

RODRIGUES

FOURTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 5 of 2018

Sitting of Tuesday 10 July 2018

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

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

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RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 10 JULY 2018

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The Executive Council

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

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

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PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OBITUARY - MR. ANDRE POMPOM, OSK

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, it is with deep regret that we have learned of the demise of Mr. André Pompom, OSK, former clerk of the National Assembly on Tuesday 29 May 2018 at the age of 75. Mr. Pompom joined the civil service at the tender age of 18 and successfully worked his way up in the judicial and legal services departments, respectively until his appointment as Clerk of the National Assembly in September 1991. He served the legislature for 13 years until his retirement therefrom in September 2004. It is during his tenure as Clerk of the National Assembly that Mr. Pompom was called upon to assist in the establishment of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. He was in that respect instrumental to the drafting of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and was also thoroughly involved in the design of the premises of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Moreover, his retirement did not preclude him from putting his experience at the service of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Until very recently he continued to provide invaluable guidance for the benefit of this House. He will always be remembered for his availability, kindness and generous free services to this Assembly whenever his help was solicited.

Madam Chairperson, may I request you to convey the deep condolences of the Assembly to his spouse, Bernadette and his two daughters, Nathalie and Nadine and their respective families.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, thank you. On behalf of the minority and on my own behalf, may I associate myself to the tribute paid to the late André Pompom. Having known him personally, I can say that he was a perfect gentleman and the Republic of Mauritius has lost a very intelligent guy. He was a good friend indeed. And, during the long years I have been at the National Assembly, he was of good advice. He always gave good advice. May I ask you, Madam Chairperson, to convey our heartfelt condolences to his widow, his two daughters and all the members of the bereaved family. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I associate myself to the tribute paid to late Mr. André Pompom, OSK, by the Chief Commissioner and the Minority Leader and I direct the Clerk to convey to the bereaved family the condolences of the Assembly. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

UNIFORM – SERJEANT-AT-ARMS

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Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I have one more announcement. As you all may have noticed, by virtue of the provision of Standing Order 68 of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, a new civilian uniform has been designed for the Serjeant-at-Arms, of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in line with what currently obtains at the National Assembly of Mauritius concerning same. As from today's sitting and for all subsequent Regional Assembly's Sittings only, the Serjeant-at-Arms of this Assembly will be using the same ornaments as his counterpart of the National Assembly other a normal suit.

PAPERS LAID

A. Chief Commissioner's Office

- (i) The Annual Report of the Discovery Rodrigues Company Ltd. for the year ended 31 December 2014 (original);**
- (ii) The Annual Report of the Discovery Rodrigues Company Ltd. for the year ended 31 December 2015 (original);**
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ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

DISPOSAL OF HOSPITAL WASTE

(No. B/34) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (The Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether in regard to the disposal of hospital waste in Rodrigues, he will state:

- (a) How it is actually being effected, indicating if the incinerator/s intended therefor is/are out of use; and**
- (b) If any new site(s) recently identified is/are currently being used therefor and, in the affirmative, to state the reasons therefor, specifying if all decisions taken in regard thereto are in compliance with the existing laws of the Republic of Mauritius?**

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Madam Chairperson, a hospital waste in Rodrigues is normally disposed using the incinerator located at Queen Elizabeth Hospital at Creve Coeur. The latter, Madam Chairperson, is quite old and defective and this is why the commission since last year floated tenders to replace it with a new and modern one. Unfortunately, Madam Chairperson, the bidding exercise was not responsive and the tender was re-launched in 2018 and the contract has been awarded to the successful bidder. I am happy to inform the House that in the near future, we will be equipped with a new and modern incinerator. But, Madam Chairperson, in the meantime due to various complaints from surrounding inhabitants and staff of the hospital concerning the environmental problems being caused by the incinerator, a high level meeting was organized to find a temporary measure to decrease the negative impact the incinerator was having on the surrounding inhabitants and staff of my commission.

It was then decided, Madam Chairperson, that human waste will still be incinerated at the incinerator of Creve Coeur and that a temporary and urgent place will have to be identified to incinerate wastes other than human wastes away from an inhabited place, secured by a fence to limit access by unauthorized people. The area chosen is a place called Delo Vert and let me assure the House that my commission is following the appropriate guidelines for the proper handling, packing, storage and transport of the wastes.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, the Respected Commissioner has said that they have chosen a place known as Delo Vert. We all know that there are many animals there and they use water from a well. Can I know whether the waste which is being disposed is done according to norms?

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

The Minority Leader: Well, having said so, if the wastes are disposed according to norms, can I know whether concrete slab has been put in this site prior to the burning of these wastes?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, at the bottom of the hole that has been dug, it is with basalt and there was no need to put concrete slab. It is not permeable.

The Minority Leader: If it is basalt, Madam Chairperson, therefore there is percolation. Water will remain on the basalt and this will...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members. Minority Leader, please wait a minute. Respected Members, I would like to remind you about the proceedings of this House – no interruptions from a sitting position is allowed.

The Minority Leader: Since, there is basalt, so there is the risk that there is seeping of these wastes, of this ... as we said. The waste water that can contaminate the surrounding water table. So, if the Respected Commissioner, is saying that this is according to norms. I do not know what he means by according to norms. Therefore, I would like to ask him whether, the officers, the Environment Officers of this locality, of the Region 1 and the Police de l'Environnement was appraised of this situation?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, as I have said, there is no percolation of water there. The site..

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please address the Chair.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: There is no percolation of water there and the place where we have chosen is found in a place where there is many trees of *Piquant Loulou* and no animal graze there.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: So, the Commissioner has not answered the question but anyway. So, I will want to ask him. As far as laws, existing laws in Mauritius, so the Environment Protection Act stipulate in the Fifth Schedule – “The incineration of municipal solid wastes, quarantine wastes, medical and clinical wastes need and EIA, as per the Environment Protection Act.” So, I would like to ask the Commissioner what he has to say about the law and about the EIA, whether there has been and EIA as prior to the construction of this hole or site for the burning of these medical wastes?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, as it was a matter of urgency regarding the public health, there was no need to search for an EIA and it was a temporary measure, this will end when we receive our incinerators.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask the Commissioner, who decides not to go for an EIA prior to this project?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: I decide, Madam Chairperson, because it was an urgency regarding public health.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, being given that we have a dumping site, we also have a place where to dump liquid wastes at Roche Bon

Dieu-Grenade. So, why is it, the fact that this area, there has been an EIA, why is it that the clinical/medical wastes, have not been burnt there?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, I have already answered the question why we go to Delo Vert, it is a very inhabited place but regarding to Roche Bon Dieu when the wind blows from the north we have problems.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, urgency or not urgency, we have to abide by the law of the land. We have to be legal. If, you yourself you are not following the law, who will? Therefore, I would like to ask - because you have not answered my question - can I know whether the Environment Officers and the Police de l'Environnement, whether these officers were appraised of this project?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, as I have said, it was a matter of urgency, the inhabitants of Crève-Coeur and the staff were complaining a lot. So, we had to take a decision regarding the public health, we had to go there and burn these.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, one more question. The Commissioner stated about the high-level committee. Can we know who forms part of this high-level committee? Give the members of this high-level committee at his commission.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: In meeting we have Commissioners and Departmental Heads.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the...

Madam Chairperson: No cross talking, please.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner, whether kerosene is used for burning of the wastes?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Of course, Madam Chairperson, we do have a kerosene to burn these wastes because it is clinical wastes. Every wastes is being burnt until it comes to ashes and the Incinerator Operator has to remain there until it is burnt completely.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Etant donné que Rodrigues n'est pas autonome dans la santé, est-ce que le ministère a donné son feu vert pour ce...

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, on est autonome en administration, on décide.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Madam Chairperson*, je suis un peu triste d'entendre, d'entendre les données qui ont été fourni par le Commissaire de la Santé ainsi que le Commissaire de la l'Environnement. Il y va de la survie de notre environnement, du processus de Rodrigues, d'une île écologique. Madame la présidente, *can I know from the Commissioner – to envi repone question là, Richard Payendee, déboute.*

Madam Chairperson: Please address the Chair, Respected Member.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Dir li reste trankil, madame.*

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, please address the Chair, once more.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Dir ça misié-là arrête fatig moi.*

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member. Order. It seems that the Respected Member is trying to challenge the authority of the Chair.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: No, this is not the case.

Madam Chairperson: So, if it is not the case, you better change your tone when addressing the Chair. Thank you.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I resume?

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you have the floor, Respected Member.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, thank you, madam. I am very sorry for what is happening here but unfortunately, it is about the members of the other side that you have to tell them also to be silent. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member. Respected Member, please. No Members should try to infer and to usurp the powers of the Chair. This is clear. This must be clear now.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I will not repeat myself. You know about the procedures of this House. You should bear in mind that in the Chamber, in the Assembly we have three Ds, Decorum, Discipline and Dignity.

And, it forms part of your duty as a parliamentarian to uphold the decorum and the dignity of this House.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you have the floor now.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la présidente, les réponses qui ont été fourni ici, c'est un crime contre Rodrigues, contre le processus d'une île écologique, contre l'environnement. Est-ce que le Commissaire de la Santé peut confirmer s'il y a eu sur les réseaux sociaux des...

Madam Chairperson: I am sorry, Respected Member, this is not allowed.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, I will rephrase the question. Being given that the site chosen by the Commissioner of Health and so on, the site has been chosen by the Commissioner and his team, can I know what type of vehicle is being used to transport the wastes from Crève Coeur to Delo Vert, whether it is in line with the existing law?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: *Madam Chairperson*, le respecté membre Rosaire Perrine a dit qu'il est triste pour l'environnement mais je vois qu'il n'est pas triste pour ce gens qui souffrent à Crève-Cœur, à Pointe Canon avec cette odeur nauséabonde des plastiques. Alors, il est triste pour quelques plants de *Piquant Loulou*. Mais je vois ça très drôle. Mais les habitants de Crève-Cœur doivent savoir ce qui se passe dans cette assemblée à propos de la minorité. Mais laissez-moi, répondre à la question. Ce sont les camions qui ont des *waste permit* qui transportent ces plastiques à ...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, no interruption from a sitting position, please.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la présidente, je ne veux pas rentrer dans ce débat de tristesse etc., concernant l'environnement, concernant les habitants de Crève-Cœur. Vous savez c'est quoi le problème ? Le problème, c'est la façon de faire, c'est une dictature. C'est la façon de faire. On nous donne des guides, on nous dit, il faut protéger l'environnement, il faut protéger ceci, il faut travailler dans une direction d'une île écologique et là on vient me dire que je n'ai pas de tristesse pour les gens de Crève-Cœur alors que moi je passe là tous les jours. Non, Madam Chairperson, ma question est comme suit : le Commissaire de la Santé a déclaré dans une réponse tout à l'heure que l'incinérateur est en panne depuis quelques temps de cela. Est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de la Santé de confirmer si vraiment l'incinérateur est en panne ou s'il y a eu aucune personne après la retraite du dite personne qui travaillait là-bas pour rouler cette incinérateur ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: N'importe quoi. Madam Chairperson, I have already answered this question of Respected Member Perrine. He has not listened carefully. The answer is already given in my answer.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, it is well known that *gouverner c'est prévoir*. He has said that he is in power. You are in power you take decision. Then, how come that up to now a new incinerator has not been bought and a good site has not been chosen. This is why I am saying whether the Respected Commissioner, whether *il a prévu*. *Donc, gouverner c'est prévoir. Il n'a rien prévu. J'aurais aimé savoir quand*, what is the time frame for the setting up of this incinerator. If you are in love with all the people of Crève-Coeur as you said...

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you Minority Leader. The question has already been put. Commissioner?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: The question has already been answered regarding the bidding exercise for the tendering of an incinerator.

Madam Chairperson: One last question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, concerning the location of the site for the incinerator itself. We know where it is now. So, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether in the new contract, the same site will be used to put the incinerator or it will be put elsewhere in the hospital?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, it will be on the same site.

Madam Chairperson: One last one.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Order, order. Respected Members from the minority side.

The Minority Leader: One question, Madam Chairperson. Being given that we have known what has happened with Asbestos, how this has been disposed...

Madam Chairperson: Commissioners, Respected Members, please.

The Minority Leader: How the Asbestos has been disposed, not according to norms and, now we are having another disposal site in Region No. 1. Can we know whether this Regional Government is making of Region 1, a *dépotoir*?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Madam Chairperson, the question did not mention for what is Asbestos and Region 1 is not becoming a *dépotoir*, it will be a temporary measure.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

AGRICULTURAL LAND – CROP PRODUCTION

(No. B/35) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others, whether in regard to agricultural land for crop production in Rodrigues, he will state:

- (a) the area still under cultivation to date as compared to that of 2016, indicating the area that has been left fallow;
- (b) the support actually provided to Rodriguan farmers for the timely preparation therefor, specifying if the roof tractors and other implements available therefor are in good running conditions; and
- (c) if there has been any delay in land preparation for beans cultivation this year?

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a), the total area of land under cultivation for the year 2016 was 192.7 hectares. The figure for 2017 was 336.14 hectares. The data for 2018 will be available in 2019 since 2018 is not yet over.

Madam Chairperson, as per our records, there are some 1100 hectares of agricultural land in Rodrigues. Some 430 hectares is normally annually cropped and some 498 hectares are invaded by invasive species such as *acacia nilotica* (*piquant loulou*). The remaining 72 hectares are therefore left fallow, that is, in an abandoned state. The possible reasons for this situation are as follows:

- many old planters are unable to cultivate their land;
- some planters have migrated to Mauritius; and
- many planters have taken up jobs, for example, in the public service

That is why our policy, Madam Chairperson, is to repossess these lands and to give to the young dynamic interested planters.

Madam Chairperson, there is currently a land suitability mapping exercise, that is, a Cadastre Agricole which is being done in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and this will help to have a better picture of the situation.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, I noticed that prior to the taking of office of the Respected Commissioner, there is a land that was cultivated, now there is about twice as much. So far, so good. Therefore, can I know what about the 100 hectares that were rehabilitated in different regions of Rodrigues and can we know in which regions they are situated? Whether all the 100 hectares have been rehabilitated?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, yes, of course. We have rehabilitated the land and donated the land or given on lease to the people. Some people are cultivating, some not. It depends, because we are not the one that forces people to plant. We give the land and then we give all the facilities to them, like mechanization and all these. We are not the one to take their hands and say you must plant and what to plant.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, my question was: being given that on 30 June 2017, Rs 11,421,213 was paid to a contractor. He was supposed to rehabilitate 100 hectares of land. And, out of these, only about 75.83 hectares were rehabilitated. This is why I was asking whether all the 100 hectares have been rehabilitated?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, Madam Chairperson, all the 100 hectares have been rehabilitated.

The Minority Leader: Can we know which regions?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I think you need to come with another question because this question has nothing to do with the places. I can tell you, Baie Malgache, Montagne Goyaves. Yes, some places. But this question is...

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please address the Chair.

The Minority Leader: Okay, I have understood. The second part of the question, I talked about the tractors available. Can we know how many are available and per region?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, we have four tractors which are available for the time being. There are some new ones which have been... four tractors for the commission, which is being used by the commission to help the planters. Because all the things that we do at the commission is free of charge but we want to give the incentive to the people to go towards private ploughing of land. That is why we have donated some tractors to some private companies or associations to help the planters but we also have some schemes because the planters pay the operator and then they get their money back from the commission.

The Minority Leader: *Déshabiller St. Paul pour habiller St. Pierre.* Can I know since he has talked of donation of tractors from the commission to cooperatives? Can I know the policy behind that? How the tractors are donated to these cooperatives?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: May be the word donated is not the right word. The tractors have been vested in these companies. And, the policy in cooperatives, the policy behind this is, we do not want people to keep waiting for the government to come and plough their land. We want to go towards this new way of thinking that makes people pay. You know, you get money for planting beans. Why cannot you pay some money to plough your land? So, this is the policy behind. The policy, we want to take those people out of this *assistanat*.

The Minority Leader: Who is talking about *assistanat*. Okay. He would like to give. I would like to know how many cooperatives you have donated these tractors. Whether you have vested in cooperatives? How many cooperatives you have vested these tractors or whether *tous les coopératives sont logés à la enseigne? Est-ce que vous allez donner à tous les coopératives ou bien vous allez pick and choose pour donner ?*

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, we did not pick and choose. We normally gave the best, the tractors in cooperatives which have experience in doing that sort of thing, you know. And, also RTMC and FACER. RAMCF. They have experience in this type of thing.

The Minority Leader: Can I know how many cooperatives have asked for these tractors, have asked to plough - tractors vested in these?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: There is only one. And, the one that asked, the one that gained/received the tractors.

The Minority Leader: If others ask you will vest, you will do the same thing?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Why not? We are not here to... We are here to help. If we do not have the tractors, we cannot give. I can give what I have.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la présidente, je voudrais demander une question. Que le commissaire réponde à cette question. Il a dit qu'il y a une coopérative qui a de l'expérience pour labourer des terrains et puis on *refund*. Mais d'après ce que comprend, le *refund* est fait seulement pour la plantation d'haricots et des oignons. Parce que lui-même lui dans sa réponse avant, il a dit que, il y a des planteurs qui se font vieux, ils veulent travailler. Après avoir labourer un terrain pour parfois plus de Rs 6,000, quand on demande au monsieur qui a fait le labourage, comment on fait pour le *refund*. Il a dit qu'on rembourse seulement pour les haricots et les oignons. Ça veut dire, si on va planter du manioc, du maïs, de la patate, il n'y aura pas de *refund*.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: *Madam Chairperson*, effectivement il n'y a pas de *refund* pour les autres. Parce que ces des *Schemes* que la commission a mis en place. Le *Scheme* pour promouvoir. Pour une certaine période c'était haricot et oignon, peut-être l'année prochaine on changera on ira vers manioc. On ne peut pas donner à tout le monde même s'il y a des gens qui travaillent pour l'état, on ne peut pas donner des facilités à tout le monde pour tout le temps. *We can give something some time but not all the time.*

The Minority Leader: *We can give something some time not all the time.*
A few years back...

Madam Chairperson: Wait a minute, Minority Leader. It seems that the Second Island Region Member has a question. Yes, you have the floor, put your question now.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam Chairperson, to part (c) of the question, I would like to ask the Commissioner because I did not hear the answer. With regard to part (c), whether there are planters who have reported that they have not got tractors to plough their land for cultivating of beans, red beans?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that as far as land preparation for bean cultivation for 2018 is concerned, following continuous heavy rainfall which has been recorded in Rodrigues from January to April, land preparation for bean has been delayed due to muddy conditions of fields. Unfortunately, the vagaries of nature have affected the activities of planters, which is beyond our control. This is likely to have an adverse implication on harvest this year.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la présidente, tout le monde sait qu'on est dans une phase de crise lorsqu'il s'agit de l'alimentation etc., à Rodrigues. Nous savons tous que nous avons beaucoup problèmes. Mais le problème de retard de tracteur, Madame la présidente, ça ne date pas d'hier. D'après ce que le commissaire nous fait comprendre, il y a eu beaucoup de pluie. On comprend. Mais il y a dans d'autres régions, il n'y a pas que la région 1, encore une fois, il y a la région ouest, qui n'a pas eu de tracteur. Les chauffeurs qui contrôlent, qui roulent ces tracteurs-là, ils viennent labourer chez X mais ils laissent Y, ils partent chez Z dans une autre région. C'est comme ça que ça se passe. C'est pour ça, Madame la présidente, qu'il y a eu un retard et il y a eu une baisse considérable concernant les terres qu'ils ont cultivés pour les haricots et un manque à gagner considérable pour les planteurs d'haricots. Est-ce que le commissaire mettra en place une structure, un monitoring pour voir qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire pour ces planteurs qui ont pas pu cultivés leurs haricots pour cette année de 2017-2018.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: *Madam Chairperson*, le membre est en train de parler de comment quelqu'un vient là, labour la terre d'une personne et part de l'autre côté. Et effectivement, laisser là... C'est vrai. Parce que ça se fait d'une façon démocratique. Si la personne tout près n'a pas demandé ou a demandé en retard, on ne peut pas le faire. *First come first serve*. C'est notre policy. Et c'est comme ça que partout même quand on achète des rôtis, le type qui est devant, derrière, il ne peut pas passer devant. C'est comme ça que ça se passe. Donc, si malheureusement, c'est comme ça et on n'a pas autant de tracteur à Rodrigues pour labourer toutes les terres dans les termes. Mais il y a tout un planning. Le problème qu'on a aujourd'hui c'est que pendant X temps, la personne c'est préparé pour planter les haricots, les oignons, on ne sait pas quoi. Mais il attend la pluie pour commencer. Il fallait préparer un peu avant. C'est la personne qui est intelligente qui prépare sa terre bien avant à de la place parce qu'à un certain moment de l'année les tracteurs sont là à ne rien faire, on attend. Mais quand ils arrivent le moment pour planter tout le monde vient. Donc, on ne peut pas satisfaire tout le monde d'un coup. C'est pour ça j'ai dit, l'expression de Bob que j'ai changé. Donc, on ne peut pas satisfaire tout le monde en même temps vu la position, vu la quantité de tracteur qu'on a.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, c'est une question de planification. Nous avons dans les régions les *sub-unit*, comme à La Ferme. Nous avons aussi des Fields Assistants, des Agricultural Technicians qui vont sur le terrain. Et, ça ces gens-là, ils travaillent avec la Commission de l'Agriculture. Comment est-ce que le commissaire peut venir nous dire ici que *first come first serve*. Ces gens-là, j'ai rencontré ces gens-là sur le terrain et...

Madam Chairperson: Put your question, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I am putting my question. Et, ces gens-là ils sont d'accord qu'on devait dans une localité on labour tous les terres parce qu'il n'y a pas que 100/200 planteurs dans une région.

Madam Chairperson: You put your question now.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, please give me one second to introduce the question.

Madam Chairperson: There is no need to introduce your question. This is for clarification. You put your question now.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes. I would like to ask the Commissioner, why is it that, being given that we have a small number of planters per region, why is it that we have to wait, being given that we have Field Assistants, Agricultural Technicians around.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: *Madam Chairperson*, effectivement les techniciens font leurs travaux. Mais qu'est-ce qui se serait passé si l'inverse était fait ? Par exemple, si nous... la personne qui est devant, on achète des rôtis, ceux qui est derrière passent devant ? Ils viendront avec une autre question la prochaine fois. Pourquoi tu fais quelqu'un passer derrière. Donc, vous connaissez cette chanson – *tou céki to fer lor sa la ter na pa bon*. C'est exactement ça qui se passe.

Madam Chairperson: You should rephrase your answer...

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Which one?

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner you should rephrase your answer.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I will.

Madam Chairperson: This is hypothetical.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Okay. Excuse me. So, you know it is normal that this is how thing is done today. You do not get someone who just applied for ploughing of land and you give priority to this person. So, we do not work like this. May be, one day if the Member become the Commissioner for Agriculture, he can work this way.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, this is what is written at La Ferme – Agricultural Services. It is a service. *When Rod Clean*, quand le camion passe, on

ne peut pas attendre que – on demande à la personne : *ramasse mo saleté lot ramasse mo saleté.*

Madam Chairperson: Put your question now, Respected Member.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I am putting my question. This is a service. So, he has to review, whether he will agree with me to review his policy concerning the preparation of land in Rodrigues?

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Order.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: I would like to ask the Commissioner whether he will agree to review his policy concerning the preparation of land in Rodrigues?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I will talk to the planters of Rodrigues because the system is good so that they get organised and they do not wait for the last minute to come and ask for permission or for the service, which is a service, of course. It is a service. We give a service to the people but we cannot give the service to the people at 100 at a time. So, it is all about planning. The Member said it. So, we will have to educate the planters about planning. They have to plan the thing.

[Interruption]

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, *il paraîtrait que le commissaire se tire une balle dans le pied.* This is a lack of planning. In fact, we have to guide these planters as it was done in the past. And, in the past there were about two tractors per region. And now, we have done away with this practice, can I know why and whether the Respected Commissioner will go ahead with the new planning of having at least two tractors per region so that this can benefit the planters.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, there is more than two tractors per region. There are four for the commission and there is a lot from the cooperatives. So, what happen is some people want to get money but they do not want to spend. That is the problem. There are facilities. They do not even have to queue up. They do not even have to queue up. You call RTMC...

Madam Chairperson: Order.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: In one minute, I mean, in five minutes RTMC is there to plough their land. The problem is the people want to get money but they do not want to spend any money. And, this planning it has to be worked out. People will have to spend Rs 1 to get Rs 50. They want to get everything for free. And, this is not the way that, you know, this country will succeed.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, we take one last question.

Mr. Z. Félicité: So, the Commissioner mentioned in his reply he has given additional land to people due to migration. So, can we know from the Commissioner on which criteria agricultural are given to planters?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Most, we are facilitating the young planters because we have seen from statistics, from surveys that most of the people that cultivate land are getting old and this is a problem. That is why our policy is – we favour the young planters. But also, there are quite a lot of people who are already on the list who have applied a long time ago. If the land is close to them and if it is their turn, first come first serve, they are the one to get the land.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

LEMON HARVEST – SALE/COMMERCIALISATION LEMON PROCESSING UNIT/FACTORY - GRAVIERS

(No. B/36) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Trade, Commerce and Licensing and Others, whether in regard to lemon harvest for this year, she will state the facilities provided by her Commission to the Rodriguan producers for the timely sale/commercialisation of this commodity, indicating if the Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company Ltd and the Lemon Processing Unit/Factory of Graviers have been put to contribution and, if not, why?

The Commissioner for Trade, Commerce and Licensing and Others (Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madam Chairperson, the actual Regional Government considers lemon as one of the main agricultural produce that can contribute to the economic development of Rodrigues. That is why much effort has been devoted by the RRA to ensure that no lemon is remained unsold or mostly unprocessed in the future.

Madam Chairperson, you would concur with me that the best way for us to get the most out of our local produce is to invest so that we can have high value added products. Having said so, I would like to elaborate on few measures that we have taken to ensure that we can sell our lemon. First of all, I should point out

here, that actually the harvest is ongoing and nearly 20 private companies, apart from RTMC, are buying lemon to be exported to Mauritius. And, of course, since the harvest is ongoing, the figures will be compiled at the end of the harvest. However, I should say that from information gathered, by myself and by officers of my office, from the Mauritius Shipping, they informed us that for the last 20 years, it is the first time so many lemon has been exported to Mauritius. And, Madam Chair, according to official figures, that is, I am referring to the Digest of Statistics, for the year 2016, where we have the last official figures, 179 tons of lemons have been exported to Mauritius. In spite of that, the RRA, the actual government, we have invested in the setting up of the plant at Graviers where two cooperatives are actually working, namely, the Rodrigues Limes Juice Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd., who has been processing 20 tons of lemon. From these 20 tons of lemons, 6 tons of lemon juice have been exported to Labourdonais, Mauritius, where derived products have been done. Also, we have the Graviers Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd., who is mainly responsible for pre-processing of lemon prior to be sold to Limon D'Or for finish products. And, I would like also to point out that same project at Graviers has been financed by the RRA, GEF Small Grant Programme and the FAO Smart Fish. Also, it is good to note that, special arrangements have been made with the RTMC, so that it buys lemon to be given to Limon D'Or for processing and for this actual harvesting period, they have been buying 1800 kgs of lemons of which actually at Limon D'Or, we have 90 pails of 20 kgs fermented lemons because we are entering into a contract, RTMC and Scott as from this October 2018 for the exporting of pickles and so on that Limon D'Or will be producing. Also, it is good to note that, as per the budget measures that the Chief Commissioner announced we have already started to work on the project for Graviers, that is, for the extraction of essential oil and two meetings have already been done and we will be finalizing by the end of July, the processes to start the construction of the building to house the new project and also we are planning to have the equipment that will reach Rodrigues. We are working so that we can have this for the next harvest of lemon in Rodrigues.

The Minority Leader: Yes, Madam Chairperson, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Despite, the much made effort of her commission, does the Respected Commissioner know that there are millions of lemons that are rotting under the trees in Rodrigues?

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Madam Chairperson, unfortunately, this has always been the case up to now. Though when they were in government, this has always been the same. So, this is not...

Madam Chairperson: Order.

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: It is as if they are discovering America today. So, this has always been the case.

Madam Chairperson: Order.

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: That is why we have taken the decision to invest in the equipment to make sure that as from the next harvest we will have no lemon under the trees. However, it is true that we have some lemons under the trees. It is true. If it is millions today, it has been millions in the past. It is not something invented today. So, according to figures, it is good to note that, every year we have some around 250 tons of lemons produced in Rodrigues up to now. And, if we look at the figures for 220/250 tons of lemons for the year 2012, 218 tons have been exported. For the year 2013, we have had an increase in the production, 282 tons have been exported. For the year 2014, 192 tons have been exported. For the year, because we have had *coshni*, we have had *sécheresse*, and for the year 2015, 197 tons have been exported and for the year 2016, I mentioned the figures, 179 tons have been exported. So, coming here and say that we have millions and millions, it is pure demagoguery, Madam Chairperson.

The Minority Leader: It is not demagoguery. I have seen. Madam Chairperson, since the Commissioner is trying to *noyer le poisson*, I would like to ask her, concerning the RTMC, prior to the lemons harvest this year, the role of the RTMC was to find markets for the lemon, for other commodities also. Why then, have the RTMC not done the work of finding the suitable markets in Mauritius for the buying of these commodities? And, you will have many mangoes afterwards in December, you will see the RTMC will do nothing.

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, *le Minority Leader parle de noyer le poisson*. He should refer himself to official statistics. *Noyer le poisson, ça veut dire quoi ?* You do not rely on these figures? So, when you were in power you rely on them. Today, they are not good figures. Madam Chairperson, RTMC have been working to have markets and RTMC is actually exporting lemons. I informed the House at the start of my answer, that apart from RTMC, some 20 companies, private companies are exporting lemons. And, I repeat myself, I am happy that at the level of the Mauritius Shipping, they had themselves informed us that it is the first time in 20 years so many lemons are being exported to Mauritius.

[Applause]

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, *zot énan toupet tap la main tou*. Madam Chairperson, the Respected Commissioner, has been talking of the lemon processing unit, of a factory in Gravières. I think, this is the only country

where you have a factory and lemons are rotting under the trees. They are processing only 20 tons.

[Applause]

There is no need to be proud of that. Can I know whether this factory is in fact, working, is operational and will this factory use more and more lemons?

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, je suis fière, parce qu'ils étaient là cinq ans, ils n'ont pas fait. J'ai fait quelque chose de plus. J'en suis fière et je maintiens ma fierté. Je maintiens ma fierté, parce que c'est un projet...

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please. It seems as if the Second Island Region Member wants to raise on a point of personal explanation. Do you want to give way, Commissioner? You have the floor.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, I would like to explain something with regard to what the Commissioner mentioned here. Today, is my day and I will enjoy my day. Madam Chairperson, on a point of personal explanation. This is not the first, there will be more again. The Commissioner explained, he refers in this Chamber, that the lemon, the processing plant of Gravières will export to Labourdonais 15 tons of juice of lemons. 15 not 50. 15 tons of juice of lemons. She mentioned this in this House. Right? And, then today he come tell us that this plant has exported 6 tons.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you. Commissioner.

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Si, en effet, madame, j'ai parlé du chiffre pour la fin 2016-2017, parce que l'année dernière il n'y avait pas une grosse production de limon. Tout le monde le sait. L'année dernière la production de limon à Rodrigues a considérablement baissé à cause de la sécheresse qu'on a fait face et à cause de la maladie de *coshni*, qu'on a eu en 2016. Donc, je maintiens, il y a eu 6 tonnes. Bien sûre, on voudrait faire plus. On a eu des problèmes techniques avec la machine et aujourd'hui, je suis encore plus fière parce qu'on a pu travailler. Entre temps, on n'est pas resté assis, on a travaillé avec la compagnie Biolabex à Maurice. Entre temps, on a envoyé des tonnes et des tonnes de lemons pour faire des tests. Entre temps, à Maurice comme en Italie. Et, aujourd'hui, on est fière parce que ce projet va aboutir et ce projet est sérieux, très bientôt on aura à Rodrigues, à travers notre limon, ce qui serait intéressant, aujourd'hui on va avoir des produits de haute valeur ajoutée qui a un marché garantie, les marchés de qualité. Par exemple, aujourd'hui on a les compagnies comme L'Oréal, qui viennent acheter l'essence de limon qui va se faire à Rodrigues.

Donc, pour nous aujourd'hui, on est content qu'on va pouvoir encadrer ces jeunes. On va encadrer les planteurs. On a déjà, un marché garanti et c'est clair aussi que cette compagnie va pouvoir acheter toutes la production de limon. Au contraire, il faudra encadrer et je travaille en collaboration avec mon collègue à l'agriculture pour voir comment assurer qu'il y a un accroissement dans la production. Et, notre fierté aussi, c'est qu'aujourd'hui, on a travaillé avec les planteurs de limon dans tous Rodrigues de la compagnie avec lequel on travail, le Biolabex. Et, les planteurs sont confiants et les planteurs collaborent aussi parce qu'ils croient qu'ils croient qu'ils vont avoir une meilleure qualité d'abord, une meilleure qualité mais aussi un meilleur prix pour leurs produits. Donc, nous travaillons dure pour que l'année prochaine à la prochaine récolte se soit une réalité.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la présidente, la commissaire vient d'annoncer, de dire que les machines sont en panne, il y a eu des problèmes techniques. Madame la présidente, des machines neuves. Madame la présidente, la commissaire sait exactement les procédures quand on achète quelque chose de neuf et quand on n'a pas la technicité, c'est qu'il faut avoir de la formation. Elle sait très bien ça. Est-ce que la commissaire peut nous dire, peut confirmer qu'actuellement il n'y a pas de monitoring avec l'industrie de Gravières et est-ce qu'elle peut confirmer si elle est en guerre avec ces personnes qui contrôlent cette... ?

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Je me pose la question, est-ce que le parlement est devenu comme une institution de palabre ici, Madame Chair. Ce ne sont pas des choses qu'on vient dire ici, je suis désolé

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: On a point of order, Madam Chairperson. On a point of order, the Commissioner is imputing motives.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, order. This point of order is not valid.

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

Madam Chairperson: Please address the Chair.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: On a point of order. The Commissioner, the Respected Commissioner, *si je peux l'appeler ainsi*, is... Yes, *parski line dire moi gossip*. I would like you to rule on that point.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, this was in a sitting position, I did not hear anything. So, Respected Member.

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, en effet, la coopérative de Gravières fonctionne indépendamment de nous. C'est une coopérative qui travaille en toute indépendance comme toutes coopératives. C'est une coopérative que nous avons aidée. Nous avons donné un *grant* pour qu'il recrute un Production Manager, qui travaille avec eux, un jeune garçon, qui est très formé, très dédié, qui fait son travail comme il se doit. Et, la coopérative, le *day-to-day running*, ce n'est pas nous. De temps en temps quand il y a des visites sur le terrain, je profite pour visiter avec eux. Je partage avec eux, ma vision pour ce projet et c'est tout à fait normal que je partage ma vision et je leur donne ce que moi je pense. Et, c'est tout à fait normal aussi, que je leur motive pour faire plus. Parce que nous avons investi dans ce bâtiment et nous voulons qu'on a le résultat qu'il faut. Mais cette coopérative travaille en toute indépendance et je dois aussi par rapport à l'équipement, c'est bon de savoir que l'équipement que nous avons mis en place à Gravières est un équipement qui a été fait sur mesure parce que le volume de limon que nous avons ne nous permet pas d'investir dans un équipement *off shelf* et c'est un équipement qui a été fait par quelqu'un de Maurice. Bien sûr, la coopérative a contracté ces services. Une fois, il y a eu des pannes. Malheureusement, la personne qui a confectionné était parti en France. Après deux semaines il est revenu pour remettre la machine en marche. Donc, c'était une panne... heureusement, qu'aujourd'hui aussi on a les *spare parts*. C'est bon que je mentionne aussi, que pour le projet qui va venir, l'équipement aussi sera fait sur mesure. Il y a eu une mission en Italie, pour voir la machine et surtout pour le volume que nous avons. Parce que les machines qui existe peuvent *process* jusqu'à 4 à 8 tonnes de l'heure et on n'a pas autant de production, on a pu négocier et on va avoir une machine qui sera fait essentiellement et exclusivement pour Rodrigues ce sera à 800 kilos à 1.2 tonne de l'heure. Donc, je pense que c'est important que les membres ici ont cette information.

The Minority Leader: Being given, Madam Chairperson, that the Respected Commissioner has said that about 6 tons of lemon juice were exported to Mauritius, is it not true that a lot of the juice was wasted due to bad storage in the sun, here at the port, and whether the Verger Labourdonais, whether they still buy the lemon juice from Rodrigues? And, last question, when...

Madam Chairperson: One at a time, please.

The Minority Leader: On the same field...

Madam Chairperson: No, one question at a time, Minority Leader.

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, la première chose aussi peut être que j'ai oublié de mentionner, qu'on a vendu 6 tonnes de limons parce que le Labourdonais était en train de développer le produit à titre d'essai. C'est-à-dire que, on aurait pu vendre plus mais il développait le produit de sorbet, le jus pour voir, parce que c'était sur une base expérimentale pour eux aussi. Et, je tiens à dire aussi que personnellement, au niveau de mon bureau aussi, on n'a jamais été informé de cette information dont le Minority Leader donne aujourd'hui. Pour dire qu'on ne s'ingère pas dans le *day to day running*. Et, jusqu'ici toute la chaîne du froid est respectée pour l'exportation du jus de limon. Et, jamais, au grand jamais, le Labourdonais a fait des plaintes par rapport au jus qu'ils ont reçu de Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson: One last question.

The Minority Leader: One last question, I would like to ask the Respected Commissioner. Elle a annoncé tambour battant il y a un certain temps que bientôt on aura du jus de limon en brique à Rodrigues. Peut-on savoir quand cela va se faire et quand on aura le plaisir d'acheter une brique de jus de limon à Rodrigues ?

[Applause]

Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, je suis heureuse que le projet, quand on va faire l'extraction de l'essence de limon, c'est une technique d'extraction à froid qui permettra d'extraire l'essence et avoir tous les jus et on va pouvoir avec cette machine avoir un gros volume de jus et le parfum de limon. Il n'y aura pas que le jus de limon en brique. Il y aura le parfum de limon. Il y aura des produits qui vont se faire aussi sur les... *it will be a juicy business for the Rodriguans*. Je suis désolé, ils aiment bien ce mot-là, parce qu'ils ont fait du *juicy business*. Nous on le fait pour Rodrigues et on est content.

[Applause]

Il y aura le parfum le limon. Il y aura le jus de limon en brique, il y aura le jus de limon en bouteille aussi parce qu'on nous dit qu'en bouteille ça a plus de valeur ajoutée. Donc, il y aura du vinaigre de limon, il y aura des biscuits. Tous les tests ont été faits. Des bonbons et on a même aussi déjà garanti que sur les vols d'Air Mauritius, ils souhaiteront avoir les *air freshner*. Donc, du limon de Rodrigues.

SHORTAGE – FLEET OF VEHICLES

(No. B/37) **Mr. L. J. Von-Mally (Minority Leader)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether he will inform the House of any

shortage in the fleet of vehicles at his Commission, stating if any contract has been awarded for the rental of vehicles for use thereby and providing, in the affirmative, the reason/s therefor, specifying if all necessary official tendering procedures have been followed?

The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Madam Chairperson, the answer is yes. There is indeed an acute shortage of vehicles at the level of my Commission particularly at the Health Services. This was badly felt when we had to organise the first phase of the Cervical Cancer Screening Project recently during the month of April/May 2018 for which some 2,000 women throughout the island were targeted.

We had to provide transport facilities for a delegation of 23 officials from the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life including the equipment to be used for the screening programmes and coupled with the daily exigencies at the hospital.

To cope with these situations, my commission sought support from other commissions at the first instance. Unfortunately, this attempt was not successful.

Following advice from the Chief Commissioner's Office, my Commission had no alternative other than to have recourse to hire private services for two mini buses, one lorry and two (4x4) vehicles. This was procured through normal quotation procedures in accordance with provision of the Public Procurement Act.

The reason for the hiring of private vehicles are to strengthen the existing fleet of vehicles to enable the smooth running of the cervical cancer screening exercise and the day-to-day operations of the hospitals services.

Upon the advice of the Chief Commissioner's Office in a letter dated 22 March 2018, my Commission requested the transport section of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to submit its requirement in terms of additional vehicles to be hired to enable the smooth running of the Cervical Cancer Screening Programme was due to April and May. The requirements from the services were determined as follows:

- (i) Mini bus – 2
- (ii) Two double cab (4X4) wheel drive and,
- (iii) One lorry 3T or 5T

On the 08 April 2018, quotations were launched to 20 vehicle owners inviting them to submit their offer for the supply of the above vehicles services on and as and when required basis. Closing date was fixed for 20 April 2018 at 10:30 hours and at the closing date, for the submission of each, the Departmental

Bid Committee took note that only three bids were received as follows: Mr. Jean Rex Edouard for lorry services, who quoted the price of Rs 6,000 per day with Driver, Mr. Marlin Prudence for the supply of (4x4) vehicles and the quoted price was Rs 2,100 per day of 24 hours without Driver and Reshad Cader for the supply of minibus with Driver at the quoted price of Rs 2,700 per day. As a matter of urgency, due to the forthcoming delegation for the Cervical Cancer Project, the Departmental Bid Committee approved the offer of the above bidders and awarded the contract accordingly.

In view of the forthcoming expiry of the contract period scheduled for the 20 May 2018, the Departmental Bid Committee met on the 18 May 2018 to discuss the issue. The following officers of the Health Services were in attendance: The Health's Director, the Hospital Administrator and the Transport Clerk. It was determined that the day-to-day running of the Hospital Services will be seriously affected upon the expiry for the contract for private services. In the light with the discussion held, the Departmental Bid Committee decided to extend the contract for the hiring of the above vehicles up to the end of June pending the finalisation of tendering procedures for a long-term contract in line with the budget measures to contract out transport services at the hospital.

The Minority Leader: There is a lack of vehicle for that essential service. Can I know from the Respected Commissioner, the reason behind this lack of *prévoyance* in the timely purchase of vehicles for this important commission?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, this is why the Chief Commissioner in his budget speech, *engagement* 6, has decided that we can contract out transport for the Health Services for the benefit of patients.

The Minority Leader: He has not answered the question. In fact, *c'est une fuite en avant. Mais le Commissaire aurait pu demander à ce qu'on mette dans le budget, dans le previous budget, the funds necessary for that.* Can I know, on another question, can I know from the respected Commissioner whether, these vehicles that are being rented are used for carrying the wastes, the medical wastes to this site at Camp Pintade, at *Délo Vert*?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. No medical waste is being carried out in this vehicle and I do not know, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, *lorsqu'il n'y a pas de transport, la minorité crie, lorsqu'on a de transport, la minorité crie plus fort. Qu'est-ce qu'ils veulent ?*

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madame la présidente, le Commissaire a mentionné que ce transport-là a été loué pour un but précis, spécifique. C'est-à-dire, pour aider, pour la sensibilisation du *breast cancer* etc. Est-ce que le

Commissaire est au courant que les (4x4) qui ont été loués étaient aux abords de Benoit Discothèque quelque temps de cela ? Est-ce qu'il est au courant de ça ?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Non, Madame la présidente, je ne suis pas au courant parce que je ne suis pas là pour veiller le chauffeur le soir.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: C'est normal, Madame la présidente, c'est normal. Le problème est là. On a loué des transports pour un but précis mais malheureusement, puisque le Commissaire ne fait pas son travail comme il se doit, les voitures sont retrouvées aux abords des discothèques. *Can I ask the Commissioner whether he will enquire for this kind of misuse of the transport at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital?*

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Si le respecté membre est déjà au courant, rapportez à la Commission mais... Non, donne le numéro....

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please address the Chair.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Donne le numéro du véhicule...

Madam Chairperson: This personal conversation cannot go on. Please, address the Chair.

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, sorry. Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, pour ce cas, je demanderais au membre Rosaire Perrine de passer à la commission de faire sa plainte. Il y a un *health desk*, il y a un CSU et un CSU à l'Administration centrale. Faites votre plainte, M. le membre.

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

SETTING UP OF 'TECHNOPOLE' – MONT VENUS, RODRIGUES

(No. B/38) **Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunication and Others whether in regard to the setting up of a 'technopole' in Rodrigues at Mont Venus, she will enlighten the House as to where matters stand?

The Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunication and Others (Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis): Madam Chairperson, the project of *Technopole* is still on. In fact, we will have more than the *technopole*. We will have a technology park which will house the *technopole* and other ICT economic activities. The technology park was

mentioned as one of the budget measures of the Chief Commissioner and announced again as a national budget measure by the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance at paragraph 254 of the budget speech which, I quote:

A technology park will be constructed in Rodrigues to promote entrepreneurship in the field of ICT. Madam Chairperson, it is also good for me to point out that la *technopole* de La Reunion is our main partner for the implementation of the *technopole* in Rodrigues and various meetings have been done last year on the occasion of the ICT week with our youth and with the public to give them information on what is a *technopole* and what we will be doing there for Rodrigues. So, this is to ensure the House that the project of *technopole* is still on.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner whether the *technopole* or the technology park will be set up at Pointe Venus?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Non, Madame la présidente, tout simplement parce que quand on a planifié le projet de *Technology Park*, on a vu que si on veut, parce que la *technology park*, c'est aussi avoir des plateformes assez grandes jusqu'à 200 personnes de capacité, des salles qui peuvent accueillir jusqu'à 200 personnes pour les différents types d'activités. On a vu que si on veut aller vers un *technology park*, le bâtiment de Pointe Venus qui était au préalable, acheté pour cela, ne sera pas approprié. En même temps aussi en parallèle, on avait eu des propositions à Maurice principalement. Le Ministère de finance était en présence des propositions d'une entité qui a de l'expérience dans le domaine de l'hôtellerie et qui souhaiterait opérationnaliser le bâtiment de Pointe Venus comme un hôtel et en parallèle, on a pu négocier pour avoir la *technology park* sur 15 arpents à Baladirou.

Et ce qui est intéressant aussi pour nous, c'est qu'on allait devoir démolir des murs pour faire la *technopole* mais là, on est en train de finaliser le projet, le concept du projet et on va voir des espaces appropriés qui répondent à notre besoin pour la *technopole* et pour la *technology park*. Donc, juste pour dire aussi que le lieu de la *technopole*, ce sera plus maintenant à Pointe Venus mais ce sera dans la *technology park*, un composant du grand *technology park* à Baladirou.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Madam Chairperson, so, prior to the acquisition of this hotel, can the Commissioner inform the House whether, her Commission has carried out a feasibility study to know before, whether this hotel is suitable, will it satisfy all the criteria for the implementation of this *technopole*?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Indeed, Madam Chair, but we know a hotel remains a hotel. You have some rooms and after the feasibility

study, we saw that we will have to demolish some walls. That is what I said formerly. Et puis, quand l'idée de la *technology park*, parce que nous, on voulait la technopole au départ à Pointe Venus, après un *technology park* qui peut house les BDOs, les *Business Processing Operators*, aussi les call centres, les deux types d'activités, les *financial services also*. Et c'est là qu'on a vu que ce serait... si on arrive à avoir un bâtiment pour et la *tecnology park* et la technopole, ça aurait été plus judicieux. Donc, on est content. On a pu convaincre, on a pu négocier pour avoir ce projet. Donc, à ce moment-là, on n'a pas hésité, on ne va pas hésiter à bouger parce que ce projet répondra vraiment à ce besoin que nous avons.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, the Respected Commissioner has said that there has been a feasibility study prior to the purchase of the Pointe Venus Hotel. Is it not true to say that there has been no feasibility study prior to buying this hotel and that all that we have in the hotel has disappeared in thin air? Is it not a juicy business that has been done?

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you, Minority Leader.

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: *Madam the Chair*, il y a eu un *feasibility study* comme je dis, c'est la technopole de La Réunion qui nous aide pour faire ce projet avec leur expertise. Le directeur, M. Gaboriau est venu à Rodrigues pas moins de quatre fois. Il est venu, on a vu ensemble les dispositions du projet et on a vu que *subject to demolishing of some walls, we can do the project*. Donc, c'est pour ça qu'on était parti sur ce projet. Donc, venir dire que c'était un *juicy business* ou je ne sais quoi, c'est encore du *gossiping* et en même temps, Madame la Présidente, je dois dire aussi que je l'ai dit ici à l'Assemblée, je le redis que l'Assemblée Régionale a acheté l'infrastructure, le bâtiment et pas les mobiliers. Et c'était au propriétaire de prendre charge de ces mobiliers et le propriétaire, les mobiliers sont à lui, il vent à qui il veut. Donc, nous, on a veillé à ce que le bâtiment reste pour nous. Donc, on a payé le bâtiment et pas le mobilier. Donc, quand ils continuent à parler de *juicy business*, c'est qu'ils continuent à avoir des cauchemars parce qu'ils ne peuvent plus le faire aujourd'hui.

The Minority Leader: Madame la présidente, I have...

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Minority Leader: I have good reasons to say what I am saying...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Minority Leader: I am not gossiping. I am saying the naked truth. So, I would like to ask the respected, if I can say the Respected Commissioner. Is she saying that the Director of Audit is lying when he said that there has been no feasibility study done on Pointe Venus prior to the purchasing of that?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Je maintiens, Madame la présidente, le Directeur, M. Gaboriau est venu, on a fait un travail préliminaire, on a vu des espaces et on a trouvé que le projet pourrait être fait à condition qu'il y a la démolition des murs. Donc, si M. le *Minority Leader* pense que *it is not a feasibility study, I do not know what name we should give but the most important, we have decided together with regard to the visits we have made there, we have seen whether it is suitable and is appropriate. So, since he is experienced in the field, we have relied on his experience, we have seen that it is feasible there, it is appropriate pending some demolishing of some walls.*

The Minority Leader: The Respected Commissioner is talking of preliminary study; not feasibility study and they have said that the Pointe Venus is suitable for the setting up of a *technopole*. Can I know from the Commissioner whether she is saying that she has been misled into taking this decision?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: Never, Madam Chair, never! We have never been misled on this subject. I have told the House, I have informed the House that formerly, we wanted to have the *technopole* there but when we have thought about having a technology park, a huge project, a more bigger project than only the *technopole*, that is why at the same time....

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: We have the proposal. At the same time, we were informed of the proposal of an entity to run this infrastructure as a hotel. We have seen that instead of demolishing the walls, it will be better for us to invest in another bigger infrastructure to suit the *technopole*. So, we have not been misled.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, can I ask the Commissioner why the Rodrigues Regional Assembly bought this hotel? Why?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: We bought the project initially because we wanted to have the *technopole* there and I maintain, we planned for that and we have seen that today, we are having very much better for the population. That is why we have chosen to move to Baladirou.

The Minority Leader: So, you say that they are just trying without taking bold decisions for this country. Can I know since the respected Commissioner has been talking of using the Pointe Venus to house a new hotel, can we know whether the Regional Government has invested in the compound, in the hotel or whether it will stay as it is and it will be rented as such to other companies and which company will this be?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: *Actuellement, on n'a pas investi un sou pour le bâtiment, à part bien sûr, it is an asset, it is an asset of the RRA. So, we should ensure that it is securely kept. So, that is why we have security guards there to ensure that the asset of the RRA is properly kept and also, we have also maintenance, some maintenance work to ensure that it is not... Ça ne tombe pas dans un état de décrépidité.*

Il y a le nettoyage qui se fait régulièrement parce qu'on prend soin. C'est encore un bâtiment de l'état. On ne va pas investir un seul sou. Et pour l'heure : je n'ai pas d'information, je ne peux pas donner les informations par rapport à cette compagnie mais les procédures sont suivies comme il se doit selon les procédures établies dans la République de Maurice et bien sûr, j'espère dans les jours qui viennent, on va pouvoir avoir toutes les informations comment, qui va gérer cet établissement et quelles sont les modalités.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, the Fourth Island Region Member.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Yes, Madam Chair, can we know from the Commissioner whether the RRA will hire this hotel to this company or will sell it to the same company?

Mrs. R. M. F. Gaspard-Pierre Louis: This decision has not been taken yet and there are discussions ongoing and we will be able to give more information in the future.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: One more question. Can I know whether there will be tendering procedures for this?

Madam Chairperson: There are different modes of acquisition of equipment or rental in the Republic of Mauritius. Sometimes maybe according to my information, it depends on who is taking the project. If it is a government, if it is a parastatal, if it is a private or if it is a government owned company, the procedures might defer. So, these will be what we will strictly adhere to, what is

being established in the Republic of Mauritius. Whether it is a private entity, we will apply the procedures. If it is corporate body, we will apply the procedure also.

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

**TRACK ROADS & FOOTPATHS – APPROVED BUDGET –
FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/18**

(No. B/39) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether in regard to track roads and footpaths constructed or to be constructed all around Rodrigues per the approved Budget for financial year 2017/2018, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the list thereof and by indicating: -

- (a) their respective lengths and exact location, specifying actual geographical positions being linked; and
- (b) the total contractual costs implicated therefor and the names of the contractor/s involved therewith, if any, per site?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, in his budget speech for financial year 2017/2018, the Chief Commissioner announced the construction of 20 km of track roads around the island. So far, my Commission has awarded works orders for the construction of 15 km of track roads and 3.5 km of footpath to Laxmanbhai Company Limited for an approximate sum of Rs 41.6 m. A list of the different track roads issued for the different regions is being tabled.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner, he will produce the list but in the meantime, can we know whether the Cité Batatrand, Cité Ile Michel and Parc Tortue are included in this list?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I will kindly invite the Minority Leader to refer to the list that has been provided because it is clear that it specifies which region and which villages are included in the list.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam Chair, is the Deputy Chief Commissioner aware that in the local region number 2, track roads are being built to relatives of Members of this RRA?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the relatives of Members of the RRA are also citizens.

Madam Chairperson: Wait a minute, please, Deputy Chief Commissioner. You should not just throw allegations on the floor of this House, respected Member. You should be able to substantiate about what you are saying and if you... You should be able to substantiate. No, not like that! Not like that, not just by saying. You should be able to table, to substantiate with proofs.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, je voudrais demander au Commissaire s'il est au courant qu'on a fait un *track road* à Roche Bon Dieu ? Mais ça s'est arrêté à un endroit que tout le monde si on va voir, qu'il ne fallait pas. Parce que quelques pas après, il y a un vieux de plus de 60 ans qui s'est amputé d'une jambe et l'ambulance ne peut pas aller chez lui. C'est très, très difficile mais on se demande comment ça a été construite. Pourquoi faire ? Parce que dans le budget, le Chef Commissaire a dit les *track roads* vont être construits pour soulager les gens qu'il faut mais... Peut-il nous rassurer de ça ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the construction of track road is an ongoing process and it depends upon the financial resources which are available as per what is voted in this Assembly. Actually, as I have told you, we voted for 20 km of track road for financial year 2017/2018 and so far, as I have depicted in my answer, we have provided for 15 km of track road and 3.5 km of footpaths, meaning that we have almost reached the objective that was set in this Assembly itself. So, if there is any demand as regard to handicapped because not all handicapped and bedridden persons in Rodrigues have already had a track road as they should have it. So, it is an ongoing process and any demand for these persons will be taken on board whenever we draw up forthcoming works orders or forthcoming tenders.

The Minority Leader: Madam, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner, true it is that you are limited by the funds that you have? But I think that there should be priorities. The priorities to the poor people, the handicapped and so on, the old people. When I am talking of Ile Michel, I am talking of Batatrand, these poor people, the old people having to walk in the mud, this is why I have said you should have priorities. Do you have them?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson. I think that the Minority Leader is venturing on a dangerously slippery track road.

[Interruptions]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes because...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I would have to refer him, Madam Chairperson, that his party has been in power and I remember that they did carry out the construction of track road around the island under the supervision of the then Commission for Public Infrastructure. But if you see, Madam Chairperson...

[Interruptions]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: But if you see, when I go around the island, how this track road has been constructed, there is no start and no end. If I take the case of one particular one which is found at Citron Donis leading to the Community Centre, you start from the main road, there is no track road. When you reach the middle, there is a track road and when you reach the end to the Community Centre, there is a track road, there is no track road.... If you go to Camp Pintade, Madam Chairperson, the same thing you will see.

[Interruptions]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Does this, Madam Chairperson...

Madam Chairperson: Order, respected Members!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Does this mean as the Commissioner, as the Minority Leader is implying that....

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order! Order! Order! Order!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: I would like to remind... Minority Leader, please! I would like to remind respected Members about Standing Order 35 (11) which states that no Member should be interrupted. No Member should be interrupted...

The Minority Leader: He started it!

Madam Chairperson: *‘[....] except on a point of order or to elucidate some matter raised by the Member speaking [...]’* So, if you have to raise on a point of personal explanation, the other Member has to give way and then, you will have the floor. But please, no interruptions from a sitting position!

The Minority Leader: On a point of explanation since the Deputy Chief Commissioner has been talking...

Madam Chairperson: Does the Deputy Chief Commissioner want to give way?

The Minority Leader: He has been talking of “we were in power”. Yes, for five years and you have been in power for 30 years almost! You must compare likes with likes!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I do not want to react on his point of explanation. Of course, I am not going to react on his point of explanation.

The Minority Leader: On a point of order, on a point of personal explanation, there should be no debate. Look at your Standing Orders!

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Deputy Chief Commissioner.

Mr. Z. Félicité: So, Madam Chairperson, can I know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner what are the criteria for individual of villages to benefit from the construction of track road?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: So many criteria, Madam Chairperson. Financial resources available at the level of my Commission, request from the villagers and if you see the list, you will see that there are many handicapped persons which are benefitted from the facilities and of course, it also based on the number of families that is going to benefit from the facility.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can we know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner concerning track roads, whether there are surveys done by officers of his Commission?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam, prior to the giving, to the handing over of the site to the Contractor. Surveys are carried out by the Inspector and staff of my Commission.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, we all know that track road has been constructed in Rodrigues since 10 or more years. So, I would like

to ask the Commissioner whether in his works order, it also includes for the repair of damaged track roads?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner

: Madam Chairperson, this is why I was telling that they were venturing on a prior slippery track road. As far as the works order are concerned, we are issuing for the construction of new ones but we nevertheless know that there is a problem with track roads which have been built especially by villagers. There are some track roads, we should admit, which have been built by villagers whose width is as wide as a motorcycle wheel and this is quite accident-prone. So, this is why we will have to come with a policy not only to come with the reparation but to come with a complete concrete road in these areas which are quite dangerous.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT - FULL FLEDGE STATION

(No. B/40) Mr. J. N. Volbert (The Second Local Region Member of La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Meteorology and Others whether in regard to the Meteorological Department of Rodrigues, he will inform the House if another full fledge station will be operational shortly in Rodrigues and, in the affirmative, to state when and where, and to table the organigram of the meteorological station actually based at Pointe Canon?

The Commissioner for Meteorology and Others (Mr. S. P. Roussety): Madam Chairperson, there are only two Meteorological Stations in Rodrigues, one at Pointe Canon and one at Plaine Corail Airport.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Plaine Corail Station which was previously operating only during aviation activity is now operating on a 24-hour basis since February this year.

This has become necessary to enable the collection of meteorological data on a regular basis in this region, to improve the preciseness of existing database which is used by different quarters and to cater for the forthcoming extension of the Plaine Corail Airport.

The Meteorological Station at Pointe Canon consists of the following Staff:

- (i) 1 Officer-in-Charge, Meteorological Station
- (ii) 1 Principal Meteorological Observer

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- (iii) 5 Senior Meteorological Observers (including 1 in Mauritius)
- (iv) 9 Meteorological Observers – 5 at Pointe Canon & 4 at Plaine Corail
- (v) 3 Trainee Meteorological Observers
- (vi) 1 Driver
- (vii) 1 General Worker

The Organigram is being tabled.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, can I know from the Commissioner whether Plaine Corail is operating as a full-fledged station?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, this has already been answered!

[Applause]

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, can I know from the Commissioner what is the purpose for having a full-fledged station at Corail?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I repeat my answer.

Madam Chairperson: This has already been answered. We will not lose the time of the House. Next question!

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, is the Commissioner aware that the World Meteorological Organisation recognised Pointe Canon only as meteorological station?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: But do not worry, Plaine Corail Airport also will be recognised soon.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, with the advent of the new railway, it is most probable that there will be only one flight daily, at the most two flights during peak season as the airbus or bigger aircraft will carry equivalent to four to five 80 or 72 passengers. So, the activity at the airport will be considerably reduced. So, why wasting tax-payers' money to run a 24-hour service thereat?

[Interruptions]

Mr. S. P. Roussety: No, I will answer. Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, as I have said, this has become necessary to enable connection of meteorological data on a regular basis in this region like we have one station, automatic station at Montagne du Sable and the other one will be built at Port Sud-Est and Plaine Corail is very important area and with the operation of 24-hour of this meteorological station and with the extension of the airport, this meteorological station is a must.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, has the Director of *meteo* in Mauritius has given his approval for the setting up of a second station at the airport or the RRA has not taken into consideration the views of the Director, who is a technical matter falling under his responsibility?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, we are an autonomous island regarding meteorological and all correspondence from the meteorological of Vacoas has been obtained.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Madam the Chair, is the Commissioner aware that Plaine Corail is an automatic weather station which costs more than Rs1.5 m. sometimes back? ...

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. N. Volbert: ...And, is providing data 24 hours around the clock. So, what is the purpose of posting officers around the clock at the airport?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Encore une fois, je redis, la réponse a été dite....

Madam Chairperson: If it has already been said, Commissioner, we will not lose the time of the House. Next question.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: The DCA is the sole responsible of the control of movement of any individual to and from the airport compound, which is a very high-restricted area. So, after closing...

Madam Chairperson: Excuse-me, respected Member, would you be more precise? What do you mean by DCA?

Mr. J. N. Volbert: The... *comment s'appelle?* DCA, ce sont ceux qui contrôlent la tour de contrôle. C'est qu'il y a... L'aviation civile. Parce que l'activité va se trouver dans l'enceinte de l'aéroport.

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[Interruptions]

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Divisional Civil Aviation.

Madam Chairperson: Civil Aviation, okay.

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. N. Volbert: So, after the closing...

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr. J. N. Volbert: So, after the closing activities at the airport where the DCA and the ARL will be leaving, who will be responsible for the movement of the meteorological officers in the compound?

Mr. S. P. Roussety: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the RRA will be responsible of the *meteo* of Plaine Corail Airport.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

**PRODUCTION OF ONIONS, RED BEANS,
CHILLIES (*TI PIMENT*) & LEMON**

(No. B/41) Mr. J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether in regard to the production of onions, red beans, chillies (*ti piment*) and lemon, respectively, in Rodrigues, from 2012 to 2017, he will state the total tonnage thereof produced per year, indicating if any specific trend in the production thereof has been observed and, if so, to give details thereon and state any reasons therefor?

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the figures for red beans, chillies, onion and lemons for the years 2012 to 2016 were as follows...

[Interruptions]

(Mo pou done toi 17 tou.)

I just inform the House that all figures will be in tons.

Food crops	Production volume 2012 - 2016 in tons					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Red Bean	86.3	113.2	119.9	113.1	47.0	145.99
Chilli	3.9	5.1	2.6	1.0	4.7	4.21
Onion	475.2	605.1	448.7	323.4	293.0	397.25
Lemon	218	282	192	197	179	213

Madam Chairperson, when you look at the figures, we see that there is no specific trend simply because plantation, cultivation, harvest depend a lot on climatic conditions and everybody knows that due to climatic change, there is a lot of fluctuation in the climate and the season is very unpredictable and it is affecting the plantation. Like in 2016, just to give an example, for red beans, it went really low. It is because of the drought that prevailed. 2016, for beans: only 47 tons.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: This local Government has given lots of incentives for local products such as red beans, onion seeds and chillies. Some planters obtain several thousand rupees if I am not mistaken. So, can I know from the Commissioner how many projects are still in activity?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: This question is very difficult for me to answer. There is a lot of projects in my Commission. I do not know what project. Maybe you are talking about the schemes or most of the schemes....

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I did not hear the word....

Madam Chairperson: Order! Order! Yes, Commissioner.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: For chilli, there are a lot of projects. We just recently restarted the project at Baladirou. There is a project which will be done, recently being financed by European Union to be implemented in Montagne du Sable and all the other projects. We are going back to these projects because unfortunately, the farmers suffered a lot from drought and most of the plantations.... Yes, most of the chilli plantations suffered a lot from the drought. That is why we started again.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the Commissioner gave some figures but I would like to ask him where did he get

these figures. Because these figures do not tally with what is written in the statistic for... Area harvested and production of food crops island of Rodrigues 2012 – 2016, no figure tallies with what is written in the.... Where did he get the figures? I would like to ask him.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, this is the figure from my Commission and all the figures, most of figures that he is talking about is only the figures that are used for export and these figures that we used are mainly....

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes but you should ask Statistic Mauritius where they get their figures because this figure is genuine.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, he told me to ask the ça, I will tell him, I will answer the question. Source: Agricultural Services, Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

[Applause]

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, Madam, since the Commissioner refer us to statistic of Mauritius and the source of the information comes from Agricultural Service, Rodrigues Regional Assembly, can the Commissioner inform the House where does he got this information and why the information given in his answer is different from what is being given by Statistic of Mauritius?

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you. Commissioner?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the figures that I have mentioned is the figures that we have at the Commission.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

OPERATION OF DISCOVERY RODRIGUES LTD

(No. B/42) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the operation of Discovery Rodrigues Ltd, from 2012 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information from the company to state and table the: -

- (a) composition of the board of directors, indicating their respective occupational background;

- (b) number of tourists visiting Ile aux Cocos and Caverne Patate, respectively, per year, indicating the amount of money received for permit delivery and all facilities being offered to the respective visitors thereof; and
- (c) number of annual reports published as at date, providing copy thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, with regard to Discovery Rodrigues Company Ltd, I am tabling the composition of the Board of Directors together with their respective occupational background.

I am further tabling all information as per part (b) of the question.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the facilities being offered to visitors at Ile aux Cocos are namely: guided tours in three languages (French, English and Creole), First Aid kits, basic sanitary and picnic space. Whereas facilities offered for the time being at the site of Caverne Patate are namely electrical torches, safety helmets, guided tours, First Aid kits and sanitary services.

In line with our vision to improve the visitor's experience in Rodrigues, funds have been provided under this current budget for the upgrading of both tourist sites.

Works will be carried out taking due consideration of the status of Ramsar site of Caverne Patate and the natural reserve status of Ile aux Cocos.

My Commission is proposing the following site development in phases for Caverne Patate namely: firstly, interior pathway to protect care and enhance security of visitors. Secondly: entrance building comprising sanitary facilities, ticket counter, cafeteria and a souvenir shop and thirdly: access road and parking facilities including landscaping works.

With regard to Ile aux Cocos, a master plan for the development of the site has been approved by the Executive Council including inter alia, the embarking site at Pointe Diable, which will be equipped with the following:

- (1) Shelter and sanitary facilities;
- (2) Locker room for staff;
- (3) Ticket counter, coffee and souvenir shop; and
- (4) Parking and landscaping works.

The master plan proposes the following development at Ile aux Cocos:

- (1) Individual kiosks;
- (2) Watchman quarters; and
- (3) Sanitary facilities.

With regard to p[art (c) of the question, I am informed that the annual reports for year 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 have been laid in the library and copies are available thereof.

As regards to the Annual Report for 2017, I am informed that same is being compiled and awaiting the finalisation of the Financial report by the Auditors.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: The Chief Commissioner just said that there is money earmarked for the upgrading of tourist sites. Can we know from the Chief Commissioner how much has been earmarked?

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

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, I think it is not normal. The Chief Commissioner should know that, what sites to be improved. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner being given that this question has been put for today, can he give a reason why as soon as this question is put, now, we have the annual report for three years: 2014, 2015, 2016? Is this normal?

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, order, please!

The Minority Leader: I would like to know...

Madam Chairperson: No personal attack!

[Interruptions]

The Minority Leader: I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he finds it normal now that we have put this question, now, you have the annual report for three years in one day? Whether he leaves it fit, whether he will change this way of working?

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

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: One question. Can I know from the Chief Commissioner why there has been a drastic change, complete change in Members of the Board from 2012 to 2018?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, Madam Chairperson, it is my prerogative to change a person in the board. Whenever you look at the board before, there were a lot of people who were nominated on the board. Even politicians were nominated on the board.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, it is your prerogative but we are here to ask question! *Ou konten, ou pa konten.* Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, can I know from the Chief Commissioner whether the mission, recent mission with regards to Discovery Rodrigues and the Tourism Sector, whether he is satisfied with the arrival that he just tabled us here?

The Chief Commissioner: He is talking about what mission, Madam? What mission?

Madam Chairperson: You have to be precise, respected Member.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, recent mission to Reunion Island and Mauritius.

Madam Chairperson: It is not related; it is out of context. I suspend the House for one hour for lunch.

At 12.27 p.m., the Assembly was suspended for one hour.

On resuming at 1.30 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.

Madam Chairperson: The commissioner raised a point of explanation.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I refer to the question 41(b), where I put a set of figures concerning production of all the agricultural products and on the other side, people were saying that the figures were not right, did not tally with the Digest, the Respected Members on the other side. So, I would like to table on page 57, all the data which is found in the Digest and a copy of the figures I gave to show that it does tally and I maintain the figures are good. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

(No. B/43) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the pre-primary schools in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) the total number thereof and if all teachers therefor are employed on a permanent and pensionable basis by Rodrigues Regional Assembly;
- (b) the current supervisor of the teachers' work; and
- (c) for each school situated in government schools' premises, the number of:-
 - (i) classes and teachers involved, tabling same;
 - (ii) helpers, specifying their respective years of service and salaries?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that that there are 34 pre-primary schools in Rodrigues and I am further informed that Pre-primary School Teachers are not employed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Out of the 85 Pre-primary schools' teachers, 78 Pre-primary school teachers are employed by the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues and 7 Pre-primary schoolteachers are employed by the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority.

Madam Chairperson, with respect to part (b) of the question, with regard to pre-primary education in Rodrigues, the Commission for Education exercises general control in collaboration with the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority and Association des Ecoles Maternelles. With respect to pre-primary schools attached to Government Schools, headmasters exercise a direct control and close supervision of the schools.

With regard to private pre-primary schools, School Inspectors give a helping hand to exercise control over the schools as well as conduct regular meetings with Executive Members to the Association des Ecoles Maternelles. Madam, Chairperson, with a view to ensure better and closer supervision of these schools' provision has been made in the Budget 2018/2019 for the recruitment of two Coordinators for the supervision of the private pre-primary schools.

In 2014, decision has been taken by my Government to provide free Pre-primary education and consequently a grant has been allocated to pay wages of the pre-primary school teachers. After consultation with the Association des Ecoles Maternelles, it has been agreed that the pre-primary teachers will draw a fixed monthly salary in accordance with the National Remuneration Board. Six

pre-primary schools are attached to six government schools namely: Basile Allas, Port Mathurin Government School, Terre Rouge Government School, Batatran Government School, Mt. Goyaves Government School, Anse Quitor Community School and Mt. Charlot Community School.

As regards, Helpers a monthly grant of Rs 2,000 is given to each school PTA to meet the allowances for the services of Helpers on a part time basis for cleaning purposes. Representations have been made by these Helpers to consider their services on full-time basis. A Committee has been set up by my commission to look at the possibility of reviewing the schedule of duties of Helper.

Madam Chairperson, as regards to part (c), I am tabling the requested information.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Yes, Madam Chairperson. Can we know from the Chief Commissioner, whether it is not time for the RRA to look into the matter for the pre-primary teachers so that the RRA can employ these people on a permanent basis?

The Chief Commissioner: *As I said in my reply, they are employed on a permanent basis. This means that they are employed by the Association des Ecoles Maternelles. Et nous, nous aidons les écoles - l'Association des Ecoles Maternelles pour payer ces enseignants du pré-primaire. Et là, justement il y a ce qu'on appelle les Helpers, on est en train de mettre en place un comité pour voir justement, le salaire qu'il faut donner à ces Helpers pour qu'ils travaillent aussi toute une journée et quel salaire leurs donner.*

Mr. J. R. Augustin: According to the grant that is allocated to the Association des Ecoles Maternelles, can we know how it is calculated?

The Chief Commissioner: Il me semble j'ai dit ça par rapport au Remuneration Board. Yes, par rapport au Remuneration Board, ils sont payés un salaire par rapport au Remuneration Board. Ces règlements qu'on vient de passer à Maurice tout dernièrement. C'est dommage, que je n'ai pas le chiffre des *grants* qu'on leurs donnent. Mais, *I take note of the question and will table it in the library of the Assembly.*

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can we know from the Chief Commissioner, whether all these pre-primary schools that are situated in the primary schools' premises, are they equipped with outdoor games?

The Chief Commissioner: *I think, that all pre-primary schools have a yard. And, they also have, what we call, ces jeux en plastiques où les enfants*

peuvent jouer et aussi on a demandé que dans chaque pré-primaire qu'il y a un petit jardin que l'enfant dès son jeune âge puisse apprendre à piocher la terre et à planter, à mettre en terre des semences pour des légumes. Alors, il y a tout ça, comme nous avons dans le passé très tôt en 1982, crée des jardins scolaires dans les écoles primaires. Alors, tout ça aussi on s'est tenu compte. Je dois dire que je rencontre de temps en temps l'Association des Ecole Maternelles et c'est cette association est présente justement, dans le briefing que je fais régulièrement au niveau de l'éducation. Et, ils sont là et ils donnent des comptes rendus de tous ce qui en train de se faire. Et, ce qui est important, j'ai noté ça, j'ai mentionné ça dans ma réponse à la question, c'est que nous avons prévu pour employer deux coordinateurs pour s'occuper des écoles maternelles. Autrefois, il y avait deux personnes qui venaient des RCEA Schools mais ils sont partis, ils ont pris leurs retraites. Mais la pour l'instant ces écoles, comme j'ai dit là, ce sont les inspecteurs qui jettent un coup d'œil. Mais nous allons bientôt lancer l'appel de candidature pour deux coordinateurs pour s'occuper de toutes ces écoles maternelles.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la présidente, je voudrais poser une question au Chef Commissaire, je sais que la question est pertinente. Nous savons que ces 'Miss', des écoles, des petites misses qu'on les appelle, elles travaillent beaucoup. Est-ce qu'à la fin de leurs – quand elles prennent la retraite, est-ce que ces personnes-là ont droit à une pension comme les autres *Public Officers* ?

The Chief Commissioner: Oui, Madam Chairperson. Je crois on a fait ça pour les – oui, oui, à partir de 2012, on a fait ça aussi pour les agents de santé communautaires. Ils peuvent prendre leurs retraites et en retour on leurs donnent une compensation. Et, nous avons dit aussi que les enseignants des écoles maternelles doivent contribuer à la National Development Pension. Alors, tout ça, on est en train de faire les choses, Madame, d'après la loi, d'après les règlements qui existent au niveau du gouvernement central. Alors, moi je pense que, nous aussi il nous faut savoir que ces enseignants des écoles prématernelles ont pendant des années travaillaient avec nos enfants et elles se sont occupées de nos enfants pour que ces enfants puissent aller en primaire dans des très bonnes conditions.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can we ask the Chief Commissioner, whether he will look into the matter to set up a form of trust for these pre-primary teachers?

The Chief Commissioner: Alors, je tiens compte de la question et nous allons étudier la question, peut-être dans un comité quand on se rencontre au briefing régulièrement.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER'S RELIEF FUND

(No. B/44) **Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Chief Commissioner's Relief Fund, the will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the objective(s) thereof, the amount credited thereto and available to date, respectively, and the different project(s) financed thereunder from 2012 to date, if any?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the Chief Commissioner's Relief Fund was initially set up to manage funds collected from solidarity contribution or any donation in respect of disasters. The funds are to be used to meet unforeseen expenses with respect to damage caused by natural disasters such as cyclone, torrential rain or flooding.

I am further informed that a balance of Rs 4,362 is available on the account as at date and that no expenditure has been made from the account since 2012.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

CONTRIBUTORY SCHEME – EMPLOYEES WELFARE FUND (EWF)

(No. B/45) **Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to any contributory scheme set under the Employees Welfare Fund, he will seek information from the relevant authority and state to the House as to if any complaint has been made thereat and/or at his Commission concerning any request for refund of contribution made thereto from any former contributor therefor in Rodrigues and, in the affirmative, to give details thereon, indicating the number of such request/s received as at date together with the outcome for each case?

The Commissioner for Social Security and Others (L. D. Baptiste): Madam Chairperson, the House may wish to note that the Employees Welfare Fund (EWF) was set up under the EWF Act 13 of 1995. In its wake the National Savings Fund Act 14 of 1995 was also promulgated.

With regard to request for refund of contribution made under the EWF, I am informed from the relevant authority in Mauritius that they have recorded only one request from Rodrigues, dated 25 August 2017, in the name of a former contributor in a northern village of Rodrigues. The claimant was officially informed in a letter dated 5 September 2017 by the EWF that the refund of his contribution could not be entertained under the EWF Act.

In fact, paragraph 17 (2) (b) of the Act provides that, only employees who retired during the period 1 July 1991 to June 1994 are eligible for a refund of the contribution made to the Fund. Hence, same is not refundable for those who retire after 30 June 1995.

He was also informed, that Employees who retire after June 1994 are governed by the provisions of the National Savings Fund Act. So, he was entitled for refund of contribution made for him under the NSF for the period of July 1994 till his date of retirement.

Madam Chairperson, I am also informed that the claimant applied for the refund of his contribution on 4 September 2014 at the Commission for Social Security and was subsequently, paid a lump sum in October 2014 representing contributions for the period July 1994 to March 2014. I am also informed that the remaining balance representing contributions for April to August 2014 was refunded in March 2015.

I can assure the House, that as at date, all his dues have been computed and paid in accordance with the existing legislations. The House may further wish to note that the claimant also made representations to the Ombudsperson, who's Office, has been provided with the same elements of reply on 10 August 2017 by the concerned Ministry.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, can I ask the Commissioner, if he can inform the House about the total numbers of Rodriguans' Public Officers, who have contributed to the fund since its creation in 1995 to date?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I need notice of this question, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, prior to the instauration of the Employees Welfare Fund in 1995, has there been any Rodriguans who have benefitted to this sum in terms of lump sum or loans as regards to the Act, itself?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I do not have the answer since it is related to the Employees Welfare Fund, which is not under aegis of the Commission for Social Security nor the Ministry for Social Security, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Madame la présidente, le Financial Act No. 126 of 1991 - « Employees Welfare Fund Regulations ». Tous ceci fait mention des contribution que les public officers and also people in private sectors may contribute to that fund. I, myself I contribute as an employee of certain companies*

that I work in Mauritius. With regard to the law, to the Act itself, the government has three representatives on that board. Does the RRA has a member on that board?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: This Act, I have said was set up in 1995, these are laws, which are there and here we are just implementing the NSF Act, in relation to payment of refund of contributions as it was in the question. It was in relation to refund of contributions and not, other issues.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Since, we have got autonomy fifteen years back, is it not time for us...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, you cannot insist on a question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: I am not insisting. I am asking question. Another question.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you put your question now.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, please. Does the commissioner find it normal that after fifteen years of the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, it is not time for us to have a representative, since there are funds, there are investment trust that is attached to the Act and where, Rodriguans are *actionnaires* in that fund? I am referring to Employees Real State Investment Trust, which lot of public officers does not even know that they are members and in the year 2013...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, I am sorry, this is not related to the main question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: This is related to the question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: No. you are speaking of something else. Next question.

The Minority Leader: May I ask only one question just to clarify matters. No, just to clarify matters. This having been said, can I ask the Respected Commissioner, whether he will arrange, since we are autonomous now, to have a member, a Rodriguan member on that board?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I think that this is a national law and we know that all laws relating to pensions, social security is for the Republic of Mauritius. As long

as all the interest of all employees are protected, I do not see the need to have a member as we are all protected under the law of the Republic.

The Minority Leader: I would like to insist. Since we are autonomous, I think there is no harm in that. May be, if I can ask the Respected Commissioner, *je peux donner un conseil*. Try to talk with the Minister concerned and have one Rodriguan put on that board. This is normal thing; this is normally done in Mauritius.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I think we should understand what was the question all about and what the Minority Leader is saying is not the prerogative of the Commissioner. I think that he was in a better position to discuss about it when he was a Member of the National Assembly. You were the Leader of the Opposition but...

The Minority Leader: On a point of order. The question is being put now, he cannot go back and trying to politicise everything. We are asking something for Rodrigues, for the betterment of Rodrigues. Either we are autonomous or not. If you do not want to do it, okay.

Madam Chairperson: Please address the Chair, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: If he does not want to do anything, okay.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: I would like to insist on that question. I would like to insist.

Madam Chairperson: You cannot insist on a question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: May I have the floor to put another question?

Madam Chairperson: I have to rule, first on the point of order raised by the Minority Leader.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: I will rule on that at a later point. But I tell you, once more, Respected Members, the supplementary question you are putting now is very far from the main question. We will move to a next question. Next question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, on a point of personal explanation, I think that I have got this right. On a point of personal explanation.

The EWF, Rodriguan people are contributing to that fund. Yes or not? Yes. We do have our money that is being put. We are asking questions about our money. We do not have right to ask question about our money here?

Madam Chairperson: You are putting question or?

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: ...but I have asked for a point of personal explanation.

Madam Chairperson: This is not a point of personal explanation, Respected Member. You should analyse your Standing Orders much more for the future. Next question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Laisse zot, laisse zot. En tou cas mo espérer la presse ki pou report céki pé dir.*

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please. Commissioner, Respected Members, Minority Leader, please. These personal conversations cannot go on. Yes, Next question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, the Respected Commissioner, just mentioned the Minority Leader '*couyon*'. I want him to take out this word.

Madam Chairperson: I have already ruled on that several times. When you are in a sitting position, I cannot hear anything. Thank you.

ARTIST ASSISTANCE SCHEME

(No. B/46) **Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Arts and Culture and Others, whether in regard to the Artist Assistance Scheme, she will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the:-

- (a) conditions applicable for the grant thereof;
- (b) total cost disbursed therefor together with the name of any beneficiary per category, if any, from February 2012 to February 2018; and
- (c) time frame for the disbursement of funds therefor and specify if there has been any complaint from any artist in relation thereto as at date?

The Commissioner for Arts and Culture and Others (Miss M. R. L. Edouard): Madam Chairperson, the Artists Assistance Scheme has enabled many

artists and cultural groups with financial difficulties to develop an arts oeuvre and at the same time to earn a living through the sale of their art works since 2004. The Scheme is contributing to a great extent in the development of Cultural Industry in Rodrigues and has allowed the Commission to achieve its main role, that is, that of a facilitator for the local artists.

Madam Chairperson, it is to be noted that the arts production has considerably increased since the scheme has been set-up and is providing the Rodriguan population and tourism sectors with artistic products that reflect the creativity and specificity of the island. These arts oeuvres are also used for the participation of Rodrigues in international tourism fair and exhibitions. The scheme, throughout the years, has enabled its beneficiaries to develop their talents and have access to local, national and international platforms. It has also supported the beneficiaries to develop their artistic disciplines, such as, recording studio, music shop, musicianship, graphic design and to create greater awareness of copyright issues.

Madam Chairperson, from 2013-2018, the scheme has been revised on three occasions with a view to provide greater consideration to our local artists. The ceiling of the grant was initially Rs 15, 000 in 2012. It was revised to Rs 30,000 in the year 2013 and the same ceiling was provided in 2014 and 2015. In 2016 and 2017, the ceiling was further revised and was based on specific arts category and fields, particularly, Rs 50,000 for cinematography and DVD production, Rs 40,000 for CD Recording, Rs 30,000 for publication of books and Rs 15,000 for arts exhibition, '*métier lontan*' and other arts field.

Madam Chairperson, for the year 2018, I am proud to announce that a new field relating to research up to a ceiling of Rs 50,000 was included in the scheme.

I am hereby, tabling the General conditions and Eligibility Criteria for the Scheme and also the different revisions of the conditions done in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2018.

With regard to part (b), Madam Chairperson, I am tabling also the total cost disbursed with the number of beneficiaries per category as from 2012 to 2018. But for ethical reasons, I cannot disclose the names but the total amounts to Rs 3,97073.75. So, I am tabling here for the perusal of Members.

With regard to part (c), Madam Chairperson, of the Question, disbursement of grant within the scheme is made in two installments:

- (i) The first disbursement is effected upon submission of first claim by the provider of the service to the commission as mentioned in the

general condition of the scheme. The beneficiaries must also submit together with the first claim, a letter authorizing the commission to disburse the first instalment; and

- (ii) The second payment is made upon completion of the project. The artist then submits three copies of the finished product and a payment of the final instalment is affected.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that once the claim is received it is processed. Payment is cleared within two weeks provided that the claim is complete. However, if information is missing, a longer time may be required to settle the claim.

Madam Chairperson, complaints form part of the process of the scheme and it enables us to evaluate the scheme and improve same over the years. The most common queries received are unavailability of studio, lack musicians and lack of fund from the artist to finance personal contributions. My Commission processes all complaints and most of the time it is sort out in a reasonable delay. In addition, regular monitoring exercises are conducted to ensure that the beneficiaries complete their projects in the time frame allocated. On Wednesday 04 July 2018, Madam Chairperson, a meeting was held with the artists who have difficulties to complete their projects to take stock of their difficulties and to explore possible solutions to enable them to complete their projects without much delay. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Yes, I would like to ask the Commissioner, par rapport au déboursement des fonds, vous avez parlé de deux périodes. Une, une fois les formalités et le premier claim déposé à la commission. Et, deuxième, une fois les produits compléter, il faut déposer trois CD, etc., au sein de la commission. Pour l'année 2017-2018, combien de déboursement la Commission des Arts et de la Culture, a fait par rapport à des artistes qui ont déposés les œuvres pour la création d'un CD ? 2017-2018 to date.*

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: I think the data is in the table, which I submitted and the Member has to consult it. Thank you.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, the Commissioner has been talking about the selection panel, which is set up every year. Can we know for this year who forms part of the selection panel? How many members are there in this panel?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, there are three members but it remains confidential who are on this board because for confidentiality, we cannot disclose. But there are three members and these are independent persons.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Why is it there is public money is involved, so why is it that it is confidential? Can I ask her? Can I try to put one more question, Madam Chairperson? Why is it?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: Madam Chairperson, I am agaced by the fact that everything is reduced to juicy business. For the protection of these people, we cannot disclose it.

Madam Chairperson: Order, order.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, I think there is something wrong in that. *An artist*, un artiste qui a terminé ces œuvres durant les années 2017 ou plusieurs artistes 2017, on est on 2018 au mois de juillet. Est-ce que le commissaire trouve ça normal que certains de ces artistes-là n'ont pas été remboursés de leurs dettes ou bien de leurs *grant* qu'ils devaient avoir pendant ces périodes-là ? Est-ce, Madame, trouve ça normal ?

Ms. M. R. L. Edouard: Madame la présidente, si le respecté membre a bien écouté à la question, il n'y a personne qui, aucun artiste n'est remboursé directement par rapport au Artist Assistance Scheme, c'est le fournisseur du service qui est remboursé. Donc, du moment que le projet est terminé, le déboursement sera fait. Mais l'artiste lui-même ne reçoit de l'argent directement de la caisse du gouvernement sur le projet Artist Assistance Scheme. C'est le service, on paie le service que l'artiste a contracté. Voilà.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la présidente, si avec votre permission, j'ai une question spécifique pour un artiste spécifique, concernant le *grant* qu'on devait lui accorder. Madame la présidente, la personne a été dans un studio, il a payé tous ces dettes au niveau du studio. Il est sorti du studio, il a fait les autres affaires qu'il devait faire en même temps pour sortir son CD. Le CD est déjà sorti depuis novembre 2017. Là, en juillet 2018, la personne n'a toujours pas reçu un centime de la part de la Commission des Arts et de la Culture. Est-ce que, Madame la commissaire peut nous garantir, la question de transparence, la question d'encouragement à ces artistes-là concernant ce cas, qu'elle d'ailleurs, je pense qu'elle sait.

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Madame la présidente, permettez-moi d'éclaircir la Chambre, je redis encore une fois, je sais de quel cas Monsieur l'honoré membre parle parce que lui-même a accompagnait l'artiste à la Commission pour ça et je

crois que les officiers lui ont bien informé des procédures. Si la personne a pris dans sa poche pour payer, on ne doit pas le savoir parce que la condition est claire ! La condition est qu'on paie au *service provider*. *Now, if the artiste has contacted other persons and need to pay these other persons, he has to deal with the service provider. We deal only upon the claim that is received.*

La question de transparence, la transparence a toujours été de mise. On va le maintenir mais de cette question, je me demande si cet artiste n'a pas contracté le service de quelqu'un pour ses pochettes ou pas mais je pense qu'on a été clair. Tous, tous, tous les services que l'artiste cherche, on paie à la personne qui fournit le service mais pas à l'artiste.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la Présidente, je suis tout à fait d'accord avec ce que Madame la Commissaire est en train de débattre dans cette Assemblée. Moi, j'ai un souci. Je parle de novembre 2017 et je parle de juillet 2018. Ça fait au moins six à sept mois. Madame le Commissaire vient de dire que *as soon as claim reached her office, it is being delt with*. Premier ou deuxième, c'est réglé dans l'espace en moins d'un rien de temps. C'est ce que j'ai compris mais comment se fait-il que dans ce cas précis, il y a eu, il y a toujours jusqu'à maintenant, un retard sur le déboursement *even to the service provider actually* ?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: *Le membre*, he has got the wrong information, Madam. But I again state it and confirm it to this House: if the artist has paid within its pocket in November, that is his problem but the fact is we play upon reception of claim and payment is made.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, l'artiste a payé dans sa poche, ça, c'est son problème. On est d'accord. Mais la personne a été éligible pour l'année 2017. On est en 2018 en mois de juillet 2018, Madame la Présidente. La personne n'a toujours pas reçu son argent. Même au service provider, celui qui a produit le service à l'artiste, il n'a pas reçu son argent. Pourquoi ?

Madam Chairperson: This question has already been put ! You are repeating yourself. Sorry.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: No, I am not repeating myself. She knows my point and I need an answer for that question because it is our public money, because you cannot...

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you!

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: You cannot...

Madam Chairperson: We understand that you need...

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Let me explain myself.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member! We understand that you need your information. I understand that but we have parameters at Parliament. We have to deal within these parameters. The Commissioner has given an answer. I understand you are not satisfied with the answer but you cannot insist upon an answer.

The Minority Leader: Okay, Madam Chair, I would like to ask the respected Commissioner since she has been talking of transparency, everything is transparent. I would like to know, to come back to the selection panel since she is not agreeable to give the names of the members sitting on this panel. Can I know whether these members are receiving an emolument, receiving funds for sitting on such panel?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: They are doing it free of charge but... *Non, zis free of charge.*

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam, can I know from the Commissioner if... Anyway, it does not mention any studio on that document here. May I ask the Commissioner what are the numbers of studio in Rodrigues available at the time being and if it is not ethical, you tell us the name of the studio?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Madam Chair, allow me to smile because if we refer to the same case that the honorable Member is mentioning, the same person has been to one studio and he has been asked to look for another studio. I will not be saying the reason because the Member knows the reason better than I. But for the studio, I would like to enlighten the House that with regard to studio, it is up to the artist to choose. We do not go and choose for the artist. We do not mingle in those things. If they want to do the recording in Mauritius, it is their business but the moment the claim comes, we pay the service provider. We do not go into the details of studios.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I know from the Commissioner an approximate date of the disbursement of funds for the clearance of this case?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Madam Chair, the only guarantee that I can give you here in this House is that the Member mentioned previously that the scheme was for 2017/2018. We are still in 2018! So, what happens is that 2017/2018, this was the year and now, after the 11th of July, we will be starting, we will be

closing the call for proposal for 2018/2019. This is clear to me that the person, those who are concerned will have their money before..., when required, when processes are completed.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, can the Commissioner inform the House whether, prior to the month of July, there has been disbursement of funds with regards to this item?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: I need notice of this question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, can I know from the Commissioner how many since the *Séga Tambour* has been listed as intangible cultural, world cultural heritage, can I know from the Commissioner how many project of *Séga Tambour* has she received from artists since January 2017 to date?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: Madam Chair, the Member is not listening to the project, how the project is being implemented. It starts on 2018... means here that we are starting! We are starting after the nomination of the *Séga Tambour*. It is not that we will have the *Séga Tambour Projects* for this call for proposal. *Enfin, parce que c'est son jour aujourd'hui mais je ne comprends pas.*

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame la Présidente, c'est mon jour. Je le reconnais parce que... Mais là, c'est mon tour.

Madam Chairperson: You put your question now !

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: My question is that, can the Commissioner inform the House whether from January 2017 to December 2017, there has been project of *Sega Tambour* CDs or DVDs at her Commission?

Ms. M. R. Edouard: I need notice of this question, Madam.

Madam Chairperson: Next question, please!

NATIONAL PROJECT OF EDUCATION - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

(No. B/47) Mrs. M. T. Agathe (Third Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the national project of education for primary schools, he will state and table: -

- (a) the number of tablets received and distributed to pupils up to now; and
- (b) when the last stock of books was received and distributed?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that in the context of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education, the Ministry of Education is equipping all primary schools in the Republic with tablets so as to develop digital knowledge in pupils. A team comprising Technical Officers from the Energy Service Division and the Ministry of Education was on official mission to Rodrigues during period 18 to 25 July 2017. The purpose of their visit was to carry a survey of electrical works to be carried out in the context of the Early Digital Learning Programme Project.

In early January 2018, a training workshop has been organised by the Mauritius Institute of Education for all Headmasters, ICT Support Officers, School Inspectors, Grade 1 and 2 Educators. During the workshop, the participants were trained on how to use the tablets as a support to enhance teaching and learning so as to:-

- (i) develop an understanding of the interactive e-books loaded on the tablets as a pedagogical tool in class.
- (ii) establish first-level trouble shooting mechanism amongst others.

Madam Chairperson, my commission has received 1,569 tablets, 72 projectors, 79 rack chargers and other related devices in February 2018.

Madam Chairperson, all the tablets have been delivered to Grades 1 and 2 classes. The tablets are kept in rack chargers in the said classrooms and are meant to be used as support to enhance teaching and learning. It is worth noted that these tablets are meant to be used solely in the classrooms and not meant to be taken at home.

My commission has been informed by the Ministry of Education that a contract has been awarded by the Energy Service Division for the reviewing and upgrading of electrical installation apt to accommodate the use of tablets in the primary schools to Mauritech Ltd and the completion date is scheduled for end of July 2018. The contractor is actually mobilised in Rodrigues and my commission is providing all support for the completion of the work before the resumption of classes for the third term.

In the meantime, my Commission has requested the Central Electricity Board to install 3 phase electrical supply in all schools.

Upon completion of upgrading of electrical supply, the tablets will be used by all pupils of grades 1 and 2.

Madam, Chairperson, as regards to part (b), the current practice is that all primary school textbooks are produced by the Mauritius Institute of Education. Most textbook consist of Part 1 and Part 2, meant to be used at different times during the school year.

I am informed that all Part 1 textbooks have been received in December 2017 and have been distributed to primary schools for use during the first term.

I am further informed that Part 2 textbooks have been received during the course of the year and as at date, all textbooks have been distributed to the primary schools to be used during the remaining school terms.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la Présidente, le Chef commissaire a dit que les tablettes seront prêtes à être utiliser au début du troisième trimestre mais est-ce que ce ne sera pas trop tard ?

The Chief Commissioner: Madame la Présidente, j'ai mentionné dans ma réponse qu'il y a des installations électriques à faire, plus particulièrement, installer la phase 3 à l'école et que ces tablettes seront mises dans des racks et pour charger régulièrement les tablettes. Donc, il y a, il faut croire que faire les enfants... mettre les tablettes entre les mains des enfants de la Grade I et II, cela demande beaucoup de formation aussi de la part des inspecteurs, des enseignants et d'autres personnes. Alors, ce n'est pas une affaire qui sera très vite mais il y aura toute une question de formation aussi des enseignants. Alors, moi, je pense que dans la mesure où s'est fait avec le temps et que ce soit bien fait, je pense que c'est vraiment dans le sens de l'éducation des enfants.

Madam Chairperson: Wait a minute, please. Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/58, B/56 and... Sorry, B/58, B/60 and B/61 have been withdrawn.

The Minority Leader: Madame, je voudrais demander au Chef commissaire, on est d'accord qu'il faut qu'on fasse bien ce travail-là, qu'on fasse de sorte que les enfants puissent utiliser leurs tablettes comme il le faut et qu'il y ait des formateurs etc. Mais comme je le dit ce matin : gouverner, c'est prévoir. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir pourquoi on a pris du retard dans l'installation, avec ces installations électriques et pourquoi on a pris du retard pour avoir des formateurs ? C'est ça, le problème, parce que les enfants, s'ils vont avoir leurs tablettes au troisième trimestre, Rodrigues va être en retard.

The Chief Commissioner: Madame, je dois dire qu'il nous a fallu attendre une mission du Ministère de l'éducation à Rodrigues pour nous préparer justement

à ce que les enfants puissent utiliser bien ces tablettes. Mais la question du retard, est-ce que... Il faudra nous poser la question. Ça, on va essayer de voir. Y-aura-t-il des examens pour ces tablettes ? Non, je ne pense pas. Non, non, non, non, justement. Alors, justement, je pense qu'il vaut mieux commencer bien que de commencer mal. Alors, c'est pourquoi moi, je suis d'accord pour que justement, ces enseignants qui vont faire les enfants utiliser ces tablettes comme il faut, je crois ce n'est pas si facile que ça. Je crois que c'est une bonne décision que ces... Et en même temps, il faut que ces enseignants puissent savoir, connaître chaque enfant parce qu'il y a beaucoup d'enfants qui ont des tablettes à la maison. C'est ça, justement. Il y en a qui vont être dans les classes, qui n'ont pas de tablettes. Alors, c'est ça, justement qu'il faudrait voir. Comme j'ai dit, ces tablettes ne vont pas être délivrées aux enfants mais ces tablettes vont rester dans la classe.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la présidente, je voudrais demander au Chef commissaire si après que l'installation soit terminée, les enseignants qui vont s'en servir de ces tablettes auront une autre formation ? Et comme il a dit dans sa réponse que ça demande beaucoup pour que chaque enfant puisse bien utiliser la tablette, est-ce que quand la classe va être conduite, l'*ICT Teacher* aussi sera mise... les *ICT Teachers* aussi vont accompagner ces profs-là pour les aider dans cette tâche ?

The Chief Commissioner: Madame la présidente, évidemment, il y a quelque chose qui nous préoccupe au niveau de l'éducation : c'est la formation. Bien important. La formation, pas simplement donner une connaissance à l'enfant mais aussi connaître l'enfant ! Connaître l'enfant, son milieu social, son milieu économique. Nous savons déjà en primaire, qu'il y a vraiment des enfants qui vivent bien, il y en a des enfants pauvres. Il y a des enfants qui vivent dans des familles pauvres. Il y a des enfants qui vivent dans des familles aisées. Alors, il y a tout ça. L'enseignant vraiment doit pouvoir, je ne sais pas, je vais voir un petit peu dans une classe, combien d'enfant il y aura dans une classe pour l'utilisation de ces tablettes. Et ça, justement, on va prendre... On est en train de demander des informations pour que nous puissions guider, nous, au niveau des enseignants qui vont enseigner les enfants à travers les tablettes.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/51, B/52, B/53 and B/54 have been withdrawn. Next question.

SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN RODRIGUES

(No. B/48) Mrs. M. T. Agathe (Third Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to secondary school education in Rodrigues, in line with the nine-year schooling, he will inform the House if: -

- (a) every student has been provided with books needed for this present year.
- (b) all colleges have the required number of instructors; and
- (c) the National Support Teaching programme is available to all students and, if not, to state what his Commission intends to do in regard thereto?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, with respect to part (a) of the question, I am informed that bulk order of textbooks was received as from the first week of January 2018 and distributed to colleges as from the resumption of studies for academic year 2018.

However, I am further informed that delays have occurred in the distribution of some textbooks for the following reasons:

- (i) Some textbooks out of stock in Mauritius;
- (ii) Bad weather conditions in Mauritius in January 2018 has caused the delay in arrival of boats from abroad and subsequently, books were delivered later in February and March 2018;
- (iii) A few titles were out of print and thus, needed to be replaced by other ones; and
- (iv) Late requests received from secondary schools in March, April and May for additional textbooks.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that to date, all textbooks which have been requested by secondary schools have already been received and distributed to students except Past Exam Papers for Classified Papers as same are not provided under the Free Book Loan scheme.

However, Madam Chairperson, it has been brought to the attention of my Commission that a few textbooks are still required at some schools but no requests for order have been received at the level of my Commission from these schools.

Madam Chairperson, the Departmental Head of my Commission has been requested to carry out an enquiry in that respect and to submit a report accordingly. The report is being awaited.

Madam Chairperson, it is the most priority of my Commission to ensure that all students get all their text books at the beginning of each academic year. Subsequently, a Committee has been set up at the level of my Commission to

review the procedures for the procurement of books for academic year 2019 to ensure that as from next year onwards that all books are distributed to students at the beginning of each academic year.

Madam Chairperson, with respect to part (b) of the question, I would like to draw the attention of the House that the grade of Instructor does not exist on the establishment of our secondary schools.

Hence, Madam Chairperson, I refer that the Respected Member may be referring to the Grade of Educator; not Instructor.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that it is the usual practice for the Management of Rodrigues Educational Development Company Limited Colleges and Rodrigues College to initiate recruitment procedures for Educators during the end of an academic year that is, November and December so as to ensure the smooth running of the schools falling under their purview as from the start of the next academic year in January.

Madam Chairperson, I am further informed that at present, all the secondary schools are properly staffed except that there may be a shortage of staff at times in particular to replace Educators proceeding on leaves. However, this shortage is not permanent but a short-term one.

Madam Chairperson, I am also informed that since the Private Secondary Education Authority is now only registering Educators with the necessary qualifications is a field related to a teaching subject, three selected Educators who were already in post in REDCO Schools as from January 2018 to teach English and Home Economics did not secure registration by virtue of their degrees with the Private Secondary Education Authority.

Therefore, Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the contract of these Educators were terminated at the end of the first term.

Advertisements were launched anew for the filling of vacancies but there was a lack of candidates with the appropriate qualifications to teach English and Home Economics, which are now a scarcity area. Consequently, a pool of supply Educators was set up at the level of REDCO and internal arrangements have been made so as not to penalise the students concerned.

Madam Chairperson, I have been apprised that as at to date, new qualified Educators have been recruited at REDCO Colleges to teach English.

However, there is still difficulty to have qualified Educators for Home Economics at Le Chou College (Annex) and Design and Technology at Rodrigues College.

Madam Chairperson, the management of the secondary schools have made internal arrangements at the schools concerned in order to ensure the smooth running of the classes. In addition, special classes will be run during the forthcoming holidays in order to enable students to catch up and to complete the syllabus for the mentioned subjects.

Madam Chairperson, with respect to part (c) of the question, I would like to draw the attention of the House and as confirmed by the Ministry of Education that there is no such programme as the National Support Teaching Programme in the context of the Nine Year Schooling. I repeat, that has been confirmed by the Ministry of Education that there is no such programme as the National Support Teaching Programme in the context of the Nine Year Schooling.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that one of the major initiatives being implemented under the Nine Year Schooling Continuous Basic Education Programme for Secondary Education is the Student Support Programme (SSP).

Madam Chairperson, the Student Support Programme is a web portal of free online educational resources accessible from multiple platforms. It is currently being developed with the collaboration of the National Council of Educational Research and Technology India.

The SSP has as objective to provide students with more ownership of their learning and helps them to become digital learners in a 21st century environment. The project complements learning at school by promoting diversity in learning strategies while also including a culture of autonomous learning.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to inform the House that my Commission is also sparing no efforts to ensure that the overarching goal of the Nine Year Schooling that is all students to successfully complete Nine Years of Basic Schooling is achieved.

Madam Chairperson, as announced in my budget speech for financial year 2018-2019, an additional School Support Programme is being developed by my Commission. The programme will be implemented on a pilot basis at La Ferme College.

Madam Chairperson, my Commission is still working on the modalities thereof. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/57 and B/59 have been withdrawn. Next question.

The Minority Leader: Can I put one supplementary on the very lengthy answer of the Chief Commissioner? Being given that we are all for having students on the same level playing field, can I know from the Chief Commissioner whether, books for the studying of Creole are available in all schools?

The Chief Commissioner: I think this has been mentioned somewhere and I think that Educators/Teachers have been recruited to teach Creole at the level of Primary Schools.

[Interruptions]

The Chief Commissioner: It is okay. They have been recruited to teach Creole at the level of Primary School.

Madam Chairperson: Books.

The Minority Leader: Books, do we have all the books already for teaching of Creole?

[Interruptions]

The Chief Commissioner: There is a committee with the Commission for Education and Mr. Carpooran.

[Interruptions]

The Chief Commissioner: The former manual with the Commission for Education and we also with the help of Mr. Carpooran, of the University of Mauritius, yes.

The Minority Leader: I ask question because I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner, some have been talking of *Créole Rodriguais*, *Créole Mauricien*. We have different types of creole but here, we are not talking of the way we talk creole, it is the way we write it. Whether we are talking *Seychellois*, *Mauricien*, *Chagossien* but the way we write it, will be the same. The same dictionary will be used. I believe we can go fast and... *Persone pa pou kav ekrir li saken so fason!* Is it not true that this is...

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you. Let the Chief Commissioner answer.

The Minority Leader: No, the same question. The same question, is it not true that this is already being done at the RCEA Schools and not at the Government School?

The Chief Commissioner: Well, we know that the RCEA Schools continue to teach *Créole Mauricien* but at the level of the Commission for Arts and Culture, we are working on a dictionary in creole *Rodriguais* and with the help of Mr. Carporan from the University of Mauritius.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam Chairperson, Madam, cette affaire de créole mauricien, créole rodriguais, c'est vrai il y a une grande différence entre la façon d'écrire et la façon de parler. C'est normal, causer aussi, c'est différent. Mais le projet d'un manuel scolaire créole pour enseigner le créole à Rodrigues, ça fait un moment qu'on en parle, ça fait un moment que le Chef commissaire nous a dit qu'il va venir avec un projet spécifique pour Rodrigues pour que les enfants de Rodrigues ne mélangent pas le créole rodriguais et le créole mauricien. Je suis tout à fait d'accord ! Mais dans le discours budget, à plusieurs reprises, il l'a mentionné. Pourrais-je demander au Chef commissaire ? Nous avons deux choses en préparation : le dictionnaire créole rodriguais et le manuel pour enseigner le créole rodriguais dans les écoles. Ça fait trois ans que nous attendons. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire peut nous dire vers quelle époque on aura ce dictionnaire, vers quelle époque on aura ce manuel ? Si vous avez besoin des coups de main, on peut donner un coup de main pour pouvoir finaliser parce que mes enfants perdent. Donc, est-ce que... *Mo pa pe koz ek toi, reste trankil.*

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you, respected Member. Your question has already been put.

The Chief Commissioner: Madame la présidente, nous travaillons dessus et le moment voulu, on va faire savoir.

Mrs. M. T. Agathe: Madame la présidente, une dernière question que je voudrais adresser au Chef commissaire, c'est que quand les enfants quittent le primaire pour aller au secondaire, est-ce que le créole est pris en compte ? Parce que sinon, les enfants des écoles du gouvernement sont pénalisés par rapport aux enfants qui sont dans la RCEA.

The Chief Commissioner: Il me semble que le créole n'est pas un sujet comme l'anglais, le français. C'est optionnel. C'est un optionnel. Ce n'est pas... Mais parce qu'aussi, on va arriver dans les années à venir sur l'agriculture comme

non-core subject qui pourra aussi être... Les enfants pourront être examiner sur l'agriculture tout ça.

DELIVERY OF TOURISM LICENCES/PERMITS

(No. B/51) Miss M.R. Collet (Frist Local Region Member for Maréchal asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the delivery of tourism licences/permits by his Commission, he will enlighten the House on the measures envisaged for the implementation of the revised process in regard thereto?

[Withdrawn]

REHABILITATION YOUTH CENTRE IN RODRIGUES – YOUTH THEREAT/PRISONS OFFICERS

(No. B/52) Miss M.R. Collet (Frist Local Region Member for Maréchal asked the Commissioner for Prisons and Reforms Institutions and Others whether, in regard to the Rehabilitation Youth Centre in Rodrigues, she will, for the benefit of the House, state the number of: -

- (a) youths currently thereat;
- (b) Prisons Officers on duty thereat on any given day; and
- (c) Prisons Officers on the Civil Establishment of Mauritius and of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, respectively, currently posted thereat and specifying her Commission's policy as regards current or future recruitment of Prisons Officers therefor, if any?

[Withdrawn]

RODCLEAN LTD

(No. B/53) Miss M.R. Collet (Frist Local Region Member for Maréchal asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to RodClean Ltd, he will, for the benefit of the House: -

- (a) state the measures undertaken by his Commission to make sure that employees thereof ensure the general maintenance of the beaches, roads and the drains along roads throughout the island; and
- (b) obtain information therefrom and state the:

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- (i) current number of employees thereof;
- (ii) status of any recruitment process for low and high cadres therefor, if any, and indicating its policy as regards current or future recruitment of cleaners?

[Withdrawn]

‘AGENTS DE SANTE COMMUNAUTAIRE’

(No. B/54) Miss M.R. Collet (Frist Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Community Development and Others Whether, in regard to ‘Agents de santé communautaire’, he will inform the House on:

- (a) where matters stand concerning the increase in the number thereof and their posting, if any;
- (b) any past or future statistical survey aimed at determining the effect of the deployment thereof in the community;
- (c) any meeting held or to be held by his Commission therewith, indicating the purpose thereof;
- (d) any complaint(s) received concerning the allowances and benefits allocated thereto; and
- (e) measures envisaged to give equal opportunities to Rodriguan with little or no experience to work thereas?

[Withdrawn]

**ORGANISATION - SPORTS COMPETITIONS/RODRIGUES/
- INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES 2019**

(No. B/57) Mr. J.L.R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to the organisation of sports competitions in Rodrigues for the Indian Ocean Island Games 2019, she will inform the House about the:

- (a) sports disciplines concerned, if any, detailing on any agreement signed by her Commission therefor and to table a copy thereof;

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- (b) monitoring mechanism set up therefor, providing the detailed composition of any committee tasked in relation thereto; and
- (c) budget earmarked by her Commission therefor, specifying the item vote to be charged in relation thereto and indicating any other financial assistance from relevant authorities?

[Withdrawn]

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS
- MODE OF OPERATION/AMOUNT OF MONEY EARMARK**

(No. B/58) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the maintenance of public buildings in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state the:

- (a) mode of operation adopted by his Commission therefor, indicating the number of staff involved therewith; and
- (b) amount of money earmarked therefor under this financial year?

[Withdrawn]

INCIDENT – PETITE BUTTE/KIOSK COLLAPSED

(No. B/59) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether he will obtain information from any relevant authority and state on an incident which occurred at Petite Butte in the month of June 2018 whereby a public kiosk collapsed on a Rodriguan citizen and detail, for the benefit of the House, measures undertaken by his Commission to ensure the appropriate maintenance of public kiosks and bus shelters around the island?

[Withdrawn]

**ORGANISATION STRUCTURE PROJECT
– WEAKNESS/CONTRACT AWARDED**

(No. B/60) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether he will, in regard to the review of the organisation structure of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, inform the House about any project undertaken by the regional government therefor, giving details:

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- (a) about any major weakness identified in the organisation structure, if any; and
- (b) on if any contract has been awarded therefor and, in the affirmative; to give the name of the successful bidder, the scope of works, the completion date and the projected cost thereof?

[Withdrawn]

Madam Chairperson: Question time is over.

**STRUCTURE TO CANALISE WASTE WATER
– MONT LUBIN TO MALABAR**

(No. B/61) Mr. J.R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the structures to canalise waste water from Mont Lubin to Malabar, his Commission has been made aware that same is blocked in the slope nearing Malabar, causing much inconvenience to the villagers, and, in the affirmative, to state the measures his Commission is contemplating to remedy same together with the expected timeframe therefor?

[Withdrawn]

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the Assembly do now adjourned to Tuesday 28 August 2018 at 10.30 hours.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

At 2.43 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 28 August 2018 at 10.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**BIO CULTIVATION OF COMBAVA LIME PLANTS
- CHILLI PASTE PROJECTS**

(No. B/49) Mrs. M. T. Agathe (Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the bio cultivation of Combava lime plants and the production of chilli paste projects under the Switch Africa Green programme, he will state where matters stand as at date in relation thereto, indicating the state of finance earmarked accordingly and to table same?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, the combava Project is being implemented by the Commission for Environment under the Switch Africa Green Programme and has started since November 2015. The project is funded jointly by the European Union and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The aim of the project is the increase the capacity building of a group of forty (40) fisherwomen through training in the bio-cultivation of combava lime and the processing of its chilli paste. This project will help in reducing pressure in the lagoon and the development of alternative livelihood activities for the beneficiaries. To date the following activities have been successfully implemented:-

1. Practrical training for the beneficiaries in:
 - (i) Customer care and Eco-Entrepreneurship
 - (ii) Bio-agriculture
 - (iii) Food processing
 - (iv) Eco-packaging
 - (v) A four-day study tour in Mauritius
2. The production of two (200) grafted plants.
3. The rehabilitation of an identified site at Montagne.

Goyaves for the establishment of a combava organic orchard. Site preparation and digging of holes are underway. Planting activities will be done in August.

4. Plan preparation for the construction of an agro-processing unit.
5. Soil profile test and the evaluation of the phyto-sanitary status of the gombava grafts and existing mother plants.
6. Recruitment of a Consultant for guide book preparation.
7. Finalisation of building plan for the processing unit.
8. Procedures for procurement of agro-processing Equipment.

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Madam Chairperson, in regard to the financial status of the project it should be noted that it is jointly funded by the European Union and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly through a Grant Support Agreement and the contributions the two parties are as follows:

	USD	MUR
European Union	230,500	8,166,615
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	61,000	2,161,230

To date a total amount of Rs 4,758,216 have been received from UNOPS in two instalments as detailed below:

Date received	Amount Received MUR
28. 11. 2015	2,467,795
23. 08. 2017	2,290, 420

The funds earmarked to complete activities the project are as follows:

	MUR	Remarks
European Union	3,054,066	In 2 instalments July 18 and October 18 Not yet disburse
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	2,161,230	July 18 Not yet disburse

**LAST CYCLONE & RECENT HEAVY RAINFALLS
– COMPENSATION TO FARMERS**

(No. B/50) Mrs. M. T. Agathe (Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the last cyclone and recent heavy rainfalls, he will for the benefit of the House, state and table on measures undertaken by his Commission to compensate the farmers affected thereby and to reduce damages caused by such heavy rainfall in the future?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that following the passage of Cyclone Berguitta over the island of Rodrigues in January 2018, the following

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farmers' complaints regarding losses have been recorded at the level of my Commission:-

Sn	Sector	No. of Cases Recorded
1	Crop	618
2	Livestock	518
TOTAL		1136

Cases recorded were verified by Officers of the Agricultural Research & Extension Services through field visits and losses were certified as far as possible.

Madam Chairperson, as for heavy rainfall of early April 2018, field visits were effected and the following cases were recorded:-

Sn	Sector	No. of Cases Recorded
1.	Crop	192
2.	Livestock	Nil
TOTAL		192

Among those one hundred and ninety-two (192) farmers, one hundred and sixty (160) were onion planters who lost their onion seedlings owing to excess water and flooding.

My Commission purchased 50 kg of onion seeds from Medine Ltd, Mauritius, to help those onion producers through a distribution exercise effected on 26 May, 2018.

Madam Chairperson, the Executive Council has already taken the decision to assist farmers who have genuinely suffered losses following the cyclone and heavy rainfall. Assistance will not be provided in terms of money but in the form of small livestock and seedlings so that they could re-start their agricultural activities as appropriate.

Madam Chairperson, officers of Agricultural Services are scrutinising the list to establish only genuine cases to be provided support accordingly. Many cases are exaggerated and not genuine. That is why we have to be very careful so that only those who suffered losses are provided assistance.

Farmers are being advised to maintain their drains and terraces properly in view of preventing the flooding of their agricultural lands. Heavy machines of my Commission are put to contribution where works required are beyond farmers' capacities.

Madam Chairperson, I am tabling the requested information.

**ON-GOING UPGRADING/RENOVATION OF PASSENGER
TERMINAL – PLAINE CORAIL AIRPORT**

(No. B/55) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the on-going upgrading/renovation of the Passenger Terminal at Plaine Corail Airport, Rodrigues, he will obtain information from the relevant authorities and inform the House on where matter stands and specifying the:

- (a) name of the successful bidder and the supervising agency therefor;
- (b) date the contract was awarded;
- (c) project contract cost; and
- (d) source of funding and the project status as at date?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the contract for the upgrading/renovation of the Passenger Terminal at Plaine Corail Airport, Rodrigues was awarded to Tayelamay & Sons Enterprise Ltd for the sum of Rs 98,398,504.93. The Consultant Luxconsult (Mtius) Ltd has been appointed on 10 July 2017 to supervise the works.

The scope of works will entail the increase of the total surface area of the ground floor of the terminal building by 60% as well as a first floor vertical extension over a total floor area of 186 m² thus providing additional space for both the arrival and departure hall to cater for a peak of more than 250 passengers at one go.

With regards to part (d) of the question, I am informed that the project is being financed by the Government of Mauritius through direct equity participation in the Airport of Rodrigues Limited.

The completion stage as at date is 75%.

I am further informed that the revised completion date is scheduled for end of August 2018.

‘CENTRE DE FORMATION HOTELIÈRE’

– ACQUISITION PROCESS OF BUILDING/PAYMENT

(No. B/56) **Mr. J. L. R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Industrial Development and Others whether, in regard to the setting up and operationalisation of a ‘centre de formation hôtelière’ in Rodrigues, she will state if the acquisition process of the building identified therefor has been finalized, indicating if payment therefor has been completed and, if so, to state when, providing details of transactions effected and to table a copy of all mandatory documents signed in relation thereto as at date?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, this House would recall that at its Sitting of Tuesday 22 November 2016, debate 8 of 2016 the reply of this Parliamentary Question was given for a similar question (B/142) put forward by the then Minority Leader, Mr. G. Jabeemissar.

This shows the lack of seriousness of the other side of this House. It also seems that the homework has not been properly done by the Opposition Side.

Nevertheless, Madam Chairperson, to uphold the dignity of this House, I will again reply to this House at this Sitting.

Madam Chairperson, I have to inform the House that all the acquisition process of the building has been completed. The Executive Council at its meeting held on 16 November 2015, has decided to approve that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly resumed possession of the whole of the land and to acquire the property standing thereon for the setting up of a hotel school in Rodrigues.

In line with existing Government procedures for the acquisition, the Chief Government Valuer, evaluated the building at Rs 7.3 M. An offer was made to the owner (Mr. R. L “Raphael Louis”) and on the 16 May 2016, the latter has immediately conveyed his acceptance thereof. The deed of sale was finalized on the 17 June 2016 through a notarial deed.

The owner did not hand over the key of the building to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and on 08 September 2016, a “*mise en demeure*” was served to the owner to request him to hand over keys within 15 days as from the date of sale. Having no response from the owner, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has applied to the Judge in Chamber to request the owner to quit, leave and vacate the site by 31 December 2016 at latest.

The Rodrigues Regional Assembly took possession of the building on 14 January 2017 after a writ issued by the Supreme Court of Mauritius onto the former Honour.

Madam Chairperson, the building was acquired for Rs 7.3 M. The payment was to be made through the Public Notary as agreed by both parties.

On 17th June 2016 payment of Rs 7.3 M has been made by cheque (cheque number: 40578413) by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to Notary Public Mr. D. Roopun for the finalization of the transaction. The deed of sales has been registered on 04 July 2016 as TVR 33/34.

Madam Chairperson, the documents requested are available at the Registration Office at Port Mathurin which my colleagues on the other side of the House may consult. I have to ensure this House, Madam Chairperson, that all procedures have been respected thereat.

FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE (FMD) – BANS IMPOSED BY AUTHORITIES

(No. B/62) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, he will, in the wake of the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) which adversely affected Rodrigues, enlighten the House on where matters stand with regard to bans imposed by authorities on local agricultural produces?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, the House will recall that Rodrigues was hit by the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) during mid-2016.

As a consequence, the Ministry of Agro Industry & Food Security imposed a complete ban on the export of livestock, meat and meat-derived products from Rodrigues in August 2016.

Following negotiations with the said Ministry, the ban was partially lifted in December 2016 to allow export of poultry, goat and sheep to Mauritius. Export of goat and sheep was permitted under a list of strict conditions set by the Ministry for bio-security reasons:

- (a) Only the Mauritius Meat Authority (MMA) can import live goats and sheep from Rodrigues.
- (b) All animals shall be sent directly to the slaughter house of the Mauritius Meat Authority and slaughtered within 24 – 48 hours.
- (c) A pre-export quarantine of 4 -7 days is to be observed for animals to be exported.

In August 2017, the ban on export of cattle to Mauritius was partially lifted provided the same conditions as for goats and sheep are observed following results of blood tests with respect to FMD in Rodrigues which indicated that only 25 % of animal tested contained the virus.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to place on record that Elisa Equipment received from Région Reunion last year is being used for blood analysis of animals by the veterinary Services of my commission. This helps to better prepare for outbreak of such diseases.

Madam Chairperson, in May 2018, another partial lift of the ban of export of cattle was carried out by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, whereby private butchers were henceforth allowed to purchase animals from Rodrigues as well, provided they observe the same conditions as the Mauritius Meat Authority.

In a nutshell, the ban imposed on Rodrigues in August 2016 with respect to export of livestock and meat to Mauritius has at date been lifted partially to allow export of cattle, sheep and goats to Mauritius for slaughter only. Export of livestock for rearing in Mauritius is still prohibited as well as export of meat and meat products. With regard to the export of poultry, there is no restriction at all.

Madam Chairperson, I chaired a meeting on 19 June, 2018 whereby the Director of Agriculture, the Assistant Director and Head of Veterinary Services and the General Manager of the MMA inter alia were present.

We have been informed that a third blood test will be conducted by the end of this and an application will be made to the World Organisation for Animal Health to declare the whole Republic of Mauritius FMD Free. It is expected that decision will be taken early next year for the complete lifting of the ban on Rodrigues thus allowing the free trading of livestock, meat and meat products as it was the case before the FMD episode of 2016.

Last but not least, Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that this year, my commission has contracted the services of Professor Gavin Thompson, FMD Expert of South Africa to prepare an Emergency Preparedness Contingency Plan to better prepare against the prevalence of animal disease by putting in place a protocol to be followed. This will help to improve our resilience against the outbreak of major animal diseases in view of protecting our livestock sector

**GERMINATION PROJECT – CENTRE DE COOPÉRATION
INTERNATIONAL EN RECHERCHE AGRONOMIQUE POUR LE
DÉVELOPPEMENT (CIRAD)/REUNION ISLAND**

(No. B/63) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the Germination Project being implemented by the Centre de Cooperation International en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) of Reunion Island, in collaboration with his Commission, he will enlighten the House thereon and to elaborate on any new developments in relation thereto?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, the project ‘Genetic Resources Management in Actions towards an Indian Ocean Network’ (GERMINATION) is a regional cooperation project aiming at the conservation of biodiversity and value addition of crop genetic resources for sustainable agriculture in the Indian Ocean.

The main objective of the project is to cluster partners of the islands of the Indian Ocean in a network with a view to unite competences to develop actions and collaborative programs for a long term conservation and value addition of crop-based genetic resources.

The project is led by the Centre de coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) of Reunion Island with funding from the European Union and Région Reunion.

The membership of the network includes the following institutions involved in agriculture:-

- (i) From Reunion Island - 11 institutions involved in agriculture
- (ii) From Madagascar - 7 institutions
- (iii) From Comoro - 4 institutions
- (iv) From Zanzibar - 1 institution
- (v) From Seychelles - 1 institution
- (vi) From Mauritius - 4 institutions
- (vii) The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)
- (viii) BIOVERSITY International
- (ix) From Rodrigues - 1 institution (Commission for Agriculture)

The project duration was initially set for two years (2013 – 2015) but due to delay in start, the project was finally run from 2014 to June 2018.

Madam Chairperson, my commission has benefitted from the following under the project:

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- (1) Training for one officer from 18 to 21 September 2017 on the Production of Quality Seeds and Fruit Plants.
- (2) Training of fifteen (15) officers and farmers in propagation techniques for fruit species by two officers of CIRAD Reunion in 2015.
- (3) Training of one (1) officer in the collection and safeguarding of crop genetic resources.
- (4) Training of one (1) officer on International Laws and Regulations related to the transfer of plant genetic resources.
- (5) Technical assistance from CIRAD Reunion for the setting up of a gene bank in Rodrigues. Currently, valuable crop genetic resources are being collected for preservation.
- (6) Listing of crop genetic resources of Rodrigues which have become rare and /or is on the verge of extinction.
- (7) Started the setting up of a collection of cassava. So far six (6) cultivars have been identified and collected.
- (8) Started the continuous collection of local vegetable seeds in view of the setting up a Gene Bank of local vegetables and crops.
- (9) An inventory of leafy vegetables and garlic in Rodrigues is nearly completed.

Madam Chairperson, a second phase of the project named GERMINATION II is about to start where technical assistance is expected to be obtained for the operationalisation of the gene bank of Rodrigues and for the management of classification of species in the gene bank.