired?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: It is the contractor and, of course, the Commission is the client, we are following it closely. But the contractor, the expert is there to ensure that things are going correctly but as the client we ensure that it is to our requirements. So, of course.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: She has not answered. I asked the Commissioner whether there is a specific officer who is supervising this repairs at the *piscine* of Maréchal?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, there is a consultant that is appointed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and I am going to answer. Just let me finished answering. So, the Commission, I said we are the client, so the Commission is following it. That is it.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madame la présidente, étant donné que la commissaire dit qu'il y a rénovation, est-ce que la commissaire peut nous informer, dire à la chambre si dans la rénovation les carreaux céramiques, pour échanger les carreaux

céramiques si ça compte dans la rénovation ? Pare qu'étant donné *that the used* carreaux céramiques ont été remplacés.

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: So, there have technical issues. There has been a technical report as to how repairs will have to be done and as I said I do not have technicalities, the consultant, the contractor and the technicians of the Commission are well aware of how things are evolving and if there is things that are not done properly, action will be taken but I think that it is a purely technical matter.

Mr. F.A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, it is quite easy to say that it is technical but to whom are we supposed to put the question, if it is not the Commissioner herself? She cannot come here and say this is quite technical and she does not have, you should have, you should have. Madam Chairperson, I come to the question. So, after it has been closed, the swimming pool has been closed by whom? By her Commission or somebody before. So, how is she going to organise after the reopening of this swimming pool. So, will there be an officer put there, will there be, I do not know, a sort of team to reckon it. Because it is quite surprising to hear that after a few years Rs 15 million is being put to renovate buildings which have not even been used for optical purposes and so on. We may agree on the fact that the swimming pool itself, it has been damaged. Okay. But the building and so on. So, how is she going to manage the swimming pool afterward?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, I have already answered part of the question by saying that there are other infrastructures around the swimming pool which will be used to its optimum as from now on. Being that there are other events that are related to same and, of course, with regard to the officers that will be posted there, we have sought the help of the Coast Guards. But we have lately launched, *faire appel à la candidature pour avoir un swimming coach mais malheureusement nous n'étions pas* successful. But now we are going to go for training of our people in that field to ensure that we can have someone from Mauritius or Rodrigues to be a full-fledged coach there. But, there has been training previously by the late Commissioner Ismaël Valimamode whereby those who were attached there has been trained. So, we will consolidate the training that has already started, to have a good team to work on the swimming issue.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madame la présidente, peut-on savoir de la commissaire combien d'activité a été organisé depuis l'ouverture, la réouverture et la rénovation ?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, I will not have the details but I am sure since the reopening in 2012, there has been the re-installation of *Ecole de Natation, Ecole de Préformation*. And we have noted the progress of our young

athletes in the field and having gone to Mauritius we have seen the performances of our young swimmers. And I feel that it is a sector that Rodrigues needs to do well and to explore because we are surrounded by the sea and we need to ensure that all our children are good swimmers and can embrace a career in the swimming sector.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam Chairperson, can we know from the Commissioner what will be the monthly running cost of the swimming pool?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, as I have said we are working parallelly with different partners. We are putting in place every aspect with regard to the smooth running of the swimming pool and this will be coming very soon.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

SHIPPING – WIDENING OF ACCESS CHANNEL/PORT MASTER PLAN/REPLACEMENT MV MAURITIUS PRIDE

(No. B/60) Mr. L. J. N. Von-Mally, G.O.S.K (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to shipping in Rodrigues, he will state:-

- (a) if a decision has been taken by the Regional and/or Central Government concerning the widening of the access channel leading to Port Mathurin harbour, giving details; and
- (b) where matters stand as regards:
 - (i) the implementation of the Port Master Plan, indicating if same has been reviewed, and, if so, to specify when and the reason(s) therefor; and
 - (ii) the replacement of the M.V Mauritius Pride by a proper passenger cum cargo ship, detailing on any discussions held with any relevant authority to date, together with the outcome thereof and any agreed timeframe therefor?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, with your permission, allow me to reply to question B/60 and B/82 at the same time as both deals with the same subject matter.

As this house is aware, the Port Services do not fall under the purview of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The Mauritius Port Authority (MPA) is under the Ports Act the sole authority to regulate and control the port of Port Mathurin. However, being given that the development of a port is a key-enabling factor for

the socio economic development of a country, my regional government has been working in close collaboration with the MPA and the central government to push forward the development of the port.

Section 5 of the Ports Act specify that an approved Port Master Plan is required to formulate the policy for its development prior to its implementation.

I am informed that the report of the Port Mathurin Port Master Plan Study has been finalized and was submitted to the MPA in December 2016. The study was carried out by Consultants Royal Haskoning DHV. The report makes provision for an integrated development of the Port as well as the Fishing port at Pointe L'Herbes up to the year 2040 and make recommendations for the phased development of the project as follows:

- i. Phase 1:** the construction of a bund-wall, dredging of the boat channel and the reclamation works for the fishing port at Pointe L'Herbes.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, on a point of order.

The Chief Commissioner: I am replying to my question, Madam.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: We have a point of order, Madam, please. Thank you. Madam, the question is straight forward. I think in my opinion the Chief Commissioner is making a statement. It is not statement time. It is question time. I will request you to ask the Chief Commissioner to go straight to the question and not to make statements.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, I can hear your point. But I regret to tell you that your point is not valid. Let the Chief Commissioner proceed with his answer.

The Chief Commissioner: Phase 1: the construction of a bund-wall, dredging of the boat channel and the reclamation works for the fishing port at Pointe L'Herbes.

Phase 2: the extension of the bund-wall for the proposed new port.

Phase 3: the dredging of the berth pocket in front of the proposed new quay and reclamation of the bunded area for the new port and realignment of the navigation channel.

Phase 4: the construction of the new quay wall of about 220 metres.

It is expected that a total investment to the tune of some Rs 2 billion will be required for both the Port area development and the fishing port.

Madam Chairperson, since the project is high on our agenda, my regional Government has already initiated action towards the implementation of the project. In that respect, with the assistance of the Mauritius Ports Authority, the request for Expression of Interest to select consultants for the detailed design, environment impact assessment of the first phase of the recommended development scheme, that is, the construction of a bund-wall, dredging of the basin for the fishing port and associated land reclamation for the development of the fishing port at Pointe L'Herbes has already been submitted to the Central Procurement Board for vetting and launching. This phase would also include recommendation for the removal of outcrops in the navigation channel and the development of a Marina for visiting yachts. These works once completed would enable dredging works to start.

Madam Chairperson, I have to point out also that the Consultants have in their report recommended that it would be an advantage to widen the access channel at the entry point, at the bend halfway along the channel and extending the turning circle to the east to provide an easier maneuvering of vessels when approaching the quay. However, the consultants have also recommended that the dredging works on the inner access channel shall have to be carried out in conjunction with other reclamation works due to the relatively high mobilization costs for bringing waterborne dredging equipment to Rodrigues. It would not be economically feasible to justify the works on the inner channel as a standalone project. The Consultants have furthermore strongly recommended that these modifications should be tested on a simulator before any decisions are made since the dredging in the channel may increase the wave action in the creek at Pointe Monier during cyclone events.

Madam Chairperson, as regards to the replacement of the MV Mauritius Pride, I have been informed by the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping that following the disposal of the vessel in September 2014, MV Anna was chartered by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd. in May 2015 as a backup vessel to Mauritius Trochetia. The charter of MV Anna has been extended until January 2019. I am also further informed that no final decision has been taken so far by the Central Government as regards to the replacement of the passenger cum cargo vessel MV Mauritius Pride by another proper passenger cum cargo vessel.

The Mauritius Shipping Corporation is currently still working on the design and technical specifications of a new multipurpose cargo vessel that may be considered for acquisition by the Government to replace the MV Anna.

Madam Chairperson, since the development of the port is high on the agenda of the Executive Council, my office is closely monitoring progress on the above decision to ensure minimal delays in the implementation of the project. My office will ensure that the full technical report and bid documents are available by mid-2018.

The Minority Leader: I thank the Chief Commissioner for his answer. I would like to ask him about what is said the authority is working on a new master plan, and I have made to understand that we already have a recent port master plan. Can we whether this port master plan that we had, is already obsolete.

The Chief Commissioner: What did he say? Obsolete? The old one? No, I am talking about the master plan which has been done and is at our disposal and we are working on this master plan. As I have said we have launched tender for the consultants to work on the master plan.

The Minority Leader: The recent master plan, I think have been put aside. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner being given that according to those captains using the channel of Port Mathurin near the Grand Paté, concerning the three out costs? Most of them say that we must go ahead with the removal of these three out costs prior to the opening of the inner channel. Can I know from the Chief Commissioner whether we will go ahead with that first?

The Chief Commissioner: I must repeat what I have said. I have just mentioned it in my reply.

Madam Chairperson: Order please. Next question.

The Minority Leader: Being given that the Chief Commissioner has said that the Mauritius Pride has been replaced by a cargo ship and we know that in Rodrigues there are many people on the lower length of the ladder, either in Mauritius or in Rodrigues, the people of the lower length of the ladder that do not have much money to pay for air tickets and the passenger ship was like a bus going to Mauritius and now we are replacing MV Anna by another cargo ship. Can we know since we have two MPs in Mauritius in Central Government? Can we know whether the Chief Commissioner has talked to them so that we can ask the Central Government to replace the Mauritius Pride by a proprio passenger cum cargo ship?

The Chief Commissioner: *I have already replied to that question. The Mauritius Shipping Corporation is working on this new project cargo passenger ship. But there is something also that we must say, que justement beaucoup de gens voyagent par avion et nous avons déjà pensé à ça, est-ce qu'on ne pourrait pas justement, par exemple, des gens qui sortent de l'aéroport pour aller à Baie du Tombeau, Pointe aux Sables ou qui sont très loin où on paye un taxi à peu près Rs 1,000, Rs 1,500. Vous comprenez-là. Et tout ça on est en train de travailler ça avec le ministère des Finances s'il y a même une possibilité de réduire. On a déjà travaillé cela avec le ministère des Finances concernant les touristes tout ça. Mais je pense qu'il faudra travailler un plan d'action pour les Rodriguais qui voyagent par avion pour aller à Maurice.*

The Minority Leader: *Une dernière question. Do we have a time frame for the replacement of the Mauritius Pride. Because it has been sold since a long time and it has not been replaced by a passenger ship?*

The Chief Commissioner: Time frame? Il me semble que j'ai dit qu'on va renouveler MV Anna jusqu'à 2019 et au-delà et à ce moment-là un autre bateau va remplacer MV Anna. I do not know; they are working on cargo cum passenger. They are working on that. Well we will find out more with the Mauritius Shipping Corporation. We are following this project closely with the Mauritius Shipping Corporation.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, can I ask the Chief Commissioner being given that this document is so important for us also to have a look at. Can I ask him if he can make this document available in the library for us to have a look at?

The Chief Commissioner: Everything is already available at the library. The new port master plan? Well we will see if we can put in the library.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

FISH AGGREGATE DEVICES (FADs)

(No. B/61) **Mr. L. J. N. Von-Mally, G.O.S.K (Minority Leader)** asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries & Others whether, in regard to the Fish Aggregate Devices (FADs) he will state the number that are currently installed in Rodrigues, indicating if all thereof are operational together with the method and frequency of maintenance thereof; and, to inform the House on if additional and/or new ones will be installed in the near future, giving reasons?

The Commissioner for Fisheries & Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, I have to inform the House that 22 FAD's were operational and they were located from North West to South East passing through North. A majority of the FADs have been lost and currently there are eight that are operational.

Madam Chairperson, officers of the Fisheries Research and Training Unit (FRTU) visit all FADs at least twice weekly depending on weather conditions. Any FAD which is found damaged is quickly repaired. In addition, FADs are maintained entirely on good weather conditions in view of preventing further damage and also to avoid the risk of injuries. The lost FADs are actually being replaced. In addition, four new FADs will be deployed in the current Financial Year 2017/2018 and will increase the number of FADs operational to 26.

The Minority Leader: According to my information, I would like to ask the Respected Commissioner, according to my information, he said that eight FADs that are operational. According to fishers there are only two which are operational. I would like him to see to it that the information given to him is right and to replace those that have been damaged. Can I know from the Commissioner how these FADs are being cared for?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, unfortunately, the information that the Minority Leader have is not true because this is the information that we have and may be some people they do not know where the FADs are. They may go close to the FADs and they do not see it. So, I can conclude that there are eight which are operational. And how are they cared for? I do not understand this question. How do you maintain a FAD? May be people do not know what is a FAD and how people placed it. It is a sort of a net, *ene filet*, it depends on the depth of the sea, may be 400 metres may be 500 metres and with big loads, concrete and then you have some boils at the top. So, how do you maintain it?

Madam Chairperson: Please address the chair.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I said it is done weekly depending on the weather condition.

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please address the chair.

The Minority Leader: What I meant, is that like in Mauritius, with the Ministry we used to work in close collaboration with the fishers. I wanted to know whether this is done here. And, there are special boats that have been put at the disposal of the Commission specially to care for these FADs. I think the Diego

Rodriguez was to be used for that. Can we know if the Diego Rodriguez is still in operation?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, Madam Chairperson, the Diego Rodriguez is the boat that is used to fix the FADs and to maintain all these FADs. Yes, it is operational.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, so I have not heard the Commissioner said about the time frame for the replacement of the FADs. So, we can say that he will replace but we do not know. This is one question. Second question is that whether the *point GPS* of the position..

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, you put one question at a time, please.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, I cannot set any time frame because we said in this financial year. Because everyone knows that with the climatic change we have more bad weather than good weather now. So, as I said in my answer FADs can only be repaired, can only be fixed when the weather is good. So, I cannot say. Even in summer now the sea is rough. So, the Diego Rodriguez and the members of the Fisheries, Research and Training Unit they do not go out when the weather is not good. So, time frame is difficult for me to set.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, this is quite surprising because we know in the past we know that FADs were replaced all year round, except in bad weather, when there is bad weather. But the Commissioner has to manage his Commission. It is his duty to derive ways and means to when put the FADs. He cannot come here and say..

Madam Chairperson: Come up with your question, please.

Madam Chairperson: Madam Chairperson, I would like to know whether the *point GPS* of these FADs are put at the disposal of the fishermen.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I have all the GPS points here and if any fishermen who want these position they just go to Fisheries, Research and Training Unit and it is available. And it seems that the Member wants to take my place. But you have to wait for next election.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

AMBULANCE SERVICES – DEMISE OF TOURIST

(No. B/62) Mr. L. J. N. VON-MALLY, G.O.S.K. (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to ambulance services at his Commission and the demise of a tourist at a hotel situated in the northern region of Rodrigues in August 2017, he will state:-

- (a) if any assistance was sought therefor and, if so, to indicate the time of the request together with the response/attending time thereof;
- (b) if any dispatched ambulance response team included any medical officer(s); and
- (c) the established protocol for response following a request for assistance, indicating the measures he intends to take in order to improve same, if any?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Madam Chairperson, as regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that a call was received by the telephonist of Queen Elizabeth Hospital at 20.48 hours on 03 August 2017. Request was made for an ambulance to pick up somebody from a tourist residence, in the north of the island. At 20.50 hours ambulance with driver and attendant left Queen Elizabeth Hospital for that residence. At 21.16 hours, ambulance returned to Queen Elizabeth Hospital with patient and relatives.

As regard to part (b) of the question, the dispatched ambulance response team did not include any Medical Officer.

Madam Chairperson, as regards to the established protocol for response, following a request for assistance, usually requests are received for assistance to transport the sick or injured to the hospital. We do not have any ambulance with a trained medical team and emergency equipment to attend to emergencies outside the hospital. People are advised to assist in the transporting all those needing prompt medical attention to the nearest hospital or health centres as soon as possible. To improve this service, we are going to set up a fully SAMU (Service d'Aide Medicale d'Urgence), as specified in the Discours Programme of the Chief Commissioner on the 03 March 2017 with adequately trained medical team.

The Minority Leader: Can I ask the Respected Commissioner, since this is a very very serious matter because one patient passed away. Very sad. He said that it took only a few minutes for the ambulance to go there. This is not what I have been made to understand. It took a long time before the ambulance went there. Can I know whether the medical team that went there, whether they went there in SAMU or in a normal ambulance?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I have already answered to this question, Madam Chairperson. We do not have a SAMU service now. It is an ambulance.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, Madam, can we know from the Commissioner since we have a SAMU ambulance long time ago and we also have trained personnel to manage this SAMU ambulance and equipment. Can the Commissioner inform the House where does matters stand with regard to same?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, I have already answered to this question. It is now that we are going to set up a fully SAMU, that is, a Service d'Aide Médicale d'Urgence, as specified in the Discours Programme of the Chief Commissioner on the 03 March 2017 with adequate trained medical team.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, I think that the Commissioner is giving false information to this House. There is a SAMU ambulance..

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, this is not allowed.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, okay, I am coming with my question.

Madam Chairperson: This is not allowed.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: What is not allowed?

Madam Chairperson: You are saying that the Commissioner is giving false information to the House. I am on my feet, please. You have to withdraw.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, I withdraw. This is not true, Madam Chairperson, the SAMU ambulance is present more than five years and this SAMU, we already have trained personnel. These personnel have been scattered since 20... all sort of health centres all around the country. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he is aware that these personnel are in Rodrigues actually?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, SAMU its whole systems regarding the Medical Officer, the Nursing Officer and the Ambulance Attendant and the Driver. So, as I have said, again I repeat, it is now on that we are going to set up a SAMU, Service d'Aide Médicale d'Urgence in Rodrigues. But I am, *je suis très peiné moi aussi que la dame est morte. Mais moi, je pense qu'il y a un manque de responsabilité de la part de cet établissement hôtelier. Il y avait un transport disponible là-bas, ils ont préféré attendre qu'une ambulance vienne et non pas transporter la personne à l'hôpital. Si la personne avait été transportée par un véhicule qui était sur place cela aurait pris cinq minutes et peut être qu'on aurait pu éviter ce drame.*

The Minority Leader: I do not know whether the Commissioner know that there is a protocol to observe when dealing with somebody who is sick especially this is a tourist. We want to develop tourism in our country and we have this sort of service. This is not good. I would like to ask the Respected Commissioner, will he deal with that urgently. Because it is not normal that up to now when there is an accident, we do not have any SAMU. So, we are playing with lives of people here.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, we have already begun to work on it. *Mais une fois encore, je vais dire quelque chose, que chaque établissement hôtelier aurait dû avoir un transport à leur disposition qui était sur place, mais ils n'ont pas transporté la personne à l'hôpital. Ce qui aurait pris cinq minutes. Mais là, ils ont attendu 30 minutes pour avoir le service d'une ambulance.*

Mr. J.N. Volbert: Madam Chairperson, is it true to say that a sum of Rs 50 m. were earmarked since 2012, sum received from Lototech for the construction and the setting up for an emergency unit including the SAMU?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, I am not aware of this sum that the Respected Member is saying but I will look into the matter.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

EQUIPMENT/SPORTS REGIONAL COMMITTEES – LIST/PROCUREMENT/TENDER

(No. B/63) Mr. J.R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to sports equipment donated by her Commission to any sports regional committee(s), Centre de Formation, Centre d'Entrainement and regional sports club, she will, for the benefit of the House:-

- (a) table a detailed list of all equipment donated since 2012 to date per club/committee/centre specifying the funds involved;
- (b) state if procurement thereof was made through tender and, if so, to indicate the successful bidder; and
- (c) table the tender specifies together with the list of bidders, if any?

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a) of the question, being given the numerous requests for equipment made by regional

committees and coaches processed at the level of my Commission, it is quite cumbersome to provide information requested by the Respected Member in such a short delay. However, I wish to highlight the different supports and equipment provided to Regional Sport Committees, Centre de Formation and different *Ecoles de Sports* during the period that we have been governing this island. So, the support range as follows:

- (i) Technical equipment for training such as javelins, shotput, discus, medicine balls for athletics;
- (ii) Boxing gloves, boxing tracts, gum shield, boxing shoes, breast protector, punching bags, jumping ropes for boxing activities;
- (iii) Kimonos for Judokas;
- (iv) Wrestling shoes and wrestling tracts for wrestlers;
- (v) Tract suit, short and jerseys, singlets for all disciplines for training and competition;
- (vi) Football shoes, shin guards, stockings for football training schools;
- (vii) Balls and nets for ball games such as volleyball, football, basketball and handball;

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, on a point of order. The Commissioner was requested to table this information. I do not know why she is coming with a list. You table the thing.

Madam Chairperson: You have requested the information. The Commissioner is giving you the information. Either you accept the answer or..You have the answer. The table will be provided. I am on my feet Respected Member. She said, it is being compiled. Yes, proceed Commissioner.

Ms. M.R.L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, thank you. I have made a short list just to.. as I have said it is cumbersome for 2012. So, let me continue. It is almost finished.

- (viii) Prizes in terms of medals, shields and cup for all disciplines;
- (ix) Petanque balls and petanque for regional committees and clubs;

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- (x) Equipment for National and International Competitions like National Youth Games, “Jeux des Iles” etc. And, also we have mentioned basketball, handball and all these things.

With regard to training schools, equipment are being provided on an as and when required basis. I wish to inform the House, Madam Chairperson, that the quantities of equipment provided and frequency of donated equipment is also subject to availability of funds.

In addition, there is other fixed equipment that the Commission has put at the disposal of athletes, the boxing ring at Malabar, the judo mats and also there are increases in the funds allocated to Regional Committees which has raised from Rs 6.5 million to Rs 8 million in this current budget.

Madam Chairperson, I also wish to highlight that a need assessment for equipment at the level of ‘*Ecole de Sport*’ and ‘*Centre Formation*’ has been completed and procurement of new equipment will be carried out as from next month. In addition, the proposal for a grant scheme to Football and Volleyball Committee for purchase of sport equipment among others has been finalized and will be released shortly.

With regard to part (b), Madam Chairperson, of the question, I am informed that procurement of equipment is made by the Procurement Section of my Commission which determine the procurement method in line with the Public Procurement Act 2006 and range from direct procurement, that is, informal quotations, restricted bidding, request for seal quotations and open advertised bidding.

Madam Chairperson, same as list of equipment donated since 2012, it is cumbersome to compile and state the successful bidder for each procurement made for equipment since 2012.

Madam Chairperson, with regards to part (c) of the question, it would be cumbersome to compile to tender specifications together with the list of bidders in such a short time.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

**PURCHASE OF DRONES AND OTHER RELATED
EQUIPMENT/LIST OF BIDDERS/MONEY DISBURSED/ITEM VOTE**

(No. B/64) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries & Others whether, in

regard to the purchase of drones and other related equipment by his Commission, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) and table the list of bidders including the successful bidder together with the specification of the equipment;
- (b) the amount of money disbursed per apparatus; and
- (c) under which item vote same was bought?

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):
Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am pleased to inform the House that in line with the policy of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to strengthen surveillance of the lagoon marine resources of Rodrigues, my Commission decided to purchase three drones to better equip the Fisheries Protection Services for a more effective and efficient enforcement of fisheries legislations. The overall aim and objective is to effectively combat the problem of illegal fishing, which is affecting the lagoon fisheries stocks and their socio-economic and ecological potential.

Accordingly, Madam Chairperson, tenders were launched on 13 March 2017 through Restricted Bidding method of procurement. The following suppliers were shortlisted after a market survey and invited to submit their bids: -

- (i) Mack Tools, Port Mathurin, Rodrigues;
- (ii) Rodnet Ltd, Port Mathurin, Rodrigues;
- (iii) LHK Joli Store, Port Mathurin, Rodrigues;
- (iv) Sixth Ocean Ltd, Port Louis, Mauritius; and
- (v) Drone and Dream Ltd., Ebene, Mauritius.

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling the list of bidders, including the successful bidder, namely Drones and Dream Ltd. together with the specifications of the equipment.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (b) of the question, the amount of money disbursed was Rs 80,000 VAT inclusive. Other accessories and training cost about Rs 90,000 per unit VAT inclusive. For the procurement of these drones and accessories, such as batteries, such as, *rotégé soleil*, smart phones, hub charger, car chargers and three working days training by professional plus commissioning, a total of Rs 510,000 VAT inclusive was paid.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (c), the Vote Item was ENV- 7104 – 31-113-006 – FSH-000-A01114 – Fisheries Development.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner whether the drones are fitted with infra-red devices so that it can also patrol at night?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: No, Madam Chairperson, the drones are not equipped with infra-red simply because it is very costly and it is not very effective at night.

Mr. J.N. Volbert: Madam Chairperson, est-ce que le commissaire est au courant qu'un des drones a déjà fait son plongeon en survolant la mer ?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Non, Madam Chairperson, je ne suis pas au courant.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, I think the drones, it is quite surprising, the government buy drones, three drones for Rs 85,000. I think that if you want really to solve this problem of *pêche illegal*, so you should may be buy drones with more specifications. Rs 85,000 for three drones.

Madam Chairperson: Come up with your question, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, I am coming. The Commissioner who is supposed to, I mean, do servicing on the drone if ever, whether he has just bought the drones like this, one off or were there any guarantee and so on, on these equipment?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, of course, on any equipment which is bought there is guarantee. Of course, there is two years guarantee on that. And also you know, it is a policy, the Member was questioning whether we could have bought something else. This is a very important device as far as combat illegal fishing is concerned. Also, I think he is questioning the cost. As I said, we did not buy only the drone, the drone is just the thing that goes up. You have got the camera; you have got all these things that goes with it. And also spare batteries. Because the drone works for only for 25 minutes and we cannot go out and have one battery for one drone and work for 25 minutes. So, we bought about three batteries for each drone. So, there are a lot of accessories which goes with it which makes the cost goes that high.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: You know one thing that I do not understand. The Commissioner just said that the drones are not effective at night. But in the specification, it is written night vision. So, have you been provided with the right drones or you have bought *ti cochon dan sac*? I do not understand. In the specification here, it is written, night vision. One of the specifications. How come

the Commissioner, he said that it is not effective at night? So, which is which, we do not understand.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, night vision is clear, it is a vision. You can look at the people. You can use the drone to look at the people. But you cannot use the drone. The main reason why we bought this was we cannot go close to the people we can take picture. But we do not have this infra-red camera which was supposed to be attached to the drone. But night vision is okay. We can have the drone and look and see. That was the main objectives of buying the drone. Even at night you can go and you see fishermen doing illegal fishing but you cannot take pictures. During the day you can because the drone is not equipped with infra-red cameras. It is equipped with infra-red binoculars which help us to see and then we can use the Fisheries Officer can see if there is any illegal fishing being done in such and such place.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I would like to know, Madam Chairperson, who is the one who do all the specifications, who decided to put all these specifications. Is it the Commissioner himself? Is it the officers of his Commission? So, we want to know.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, there are a lot of organisation having drones here. We mainly contacted the Police Unit in Mauritius which help us to have these specifications.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, *j'ai l'impression que les choses ne passent pas comme il se doit.* Prior to the setting up of this unit, if I can call it like this, for good surveyance of the sea of Rodrigues, there should have been a plan. A sort of, we cannot call it a business plan. The Commissioner, I think, should have a plan, the way forward to see how to cater for these drones. But I think it is surprising to understand here. They purchased a camera and all accessories for the sum of Rs 800,000, which is a huge amount for the RRA. Right? And, at our surprise we see that these cameras are not equipped with infra-red. Can I ask the Commissioner actually to put infra-red on these drones/camera how much it will cost the RRA?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I do not have the figure, but when you have the drone and you have the camera, you can add any camera. So, we can buy one anytime, if need be. But for the time being.. What would have happened if we bought the drones... what would have they said if we had bought the drones for Rs 1.6 m. *Ah they would have said, why did you put the infra-red. Tou céki to fer lor ça la ter là na pa bon.* So, we did buy something which is useful for the Fisheries Division.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, I do not think that these cameras are useful actually. Because most of the time all these frauds happened at night. So, we have bought/purchase Rs 800,000 of equipment and we cannot meet the objectives of these equipment. Can the Commissioner inform the House, whether this is okay for him or not?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, this is okay for me. Because definitely they do not know the importance of this machine. You know how to go close to the reef..

Madam Chairperson: Order please. Respected Members, order please. Yes, Commissioner proceeds with your answer.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: The main important use of a drone is to go close to the fishermen so the Fisheries do that have to go close. Especially, in Rodrigues at low tide the boat of the Fisheries cannot go in the lagoon. Unless, we put some wheels to the boat. But for the time being we do not have these devices. So, the drone is very important for them. For example, if we have fishermen doing illegal fishing in Grand Bassin, where we cannot go there with the boat because of the shallow lagoon. We use the drone to go and inspect the vicinity. Such was mainly purchased for the day. But if need be...

Madam Chairperson: Second Island Region Member, this is the last time.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, madam, sorry.

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner please proceeds.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, the drones were mainly purchased to be used during the day. And we are working on this. And, I am glad to inform the House people are saying that it was not a good thing to do. But I am surprised, if people watched last time, people in Mauritius are saying that we are much ahead of Mauritius. We have drones, we gave people GPS. And, also recently we got a letter from the Ministry for Fisheries asking us for the specifications because they want to buy the same thing. So, which is which?

The Minority Leader: One clarification, I would like from the Respected Commissioner. He is saying that the infra-red device they put on the drones cost a lot. And after that, he said he does not know how much this cost. Which is which? He would like to know whether he has the information or not. He cannot say something and then afterwards he says he does not know. Because *ban fraudeur c'est à soir ki zot ale fraudé*. So, we need the device for night vision.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, it is difficult for people to understand what is happening. With an infra-red camera, if you take a picture you need a flash to be able to see, to differentiate the people. The drone goes quite high, where do you get these flash to..

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, as a cameraman, professional cameraman, the Commissioner is misleading the House when he says..

Madam Chairperson: No, this is not correct. This is out of order. You cannot say that the Commissioner is misleading the House. No, this is not correct. This is out of order. You have to withdraw.

[Interruption]

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Withdraw what? What do you want me to withdraw? The Commissioner is misleading the House.

Madam Chairperson: No, this is out of order, Respected Member.

[Interruption]

The Minority Leader: On a point of personal explanation because it seems that the Respected Commissioner seems to miss a few points. Concerning infra-red, you do not need flash because even in astronomy to see different stage, you do not need a flash to see them because infra-red does not need that. Just for the sake of..

Mr. J. R. Payendee: You need a flash because what is the aim of taking the picture of someone doing illegal fishing. You need to be able to take this to Court. So, how do you take a picture of infra-red to Court? Infra-red is to see what is happening. It is not to take a picture. It is not legal to take an infra-red picture to the Court. So, that is the aim of using drones for enforcement.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

**HIRING OF EQUIPMENT – MODE OF PROCUREMENT/DATE
QUOTATION LAUNCHED/ITEM VOTE**

(No. B/65) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Training and Others whether, with regard to the hiring of equipment by her Commission, from September 2015 to date, she will state: -

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- (a) mode of procurement thereof including the price quoted by the respective successful bidder;
- (b) the date on which the quotation/tender was respectively launched therefor together with the date at which same was delivered to her Commission; and
- (c) to which item vote were claims charged per respective item, if any.?

The Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunications and Others (Mrs. R. M. R. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madam Chairperson, I am informed that since September 2015 to date sound system equipment and marquees was hired for the various activities of the Commission.

In 2015, sound system was hired through informal quotation amounting to Rs 55,000 and Rs 10,000 to successful bidders of Les Jeux des Femmes de l'Océan Indien held on 05 and 06 September 2015 held at Camp du Roi, Baie Lascars and Pointe L'herbes. Quotation was floated on 02 August 2015 and awarded on 13 August 2015 under Vote Item Promotion of Women Development: DCC – 402 – 22900936.

For the year 2016, in March 2016, in connection with International Women's Day held at Grande Montagne, sound system was hired for the amount of Rs 30,000. Informal quotation was sought on 02 March 2017 and was awarded on 08 March 2017 under the Vote Item Promotion of Women's Development: DCC – 3101 – 22900936:

In May 2016, in connection with the Family Fun Day for EPR held at Grand Bay, sound system was hired from the successful bidder amounting to Rs 10,000 through informal quotation. Launched on 06 May and delivered on 15 May under the Vote Item: Training: DCC – 3101 – 22900927.

In August 2016, in connection with the Salon des Métiers et des Entreprises and the fifth edition of Infotech, the Commission went through procurement procedures for the hiring of sound system and marquees respectively. Sound system was hired to the amount of Rs 50,000 through Informal Quotation. Quotation floated on 02 August and closing date set for 30 August. The Vote Item was under Training: DCC – 3104 – 22900927.

As regards to hiring of marquees for the same occasion, I am informed that the matter is before Court and that it would be subjudiced to give further details at this stage.

In connection with Jeux des Femmes held on 05 to 06 November 2016, sound system was hired from different groups amounting to Rs 152,350 through Informal Quotation sought on 18 October with closing date on 26 October 2016. So the Vote Item was under Promotion of Women: DCC - 3104 – 22900936.

In view of the Universal Children's Day held on 20 November 2016, sound system was again hired up to the amount of Rs 34,500 through Informal Quotation launched on 15 November and closed on 17 November.

In 2017, in connection with Innovtech 2017, sound equipment was again hired amounting to Rs 9,000 through Informal Quotation dated 29 June 2016 and delivered on 04 August 2017 under Vote Item Infotech: 4103 – 2290097:

In view of the official opening of the Rodrigues Student House held on 12 August 2017, marquees and sounds were hired for the amount of Rs 169,170 under Vote Item RRA Student House: 4104 -31111001 – 4010405.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, I would like to know from the Respected Commissioner. Well my point of view, we could have saved a lot of money by using, for example, school compound, and social centres compound instead of using marquees. Being given that there is a problem with the marquees; can I know whether all the funds for the rent of the marquees have been done? Can we know whether all the funds have been spent?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Being given, Madam Chairperson, as I have just informed that the matter is before Court, no payment has been done up to now.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Can we know, Madam Chairperson, the nature of, since the matter is before Court. For a marquee we go to court. So, what is the problem, can we know the nature of this problem?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: So, in fact, because I have been advised not to give additional information so I have to stick to that.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, can I know from the Commissioner how is such a huge amount of money being spent in hiring of sound equipment. I see that in at least one activity there has been Rs 50,000 spent on equipment whereas the last hiring of equipment amount to Rs 9,000. Can I know from the Commissioner why there is such a huge difference?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Madame la présidente, ça dépend de l'envergure de l'activité. On a fait un concert des femmes pour les Jeux des Femmes, je pense que la demande, les besoins en terme de son, n'est pas la même chose pour un Infotech sous des marquises.

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

At 12.30 p.m. the Assembly was suspended for one hour

On resumption at 13.37 p.m. with Madam Chairperson in the Chair

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, further the point of order of the Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel, I have gone back to the records of these days' sittings and have found that indeed a number of unbecoming words have been flown on the floor of this House and more particularly as a direct challenge to the authority of the Chair. For the sake of maintaining the dignity and decorum of the House, I will not be repeated the chosen words of the Minority Leader but I am requesting the Respected Minority Leader to withdraw unconditionally the words he used at the end of PQ B/57..

RECRUITMENT - PSYCHOLOGIST IN POST/QUALIFICATION/SALARY

(No. B/66) Mr. J.N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Child Development and Others whether, in regard, in regard to Officers posted at her Commission, she will: -

- (a) state the recruitment process for the Psychologist, presently in post, indicating if recruitment is on a permanent basis and, in the negative, to specify the starting and ending date of the contract period or other working terms;
- (b) state and table the qualifications of the Psychologist together with the salary obtained since assumption of duty to date?

The Commissioner for Child Development and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madam Chairperson, as regards to part (a) of the question, applications were invited from interested qualified candidates from the Mauritius Public Service (PSC) on 20 August 2015 (Public Advertisement No. 47 of 2015) for employment as Psychologist on a contractual basis in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The Psychologist assumed duty at my Commission on 27 March 2017 on a contractual period of two years.

As regard to part (b) of the question, the Psychologist holds:

- A Bachelor of Arts (BA) in English, Journalism and Psychology from the Bangalore University, India since June 2010; and
- A Master's Degree (MSC) in Abnormal and Clinical Psychology from the Swansea University, United Kingdom since 12 December 2012.

Her salary is defined as per the PRB rate.

**SEMPA – NO. OF RANGERS & COMMUNITY OBSERVERS/RENEWAL
FREQUENCY - EQUIPMENT**

(No. B/67) Mr. J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries & Others whether, in regard to the South East Marine Protection Area (SEMPA), he will obtain information for the benefit of the House and state;-

- (a) the actual strength and organigram thereof specifying the number of Rangers and Community Observers attached thereto together with their respective conditions of service;
- (b) the renewal frequency of equipment used therefor indicating the last time officers thereof were provided therewith?

The Commissioner responsible for Fisheries & Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, I have to inform the House that the SEMPA Management Unit is headed by the Acting Project Manager, who is supported administratively by a Management Support Office Clerk. The SEMPA Management Unit is supported by a statutory body namely, the SEMPA Management Board established under the SEMPA Regulations of 2011, which provides the strategic direction the development of the Marine Protected Area.

The SEMPA Management Team is supported by three Fisheries Protection Officers and six Field Rangers who are responsible for proper monitoring, control and surveillance within the MPA. They are assisted in the field by eighteen (18) Community Resource Observers (CROs) who have the role of sensitizing the fishers community and ensure interface between fishers and SEMPA. The CROs also assist in the recording of resources, their uses and the different current changes in these resources within the SEMPA.

Out of the nine Field Rangers, four were recruited in February 2010 and five in May 2011. They were recruited under a contract of one year, renewable in 2010 and in 2011. They have been offered contract employment on a month-to-month basis for a period of 12 months as from May 2012 renewable every year. Two Field Rangers have taken employment in the public sector and one has unfortunately passed away. As at date, there are six Field Rangers in post.

The CROs were recruited on a sessional basis through a co-management approach in February 2010 and April 2011 under the (UNDP/GEF) funded Project “Partnerships for Marine Protected Areas in Mauritius and Rodrigues.” This is part of a concept of community participation whereby the community members are actively involved in the implementation of key activities for the development of the Marine Park. Five CROs are recruited from each of the ten fishing villages within the SEMPA watershed. Currently, there is a total of 18 CROs supporting the SEMPA management team. As such, they are being paid a daily stipend of Rs 450 for assisting the SEMPA management team for different field activities. The Executive Council has already approved for the recruitment of 32 additional CROs to establish a pool of fifty CROs.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (b), the Field Rangers and Community Resource Observers have been issued with protective equipment including boots and raincoats in August 2015 while uniforms were issued to the Field Rangers in December 2015. Procedures have been initiated by my Commission for the renewal of these protective equipment. Additionally, the Field Rangers and Community Resource Observers have been issued with pocket torches for facilitating their works during night patrol in June 2017.

Mr. J.N. Volbert: Under what command are the CROs and Rangers working?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: They work under the command of the Assistant Manager of SEMPA.

The Minority Leader: Can I ask the Respected Commissioner. There was a report that was prepared by a Consultant, the Seychellois Alain Cedras. Can I know whether this is strictly adhered to, if this is being followed?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, a report has been written and whatever we think good in this report we are using. But we are not supposed to respect the whole of the report.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I know that government and donor’s agencies have spent money on that report. So, it is quite surprising that the Commissioner

responds in that way. Well, I would like to ask him, the SEMPA Board whether he can tell us the various members of the SEMPA board and whether he is on the board himself?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I am not supposed to be on that board and the board are composed of representatives and stakeholders, like the representative of Terre Mer is the Chairman of the board, Mr. Ravina. We have the President of Rodrigues Kite Surf, Diving Club, Mr. De Baize. We have the President of Committee Advisory Council, Mr. Samois. We have the Vice-president of Committee Advisory Council, Mr. Speville. We have the Secretary, Committee Advisory Council, Noella Perrine. We have the Officer-in-charge of Fisheries Research and Training Unit, Mr. Perrine and we also have the Controller for Fisheries, Mr. Meunier, a representative of the Environment Unit, it used to be Mr. Azie but we will change soon because has moved. We have the Manager himself, Mr. Pierre Louis and the President of Association du Touristes Reunniens, Mr. Benoit Jolicoeur.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Can we know, I do not know if I have heard well, but I would like to know whether there are fishermen on this board?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: We have the representative of fishermen but not fishermen themselves.

Mr. J.N. Volbert: Madam Chairperson, since this project is very important to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Can I know how long Mr. Pierre Louis I think is acting at the SEMPA?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, Madam Chairperson, he has been acting for quite a long but it is true but we have already advertised the post.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

**ADVISERS - NAME/NUMBER/COMMISSION
/RENEWAL OF CONTRACT**

(No. B/68) Mr. J.N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the employment of advisers at the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, from January 2012 to date, he will:

- (a) state and table the name(s) and number thereof as well as the Commission to which they are attached, specifying their respective qualifications, salaries and their duties/responsibilities thereat;

- (b) state if any adviser's contract has not been renewed and, if so, when and why?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that 15 Advisers have been recruited either on a full time or on sessional basis since February 2002 to date. I am tabling their names together with their qualifications, duties and conditions of employment as well as the Commissions they are attached.

As regards to part (b) of the question, I would like to inform the House that two of them have resigned for personal reasons and that the contract of one Adviser was not renewed on the same terms and conditions. However, he was re-offered employment as Adviser on new terms and conditions.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Chief Commissioner, the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports, they continue to finance certain disciplines in Rodrigues. Can we know how these are funded? To which bank account this money goes?

The Chief Commissioner: The Advisers are financed by the different commissions where they are working, at the different commissions.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Can I ask the Chief Commissioner what is the date of the last nomination of Adviser in the RRA?

The Chief Commissioner: I will table the information.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner as regards to the terms and conditions whether it is on a renewable basis or it is per mandate? Yes, permanent or one-year renewable basis?

The Chief Commissioner: It can be either renewable, it can be for mandate, for one year or two years and they can also resign from the post.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: What are the new terms and condition with regard to new recruits advisers?

The Chief Commissioner: New recruits - advisers. You have all the information in the papers.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, from the information we had before and now when we are looking at the different post, posting rather. So, we

have seen that there are Advisers who have changed posting. This means that for the last mandate they were at a commission now they are attached to another commission. Can the Chief Commissioner explain why there is a change in posting?

The Chief Commissioner: This depends on the different Commissioners. Either the Commissioner would like to have the same or would like to have another Adviser.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

COACHING IN SPORTS ACTIVITIES – RODRIGUES

(No. B/69) Mr. J. N. Volbert (The Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to coaching in sports activities being delivered in Rodrigues, she will state if all thereof are being dispensed by officers of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and:-

- (a) if so, in what capacity and to table a list of all tutors/trainers currently employed /involved therefor;
- (b) if not, to state which organisation, if any, is providing same and to state and table all conditions/arrangements made therewith, and
- (c) indicate from which item vote these tutors/trainers are being paid together with all incidental expenses in connection thereto as well as the respective item vote?

The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Ms. M. R. Edouard): Madam Chairperson, as per Sports Act 2016, the organisation promotion of sports in each respective discipline as may be recognised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Commission for Youth and Sports is the responsibility of the respective Federation and consequently, the Regional Sports Committees. Training of athletes and sports cadres is one component of promotion of these sports disciplines. The Commission for Sports is responsible to set the policies and the strategic direction within which all sports projects and activities should be developed in Rodrigues. In this respect, the Commission acts as a facilitator to support Regional Sports Committees and other sports organisations in their quest to optimise athletes' performance at all levels.

This includes inter alia provision of coaches and sports animators for mass training and detection of athletes from grassroots to semi-grassroots levels that is, from the age of 8 to 15 years. Financial support to regional committees for

organisation of training courses for coaches and officials locally and abroad, financial support for the participation of athletes, coaches and officials abroad, organisation of training locally for coaches so that they upgrade their level notably the *Brevet d'Etat de Cadre Sportif (BEDS)* and the Sports Management Course which is being organised for the first time in Rodrigues. Madam Chairperson, the Commission for sports counts three Coaches, one Senior Coach and three Advisor Coaches among its staff to conduct training to two main training structures including *Ecole de Sport* and *Centre de Formation* of Volleyball, football, wrestling, athletics, judo, *handisport* and boxing.

Given the limited number of coaches with respect to the number of *école de sport* in high demand from athletes, my Commission has 40 Sports Animators who operate on a sessional basis training to athletes of *Ecole de Sport* and some centre de formations. Their work is being supervised by the Coaches and Senior Coaches of my Commission. The contract of the Sports Animators is renewable yearly subject to satisfactory service. In addition, some *écoles de sports* are run by some animators who have required coaching qualifications but on a voluntary basis. Their case is being studied at the level of my Commission and a solution to compensate them is being worked out. In this context, a meeting with the Sports Animators was organised on 23 May 2017 at Malabar Gymnasium to assess the present situation with regards to Sport Animators and to listen and take stock of actual situation and/or recommendations to improve the training and coaching of athletes.

Other issues pertaining to Sports Animators, Madam Chairperson, were also discussed during that meeting including punctuality on training grounds, employment conditions and management of athletes before and after training sessions. A working session was also organised with the coaches on my Commission on Monday 14 August 2017 whereby, each Coach made a presentation on the different training structures falling under their supervision and a short analysis of the *Ecole de Sport* and *Centre de Formation* was also made. Ways and means to improve the different sports development structures are also under study.

A new organisational structure has been worked out which includes High-Level Sports Unit and that unit will comprise of the Medical Sport Unit, a High-Level Sports Scheme for Financial Assistance to High-Level Athletes and the creation of High Performance Training Sector with major facilities. The actual training sector will also be extended to athletes of the age of 21. Madam Chairperson, I am here tabling the list of Coaches and Advisor Coaches and Animators employed on sessional basis by my Commission. With regards to part (b), Madam Chair, I have to inform the House that the training of athletes above the age of 15 in most disciplines is done at the level of all Regional Sports

Committees and their respective clubs. The conditions and arrangement of training are specific to each Regional Committee and it would be difficult to table such conditions or information as it relates to the autonomous functioning of each Regional Committee and sports organisation.

With regards to part (c), Madam Chairperson, payment of cultures and animators is effected under Budget Item 8103211100001: Basic Salary and Allowance of Animators 8103 22900943. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: *Madam Chair*, est-ce que la Commissaire peut nous dire s'il y a des comités sportifs ou des *Trust* qui sont *implement* de Maurice et dont elle a le droit de regard ici ?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, only this Saturday with the coming of the Honourable Mr. Stephane Toussaint and the delegation from the Trust Fund for Excellence, indeed, the Trust Fund for Excellence has an antenna here in Rodrigues and of course, a line of communication has been established between the commission and the trust and we are exploring other sectors whereby, the Trust can operate in Rodrigues or to encourage more athletes to be under this programme.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: *Madam the Chair*, la Commissaire peut nous dire si avant l'arrivée de l'honorable Toussaint samedi, il y avait cette antenne qui était là déjà et qui était responsable, qui était le président de cette antenne ?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: *Donc, yes, there was this antenna in Rodrigues and indeed, the activities were restricted to athlétisme only. Now, l'éventail des activités a été élargi pour la boxe et le judo. Donc, auparavant, il y avait un officier... Pas un officier ; un membre d'un comité régional qui était responsable de cette antenne-là mais maintenant, la personne est toujours là mais une ligne de communication a été établie entre la Commission et le Trust.*

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Est-ce que, *Madam the Chair*, la Commissaire peut nous informer s'il y avait un transport qui a été mis à la disposition de cette ancienne antenne et qui a été servi, était desservi, était servi par une personne spécifique et avait-il une MOU entre le *Trust*, la Commission ou la Commission où la personne travaillait ? – Parce que la personne servait ce transport-là à n'importe quel moment, quelle heure de la journée.

Ms. M. R. Edouard: *Bon, d'après mes informations, il n'y a pas ancien Trust et nouveau Trust. This is the same trust. It is only the variety of activities that have been extended. Indeed, there is a transport that is attached to trust because there is that movement from school to sports infrastructure that needs to*

be done and indeed, there is that transport issue that will continue to operate. Yes, it is limited to Trust only.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Qui était responsable de ce transport ? Étant donné qu'il n'y a pas de comité, il n'y a pas de comité, ce n'est que samedi qu'un comité a été mis en place et où est le transport est garé ? Qui c'est qui a la maintenance de ce transport-là ?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Donc, il y a toujours... Enfin, il n'y a pas de comité qui a géré le *Trust* depuis avant ! Il y avait un groupe de personnes, des *tutors* et des coaches qui suivaient les enfants et ils continuent toujours à suivre les enfants qui sont sous le *Trust*. Maintenant, il y a un transport qui est *limited to the use of the Trust only*. Donc, auparavant, c'était le *Trust* qui gérait tout cela directement avec la personne qu'il avait nommée. Donc, maintenant, il y a une ligne de communication avec la Commission on travaille maintenant avec plus de collaboration mais la Commission savait qu'il y avait le *Trust* auparavant. Mais là, c'est le fonctionnement qui a changé par rapport au nombre d'activités qui est disponible.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: *Madam the Chair*, je pense que *respected Commissioner has not answered my question. I rephrase my question.* Je demanderais à la Commissaire où ce transport est garé depuis que le *Trust* existait. Un nouveau transport qu'on se sert actuellement, si dans l'enceinte du Gouvernement, si chez une personne spécifique.

Ms. M. R. Edouard: *Donc*, I do not have this information where the van is... I do not know! If I do not know, I do not know. But what happens is that the Trust has always been an independent body. It is only now that a line of communication has been set and we are going according to this line and let me tell you that the transport will remain at the custody of the Trust. There will be no change.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I ask, Madam, what is in this line of communication that has just been established on Saturday? Can Madam tell us more, enlighten us on this line of communication, please?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Yes, you can be enlightened, Madam Chair, because indeed, now, there is an officer at the Commission that can give views and accompany the athletes. Previously, it was very independent. Now, the Ministry itself has changed its mode of operation. So, it is clear that Rodrigues, too, has to change

Mr. J. N. Volbert: *Madam the Chair*, d'après mes informations, le *Trust*, il y avait trois... Ça fait le troisième comité qui existait, qui existe depuis samedi. Auparavant, le premier comité, il y avait le sport...

Madam Chairperson: Come with your question, please !

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Yes, Madam. Il y avait le judo, la boxe et puis ça, on a retiré et même ceux qui forment part de ce trust, il y a Monsieur A. W. Il est parti. Pourquoi ?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: *I am not aware of who is A. W. the Chair or whatever but I know that there is a committee, that previously they were dealing with* seulement l'athlétisme mais maintenant, on va vers la boxe et le judo et j'ai même proposé le *Trust* pour avoir un regard sur les sports d'équipe, les jeunes qui font un sport d'équipe; le volleyball ou le football. Donc, je travaille dans cette direction. *Mo pas travail zis pou guette dimoune.*

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, est-il vrai que the allowances of the tutors, trainers from the Trust, *l'argent est versé sur le compte personnel de quelqu'un ?*

Ms. M. R. Edouard: *Non*, we are not aware of it. As at now, all payments are done by checks according to our information but that information, I do not have this. This is totally new to me.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: *Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the Commissioner is not aware and then, she answers a question. Okay, very good. So, I would like to ask her* comment sont audités les comptes. Comment est-ce qu'on fait? Tout ce qui contrôle le diesel, paiement des *coaches* tout ça, comment est-ce que ça se fait et si la Commission a un regard justement surtout ça ?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: For forecast financial issues, I think that we have to query the trust because the Commission did not have direction in that. Only now we are starting with the officer to have a modus operandi to be put in place and as I told you, I repeat myself, the mode of operation has changed in Mauritius because the way it operated here in Rodrigues, it was the same operation. Now, we are changing. We are adapting to the same according to what the parameters, the legal parameters... No worries. Facebook is here for anyone to add whatever they want.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES – RODRIGUES

(No. B/70) Miss M. R. Collet (The First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Cooperatives and Others whether, in regard to the cooperative societies in Rodrigues, she will, for the benefit of the House:-

- (a) give information on any grant(s) and/or facility(ies) and/or assistance given thereto to ensure proper accounting bookkeeping and management of assets;
- (b) state the number of Cooperative Officers and Bookkeepers, respectively, currently providing assistance thereto?

The Commissioner for Cooperatives and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) : Madam Chairperson, as regard to part (a) of the question, yearly grants and one-off grants are provided to the cooperative societies as well as the service of bookkeepers. With regards to part 2 of the question, assistance is being given by the Cooperative Office and is composed of six officers at the level of the Cooperative Department and eight Bookkeepers serving 73 active Cooperative Societies.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

Miss M. R. Collet: Question B/71, please.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Pane fini repone sanla la?*

Madam Chairperson: Fourth Island Region Member.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: You announced this in your first announcement.

GRANT AND ASSISTANCE TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

(No. B/71) Miss M. R. Collet (The First Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Training and Others whether, in regard to any grant and assistance to university students by her Commission, she will, of the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) on any new facilities and assistance available as from this year;
- (b) the eligibility criteria to benefit therefrom; and

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- (c) number of students benefiting from same, if any, for academic year 2017/2018?

[Vide reply to PQ 57]

**APPLICATION AND/OR CONVERSION –
STATE LAND LEASES – RODRIGUES**

(No. B/72) Mr. J. R. Augustin (The Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to application and/or conversion for State Land leases in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House state the:-

- (a) number of application(s) received from 2012 to date indicating the different types of leases and the number that has been favourably considered type wise as at date;
- (b) number of application(s) still pending or which has not been processed; and
- (c) delay after survey until (i) the signature of leases and (ii) conversion of leases, indicating the time frame for obtention of the lease agreement by the applicant?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that 6,758 applications have been received from 2012 to date as follows:

Residential	6,184
Commercial	382
Industrial	192

I am further informed that some 3,394 applications have been favourably considered during the same period as follows:

Residential	3,100
Commercial	182
Industrial	112

Allow me, Madam Chairperson, to enlighten the House briefly on the processes involved from time of an application... Excuse me. Allow me, Madam Chairperson, to enlighten the House briefly on the processes involved from time of an application for a lease until the lease is granted.

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The recommendation is sent for approval by the Commissioner responsible for state land through the Departmental Head. A letter of intent is issued to the applicant informing him of the main conditions of the approval and requesting him to state whether he accepts the terms and conditions of the letter of intent. If the applicant is agreeable to the conditions, he has to effect payment of the survey fee as well as the rental for the first year. Once all the above is cleared, the Cadastral Office then drafts the lease agreement which the applicant is called upon to sign.

With regard to conversion of leases, Madam Chairperson, the lessee must submit an application to the Cadastral Office. The lessor, that is, my office, reserves the right to grant the request in line with guidelines in force subject to revised conditions inclusive of rent.

Their request for conversion includes the following steps:-

- (i) Checking whether lessee has settled all rent due
- (ii) Inspection/survey is carried out
- (iii) Recommendation is prepared by Cadastral Office
- (iv) Recommendation is approved by Chief Commissioner
- (v) Assessment of rent (if not already defined by standard rental) by Government Valuer upon their visit which is scheduled every six months; and
- (vi) Issue of letter of intent
- (vii) Payment of lease
- (viii) Drafting of lease
- (ix) Signature of lease
- (x) Registration of lease

Therefore, Madam Chairperson, it is to be noted that the survey stage is not the final step in the process of the lease agreement.

A specific time frame cannot be specified for the obtention of a lease since very often, it depends on the time taken for each different process.

However, a deadline of one month is required in the letter of intent for the applicant to accept the offer. Depending on the circumstances, the minimum time frame from survey to drafting of lease will be at least two months.

I have to inform the House that my office is taking several measures to reduce the delay in obtaining a lease. This includes:

- (a) the increase in the number of surveyors. Two Trainee Surveyors have been recruited and awaiting their training in Mauritius;
- (b) contracting out of the survey of land to private surveyors;
- (c) facilitating those possessing a residential lease to run a business on their lease without the need for formal conversion of the lease;
- (d) the forthcoming setting up of a fast track unit to deal with hardship cases;
- (e) the setting up of an e-processing system for lease to review and facilitate the whole process.

Furthermore, a request has been made to the Ministry of Housing and lands for the posting of additional surveyors in Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson, I have to inform the House that though more than 4,200 leases have been drawn for the period 2012 to date compared to 2,813 for the period 2007-2011. What a difference! *Be kine arrive la?* I read once again. I have to inform the House that though more than 4,200 leases have been drawn for the period 2012 to date compared to 2,813 for the period 2007-2011.

[Applause]

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: So what?

The Chief Commissioner: *Be nou pe travay!* I have instructed the Departmental Head to ensure that the process for granting a lease be reviewed and accelerated.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Concerning the conversion of leases, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House who decides the sum to be paid by the lessee?

The Chief Commissioner: That depends on the extent of the land.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: *So, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, j'ai cru comprendre que le Chef Commissaire avait parlé de conversion pour que des détenteurs d'un bail résidentiel peuvent éventuellement faire une activité sur leur bail sans conversion mais la question se pose lorsqu'on va vers les assurances. Donc, comme vous savez, dans les conditions pour un bail résidentiel et pour un bail commercial, c'est différent. Donc, qu'en est-il maintenant si la personne veut assurer ce business-là à l'assurance et commence ça va se passer ? – Parce qu'ils*

demandent des fois, pour les assurances, ils demandent qu'il y ait des conditions spéciales attachées à ce bail. Donc, qu'en est-il de tout cela ?

The Chief Commissioner: Il me semble que ma collègue a répondu à ce genre de questions. Il va y avoir quoi ? Oui, c'est un excès au bail pour la résidence. Oui, à mon avis, c'est une décision extraordinaire pour permettre que la personne puisse faire son business au plus vite possible au lieu d'attendre un bail commercial ou industriel.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Non, je comprends, mais qu'en est-il de l'assurance, des compagnies d'assurances à ce moment-là ? Eux, ils vont demander à ce qu'il y ait des conditions spécifiques. Qu'est-ce que l'Assemblée Régionale, le bureau du Chef Commissaire va faire pour pallier à ce problème-là ? – Parce que n'oubliez-pas, les compagnies d'assurance sont des compagnies privées. Donc, ils voudront avoir des garanties pour pouvoir assurer le business tel que ce soit.

The Chief Commissioner: On a pris tout cela en ligne de compte, *Madam Chairperson*.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Oui, oui je sais. Je peux comprendre que vous allez prendre en compte mais qu'est-ce que vous allez faire ? C'est ça, la question. On aimerait savoir. Prendre en compte, c'est quelque chose mais qu'est-ce que vous allez faire pour pallier à ce problème ? On est devant un problème ; vous allez prendre en compte après.

The Chief Commissioner: Nous allons prendre les actions nécessaires. Probablement, nous allons légiférer.

Madam Chairperson: Next question !

BUDGET SPEECH 2017/2018 – ENGAGEMENT 2

(No. B/73) Mr. J. R. Augustin (The Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Budget Speech 2017/2018, Engagement 2: “Faire prospérer notre Economie- L’industrie, l’innovation et l’entrepreneuriat, items 20 and 21, he will state where matters stand in relation thereto?

[Vide reply to PQ 58]

ENGINE OIL/LUBRICANTS – GOVERNMENT MECHANICAL WORKSHOP, CENTRAL ELECTRICITY BOARD & OTHERS

(No. B/74) Mr. J. R. Augustin (The Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to used engine oil/lubricants at the government mechanical workshop, the Central Electricity Board and other mechanical workshops all around Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state how this waste is being handled and disposed?

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, Madam, with regards to the handling and disposal of used oil and lubricants from the Government Mechanical Workshop and other private mechanical workshops around the island, my Commission has taken the following actions:

- (a) The collection of used oil from all the workshops and its shipment to Mauritius for recycling purpose by Ecofuel Ltd. The latter is a used oil recycling Company collaborating with the Commission for Environment to enable the proper disposal of used oil from Rodrigues. An average amount of 11,500 litres of used oil are shipped to Mauritius yearly for recycling.
- (b) Further to a request from Eco Fuel Ltd, the Commission for Environment has decided in May 2015 to meet the cost of freight to enable the regular shipment of the used oil to Mauritius. This measure was felt necessary to minimize the risk of environmental pollution by used oil in Rodrigues.
- (c) The Commission also decided to provide 31 registered and non-registered mechanical workshops with container facilities to store their used oil pending collection and shipment to Mauritius. The distribution was made in March 2017; five workshops generating more than 1000 L per month were provided with a 1000 L plastic container and the other 26 workshops have received a 200 L plastic container each.

With regard to the Central Electricity Board, I am informed that all used oil and lubricants generated are being collected from their power stations and disposed of by incineration at Pointe Monier.

The Minority Leader : I would like to ask the respected Commissioner, well, what he has said seems to be near *déclaration d'intention* but is he aware that there are plenty of used oil that are being released in the canal at the mechanical workshop and these go to the sea?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I have heard about it and I went personally with my officers and we did not notice such damage.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

MALE WARD – QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

(No. B/75) Mrs. M. T. Agathe: (The Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the male ward at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will state and table:-

- (a) the patients' accommodation capacity thereof, indicating if same has recently been increased and specifying if the space between the beds are in conformity with infection control norms, giving details;
- (b) measures taken to ensure that patients admitted thereto are immediately provided with a bed;
- (c) measures undertaken to minimize cross infection from intermixing of patients with varying medical conditions thereat; and
- (d) if his Commission is considering the construction of specialist wards, if so, when and if not, why not?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the male ward of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital can accommodate 28 patients.

The space between the beds is in conformity with the recommended 900 mm intervals.

As regard to part (b) of the question, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam is when the male ward at Queen Elizabeth Hospital is nearly full in capacity, convalescent patients are transferred to Mont. Lubin Area Health Centre in order to ensure that enough beds are made available for new admissions at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH).

All patients admitted are provided with a clean bed.

To minimize cross infection from intermixing of patients with varying medical conditions thereat, the male ward has three cubicles with two beds in each. Patients who need isolation are nursed in these cubicles to minimize cross infection.

Regarding to part (d) of the question, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the Commission for Health is contemplating of having the Queen Elizabeth Hospital extended to have surgical wards for men and women.

Just today, we have the visit of Indian consultants in the matters of civil works and a master plan will be made available for the Commission and they will advise us regarding the construction of these wards. Construction of wards will start after their report.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, je voudrais... si le Commissaire est au courant que le 06 juin, vers 11h25, il y avait trois patients qui avaient été admis au *male ward* dont deux graves ; un souffrant d'une attaque et l'autre qui souffrait des reins et qui avait à attendre plus de deux heures de temps pour avoir un lit ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I agree with the respected Member but as you know, we are doing all our efforts so that some convalescent patients be transferred to Mont Lubin. That is why in some cases, we have to wait for one hour for the transfer to have more beds.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, le Commissaire a dit que le *male ward* peut accommoder 28 patients. Dans cette Chambre, il y a beaucoup d'hommes. Je pense qu'ils conviendront avec moi que pour que la société progresse, il nous faut s'occuper de la santé des hommes. Il n'y a pas un seul hôpital, il y a deux *Areas Centres*, il y a des malades qui doivent être traités au.... Qu'est-ce que le Commissaire va faire ? Est-ce que nous irons vers la mort de nos hommes ou bien nous allons bien les accommoder ?

[Applause]

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Non, Madame la Présidente, à la Commission de la santé, au *Queen Elizabeth Hospital*, on fait tout pour donner aux patients des traitements bien adéquats et comme j'ai dit, si à Crève-cœur, la salle des hommes sont remplies, on les envoie à Mont Lubin mais on fait tout pour donner des soins adéquats aux patients.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I would like to ask the Commissioner being given that the RRA hires the service of consultants in Rodrigues, so, why does he have to wait for Consultants coming from India? Indian Consultants to... Yes, I know it may be special but how special it is compared to Consultants already working in Rodrigues? So, why is it?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: As I said, these Consultants are specialised Consultants regarding health problems. Even in Mauritius, they have contracted their services to have new buildings, new health wards be constructed in Mauritius.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes but normally, what we do, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam? The Consultants, they are told to do a work and they, Consultants, they hire their special Consultants. It is not the RRA to hire special Consultants for this. So, I do not know. This is your policy; I understand but how much money is being paid to that special Consultant?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson Madam, these consultants have been hired by the Ministry of health for us, to give us a help in the master plan for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The Minority Leader : I would like to ask the respected Commissioner if he is aware that since the construction of this male ward in 1961 if I am not mistaken, there were... Not 61, 63. There were 28 beds at that time and up to now, still, there are 28 beds. Is it not high time to revamp all these and to increase the number of beds and build another ward for the men?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I am surprised of the question of the Minority Leader. They were there from 2006 to 2011 and nothing was done. We have more beds as I have said, in Mont Lubin and La Ferme. Do not worry, we will come there.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Le Commissaire vient nous dire les patients vont être admis à La Ferme et Mont Lubin. Peut-on savoir combien de lits il y a dans la salle de Mont Lubin, le *male ward* de Mont Lubin et de La Ferme étant donné que nous avons une population d'à peu près 15,000 hommes à Rodrigues ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madame la Présidente, nous travaillons sur des préventions pour que la population de Rodrigues soit moins malade. Pour le moment, à La Ferme, c'est toujours en rénovation et on ne peut pas envoyer des patients à La Ferme mais à Mont Lubin, il y a une dizaine de lits.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: *Madam the Chair*, d'après mes informations, la rénovation de Mont Lubin et de La Ferme n'a rien à voir avec l'augmentation des lits parce que ce n'est que des bureaux qu'on a construits. Il n'y a pas de *wards* additionnels à Mont Lubin et à La Ferme.

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Mr. S. P. Roussety: I do not agree with the respected Member. I do not know where he has his information but we are working. We send patient to Mont Lubin and later on, we send to La Ferme for....

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: The question is still not answered. So, we would like to know whether, there will be new wards at La Ferme and Mont Lubin Health Centres.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: There are male ward and female ward that will be at La Ferme.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I insist, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. I insist.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Standing Orders are clear about that. An answer to a question cannot be insisted upon if the answer is refused by the Commissioner.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I rephrase. Yes, I want one more question. We have been talking about new male wards; not about... We know male ward exists there. We know! We know how many beds are there but my question was about how many new, whether there will be new male wards at Mont Lubin/La Ferme prior to the construction/renovation works.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, there are male wards at Mont Lubin, male ward at La Ferme and at present, there is only perhaps one patient at Mont Lubin but La Ferme also, we will have about eight to ten beds. So there will be no additional male ward at La Ferme and Mont Lubin.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT

(No. B/76) Mrs. M. T. Agathe: (The Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the physiotherapy department of his Commission, he will state the:-

- (a) number of officers attached thereto indicating their grades as well as the grades of the officer in charge of the unit; and
- (b) number of officer(s) from the department attending to patients in the Intensive Care Unit?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mont Lubin. Mrs. Chairperson, Madam... *Dans l'hôtel, pavillon.*

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please address the Chair.

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mrs. Chairperson, Madam,

- (a) there are two Physiotherapy Assistant in post, one Trainee Physiotherapy Assistant in post at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Physiotherapy services are offered only at Queen Elizabeth Hospital on a daily basis.
- (b) From Monday to Friday, they cater for disabilities and give treatment to both male and female in-patients and out-patients and attend patients in Intensive Care Unit, also.

Furthermore, with the implementation of the Performance Management System in Rodrigues, action is being initiated with the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life for the posting of a Physiotherapist on a tour service to Rodrigues and hopefully, the officer will be in Rodrigues by the end of October 2017. Action will be initiated for the creation of a new post of Physiotherapist on the Rodrigues establishment in the next exercise, budget exercise.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: *Madam Chairperson, je voudrais attirer l'attention du Commissaire s'il sait que d'après l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé, only a Senior Therapist can work with patients in the ICU.*

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. That is why we are asking the Ministry of Health to help us to have a Physiotherapist on a tour service. It would be done as from October.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the Table has been advised that PQ B/88, B/89 and B/90 have been withdrawn. Thank you. Next question!

PATIENTS NEEDING WHEEL CHAIRS

(No. B/77) Mrs. M. T. Agathe: (The Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to patients needing wheel chairs, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the:-

- (a) number of wheel chairs available in the different centres of his Commission; and
- (b) patient average waiting time before being provided therewith together with the steps his Commission is considering in order to ensure rapid provision thereof upon request?

The Commissioner for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste):

Madam Chairperson, in regards to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the number of wheelchairs available at the different centres are as follows:

- Malabar - one commode wheelchair
- La Ferme - Nil
- Port Mathurin - 5 junior wheelchairs + 5 commode wheelchairs

Madam Chairperson, as regard to part (b) of the question, allow me to remind the house that when the portfolio of Social Security was entrusted to me in 2012, the situation regarding wheelchairs was chaotic. When I took office, wheelchairs were not available and I received complaints from many disabled persons who had been waiting for as long as nine months as same were not available. It seems that this issue was not a priority for my predecessors.

Once I took cognizance of the matter, I instructed my staff to initiate procedures for the procurement of 100 wheelchairs to meet the demand for the long outstanding list of needy persons and at the same time, ensuring that we have a buffer stock to ensure prompt delivery.

I remember we received a first consignment in August 2012. My Commission donated more than 70 wheelchairs at Malabar, Port Mathurin and La Ferme Centres to those who had been waiting for months.

Since then, wheelchairs have been issued to the applicant on the day of application, they put the application itself or at worst on the next working day.

However, Madam Chairperson, I have to inform the House that since July 2016, the national policy for the issue of wheelchairs to potential beneficiaries has changed.

It is no longer a universal facility, but has become means tested, that is, subject to income assessment. As per actual criteria, the household income of applicants should not exceed Rs 30 000 per month in order to benefit from this service.

It takes now about five working days to complete all assessments and investigations including site visits so as to determine eligibility of applicants by Higher Social Security Officers, provided that all relevant documents, such as pay slips are submitted. Once this process has been completed, the claimant can receive the wheelchair. I am tabling the requested information.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, je voudrais demander au Commissaire si quand un malade, il sort de l'hôpital, il est alité, le médecin lui donne un papier lui disant d'aller à la sécurité sociale pour avoir une chaise roulante et arrivé là-bas, on vous fait venir deux/trois jours parce que moi-même, moi, j'ai été victime de ça et après trois jours, on vous dit apportez *payslip*, apportez ici, là-bas ? Ce serait bon aussi que le Commissaire voit que le médecin sache qu'elles sont les nouvelles conditions pour que quand il donne un papier à une personne, on lui dit mais si votre salaire dépasse Rs30000, vous n'avez pas accès à cela.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I think it is the duty of the Medical Practitioner to understand all these procedures because wheelchairs can also be bought from private sources. But, we have to follow the procedures established at the Social Security Office and without a medical certificate, obviously, Social Security Officers cannot deliver wheelchairs to patients.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, j'ai bien compris ce que le Commissaire a dit mais il a dit qu'on peut acheter les chaises roulantes. Mais à Rodrigues, où est-ce qu'on va se procurer de ça ? Si vous avez un malade alité chez vous, il vous faut vous rendre à Maurice payer votre billet, faire deux jours à l'hôtel, acheter une chaise roulante qui pèse plus de 30 livres, payer un passage pour la chaise roulante pour arriver à Rodrigues. Donc, pour nous, c'est un martyr. S'il peut voir comment est-ce qu'on peut faire pour qu'on puisse avoir des chaises roulantes même contre paiement... *Pas mo filleul sa*. Contre paiement parce que c'est difficile pour une personne de se rendre à Maurice pour aller acheter une chaise roulante parce qu'à Rodrigues, ce service-là n'existe pas et que la population aussi sont informés de ça.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I understand the point of the respected Member which is very valid one that let me just tell you that we are working also in close collaboration with some NGOs dealing with the disabled association. That is why up to now, we have received only three cases where applicants are not eligible and two of them have been able to obtain same from these organisations. But what happened in the third case, I understand that officers from Social Security should first of all ensure that eligibility or not of the patient. In the third case, I understand that the applicant has refused to call to the office with the payslip.

That is why they have not yet decided upon the case but upon determination of eligibility or not, then, we will liaise with the concerned NGO so that we can provide the person with a wheelchair but we cannot go against the national policy. As Social Security, we do not have policy. We are only having the administrative part of it.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, la personne n'a jamais refusé de produire les *payslips* mais sur la façon dont on a expliqué parce qu'on n'était pas au courant de ces critères. Donc, pour vous dire : « *Il vous faut signer un statement ! Il vous faut signer un statement !* » Mais maintenant, quand on demande des renseignements, il y a une façon aussi que M. le Commissaire puisse dire à ses officiers de bien recevoir des gens parce que ce n'est pas évident si on savait qu'on allait pas recevoir quelque chose de se rendre là-bas pour aller être insulté !

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Je voudrais savoir du Commissaire qui c'est qui a changé les critères pour l'octroi, pour être éligible pour avoir ces *wheelchairs* ?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: The Ministry of the Social Security. So, through the Minister in July 2016, I said in my reply.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Ils veulent franchir une nouvelle étape...

Madam Chairperson: Come with your question, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I am coming. This is the introduction of my question. Normally, those people who ask for wheelchairs, they are old persons. People are working in Rodrigues, building Rodrigues, building the autonomy. If the Government of Mauritius change the criteria, you agree with that. What is the role of the Commission? You should subsidies! You have money, you have the budget. Just subsidies!

[Applause]

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Why is it that you can give cooperatives money to run their business and old persons asking for a wheelchair, you cannot?

Madam Chairperson: We are still waiting for the question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, I am coming. So, what is the solution for this problem? This is a real problem because we care for our elderly. So, even though Mauritius has taken the decision.... we should not agree with that here in

Rodrigues. So, we should come with solutions. So, what is the solution of the Commissioner?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: *C'est triste qu'un enseignant n'a rien compris !* I do not want to subsidies because I am giving it free of charge through NGOs as I have said rightly.

[Applause]

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: It is free of charge!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the Table has been advised that PQ B/86 and B/87 have been withdrawn. Thank you.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, can I have one supplementary, please? Yes, this is... I have understood!

Madam Chairperson: Please, address the Chair.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: *I am addressing to you, yes. We can also go because it is the end of question time. No worry. Well, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, we know! I am talking about those people who are not eligible. Il ne faut pas changer la tournure de la question. Moi, j'ai dit concernant ceux qui n'ont accès, qui ne tombent pas sous les critères pour avoir ces wheelchairs. Ne venez pas me dire qu'il donne un free of charge. Free of charge, oui, ceux qui sont éligibles mais ceux qui ne sont pas éligibles, qu'est-ce qu'ils vont faire ? A travers les NGOs, qu'est-ce qu'il a fait ? Combien ils ont donné ? Jusqu'à maintenant, zéro wheelchair. Qu'est-ce qu'il va venir me dire après ? Il va faire, il va, il va. Il va faire. Donc, il doit quand même... On doit avoir des réponses concrètes.*

Madam Chairperson: What is your question ?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, est-ce qu'il va venir, si jamais il n'y a pas de NGO, est-ce qu'il va subventionner ceux qui veulent acheter les wheelchairs ? C'est une solution. Est-ce qu'il va le faire ? Oui ou non ?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: C'est très chagrinant encore une fois, Madame la Présidente. C'est triste. J'ai bien dit nous avons eu trois cas où les personnes concernées ne sont pas éligibles et dans les trois cas, enfin on a confirmé deux cas et nous avons un accord avec une organisation non-gouvernementale et deux

personnes ont déjà eu leurs *wheelchairs* though they are not *éligible* under the criteria set by the Central Government.

As a caring Government and Commissioner, I have taken the decision to go, to use another system because at the end of the day, it is important for the person to get the service free of charge. *Mais il y a un troisième cas comme je vous ai dit*, the procedures have not been completed, the process, because that applicant has not yet brought the payslip. Once the eligibility criteria have been set/determined, then, if the person is eligible, he/she will receive it through the normal safety net procedure which is existing at the national level. If not, then, we will work with this NGO who is providing for those people who are out of this system. *Mais* there is no need to subsidise because we are giving it free of charge!

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

ATHLETES UNDERGOING TRAINING – MALABAR GYMNASIUM

(No. B/78) Mrs. M. T. Agathe: (The Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to athletes undergoing training at Malabar gymnasium, she will inform the House on:-

- (a) transport arrangements provided to athletes after training to go home, specifying means of transport and to table the list of vehicles currently used therefor together with the number of athletes each vehicle can accommodate;
- (b) if there are assistant drivers, including females, to look after these athletes in the different vehicles; and
- (c) if all the athletes are covered by an insurance?

The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Ms. M. R. Edouard): Madam Chairperson, it has always been the practice to provide transport facilities back home to athletes undergoing training sessions with a view to optimise sport's performance and also to provide students athletes to get home early to ensure their education is not neglected. Madam Chairperson, I am hereby tabling the requested information.

With regards to part (b), Madam Chairperson, to my knowledge, there is no such post as Assistant Drivers on Rodrigues Establishment. Madam Chairperson,

I also wish to highlight that the actual system put in place for the athletes implies an annual estimated cost of Rs 6 m. consisting mostly of overtime for drivers. My Commission is working now itself on a more cost-effective system to offer a better service to athletes and better working conditions. A meeting was organised with all the drivers involved in the conveyance of athletes at my Commission on the 10 July to look into the difficulties being encountered by all partners using the service and proposals for its improvement. Further consultation will be organised with parents before the end of this year to further consolidate the partnership with parents, the Commission and all stakeholders for follow-up of athletes' behaviour and performance.

Madam Chairperson, with regards to part (c) of the question, it is a fact that all athletes who possess a valid sports licence are covered by an insurance. Moreover, all users including athletes who are officially authorised to travel in Government vehicles fall under the responsibility of Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Madam Chairperson, it is the priority of this Government as spelt out in our budget measures to provide an insurance cover to all athletes, coaches, referees and officials during trainings, competitions and for related internal displacement to ensure that they are protected in case of injuries or prolonged illness, temporary or permanent disabilities resulting from their activities.

I am pleased to announce that a draft proposal for the insurance policy has already been worked out at the level of my Commission and will be discussed with Insurance Companies by the end of this month. The final scheme will be implemented before the end of the financial year 2017/2018. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madam Chairperson, je voudrais demander à la Commissaire si elle sait que la condition dans laquelle ces athlètes retournent chez eux après leur entraînement. Ils finissent l'école, ils vont dans les centres. Il y a des voitures avec des bancs en bois et parfois, les enfants sont un petit peu insignifiants parce que nous aussi, nous étions enfants. Parce que moi, j'attendais un enfant qui revenait. Il y avait deux autres qui avaient deux pieds dehors. De voir à ce que ça ne se reproduise pas parce que dans le passé, on a déjà eu un cas que tout le monde connaît.

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Donc, en effet, c'est pour ça qu'on a eu la réunion avec les personnes concernées justement, qu'on est en train de travailler pour avoir un meilleur système de transport pour les enfants parce que nous voyons aussi qu'il y a une augmentation au niveau des athlètes qui s'engagent dans le sport... *prospect also around sport*. Donc, tout cela est pris en considération pour l'avenir.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, est-ce que la Commissaire est au courant dans un passé très récent que des athlètes ont dû marcher de Malabar pour aller demander des secours à la station de Petit Gabriel tard dans la soirée parce que les transports qui devaient venir les chercher ne sont pas venus ? Est-ce que vous allez mener une enquête qui était responsable de cette situation-là ?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: As at date, there is no reported case on this issue but we shall find out.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam Chairperson, Madam, may I ask the Commissioner, I do not know if I have really heard the part (b) of the question. There is mention including females. Do we have some female attendants who help these athletes, especially the girls, to get into the bus, to return back home safely?

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: You do not listen to my question. Yes, I repeat the question. Part (b) of this question, it is mentioned including females. So, I would like to ask you because I did not hear it in your answer. Do we have female attendants or assistants whatever they are, female ones to help these athletes, especially female athletes, to get into the bus to make sure that they are returned back home safely especially at night, because we are having more and more problems with our society actually?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, I have answered to that part of the question saying that there is no such post under Rodrigues establishment and even in Mauritius, this does not exist yet and, indeed, if we can recall, the training sessions are done with mixed abilities both boys and girls. The education system, we have a mixed education system. So, I think that question does not arise but we are going to explore it. But this system does not exist even in Mauritius.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam, I am not telling the Commissioner to compare with Mauritius. We are autonomous in sports; you have full administration under the sports. So, you have to *franchir une nouvelle étape*, you have to put policy to ensure that these athletes, especially girls, they return back home safely! That is what I am asking you. Sometimes, you use private cars, private vans to carry out these athletes. Are these privacy vans equipped with a female attendant?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: We are not using privacy vans to carry athletes. It is only now what we are exploring the different options that are to be used to accompany our athletes home and as we said previously in various functions and

so on, we said that we are going to devise athletes centred strategies, that would put the athletes at the centre, that they are safe and they have the required consideration. So, all these are taken into consideration and we will come to you in due time to expose the different options adopted and you will be informed of same. An assessment has already been made. So, we just have to be a little bit patient.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

**IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE –
RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

(No. B/79) Mr. Z. Félicité: (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the implementation of electronic attendance at the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will inform the House on the number of government departments and buildings which are currently equipped therewith, indicating since when and to table a list thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I would like to inform the House that the Pay Research Bureau Report 2016 has recommended that Electronic Attendance System should mandatorily be implemented in every Ministry/Department/Organisation by December 2016. In line with the above mentioned recommendation, a Circular was issued on 11 July 2016 requesting all Departmental Heads to ensure that all officers are encouraged to record their attendance electronically and to initiate action for the Electronic Attendance System to be implemented in their respective Commissions by December 2016 as recommended by the PRB.

Since not all Commissions have implemented the system, a reminding circular was issued on 24 July 2017:

- (i) to ensure that every officer use the Electronic Attendance System for the recording of attendance. Those who do not wish to enroll their fingerprints should be allocated with an Employee Code Number along with a password.
- (ii) Containing guidelines on how to deal with cases of lateness.

As at date, eight Commissions/Departments of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly are presently equipped with the Electronic Attendance System. The others have already initiated actions to be equipped.

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling the list thereof.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Madam Chairperson, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House whether, all employees have agreed to use the electronic attendance system?

The Chief Commissioner: It is a PRB. It is a decision of the Pay Research Bureau.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Madam Chairperson, can the Chief Commissioner inform the House the amount of money disbursed for acquisition of one fingerprint-based electronic attendance?

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, Madam, can the Commissioner inform the House about the control of this fingerprint in each and every department? Can he enlighten the house on that?

The Chief Commissioner: I think, Madam Chairperson, it is the Island Chief Executive because a last reminder has been sent to every Commission asking them to install this electronic attendance.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, can I ask the Chief Commissioner what happens if an officer refuses to...

Madam Chairperson: This is hypothetical. You have to rephrase your question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: So, whether he can inform the house with regards to refusal of electronic attendance?

The Chief Commissioner: I have mentioned it in my reply. Those who do not wish to enrol their fingerprints should be allocated with an employee code number along with a password.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

STATE LAND ALLOCATED TO ULTRA MARINE LTD – ANSE NICOLAS

(No. B/80) Mr. Z. Félicité: (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to State Land allocated to Ultra Marine Ltd at Anse Nicolas, he will state to the House: -

- (a) the nature of project that will be implemented thereat indicating the total investment in connection thereto and to table same; and
- (b) if there is a partnership there-into same and which includes Rodriguan(s) and, in the affirmative, to give details thereon?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the company “Ultramarine Resorts Limited”, a private company incorporated on 03 December 2002 represented by Mr. Christopher Edward Astor Oxenham and Mr. Sylvan Jerry Oxenham, held an industrial lease for the construction of a hotel over a plot of state land of 4 hectares and 582 m² at Fumier, Rodrigues valid for a period starting from 18 July 2003 to expire on 30 June 2023.

Thereafter, the Cadastral Office prepared the deed of cancellation to the existing lease mentioned above on 10 March 2008, the company was requested to call at the Cadastral Office to sign the deed of cancellation by letter dated 04 April 2008, the company informed that they would not be able to sign the lease agreement on 21 March 2008 being given that their Chairman was under medical treatment and was not able to fly to Rodrigues. The Cadastral Office issued another letter of reminder dated 09 April 2008 calling the lessee to sign the lease cancellation agreement on 18 April 2008. The lessee did not turn up but informed that they would not be able to sign the lease cancellation agreement for late notice.

In the meantime, (that is prior to the signature of the deed of cancellation) a plot of land of an extent of 2 Hectares and 467m² was excised from the land of 4 Hectares 582m² leased to Ultramarine Resorts Limited and was leased to another company. The lease agreement for the latter was signed on 17 January 2008.

In view of the fact that a lease was granted to another company without the cancellation of the existing lease of Ultramarine Resorts Ltd, legal advice was sought on the way forward as Ultramarine Resorts Ltd has then made a representation. The then Legal Adviser has tendered that as the case stands now, it will be in the interest of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to avoid any claim for damages and that negotiations be held with the lessee Ultramarine Resorts Ltd to come with a win-win situation.

Further to negotiations, on 02 May 2013, the company Ultramarine Resorts Ltd informed that they had no objection to relocate their project to Anse Nicolas for the construction of an Agri-Tourism Complex and will not claim any damage for the excision of land at Fumier and the cancellation of the said lease. An industrial lease and an agricultural lease was then finalized and signed on 22 December 2016.

Madam Chairperson, the project is destined to be an Agri-Tourism Project on a plot of 1 Hectare 850m² at Anse Nicolas, of which 1 Hectare reserved for Tourism Residence complex of 10 individual luxury bungalows and the remaining of 850m² for related bio agricultural development.

The project cost is estimated to be around Rs 100 million.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the company regroup five Mauritian citizens shareholders bearing the same family name that is, the Oxenham family.

Since their act of birth is not available, I cannot thus confirm whether they are Rodriguan born or not.

The Minority Leader : I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner if I heard him well, since 2002, the lease agreement at Fumier was signed. Can I know why from this time up to the cancellation of the lease, nothing was done? So, I do not think there could have been legal problem with that.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said, Madam Chairperson, there was a pressure on them to give part of land to another businessman. This is the main problem at Fumier and they refused to have a win-win situation. They will not ask for damages and that is why they ask to have another plot of land which is at Anse Nicolas. I think the decision was taken with them and the Government at that time.

Madam Chairperson: Question time is over.

MONT LUBIN COLLEGE – BUILDINGS CONDITION

(No. B/81) Mr. Z. Félicité: (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Mont Lubin College, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information from the Rodrigues Educational Development Company Ltd and state if all the buildings thereof are in good condition indicating if any of them is leaking, giving reasons, and of any remedial measures/actions which have been taken in relation thereto?

[Withdrawn]

PORT DEVELOPMENT IN RODRIGUES

(No. B/82) Mr. J. R. Ramdally: (The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Port development in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information from relevant authorities on:-

- (a) if the Port Master Plan has been completed, and, in the affirmative, to give details thereon and, in the negative, to state the expected time for its completion thereof; and
- (b) the actions, if any, that are being taken to implement the Port Master Plan?

[Vide Reply to PQ B/60]

SECURITY – PLAINE CORAIL AIRPORT

(No. B/86) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: (The Second Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to security at Plaine Corail Airport, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information from the relevant authorities, including the Commissioner of Police, on if any enquiry has been initiated into the alleged loss of a “*colis*” which occurred on or about the 27th January 2017 at the then Sir Gaetan Duval Airport?

[Withdrawn]

WRITE-OFF OF ITEMS

(No. B/87) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: (The Second Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the write-off of items at the Commission for Public Infrastructure, from 2012 to date, he can state and table all items disposed per category per price and the names of purchasers thereof, if any?

[Withdrawn]

COASTAL ROAD LINKING RIVIÈRE COCOS TO SONGES

(No. B/88) Mr. J. N. Nemours: (The Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the coastal road linking Rivière Cocos to Songes, he will state if he has been informed of the bad conditions of the road thereat and, if so, to indicate if any remedial measures will be taken therefor during this financial year?

/UNREVISED/

[Withdrawn]

**RIVIÈRE COCOS VILLAGE
– STATE OF GABION BRIDGE
– ABSENCE OF STREET LANTERNS**

(No. B/89) Mr. J. N. Nemours: (The Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Rivière Cocos village, he will, for the benefit of the House, state if he intends to carry out any survey on the state of the gabion bridge crossing the river and of the absence of street lanterns thereat and, if so, when and, if not, why not?

[Withdrawn]

HOSPITALS & AREA HEALTH CENTRES – RODRIGUES

(No. B/90) Mr. J. N. Nemours: (The Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to hospitals and area health centres in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House:-

- (a) indicate the number of dentists, generalist and specialist doctors, respectively, attached to each; and
- (b) table a list thereof, indicating their qualifications and field of specialisation, respectively?

[Withdrawn]

SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED TO RODRIGUAN STUDENTS

(No. B/91) Mr. J. N. Nemours: (The Second Local Region Member of Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Training and Others whether, in regard to scholarships offered to Rodriguan students, she will, for the benefit of the House, indicate where matters stand for this current year?

[Vide reply to PQ 57]

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

VISIT OF SECRETARY GENERAL – UNWTO

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, it is with great pleasure that I wish to apprise the House of the recent visit of the Secretary General, United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), Dr Taleb Rifai, accompanied by programme director, Regional Programme for Africa, Mrs Marie Elcia Grandcourt who effected a one-day visit to Rodrigues on 02 August 2017. The honourable Maurice Loustau-Lalanne... Excuse me. A delegation was accompanied by the Minister of Tourism, honourable Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, the honourable Maurice Loustau-Lalanne, Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine of the Republic of Seychelles, Mr. Donald Payen, Executive Vice-President of Air Mauritius Ltd. and Mr. Pascal Verolot, CEO Vanilla Islands Organisation from Reunion Island. Allow me to emphasise that it is the first that Rodrigues welcome such a high-level delegation in the tourism sector. Furthermore, the Secretary General United Tourism Organisation arrived on Sunday 30 July and owing to very good working relationship established with my parent Ministry in Mauritius, the mission has been extended to Rodrigues for one day. My Commission had a fruitful working session with the delegation at La Residence. I am pleased to inform the House of the immediate outcome of the mission which are as follows:

- (1) The UNWTO Secretary General, Mr. Rifai has proposed to send a team of experts to Rodrigues:
 - (a) to assess the actual situation of tourism sector and to provide my Commission with a roadmap which will help in the development of a strategic document for the short, medium and long-term.
 - (b) The UNWTO has developed two toolkits which may be extended to Rodrigues. They are namely:
 - (i) hotel energy solutions which helps in the reduction of energy consumption by 17% and,
 - (ii) the UNWTO International Networking of Sustainable Tourism Conservatories, another tool which helps to better understand the impacts of tourist has on an area, its footprints. It was mentioned that Rodrigues could be the first observatory of Africa.

Madam Chairperson, during the margin of the mission of the UNWTO delegation, they also proceed to a brief visit to Cotton Bay Hotel, Le Tekoma Boutique Hotel and François Leguat Tortoise Reserve in view of providing the delegation an insight of the tourism products offered by the island. I am pleased to inform the House that before leaving Mauritius, the UNWTO's Secretary

General was interviewed by a national newspaper, “*Le Mauricien*” and whereby, he declared his appreciation with regards to Rodrigues’ authenticity. Madam Chairperson, the UNWTO’s mission in a way consolidates the main vision of my Commission that is, to promote Rodrigues as an ecological authentic tourist destination. Thank you, Madam.

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner for Training and Others.

SCHOLARSHIPS TO HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE STUDENTS

The Commissioner for Training and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) : Madame la Présidente, sur une question de transparence, je tiens à apporter quelques précisions puisque ce matin, on n’a pas eu tout le temps qu’il faut pour donner les informations par rapport aux allocations de bourses indiennes. Donc, je vais surtout ici mentionner quelques dates importantes. Donc, en effet, le 06 janvier 2017, la Commission a reçu une correspondance du Ministère de l’éducation informant des bourses allouées à Rodrigues. Suivant cette lettre datée du 06 janvier, le 17 janvier 2017, mon bureau a lancé des communiqués de radio invitant le public Rodriguais à venir s’informer sur les bourses offertes et faire acte de candidature. La dernière date pour compléter le formulaire était fixée au 14 février 2017. Après le 14 février, une semaine après, le 22 février, le *Scholarship Screening Committee* s’est rencontré pour l’exercice de sélection et durant cet exercice, comme je disais ce matin, deux listes étaient établies ; une liste avec les candidats fermes et une liste avec les candidats... un *reserve list*.

Cette liste établie après le *Screening Committee*, a été envoyée, dûment envoyée, donc, j’ai des correspondances échangées avec le Ministère de l’éducation, le 27 février 2017 avec les noms des candidats... *and firm pour les deux secteur, Science and Engineering, any other subjects except Medicine*. Après, le 27 février, mon bureau a complété tous les documents des étudiants listes *on the firm list*. On a envoyé tous les documents dûment complétés le 14 mars 2017 au Ministère. La première lettre émanant du Ministère *for the first Letter of Award*, je veux dire, a été reçue le 11 juillet 2017 et l’élève a accepté l’offre. Une deuxième lettre, *Letter of Offer*, est arrivée à mon bureau, le vendredi 21 juillet aux alentours de 15h00 et le même jour, mon bureau a appelé l’élève qui est boursière pour lui informer que le samedi, le 22 juillet, elle doit passer pour collecter sa lettre. Effectivement, le 22 juillet, elle est venue au bureau. Elle a pris connaissance de sa lettre et lundi après-midi, le 24 juillet, elle est revenue avec une lettre déclinant l’offre de la bourse indienne.

On est arrivé le lundi 24 juillet et le mardi 25 juillet, mon bureau a écrit au Ministère de l'éducation pour leur informer que celle qui a été offerte the *second Letter of Award* que la fille a décliné l'offre et qu'on souhaite et qu'on propose que *next on the list* soit considéré pour la bourse. Donc, après le 25 juillet, après que la lettre a été envoyé, tout de suite le même jour, le document pour celui qui est on *reserve list* a été envoyé au Ministère. Entre temps, il y a eu une troisième lettre qui est arrivé le 07 août pour un autre étudiant qui a accepté l'offre de la bourse indienne. Donc, pour dire que jusqu'ici, il y a eu trois offres au niveau des bourses indiennes et deux ont accepté l'offre et un étudiant a refusé jusqu'ici. Donc, pour dire aussi que s'il y avait eu des retards dans l'envoi des documents, aucun étudiant n'allait avoir de bourses. Donc, toutes les procédures ont été suivies comme il se doit dans le temps qu'il faut pour assurer que les enfants bénéficient de leurs bourses. Donc, je souhaite tout simplement maintenant que les autres qui attendent peuvent avoir leurs bourses en temps voulu.

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner for Health and Others.

SAMU (SERVICE D'AIDE MEDICALE URGENTE)

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Madame la présidente, merci de me donner la chance pour intervenir sur le sujet de SAMU à Rodrigues. Ce matin, une question a été posée concernant une dotation qu'avait fait le *Lottotech* à Rodrigues. Une dotation de Rs50 million.

Je tiens à rassurer la Chambre que l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues n'a jamais reçue de l'argent pour ce projet de SAMU. Si l'argent avait été crédité, c'est avant que l'Organisation du Peuple de Rodrigues est arrivé au pouvoir en février de 2012.

Étant un Gouvernement responsable, si nous avions eu cet argent, une telle somme d'argent n'aurait pas été sans utilisation et la mise en place d'une unité de SAMU aurait vu le jour avec un personnel adéquat, même s'il fallait recruter sur contrat.

Je tiens à rassurer la Chambre que le Service D'Aide Médicale D'urgence, le SAMU, sera une réalité bientôt sans la dotation de *Lottotech*.

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner for Youth and Sports.

ORGANISATION OF YOUTH CANCUS – MALABAR

The Commissioner for Youth and Others (Ms. M. R. Edouard): Madam Chairperson, I wish to apprise the House that in the context of the

International Youth Day, my Commission has organized for the first time in Rodrigues, a Youth Caucus on Friday 11 August under the *Chapiteau* at Malabar for a whole day.

The theme of the Caucus was “*Ene Sexualité responsable pou ene zeness epanoui*”.

Madam Chairperson, though there is a gradual decrease in the number of teenage pregnancies during the past five years, we should remain on the alert regarding teenage pregnancy and more importantly, to devise key actions and strategies to further protect our youth against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIS) and HIV/AIDS which are also serious threats to our youth.

Madam Chairperson, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly wants to promote Rodrigues as an island where respect prevails, that is, respect of the law, respect of values and respect of individuals and people living on this island. We firmly believe that the best way to cure any disease/problem is through prevention.

Madam Chairperson, my Commission is moving one step ahead in its sensitization and prevention programme and it is the “*raison d’etre*” of the Youth Caucus.

The objective of the organisation of this activity was to provide opportunity for young people and a platform for them to express themselves freely on the youth sexuality and to highlight key strategies to increase awareness of our youth on sexual reproductive health issues as a positive behavior – change communication approach, to focus on appropriate actions to be taken thereafter and to give the youth the required information in a timely manner for them to better protect themselves and the young people around them.

Madam Chairperson, some 200 young people of different organisations, that is, youth clubs, colleges, MITD, Centre Agricole Frère Remi, Atelier de Savoir, athletes, young professionals and other social workers participated in the Caucus.

We had a Lecturer from the University of Mauritius and a person from Rodrigues who acted as facilitators and Bernard Baptiste, a high-level athlete and medical practitioner was invited as a special guest of the Youth Caucus intervened during the event on the perseverance and determination to be a high-level athlete and on sexually transmitted diseases – its causes and consequences. Bernard Baptiste is also a role model for our youth as he is a model of success, perseverance and holds the values we are upholding in our youth.

/UNREVISED/

Madam Chairperson, on the same occasion, we seize this opportunity to rewarded the young athletes that made outstanding performance in international competitions namely:-

SN	NAME	CASH PRIZE (Rs)	PALMARES
1.	LEGENTIL Marie Christiane	40,000	Silver Medalist -52 kg category Francophony Games held at Cote d'Ivoire - July 2017
2.	BAPTISTE Henry Bernard	25, 000	Bronze Medalist in Shot Put Throw – Francophony Games held at Cote d'Ivoire July 2017
3.	FRANCOIS Brian Fils	25,000	Bronze Medalist in the World Boxe Française Championship held in Croatia from 22-25 June 2017
4.	CLAIR Merven	40,000	Silver Medalist 69 kg category at Congo Brazaville for the African Championship
5.	ROUSSETY Jean Francois (Coach)	5,000	Coach of Brian Fils FRANCOIS and Mrs Angelina BAPTISTE

Madam Chairperson, the following issues were discussed and debated on during the Youth Caucus:-

- (i) Knowledge and information about sexual reproductive health;
- (ii) Sexual behaviour and impact of the media on youth sexuality;
- (iii) Existing legislations/laws concerning sexual offences;
- (iv) Responsible behaviours
- (v) Life plan of young people regarding their priorities to marriage, employment and career;
- (vi) Roles of parents/gardians/teachers in providing Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) education and values.
- (vii) Ways and means to protect our youth against sexually related issues and prevention against premature sexual activities.

Madam Chairperson, the findings around the Youth Caucus are being studied and discussed with much scrutiny. However, my Commission is planning a second meeting with the school representatives and every youth organisation or organisations working with the youth.

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A first meeting will be held with parents and other partners working with the targeted group.

Madam Chairperson, my Commission is also using different modern media of communication to further sensitise our youth and manage a responsible and intelligent use of the media. A clip and short films were also produced to sensitise our youth on the said issues and I must point out that everybody who participated in the films were young Rodriguans themselves and they acted as positive peer pressure. I seize the opportunity to thank the MBC for having already broadcasted the clip and film on television.

Madam Chairperson, I must say that the organisation of the first Youth Caucus met its objectives as the youth present participated fully and openly in the discussions and my Commission has been able to collect enough materials and data for future youth oriented, more impactful and result oriented strategies and initiatives.

Madam Chairperson, my Commission will be furthering its actions for a healthy youth be it in small groups or through mass activities. I wish to thank all partners that participated fully in making that event successful.

Thank you, Madam.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that this Assembly be now adjourned to Tuesday 24 October 2017 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

MATTERS RAISED

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

FISHING IN RODRIGUES

The Minority Leader : *Madam Chair*, alors qu'on parle de pousser nos pêcheurs vers le large, aller en dehors du lagon, c'est triste de constater qu'on a cinq bateaux de pêche pour les Rs58 millions. L'argent est venu principalement des donateurs étrangers, des organisations étrangères et ses bateaux restent lamentablement à quai, restent inutilisés. J'aurais aimé demander au Commissaire

de la pêche d'essayer de voir si on ne peut pas aider ces coopératives. Parce que ces cinq bateaux appartiennent aux coopératives. Je sais qu'en 2012, on avait mis en place un *Management Special* pour s'occuper de cela, pour essayer de voir comment faire un *business plan* pour pouvoir faire travailler ces bateaux. J'aurais aimé savoir si le Commissaire de la pêche pourra faire le nécessaire pour aider ces pêcheurs.

Aussi il y a le cas des six bateaux de *Rodrigues General Fishing*. Les six bateaux, je ne sais pas ce qu'il est advenu de ces bateaux. Ils ont été éparpillés un peu partout. Il y en a un qui est même allé à Port Sud-Est. Depuis que le bateau est allé à Port Sud-Est, c'est resté inutilisable. Donc, on ne sait pas pourquoi on a donné ça là-bas et les autres bateaux, ils sont où, s'il continue à pêcher. Donc, vous savez quand on reçoit des dons, des billets étrangers, on ne les utilise pas à bon escient, c'est Rodrigues qui perd la face. Donc, j'aurais aimé demander au Commissaire de la pêche d'essayer de faire le nécessaire parce qu'il en va de la réputation de Rodrigues et il en va de la vie même de nos pêcheurs. Ce serait bien de les aider à mieux gagner leur vie et les pousser à aller en dehors du lagon. Je vous remercie.

Madam Chairperson: Second Local Region Member of La Ferme.

MEDICAL SERVICES IN RODRIGUES

Mr. J. N. Volbert: I thank you, Madam the Chair. The objective of this statement is not just to criticise but to take cognizance of the actual situation and make appropriate recommendations on health sector. There is no doubt that the health service has witnessed some improvement over the past decades and the main health indicators such as the infant mortality rates and the maternal mortality rates have been stabilised and comparable to that of the major regional hospital in Mauritius. We have also seen a slight increase in the infrastructure quality. We must, however, not rest on our base pretending that things are all okay and continue business as usual. I would like to highlight some areas where deficiencies have been noted and appropriate measures need to be taken to improve the service delivery level in our health sector in Rodrigues.

Madam the Chair, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is the only hospital of our island. Over the past years, significant capital expenditure has been incurred in infrastructural development but all centred on the administrative block rather than facilities that directly serve to patients. It appears that required facilities to deliver better services to the patient who calls daily to the Health Department for required services have been forgotten. With regards to the infrastructure, it is to be said and noted with regrets that the male ward actually has a capacity of 28 beds as it was in the years 1960s though our population has increased and the number and

type of disease expanded. The whole male ward is used to admit patients of different diseases altogether.

Patients have complained of the metal beds covered with thin mattresses. I would suggest the Commission and ask the Commission to develop a good land use plan all the available space and ensure that the implementation of the proper infrastructure plan, a new block and other desired required building could have been constructed in the space available at the ex-maternity ward. We could have got a surgical ward, a medical ward, a psychiatric ward etc. Actually, patients of different wards are housed together with the risk of cross infection. The desired infrastructure will thus ensure the patients are kept in the appropriate department ward. Actually, psychiatric patients are mixed with those suffering from infectious diseases. The hospital compound which is expected to be exemplary, still has a very poor environment. The hospital ward is invaded with stray dogs and chicken are seen roaming freely.

The existence of the public prone in between the OPD and the male ward is quite a very important issue and appropriate decision must be taken to ensure the security of patients being transferred from OPD to various wards on trolleys and wheelchairs. In respect to sanitation, patients often complain of the presence of rats in some wards. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital does not have a proper drainage system. These should be considered as top priority for immediate remedial. Moreover, in the underground floor of the maternity ward, a sterilised place close to the ways drainage pipes which is not appropriate. The development work in the two Area Health Centres has already seen the extension of administrative blocks while the bed capacity is the same as before. Many patients attended to Outpatient Department through the ambulance services of the Commission.

It is good to be noted the increase in the number of ambulance newly brought. Very good but it could also be very important that ambulance drivers obtain adequate and necessary training to enable them to deliver efficiently. However, it is unfortunate that up to now, no *Service Aide Médical D'Urgence* has been set up though several staff has already trained for that. I would make an appeal so that a SAMU Unit be dressed for the welfare of our population. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is the only regional hospital in our Republic which is not provided with an Emergency Unit and SAMU Service. We already have trained staff. So, I beg the Commissioner to move forward in setting up of such unit.

I wish to draw the attention of my colleagues on the importance of vaccination programme. Our children are vaccinated so that they develop immunity against certain preventable diseases. What will happen if children are

vaccinated with vaccines that do not conform to the appropriate cold chain as prescribed by the World Health Organisation (WHO)? The purpose of vaccine cold chain is to maintain product quality from the time of manufacture until a point of administration by ensuring vaccines are stored and transported within WHO's recommended temperatures. Here, I am not blaming anyone but just to refer to the Audit Report 2016 on page 66. I quote:

'Certain items were required to be kept at controlled temperatures in biomedical refrigerator where only one was available for domestic refrigerators, in which there were no thermostat to control the temperature, were also used to keep such item.' Unquote.

I wish that such deficiencies must not be repeated. Madam the Chair, last but not least, it is the wish of our citizens that we get the service that is comparable to that of Mauritius. I wish to thank the staff of the Health Service for their dedication. We have to agree that they be treated with due respect in a good manner for the appropriate service they are delivering. In this respect, the Commission has to ensure that we obtain the desired and qualified personnel to serve the medical and health service. Thank you, Madam the Chair.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: The Fifth Island Region Member.

HAZARDOUS WASTES – MONTAGNE PLATE

Mr. Z. Félicité: Thanks, Madam the Chairperson. Concerning the statement, I am referring to the answer given by the Commissioner of the Environment on the sitting 04 July 2017 concerning the disposal of hazardous wastes at Montagne Plate. With your permission, Madam the Chairperson, I would like to quote.

"The Commissioner said that 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." I unquote.

Since this question of disposal of hazardous wastes, asbestos, I would like to retain the attention of the House and to inform the Commissioner that these wastes are still there at Montagne Plate and which represents a real danger for the population, especially the localities. It is good to note that there are many animals grazing on that spot and these hazardous wastes represent a real danger for the people living in the village. So, I am calling upon the faith of the Commissioner

of the Environment to see to it that these wastes are being properly disposed. Thanks, Madam the Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Third Island Region Member.

INCIDENCE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY – SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Merci, Madame la Présidente, de me permettre de m'exprimer sur un sujet qui me tient vraiment à cœur et qui en ce moment, inquiète une bonne partie de la population : c'est la délinquance juvénile dans nos collèges. En 2012, il y avait 50 cas, un chiffre qui était déjà trop élevé et maintenant, ça fait une montée vertigineuse pour atteindre le chiffre de 600 en 2017 d'après les informations obtenues. Si les chiffres sont exacts, ça ferait une augmentation de 1100%. Un cas de plus est un cas de trop, Madame la Présidente. La situation devient de plus en plus difficile pour le personnel des collèges tout comme pour les parents et les étudiants qui s'adonnent vraiment à leurs études et pour tous ceux qui veulent que le pays avance et progresse. Les enseignants, malgré toute leur bonne volonté, sont dans l'insécurité car il y a des étudiants vraiment violents et avec cette loi qui protège ces derniers, on ne sait plus à quel saint se vouer.

La situation est très préoccupante, Madame la Présidente. Il y a entre autres, le problème de drogue, le problème de l'alcoolisme, le problème de retard, le problème de violence entre étudiants, le problème de laisser-aller de la part de certains parents, le problème du mal utilisation de portable/tablette au collège et même pendant des heures de classe, grossesse précoce, le problème d'absentéisme et tant d'autres, Madame la Présidente. Si vous faites un petit tour le matin et après les heures de classe aux abords des terminus, principalement à Mont Lubin et Port Mathurin, Madame la Présidente, vous verrez des étudiants en train de se balader ou tout simplement en grande conversation sans ce souci est que le temps perdu ne se rattrape pas.

Madame la Présidente, une autre situation qui inquiète beaucoup, c'est quel type de correction pour aider les étudiants qui fautent. Actuellement, c'est en principe une semaine de renvoi. Cela plaît beaucoup aux auteurs de troubles qui ont une semaine de congés et pour les parents surtout ceux qui travaillent, c'est un calvaire, Madame. Si nos collèges continuent dans cet état, l'avenir s'annonce très sombre et l'année prochaine, avec l'application de *Nine-Year Schooling*, le nombre d'étudiants va augmenter dans nos collèges. Madame la Présidente, tout le monde dans cette Chambre conviendrait avec moi qu'il est urgent que le Chef commissaire mobilise sa Commission pour trouver les bonnes solutions pour

mettre fin à ce problème de délinquance juvénile de nos collègues. Merci, Madame la Présidente.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Fourth Island Region Member.

**PROHIBITED USE OF PLASTIC BAGS
– DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED**

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Madam Chairperson, allow me to make a statement on the difficulties being faced by our local entrepreneurs to pack their food products. It is not an open secret that besides handicrafts, our local entrepreneurs sell their agricultural produce and processed goods in the local market, and some are even exported to Mauritius. These local products are in great demand in Mauritius. Over the years, our artisans have learnt and implemented measures to improve the packaging of their products. Packing comprise an important business activity in the food value chain and unpacked articles have no value and does not meet the qualities of a standardised product. Our entrepreneurs now pack their products satisfactorily. They had obtained training through the handicraft centre in Malabar to professionalise the packaging of their products.

I wish to grasp this opportunity to thank the SMEDA for the colossal work that they have done in this area over the past decades. Even foreign trainers are hired from other countries such as India to help to improve local product presentation and ensure proper branding. They now know that packaging facilitates the export of their products and the tourists visiting our island buy them so that they can carry some as gift in their limited luggage. An entrepreneur does not need an MBA degree to know the importance of packaging in marketing. Our entrepreneurs are neither fools to risk loosing their market by wrapping their goods in newspapers or other means besides plastics. We are quite aware that this Assembly passed a piece of legislation in respect of the use of plastic bags in our island.

The Plastic Bags Amendment Regulations was passed in 2015 and two years have since elapsed. It was in that regulation that restriction was imposed on the importation of use of plastic bags. Following the implementation of this regulation, some entrepreneurs were granted a special permit to use plastic materials on the ground that these were required for packaging. Unfortunately, these permits are not being renewed by the Commission of the Environment and some entrepreneurs who earn their living from these activities are being deprived of an important source of revenue to meet their basic needs. This is a serious matter on which this Assembly cannot turn a deaf ear.

Madam Chairperson, I am of the view that the Regulation was prepared in a haste without a proper assessment of its benefits and costs. The business sector was probably not considered. Proper and in-depth research had definitely not been conducted. I think it is for that reason that permits have been issued to entrepreneurs requiring plastics for packaging. Until the time the Executive Council come up with a miraculous solution or formulae for packaging, plastics will still be required today for packing of the crystallised items, salted fish, dry octopus, local beans, and maize among others. Even at the airport, plastic is still in use for the wrapping of frozen goods or for other uses.

Madam Chairperson, these permits accorded to our entrepreneurs – the Exemption Certificate to use Plastic Bags for Packaging of Local Goods have expired since 07 January 2017 and have not been renewed since now. And, the entrepreneurs are facing innumerable difficulties to pack their goods so as to make them saleable and marketable. They are losing their markets. On the recent past, the *Police de L'environnement* has verbalised some of these traders in the local markets. They fail to realise that these plastics were legally imported through those permits. On the other hand, many products imported into Rodrigues are entering freely into the island and are sold in the open market. They can be seen in the supermarkets and all the retail outlets. I wish to inform this House that these imported products that are currently on sale include among others, food grains, raw and processed sugar, salt, cakes etc. This may be verified for confirmation.

Madam Chairperson, we cannot have a different type of treatment of traders using plastics: on one side, we have imported goods which are sold freely without any difficulty from the authorities and on the other side, we have our entrepreneurs who have no alternative to pack their goods to make it marketable. The latter are the ones who are being verbalised in the market.

After all it is a reality that packaging for foodstuffs comes in many different forms, based on technical requirements throughout the supply chain, as well as marketing needs and other criteria.

Madam Chairperson, the world market share of packing materials are as follows: Rigid plastic (27%), Flexible plastic (10%) paper and board (34%), glass (11%), other metal (9%) and others (3%).

Let me repeat again, Madam: Rigid plastic (27%), Flexible plastic (10%) paper and board (34%), glass (11%), other metal (9%) and others (3%).

If our entrepreneurs cannot use plastics, let me ask whether they will use glass or paper for packaging. Plastic is bound to remain a major source of packaging material and I am of the view that either the Commission of Environment review the situation of the local entrepreneurs in respect of their requirements for plastic bag and extend the initial permit or work out an appropriate formula to enable the local entrepreneurs pack their goods and make it marketable. *Madame la Présidente...*

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Point of order. I just want the Chair to give a ruling relating to Sittings, 9, paragraph (12) relating to motion after adjournment. Some Members from the other side of the House have talked about statement, making statement. So, I just want to know whether we can discuss about it.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Yes, concerning your Point of Order, Commissioner, as long as the Members are confining their observation to only one subject matter, it is in order.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Guests who are invited here are not authorised to talk! I would request you to ask the Member, the PPS Francisco François not to give orders, not to talk to Commissioners. I would ask you to rule on that, Madam, please.

Madam Chairperson: I would ask Members from official gallery to be mindful not to intervene in the proceedings of the Assembly. Yes, can we continue?

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Madame la Présidente, je vais terminer. Huit mois depuis que nos entrepreneurs attendent une décision de la Commission de l'Environnement pour le renouvellement de ce certificat d'exemption. Comment faire prospérer notre économie et franchir cette nouvelle étape si les facilités nécessaires accordées à nos entrepreneurs ne sont pas respectées ?

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Second Island Region Member.

**DISPOSAL OF WRITE-OFF ITEMS
– RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame, je voudrais attirer l'attention de la Chambre... Je voudrais attirer l'attention de la Chambre sur un sujet brûlant de l'actualité actuellement sur le *disposal of write-off items in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly*. Madame la Présidente, nous avons assisté récemment à la destruction d'un bâtiment à Pointe Canon, un bâtiment de guerre dont les tôles et les bois qui étaient en très bon état ont disparu. On ne sait pas par qui mais ont été transporté loin du store de l'Assemblée régionale pour des « *petits copains* ». Cette pratique normalement n'est pas autorisée. Nous avons assisté aussi tout dernièrement à la vente à l'encan des véhicules de l'Administration régionale et qu'il y a eu des officiers, il y a eu l'acheteur. L'acheteur en question *is paying installments for the items bought*.

Madame la Présidente, l'Assemblée régionale, le Gouvernement actuel a parlé de franchir une nouvelle étape. Nous avons 15 ans de l'autonomie. Nous sommes supposés être mûrs. Nous sommes supposés donner le bon exemple à nos enfants qui vont arriver incessamment, qui vont prendre le relais et donner le bon exemple de la bonne gouvernance. Madame la Présidente, *I will ask I will retain the attention of this Chamber to make a plea to all those concerned in regard to all the aspects to see that things are done correctly and to maintain our...* Justement, pour maintenir cette nouvelle étape, pour franchir cette nouvelle étape, pour dire que les Rodriguais sont capables. Merci, Madame la Présidente.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: First Local Region Member of La Ferme.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I know there is little time left but I would like to talk about the new Housing Scheme in Rodrigues. Madame la Présidente, c'est vrai que le *Housing Scheme* a été fort dans l'agenda des deux Gouvernements qui ont siégé dans cette Assemblée mais on constate qu'il y a des problèmes concernant ce *new Housing Scheme*. On est sur le terrain et on entend parler des bénéficiaires, de leurs problèmes et à ce qu'il parait, la Commission ne fait rien, ne veulent pas écouter ces gens, ne veulent pas écouter leurs doléances. Leur seul souci, c'est de faire/construire des maisons. On a eu beaucoup de plaintes, Madame la Présidente concernant la construction même de ces maisons-là. On a eu l'épisode de *Lakaz Bella* qui est maintenant aujourd'hui considéré comme un panier percé.

Donc, nous, on veut attirer l'attention à ce que ça ne se reproduise pas. Donc, on demande le sérieux de la part de la Commission, le sérieux de la part du Commissaire pour veiller à ce que ces maisonnettes-là soient construites comme il le faut. On a eu beaucoup de plaintes dans le nord, on a eu beaucoup de plaintes concernant les tracteurs qui n'utilisent pas les matériaux appropriés :

barre ferraille. Dans les sous placements, on ne met pas de *ferraille* et ces gens-là, ils ne savent pas à qui s'adresser. C'est vrai, je sais qu'il y a des officiers mais ces officiers-là ne peuvent pas être partout en même temps. Donc, je demanderais au Commissaire et aux personnes concernées de faire de sorte à ce qu'on puisse résoudre ce problème parce que n'oubliez-pas, Madame la Présidente, on a aussi... Ces gens-là ont pris des emprunts avec la banque.

Donc, il y a la banque qui peut demain venir dire à l'Assemblée Régionale que telles et telles maisons n'a pas été construite et quel sera votre réaction, Madame la Présidente ? Donc, je demande au Commissaire de voir d'un peu plus près, s'il le faut, d'augmenter le nombre d'inspecteurs qui travaillent sur le dossier afin que ces gens-là puissent avoir une bonne maison. Merci, Madame la Présidente.

Madam Chairperson: You have two minutes to intervene, Commissioner.

REPLY – INTERVENTION OF THIRD ISLAND REGION MEMBER

The Commissioner for Training and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis) : Juste pour, Madame la Présidente, pour être... C'est par rapport à l'intervention de Mme Agathe, *respected Member Agathe*. Donc, je dois dire que... Elle a parlé de la délinquance juvénile. La délinquance juvénile qui est définie par la loi et je crains qu'il y a un mélange entre la délinquance juvénile et les cas d'indisciplines reportés dans les écoles. Si effectivement, je crois qu'il y a une recrudescence dans le nombre de cas d'indiscipline aussi dans le nombre de cas de délinquance juvénile mais dire qu'on est passé de 50 à 600 en 2017 dans des collèges, je me demande d'où provienne ces chiffres, quelles sont les sources de la membre Agathe. Et je dois dire aussi que la grossesse précoce en elle-même, c'est un fléau mais ce n'est pas la délinquance juvénile. C'est peut-être ça aussi où il y a toute la nuance.

En même temps, je dois dire qu'il y a toute une volonté du Gouvernement pour accompagner les enseignants et les parents. Effectivement, c'est vrai. Donc, la punition est interdite aujourd'hui, la punition corporelle. C'est vrai aussi que très souvent, on entend les enseignants, les éducateurs disent qu'ils ont les mains liées. C'est pour cela que la Commission, nous avons travaillé beaucoup sur la formation des enseignants, sur la punition positive ainsi qu'exercer en autorité sans mettre la violence. Donc, ce sont des programmes que nous avons mis en place, que nous allons continuer à mettre en place. Je dois dire aussi qu'au niveau de la Commission de l'Education, pour la première fois, on a eu un psychologue attaché au collège, ce qui fait qu'il y a tout un travail d'accompagnement qui est fait au niveau des collèges eux-mêmes.

Il y a aussi le programme pour les parents, quoique je renvoie toujours la responsabilité aux parents, quel est leur rôle. Un enfant ne naît pas indiscipliné. Un enfant ne naît pas délinquant. Donc, c'est le parent qui a la responsabilité d'accompagner ses enfants et trop souvent, ces parents qui ont le plus besoin d'être accompagnés ne viennent pas aussi à ces formations, donc, pour les aider à mieux assurer leur parentalité. Donc, je tiens à assurer la Chambre que... Et la Commission de l'Éducation et la Commission de la Formation et de la Protection des Enfants, nous sommes conscients qu'aujourd'hui, ça devient de plus en plus *challenging*, que ce soit au sein des écoles, que ce soit au sein des familles pour encadrer les enfants mais nous mettons tout en œuvre avec le support des professionnels, des institutions comme *Ombudsperson*, brigade pour la protection des mineurs. Donc, on met tout en œuvre pour accompagner nos enfants. Mais franchement, je souhaiterais pouvoir m'entretenir avec Mme Agathe pour savoir d'où provient ces chiffres de 600 dont nous, on ne détient pas officiellement au niveau de la Commission.

Madam Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

At 15.49 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 24 October 2017 at 10.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS SINCE FEBRUARY 2017

(No. B/83) Mr. J. R. Ramdally: (The Second Local Region Member of St Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to infrastructural projects around the island since February 2017, he will, for the benefit of the House:-

- (a) list and give brief details on each of the different projects that are on-going, launched and already awarded and those already launched but not yet awarded; and
- (b) table, if any, the cost, the successful bidder, the scope of work and the expected completion date for each of the project mentioned?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, I am tabling details in respect of infrastructural projects being implemented by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

EMPLOYMENT IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR – DIFFICULTIES MET BY CONTRACTORS

(No. B/84) Mr. J. R. Ramdally: (The Second Local Region Member of St Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Employment and Others whether, in regard to employment in the construction sector, he will, for the benefit of the House, state if he is aware of difficulties being met by contractors to obtain manpower and, in the affirmative, to give details thereof and to state the actions taken, or being contemplated, by his Commission to remedy the situation, if any?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, as announced in the Government Programme 2017-2022 we are aiming at the creation of 4000 decent and sustainable jobs. We are at the crossroads of our socio-economic development.

The numerous ongoing infrastructure projects as well as the forthcoming ones are creating hundreds of jobs in the construction sector.

This is an opportunity that we have to grab and offer to our citizens so that they can improve their standard of living and exit from the social safety net system.

With regard to the difficulties being met by contractors to obtain manpower, I have to say that many contractors have approached us to express their concern regarding shortage of certified skilled workers in the construction sector. As may be observed, nearly all construction projects are not being completed within the contractual time frame.

Madam Chairperson, on 10 June 2017, a meeting was held at the Family Integration Centre at Malabar, with all registered small contractors and other stakeholders in the presence of the Chief Commissioner, my colleague Commissioner for Training and myself to take stock of the situation and act accordingly. (We took note of the problems they encountered among which; the shortage of certified skilled workers).

It has been decided to organise NTC4 courses on different skills such as carpentry, scaffolding, accurate measurement techniques, among others, needed by contractors and workers of the sector. Theoretical, practical work-based and grade-based training will be mounted with the help of the MITD for this particular category of labour force.

Madam Chairperson, as Commissioner responsible for the subject of employment, it is my sacred duty to care for our jobseekers first.

I am informed that according to our database:

607 unemployed jobseekers with experience in the construction sector are registered at the Employment Information Centre.

My Commission convened some 200 construction workers for an explanatory and interactive meeting on Thursday 27 July 2017 at the Cultural and Leisure Centre. 194 jobseekers turned up. They were given necessary explanations on:

- Current development in the labour market
- Employment opportunities in the construction sector
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Health and Safety at work sites
- Regulations as regards to contribution by employers and employees to NPF and NSF

After the meeting, 173 among those present registered themselves and expressed their interest to take up an employment relevant to their skills in the sector.

Madam Chairperson, I am going even further. My Commission will write officially to those contractors requesting them to submit the number of their job vacancies skill-wise and the wage bracket for each category.

Subsequently the Employment Information Office will organize a separate exercise to register those who are genuinely in search of a job in the Constructor Sector and match the demand with the supply of labour in Rodrigues in regard to the construction sector.

LAYING DOWN OF THE FIBRE OPTIC CABLE

(No. B/85) Mr. J. R. Ramdally: (The Second Local Region Member of St Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Information and Communication Technology and Others whether, in regard to the contract launched for the laying down of the fiber optic cable, she can enlighten the House as to where matters stand?

Reply: I am informed that as regards to Procurement of Internet Connection Bandwidth Services through undersea Fiber Optic Cable from Mauritius to Rodrigues, tenders were launched by the Central Procurement Board (CPB) on 10 April 2017 through an Open International Bidding (REF No. CPB/20/2017).

/UNREVISED/

The closing date was set on Friday 30 June 2017 and the public opening of bids was on Friday 30 June 2017.

Three bidders have submitted their offers, namely:-

1. Mauritius Telecom Ltd
2. IOX Cable Ltd
3. Cable Metiss Ltd

The Evaluation of the Bids was made by the Central Procurement Board (CPB).

The bid from the preferred bidder amounting to USD 44,784,694 exclusive VAT was retained.

The approval was conveyed to the RRA on 07 August 2017. Seven days as from 07 August 2017 was given for other suppliers to appeal for any notification.

Financial clearance from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development is being sought to award the contract.