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RODRIGUES

FOURTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 9 of 2017

Sitting of Tuesday 24 October 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 24 OCTOBER 2017

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ADJOURNMENT

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

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

WATER – HOUSEHOLD DISTRIBUTION

(No. B/92) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (The Minority Leader) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to water for household distribution in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state : -

- (a) The frequency of distribution throughout the island, indicating the reasons for any disruption in relation thereto in certain regions and giving the remedial measures being taken therefor;
- (b) If tests are regularly done on different water samples to ensure its potability, indicating the frequency and the body/team responsible for the monitoring thereof; and
- (c) If new dam(s) will be built, indicating the respective location and time frame, if any?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Madam Chairperson,

- (a) The frequency of water distribution varies from 8 to 45 days throughout the island depending upon the regions and the serving reservoirs. The frequency of distribution depends upon the availability, available production of water.

Madam Chairperson, there are various factors which have contributed to the change in the frequency of distribution namely:

- (i) There has no consequential rainfall since July this year and this has caused a decrease in production from about 6,250 per day in July this year to 4,350 m³ as at 15 October 2017, a decrease of about 30%. Ultimately, this has impacted on the frequency of distribution in most regions.
- (ii) My Commission has found itself under the obligation of closing the treatment plant of Anse Raffin for a complete upgrading in order to improve the quality of water being distributed there. This has consequently affected the production of water for the South. As such, water has had to be transferred from this Eastern part to the Southern part of the island to compensate for the decrease in

production. Ultimately, this has impacted on the frequency of distribution of some villagers in the East. The upgrading has been completed during the weekend and we expect to increase the amount of water being treated from the usual 150 m³ to 250 m³ per day.

- (iii) The third reason is due to the boost in the construction industry, there is a higher demand for water, hence, putting more pressure on the sector. Just to give an example, in addition to the big projects which have been awarded by the various Commissions, my Commission has awarded some 547 building permits since January, meaning an average of 60 per month.
- (iv) Adding to this is the increase in the number of tourist's arrival which ultimately means more consumption of water.
- (v) And, finally, Madam Chairperson, minor changes in the frequency of water distribution may also be due to the breakdown of pumps and/or damage of water networks.

Madam Chairperson, there are various measures which have been taken and which are being taken to improve the situation:

- (i) As stated above, the coming back into operation of Anse Raffin Treatment Plant will help to improve production in the southern part of the island and brings matter back to normal.
- (ii) There has been the complete desilting of Bassin Gallard Dam which has impacted positively on the distribution in the northern as well as the central part of the island.
- (iii) Contract for the installation of public fountains around the island have been awarded already.
- (iv) The contract for the procurement of fibre tanks for the sum of Rs 1,091,235 has also been awarded and same are being shipped to Rodrigues.
- (v) 500 m³ desalination plant financed by the European Union at Songes is on the verge of being awarded.
- (vi) Procedures/discussions for the construction of a 240 m³ hybrid desalination plant by Mascara at Caverne Bouteille has been finalised. The equipment is being mounted in France.

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- (vii) The staffing of the Water Resources Unit is also being reviewed and strengthened to cope with the situation.
- (viii) The Commission is embarking on the reoperation/operation of some boreholes which have never been operated or whose operation has stopped since long. This includes Dans Bébé, St Gabriel, Anse Quitor, La Ferme and Fond Accacia. Some of the pumps have already been shipped to Rodrigues and will be installed shortly. Our experience of Dans Bébé has proved very conclusive in this field since we are able to serve some 250 families from the villages of Montagne Persille to Montagne Goyaves on a fortnight basis directly from the borehole. We are going to apply the same formula for the villages of Dans Cocos and Anse Quitor.
- (ix) The Commission has also embarked on the setting up of a dug well at Anse Baleine and we are expecting to get some 200 m³ per day. The water is to be treated at Anse Raffin before distribution in the South. This is why we have found it useful of taking the risky bet of closing the plant for some time in order to upgrade its treatment capacity.
- (x) Over and above all, all tendering exercise for the construction of Pointe Coton and Baie Malgache desalination plants have been completed. Contracts for the building works at Anse Goéland has already been awarded to SDR Construction. Tendering exercise for the procurement of equipment of plants has already been launched with closing date on 16 November 2017. Tenders have also been launched for the intake structure at Anse Goéland with closing date on the 06 November 2017.
- (xi) Tenders for the desilting of Cascade Pigeon Dam was launched and is under evaluation.
- (xii) The Commission is preparing scope of works for the desilting of some dams like St D'Or and Cascade Jean Louis.
- (xiii) The Commissions are soliciting private tank operators for the distribution of water to the villagers.
- (xiv) And, finally, the Commission for Social Security is continuing to provide water tanks to low-income families so as to increase their stocking capacity.

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Madam Chairperson, you will realise that with all the measures which I have enunciated, that my Commission is cornering the sector from all angles and there is no doubt that the result will drop.

As regard to part (b),

(b) Madam Chairperson, tests on water samples are carried out as follows:

- Physicochemical tests are carried out on a fortnightly basis by the laboratory section of the Water Resources Unit. Samples are collected on 39 different points around the island by the Laboratory Technician.
- The Public Health Office of the Commission for Health also collects and carries out bacteriological tests on water samples. I am informed that 63 such tests have been carried out by the Department since January 2017.
- The Commission also sends samples of water to the CWA as and when required and to the Ministry of Health in Mauritius if the need is felt.

I would like to point out that as regard to the laboratory, that a project is being funded by the European Union and equipment are being procured. The lists of equipment have already been sent to the Commission for Health for necessary action. The laboratory staff consists of one Laboratory Technician for the time being and a STM Intern. With the proposed upgrading of the laboratory as spelt out earlier, the Commission intends to request for a Scientific Officer in the field for next financial year.

As regards to part (c),

(c) As announced in the budget speech 2017/18, it is proposed to construct new dams to collect surface water. In the first instance, funds have been provided in this year budget to carry out feasibility studies for the construction of dams at Pavé La Bonté and/or Anse Baleine. The Consultant will be instructed to work on these soon. We are expecting the construction of the dam by year 2021.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, it seems that there are many *déclarations d'intention* but to no avail. The Deputy Chief Commissioner has said that in certain places, the frequency of water distribution is eight days and in

other places, 45 days. Can we know in which regions we have water every eight days and in which regions every 45 days?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I have mentioned in my answer, Madam Chairperson. It all depends upon the sectors, the sections and also the serving reservoirs. My experience of the matter indicates that where we have a source of water in a particular village, then, that particular village will be served more frequently. I take the case of for example, la Source Tigom, Madam Chairperson. In these villages, under normal conditions, these villages, they are served with water for at least twice per week. Now, actually, they are being served with water once every week. So, it all depends upon where the production comes from and of course, the serving reservoirs.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, my question was clear. I want a direct answer. Which regions are having water once every eight days and which region every 45 days?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It all depends, Madam Chairperson, upon the villagers. There is no clear definition to say that in the South, we are having eight days' distribution or in the East, there is eight days' distribution. It varies even if we take the case of the southern section, some may be having water for 15 days and up to 45 days and if we go in the East, there will be some villagers who will be served with water for 15 days. And, if I take the case of Gravières, it can go up to 45 days.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, we know that we have to be fair and before the elections, they said that we are going to have an equitable distribution of water, even distribution everywhere. Can we know what the Commission is doing in order to see to it that all regions of Rodrigues.... equitable distribution of water. – Because actually, even at my place, we are having water about every two months. He is saying 45 days? In some places, every three months like the villagers of Montagne Du Sable.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I have already explained how the water is distributed with relation to existing reservoirs. Of course, it would have been fair for every citizen in this country to be distributed with water equally, yes, but the fact remains that the different reservoirs, they are not necessarily interconnected. If ever there was interconnection between the reservoirs, then it would be possible for us to distribute or transfer the water from one reservoir to the other and as such, leads to an equitable distribution in the water distribution.

Second, Madam Chairperson, we have said that we are coming with a policy of distributing water once every week by the year 2022. That is for sure. Now, when we refer to equitability, equity and equitability, Madam Chairperson, when this Government decides to place a desalination plant at Anse Goéland, when this Government decides to place a desalination plant at Songes 500cm³, when this Government decides to place a desalination plant at Caverne Bouteille to increase the production, what are we aiming at? We are aiming actually at producing water in the regions where there is less water for distribution and this is the concept of equitability that we have been stating about.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Madam Chairperson, the Deputy Chief Commissioner is saying that all the reservoirs are not interconnected. Okay, true it is but we can have water lorries *comme palliatif*. What is he doing? Can we know how many water lorries we have and whether these are used *à bon escient* to provide water to these regions where you have water once every 45 days? Or these villagers, they go to the streets in order to have some water?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Actually at the Commission, we have five lorry tankers but as I have mentioned in my answer, we do also make provisions in the budget to ask for private operators whenever there is the need. If we take the case of Plaine Maho, Camp Pintade and Baie Topaze which are the villagers which are the most affected in the South, we have done an operation not later than last week for three days consequently, we have distributing water to these villagers consequently for three days, family from family. But there is one fact that I would like to state in this House. Whenever we distribute water through private lorries, the family sometimes does not consider it as distribution. This is the problem. This means that if we are going to provide them with their fourth m³ of water on the distribution day through private lorries, then, we will not say that we have not got water for our domestic purposes. Instead, when they are going to count for the frequency of distribution, they are going to consider the last date that the water was getting through the network. This is why sometimes there is a mismatch about the way that the villagers used to count to say that they are getting water for three months, sometimes, four months. But, there is that policy of distributing water by.... hours and we will continue with it, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, there is something I have understood from what the Commissioner is saying: mismatch is one thing but the quality of water is another thing. The private lorries, they take water everywhere! Where do they take? Anse Baleine? Do you know how...? The Commissioner has been talking, I will come afterwards on that, has been talking about tests being carried out, samples being taken, 60 samples being taken everywhere without telling one word about the results. What about the results of

these testing from the laboratories? What about the results? This is one thing. Second thing, he is talking about...

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

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: What about the results?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : I think that the Member is wrong in its approach. Whenever my Commission makes an appeal for private operators to distribute water in the villages, there is a direct control from where they collect the water. We have, Madam Chairperson, a Valve Operator or an officer who will ensure that the valve at the private operators collect the water at Mourouk and there is a letter, there is a form which is signed there, especially to confirm that the water is collected there. I know, Madam Chairperson, that there are some private lorries who are collecting water at Anse Baleine because we have dug a dug well there as I have mentioned in my answer, because we are coming forward with the dug well to distribute the water to the South. But for the time being, given the fact that we are not exploiting it, so, we are allowing private operators who are taking water from there so that they can distribute it to the construction industry but these water, they are not being distributed to the villagers on our accord.

If ever it is the case, then, we can take necessary action to ensure that the water that is being distributed there, that is being collected at Anse Baleine and distributed to the villagers, we have to be sure that it is on sale. Maybe we can come with a communiqué on the matter that because we are clear about one thing, whenever we give permit to private lorries, there is a direct control also at the level of my Commission and also at Mourouk. So, we can have records of whose lorries go and collect water at Mourouk and who are those who are taking water from other source and distributing to the population. This can easily be....

[Interruptions]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : The results are clear, Madam Chairperson. Of course, most of the results, I should say all the results that are provided by the...

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: No cross talking, please! Commissioner, please address the Chair.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner :laboratory, they are good. What other results that are performed? We have at least seven physicochemical tests

which are performed in terms of turbidity, in terms of connectivity, in terms of PH, in terms of TDS, there are at least 5 parameters. And, these parameters, they are done by the Laboratory Technician in Rodrigues. And, whenever there is a problem, if ever there is a problem with the quality of water, of course, we take the necessary action at our end.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, I wonder whether the Deputy Chairperson is double-checking his answers before answering and I would advise him to do so. Can I know...? Still, we are on part (a) of the question, whether during the rainy periods, because he is saying that we are now in a period of drought. Every year, we have three months of drought from October to December but during the rainy period and this year has been quite a rainy period, very rainy period this year, a lot of water we have got. *Israël 400 mm la pluie, dimoune dans Rodrigues ici 1200 mm la pluie.* We have got plenty of rain. Can I know whether during the rainy periods, what.... from all the reservoirs, all the surface was used or whether the Commission was pumping water underground? Was it not better to use surface water during the rainy period and not pump water underground or desalinate water? Now, we could use the underground water. Has his Commission done that?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Madam Chairperson, Madam, first thing that we have to note is that as regard to desalination plant, the plant is set up in such a way that it cannot stop because otherwise, the membrane will be destroyed, it is going to be affected. So, it is a plant which has been set to run on a 24-hour basis for 465 days per year. So, we do not have a technology as such in Rodrigues right now to say that we can stop the operation of the desalination plant. I agree that the Minority Leader has got a point that it would have been better that we use surface water during rainy periods and of course, leaving our underground water to build up and distribute same during the drought seasons but the matter remains and the fact remains is that the contribution of surface water even during the rainy periods, it amounts to 40%.

Yes, of course. As we stand right now, what is our stocking capacity as regard to the stocking of water say at Anse Raffin, we say at Mourouk. Where else? *La Source Tigom?* Where else? What we have is distribution reservoirs, we have to be very careful about that, distribution reservoirs which are found on the upper part of the island. If I take the case of the reservoir at Papayes, where does it produce water? Does it produce water or is it used rather as a distribution reservoir as such? So, we have... This is why if you are speaking about Cascade Pigeon, we have already launched tenders for the desilting of the dam. We have already launched and we are waiting the.... to proceed so that we can stop more water, of course. But we have to deal, Madam Chairperson...

Madam Chairperson: No cross talking, please!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : We have to deal, Madam Chairperson, Madam, with the infrastructures that we have at hand now and as such, collect and distribute as per availability.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, the Deputy Chief Commissioner has been talking of Cascade Pigeon. I know it is not his doing. He has said that the dam now has been silted. But since this has been desilted by the MR Government, what has the OPR Government done to use this water?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : I know, Madam Chairperson, that there have been a lot of polemics about the matter. I do not have a scope of work in mind of what has been done so far but I think it has been found useful to relaunch tenders and I should add it is the third time that tenders have been relaunched for the desilting of Cascade Pigeon. The two previous launching has not been successful and we have launched it since I think March or April and we are waiting for the evaluation to be completed so that we can proceed with the award of the contract.

The Minority Leader : As regard to part (b), Madam Chair, concerning water samples that are supposedly regularly tested, is the Deputy Chief Commissioner aware that in certain places where there are receiving the water from the Desalination Plant, many are complaining of having salty water, that is, unfit for consumption?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, this is a subjective question because it all depends upon the individual, first thing. And the second thing, is that, if we refer to the standard that is set by the WHO, there is a standard which is set by the WHO and it stipulates as regards to salinity, we can go up as high as 1000 mg per litre. This is one thing, but of course, I am aware of the potential danger that salinity may have on the health of our population and of course, we have to go to keep that salinity as low as possible. But I can assure whenever the test has been performed it has always been lower than the standard of 1000 mg per litre of water as stipulated by the WHO.

The Minority Leader: Concerning the test thing. The test thing is done in Mauritius, some test. Therefore, is the Deputy Chief Commissioner contemplating the possibility of having a lab set in Rodrigues so that we can test it right over here?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I told the Minority Leader formerly, Madam Chairperson, Sir, that we have a project under the Commission for Health

for the upgrading of the laboratory of the Water Resource Unit. The proposal that we have made to the open union includes in fact the possibility of performing bacteriological test in Rodrigues itself. But for the time being the test for *Escherichia coli*, T. coliform and coliform, this is normally done by the Public Health, by the Sanitary Service of the Commission for Health and as I have stated we have had up to now since January some 63 or 69 tests which have been performed so far.

The Minority Leader: This is again a very good *declaration d'intention*. Can we have a time frame for that? Can we know when this will be done?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, we cannot at this stage say that we are going to do this but I can assure the House that procedures for the procurement of equipment is under way. When we go for procurement, Madam Chairperson, Sir, we have deadline which are set as regards as to when the contract is to be awarded; when we intend to implant the system. But we do not have the upper hand as regards to some factors that may crimp in during the process. So, this is why I cannot say it is going to be the month of January or February but the process for that upgrading of the laboratory, it is on.

The Minority Leader: Concerning part (c) of the question, Madam Chair, I see that new dam will be built at Anse Baleine and at Fond la Bonté? That is right? At Pavé la Bonté, can we know whether the Pistaches Dam will be built?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, when we were in power in 2002 to 2006, we did indeed carry out a feasibility study which was done by, I think, Nisham Incorporation in collaboration with Jadav Seervansing Partners in 2002. And that report clearly stated that there is a risk of the building of the dam. In 2008, when your party was in power, you conducted another survey by AFD, that was sure. And you know about it, that there was a survey that was carried by AFD in relation to this. You will allow me, Madam Chairperson, Sir, to read the outcome of the AFD survey being given that the Minority Leader has come to this issue: '*Le projet de barrage de Pistaches, aide memoire, sécurisation de la limitation en eau de Rodrigues, mission Pierre Jeremy du 07 au 12 avril 2010.*' What did the report of AFD said ? *Les autorités mauriciennes conscientes*', I am quoting : « *Les autorités mauriciennes conscientes de cette situation on confiat en mars 2002 au bureau d'Etude Nisham Shan Ltd., les études de pré faisabilité et de faisabilité du projet du barrage de réservoir de Pistaches qui avait été recommander dans l'étude qui avait été réalisé par Lux Consult en 2000.* » Now we come to the recommendations : « *La réalisation du projet de barrage du réservoir de Pistaches étant jugé prioritaire par l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues sous réserve de la justification techniques et économique qui est resté à réaliser. En juin 2008, les autorités mauriciennes ont confié à*

l'AFD, l'ensemble des études existante souhaitant connaître l'avis de notre institution concernant la possibilité de financer le projet de construction du barrage. L'AFD a proposé de financer une mission d'experts. Par l'AFD, une mission d'experts, afin de permettre de mieux identifier la ou les solutions possibles de sécuriser au maximum l'approvisionnement en eau de Rodrigues et un rapport a été soumis au autorité mauricienne en décembre 2008. »

Concernant le barrage de Pistaches, les conclusions de cette étude peuvent se résumer comme suite :

- 1) Un barrage de type classique situer à la côte prévue dans l'étude Nisham Shan ne garantit pas une réserve permanente contenu de la forte perméabilité et du lit de la rivière. *This is one thing. The first thing.*
- 2) *The second thing*, la réalisation d'un rideau de palpe planche dans la moraine de fermeture de la baie ne permet pas d'assurer la coupure d'étanches dans les alluvions. *It continues with that* et il continu : « Le coût et la complexité des travaux d'étanchéité exclue toute rentabilité économique d'ouvrage dans cette zone d'autant que l'eau stocker devra être pomper et stocker à plus de 50 mètres d'altitude pour une situation agricole. »

And the conclusion is that, there are a lot of recommendations and negative recommendations that have been stipulated in the report and the final conclusion you know what is said: « *Contenu de ces observations, la retenue de Pistaches ne pourrait guère contribuer à la sécurisation de l'alimentation en eau de la population à Rodrigues.* » This is the final...

Madam Chairperson: Order, please.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: This is the final conclusion of the AFD project. I am not challenging the...

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. Commissioner, Commissioner. Order, please. You allow the Commissioner to answer the question, please.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: My question remains, Madam Chairperson, Sir. My question remains. What is my question? Their party has got an objective, let us take it as that but when this report was *commandité*, your party was in power. So, but you should at least start kicking the project if ever it was

your '*ti bébé*'. Why is it that from 2008, when the report was made public, why is it that you were in power at that time and you did not kick start project of Pistaches. So, you have to question yourself and I leave you to answer it by yourself.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, the Deputy Chief Commissioner as if he has given an answer, clearly showed that he is one-sided. He has not read the report properly. There have been three sites identified and he has been talking of one site. And now, we have good technicians that can go ahead with this barrage, this dam. If you read the report correctly, you will see, this will..

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, come with your question.

The Minority Leader: It will raise the water table everywhere in this western region. Therefore, is his commission ready to work on this report anew because there are three dams, three sites that have been identified. You have been talking of the least feasible one, the one that is found near the sea. There are two others. And there are other dams on this river. It is the longest river of Rodrigues. *Le plus grand bassin versant de Rodrigues. Quand il pleut, c'est là où il y a le plus grand volume d'eau qui part vers la mer. Donc, si on dit qu'un barrage ne peut garder l'eau en permanence. C'est vrai dans n'importe quel pays mais au moins ça peut garder de l'eau pour un an, deux ans...*

Madam Chairperson: Put your question, please.

The Minority Leader: C'est pourquoi je voudrais demander au Commissaire, s'il est prêt à étudier de nouveau cela. Parce que, *it is above party politics. If this can help the country, so be it.*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, Sir, I am not in any way taking this matter politically. If it were the solution for resolving the problem of water in the south, why not? But the fact remain that we have two reports in front of us. One in 2002 and one in 2008. And, if I have read further, I have not gone... this is the 2008. I could have gone further in what have been written in the report as regards to the *la capacité de captage*. I think it is better that I read it, Madam Chairperson, Sir. If you do not want to hear it but I would prefer that you go and read what is said in the report as regards, Madam Chairperson, Sir, *la question concernant les périodes de sécheresse à Pistaches*. It is better that you read the report. It would have been better.

Madam Chairperson: This is the last question.

The Minority Leader: Two last. This is a very important issue in Rodrigues. Can I know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether his commission will retain the service of a consultant for water distribution in Rodrigues?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, Sir, we have, if I remember well, we launched an expression of interest, I think, one month's back to have a consultancy for my commission at national level but unfortunately we did not have any candidature. Now we have relaunched once again at the level of the Chief Commissioner's Office an expression of interest with respect to consultancy on management of water in Rodrigues but on an international level. I think that the closing date for the expression of interest is in the coming days. The objective is in fact, Madam Chairperson, Sir, to help the commission in overseeing the whole question of the networking in Rodrigues and also dealing with the management of the so precious resource water resources that are available on the island so that we come to what you have equitable distribution. We are also in this axe of going and leading to that equitable distribution among the population. It remains our focus.

The Minority Leader: A last question. So, are we not to square one being given that we had the Rodrigues Water Company with all the consultancy. Now, I think you are going back to number one. Is it not?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It is not the same thing. The Rodrigues Water Company is a company that was specially set up for the distribution of water, Madam Chairperson. But here when we are speaking about a consultancy in the water sector, we are looking for an expert who is a professional in the field, who can help us in the overall overseeing of this sector itself. This is what it is.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: But we have expert in Rodrigues. We have advisers...

Madam Chairperson: This is question time, you come with your question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Concerning Anse Goeland and Pointe Coton desalination plants, the Commissioner is saying that there will be tenders and so one. This is not our problem. Our problem it is that it is not producing water, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. Can the Commissioner tell us what has happened since the laying of the foundation stone by the former Commissioner till now, what has happened? Why is it that there is no water coming out from these two desalination plants?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I think that if we are going to that debate, you will realise by yourself that this question is very far away from the question that has been set in the original question. Yes, I did mention about what are the possible solutions that we are coming in the medium term. Yes, that is it? This is why, I mentioned it in my answer because it is one of the medium term solution. But if you are going to the debate as regards to what happened to the desalination plant, I think we are not going to be able to stop there, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

COASTAL ROAD LINKING RIVIÈRE COCOS TO SONGES

(No. B/93) Mr. J. N. Nemours (Second Local Region Member for 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?

Madam Chairperson: Deputy Chief Commissioner? Yes, you may proceed.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the coastal road linking Rivière Cocos to Songes was built in year 1990/1991. The state of the road has degraded with time. In an attempt to improve the road conditions, my Commission issue a Work Order to perform patching work on it in the month of July 2017. However, as spelt out in the budget speech for financial year 2017/2018, my commission will consider the possibility of upgrading and rehabilitating the road infrastructure during this financial year.

The Minority Leader: Can I know, being given that along the road there are many *radiers*. Will these *radiers* be replaced by bridges?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Of course, Madam Chairperson, Sir. Upon the rehabilitation process, we will consider that point that has been raised. And, I know also that the National Development Unit also has got some projects as regards to the rehabilitation of these *radiers* that you have mentioned.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, je viens d'entendre l'Adjoint du Chef Commissaire mentionné que sa commission verra la possibilité d'aménager ou de *upgrading* la route de Songes. Mais pourtant, Madame la présidente, avant les élections de 2017, il y avait bien des BOBCAT, des JCB qui travaillaient sur cette route-là, aplanissaient les deux côtés de la route. Donc, pour nous c'était un

projet qui démarrer déjà. *Can the Commissioner inform the House whether there has been a Works Order prior to the elections of 2017 with regard to the road from Songes, Rivière Cocos etc.?*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, Sir, I do not really have the information at hand. I take notice of the question and will inform this House whether any Works Order has been...

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. I will now invite the Deputy Chairperson to take the Chair.

At this stage, the Deputy Chairperson took the Chair.

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

**RIVIÈRE COCOS VILLAGE
- STATE OF GABION BRIDGE/ABSENCE OF STREET LANTERNS**

(No. B/94) Mr. J. N. Nemours (Second Local Region Member for 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?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is a gabion structure at Rivière Cocos which have been installed as erosion control dykes across the river and I am informed that villagers are using one of these as a shortcut and the proposals of providing street lightings thereat will be looked into.

It remains a fact that a proper bridge needs to be built to facilitate access by vehicles during heavy rainfalls. Same will be considered upon availability of funds.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Deputy Chairperson, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House whether there is a construction of a bridge or *passerelle* actually in the village of Rivière Cocos? Can he confirm whether there is...?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, Sir, ... But it is not related to the question as he will note there is a Works Order which has been issued to Trans Invest for the construction of a box culvert.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: So, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, *peut-on savoir si* the New Development Company Ltd. has got contract and is working on site actually?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The Works Order that has been issued has been issued to Trans Invest under the annual read contract and as such I am not in the possibility of informing the member whether the Trans Invest has subcontracted the project or not. But it remains the prerogative of the contractor, if ever, there is a need to do so. But I do not see why there can be any objection on the matter.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Mr., so I have been on site, I was astonished to see Members/Member of the Assembly here supervising the work at Rivière Cocos. Can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner to see to it so that the works is being done, regulation being observed and everything going right in order to have a good transparency - right, for the betterment of this Assembly?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, Mr. Deputy, sorry. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, whenever my commission issue a contract or a Works Order, in this particular case, to Trans Invest, it is up to the company to monitor its workmanship and, of course, it remains for my commission as client to see that the work is done as per the scope of work which has been given. This is where, at the level of my commission, this is where my works stop. The works stop whether the scope of work has been completed as per the contract. So, if I would stop by going to manage what is going on in company X or Y, then I think that it will be a usurpation of duty by my commission.

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

HOSPITALS & AREA HEALTH CENTRES
– NO. OF DENTISTS, GENERALIST & SPECIALIST DOCTORS
– QUALIFICATION/FIELD OF SPECIALISATION

(No. B/95) **Mr. J.N. Nemours (Second Local Region Member for 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?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, actually the Commission has three Dental Surgeon/Senior Dental Surgeon, one posted at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Zita Jean Louis and La Ferme Health Centres. Eight Medical and Health Officers/Senior Medical and Health Officers are posted at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, four at Zita Jean Louis Area Health Centre and three at La Ferme Area Health Centre. There are eight Specialists/Senior Specialists who are attached to Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the two Area Health Centres.

Regarding the part (b) of the question, the answer is being tabled.

Mr. J. N. Nemours: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, can the Commissioner inform the House that if ever at a certain moment there was no seat at the *Psychiatre et ça a prit combien de temps pour remplacer?*

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Le Psychiatre est là pour une période d'un mois mais il a signifié son intention de demander extension pour une année.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: M. le Vice-président, c'est bien d'avoir des dentistes, des généralistes, machin et autres. Mais est-ce que, à côté de ça on ne peut pas mettre des dentistes, comme par exemple, je viens sur un cas à La Ferme où j'ai été voir des dentistes samedi, il y a deux semaines de cela. J'arrive là-bas, on me dit qu'il faut que je retourne à la maison parce qu'il n'y a pas d'eau dans le Area Health Centre. J'ai des témoins. J'étais là. Comment est-ce que le Commissaire peut voir. C'est vrai d'annoncer, des effets d'annonces à la radio, de voir d'une façon plus holistique l'ensemble du service. On ne peut pas dire on a recruté tant de dentiste, tant de généraliste mais le service est toujours manquant, c'est-à-dire, comme cette exemple-là, où il n'y avait pas d'eau pour pratiquer.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le Vice-président, je ne suis pas au courant de ce cas-là mais c'est le Ward Manager de l'hôpital de La Ferme qui aurait dû attirer l'attention qu'il n'y a pas d'eau à La Ferme.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: M. le Vice-président, j'aimerais posé la question suivante au Commissaire responsable de la santé, combien de médecin que nous avons actuellement à Rodrigues ?

[Interruption]

The Deputy Chairperson: Order, order.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Pourrais-je demander au Commissaire de la Santé combien de médecin qu'on a actuellement à Rodrigues ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: 16.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: M. le Vice-président, est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous éclairer/informer des cas de désintéressement, c'est-à-dire, les médecins sont désintéressés, démotivés comme tout parce qu'il n'y a pas suffisamment de suivi, il n'y a pas de communication comme il se doit, il y a une pression énorme sur toute l'ensemble du service de la santé. Est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous éclairer là-dessus ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le Vice-président, si ça c'est l'opinion du Membre, je ne peux pas répondre dessus.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: M. le Vice-président, ce n'est pas une opinion du Membre. J'ai eu le cris d'un médecin qui m'a téléphoné et que j'ai rencontré, je ne vais pas citer son nom ici et qu'il m'a dit la situation, le malaise qu'il y a au sein de la santé. Si je dois aller plus loin, je peux aller encore mais je préfère rester là pour demander au Commissaire de voir à ce que ces personnes qui viennent de Maurice ou ces médecins qui travaillent à Rodrigues, ils ont un traitement comme il se doit et ils ont un bon encadrement. Et qu'ils ont suffisamment de personnel adéquat pour pouvoir mener à bien la mission.

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: M. le Vice-président, ça se fait à l'hôpital de Crève-Cœur.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: M. le Vice-président, je réitère mon intention, je réitère mon souhait, je réitère les appels d'urgences de ces médecins qui crient au secours et que le Commissaire n'entend pas parce qu'il est peut être sourd lui-même. Mais je vous demanderai encore une fois au Commissaire de voir, d'aller à la rencontre de ces médecins pour voir un peu comment régler ce problème, cette malaise qui existe. Merci.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Je répète, M. le Vice-président, c'est l'opinion du Membre. On est en communication avec les médecins à l'hôpital de Crève-Cœur.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, récemment le Commissaire a dit dans sa réponse qu'il y a le Psychiatre chaque mois. Est-ce que le Commissaire est au courant qu'il y avait quatre patients *severely sick*, quatre patients avec des problèmes qui ont été envoyés à Maurice pour le traitement. Comment se fait-il quand il y a le Psychiatre ici.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Ecoutez, ça se pourrait parce qu'il y a des traitements que le psychiatre ne peut pas donner qu'on envoie à Maurice.

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER – MISSION IN FRANCE/TOURISM PROMOTION

(No. B/96) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally, G.O.S.K (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to his recent mission in France for Tourism Promotion, he will, for the benefit of the House, state: -

- (a) and table the composition of his delegation;
- (b) the amount of money disbursed by his Commission therefore, indicating the sum paid in terms of stipend to each member of the said delegation; and
- (c) the outcome of the mission?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that I headed the delegation who participated in the International French Travel Market (IFTM) – TOP RESA from 25 to 30 September 2017. I was accompanied by the Island Chief Executive, the Managing Director, Discovery Rodrigues, the Tourism Promotion Officer of the Rodrigues Tourism Office and 10 Tourism Operators.

The total amount of money disbursed for the participation in the TOP RESA Fair is around Rs 400,000 which represents cost of air tickets, stipends, accommodations and related logistics. The stipend paid to the official delegation is as per approved official rate prescribed by the Ministry of Finance effective as from July 2016 that is US\$ 497 per day for the ICE and US\$ 590 for the Chief Commissioner. However, the officers from the Rodrigues Tourism Office were paid at the rate of EU 260 per day. The cost of renting the stand at the fair is met by the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that tourism arrival from France has increased by more than 35% over the past five years, that is, from 6,000 tourists' arrival in 2012 to more than 8,000 arrivals in 2016.

My Recent mission in France has been very fruitful as it has enabled my Commission to kick start and implements actions with respect to strategies for tourism development which, is to increase the number of arrival from France as well as increase the visibility of Rodrigues in France.

In line with our approach to “*démocratie participative*”, I am meeting all Tourism Operators tomorrow to brief them on the outcomes of the mission and the way forward and to submit concrete proposals for the enhancement of the Rodrigues destination in France.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will therefore not abuse the time of the House to make an exhaustive list of outcomes and contacts effected during the TOP RESA fair but with your permission, allow me to name a few main actions: -

- 1) Review of the marketing strategies for the French market by hiring a consultant to propose new ideas and ways forward;
- 2) New partnership with Tour Operators based on a challenge basis, for example, more arrivals, more educators; and
- 3) Increase in the number of Blog Trips, Press Trips, and Educational Tours, Photographs for the coming months (BFM TV, TF1, Alex Video).

The Minority Leader: Yes, can the Chief Commissioner table details about these? About all these. Can he table details... Why?

The Chief Commissioner: No, no, I take notice of the question.

The Minority Leader: No, this is something that I see. We can at least table so that we can have a look at it closely.

[Interruption]

The Chief Commissioner: But I have given the names, the composition of the delegation.

[Interruption]

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, for the sake of transparency.

The Chief Commissioner: I have given the name, the composition of the delegation and I have given also the stipends. It was not question to be tabled here.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: But it was written in the question.

The Deputy Chairperson: Yes, but the Chief Commissioner has given the answer already.

The Minority Leader: *If there is nothing to hide.* Si on n'a rien à cacher. On est dans une démocratie, il n'y a rien à cacher, on peut *table* tout ça.

[Interruption]

The Chief Commissioner: I take notice of the question. I will prepare a paper and I will table in the House.

The Minority Leader: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the first part of the question, part (a), he tabled the composition of his delegation. I think there is no need to take notice of this. It was clear how to table. Secondly, can I know how the members accompanying him was chosen? Can I know? I repeat anew: Can I know from the Chief Commissioner how the members of his delegation were chosen?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, the TOP RESA is a very important *salon des touristes* et we have chosen myself, the Island Chief Executive, the person in charge of Discovery and a Promotion Tourist Officer. Yes, that is what we have chosen. We meet very often this team and others also.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Chief Commissioner has said that his commission is taking concrete action to increase the visibility of Rodrigues in France. Can we know what are these actions to increase the visibility of Rodrigues in France?

The Chief Commissioner: *Well, I said, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, that at the salon of the TOP RESA, nous avons eu plusieurs rencontres avec des agences de voyage et ils nous ont dit comment il faut changer de stratégie pour pouvoir justement arriver à faire connaître Rodrigues et nous aussi. Et, c'est pourquoi j'ai dit que nous aurons une réunion demain avec les tours opérateurs. Il*

y avait dix qui était à TOP RESA, en France et demain nous allons leurs partagés justement cette nouvelle vision du tourisme pour Rodrigues et je pense qu'à travers cette rencontre de demain et aussi ils vont partager leurs visions concernant Rodrigues. Donc, le TOP RESA a été pour nous une sorte d'école d'apprentissage vraiment d'une certaine façon, des nouvelles stratégies pour le tourisme à Rodrigues.

The Minority Leader: Donc, si j'ai bien compris, c'est maintenant qu'on va prendre des actions. *So, be it.* Mais concernant les actions qu'on peut prendre, étant donné qu'à Maurice on a déjà pris des actions et quand on sait que nos amis Français qui ont l'habitude d'aller dans les îles comme St. Barthelemy, les autres îles, des îles du Pacifique qui ont subis la violence des cyclones. Et là il y a beaucoup des touristes Français qui ne peuvent aller là-bas et ils préfèrent venir à Maurice. Et à Maurice, on s'est arrangé pour que les Français puissent venir et présenter seulement leurs cartes d'identités, non pas des passeports, pour qu'ils puissent venir à Maurice. Est-ce que le Chef Commissaire pense prendre avantage de cela ? Et aller plus loin et inviter les Français à venir à Rodrigues, même en présentant seulement leur carte d'identité, en venant de la Réunion, par exemple, par Air Austral ?

The Chief Commissioner: C'est ce qui est fait pour Maurice et fait pour Rodrigues. Nous sommes dans la même république. Et c'est justement ce que nous avons fait en France au salon de TOP RESA. Nous avons écouté beaucoup d'agences de voyage, beaucoup de personne qui nous ont dit qu'ils aiment Rodrigues, ils voudraient venir à Rodrigues. Donc, c'est pourquoi nous ici les nouvelles stratégies que nous allons adoptés c'est justement comment le peuple de Rodrigues, comment les tours opérateurs, qu'est-ce qu'ils vont faire pour pouvoir justement accueillir autrement ces touristes qui viennent à Rodrigues. Il faut dire aussi, M. le Vice-président que le touriste qui vient à Rodrigues, lui aussi il va faire de la propagande pour Rodrigues lorsqu'il retourne à son pays. Et ça, c'est très important. Et c'est pourquoi, nous là, ce qui est plus important pour nous c'est au niveau/c'est pourquoi on parle beaucoup d'authenticité Rodriguais. On nous a parlé de ça à TOP RESA. Garder notre authenticité, ne pas copier, préserver notre culture et ainsi de suite, ne présenter pas quelque chose qui vienne d'ailleurs. Et surtout, ils ont parlé de notre cuisine. De notre cuisine, comment il faut préparer notre cuisine, à partir de quel aliment, tout ça. Alors, tout ça nous avons appris à TOP RESA. Et tout ça, ce n'est pas maintenant, nous avons déjà une stratégie mais nous allons continuer justement à partir de TOP RESA, justement retravailler...

[Interruption]

The Deputy Chairperson: Order, allow the Commissioner to answer.

The Minority Leader: Ce que je voudrai savoir une question directe. Est-ce que les Français qui débarquent à Plaine Corail à travers Air Austral, est-ce qu'on fait la même chose à Maurice, ils peuvent présenter uniquement leurs cartes d'identité et débarquer à Maurice ? Est-ce que maintenant la politique à changer ? Parce que le Chef Commissaire lui-même avait déjà dit Rodrigues n'est pas à vendre. Est-ce que maintenant Rodrigues est à vendre ?

[Interruption]

The Minority Leader: Bon, je peux répéter. Est-ce que les touristes Français qui arrivent à Rodrigues à travers Air Austral, est-ce qu'ils peuvent présenter leurs cartes d'identités et débarquer, même s'ils n'ont pas de passeport ?

The Chief Commissioner: C'est ce qui se fait à Maurice, se fait à Rodrigues. Je l'ai dit tout à l'heure-là. C'est clair et net. S'ils n'ont pas de passeport, s'ils ont une carte d'identité, ils présentent leurs cartes d'identités. Nous sommes dans la République de Maurice. On ne peut pas avoir deux types de comportement dans la manière de faire dans la même république. Vous comprenez, M. le président.

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

The Chief Commissioner: Je réponds à la question tout à l'heure. On me dit c'est maintenant qu'on va ... Mais depuis longtemps on parle justement de l'authenticité de Rodrigues. Depuis longtemps on parle de notre culture, de préserver notre culture. Même si on a été au TOP RESA, on a parlé de ça. Ils ont parlé de tout ça. Et, c'est pourquoi nous notre but c'est de revoir d'une certaine façon après TOP RESA comment identifier tout cela, comment protéger tout cela et c'est pourquoi nous allons faire appel de candidature pour un consultant. Et ce consultant va nous aider justement après TOP RESA de nous aider justement à travailler ces nouvelles stratégies qui peut-être pour augmenter le nombre de visiteur à Rodrigues.

The Deputy Chairperson: Last question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Dans la même ligner. Donc, on va chercher un nouveau consultant pour nous apprendre comment préserver notre culture, comment préserver notre nourriture, comment préserver de la musique, ainsi de suite, à Rodrigues. M. le Vice-président, est-ce qu'on n'a pas des consultants ici ? Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas l'Office du Touristes à Rodrigues ? Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas un Adviser du Touriste à Rodrigues ? Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas des associations touristiques à Rodrigues ? Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas des opérateurs touristiques à

Rodrigues ? Pourquoi aller chercher un consultant maintenant ? Il parle de franchir une nouvelle étape. Il parle de franchir une nouvelle étape. Est-ce que là, c'est franchir une nouvelle étape en allant/cherchant quelqu'un, je ne sais où, parce que je pense que ça va être international, après avoir été à TOP RESA, après avoir appris qu'il faut conserver notre nourriture, notre culture, ainsi de suite, qu'il faut maintenant chercher pour avoir des nouvelles idées. M. le Vice-président, *I am coming*. Non, parce qu'il faut parler, il faut défendre. Non, moi je défends la culture Rodriguaise. C'est impossible qu'un Chef Commissaire, Commissaire du Tourisme vient nous dire qu'il va chercher un consultant pour justement venir nous montrer comment faire ça. J'aimerais lui poser la question maintenant, je viens avec à la question. Est-ce qu'il pense aller de l'avant ou bien sinon si le consultant va être quelqu'un de Rodrigues, expliquez-nous comment ça va être ?

[Interruption]

The Chief Commissioner: Je m'excuse, M. le Vice-président, le Membre n'a rien compris. Depuis longtemps nous avons compris justement, qu'il faut préserver notre identité, notre culture et ainsi de suite. Vous comprenez là ? Et ce consultant va nous aider par rapport à comment faire venir des touristes d'ailleurs. C'est ça. Nous avons rencontré un consultant à TOP RESA, extra, extra. Vous comprenez, M. le Vice-président. Alors, c'est tout ça, justement. Et l'honorable membre semble vouloir dire que nous sommes des inutiles, que nous n'avons pas certaines visions de Rodrigues, ni certaines visions du tourisme. Mais non, c'est ce que nous appelons des nouvelles stratégies pour faire venir des touristes. Et c'est ça justement dont nous avons besoin.

[Interruption]

The Deputy Chairperson: Next question.

[Interruption]

The Chief Commissioner: *Ferme ou la bouche. Ferme ou la bouche, net kozé, kozé. Mais ou pas trouvé travail là pé faire ?*

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Li pa pé faire.

The Chief Commissioner: *Li pé faire.*

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Li pa pé faire.

The Chief Commissioner: *Li pé faire. Li pé faire*

/UNREVISED/

[Interruption]

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Asizé.*

The Chief Commissioner: *Net kozé kozé.*

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Asizé.*

[Interruption]

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order.

The Chief Commissioner: *Net kozé kozé.*

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please on both sides of the House.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Mal élevé. Asize ou mal élevé.*

The Chief Commissioner: *Ou ki ou été ou ? Ou pa ene mal élevé où ?*

[Interruption]

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, order, please in the House.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Ou ene mal élevé ou pénan respect pou nou. Ou ene grand dimoune pou narnier où.*

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Please.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *L'Aéroport ki bizin construire, ça ki ti dir pou faire.*

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Member Rosaire.

[Interruption]

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Ça ki ti dir pou fer, pas rode consultant! Construire nou l'aéroport pou nou kapav ouvert pays-là. Oune ferme li.*

[Interruption]

The Deputy Chairperson: Member Rosaire.

/UNREVISED/

[Interruption]

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, order in the House, please.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: This is true. Et que l'histoire retienne ce que j'ai dit.

[Interruption]

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. On both sides.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Monsieur Baptiste, monsieur Baptiste. Mo koné ki apel l'opposition...*

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order. Member Rosaire for the last time. Next question.

CAPITAL PROJECT(S)/FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/2018 - IMPLEMENTED

(No. B/97) Mr. Louis Joseph Von-Mally, G.O.S.K (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to capital project(s) falling under his Commission for financial year 2017/2018, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table a list thereof that have been implemented to date together with the respective cost and successful bidder for each project, indicating the evaluation criteria observed behind each choice?

Commissioner for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, for Financial Year 2017/2018, the two main capital projects being implemented by my commission are as follows: -

1. Administrative Blocks at Mont Lubin; and
2. the new Social Housing Projects.

The tender regarding the Administrative Blocks at Mont Lubin was floated by the Central Tender Board and the bids were evaluated by the Board itself. After evaluation, my commission was informed that the most responsive successful bidder was Tayelamay and Sons Enterprise Ltd. The contract was awarded on 03 July 2017 to the contractor for the sum of Rs 96,365,894, excluding VAT. The contract was signed on 28 July 2017 between my commission and the Contractor. I am informed that the contract period is 450 calendar days and the expected completion date of the project is 14 November 2018. As at date, around 10% of the works have been completed and is on schedule.

With regard to the New Social Housing Project, I have already elaborated on all the details in my reply to PQ B/4 on sitting of 16 May this year.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that as at date 160 families have already benefitted from this project. I am informed that 17 new houses have been completed already, 75 have attained slab level and are awaiting finishing works, 16 others have reached beam levels, 14 have completed their floor levels, 12 have completed their foundation works and 26 have not yet started their construction. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am tabling the...

The Minority Leader: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. So, I have made to understand that there are 160 houses that are being built? Can I know whether all these norms and whether there are certain houses that are behind scheduled, even the administrative block, is it not behind scheduled because it is supposed to be completed in November?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: It is November 2018. I mentioned earlier that it is right on schedule, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. For Mont Lubin it is 2018 not 2017. And, for the housing units also they are all according to norms and specifications and everything is under controlled.

The Minority Leader: And, can we have the list of the contractors that have got the most of it. *La part du lion concernant ces travaux. Quels sont les compagnies qui ont eu la part du lion ?*

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I do not have a list, but later on in question B/108, I will table a list of all eligible contractors.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the commissioner whether he is making sure that all the workers, the Rodriguan workers are being paid according to law?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir. We have not yet received any complaints from workers relating to being paid at a lower rate than what is set by the office, the Labour Office. And, I met all the workers concerned few weeks back to explain about all the conditions. But we have not received any official complaint.

The Minority Leader: Can I know how the supervision work is done?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Yes, it has already been replied in my last PQ B/4.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Monsieur le Commissaire, si tous les éventuelles bénéficiaires, ils ont même accès aux banques ? Si tous les banques, ils peuvent avoir des emprunts de toutes les banques ?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: So, the beneficiaries have been able either to secure a loan from bank, all the 160 or from their own contribution. Otherwise, they cannot go ahead with the project because the new scheme consists of a part of contribution, a share from the beneficiaries.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: M. le Vice-président, c'était bien dit que les bénéficiaires demanderaient un emprunt auprès des banques. Mais c'est la question que je demande au Commissaire. Est-ce que toutes les banques commerciales qui ont été approché on donnait l'emprunt aux personnes ?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: So, obviously it depends on the requirements and the *les procédures des banques*. Some beneficiaries, we have learnt, not beneficiaries, but some of the potential beneficiaries who were offered a letter of pre-selection have been to certain commercial banks and they have not been able to obtain the loan and we will consider them in another scheme. It seems that some have problems, for example, they have already had other loans at the banks or they have not been able to show proof that they can repay the amount. So, for this category of potential beneficiaries, we will come up with a new scheme to cater for, so that they can obtain a housing unit.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, Sir, I will put two questions in one. I will try to. He is a teacher he will be able to... He has... no he is still a teacher. Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, so prior to the handing over of the award letter for a housing unit under your scheme, we have been made to understand that before the...(end of recording)

[BREAK IN RECORDING – as from B/98 to B/107 not on record]

REFORESTATION ACROSS THE ISLAND

(No. B/98) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to reforestation across the island, he will inform the House on where matters stand in relation thereto, indicating if his Commission has already determined and/or identified the concerned zones/regions/villages and the anticipated date of start of the said project?

HOUSING PROJECTS - CITÉ PATATE

(No. B/99) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Housing and Others whether, in regard to housing projects for Cité Patate, he will, for the benefit of the House, state where matters stand together with the proposed starting date of the project?

CONSTRUCTION OF A RESERVOIR - MONT CABRIS CORAIL

(No. B/100) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to construction of a reservoir at Mont Cabris Corail, he will inform the House on where matters stand and the expected starting date therefor?

RENOVATION AND UPGRADING/COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES - LA FERME & MARECHAL

(No. B/101) Miss M. R. Collet (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Community Development and Others whether, in regard to the renovation and upgrading of social and community health centres in the electoral regions of La Ferme (number 1) and Marechal (number 2), he will state where matters stand, indicating the estimated cost thereof together with any remedial actions his Commission is envisaging as regards the centres currently in a non-functional state?

ONGOING PROJECT – FENCING FACILITIES

(No. B/102) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally, GOSK (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the ongoing project whereby fencing facilities are provided to planters of Rodrigues, he will state: -

- (a) the number of beneficiaries thereof;
- (b) the eligibility criteria to benefit therefrom, indicating the equipment, materials and support provided in each case; and
- (c) if there has been any bidding process for the supply of the best equipment and service, and tabling the list of all the bidders, the tender documents and the name of the successful bidder together with the funds concerned?

At 12.34 hours the Assembly was suspended for one hour.

On its resumption at 13.35 hours with the Chairperson in the chair.

**SUBSIDY ON MEAT – NO. OF ANIMALS
SLAUGHTERED/SUPERVISION/HEALTH SAFETY**

(No. B/103) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to subsidy on meat put forward by his Commission on 12 August 2017, he will, for the benefit of the House:-

- (a) state the number of animals slaughtered by butchers operating at the Port Mathurin market specifying the slaughtering date;
- (b) state how supervision was made by his Commission and indicating the price at which meat was sold; and
- (c) table the report of the Health Inspector on this activity at Port Mathurin market, if any?

SECURITY AT PLAINE CORAIL AIRPORT – LOSS OF A ‘COLIS’

(No. B/104) Mr. J.L.R. Perrine (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?

**WRITE-OFF OF ITEMS
- COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

(No. B/105) Mr. J.L.R. Perrine (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?

RODCLEAN LTD

(No. B/106) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to Rodclean Ltd, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information from the company and table: -

- (a) the organigram thereof;

- (b) the name and grade of any new recruit, from January 2016 to date, indicating their respective salary and scope of work; and
- (c) and state the average monthly breakdown of expenses incurred by the company detailing in terms of salaries, fuel and other related operational costs?

**RECENT PROMOTION EXERCISE/HEALTH SECTOR
– VACANCY/WARD MANAGER**

(No. B/107) Mr. J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the recent promotion exercise in the health sector, he will, for the benefit of the House state: -

- (a) the grades concerned, indicating the number of staff involved, both male and female, and specifying the eligibility criteria observed therefor; and
- (b) if any vacancy in the grade of Ward Manager was filled and, if not, when same will be done and to indicate if all wards are currently supervised by a Ward Manager?

[RECORDING RESUMES – on record]

As regards to part (b) of the question, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, there is no vacancy in the grade of Ward Manager but there are six Charge Nurses who are assigning higher duties at the level of Ward Managers on a pilot basis as follows:

- Four are posted at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the different Wards;
- One is posted at La Ferme Area Health Centre;
- One at Zita Jean Louis Area Health Centre;
- Six Officers - three Male and three Female have been assigned higher duties among charge Nurses on a seniority basis.

It is to be noted that the post of Ward Manager is not funded for this Financial Year but provisions will be made in the next budgetary exercise for the funding of the posts and also for the filling of vacancies in the grade. All Wards and Area Health Centres are supervised by Ward Manager.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

HOUSING PROJECT – CONTRACTOR INVOLVED/SUPERVISING OFFICER

(No. B/108) Mr. J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to the social housing project at the level of his Commission, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the contractor involved per housing unit and to indicate if there is any supervising officer overseeing the construction before handing over of the housing unit to beneficiaries?

The Commissioner for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Madam Chairperson, the Chief Commissioner reiterated his commitment in the Budget Speech 2017/18 to realise this ambitious housing project of “*ene famille ene bon lakaz*”. This means that the Housing Unit should be provided with basic amenities like toilet, bathroom and kitchen while at the same time ensuring that they are being constructed by professionals according to norms and this is why registered local contractors are involved in the project.

Madam Chairperson, in regard to supervision, I am informed that the Acting Senior Inspector of Works and Assistant Inspector of Works posted at my Commission carry out regular inspections at different stages of the construction process.

There are three inspections by the time plinth and floor level is reached. Regular visits are also being carried out before beams and roof slab are cast. The Inspectors are informed by the contractors and the beneficiaries before any concrete works is being done to enable proper inspections.

The last stage where finishing works are carried out, the Inspectors make sure that all openings, electricity, plumbing and painting works are according to norms. As I mentioned earlier, beneficiaries’ participation is mandatory. This is why some onus is also on them to help, to closely supervise the construction progress and also to report to the Inspectors of Works of my commission, if ever, they have any doubt about anything that might not be going smoothly. Therefore, the probability that the housing units are not constructed according to established norms are very, very low.

I have to ensure the House that all visits are supported by photographs, by pictures. Before certifying claims for payments, the inspectors have to make sure

that the building materials used during all the stages of construction are according to specifications.

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling a list of the 38 CIDB registered contractors who are eligible to undertake construction works under this project as at date.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, can I ask the Commissioner whether prior to the payment of bills or payment to the contractor whether he paid visits, he had sites visits on the different sites where the houses are being constructed?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Madam Chairperson, I think that everybody knows that it is not the duty of the Commissioner, that is why we have technical persons, inspectors who are qualified to carry out the jobs and before any payments is made obviously, as I mentioned, the Inspectors who are qualified for this job will have to make...

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: So, yes, I rephrase my question. Does he go on sites visits, for some sites visits on the different sites, he himself as Commissioner?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Obviously, this is the project of my commission, I should know how works are going on but technically speaking, I cannot ascertain whether a job is being done correctly or not. But I trust the technical officers who are qualified to carry out these jobs and I also trust that the beneficiaries are doing what they should do to report if ever they believe that there is something wrong to report to the commission as I explained to them clearly during the various meetings that I had, during the preselection of letter of award.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, est-ce-que le Commissaire est au courant qu'une des bénéficiaires a déjà reçu sa lettre de *letter of intention* en écrit, c'était en écrit, mais par contre après il y a quelqu'un de votre commission, de la commission du Commissaire qui a téléphoné à la personne *verbally* pour dire qu'il ne tombe pas sous tel ou tel projet. Est-ce que vous êtes au courant de ce cas-là ?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I do not know if it is the same case but I know that in at least in one case somebody made a false declaration and once it has been confirmed that she has made false declaration as it is stipulated in the contract so the contract has been cancelled.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: ... of supervisors, those officers, I think who are Inspectors or Assistant Inspectors doing inspection, so can we know how many of them is following this projects?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I have already mentioned, I have already given the answer, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. F.A. Grandcourt: How many of them, how many officers, how many Inspectors or Assistant Inspectors are involved in the... The number, so I want to know the number, so he has not given the number?

Mr. L.D. Baptiste: Two Members, Madam Chairperson, please listen carefully.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Why such hesitation to say two? Only two?

Madam Chairperson: Come with your question, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Only two supervisors for this project, 160?

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, you are wasting question time, please.

Mr. F.A. Grandcourt: Is this number, that is two officers, are enough to supervise this project?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: According to me, for the time it is enough as long as to supervise all the housing units, that is why we have been able to give full details of all the 160 cases where matters stand, where they have reached, which level and these are as I have mentioned, supported by pictures taken at each stage, at each visit. And I would invite the Members of the minority side if you want, there is the Public Accounts, Committee, you can go and find out everything, everything is clearly there in the folders.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: One question at a time.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam Chair, can I ask the commissioner how out of the 38 houses already allotted more than 80%, one of the same contractor building construction work obtained same, more than 80%?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Madam Chairperson, it is so simple. This is a competitive market. The beneficiaries they go and negotiate. Whoever contractors give them the best offer, obviously they chose it. So, you will ask me why some contractors get more projects with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. It is simple. This is business, you should know, it is competition.

Madam Chairperson: Next question, please.

CONSTRUCTION – KITCHEN & PREAU/GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

(No. B/109) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of kitchen and *préau* in government primary schools in Rodrigues, he will:

- (a) state the number thereof being constructed and the list of primary schools concerned together with the amount of money involved thereof in each primary school;
- (b) state the procedures followed for the construction thereof, the progress of works to date and the expected date that same will be fully operational; and
- (c) table the list of bidders, indicating the successful bidder for each school together with the specifications of the building?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as announced in my previous budget speech, my Regional Government is investing heavily in the Education sector as I strongly believe that an educated population is a major asset for the island of Rodrigues.

Consequently, Madam Chairperson, among the major infrastructural development in the field of Education, my Commission is proceeding with the construction of *préau* and kitchen in Primary Schools to provide proper facilities to the pupils.

As at date, Madam Chairperson, the project of constructing kitchen and *préau* have been implemented in eight primary government schools out of 12 existing, namely: -

- (i) Marc Etienne Roche Bon Dieu Primary School;
- (ii) Port Sud Est Primary School;
- (iii) Basile Allas Port Mathurin Government School;

- (iv) Grand la Fouche Corail Government School;
- (v) Terre Rouge Government School;
- (vi) Batatran Government School;
- (vii) Oyster Bay Government School; and
- (viii) Mangues Government School.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that the kitchen and *préau* facilities are available in the other four government schools namely:-

- (i) Montagne Charlot Community Government School
- (ii) Araucaria Community Government School
- (iii) Anse Quitor Community Government School
- (iv) Mt. Goyaves Community Government School

Madam, Chairperson, I wish also to inform the House that since the required facilities are now available, actions are being initiated to provide a balanced meal on a pilot basis to two Primary schools namely Port Sud Est Government School and Anse Quitor Government School announced in my Budget Speech earlier this year.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the procedures followed for the tendering exercise are as per the Public Procurement Act and guidelines.

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling the following information as required: -

- (i) Amount of money involved thereof for each primary school;
- (ii) Procurement method for each project and list of bidders if any;
- (iii) The successful bidder for each primary school;
- (iv) Date of Completion/Progress of works to date; and
- (v) Specifications.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Yes, can the Chief Commissioner see to it that for Terre Rouge Government School and Roche Bon Dieu, Marc Etienne Government School when there are heavy winds or rainfalls, these people will not be able to stay under these *préaux*. Can the Chief Commissioner see to it to make arrangement to remediate this matter?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, I know this problem and we have given instruction to prevent pupils from winds or rain.

Madam Chairperson: Next question. Next question, the Fourth Island Region Member.

TOURISM PROMOTION CAMPAIGN FOR RODRIGUES

(No. B/110) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Tourism Promotion Campaign for Rodrigues as a tourist destination, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the number of missions effected since January 2017 to date by his Commission indicating the countries involved, the list of Rodriguan delegation for each mission and the amount of money disbursed therefor?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as already spelt out in the “Discours Programme” 2017–2022, my Government is targeting 100,000 tourists’ arrival by 2025 being given that the Tourism Sector is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson, one of the most evident strategies to achieve our target is by adopting a more aggressive Promotion and Marketing Campaign of the destination through continuous participation of Rodrigues Tourism Office in International and Regional Tourism Fairs.

You will concur, Madam Chairperson, that Tourism is a highly competitive sector and Rodrigues needs to be made visible on all main fairs so as to be able to compete with other destinations to achieve the targeted goals.

Madam Chairperson, the number of tourist arrival in Rodrigues has experienced an unprecedented growth from 2012 to 2017 by more than 40% increase, that is, the number of arrival has increased from about 50,000 to more than 75,000.

Madam Chairperson, the missions effected by my Commission and the Office du Tourisme are two folds. Firstly, to promote the destination on International and Regional Market by the Rodrigues Office and Tourism operators. And secondly, meeting with strategic partners in Mauritius, such as, Ministry of Tourism, Mauritius Promotion Tourism Authority, Mauritius Tourism Authority and Air Mauritius to enhance further collaboration and dialogue.

Tourism Development in Rodrigues is one of the priority projects of my Government. This is why the budget allocated for the promotion of Tourism in Rodrigues has increased from Rs 6 million in 2010 to Rs 11 million in 2017.

Madam Chairperson, as regards to the number of missions effected since January 2017 to date by my Commission, a detailed report has been compiled and I am tabling same. I wish to mention, Madam, that the total cost incurred for all missions effected from January 2017 to date amounts to about Rs 2 m.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, I have one question. The question put by the Member was clear. It is said, if the Chief Commissioner can state and table the number of missions effected. He has said that he will table but he has not said what is the number of missions effected. It is easy to say how many missions? Can we know how many mission?

Madam Chairperson: In the meantime, the table has been advised that PQ B/123 and B/124 have both been withdrawn.

[Interruption]

Next question. You are wasting question time, Member. Next question.

[Interruption]

Next question, yourself.

FIVE FISHING COOPERATIVE VESSELS – FACILITIES/SUPPORT PUT FORWARD

(No. B/111) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the five fishing cooperative vessels acquired under the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and under the ‘Promotion of Outer Lagoon Fishing Development Scheme’, he will, for the benefit of the House, state what facilities or support his Commission has put forward or given to fishing cooperatives so that these vessels be operational to their optimal capacity?

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, let me inform the House that development of the off-lagoon fishery is one of the priority objective of my commission. In order to meet this objective, one of our strategies is to empower the local fishermen so that they can play their role effectively and increase fisheries catch. This is in line with our policy to favour community participation in the development process of Rodrigues and the democratization of our economy.

Madam Chairperson, it is in this spirit that since we took office in February 2012, my Commission has implemented a series of measures which aim at building capacity of the outer lagoon fishers to facilitate their fishing activities.

/UNREVISED/

As regards, to the fishing vessels acquired under the IFAD programme 2011, these were allocated to five fishing cooperatives which were encountering serious difficulties to operate when we came into office. Since 2012 to date, we provided the following support to the five fisheries cooperatives to enable them to operate smoothly:

- (i) The purchase of electric wheels and fishing equipment;
- (ii) The supply of argo brackets, hooks, satellite phones and screw drivers to the tune of Rs 327,850;
- (iii) Servicing of life rafts and the renewal of expired spares amounting to Rs 245,369 in March 2015;
- (iv) The installation of wining on the five fishing vessels and replacement of rubber amounting to Rs 324,950 in May 2015;
- (v) In July 2016, a delegation of fishers from the Rodrigues Offshore Fishermen Cooperative Federation Ltd. accompanied by the Acting Comtroller of Fisheries undertook an exchange programme with the Praslin Fishermen Association in Seychelles under the sponsorship of my commission;
- (vi) In September 2016, we purchased and installed digital fish finders on each of the fishing vessels to the tune of Rs 1.6 m.;
- (vii) In December 2016, my commission provided a grant of Rs 200,000 to the Federation for the procurement of a set of Mini-CVMS, Distress and Tracking Solution to enable the fishing vessels to proceed on fishing campaigns.

Additionally, Madam Chairperson, my commission has provided financial supports to the cooperatives on several occasions as follows:

- (i) The purchase of a new ice making machine at La Maison des Pêcheurs;
- (ii) We made facilities for them to pay fuel at duty free prices;
- (iii) We paid the sea worthiness of the fishing vessels on several occasions;
- (iv) We paid the insurance for group personal accident and Marine Hull Insurance;
- (v) We paid renewal of ship station licence; and
- (vi) Payment of electricity bills on several occasions.

Let me also point out that for Maison des Pêcheurs we have fixed photo voltaic panels on the roofs of La Maison des Pêcheurs to cut down electricity cost.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can the Commissioner for Fisheries inform the House with all these technical support given to fishermen why approval has been sought from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development so that the RRA can purchase these five fishing vessels?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I do not understand the question.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: The RRA, you just said, that many technical support, facilities have been given to these cooperatives. But why approval has been sought from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development so that the RRA can buy these fishing vessels? Why?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, because these vessels costed a lot of money. It costed about Rs 12 m. for one but we did not have the budget for that. Of course, this is the procedure to go for the Ministry of Finance to get the money.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Who will operate these fishing vessels if the RRA buys these fishing vessels? Who will operate?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I have never said that the RRA will buy these fishing vessels. For the time being, the fishing vessels belong to these cooperatives. It is a fact, that they have not paid a single rupee, I mean, very little money as reimbursement of the fund but I never said that RRA will buy the vessel.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, can I know from the Commissioner whether there is a nationalisation spirit in this regional government of buying hotels *en faillite*, boats? Are we nationalising everything?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, Madam, we are not buying. How can we buy our boats? We cannot buy our own boats. These boats as long as it is not paid belong to the government. It is government money that has been invested in that. If it is working, everything is okay, it is okay. I must admit that there is about two of these boats which are not being used properly, the cooperatives are not working. So, what do we do? Do we sit down and say: "Okay we leave the boats there and we do not use them. Or we do something towards... Whatever we say in this world is not good – *tou céki to fer pas bon*. If we leave the boats, we do nothing, then they would say why are you not doing anything. We are doing something; we are trying, of course. It is not the idea of having these boats and putting them there. It is not being used. So, it is our duty to act accordingly.

The Minority Leader: We are not saying that we must not do anything but we can support them, without taking ownership of the boats. We can support,

give them necessary support, necessary consultancy and necessary consultant to help them to move ahead. In the past there was such board helping these fishermen. I think, this is the way to go about it.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, but you have heard. I think you... I have listed several supports that we are giving. We have been giving for five years. So, we cannot forever support something which is not supportable.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Madam Chairperson, why not using the Rodrigues Innovative and Excellence Programme for Cooperatives *pour accompagner ces cinq cooperatives*?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Ces coopératives sont accompagnés. J'ai listé pas mal de chose. Ils sont accompagnés. La Commission des Coopératives accompagne ces coopératives. Mais je ne sais pas d'où ça vient mais c'est une question de gestion.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, il y a eu plusieurs questions dans cette Assemblée concernant la gestion de ces coopératives, la gestion de ces bateaux de pêche qui appartiennent en partie aux pêcheurs mais en partie à l'Assemblée Régionale parce que l'Assemblée Régionale a investi de l'argent dedans. Madame la présidente, il y avait un Management Plan, si je me souviens bien, en 2013 qui était supposé être en exécution avec à partir de cette date-là avec l'accord de l'IFAD. Il y a eu *several attempts to help these fishermen and their boats, even their boats have been changed of colour, from green to red. That means that there is something happened here* but comment expliquer, je vais demander au Commissaire, pendant 2013, 2012, normalement les pêcheurs auront une année pour rentabiliser leurs projets, comment expliquer qu'à partir 2012 à ce jour les pêcheurs ont pu rembourser que Rs 10,000 sur le montant total alors qu'ils devaient rembourser pleinement. Est-ce que ce plan directeur qu'il nous ont annoncé, lui-même ici dans cette chambre a fonctionné ou est-ce qu'il y a eu faillite ?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madame la présidente, il y a eu plusieurs plans. C'est vrai que la dernière chose, c'était de reprendre les bateaux et de donner à d'autres personnes, d'autres coopératives. L'idée de prendre les bateaux pour qu'ils puissent... Ce n'est pas des mêmes bateaux dont on parle, les bateaux qui sont à Port Sud Est, c'est autre chose. Ça c'est un autre petit bateau, moi je parle des gros bateaux. Mais oui, il y a eu plusieurs stratégies qui ont été mis en place. On a beaucoup fait. Et, la dernière stratégie, c'est que peut être qu'il y a quelques coopératives, il n'y a pas toutes les coopératives, il y en a qui font du bon travail mais il y a au moins deux qui ne fonctionnent pas comme il faut. Donc, nous on doit prendre les taureaux par les cornes.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madame la présidente, il y a eu tentative de *write-off* de Rodrigues General Fishing Company. C'est vrai, ce n'était pas leurs enfants, déclaré, comme on dit, *li comment dire ene zenfant batard*.

Madam Chairperson: Come with your question, please.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, I am coming to my question. I must explain myself for everyone to get aware of what I want to say. The Rodrigues Trade and Marketing is a private company owned by STC and RRA. The Rodrigues General Fishing is a company owned by the RRA itself. Why not open this Rodrigues General Fishing company to investors who want to invest in the fishing sector and then promote this boat for them to get out of this lagoon and be off-lagoon to have sufficient money to underliving and to pay their debts, Madam Chairperson, Madam?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I do not see the question coming.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: You do not see the question in it. I will rephrase my question. Can the Commissioner inform the House, if he does not have any idea, he just mentioned it? He does not have any way how to help these fishermen again. Why not do a PPP, Private Public Partnership to *remettre à fleau le Rodrigues General Fishing* or create another company to support these fishermen instead of getting rid of their boats and all the facilities offered to them. Madam Chairperson, we are here to help people. This is a rule of the government. We cannot put them aside like this.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: We are not putting anyone aside. We are just working towards productivity. If you give facilities to someone, you give the boat, you give everything and then those who are working will continue but the one which are not working we have to take the measures in order that the boats can work.

Madam Chairperson: The table has been advised that PQ B/122 and B/125 have been withdrawn. Next question.

FIRE ALARMS/HOSPITAL & AREA HEALTH CENTRES

(No. B/112) Mr. J.L.R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to fire alarms in hospital and area health centres in Rodrigues, he will: -

- (a) state if all the health centres are equipped therewith and to give details per centre/building/ward, on the date installed and by whom; and
- (b) obtain information from relevant authorities and inform the House about the outcome of the fire which broke out in March 2016 in the administrative building of Queen Elizabeth Hospital?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, fire alarms have been installed at the Maternity Block, Steeve Roussety Intensive Care Unit and the new Pediatric Ward during the construction/renovation works. However, fire alarm will also be installed at the OPD/Administrative Block at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Zita Jean Louis and La Ferme Area Health Centres where renovations and upgrading works are being carried out.

Madam Chairperson, as regards to part (b), I am informed that:

- On the 3rd February 2016, at about 03.20 hours, a call was received stated that there is a fire at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the assistance of the Fire Rescue Services is required. At about 03.21 a.m., crew of six turned out to the above mentioned place to attend the request.
- Arriving on the spot a risk assessment was conducted to determine the hazard present to Firefighters so that firefighting operation could commence in a safely environment. At the same time, it was noticed that two persons were trapped in the Doctor's mess as hot smoky gasses had obstructed the means of escape. A ladder was immediately pitched to the sill of the window and two Doctors were rescued by the team.
- Personnel off-duty were recalled to provide assistance to the firefighting crew and the operation was completed at about 08.15 a.m.
- Apart from a slight injury of the right arm of a Firefighter, there has not been any casualty directly linked with the fire.
- Part of the first floor of the building sustained severe damage. The plaster at the ceiling cracked and fall, information and communication technology destroyed, partition walls destroyed as well as office equipment and electrical installations.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, Madam, my question was: When installation was made per centre, per building, per area centre? Can the Commissioner give us these information, please?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: As I have said, Madam, the Maternity Block, Steeve Roussety Intensive Care Unit and new Paediatric Ward during the construction fire alarms were installed. I have not the date of the installed fire alarms.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Okay. Does this fire alarm installed in Maternity and so on, they function normally, they are in good condition?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Madam.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Yes, Madam. Can the Commissioner confirm to the House that it is only the new Paediatric Ward which are installed/equipped with new fire alarms and the others are not working as he mentioned?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, as I have stated in the first paragraph of my question fire alarm has been installed at the Maternity Block, Steeve Roussety Intensive Care Unit and new Pediatric Ward during the construction and renovation works. We have not experienced any fire in these wards, so for me it is in good condition.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Madame la présidente, l'hôpital de Crève-Cœur, le Centre hospitalier de Mont Lubin et de La Ferme.* We are talking about security of people. Can the Commissioner explain to this House if these fire alarms were working correctly? How come that the fire that broke out on the 3rd February 2016, there was no fire alarm *déclenché* at that date?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, the Respected Member has not listened to my answer. Because as I have said, it is now that the OPD administrative block, Zita Jean Louis and La Ferme Health Centres will be provided with fire alarms.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, it is unfair. *Enfin, ce n'est pas correcte, ce n'est pas correcte. Et, ce n'est pas comme-ci de venir dire à la Chambre que toutes ces affaires-là fonctionnent, toutes les fire alarms fonctionnent.* I will invite the Commissioner, because I have got information, the panel that control the fire alarms there is no fuse in it since a long time. So, he cannot come here and tell us that these fire alarms are working. That is why fire broke out in the administrative block and nobody has been made aware of this

because the fire alarm was in bad condition. I would invite the Commissioner instead of saying everything is working...

Madam Chairperson: We are still waiting for the question, Respected Member.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: I would invite the Commissioner to make a survey in all the administrative blocks...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, please come with your question.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madam, I am coming with my question, please wait. The blocks and everything is equipped with fire alarms and they functioned normally instead of coming and say everything is correct whereas it is not correct.

Madam Chairperson: The table has been advised that PQs B/118, B/119, B/120 and B/121 have been withdrawn. Question time is over.

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

OBITUARY – LATE MR. ANDRÉ LÉLIO ROUSSETY

The Chief Commissioner: Madame la présidente, c'est avec tristesse que nous avons appris le 4 octobre dernier, le décès de Monsieur André Lélío Roussety à l'âge de 77 ans. M. André Lélío Roussety a eu une riche carrière dans l'enseignement secondaire avant de faire ces débuts en politique au sein de l'OPR. Il a été élu dans la Région No. 5 à Port Mathurin, lors des premières élections régionales de 2002. Il a été nommé Commissaire de l'Education par la suite. Madame la présidente, j'adresse à son épouse, à son fils, à ces proches, à ces amis et ces camarades, ma solidarité affectueuse et les condoléances de la population de Rodrigues. Rodrigues perd un de ces plus grands talents. Madame la présidente, en mon nom personnel et au nom de cette Assemblée et toute la population de Rodrigues veuillez avoir l'obligeance de demander au Clerk de transmettre nos condoléances les plus sincères à sa famille. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

The Minority Leader: Madame la présidente, au nom de l'opposition, la minorité, je voudrai aussi m'associer au Chef Commissaire pour présenter mes condoléances à la famille de feu André Lélío Roussety. J'ai connu André Lélío Roussety comme collègue, on a travaillé ensemble au Rodrigues College. Moi, le souvenir que je garde de lui, c'était quelqu'un de bien affable, un bon vivant qui ne se soucier pas du quand dira-t-on. Et, beaucoup d'entre nous se rappelle

souvent quand il avait 75 ans, il avait l'habitude de dire – *I am not 75 years old, I am 75 years young*. Donc, on se rappelle beaucoup de sa maîtrise de la langue française, de sa maîtrise de sa langue anglaise qui fasciner plus d'un et il a quitté un livre en héritage au peuple Rodriguais. Donc, pour nous c'est un beau cadeau. Donc, je voudrai au nom de la minorité et en mon nom personnel de transmettre nos condoléances à toute sa famille, à sa femme, à ces enfants et à tous ces proches. Je vous remercie.

Madam Chairperson: I am associating myself with the Chief Commissioner and the Minority Leader to transmit the condolences to the family of Mr. André Lélío Roussety and his relatives and I am directing the Clerk of the Regional Assembly to transmit same to the family.

ACQUISITION DU COMPLEXE HOTELIER DE POINTE VENUS

The Commissioner for Child Development and Other (Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madame la présidente, mon allocution cette après-midi fait référence à l'acquisition du complexe hôtelier de Pointe Venus par l'Assemblée Régionale. En effet, comme vous le savez en 2015, il était du domaine public que l'hôtel Pointe Venus avait fermé ces portes et voulait trouver preneur. En même temps le Gouvernement Régional travaillait sur le projet de la Technopole à Rodrigues. C'est dans cette optique et dans ce contexte que le Conseil Exécutif a pris la décision de démarrer les procédures en vue de faire l'acquisition du complexe de Pointe Venus. A cette même période la compagnie avait un long *outstanding balance* concernant le paiement de leur bail. Suivant les procédures gouvernementaux, l'Assemblée Régionale a sollicité le support de *l'Evaluation Department* du Ministère des Finances et du Développement Economique dans une correspondance émanant du bureau du Chef Commissaire et Commissaire des Terre datant le 5 novembre 2015. Dans une correspondance datant du 29 février 2016 *l'Evaluation Department* a communiqué le montant évaluer soit Rs 55 millions au bureau du Chef Commissaire mentionnant que l'évaluation *is exclusive of Furniture and Plant and Equipment*. Entretemps, les échanges ont continué entre les parties concernées. Et, après consensus entre les différentes parties, les procédures de paiement ont été fait par l'intermédiaire des professionnels requis et les clés remettent à mon bureau en date du 20 octobre.

Madame la présidente, les rumeurs ont couru les rues la semaine dernière, disant qu'il y a eu pillage à Pointe Venus. Etant donné que l'achat par l'Assemblée Régionale comprend uniquement le bâtiment, un administrateur avait été nommé par la Cour pour disposer des *Furniture and Plant and Equipement* qui se trouve dans les locaux de Pointe Venus. Il est bon à savoir que l'Assemblée Régionale n'a rien à avoir avec la vente des *Furniture and Plant and Equipement*.

On a cependant appris des témoins oculaires, que des politiciens, certains même qui ont été Chef Commissaire étaient sur le lieu et prenaient sans autorisation les mobiliers achetaient pour ne pas dire voler. Ils étaient une petite équipe avec leurs camions qui prenaient à mesure que les autres achetaient. Je dois dire aussi que j'ai visionné une petite vidéo hier attestant un politicien avec ces outils essayant de prendre des appliques et des installations électriques. J'ai aussi été informé par les policiers que certains membres de l'opposition étaient montés sur les murs et ont été forcé de descendre. Et, on a pu constater de visu qu'il y avait une tentative de voler quelques portes mais que les policiers sont intervenus et que les portes n'ont pas quittés les lieux.

Ceci dit, Madame la présidente, la population doit savoir que l'Assemblée Régionale a seulement fait acquisition du bâtiment de Pointe Venus pour être équipé et utiliser pour abriter le projet de Technopole. Du 21 octobre jusqu'au 25 octobre la sécurité du bâtiment est sous l'égide de la Police après qui un service de gardiennage y sera affecter. Merci, pour votre attention, Madame la présidente.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner for Health.

SERVICE DE LA SANTE

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety):
Madame la présidente, je vous remercie de me donner la chance d'adresser la chambre pour parler de la santé.

Un membre de la minorité pendant la dernière session a confirmé lui-même que le service de la santé a fait des progrès et que nous ne devons pas rester sur des lauriers. Je suis tout à fait d'accord avec lui.

Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, at the Commission for Health we are doing the best to offer quality services to the inhabitants of Rodrigues. First of all, I would like to highlight on the infrastructural development at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the two Area Health Centres, that is, Zita Jean Louis at Mont Lubin and La Ferme Area Health Centres. It is not true to say that all the Capital Expenditure has been concentrated on the administrative block rather than facilities that are directly offered to patients. Or, if this was true, it was under the period when the previous government from August 2006–2011, that this was done.

During the administration period of the previous government from the date that I have just cited, I would like to ask that Respected Member: What has been done by his party during that period with a budget amounting to Rs 70 m. for Capital Expenditure? But all was centred on the administrative block that directly serve the patients. The facilities to deliver better services to the patients who call daily to the health department for required services were forgotten during that period.

I would like to ask the Respected Member what has been done by his party during that period? Everyone knows what happened to the maternity block, constructed by the first Regional Government, during period October 2002 to August 2006. From that period, the maternity block has not been used for its purpose. They arranged the block in a disorderly manner, lacking of good arrangement. Where there is the maternity now, it should have been the Prenatal Ward.

I would like to ask the Respected Member, what has been done during the period when his government was governing Rodrigues with a budget of Rs 70 m? The answer is zero.

From February 2012 to date our government, with a budget of Rs 71 m. has implemented the following works:

- Renovation of the Ex Paediatric Ward into an Intensive Care Unit;
- The extension of La Ferme Health Centre;
- Transferring the Paediatric Ward on the first floor of the Maternity Block in 2011 was a big mistake from the former government. Our little kids suffered from the sun. God bless this Regional Government, who had the idea to convert the Ex Maternity Ward into a Paediatric Ward. The works completed and the new Paediatric Ward has been inaugurated on Friday last.
- Now our kids have a pleasant ward, pleasant environment and can recover quickly.
- The GOS Ward should have been only the Gaynee, not with the female surgical patients and the female orthopaedic patients. Where the Paediatric Ward should have been the Post Natal and Nursery. And, where is the Nursery? It should have been the Neonatal Ward.

I agree with the Respected Member from the other side that it is time to have a good land use plan for future infrastructural development at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The Member may rest assured that well before his statement on the 22nd August 2017, all necessary arrangement has been made with the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.

On the same day, (*écouter pou to met lor zurnal*) Messrs. Raj Kishore Bunjun, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Panday Gyanesh Kuman, Chairperson and Narendra Kumar, Deputy General Manager of the Hospital Services Consultant Corporation of India paid a visit to Rodrigues to have an idea of our structural building of the hospital.

To honté pour to écoute ça. We, however, have to admit that the infrastructure needs improvement has now...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, please.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: ...however, have to admit that the infrastructural needs improvement has now as a lot of buildings have become old. But being given the lack of space at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital this is why a Consultant is working on how to make optimum use of the space available at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and its surroundings.

It is a fact, that we shall not be able to continue to build new wards or new hospital as there is no space available in Rodrigues anymore for same. Hence, the introduction of new concepts and improving existing infrastructures.

Following their visit, a team of Architects from India will arrive in Rodrigues shortly to work on a Master Plan for the Health Sector. The Master Plan shall include: Surgical wards for Male and Female, new operating theatre, laboratory and other wards for patients and all departments that have to be added to the hospital.

Nous ne serions pas en cette situation de manque d'espace, si le gouvernement de 2006 à 2012 avait continué le programme de l'ancien gouvernement qui était là. Ils n'avaient pas de vision et ils en sont en manque.

The bed capacity for the Male Ward is 28. Eight at the Zita Jean Louis Area Health Centre at Mont Lubin. With the completion of the renovation of the La Ferme Health Centre, eight more beds will be available, making a total of 44. As the total beds capacity for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital...

Madam Chairperson: Does the Second Island Region Member want to go home early today?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: ...is 130. This Regional Government is planning to have a bed capacity of 200 in the near future.

Madam Chairperson, since, my taking over as Commissioner for Health, I must point out that a great boost has been given to maintain all the infrastructure and to provide high quality and timely health services in Rodrigues. We have reduced morbidity as well increase in life expectancy through disease prevention, health promotion of high quality care and treatment to patients. There is no doubt that the health service has witnessed some improvement over the past years as the main health indicators such as infant mortality rates and maternal mortality rates have been stabilised comparable to that of the major regional hospital in Mauritius.

There have been major improvements such as:

- increase in the number of Medical Health Officers posted in Rodrigues, Rodriguan Health Officer;
- increase in the number of specialists posted in Rodrigues, be it long term or short terms;
- even a radiologist to read reports of the CT scan;
- increase in the number of wards/construction of new specialised wards.

However, with increase in number of patients, apparition of new disease, it has become imperative to change the way the health system is administered and delivered in Rodrigues. Hence, the introduction of the Family Concept Doctor will be a reality very soon. This will allow the recruitment of more doctors and allow for an optimum use of the dispensaries, which actually are underutilised. We will have to proceed with this concept as we intend to decrease pressure on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the other Area Health Centres also. We also intend to rapidly fill the vacancies in the Health Services as far as possible to improve services to patients.

The construction of the new wards, maternity wards, ICU, and respective specialised wards took place under the government 2002-2006. This government has carried out major improvements at Zita Jean Louis Area Health Centre at Mont Lubin and La Ferme Health Centre. However, has therefore allowed that new facilities/Services be offered there.

A modern digital X-Ray apparatus has been installed at Month Lubin. This apparatus has already been commissioned on the 14 September 2017. This X Ray Apparatus was offered by the Mauritius Commercial Bank Forward Foundation. The patients found in the surroundings of Mont Lubin will not have to attend the Queen Elizabeth Hospital at Creve Coeur for an X-Ray. The above Foundation has already signified its intention to offer the Commission for Health another X-Ray machine to be installed at La Ferme Health Centre next year. But we

should bear in mind that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital will have to become a specialised centre when the family doctor concept will be implemented.

Some areas where deficiencies have been noted and appropriate measures has been taken to improve the service delivery level in our sector in Rodrigues. We have found that with the increase in the number of patients, this has called for the recruitment of more doctors. Three doctors will be appointed very soon by the end of this month and more specialists posted on a long or short terms basis.

A Respected Member, from the minority side complained about the mattress *feuille papier*. And, of course, there were no mattress *feuille papier* at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The consignment of mattresses and beds were ought to have been delivered since 26 May 2017, but unfortunately they have been delivered to the Commission early September 2017. Patients are now happy with the newly installed beds and mattresses. All old mattresses have been replaced.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed with MSAW, and soon the problem of stray dogs will no longer be a problem at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The fencing surrounding the Hospital compound is also being repaired to prevent stray dogs from entering the hospital compound. Action is being taken for the construction of a high perimeter wall around the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to prevent the entering of dogs and other animals in the compound.

We are looking for a better way how to convey patients to wards, between OPD and the wards. It is quite a very important issue, an appropriated issue and appropriate decision is being taken to ensure the security of patients being transferred from OPD to various wards on trolleys and wheelchairs. The Public Infrastructure is working on the project how to close the Public Road crossing the Hospital or another alternative solution for safety.

Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, for long the disposal of waste water has been a major problem at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Action has already been taken for the construction of a sewage treatment plant at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and bids have already been evaluated and shortly contract will be allocated. The project is being considered as a top priority for immediate remedial.

The increase in the number of ambulance newly bought since 2012 has been of great importance for the conveyance of patients to Hospital and Area Health Centres. But unfortunately, we have not been able to set a SAMU service now. We will need a Medical and Health Officer to be trained to be in charge of the SAMU team We have started to send Rodriguan Medical Officers on training and eventually we shall have the staff required for the unit. For the time being, all these treatments are given by the OPD.

Avant de terminer, la mise en place de ce SAMU verra le jour comme annoncé dans le programme discours du Chef Commissaire 2017–2022.

Last thing that a Member said in his statement on the 22nd of August 2017. He put in question how vaccination is being performed on our children. I wish to inform and re-assure the House that the vaccinations are being done according to the World Health Organisation norm. Up to now, we have not recorded any adverse report. Our officers are performing this vaccination job with great professionalism. I thank you, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner.

CELEBRATION - 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AUTONOMY

The Commissioner for Arts and Culture and Others (Ms. M. R. Edouard): Madam Chairperson, allow me to made a statement on the 15th Anniversary of the Autonomy this year. Madam Chairperson, this year Rodrigues is marking the 15th Anniversary of Autonomy on the theme '*Nou Rev Pou Nou Pei Rodrig*' and a series of activities with specific objectives were organised for all ages and around the island. It was an occasion for us, Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the population of Rodrigues to further enhance the sense of belonging and pride amongst the Rodriguans.

Madam Chairperson, Rodrigues has acceded to its autonomy status since 2002 and the most essential and important decisions regarding the development of our island are taken in Rodrigues by Rodriguans themselves. The struggle for Autonomy started in 1976 and today we are proud to acknowledge the achievements of Rodrigues as an autonomous island.

Madam Chairperson, the symbols of autonomy were also made very visible and accessible to each and every one. The celebration of the 15th Anniversary was the right time to promote, develop and enhance our sense of pride to the main symbols of Autonomy, that is, our Coat of Arms and our '*l'hymne aux Bâtisseurs*' '*Se Pou Sa*' as well as the *legende du monument de l'autonomie*. It was also noted that with deep appreciation that now our '*l'hymne aux Bâtisseurs*' is being adopted by our Rodriguans and the Hymne is sung and the Coat of Arms floats in all activities organised on the occasion be it by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or non-government bodies.

The official ceremony in schools, Madam Chairperson, was held in all primary, secondary schools and vocational institutions as well as in pre-primary schools whereby each school was granted a sum of Rs 10,000 to launch the

project 'I Love Rodrigues'. The concept 'I Love Rodrigues' was introduced and will be promoted all throughout Rodrigues and extended to other target groups in society. The programme 'I Love Rodrigues' was launched also in the "*Relai de l'Autonomie*" whereby the Armoirie of Rodrigues Regional Assembly was transmitted by the main bearers of the *Relai* which was in fact a patriotic initiative in itself.

Madam Chairperson, a series of activities was also launched in June 2017 and was organized in the context of the celebration of this anniversary '*Nou Rev Pou Nou Pei Rodrig.*'

Madam Chairperson, an informative session on the Autonomy of Rodrigues, intended for the upper secondary schools, was launched on 09 August and organised in August 2017 in all schools. Some 450 students participated in the informative sessions and they have allowed the transmission of history of autonomy to the young generation and it has been decided that hereafter the informative sessions will become an annual feature in the extracurricular activities of school and will touch a larger group of students. In a view, Madam Chairperson, to promote our history, the informative session will also be extended to villages and the sessions are meant to start in November this year itself.

Madam Chairperson, in the same respect, school-based competitions were launched in schools and the Final & Prize Giving Ceremony of the Interschool Slam Competition and the Prize Giving Ceremony of Painting Competition & Short Stories were held on the 23rd of September 2017. These activities have enabled school students from pre-primary, primary, secondary and vocational institutions to be involved and participate in the celebration, fully.

Madam Chairperson, to create a greater awareness of our history again, an *avant-premiere* Exhibition was held on the 2nd of October 2017 at the new building acquired for the implementation of the museum of Rodrigues. It is an opportunity, Madam Chair, to display to our citizens and tourists, the artifacts and information already acquired for the future museum of Rodrigues and is also a tool to invite more people to be involved in the building and mounting of that museum. The exhibition included an audio visual component and live demonstration of traditional skills, particularly, the fabrication of tambour and it expected that regular exhibitions will continue to be held in the new building.

Madam Chairperson, my commission has also seized the opportunity to pay a tribute to late artists who have contributed in the development of our culture in diverse arts fields and for the first time in Rodrigues a '*Miray Rekonesans*' was unveiled followed by an exhibition on '*15 ans en image*' and the unveiling of a '*parchemin*' of Honorary Freeman of Rodrigues as from 2003 to 2016 in the

CELPAC of Rodrigues at Port Mathurin. It is to be noted, Madam Chair that the remembrance ceremony was very emotional one and relatives of artists concerned have made very poignant *temoignages*.

Madam, Chairperson, our main event was held on the 12th of October and the Right Honorable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence and Minister of Rodrigues was our Guest of Honour for the celebration and Her Royal Highness, the High Commissioner of South Africa and the High Commissioner of India were also our special guests. A Wreath Laying Ceremony was held at Malabar at the '*Monument de L'Autonomie*' (and the Official Ceremony) and followed by the participation of the Guard of Honour. Some 8000 people comprising of citizens of Rodrigues and tourists attended the official ceremony at Grande Montagne. Our guest of honour and the Chief Commissioner have had the honour and privilege to address the audience on that day to give more hope and more will among the people to work harder. In the same vein, Madam Chair, the '*Medaille de la Reconnaissance Rodriguaise*' was conferred to nine personalities and the Honorary Freeman to three distinguished personalities who have contributed to the advancement of the island. This was once again an opportunity to reward and show recognition to all those who have contributed to '*Batir l'Autonomie de Rodrigues*'. The Official Ceremony culminated with a lively popular show which was much appreciated by the public and which citizens and tourists' guests attended massively.

Madam Chairperson, une '*messe d'action de grâce*' was organized on the 15th of October by the '*Comité Lithurgique*' to express our warmest gratitude to the '*Bâtisseurs de l'Autonomie de Rodrigues*'.

Madam Chairperson, sports also acted as a very important aspect in these celebration namely, in the organisation of the Inter Village Games 2017 whereby the finals were organised on the 30th of September at Grande Montagne. And, whereby 1500 non-license athletes participated in the finals which included many activities that we generally see and demonstration in Rugby and other innovations. I wish to highlight that Eastern Zone won the first place and the village of Batatrand was the best Village for the third time.

Madam Chairperson, it is estimated that more than 10,000 participants joined the programme from the preliminaries in zones to the final phase at Grande Montagne Football ground.

Secondly, there were the *Relais de l'autonomie* and, of course, the bikers were participating in that event, the *Relais de l'autonomie*. A '*relais de l'autonomie*' was held on the 8th of October along la route de l'autonomie from Plaine Corail to Port Mathurin. And, after the kick start by the Chief

Commissioner, the number of participants increased exponentially as the '*Armoirie*' of the Regional Assembly was transmitted by the different bearers at the 15 stages of transmission until the MCB Square. More than two thousand persons participated in the relay accompanying the bearers of the "*Armoirie*" who represented all sectors of the Rodriguan society and economy.

Perhaps one of the most salient feature of the relay is the ceremony at the '*Monument de l'autonomie*' whereby the 'Hymne aux batisseurs' was sang live and participants of the relay holding hand in harmony, respect and dignity.

Madam Chairperson, the Rodrigues Day Volleyball Cup was also organised and it marked at the level of my commission the end of activities for the 15th Anniversary. On the 19th of October we saw the finals and, as usual, the volleyball tournament attracted so many spectators, be it during the matches held outdoor or matches held at the museum. During the finals, the "*Centre de Formation de Volleyball Girls*" defeated Orange Volleyball Club by 3 sets to 1 and for Men, Roche Bon Dieu Volleyball Club defeated Vainqueur Volleyball Club by 3 set to nil.

Madam Chairperson, other commissions were also involved in the celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Autonomy, particularly the organization of the Elderly Day by the Commission for Social Security on the 1st of October 2017 and a '*Defilé Haute Couture*' which is to be organized by the Commission for Industrial Development on the 28th of October 2017 and I am sure my colleagues Commissioners will be glad to highlight the details of the events organised at the end of same.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to express heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed in the celebration of the 15th Anniversary of Autonomy. Our special thanks go to the Chief Commissioner and my colleagues Commissioners, the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Rodrigues, the Chief Commissioner's Office, the different Commissions of Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the members of the Coordinating Committee, the sponsors, the Discipline Forces, the schools, Village Communities and the *Conseil Culturel*, the RCSS and the people of Rodrigues. I also wish to thank, Madam Chairperson, for the initiative held at the House of the Assembly to unite the Members of the government and opposition with regard to the 15th Anniversary of Autonomy. So, it is a good initiative to show that we are people of Rodrigues and we need to do our best to promote the island.

I finally, wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the staff of my commission, who have been working very hard lately for their invaluable contribution and commitment to mark these celebrations. So, I once again wish Happy 15th

/UNREVISED/

Anniversary to all Rodriguans; Long live the Autonomy of Rodrigues; Long live Rodrigues, and as would say the Chief Commissioner, “We Love Rodrigues”. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[Applause]

MOTION

SUSPENSION OF S.O. 9(3)

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that all the businesses on today’s Order Paper be exempted from the provisions of paragraph 3 of Standing Order 9.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

On question put the motion was agreed to.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move the motion standing in my name on today’s Order Paper which reads as follows:

“This Assembly is of the opinion that, by virtue of section 31 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, there is passed the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Shipment of Motor Vehicles) Regulations 2017.”

Madam Chairperson, as at now, we have no legal control on the number of vehicles that an individual may ship to Rodrigues in a given timeframe nor on the age limit of these vehicles though I should admit that there has been the restrictive administrative control on the transaction. I hold here a copy of the proposed regulation, which is so essential for the future interest of Rodrigues. While the secondhand car dealership has made the dreams of owning a car, a reality for many Rodriguans especially those in the lower and the middle income families, yet, we have to express concern that Rodrigues is slowly becoming a dumping ground for used cars. Many of these cars are older than ten years, some even older than 20 years thereby, compromising road safety. It is a fact and every Member of this Assembly will agree that there is a need to start introducing and exerting some control on our automobile park in view of protecting our environment, Public Health and our Tourist Industry.

Rodrigues remains one of the safest place to drive in the Republic. This is the higher order view that I am inviting Members of this Assembly to consider and keep in mind while debating on these regulations. Just to give some statistics, as at 30th September 2017, our automobile park stood at 13,782 vehicles as

compared to 12,976 in December 2016, meaning a 6% increase. This means, Madam Chairperson, for every two persons who are above 18, almost one vehicle for every two persons who are above 18 years old. In fact, since January 2017, there are some 90 additional vehicles which are being added on our roads every month and it remains a matter of concern. The concern is not necessarily with respect to the number but the state and type of vehicles being shipped to Rodrigues. We have to keep in mind one thing, Madam Chairperson, if more people are buying cars, this means that the standard of living of our people is improving but it remains our responsibility to legislate and provide guidance to the people of the type of vehicles that should be imported so as to limit possible negative impacts in our island both in terms of health, environment and safety.

Madam Chairperson, the regulations brought into this House today has two main objectives. The first objective is to place a restriction of a seven-year-old limit on vehicles which may be shipped to Rodrigues. This control is provided by Regulation 4 (6) (a) and is defined in the second schedule of the regulations. By adopting such an approach, we are at the same time indirectly introducing standards-based approach by vehicles entering the fleet will meet specified standards for we all know that new vehicles are equipped with better technologies in terms of gas emission and safety as a whole. Newer vehicles are safer and more fuel-efficient than earlier models and some benefits should result of course. So, there is a climate change benefit in being able to actively promote the use of less ageing vehicles which is in line with our vision of making Rodrigues an ecological island. In line with this, Madam Chairperson, it becomes imperative to improve our examination centre for vehicles. The centre has just been provided with the smoke reader but the focus remains in the transfer and the construction of a modern fitness centre on the reclaimed land of Oyster Bay. The consultant will be called upon to work on the project before the end of this financial year.

Madam chairperson, it goes without saying that the bringing of these regulations in this House will without any doubt, take a slice of freedom of our citizens. However, we should not view it from only this side; we have to look at the global positive effects. This is why we have taken care before getting these Regulations vetted by the State Law Office and subsequently, its bringing into this House to hold consultation meetings with major stakeholders. I am here referring to the *Association Consommateurs de l'Ile Rodrigues*, the Rodrigues Bus Owners Cooperative Society, the Rodrigues Council of Social Services, the Police, the National Transport Authority and major clubs involved in motor riding activities. I am glad to see that some of the representatives who form part of the consultation are present today in this Assembly so that they may ensure what in fact was supposed to them and discussed with them are in fact what are being introduced in this Assembly we have taken also into consideration their various suggestions. I should add here that up to now, there is an administrative control of 10 years' age

limit on the shipment of public service bus to Rodrigues. The reason was obvious because the bus owners were facing difficulties in procuring buses of lower age from the Mauritian market. In fact, we did discuss about the issue why we did the consultation with the different stakeholders.

However, with the introduction of a Bus Modernisation Scheme for Rodrigues, whether owners are benefiting up to Rs 1 m., this are better off for the purchase of new buses for the benefit of our local passengers. The matter was discussed with the Representatives of the Bus Owner Cooperative and they did propose a maximum seven-year-old ban for buses to be shipped to Rodrigues. Madam Chairperson, what we are proposing today is not new worldwide. Many countries have already embarked since long to exert control on age limit for the import of vehicles with a view of reducing the number of motor vehicles on the roads and hence, curbing the problem of traffic jams. In Mauritius, recognition cars older than five years are not allowed. Even in Africa, Madam Chairperson, some countries have embarked on the process. In Kenya for instance, imported Japanese used cars that are older than eight years are not allowed. While Angola has an age limit restriction of five years, this measure ensures that only vehicles that are road worthy are imported into the country. Just to take another example, the case of Trinidad and Tobago on which our Assembly is modelled upon, a new policy was introduced last year which barred the importation of gasoline-powered vehicles more than four years.

Previously, foreign new car dealers were allowed to import vehicles that were up to six years. The policy in Trinidad and Tobago also restricted prospective buyers importing cars for personal use to doing so every four years instead of every three years. In our case, we have not gone too far. We are proposing a seven-year-old ban and we are allowing every individual to have a permit at least every six months. I think this is very flexible indeed. The second objective, Madam Chairperson, aims at placing a restriction on the number of vehicles that an individual can ship to Rodrigues within a given timeframe and as I mentioned here, six months, while ensuring that the constitutional rights of ownership of the individual is not violated. There has been a proliferation of people operating as unregistered dealers who are evading taxes resulting in loss revenue for the Government. This control is regulated by Regulation 6 (1). However, care has been taken to ensure in Regulation 6 (2) the persons involved in trades and businesses are not affected as well as cars which are involved in the accident resulting in total loss.

The focus targeted by each of these objectives is multifold in terms of the effects on health, environment and controlling the informal market that we are witnessing so far. It is not a secret that some second-hand car dealers in Mauritius are cheating second-hand car buyers from Rodrigues by not disclosing the true

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conditions of the vehicle itself. Details like mileage and accident records are often withheld and altered. Madam Chairperson, by imposing restriction on the age limit as well as a number of shipment permit granted, we are indirectly promoting local car dealers' business to flourish. Other provisions included in these Regulations worth mentioning, it is proposed that historic classic vehicles be exempted and continued to be allowed to enter the fleet regardless of their age as spelt out in Regulation 3 (1) (b). Regulation 3 (1) (a) provides for the facilitation of officers who come to work on the tour of service in Rodrigues, it is recommended that as regard to this category of officers, but there should be no restriction of age limit for their imported vehicles.

However, we are going to place restriction on the sales of the vehicles upon their departure. We have also set the obligation of the Commission for Transport to issue a shipment permit within seven working days of the date of application as per Regulation 4 (6) (b) (i). We have also introduced, Madam Chairperson, an appeal procedure which is allowed under regulation 4 (vii) (b) in case application for the shipment permit is rejected and finally, we have introduced in a nominal fee of only Rs 300 as shipment permit fee as stipulated under the schedule. Madam Chairperson, as I have spelt out, one of the ultimate aims of these Regulations is improving the roadworthiness and safety of our vehicles by improving the conditions of our automobile park. Since the last five years, we have had an average of two fatal accidents per year. As for this year, we have only one death on our roads so far in our aim is to have a zero death toll rate, which I should add is very challenging indeed. This is a unique fact that we may market our tourism industry.

There is much hope that with the Regulation being introduced in this Assembly, that our automobile park will be progressively improved leading to a reduction in the number of road accidents due to better roadworthiness, improvement in air quality and a step towards controlling traffic jam in Rodrigues. I only hope that Members of this Assembly will help to promote such initiatives for our island and take all these into consideration while debating on these Regulations. Madam Chairperson, with these words, I thank you for your attention and I command the Motion to the House.

Mrs. R. F. M. Gaspard Pierre Louis rose and seconded.

ANNOUNCEMENT

INTERVENTION TIME

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I have one announcement before go any further. I have been given to understand that almost all Members

will intervene on the Motion of the Deputy Chief Commissioner. I have to inform Members that I have not set a figure limit on the intervention time for the debate. However, as always, I will be very mindful that there is no abuse of the time of the House in vide, respected Members to remain throughout the speech within the parameters of our Standing Orders and Rules. Members are kindly advised that I will not hesitate if the need arises to invoke provision of Standing Order 46 as well as Standing Order 43. I trust that every Member will give their best for the smooth running of this exercise. I thank you for your attention. Yes, one Member from the minority side.

The Minority Leader : Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, at the time when the people of Rodrigues is facing one of the most severe water crisis in its history, at a time when our poor breeders are having.... great problems to serve their animals, this Regional Government comes to this House and as a matter of priority, comes here and ask us to debate on a bill that talks about the age of vehicle? Vehicles beyond seven years will not be allowed to get access to Rodrigues, to be imported.

Madame la Présidente, je me demande comment le Gouvernement régional, il choisit les thèmes et quelles sont leurs priorités. Quand on parle de ce règlement de ne pas permettre l'importation des véhicules de plus de sept ans, le *Deputy Chief Commissioner*, il a pris quelques exemples, il a donné comme raison *climate change benefits*. Il a parlé de manque de *parking space*, qu'il y a plus d'accident. Ce serait bien d'aller voir. Ce n'est pas à cause de l'âge de véhicules qu'il y a eu plus d'accident. Bien souvent, c'est à cause des véhicules neufs qui roulent vite ; ce n'est pas cause de l'âge des véhicules ! Il a pris l'exemple de Trinidad et Tobago. J'ai été à Trinidad et Tobago. Trinidad et Tobago, c'est un pays qui produit du pétrole. *We must compare light with light*. Il paraîtrait que ce règlement a été fait pour favoriser une petite poignée de personnes à Rodrigues. C'est mon point de vue et c'est le point de vue de l'opposition à Rodrigues.

Je me demande si le Commissaire est allé rencontrer les gens un peu partout à Rodrigues pour savoir ce qu'ils pensent de ça. Vous voulez améliorer la qualité de l'air à Rodrigues ? *Oké*, de plus en plus, on est en train d'aller vers des véhicules électriques. Allons vers cela! On peut demain, plus il y a des véhicules qui roulent à l'énergie solaire, au gaz, demain peut-être, on pourra mettre un quota si vous voulez. Il a parlé de *bottlenecks*. *Bottlenecks* améliorons notre réseau routier. Il a parlé aussi de l'accès au parking. À Port Mathurin, il y a un très gros problème de parking. Mais à qui la faute ? Qui sont ceux qui ont construit des bâtiments du gouvernement sans prévoir des *parkings spaces* ? Il y a encore de la place. Il n'est pas trop tard de prévoir les espaces de parking pour Rodrigues. Il faut prévoir. On doit planifier *because we fail to plan is planning to fail*. *We have*

to start right now! Mais au lieu de ça, on veut passer par une loi que je qualifierai de scélérate, qui va pénaliser surtout les *petits dimounes* de notre pays.

Quand vous pensez combien de personnes à Rodrigues avec une petite moto, avec un petit véhicule. Il utilise le plus souvent pourquoi faire ? – Pour aller chercher de l’eau parce que l’eau ne coule pas chez lui. Aujourd’hui, vous lui dites-vous n’avez pas le droit d’importer ce véhicule-là, il faut aller *mettre sa lor la tête amener*, l’herbe etc. Mais on est en train de les pénaliser ! Moi, je ne voterai pas pour une loi qui va pénaliser les petits au détriment des grands ! Madame la Présidente, il a parlé de sept ans mais sept ans, est-ce que c’est là-dessus qu’on doit compter, on doit se baser pour faire venir un véhicule à Rodrigues ? Est-ce que vous savez qu’il y a des véhicules de plus de 10 ans qui sont en meilleur état que certains véhicules de trois ans ? Moi, je pense que ce n’est pas l’âge qui est important ; c’est la qualité du moteur qu’il faut voir et il faut essayer de faire le fitness. Ce serait mieux d’avoir une équipe de techniciens, de mécaniciens pour vérifier l’état des moteurs.

Ça, je pense, si on était venu avec un règlement comme ça, ça, ce serait allé dans le bon sens. Mais malheureusement, là, je crois qu’on a préféré prendre la direction la plus facile. On dit sept ans, sept ans, non ? Vrai, il y a des véhicules deux ans/trois ans sont en piteux état. Il y a des véhicules plus de sept ans qui sont en meilleur état. Il faut regarder ce côté-là, pas l’âge seulement. Ce serait bien de prendre le bill, d’aller travailler et revenir parce que ce n’est pas bon pour Rodrigues. On est en train de créer un précédent, là. Ce n’est pas une priorité ça. Venez avec autre chose beaucoup plus important, discutons de choses qui aideraient à faciliter la vie des Rodriguais. On a parlé sept ans et quand je regarde le règlement, ce qui est risible dedans, la partie 7 dit: “...*where the Departmental Head refuses an application, he shall within 15 days of his decision, inform the applicant accordingly and any applicant aggrieved by the decision of the Departmental Head may within 15 days after having been informed of the decision appealed to the Commissioner...*”

Mais quel appel ? Il y a la guillotine de sept ans. Si vous venez avec un véhicule de huit ans qui a roulé seulement pendant quelques kilomètres, je crois que là, si vous parlez de kilométrage, de *mileage*, ça, c’est plus important ! Si un véhicule a 10 ans, 20 ans même mais il a roulé seulement quelques kilomètres ? Un autre véhicule a cinq ans mais qui a roulé je ne sais combien de kilomètres, en piteux état, je me demande si le Commissaire, si le Gouvernement régional a travaillé là-dessus. Donc, de quel appel on parle ? Surtout, il y en a sachant que ce règlement allait venir, il y en a qui ont fait venir des véhicules en quatrième vitesse. Maintenant, quand on a fait venir nos véhicules, quatre/cinq véhicules, maintenant, on dit stop. Les autres, là, vous n’avez pas le droit de faire venir des véhicules. Et les pauvres malheureux, les petits ‘*bayans*’, ceux qui vont chercher

de l'herbe pour leurs animaux, on leur dit : « *Mettez-vous debout sur vos deux pieds !* » Et on complique la vie de ces gens-là ! Venez avec des règlements pour pousser Rodrigues à aller de l'avant, venez avec des règlements non restrictifs. Là, toujours, on est en train de restreindre, de restreindre, de restreindre alors qu'on sait qu'il y a des véhicules de plus de 20 ans.

D'après le *Road Traffic Act*, il y a des véhicules à 18 ans/20 ans qui ne devraient pas être sur la route. Il y en a qui sont encore là. Pourquoi ? Ils sont en bon état, non ? Donc, on va avoir une loi qui va à l'encontre des lois de la République et on parle d'une seule République, un seul pays ? Madame la Présidente, moi, je pense que cette affaire de *mileage*, c'est ça qu'on devrait... On doit considérer cela plus. Madame la présidente, cette loi, comme je viens de le dire, c'est une loi... Bon, il a parlé de 13792 véhicules. Le problème n'est pas le nombre de véhicules. Il y a des pays plus petits que Rodrigues qui a beaucoup plus de véhicules que ça. L'important, c'est d'avoir si on peut demain avoir des véhicules plus économiques, des véhicules qui utilisent plus de l'électricité par exemple. Il y en a. Les véhicules deviennent de plus en plus performants. Aller dans cette direction-là, c'est bon, mais se baser uniquement sur l'âge du véhicule, je pense que ça, ce n'est pas une très bonne idée.

Moi, je pense quand on parle de *bottlenecks*, on n'a qu'à améliorer les routes de partout à Rodrigues, faire le travail comme il faut, le manque de *parking space*, essayer de travailler là-dessus. Est-ce qu'on a mis une équipe pour travailler sur les *parking spaces*? On n'a pas fait de nouveau parking mais par contre, il y a des lignes jaunes à gauche, à droite à Port Mathurin. On vient à Port Mathurin, on ne sait pas où se garer mais devant certaines boutiques là, oui, on peut se garer mais les autres non. Il ne faut pas faire de la politique là-dessus. Il faut faire le travail comme il se doit et créer des bons *parkings space* comme il le faut. Pour ne pas aller plus long parce qu'il n'y a pas beaucoup à dire là-dessus étant donné qu'on veut seulement empêcher les familles pauvres d'importer des véhicules de plus de sept ans, moi, de ce côté de la Chambre, l'opposition, on n'est pas d'accord. On n'est pas d'accord d'être complice d'un Gouvernement régional qui apporte un règlement pour favoriser les riches au détriment des pauvres. Ne comptez pas sur moi pour faire cela.

Ceci étant dit, je ne voterai pas si cette loi. Je pense que vous auriez pu prendre cette décision au sein de l'Assemblée du Conseil exécutif. Vous n'avez pas besoin de venir discuter de ça ici. On a d'autres choses beaucoup plus importantes. On aurait pu discuter de l'aéroport si vous voulez, l'agrandissement du port. On aurait pu discuter du problème d'eau en profondeur. On aurait pu discuter de l'environnement. On aurait pu discuter du câble optique, du chômage. Ça, on est venu là pour discuter de ça; pas pour discuter de règlements qui pour nous, vole très bas au ras des pâquerettes. Merci, Madame la Présidente.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Anyone from Majority side?

At this stage, the Members in the Opposition left the Chamber.

The Deputy Chairperson: Merci, Madame la Présidente, de me donner l'occasion de me prononcer sur les *Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Shipment of Motor Vehicles) Regulations 2017*. D'emblée, je dois féliciter le Gouvernement pour le courage qu'il a eu introduire ces règlements à l'Assemblée régionale cet après-midi. Ces règlements regardent Rodrigues dans l'avenir. Je ne ramènerais pas comme le *Minority Leader* l'a fait ces règlements à simplement des raisons économiques. Donc, je pense plus à la santé de la population, à la santé de nos enfants, à l'avenir de Rodrigues. Madame la Présidente, il est indéniable que de constater que le parc automobile de Rodrigues s'accroît à vitesse grand V. Donc, selon le *Digest Statistics on Rodrigues 2016*, si on regarde les statistiques concernant les véhicules de type *car* et *dual purpose*, le nombre est passé de 1877 à 3030 en décembre 2016 et les motocyclettes de 5558 à 8024, soit une augmentation de plus de 44 %. De l'autre côté, on n'a pas besoin de statistiques pour dire que les véhicules, principalement les voitures qui arrivent au quai de Port Mathurin sont dans beaucoup de cas bien âgées.

Si on continue sur ce rythme, Madame la Présidente, Rodrigues deviendra, dans pas longtemps, une zone hautement polluée en termes de déchets solides, liquides et gazeux. En effet, les vieux moteurs produisent beaucoup plus de gaz à l'effet de serre, le dioxyde de carbone et les oxydes d'azote et vu que ces véhicules sont âgés, leur durée de vie est moindre et ceci résulte en la production de déchets solides en fin de vie de ces véhicules ainsi que des gros volumes de déchets liquides. De plus, avec l'âge, Madame la Présidente, les moteurs de diesel et essence rejettent beaucoup d'hydrocarbures imbrûlés qui sont irritants et cancérogènes. Donc, d'un point de vue de la santé publique, ces règlements sont les bienvenus et je trouve que la santé est aussi importante que l'eau contrairement au *Minority Leader*. La principale mesure de ces règlements, comme l'a dit le Chef commissaire adjoint, est de bannir l'importation des véhicules de plus de sept ans pour tout type de véhicule sauf pour les voitures *vintage* ou celle des officiers de la fonction publique *on a tour of service* à Rodrigues.

Cette décision s'inscrit dans la vision d'une île Rodrigues écologique prônée par ce Gouvernement depuis qu'il est venu au pouvoir en 2012 et va aussi dans le sens du développement durable de Rodrigues. Cette mesure vient s'ajouter aux mesures déjà en place dans l'approche intégrée adoptée par ce Gouvernement régional OPR. Permettez-moi, Madame la Présidente, de citer certaines de ces

mesures: la construction de réseaux routiers de qualité. En effet, Madame la présidente, depuis 2012, plusieurs tronçons de routes de qualité ont été construits et ceci est bénéfique pour les véhicules sur nos routes, pour leur durabilité et pour la sécurité des usagers et du public en général. Le *Minority Leader* ne le sait peut-être pas mais le travail se fait et ça depuis longtemps pour. Deuxièmement, je parlerai de la décentralisation des bureaux et services. Depuis 2012, le Gouvernement s'est embarqué sur beaucoup de projets de décentralisation de bureaux et de services et à travers ces mesures, la population n'a pas besoin de bouger vers le service. C'est le service qui va vers la population.

Permettez-moi, Madame, d'en citer quelques exemples : le centre administratif à Mont Lubin, le caserne des pompiers à Mont plaisir, la construction des collèges autour de l'île et les écoles communautaires, l'aménagement des centres de santé et le projet de Médecin de famille. Ces projets, Madame la Présidente, réduiront certainement l'utilisation de véhicules et par ricochet, réduire la pollution. Troisième point, c'est la vision du Gouvernement régional pour une île Rodrigues écologique. D'un point de vue environnementale, pour les océans, cela devient plus alarmant car l'absorption du dioxyde de carbone par les océans est considérée comme un processus bénéfique qui réduit sa concentration dans l'atmosphère et atténue son impact sur les températures globales. Ce gaz réagit avec l'eau de mer et se transforme en acide carbonique qui est graduellement neutralisé par les coquillages fossiles carbonés au fond de l'océan. Cependant, comme pour l'être humain, trop de dioxyde de carbone tue l'océan.

Si l'apport du dioxyde de carbone est trop massif et trop rapide, les océans peuvent s'appauvrir en carbonate nécessaire à la production des récifs et des coquilles par les coraux, mollusques et différents types de plancton. En exemple, les barrières de corail se fragilisent et nos mollusques se retrouvent avec des coques plus fines et peureuses. Madame la présidente, l'avenir de Rodrigues dépend grandement de ses ressources marines. Il est du devoir de n'importe quel gouvernement responsable de prendre toutes les mesures à sa disposition pour l'avenir de nos enfants et je suis tout à fait favorable, Madame la Présidente, à ces règlements. Avec cette décision, Madame la Présidente, il y aura un renouvellement progressif du parc automobile, il y aura plus de sécurité pour la population et l'environnement sera grandement protégé contre l'émanation des gaz à effet de serre. Je donne ainsi, Madame la Présidente, tout mon soutien au Gouvernement régional pour ces règlements. Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

[Applause]

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, this Shipment Regulations 2017 presented today by the Deputy Chief Commissioner is a must to regularise the transport situation and to monitor the traffic in Rodrigues. The increase float of vehicles in Rodrigues with an average of 90 per month needs to be analysed regarding the age. All vehicles have a negative impact on the environment. They emit more gas, more carbon dioxide than the new vehicles. Carbon dioxide in its gas form is *asphyxiant*, which cuts off the oxygen supply for breathing especially in confined spaces. Exposure to concentration of 10% or more may be harmful to our population. Carbon dioxide can cause death, unconscious or combustion. Carbon dioxide emission impact on human health by displacing oxygen in the atmosphere.

Breathing becomes more difficult as carbon dioxide level rises. In close areas, high level of carbon dioxide can lead lead dioxide, levels may indicate high level of all the harmful air pollutants such as volatile organic compound which contributes to indoor air pollution. Carbon dioxide causes and worsens respiratory and cardiovascular illness, emphysema and asthma and many published studies have associated with higher mortality. Emission from road transportation are the most significant contributor to premature of death. We want Rodrigues to be an ecological island. So, we have to reduce carbon dioxide from all vehicles. We have to stop the transshipment of all vehicles more than seven years to Rodrigues. This Regulation has its major importance for the transport in Rodrigues and this should be voted in this assembly. I thank you, Madam Chairperson.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Commissioner?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Madame la Présidente, je voudrais tout d'abord féliciter le Chef commissaire adjoint cet après-midi d'avoir eu le courage de venir de l'avant avec ce règlement que je considère également d'être un grand pas en avant en vue d'assurer de meilleures protections aux consommateurs Rodriguais. Donc, on a parlé beaucoup de l'aspect environnemental, la santé, la sécurité routière mais contrairement à ce que le leader de la minorité pense, je pense que c'est très important aussi également pour aider à protéger les intérêts des consommateurs, des Rodriguais, surtout ceux à faible revenu au bas de l'échelle qui n'auront pas probablement la possibilité d'acheter une voiture neuve. Je vais peut-être élaborer un petit peu plus là-dessus après. Mais c'est dommage qu'ils ont choisi quand même de quitter l'hémicycle parce que moi je crois que nous ici, de ce côté de la Chambre, nous travaillons quand même d'une façon vraiment très intégrée. Il y a beaucoup de choses qu'on a promises. Donc, ce sont toutes les priorités pour ce Gouvernement.

Donc, on travaille déjà sur les grands projets et ce règlement aussi va quand même contribuer à l'avancement de l'autonomie de Rodrigues. Donc, moi, je soutiens toute action venant renforcer le cadre réglementaire, assurant ainsi une démarche plus professionnelle dans le développement du secteur automobile croissant à Rodrigues. Madame la Présidente, déjà, on a vu durant ces dernières années, des vieilles voitures, des voitures de seconde main venant de Maurice qui sont déversées sur le marché à Rodrigues sans pour autant se rendre compte qu'il y a quand même des réalités ici à Rodrigues qui ne sont pas les mêmes qu'à Maurice. Ici, par exemple, l'île est montagneuse avec des réseaux routiers quand même à forte pente qui ne sont pas toujours appropriées pour ces types de véhicules. Et là, je me souviens de ce cas d'un habitant de Trèfle qui quelques années de cela, avait acheté une très belle petite voiture. Physiquement quand on regarde, c'est vraiment extraordinaire mais malheureusement, il avait été pris au piège puisqu'elle ne pouvait plus avancer sur pas mal de sections de nos routes à forte pente dans l'île.

Et pourtant, il a fait des tests sur les routes à Maurice. Et il avait auparavant une voiture, elle n'était pas quand même nouvelle je dois dire et tout paraissait normal quand il était à Maurice. Mais malheureusement, quand c'est arrivée ici, il s'est rendu compte qu'il a été arnaqué. Heureusement quand même qu'il a été plus chanceux à comparer avec cet autre habitant de St-François parce que grâce à l'intervention des officiers du bureau de protection de consommateurs de ma Commission, l'habitant de trèfles a pu obtenir un nouveau moteur du vendeur de Maurice. Mais ça, justement, parce que c'était plus formel. Ce n'était pas en particulier quelconque. Donc, c'est pourquoi ce règlement, *it is not only about restricting the age of the vehicles*. Ce n'est pas une restriction tout simplement par rapport à l'âge. C'est beaucoup plus loin. C'est beaucoup plus que ça. Donc, *if we see Regulation 7*, donc, *Regulation 7* qui parle de:

« *The Departmental Head may, notwithstanding that a valid certificate of fitness has been issued by the National Transport Authority in respect of a motor vehicle, instruct the officer in charge of the motor vehicle examination centre to examine the motor vehicle shipped to Rodrigues prior to its registration.* »

Donc, ce qui veut dire quand même que nous pouvons toujours contre vérifier parce que jusqu'ici, il n'y a aucun mécanisme qui permet de vérifier ou de contre vérifier les dires que ce soit du concessionnaire, du revendeur ou même le particulier qui vend une voiture à un Rodriguais. Donc, il peut se passer beaucoup de choses entre le *road test* qu'on fait à Maurice, même si le Rodriguais part pour Maurice pour faire le *road test* ou même la vérification du véhicule par des professionnels à Maurice jusqu'à l'acheminement sur Rodrigues. Parce qu'il y a des choses quand même qui peuvent se passer entre-temps. Donc, plusieurs cas de fraude ont été quand même signalés: d'informations erronées inscrites sur les

certificats avant l'embarquement, des acheteurs parfois arnaqués par un certain agent, des véhicules accidentés avec des défauts non signalés. Donc, tout ça ont été rapportés dans le passé et ce sont malheureusement ce que je n'aime pas dire mais que le *Minority* parle de « *petits dimounes* », de malheureux.

Malheureusement, ce sont ces gens-là qui sont le plus souvent victime et ils sont exploités et le fait qu'il y a quand même cette distance physique entre Maurice et Rodrigues, donc, c'est difficile pour le Rodriguais de retourner, de repartir sur Maurice. Par contre, ces gens-là peuvent quand même toujours avoir accès à des voitures de secondes mains qui sont à Rodrigues parce qu'il y a beaucoup de personnes quand même qui après un certain temps, décide de vendre leurs voitures pour s'en procurer d'une autre. Donc, je ne vois pas vraiment le point soulevé par le *Minority leader* parce que ça peut toujours quand même créer du business au niveau local. Donc, Madame la Présidente, ce mécanisme de vérification/contre vérification, c'est très important et je pense que ça peut aider à faire réduire ce risque d'arnaque qu'on a parlé un petit peu plus tôt. C'est vrai, avoir une voiture, c'est devenu quand même un rêve pour la majorité de la population et bien sûr, c'est normal, ils ont raison mais il faut quand même être prudent pour éviter que Rodrigues quand même devienne un sac poubelle de vieilles voitures.

Donc, en fin de compte, nous pouvons constater quand même que beaucoup de ces personnes à faible revenu ont recours à des voitures de très, très longue date un prix d'achat très supposément abordable mais au final, qu'est-ce qui se passe, Madame la Présidente ? Cela leur coûte une fortune en termes de pannes récurrentes, en termes de voitures très gourmandes en carburant, les difficultés pour avoir des pièces détachées ou encore des pièces rares qui coûtent très chères. Parce que généralement, une personne *will try to get rid of his old vehicle when it starts to create problems*. *Kan li pe gagne problème ki li pou vane so zistore*. Donc, ce n'est pas nécessairement au désavantage des personnes à faible revenu. Je connais aussi pas mal de ces voitures qui sont en état de marche, qui ont été en état de marche que pour quelques jours, quelques semaines et malheureusement, terminent très souvent leur aventure chez des garagistes ou les tôliers. Ça, souvent, ça arrive. Si vous passez un petit peu à travers Rodrigues, vous allez voir combien de ces vieilles voitures dorment chez ses garagistes et tôliers. Et aussi, j'ai vu des gens avoir des casse-tête à chaque année quand il faut passer l'épreuve des examens pour avoir le *Fitness Certificate*, une procédure très importante pour avoir la déclaration auprès de la NTA.

En fin de compte, si vous faites des calculs intelligents, ça devient beaucoup plus cher d'acheter des vieilles carcasses, d'acheter de vieilles voitures comme ça et comme le dit si bien le jargon créole: '*bon marsé koute ser*'. Donc, je réitère ma conviction, Madame la Président, en faveur de la pertinence de ce

règlement et qui est aussi comme j'ai bien dit, un pas géant en faveur de la protection des consommateurs. Donc, si vous regardez également *the Regulation 6* concernant *restriction on additional permit*, ça aussi, c'est important pour décourager des particuliers à transporter ces « *Katchak Charlie* », ces carcasses, ces vieilles ferrailles de Maurice, les enregistrer ici sur leurs noms ou utilisent des prête-noms pour ensuite les revendre et très souvent, sans aucune garantie ou spécifications techniques ou des informations complètes des conditions réelles de la voiture.

Très souvent, ce sont des gens à revenu moyen comme j'ai bien dit, qui ne connaissent pas grand-chose par rapport au fonctionnement d'une voiture qui en font les frais. Donc, ils ont tendance à regarder que l'apparence physique plutôt que les spécifications techniques. Donc, je crois que ça va apporter beaucoup et ça va aider également les consommateurs à être mieux avisés par rapport à leurs voitures. Donc, Madame la présidente, moi je pense que le marché des véhicules d'occasion doit être assuré autant que possible par des professionnels du secteur à travers un réseau de distribution réglementée afin de mieux protéger l'intérêt des consommateurs, promouvoir plus de transparence et réduire les risques d'être arnaqué par des individus qui ne veulent que faire du profit sur le dos des malheureux comme il le dit de l'autre côté de la Chambre.

Donc, à Rodrigues, on a pu voir, on voit de temps en temps, parfois même souvent le même propriétaire roulant dans des différentes voitures avec des instructions à l'arrière: à vendre. Chaque semaine, une nouvelle voiture à vendre. Donc, pour moi, six mois, c'est peu. Six mois, comme c'est stipulé dans le règlement 6, on aurait dû mettre ça pour deux ans/trois ans parce que ce sont malheureusement très souvent, ces catégories de personnes qui font du business illégal qui trompent les consommateurs et malheureusement, on n'a pas beaucoup de recours parce que pour les business officiels, c'est beaucoup plus facile de rapporter les cas et de prendre des actions. Donc, je suis d'avis donc, comme je vous ai dit, que la période de six mois est trop courte. On devrait étendre ça à peut-être deux ans ou plus pour décourager ces pratiques des agents... en même temps, pardon, favoriser des agents automobiles officiels qui sont en règle avec le *Rodrigues Regional Assembly Licensing Regulation* tout en respectant les autres lois en vigueur pour assurer les services aux consommateurs tels que les périodes de garantie et les services après-vente.

Madame la présidente, je voudrais terminer par dire que ce Gouvernement régional dirigé par le Chef commissaire, Serge Clair, marque une nouvelle fois des points sur la vision d'une île Rodrigues écologique après les règlements du bannissement des sacs en plastique, la fermeture de la pêche à l'ourite mais aussi, c'est un pas extraordinaire en matière de sécurité routière pour la protection des consommateurs et l'industrie du tourisme aussi bien que l'industrie automobile.

C'est une preuve que l'Assemblée régionale de Rodrigues avance, que l'autonomie de Rodrigues marche et que l'île Rodrigues progresse et agit selon ses réalités tout en restant en ligne avec ce qui se passe dans le monde. Merci, Madame la présidente pour votre attention.

[Applause]

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):

Madame la Présidente, merci de me donner l'occasion d'intervenir sur ces règlements et je tiens à féliciter l'adjoint au Chef commissaire pour ces règlements que je qualifie de très importants pour Rodrigues surtout dans cette stratégie de faire de Rodrigues, une île écologique. Je dois dire que je ne suis pas surpris du comportement des membres de la minorité parce que qui ne se souvient pas de leur comportement par rapport quand on avait emmené la loi de sacs en plastique, fermeture de la pêche ourite ? Donc, je ne suis pas surpris. Je pense que puisqu'ils n'ont pas grand-chose à dire, il n'y a pas grand-chose à dire, il n'y a pas rien à dire ils n'ont rien dit et je trouve dommage. J'appelle ça, moi, du *cheap politics*. C'est *cheap* de fuir devant ses responsabilités. Ces gens-là ont été mis ici pour défendre l'intérêt du peuple dans la minorité, bien sûr, mais au lieu de défendre cela, ils se mettent... ils fuient et pour moi, c'est aussi que je qualifie de la lâcheté. Ce n'est pas lâcheté politique mais lâcheté.

Je tiens aussi ici à remercier la Commissaire de l'Art et la culture pour le projet, le programme de «*I Love Rodrigues* » et je pense que ces règlements tombent bien, cadrent bien dans ce programme. Parce que qui aime Rodrigues ne fait pas pleurer cette île. Donc, je pense que les vieux véhicules qui viennent à Rodrigues, malheureusement ceci Rodrigues pouvait parler, Rodrigues allait dire: non, je ne veux pas. Mais au nom de Rodrigues, l'adjoint au Chef commissaire est venu et c'est pareil comme on a fait avec des sacs en plastique et l'autre. C'était programme, des règlements qui cadrent bien dans le programme de «*I Love Rodrigues* ». Ce Gouvernement prône de faire de Rodrigues une île écologique mais il y a beaucoup de personnes qui ne comprennent pas vraiment c'est quoi une île écologique.

Au fait, je qualifierais une île écologique, une île propre tout simplement et propre dans tous les sens du mot. Propre dans le sens des ordures, la gestion des ordures, par rapport à l'énergie, on parle aussi aujourd'hui de l'énergie propre, par rapport à l'utilisation ou non des pesticides, herbicides, des trucs qui détruisent l'environnement, propre par rapport aux fertilisants qu'on utilise au lieu d'utiliser du compost, propre en la protection du sol et en la protection du milieu marin, propre par rapport à la santé, à la sécurité et surtout, là, je viens sur propre par rapport à la pollution. Mon collègue a parlé de ça. Les statistiques montrent qu'il y a beaucoup de véhicules qui viennent à Rodrigues et qui ne sont pas vraiment

dans un état... Mon ami vient de parler de l'arnaque. Je peux même ajouter parce que je connais ça, j'ai vu, j'ai «*expérimenté*» ce genre d'arnaque. Eux, ils disent que les pauvres, les gens pauvres achètent une voiture d'occasion, qui n'est pas mauvais mais est-ce que c'est vraiment une voiture d'occasion ? Est-ce que ça fait du bien à ces gens ?

Je me souviens quelqu'un avait acheté une voiture qu'il qualifiait neuve, 15 ans mais neuve. Il arrive là, je crois que ça été peint pendant la nuit pour vendre le lendemain matin. Il arrive ici, il voit la voiture mais superbe vraiment mais sur le bateau ça a bougé un petit peu. Je ne sais pas si ça a tapé et une grosse goutte d'eau, ce qu'on appelle «*quick fill* » tombait et la voiture était supposée être en état neuf. À Maurice, ça se fait. C'est la pratique ils savent il y a beaucoup de Rodriguais qui sont prêts à ça. C'est vrai que ouais, *ene ti loto pas ser, korek, amene Rodrigues*. Mais mon ami a bien stipulé, a montré que cette voiture qui n'est pas chère peut devenir très chère à l'avenir. Donc, nos routes, si vous montez à Mont Lubin, combien de personnes, combien parmi vous ont roulé vers solitude ? Et c'est un fait, les routes de Rodrigues, on n'a pas les trois voies. On ne va pas vite. Il y a des tournants partout. Il y a des endroits, le Chef commissaire dit tout le temps '*les gens doublent dans la ligne blanche*'. Donc, il y a des endroits où on ne peut même pas doubler même s'il y a une voiture que je qualifie d'un peu pourrie, devant nous qui lâche de la fumée noire, on ne peut pas... On doit rester.

Moi, surtout, qui roule beaucoup la moto, ce n'est pas évident. Et on sait, tout le monde sait qu'il y a des pays et l'avantage qu'on a, c'est qu'il y a des gens qui disent que Rodrigues a raté son développement, on a pris du temps pour développer. C'est vrai mais c'est bien ! Le fait qu'on a pris du temps pour développer, on a eu l'occasion de voir les autres, les autres pays. On voit la Chine, on voit Hong Kong, on voit des motocyclistes avec des masques qui roulent. Donc, est-ce qu'on veut ça pour Rodrigues ? *Do we love Rodrigues* ? Quand on voit... Si un jour, j'espère que ce ne sera pas pour bientôt et je suis sûr qu'avec ces règlements, on arrivera jamais là-bas. Est-ce que ce serait bien de rouler, d'aller à Mont Lubin avec un masque pour qu'on soit vraiment en pleine forme, pour ne pas vraiment se laisser polluer par des voitures, la fumée des voitures ? Donc, je pense que c'est très important, cette loi, ce règlement parce que tout le monde a parlé de la santé, de l'environnement.

Moi, j'ai des chiffres pour appuyer vraiment ce truc de fumée statistique. J'ai fait un petit travail avec la police de l'environnement hier. On a fait un tour dans tous les contraventions qu'ils ont fait par rapport au gaz, des machines qui lâchent toutes sortes de fumée : 84 % des voitures examinées, là, ce n'était pas la fumée qui sortait, ce n'était pas bien et c'était surtout des voitures plus de sept ans donc, qui cadrent vraiment, qui montre que les statistiques montrent que c'est ça. Le *Minority Leader* a parlé de changement climatique. C'est vrai et ces

règlements sont en lien avec la protection de Rodrigues par rapport au changement climatique. Mais c'est vrai qu'au niveau de Rodrigues, on dit même si on ne fait rien, ce n'est pas nous qui polluons et c'est un fait, le monde pour que nous on souffre. Tout dernièrement, il y a eu *El Niño* et on voit à quel point les coraux de Rodrigues, moi je peux témoigner de ça, ont souffert.

Donc, le changement climatique, pour expliquer ça, j'aimerais bien peut-être raconter une petite histoire que j'adore, petite. Je ne serai pas long là-dessus. Il y avait le feu dans la forêt. C'est une histoire mais belle. Feu dans la forêt et puis les animaux fuyaient parce que les animaux perdaient leur habitat. Par contre, il y a l'éléphant qui se sentait bien sûr avec trompe et tout, dire: « moi, je ne vais pas fuir, je vais essayer d'éteindre le feu ». Donc, il part dans la rivière « *pscht* », il vient avec trompe et jeter sur le feu et en même temps, il y avait un petit oiseau. Je ne me souviens pas de son nom malheureusement. On dit le Cardinal jaune de Rodrigues qui dit lui aussi, il partait dans la rivière et prenait un petit peu d'eau et jetait sur le feu. Et là, les autres animaux, le loup regarde, le renard.

Vous connaissez le comportement du renard dans toutes les histoires. Le renard dit : « *Qu'est-ce que tu fais ? Tu penses qu'avec des petites gouttes d'eau-là, tu vas arriver à éteindre ce feu ?* » Mais l'oiseau répond : « *Je suis en train d'emmener mon petit goût de sel, je suis en train de contribuer. Je sais que je ne pourrais pas payer faut que je... je ne peux pas rester insensé à ce qui se passe dans cette forêt.* » Je pense que c'est ça qu'on est en train de faire par rapport au changement climatique. Il y a beaucoup, on est en train de souffrir par rapport au changement climatique. Donc, Rodrigues doit le faire même s'il y a beaucoup de personnes qui pensent que: *bah*, laissons Rodrigues, on n'a pas de problème, l'Amérique, les grands pays qui font... Il y a aussi des tests toujours avec la police de l'environnement, j'ai fait encore un petit travail hier encore par rapport à l'huile de vidange des véhicules qui lâchent et de l'huile sur la route, ce qu'on appelle *oil leakage*, 88 % des contraventions, 88 % des machines inspectées lâchent beaucoup d'huile sur les routes et bien sûr, les machines, les véhicules qui dépassent les sept ans.

Et tout le monde sait que c'est très dangereux d'avoir... Moi, comme motocycliste, je peux vous dire c'est très, très dangereux d'avoir d'huile sur les routes et non seulement ça, c'est aussi pour l'environnement parce que cette huile va avec le temps... Parce que nous, notre projet, par exemple, des retenues collinaires, on récupère de l'eau des routes. Mais qu'est-ce qui va se passer si demain, on a que des vieilles voitures, des vieux trucs qui polluent, qui lâchent de l'huile partout et ça, ça part, supposé, dans nos nappes souterraines aussi et dans nos retenues collinaires. Donc, ces règlements certes vont aider à protéger davantage cette île Rodrigues et ça va surtout aider ce programme de « *I Love Rodrigues* ». J'adore ce programme! Donc, je voudrais aussi mentionner la vision

de ce Gouvernement de faire de Rodrigues 100 % autonome en 2030 en termes d'énergie et c'est vrai, le *Minority Leader* a bien dit ce serait bien d'avoir des voitures électriques et c'est vrai que c'est cher.

Mais c'est vrai dans que dans l'avenir, on pourra peut-être venir avec des subventions, des trucs, je ne sais pas, pour avoir plus de voitures électriques. Mais si on ne fait rien maintenant pour diminuer ses voitures qui ne sont pas électriques qui viennent à Rodrigues, qu'est-ce qui va se passer ? Quelle stratégie on va utiliser dans le futur pour nettoyer Rodrigues ? Donc, c'est très important aussi, vous passez, le Chef commissaire me dit tout le temps j'ai vu une voiture pourrie là-bas, j'ai vu une voiture pourrie là. On a un cimetière de voitures à Rodrigues. Des gens, après l'arnaque même, des gens qui se font arnaquer par des voitures qui viennent de Maurice, de plus de sept ans. Et puis, le *Minority Leader* a parlé de: au lieu de l'âge, il fallait penser plus au kilométrage, au millage. Qui ne sait pas que c'est possible de trafiquer le millage ?

Si je veux vendre ma voiture de 20 ans, je peux dire ça fais 14 000 km. C'est trafiquable, ça. Mais si! Ce n'est qu'un câble. C'est facile aujourd'hui. Les gens trafiquent beaucoup de choses, ils trafiquent, ils font toutes sortes de choses. Donc, le kilométrage n'est pas de ces paramètres importants qui qui va vraiment qualifier une voiture en bon état ou qui peut venir à Rodrigues. Donc, moi je pense qu'encore une fois, je félicite l'adjoint au Chef commissaire pour ses règlements. Bien sûr, je voterai pour et que en tant que Rodriguais, en tant que fils du sol, en tant que quelqu'un qui aime ce programme de « *I Love Rodrigues* », quelqu'un qui aime son pays, j'irai dans cette direction. Donc, je félicite l'adjoint au Chef commissaire pour ces règlements. Merci.

[Applause]

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis : Je me permets de dire deux mots sur ces règlements présentés aujourd'hui par l'adjoint au Chef commissaire parce que je pense que la sécurité des usagers de la route, des conducteurs et de toute la population doit être la priorité de tout gouvernement digne de ce nom. Madame la Présidente, aujourd'hui, il va sans dire que les femmes en général dans tous les pays dont aussi la femme Rodriguaise, prennent de plus en plus le volant. Nous, les femmes, nous clamons haut et fort de l'importance d'une île Rodrigues moderne, d'une île Rodrigues comme un pays sécuritaire comme mentionné dans le manifeste électoral 2017-2022 et d'une île Rodrigues comme une terre de respect, respect de notre environnement. Qui dit sécurité, Madame la Présidente, je crois que l'état d'un véhicule a un lien et un impact direct sur la sécurité des usagers et du conducteur.

C'est pour cela que je qualifie le geste de l'adjoint au Chef commissaire de courageux pour venir de l'avant avec ces règlements puisque je dois dire aussi que ce sont des règlements qu'on a eu longuement l'occasion de discuter avec le Commissaire Roussety dans le passé et bien sûr, je suis contente que l'adjoint au Chef commissaire a été consulté les partenaires sociaux, les ONGs et cela cadre dans cet esprit de démocratie participative que nous, au gouvernement, nous prôtons depuis 2012. Donc, pour moi, c'est vraiment un acte courageux, quand j'ai écouté surtout les propos du *Minority Leader* qui trouve aujourd'hui que des choses négatives et surtout l'occasion que de faire de la démagogie.

Madame la présidente, nous avons su depuis 2012 être courageux dans ce Parlement. Nous sommes venus avec des règlements qui, au départ, ont suscité des remous mais qui après, ont été adoptés presque à l'unanimité auprès de la population. Donc, je viens aujourd'hui dire que nous voulons avec ces règlements, protéger nos filles, protéger nos femmes et nos mamans à travers des mesures si courageuses. Donc, je remercie l'adjoint au Chef commissaire pour ce courage dont il a fait preuve.

[Applause]

Miss M. R. Collet : Thank you, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. I will have only three sentences. The introduction of the Shipment of Motor Vehicles Regulations is quite one unpopular measure qualified as "*loi scélérate*". However, just like the Octopus closed season regulations, the shipment for motor vehicles regulations have been introduced to implement a policy dating back to 2012. It was high time one courageous Deputy Chief Commissioner supported by the Members of Parliament on this side of the House introduce same. I congratulate him for the move and I support his Motion. Thank you.

[Applause]

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, allow me to say a word of support to the motion Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Shipment of Motor Vehicles) Regulations 2017. I am going to say a few words because I feel that this is a motion that aims at the protection of the consumer, the protection of the Rodriguan habitants, the protection of our children's future and the protection of our *patrimoine*. So, various speakers before me have spoken about the various countries having followed that same path and which have demonstrated the success of same. And, I feel that on this side of the house, we have waived the benefits and the loss of this motion and we have seen that the legacy of a healthier, brighter future for our kids outweigh everything that may discourage us from taking this very important decision.

So, I think this action, Madam Chairperson, this motion is strengthening our actions for an ecological island, for a safer island whereby, the vehicle criteria are in the medium and long term will enhance a more consumer awareness and consumer protection. The Minority Leader has pointed out that there are various problems that we need to repair the road networks, add new road networks. I would just highlight that since 2012, there have been the construction, the upgrading and amelioration of various road networks at the level of the country, the level of the island throughout. And, also, I wish to again congratulate the Deputy Chief Commissioner for this health-friendly Motion, environment-friendly Motion, people-oriented and future-oriented measure. My colleague, Richard Payendee talked about the program "I Love Rodrigues" and one of aspects that has been highlighted in the programme "I Love Rodrigues" is to take actions and decisions at all levels but the love and respect for the Rodriguan people and the Rodrigues Island itself. So, I feel that it will be for the benefit of every one of us and I once again support that Motion. Thank you, Chair.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Yes?

Mr. J. N. Nemours: Madame la Présidente, tout d'abord, je félicite mon collègue, l'adjoint au Chef commissaire qui a eu le courage et la détermination de venir de l'avant avec cet amendement. Je trouve cela très malheureux que les membres de l'autre côté de la Chambre ont préféré quitter l'hémicycle parce qu'à mon avis, ils ne savent pas ce qu'ils disent vraiment ici dans cette Chambre. Cet amendement va dans le sens avec la vision du Gouvernement central qui aussi a pris cette initiative de venir de l'avant avec un tel projet de loi. Madame la Présidente, cet amendement a beaucoup de valeur pour notre île qui d'ici 2030, va devenir autonome en termes écologiques. Madame la présidente, moi, je donne tout mon support à ce projet de loi et je félicite encore une fois le Chef commissaire adjoint pour son courage. Merci.

[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Chief Commissioner ?

The Chief Commissioner: Madame la Présidente, c'est dommage qu'ils ne soient pas là. Et en écoutant le *Minority Leader*, il a parlé de pauvreté et il associait la pauvreté à un véhicule de 20 ans. Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire ? Pourtant, ce monsieur a été Ministre dans un gouvernement. Mais ça veut dire que pour pouvoir... Si moi, je suis un pauvre, je dois acheter un véhicule de 45 ans, je ne sais pas moi. Je me souviens quand j'étais ministre, il y a plusieurs années de cela, il y avait un Rodriguais qui voulait importer un Mini Minor de 25

ans à Rodrigues. Vous connaissez les *Mini Minor*? Je lui ai dit fait attention, *ou kapave ale perdi ou la vie dans sa Mini Minor la parski Rodrigues, li ene pays monté desane, monté desane, ou trouvé la.*

Alors, c'est facile d'acheter une voiture très bon marché mais surtout pour venir à Rodrigues. Et nous avons parlé de Rodrigues, faire de Rodrigues une île écologique. Nous avons parlé de ça dans notre dernier programme 2017-2022. Mais seulement, je dois dire que c'est tout le temps même devant toute la population quand nous allons à faire des rencontres, des réunions, que sera Rodrigues dans 10 ans, dans cinq ans, 10 ans, 20 ans, 25 ans, 50 ans? C'est quand nous posons ces questions-là qui nous fait venir avec des règlements. Nous allons aussi venir avec le développement avec l'aménagement du territoire. J'ai un ami qui m'a parlé là et il vient me voir. Il sait que je vais à Maurice le 26 pour la signature d'un MoU entre Rodrigues et les Seychelles.

Il m'a dit que Rodrigues soit un jardin. Il nous faut aussi travailler au niveau de l'aménagement, la construction de maisons, le type de maison et ainsi de suite. Donc, il ne faut pas nous laisser aller dans une mauvaise direction. Il faudra corriger et pour pouvoir venir avec autre chose. Mais c'est ce que nous sommes en train de faire: venir avec du nouveau. Ça peut faire du mal à M. Von Mally. Ça peut lui faire du mal. Pourquoi ça lui fait du mal ? Est-ce qu'il a une vision de Rodrigues ? Est-ce que ce monsieur a une vision de Rodrigues dans les années à venir ? Une fois, j'ai vu en montant vers Mont Lubin, j'ai vu une demoiselle sur son Scooter. Elle voyageait sur son Scooter derrière un bus et ce bus lâchait des fumées noires. J'ai dit : « *Sa mamzel la pou respire sa la fumée la ?* » C'est incroyable ! C'est incroyable ! Et c'est pourquoi justement quand nous voyageons, nous voyons des bus, des véhicules de tel âge qui lâchent des fumées noires.

Et c'est pourquoi quand je vais à une réunion de la sécurité routière, je soulève tout ça devant les policiers qui sont là et on ne voit rien ! Mais il faudrait que la police soit une police beaucoup plus active dans notre pays. Il faut ça même au niveau de la circulation, même au niveau de la façon de conduire. On a vu ces temps-ci là. On a vu un véhicule le nez dans la pierre à Contour Oblass là. On ne sait pas quel âge à ce véhicule-là. Qu'est-ce qui est arrivé ? On ne sait pas. 19 ans! *Be kifer li vine comsa?* Nous sommes une petite île, une petite île de 104 km², nous avons 50 000 habitants et moi, ma préoccupation, nous avons beaucoup de nos frères et sœurs de l'île Maurice qui viennent nous visiter et les personnes d'ailleurs dans d'autres pays. Mais il ne faut pas qu'ils voient, par exemple, que nos amis Mauriciens que ce qui se passe chez eux, ils voient ça chez nous ! Il faut faire bien attention.

C'est vrai, le nombre de véhicules à Maurice. Je ne sais pas, c'est combien. C'est un million, un million de véhicules ? Je ne sais pas. 500 000? Plus les motocyclettes. Ces motocyclettes qu'on modifie les tuyaux d'échappement, ces véhicules qu'on modifie les tuyaux d'échappement « *Vrou, vrou, vrou! Vroouu!* » *Pa kapave dormi astère la. Parfois moi, à Mont Lubin, mo tane ene motocyclette pe alé vroouuu!* Alors, tout ça, il faut voir. Ils modifient pour avoir plus de bruit. Ou bien ils modifient aussi pour faire une cheminée sur la route, on ne sait pas. Non, il faut prendre des précautions. Même si ça ne fera pas plaisir à ce *Minority Leader* et toute sa bande mais il faut voir Rodrigues dans cinq ans, 10 ans, 20 ans que sera Rodrigues. C'est notre grande préoccupation, Madame la Présidente. C'est notre grande préoccupation, cette petite île Rodrigues qu'on veut faire un jardin. Au niveau des maisons, ça aussi, il faudrait voir. Nous allons venir avec des dérèglements concernant l'aménagement du territoire. Ça aussi, on va venir.

Une fois, il y avait un ami Mauricien qui est venu à Rodrigues. Il m'a dit il y avait quelque chose à La Ferme, il me semble, à l'hôpital de La Ferme. Il m'a dit : « M. Clair, partout où je vais à Rodrigues, je ne vois pas d'arbres autour des maisons. » Vous savez ce qu'il m'a dit? Il faut faire passer un règlement pour dire aux Rodriguais de planter des arbres autour de leurs maisons alors que nous, chaque fois on donne des baux, nous disons cela aux gens : « Plantez des arbres autour de votre maison. » Et justement, pourquoi planter les arbres? Pour attirer la pluie, pour créer de l'humidité. L'humidité attire la pluie. Est-ce que mon ami Payendee, sait ça, l'arbre attire la pluie? *Be kifer pane plante arbres beaucoup dans Rodrigues?* Mais il faut que la population puisse planter des arbres dans leurs cours. Ça attire la pluie. Vous comprenez là ?

Alors, il y a tout cela. Il nous faudra venir encore avec des règlements. Nous allons venir. Ça, c'est un bon règlement qui a permis à M. Von Mally d'associer la pauvreté à une voiture de 15 ans ou de 20 ans. Ça veut dire pour pouvoir acheter une voiture de 15 ans, il faut être pauvre. Vous avez compris ce qu'il a dit ? Ça veut dire il n'y a pas d'argent pour acheter. C'est un peu, comment dirais-je? C'est vraiment... J'allais dire un mot. C'est incroyable ce qu'il a dit, associer la pauvreté à la vie d'un véhicule. Vous comprenez là ? Et puis, ils se lèvent, ils partent tous. Mais ils ne regardent pas leur pays, ils ne regardent pas l'île Rodrigues de demain. C'est ça justement. Nous savons, oui, il y a de l'eau, il y a d'autres problèmes, il y a ceci, il y a cela. Nous avons fait le sac plastique, les ourites et ceci. D'autres encore vont venir parce que nous aimons ce pays-là. *I love Rodrigues! Do you love Rodrigues? Yeah!* Alors, c'est ça justement.

Alors, ça, c'est une étape, encore une étape dans tous ces règlements que nous apportons. Il y aura d'autres règlements qui vont venir et je demande à mes collègues selon leur secteur, leur champ d'action, de voir qu'on fasse... qu'on vienne avec des règlements. Qu'est-ce que c'est que cette affaire, la beauté là ?

L'éducation a de la beauté, vous avez un règlement pour ça ? Ah bon? L'éducation a de la beauté, ils acceptent que c'est de la beauté, ça? L'éducation a de la beauté on veut tout ce qu'il y a de beau, que notre pays soit beau, que tout ce qu'il y a les détruise pas cette île Rodrigues, c'est la beauté de cette île, notre île Rodrigues que tout le monde aime, que beaucoup de nos amis Mauriciens pourront venir visiter et lorsqu'ils viennent ici, il ne faut pas qu'ils voient ce qu'ils voient à Maurice. Il faut qu'il voit les choses autrement. En tout cas, félicitations à mon collègue d'être venu avec ces règlements. J'espère que ce n'est pas terminé. Il y aura d'autres règlements qui vont venir encore dans d'autres Commissions et ça va nous permettre d'améliorer justement, de nous poser la question: est-ce que *we love Rodrigues*? *Yes, we love Rodrigues*.

[Applause]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Madam Chairperson, I will start by first of all, thank all the Members on this side of the House who have supported the Motion and the Regulations that I have brought to this House today. The history will retain the cowardship of the minority team. This is what history will retain today because we have brought in this House, a regulation which is of utmost importance for the future interest of Rodrigues and they consider it not as a priority. If I were to analyse the mind-set of the Minority Leader, everything is not a priority. When we speak of electoral reform; this is not a priority. We come up with a regulation, this is not a priority but if I remember well, when the previous Government came with a reform and amendments of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) in the last mandate, they told that it was too near to the election and we have taken the steps to come up with amendments and to cover the reform just at the very beginning of this mandate so that we have ample time to discuss about it and this Minority Leader himself comes forward and say that this is not the time for such action. I do not know what is actually his agenda.

In fact, he wants to dictate the agenda of this Regional Government. He thinks that he is the one to come and say what this Regional Government is to introduce in the Assembly, what policy this Regional government is to bring in the Executive Council or to the population. But there is one thing that we have to note also: we can think of other matters while taking into consideration also matters such as regulations. We have in mind that water is a priority, we have in mind that the construction of the airport and the port is a priority and so many other things but that does not prevent us also at the same time to discuss and to come forward with other policies that is of essential importance for this Regional Government. By rejecting this Regulation, what the minority group is rejecting, they are rejecting an improvement on public health. By rejecting this Regulation, the minority group is rejecting an improvement on our environment.

By rejecting this Regulation, the minority is also rejecting the improvement of roadworthiness on our road and I think that as I have said at the beginning, history will retain their cowardish attitude towards Rodrigues and towards the future generation of Rodrigues. The Minority Leader even if he is not here, needs to be known that he has been contradictory in his approach. First, he came to say that we are favouring a small group of persons. I do not know whom. It is as if when we are proposing this Regulation, we are targeting specific.... on Regulations. The question that I would have asked him: which are these groups that this Regional Government is in fact favouring? He came with the proposal of coming with electric vehicles. This is a modern and worldwide behaviour right now. Not later than last Sunday, the Minister for Public infrastructure and transport in Mauritius did make a public statement, stating that he intends to abolish gasoline powered and diesel powered vehicles in Mauritius and favouring the introduction of hybrid and electric vehicles.

Of course, this is.... as I have said that the contradiction of the Minority Leader stands on the fact that he is saying that a seven-year-old ban is restrictive to the "*petits dimounes*" but at the same time, he is proposing to go for the electric vehicles. My question to him: will les "*petits dimounes*" what he has mentioned, will be to buy an electric vehicle? This is why I said that he has been contradictory in his approach. We know very well that they do not have any argument, solid argument to discredit this Regulation. The only problem that has been raised was on the seven-year-old ban and he proposes instead of a seven-year-old ban, to come up with a mileage proposal by introducing vehicles of the particular mileage. I think that the Member, the Commissioner Payendee has rightly answered that this possibility can be so easily cheated. It can be so easily cheated.

While I was having discussions with the stakeholders, the Bus Owners Association, the RCSS and other stakeholders which represent the civil societies, there was a point that they did raise. They told/mentioned in the consultation that if we are having so many "*taxis marrons*" in Rodrigues these days, it is because there is the possibility of importing vehicles of say, 15 and 20 years old. What are we experiencing these days because these vehicles, they are sold so cheaply in Mauritius may be Rs 60,000 or Rs 80,000, these very persons, they will go to Mauritius and buy these cars at a cheaper rate and they will come here, work all day without taking into consideration whether the vehicle is going to be damaged or not and within three months, they can easily, how to say... recoup their investment. And, this is why there is so many proliferations of "*taxis marrons*" and I believe that with these Regulations that we are producing in this House today, there will be less people who will be able to import vehicles of 15/20 years old to indulge into that illegal transaction of "*taxis marrons*".

I was reading an article some months back, an interview of the *Secrétaire générale de la Motor Vehicles Dealers Association*. In fact, there is also in Mauritius, that question of importation of second-hand cars that we call as reconditioned cars. The Secretary of the Motor Vehicles Dealers Association questioned the Government and questioned the public at large and he stated something about the reconditioned cars: "*Les voitures accidentées retapées sont des cercueils ambulants*", dated *L'Express du mercredi 02 août 2017*. This is to say, Madam Chairperson, Madam, that not only in Rodrigues are we thinking and preoccupied about safety of the road but even in Mauritius, there is that discussion, there is that debate that is going on as regard to the importation of second-hand cars from other countries.

We have had the courage, Madam Chairperson, to bring this Regulation because we have in mind, the interest of Rodrigues. If we say that we want to improve the environment, if we say that we want to make Rodrigues an ecological island, then, we have to take steps towards this goal; not only bold steps but we should take also minor steps little by little leading to that objective and this Regulation that we have brought into this House today is a leap, is a small step towards this policy, towards this objective of making Rodrigues an ecological island and making Rodrigues by 2030, an island where we are using 100% renewable energy. So, I end up here by thanking once more all the Members that have supported the motion and what you have supported today will remain in history because it is historic what this Regional Government has decided to bring into this house with respect to making Rodrigues a better place to live in the future. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the Assembly in accordance with Standing Order 62 does now resolve into a Committee of the whole Assembly.

On question put the Motion was agreed to.

Mrs. R. M. Gaspard Pierre Louis rose and seconded.

COMMITTEE STAGE OF THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY

Madam Chairperson: We will now proceed page by page.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Shipment of Motor Vehicles) Regulations 2017 be amended as per amendments circulated.

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On question put the amendments were agreed to.

Madam Chairperson: Page 1. Page 2, 3, 4. Page 5, page 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. That will do for Committee Stage.

REPORT STAGE

On the Assembly resuming with Mrs. Chairperson in the Chair, Mrs. Chairperson reported accordingly.

On question put the motion was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 19 December 2017 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

At 16.51 hours the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 19 December 2017 at 10.30 hours.

WRITTEN ANSWERS

**DESALINATION PLANT OF
ANSE GOELAND/BAIE MALGACHE**

(No. B/113) Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (The Second Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the desalination plant of Anse Goeland/Baie Malgache, he will state if there has been any modification/readjustment in location/piping to the original plant proposed in 2014, indicating if same is operational as at date and, in the affirmative, to specify when the operational test therefor was carried?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, there has been no modification/readjustment in location/piping of the proposed desalination plant. Under the turnkey, design and build contract, it was up to the contractor to devise the intake process for alimenting the plant with sufficient raw water.

The plant is not operational as at date. However, all procedure regarding tendering exercise for building works, intake structure and equipment for Reverse Osmosis, have been completed.

**CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNITY SCHOOL
– BAIE MALGACHE**

(No. B/114) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of a Community School at Baie Malgache, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) The cost of the project, the successful bidder, the scope of work and the expected completion date; and
- (b) Its objective(s), specifying the expected intake of pupils and the catchment area of the school?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the contract has been awarded on 12 June 2017 for the construction of a Community School at Baie Malgache for the sum of Rs 73,710,155.94 exclusive of VAT.

Madam Chairperson, the scope of work comprises the following Buildings works:-

- (i) Classrooms Block at ground plus one level with an approximate gross floor area of 783 m²;
- (ii) Science Block at ground plus one level with an approximate gross floor area of 512 m²;
- (iii) Administrative Block at ground plus one level with an approximate gross area of 685 m²;
- (iv) Preau;
- (v) Dedicated Offices for infirmary purposes and Counselling;
- (vi) Toilet block at ground floor only of an approximate gross floor area of 66 m²;

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(vii) Gymnasium Block with an approximate gross floor area of 456 m²; and

(viii) Services installation.

I am informed, Madam Chairperson, that the works started on 14 August 2017 and are expected to be completed within 360 calendar days from start date.

Madam Chairperson, with respect to part (b) of the question, I would like to highlight that Baie Malgache Community School is the fifth Community School that my Government has decided to construct. The Objectives of my Commission through the construction of Community School are to:-

- (i) provide adequate school infrastructures for the promotion of quality education for the overall development of all pupils
- (ii) bring the school nearer to the pupils so as to reduce walking or travelling time for children
- (iii) provide inclusive education through greater parental involvement;
- (iv) enlist parents collaboration and active participation in the schooling of their children;
- (v) reduce the pupils/teacher ratio to 20:1 compared to 30:1 traditional schools; and
- (vi) Initiate our young generation to the concept of rainwater harvesting and smart agriculture.

Madam Chairperson, it is expected that the new Community School at Baie Malgache will be operational as from January 2019 with an expected first intake of 116 pupils.

Madam Chairperson, the catchment area of the school will be as follows:-

Anse Goeland ;
Anse Nicolas ;
Montagne du Sables (lower part) ;
Baie Malgache ;
Baie du Nord; and
Baie Diamant

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Madam Chairperson, the opening of the Baie Malgache Community School in January 2019 will have a direct impact on the pupil/ teacher ratio in Oyster Bay Government School/Mangues Government School and St Esprit RCA Schools.

**CONTRACT FOR PROCUREMENT OF
INTERNET CONNECTION BANDWIDTH
THROUGH UNDERSEA FIBRE OPTIC CABLE**

(No. B/115) 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 for the procurement of internet connection bandwidth through undersea fibre optic cable, she will inform the House about new developments to relation thereto, if any?

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

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

At opening, only three (3) bidders have submitted their offers, namely:-

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

Madam Chairperson,

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

The bid from the preferred bidder (i.e. Mauritius Telecom Ltd) amounting to USD 44,784,694 exclusive VAT was retained.

The approval was conveyed to the RRA on 07th August 2017. Seven (7) days as from 07th August 2017 was given for other suppliers to appeal for any notification. No appeal was notified.

Madam Chairperson,

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A letter of offer for the project Procurement of Internet Connection Bandwidth Services through Undersea Fibre Optic Cable from Mauritius to Rodrigues Island has been issued to the Mauritius Telecom Ltd on 20th September 2017.

The contract agreement with regards to the project will be signed shortly between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and Mauritius Telecom Ltd.

Madam Chairperson, I have the pleasure to inform this House that apart from the above initiative another private Company intend to bring its own Undersea Fibre Optic Cable connecting Rodrigues to Mauritius and onwards to South Africa on an Open Access Basis. This is a purely private concept and it will operate on a private basis.

Madam Chairperson, the Company is exploring various options for routing a cable through the northern reef barrier of Rodrigues and onto a safe landing site at either Cavern Provert, Grand Bay or Baladirou.

The Company is currently studying the suitability of options for the placement of a Cable Landing Station and associated infrastructure and facilities along the coastal road close to the aforementioned landing sites. This will allow any licensed operators within the Republic of Mauritius and registered to operate in Rodrigues to utilise and benefit from this infrastructure throughout the life cycle of the cable system.

The Company is proposing to supply some 13.5 Terra of Megabyte. Marine Survey will be carried out and Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Licence will be sought thereafter. The Company is currently working on its Implementation Plan.

Madam Chairperson,

This initiative by the Company is with a view to help the Rodrigues Administration and its people to increase the availability of ultra-high internet access and deliver an Open Access International connection to all operators on the island.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR RODRIGUES

(No. B/116) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Trading and Others whether, in regard to Research and Innovation for Rodrigues, she will inform the House of the different

measures taken by the Commission in relation thereto together with the expecting outcome of each measure taken and to table a copy of the strategic plan, if any?

Reply: Madam the Chairperson, the Republic of Mauritius, according to the Global Innovation Index 2016 is the most innovative country in the African Region. In this context to align with the National Government policies and strategies, my Commission has envisaged a series of initiatives.

In view of our aspiration, this Government intend to set up all the infrastructures to promote Research and Innovation and become an integral part of development.

In context of « *franchir une nouvelle étape* » this Government is aiming excellence. My Commission is reinforcing its arm towards development.

First of all, Madam Chairperson, we have embarked in a massive Capacity Building Programme where more than Rs 18 m is being invested to rise in the development index.

The measures announced in the Budget Speech 2017/18 by the Chief Commissioner on 31st March 2017 has shown this Government Commitments. It is imperative to progress on the **Innovation Efficiency Ratio**. **Knowledge Creation** is imperative and this what my Commission is proning.

We have come to the conclusion that our Education Sector at primary, secondary and tertiary level has to be risen at a level above.

This Government intends to encourage the youth à *réfléchir, innover et créer*.

Madam Chairperson, the different measures taken by my Commission with regard to Research and Innovation for Rodrigues are as follows:

First, Madam Chairperson, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly through my Commission works in close collaboration with the **Mauritius Research and Innovative Council (MRIC)** in view to boost up research and innovation among the different sphere of the economy.

In 2015, an “*Assise de la Recherche et de l’Innovation*” has been organised and the strategic plan devised is as per Annexed for period 2015/2020. There are three main clusters which have been identified as follows:

1. Agro industry and Bio farming

2. Ocean and Marine Resources
3. ICT, Renewable Energy and other emerging sectors

Currently, different actions have already started in view of implementing the different action plan identified so as to boost research and innovation in Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling a copy of the proposed Strategic Plan for Research and Innovation for Rodrigues (2015-2020) submitted by the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council.

Second, Madam Chairperson, since November 2016, my Commission in collaboration with the **National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC)** has been working on the devise of a strategic plan to boost productivity and competitiveness in Rodrigues. A Strategic Plan has been validated in May 2017 in a two days' workshop in Rodrigues. In same line, in May this year, there has been the setting up of the **Rodrigues Productivity Committee**, comprising of members from the public and private sector, NGOs and parastatal bodies.

The mandate of the Rodrigues Productivity Committee is to implement actions in view of creating an awareness culture of productivity and competitiveness among the different sphere of the Rodriguan economy. With the concept of being competitive, the Committee met on a monthly basis under the Chairpersonship of the Acting Head, Human Resource Development Centre, Commission for Training.

The Rodrigues Productivity Committee works in close collaboration with the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council, of Mauritius.

Third, Madam Chairperson, Rodrigues is currently moving towards a development strategy where ICT is a matter of concern so as to ensure a sustainable moving ahead action. The empowerment of the human capital is one innovative action which the current government is laying emphasis upon. In this context, the government has planned to train 45 trainees over a period of three consecutive years with an intake of 15 trainees per year for a two years training programme leading to a **“BREVET DE TECHNICIEN SUPERIEUR – SERVICES AUX ORGANISATIONS”** with the lead of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Business School.

Fourth, Madam Chairperson, in view of bringing a culture of research and innovation in the education sector, the project on *EXCELLENCE in EDUCATION SECTOR* is among one of the programme currently budgeted in this financial year. The aim is to enhance a culture of excellence in the education system

currently provided in the different primary and secondary institutions of the island. Each participating schools will have to take on board the teaching, non-teaching staff, the students, the parents and the community as a whole and present a research and innovative action that will enhance the schooling process and environment of our youth.

Fifth, Madam Chairperson, the upgrading of our human capital is once more being tackled with the programme on “**EDUCATION A LA BEAUTE**” which will be implemented as from January 2018 for our HSC students who will pursue their post-secondary studies during the same year. The aim is to promote an education system leading to creativity which will also prepare our prospective post-secondary students in their enrolment in the next level of preparation of their career plan. The pool of students will be exposed to theme of life which they have not come across with during either their primary or secondary schooling. Students will be having an empowered know how and give value to their cultural identity.

Madam the Chairperson, the modernisation of the economy in a country undeniably requires the development of ICT. In that context, my Commission will set up the “*Technopole de Rodrigues*” which will foster creation, development and implementation of innovative projects and businesses at the same time create employment prospective. These will enhance the ICT Sector especially with the forthcoming Undersea Fibre Optic Cable which will connect Rodrigues Island to the rest of the world.

Madam, the Chairperson, I have been informed that the Concept Note for the setting up of the Technopole de Rodrigues which will be accommodated at the Ex-Mont Venus Hotel has already been prepared and the main objectives of the project are amongst others to:-

- Boost the economic growth of Rodrigues
- Promote, stimulate and detect innovative projects and provide support for their transformation into innovative company.
- Facilitate the setting up of innovative technological projects in Rodrigues.
- Promote entrepreneurship, employment and create sustainable development to move towards an Ecologic Rodrigues.
- Reduce unemployment.
- Promote and advocate the label “*Rodrigues Naturellement*” in business development processes.

Madam the Chairperson, the Regional Government has started to invest massively in the digital sphere to incite our SMEs to embrace technologies in their

daily operations. Thus, I wish to inform the house that the Regional Government is collaborating with Landscape Mauritius Ltd to prepare a master plan to implement a Technology Park on the reclaimed land of Oyster Bay. This cluster will concentrate and provide all essential facilities for SMEs involved in new technologies to bloom.

Madam the Chairperson, my Commission is providing technical assistance to our SMEs to help develop new products that will give a new thrust to our agro-processing industry. Various incentives are being provided to help individuals, cooperatives and other groups in their quest for developing new products.

I will now give a list of activities piloted by my Commission to encourage Research & Development in SMEs in Rodrigues:

Lime fruits

In June 2016, research was done on production of frozen lime juice at Graviers. The lime juice was stored and maintained in freezing conditions to preserve its quality. The research also aimed at determining the production flow, extraction efficiency of the pilot juice extractor and production capacity of the unit.

New research will be done at Graviers for the development of shelf-stable lime juices that can be stored at ambient temperature and the use of lime peels for new product development such as lime fruit paste that will be a typical product for the entrepreneurs working in the unit.

New Fruit and Vegetable Products

Rodrigues Lime Juice Cooperative Society hired the service of a Consultant in two occasions notably in June and August 2017 for 2 weeks and 1 month respectively. During these training sessions, new products were developed at Graviers and Limon d'Or using fruits that are locally available. The categories of products developed during these posting are jams/marmelades, pate de fruits, syrup and candied fruits (Crystalisé).

Madam Chairperson, the expected outcomes of this measure were:-

- The newly developed products will be marketed to increase revenues of entrepreneurs working in food processing units.
- Diversify the range of products available on the market.

- Empowerment of entrepreneurs for creativity and innovation in the food sector

Madam Chairperson, with regards to **New Seafood Products**, new researches are being carried-out to improve the quality of existing seafood products as well as the development of new ones. In June 2017, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) funded a research programme on seafood. Hence, the quality of grilled sliced octopus was improved by using new machine and vacuum pack packages, and development of new labels for packaging. The research was done to increase the revenue of entrepreneurs through the reduction of cost of production and improve production capacity. The production process, including grilling and slicing, was reviewed to improve the products.

In addition to above measure, researches were done on the processing of by-products derived from the production of grilled octopus. The by-products include the dried heads, dried thin tentacles and grilled leftovers. The heads and dried tentacles were packed and marketed. The grilled leftovers consisting of small pieces of grilled tentacles, which are difficult to slice, are used to produce the famous “Piment Ourite”

Madam Chairperson, the expected outcomes of these measures are:

- Better quality of seafood products
- Potential for extension of research project to develop packed fish products at a later stage.
- Optimized profits following used of by-products for production of new high value products hence ensuring business sustainability
- Diversified range of products
- Empowerment of entrepreneurs

Madam, the Chairperson,

As enunciated at Paragraph 19 in the “*Discours du Budget 2017-2018*” on 31st March 2017, my Commission is working towards transforming Rodrigues into a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) to attract investors in specific fields such as ICT and off-lagoon fishing amongst others. A Consultant will be recruited for the elaboration of the Strategies and Development of the Concept. The “*appui*” of

the Commission for Fisheries and Fisheries Research and Training Unit are being sought.

Madam Chairperson, as regards to Agriculture, Environment, Forestry, Fisheries and Marine Park, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in collaboration with the Mauritius Research Council has developed a series of Research projects:-

- **First, improving Marketability and Export Potential of dried octopus and Sea weed-based food products in Rodrigues**

A technical design and a 3D design of the plan has already been completed and approved by Mauritius Research Council (MRC). Presently, the team is finalising the Terms of Reference for construction of the solar dryer. Construction is expected to complete by mid December 2017. Thereafter, the drying quality of the seafood will be studied.

- **Secondly, enriching the nutritional value and adding new flavour to baked goods (savory biscuits) through the inclusion of bio-transformed products**

Madam Chairperson, the concept is to develop new flavour through fermentation technology and the final result will be introduced in baked goods for new products development. Isolation and development of the new flavour is also another component of the project.

This project is being run jointly with University of Mauritius. On 02nd June 2017, the Executive Council approved to fund the project and additional funding is being sought from Mauritius Research Council under the Collaborative Research and Innovation Grant (CRIG) Scheme. Project submitted in October 2017 through TER-MER Rodrigues.

- **Third, Local production of animal feed from local raw materials**

The project consists of using materials to produce animal feed for pigs. Madam Chairperson, a brief has already been submitted by the Commission for Agriculture to my Commission for consideration.

MEASURES TAKEN FOR RODRIGUES – FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

(No. B/117) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (The Second Local Region Member of St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to measures taken for Rodrigues to recover its free from Foot and Mouth

Disease status, he will give details thereon and any other matter incidental thereto including the bans imposed in connection thereto on agricultural produces?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, following the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in Rodrigues on 7th July 2017, the following actions have been taken by my Commission in view of enabling Rodrigues to recover speedily the FMD Free Status:

- (i) Vaccination of all animals in Rodrigues against the virus to stop the proliferation of the disease was done in 3 rounds from 22nd August 2016 to 24th April 2017 whereby the whole population (54 200) of pigs, cattle, goat and sheep were vaccinated. The last clinical case of FMD in Rodrigues dated back to 11 October 2016. No new cases have been recorded to date. This is a clear signal that we have succeeded in combating the disease effectively.
- (ii) My Commission works in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, Veterinary Division, Professor Gavin Thomson, FMD Expert from South Africa and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) through the SEGA One Health network to ensure that no new outbreak of the disease occur. A high level meeting took place in Rodrigues on 10th May 2017 under my chairmanship and with the participation of Dr Deodass Meenowa, Assistant Director of Agriculture in Mauritius, Dr Harena Rasamoelina of the IOC, Prof Gavind Thomson and officers of my commission to review the management of FMD and to set the way forward.
- (iii) My Commission hired the services of Professor Thomson, a well-known OIE expert on FMD to advise on the management of the disease in Rodrigues and to recover the FMD free status. Prof Thomson fielded 2 missions in Rodrigues namely on 4th September 2016 and 8th May 2017. A third mission of the expert is due to take place this year. The advice and guidance of Prof Thomson have been very effective in containing the disease locally.
- (iv) Sero-surveillance through blood analysis to determine the presence of the virus in our livestock is being done regularly. A first blood analysis was done in December 2016 which indicated that only 25 % of goats and sheep were still infected. Consequently, Mauritius authorised the shipment of goats and sheep to Mauritius as from end December 2016.

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- (v) A second blood analysis was done in June 2017 on cattle. The results indicated that only 2 % of the cattle population still contained the virus.
- (vi) Pursuant to these results, in my capacity as Commissioner responsible for Agriculture, I negotiated with the Minister of Agro Industry and Food Security to allow the export of cattle to Mauritius as it is the case for Goat and Sheep. A first consignment of cattle export to Mauritius was thus allowed during first week of September 2017. Only the Mauritius Meat Authority is allowed to purchase cattle at the rate of Rs105 per kg. This has provided some relief to the breeder community, particularly with the forthcoming dried season in Rodrigues. As at to date, some **323** cattle, **1493** goat and **1213** sheep have been exported through this arrangement with the MMA. My Commission is continuing to press on the Ministry to remove the embargo on trade of animals for the benefit of our breeders.
- (vi) Following discussions with the President of Région Réunion in October 2016, an ELISA spectrophotometer has been received as donation to enable animal blood analysis in Rodrigues. Training of local laboratory and veterinary staff was done in September 2017 by CIRAD Reunion while both CIRAD and IOC donated related equipment and consumables to perform tests.
- (vii) As from 20th September 2017, my commission is performing FMD test at Citronelle. Some 196 blood samples have been tested and no presence of FMD has been detected. By carrying out such tests locally in Rodrigues, we will be in a better position to respond rapidly and effectively in times of outbreak of diseases.

Following the Fact Finding Committee Report, my commission is looking into the possibility of banning the import of meat from FMD infected countries, in view of protecting our livestock sector.