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No. 10 of 2019

**RODRIGUES
FOURTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Debate No. 10 of 2019

Sitting of Tuesday 24 September 2019

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

(Mrs. Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

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RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2019

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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

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

**PRIVILEGE COMPLAINT – REPLY TO PQ B/100
– SITTING 20 AUGUST 2019**

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I have an announcement this morning. I wish to inform the House that there has been a privilege complaint by the Fourth Island Region Member, Mr. Joseph Reddy Augustin, stating that in his opinion, reply to question B/100 at the sitting of 20 August 2019 was misleading the House. I have given due consideration to the complaint and I am now coming with my ruling thereon. For the purposes of determining matters of contempt, the list of offences is provided under Section 6 of the National Assembly Privileges, Immunities and Powers Act and which have been extended to this Assembly, that is, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly under Section 65 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act. Respected Members, after having gone through the above act, the Standing Orders and Rules and Regulations of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and having regard to past practice of the House, I had a word with the Commissioner, Mr. Jean Richard Payendee as regards to the complaint made by the respected Member Augustin. The concerned Commissioner has explained to me his position as regard the issue and at the same time, expressed his unreserved apologies in writing to the House in view of the explanations offered to the Chair and the House by the Commissioner, Mr. Jean Richard Payendee, I do not propose to proceed further with the matter and consider it close. Nonetheless, the Commissioner concerned is being directed for the report purposes and to maintain the dignity of the Assembly to present his apologies to the House. Thank you for your attention. Commissioner Mr. Jean Richard Payendee, you now have the floor.

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, with your permission, I would like to present my apology to the House in relation to PQ B/100 of Sitting 20 August 2019. Madam Chairperson, following supplementary questions from the minority side in respect to rental of fishing vessels, I wrongly replied that my Commission did not outsource the service of fishing vessels as the latter belong to the Commission. In fact, my Commission rented the services of two fishing vessels namely L'Oiseau de Mer and Northern Light I respectively from the Rodrigues Offshore Fishermen Cooperative Federation to the tune of Rs10000 per day for 30 days. A total amount of Rs 300,000 was paid to the federation. I am tendering my apologies to the House and is tabling the requested information, Madam Chairperson.

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[Applause]

Madam Chairperson: Thank you. Yes.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

The Minority Leader: Thank you, Madam Chair. B/133.

STONE CRUSHER – GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL/CITADELLE

(No. B/133): The Minority Leader (Mr. L. J. Von-mally) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to the stone crusher operating at Grand La Fouche Corail/Citadelle, he will state if his Regional Government has been informed of the inconvenience being caused thereby and health hazard this represents to the inhabitants of the surroundings thereof specifying if any study has been or will be made to determine the incidence of respiratory ailments among same and indicating if his government will consider the relocation thereof to a more appropriate site?

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, Madam, On Tuesday 17th of September 2019, I received a series of photos from one of the inhabitants living close to the stone crusher at Grand la Fouche Corail showing a significant amount of dust in her living room which according to her, came from the stone crusher. The next day that is, on Wednesday 18 September 2019 while I was receiving the public, a group of villagers of La Ferme Citadelle came to see me as Commissioner for Environment, to express their grief regarding the nuisance caused by the stone crusher, Welcome Industry, a branch of United Basalt Products (UBP).

Madam Chairperson, as a responsible Commissioner in a caring Government and sensible to the cause of the environment and the quality of life of Rodrigues, I immediately convene a site visit on the next day that is, on Thursday 19th of October at 08.00 a.m. I was accompanied by the Environment Officers of my Commission, the *Police de l'Environnement*, a Public Health Officer in the presence of the aggrieved party to appraise of the problems thereat.

Madam Chairperson, during the visit, I discovered the gravity of the problem that the villagers of the vicinity were facing. The nuisance caused by dust emanating from stone crushing activities is visible. We have noted the

presence of important layers of dust on the infrastructures and plants of nearby residents. I was even made to understand that some health problems have been reported to be possibly caused by the polluted air thereat.

Madam Chairperson, being confronted with the urgency of the situation, I immediately convened a meeting at my Commission at 10.30 hours on the same day with the Manager of Welcome Industries, the officers of my Commission, including the Forestry Services, a Public Health Officer, the Officer in Charge of the Mauritius Research Council. MRC was invited in the meeting because the latter is actually working on a new project of Air Monitoring in Rodrigues and will assist in the monitoring of air quality in selected locations around Rodrigues, including near the stone crusher.

Madam Chairperson, Madam, the objectives of the meeting were to identify immediate mitigation actions, medium term solutions and long term measures to palliate to the nuisances noted.

Madam Chairperson, one of the urgent measures that my Commission could have taken is to issue a stop order to this stone crushing activity as per environmental laws in force. However, same has to be considered view the economic and social impacts that it will entail.

Madam Chairperson, Madam, I am informed that the company has production capacity of 41,000 concrete blocks and 5,000 tons of aggregates per week, that is, five working days. But, presently, it is operating at less than 50% of its normal capacity due to fall in demand. The company has 38 employees and on a regular basis, employs 30 drivers and helpers for the conveyance of boulders from the stone quarry to the stone crushing plant and the delivery of construction materials from the manufacturing plant to the general public. Besides, it is estimated by the Welcome Industries that more than 100 persons are engaged in the transportation of construction materials arising from the activities of the company around the island.

Madam Chairperson, in order to urgently abate the dust pollution, decision has thus been taken to carry out a more efficient watering of the stone crushing activities. The company has already installed sprinklers on the site. It is also made to understand that around 21 tanks of water are needed per day to water the yards, the stone crushing operations to prevent the problem of dust and that this minimum is hardly reached due to shortage of water in Rodrigues, mostly in summer.

Madam Chairperson, I have already contacted the Commissioner responsible for Water so that necessary assistance be provided to the company

regarding provision of water in order to be able to abate the dust pollution. This is the most urgent measure that has been taken since this falls within the public health domain. In addition, I am informed by the Manager of Welcome Industries that 120 metres of woven shade cloth, that is, charlon has already been ordered. These charlon will be placed on the boundary wall at the leeward side to fill the openings in the Eucalyptus natural screen. It is to be noted that the Eucalyptus screen has been severely destroyed during the passage of cyclone Gelena and Joaninha in February and March this year. This covering of the wall is expected to be completed within one month.

Madam Chairperson, I am also informed by the Manager of Welcome Industries that it will within weeks enclosed more thoroughly the crushers, the vibrating screens and other places where dust emanates.

Madam Chairperson, Madam, it was agreed during the meeting that the Company will need to identify a new location for its stone crushing activities within the shortest possible time and to consider using of mobile stone crushers.

Madam Chairperson, Madam, as regard to the lease agreement, the company has been granted a preliminary lease agreement of 20 years that expired in June 2015. The lease was renewed for another five years in 2017. After representation by the company, the lease was renewed for another nine years as from 31 July 2019 to 30 June 2028. However, the new lease is subjected to the following conditions:

- (i) To identify a new site for the relocation of its activities because of the problem of air pollution to the residents in the vicinity;
- (ii) Not to undertake any development on the site except for the development aiming at improving the environment. Any new development will warrant the approval of the Commission for Public infrastructure.

Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, since the new lease agreement has given the company nine years to relocate, we have agreed during the meeting that a definite calendar should be agreed for the relocation of the crushing plant which should come within a shorter time period to relieve the inhabitants of La Ferme Citadelle and the vicinity of polluting activities.

Madam Chairperson, Madam, I have decided to set up a Select Committee, chaired by myself, as from next week with the representatives of the Welcome Industries Ltd., the United Basalt Products and the relevant authorities in Rodrigues to fast tract the relocation process.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, being given that this is... the problem has been occurring for years and being given that the respected Commissioner is saying that his Commission has asked the owner to find, to identify a new site for the... to relocate the crusher, can I know whether he is aware that prior, a few years back, a new site has been identified? And, well, there have been talks with the owners and they were agreeable to relocate this stone crusher. Can we know what has become of this agreement?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, this agreement was just a verbal agreement and then, we were working towards that but unfortunately, the site that was chosen was... sort of chosen by the company was not the real... the good site because there was people also living in the vicinity. So, the plan is the Select Committee that we are putting in place will look into this matter and will try to identify. I said in the shortest possible time.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, can we know from the respected Commissioner whether... In fact, this site was chosen by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly itself; not by the owner and we all agree to that. Can we know whether this site at the time, it was given to this stone crusher, there were no family living there? Can we know why these sites around, the sites chosen, have been given to certain families? Can we know by this Government?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I am not aware of this, Madam Chairperson. What I know is as I said, I have given my words to these people that we will look into the matter. A Select Committee has been put in place. We will go and look at these different sites to see what is the best place. Even if it was chosen by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, it may be not... was not agreed by the company. So, that is why we will sit together as from next week to accelerate the process to relocate the Welcome Industries.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, *on doit appeler un chat un chat*. Is it not true that this site has been given to a hotel promoter? Now, this is why we have such problem? And, can we know whether the site that we... We are asking the owner to find another site. Do we have an idea where they have asked the owner to find a site?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I keep saying that we have set up a Select Committee and this will be dealt into the committee. So, the Welcome Industries may choose a site which is not compatible to us. We may choose a site that they do not like. So, that is why I said we have put forward a Select Committee to work overall of the thing but our main objective is to relocate in the shortest time the activities there.

The Minority Leader : Being given that the respected Commissioner is talking of the shortest time, can we have a time... Does he have a timeframe for the relocation of this stone crusher? Because people are suffering. There are many people suffering from respiratory ailments and can I know from the respected Commissioner whether he has made a survey to know how many people are suffering from respiratory ailments in this region?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes. We have different letters from these people. But, Madam Chairperson, the Minority Leader is pushing towards saying that these people are suffering. It is not yesterday! They have been in power for five years. What have they done? They... You know, the good thing about this is the people living there were happy to see a Commissioner coming to visit them and to see their problem because this has never been in the past, you know. That is what they said to me. That is what these people said to me and they were saying that they were confident that we will find a solution to their problem.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Madame la présidente.... intervenir parce que....

Madam Chairperson: Your mic, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Sorry?

Madam Chairperson: Your mic.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, the thing is that le Commissaire dit que... je ne sais pas s'il a bien compris qu'on a ce problème-là, il y a eu ce problème pendant longtemps. C'est la raison pour laquelle après 2015, on n'avait pas renouvelé le bail. C'est la raison pour laquelle on avait déjà construit la route à l'envers Anse Nicolas. C'est la raison pour laquelle il y avait déjà... parce qu'on avait déjà identifié le site parce que le contracteur doit avoir un site pour faire un *borehole*. C'est la raison pour laquelle on avait choisi Anse Nicolas. Le Commissaire ne peut pas venir aujourd'hui dire comme si ce problème-là date depuis avant comme si on n'a rien fait.

Madam Chairperson: Your question, please.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Ce que j'aimerais lui dire, c'est de reconsidérer l'endroit parce que c'est approprié parce qu'il y a toute la question des camionneurs qui sortent du site, c'est-à-dire, Montagne Plate pour aller sur le nouveau site de.... Mais malheureusement, ils ont donné le site à Oxenham.

Donc, j'aimerais... On insiste là-dessus de ce côté-ci de la Chambre. J'aimerais demander au Commissaire de voir si on peut reconsidérer de donner à la compagnie le site qu'on avait identifié dans le passé. Parce que...

Madam Chairperson: Thank you. Yes, Commissioner.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Je ne sais pas si ma mémoire est bonne. Le membre parlait de « ils ont pas renouvelé le truc depuis 2015 ». Je me demande est-ce qu'ils étaient au pouvoir en 2015. Est-ce que c'était eux qui devait renouveler ou pas renouveler. Quand est-ce qu'ils ont quitté le... *When did they leave... No, do not play with...*

Madam Chairperson: Order !

Mr. J. R. Payendee: *Do not play with me! It is not just playing!* Moi, j'ai dit, Madame, je maintiens. Ce n'est pas une question de site. Je vois où ils viennent. Ce n'est pas une question de site, qui choisit, qui a pris, qui a... Le problème là, il y a des gens qui ont des problèmes de santé. Il y a un problème qu'il faut résoudre et ce problème-là, pour le résoudre, le Commissaire tout seul ne va pas le faire. Le Welcome Industries tout seul ne va pas le faire ni l'Assemblée régionale. Ensemble, on va le faire. C'est pour ça. Le Select Committee, je crois que c'est la solution à ce problème. On va trouver. S'il faut retourner sur ce site dont il parle, on retournera. Donc, il faut trouver une solution et la solution, moi, je vais les trouver...

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Merci, Madame. Etant donné que...

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order !

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Etant donné que le Commissaire lui-même, il est parti là-bas, il a constaté nuisance que ça cause aux familles de la région, trouvez-vous ça normal que vous donnez des baux résidentiels juste devant ça, de l'autre côté du chemin ?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, j'admets que peut-être, le problème qu'il y aurait... J'ai demandé à la Police d'environnement, bon, s'il y a eu des plaintes par rapport à là. Au fait, ce problème date de longtemps. Mais les gens, ils ne demandaient pas à bouger Welcome. Parce que j'ai appris aussi qu'il y a pas mal de personnes qui vivent tout près qui ont eu des baux, qui ont eu des maisons construites là-bas et qui ont eu l'aide de Welcome Industry just to compensate for the thing and this is true ! And, this, I can prove. I can

prove this, that these people ‘has’ got help. They have got help from Welcome Industry.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Now, you look for a piece of... You look for a lease. Somebody look for a lease and then, you say, there is a nuisance here. I say come and help me, I will forget about your nuisance, you know. And, then, they accept the lease. They accept the lease and they got help from the Welcome to construct the house. And, it is not nice, it is not fair after that to come and say you know, this is causing damage to me! This is not fair. I agree that there has been some lease given there but it was agreed on both parties that yes, we give you the lease and you help us to construct the house by providing building materials which is the case, which is the case! I have been...

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I have been...

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. R. Payendee: You did know...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr. J. R. Payendee: You did know about this but let me put this point. I did not want to take it to this but I have to take it to the point that yes, there are some leases have been given there and these people were happy. Because by the time, you know Welcome Industry was established in 1973! It is not yesterday. So, after that, there is a lot of lease. A lot of government have given lease to people to stay around it. So, the problem of lease is not a problem. Now, let us look forward. Let us say how are we going to solve this problem of these people suffering. And, I have explained some of the measures that we are taking in the very short-term, medium term and long-term and one of my... the thing that I want to do is to work as hard as possible to relocate not all the activities but the activities causing harm, that is the crushing activities to another place so that these people can respire.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I am tempted to put this question. So, who will bear? Prior to the relocation of the stone crusher equipments and so on, so, who will bear the cost? I mean, there should be roads

being constructed, there should be electric poles being extended and water also being provided to the company. So, I would like to ask the Commissioner who will bear the cost.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, it seems that the Member wants to be... he wants to be a member of this Select Committee. This will be dealt, everything will be dealt in the Select Committee. That is why we put a Select Committee. Who will bear the cost? What do I know? How do I know who will bear the cost? You know. But if we have to bear the cost, we will bear it for the benefit of these people, Madam Chairperson.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, the respected Commissioner is talking of the Select Committee and we all know that a Select Committee must work according to a plan. Can we know whether the Executive Council has got a *plan d'aménagement* ready for this in order to tell the Committee here you can this stone crusher, here you do not have. Because actually, as things are actually, the stone crusher is in a residential area and I think we should never allow this to happen again and put it in a place where nobody will be affected. Can I know from the respected Commissioner whether we have a *plan d'aménagement du territoire*, whether we have an idea of where the stone crusher will be relocated?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, this is a very good question. Because this is what we are doing. We have the Suitability Land Mapping which is being done by my Commission itself and this will help to relocate the Welcome Industry.

The Minority Leader : Another question. The respected Commissioner has been talking of water, *la disponibilité de l'eau*. I have been made to understand that there is a borehole at the stone crusher site. Can we know whether... Well, this is not sufficient. Whether we are going to pay other lorries to carry water there. Can he enlighten us on that?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the borehole, yes, it is got a borehole there but the borehole is not sufficient. That is why we will call for one of the Members of the other side to help us with his borehole to get more water for this Welcome Industry.

Madam Chairperson: One last question. Please, be brief.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, thank you, Madam. J'aimerais demander au Commissaire en question, M. Richard Payendee. Madame, il y a eu le renouvellement de bail de Welcome Industries as from 2019 til 2028. Neuf ans.

Nine years. ‘Ce’ durée de temps, cette durée de temps, Madame la présidente, avec le *Select Committee* qui a été mis en place, ce n’est pas la première fois qu’on a des rapports et des rapports après plusieurs mois, plusieurs années de travail tout comme le projet de relocation des habitants de Sainte Marie. Ils ont tergiversé depuis 2012 jusqu’à 2019, ça va faire sept ans. Et c’est maintenant que les habitants de Sainte Marie are being relocated. Can I ask the Commissioner being given that the site of Anse Nicolas was already chosen by the previous Government and there was agreement between this Government at that time and the Welcome Industries, why can I request on behalf of these inhabitants of Grand La Fouche Corail request/made a plea to the Commissioner to reconsider the site of Anse Nicolas since all the amenities are placed there? I am telling about the borehole which is near to Pistache Dam, Pistache, I am talking with a road already accessed, already done. I am talking about the vicinity of the Montagne Plate. Can I “made” a plea to the Commissioner? To the Commissioner and to reconsider the site of Anse Nicolas at soonest for the benefit of these people who are suffering from lots of damages.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I insist that this... the Select Committee is the right authority to choose the best site for the relocation.

Madam Chairperson: Next question! No, no, I have already told. Next question!

The Minority Leader : B/134.

NEW REQUEST – PERMISSION TO SEARCH HIDDEN TREASURE

(No. B/134): The Minority Leader (Mr. L. J. Von-mally) asked the Commissioner for Arts and Culture whether, she will state if the Regional Government has received any new request for permission to search for any hidden treasure around the island of Rodrigues, indicating the Government’s policy on the matter, if any?

The Commissioner for Arts and Culture (Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina): Madam Chairperson, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has not received new requests for permission to search for any hidden treasure around the Island of Rodrigues apart from the Reported Case of Treasure at Saint Francois.

A general policy with regards to the discovery of treasures is devised according to how same is discovered.

Madam Chair, if a new request is received, same shall be treated under strict confidentiality until all parameters are cleared with all partners and establish the probability of the existence of same.

The Minority Leader : Can I know from the respected Commissioner being given that she has said that she has received no other request... no new request but there has been at least one. There is no new. Can we know how many we have got if there is no new? How many requests there have been actually?

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chairperson, the question was clear. New request. So, I need notice of this question.

The Minority Leader : I would like to ask the respected Commissioner concerning the policy, what... I know why you are not being transparent on that, *pourquoi il y a tant d'opacité*. Can I know from the respected Commissioner what is the policy concerning this excavation of treasure, for example the one at Saint François? What is the policy of this Government? How are we going along with that? Whether there will be... When the excavation will start, whether it will be made public? I would like to know. As a general policy.

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, I have replied to this question but I may repeat myself again. The policy with regards to discovery of treasure is made according to how same is discovered or whether a search is being proposed to discover same. So, if there is a treasure that is discovered, the policy, the actual policy that I replied last time will be applied and if a search is being proposed, another policy will be applied under the... with the collaboration of the National Heritage Fund. So, there is no opacity around it provided we have only written and formal request, the Commission will treat it. On a first instance with confidentiality as I have mentioned because researchers or discoverers at a point, they request confidentiality. So, this is treated as this. There is no opacity around anything.

The Minority Leader : Well, Madam Chair, the respected Commissioner is reacting to what... Well, I have... concerning the opacity. Well, let us be... Let us move forward. Can I know from the respected Commissioner what policy she is talking about and whether in the case of Saint François, whether when the archaeological search will start? We hope by professional, this will be made public. Whether MBC will be live and direct broadcast and everybody... a representative from the Government, from the opposition, from National Geography, M6, MBC will be there to see to it that everything is done in all transparency? Can we know?

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, I have already replied to question with regards to Saint François and excavation works since last sitting but let me remind the House with regard to very serious issues, I always make it a point that everybody is invited and get on board. For example, last time, we had the validation of Creole. We invited the opposition to be there. No one came. So, with regards to urgent and pressing issues, we do needful to ensure that everybody is there.

The Minority Leader : *Madam Chair, mixing issues. Creole and with this treasure. Everybody... Why I am putting this question? Because now, all over the world, Rodrigues is being known as l'île aux trésors. Therefore, on doit essayer d'utiliser cela pour mettre Rodrigues encore plus sur la map du monde. Je voudrais... C'est pourquoi je voudrais demander à la Commissaire si elle est en train de contempler la possibilité d'avoir... la fouille qui va commencer, j'espère que ça va être faite par des professionnels, des archéologues, pas n'importe qui avec pios, la pel vine fouille fouillé vine gate li non. Par des professionnels et que ce soit fait en toute transparence en présence des... live and direct en présence des cameras du télévision comme National Geography, MBC etc.*

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: I have already replied, Madam Chair.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, can I have one question Madam, with regards to this issue? To the issue of treasurer... treasure in Rodrigues, around in Rodrigues. *Est-ce que la Commission de l'Assemblée régionale, la Commission des Arts et de la culture, le fait que nous avons fully autonomous in the matter of patrimoine tangible et intangible*, does the Commissioner can enlighten the House with regards to the protocol which has already been established or I do not know if there are ? If Rosaire discover a treasure tomorrow, what will I do? What should I do, Madam?

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, I already replied to the policy questions. So, this issue is hypothetical and we treated in transparency. I told you I replied to the question last time and everything in the last times reply.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame, la question est directe. Ce n'est pas hypothétique ou n'importe quoi. Je demande il y a eu des découvertes de trésors, est-ce que... Jusqu'à maintenant, on n'a pas d'information précis sur le trésor qui a été soi-disant découvert. On ne sait pas si ça existe ou pas. Mais là, nous sommes dans une situation difficile parce qu'il y a des petits... Comme on dit, il y a des *struggles* des deux cotés. Il y a M. X qui prétend qu'il a découvert un trésor à Rodrigues, il a fait un affidavit et jusqu'à maintenant, Madame...

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: On a point of order, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madame...

Madam Chairperson:

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: I think the question was about new requests for permission of search of hidden treasure and now, the Member is talking about a question which has already been replied with regard to treasure. So, I think it is out of order.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order, respected Members! Member Perrine, would you allow me to rule? Yes, indeed, this question has already been answered during previous sitting and it is up to the Commissioner to give further information or not but I still remind the House of Standing Orders that clearly state that we should not bring to the House any question that has already been answered or any debate that has already taken place within the 12 months. So, respected Members, please restrict your supplementary questions to the main question being on the Order Paper of today.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, in fact, we have put... We are putting question to enlighten the House and the people of Rodrigues. This is because people are at a loss, they do not understand anything. This is why we are asking the respected Commissioner to enlighten us on the policy. This is what she has not done up to now.

[Interruptions]

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: The policy of new request has been clearly spelt out in this House. If the treasure is discovered haphazardly, there is a protocol that is established, if someone decides to make a search in Rodrigues, another protocol is applied. That is, the person has to have the approval of the NHF and of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to go forward, to go through research and the issue of ownership also is addressed, then, there is a search. But when it is haphazard, another issue cropped up. This is what we are doing. So, what happens is that the two different situations are different but the

politician of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is clear on the two but we have no request that the policy is there.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Can I ask the Commissioner to table the policy that she mentioned in both cases?

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: In the question, it was not mentioned. I will table the policy in the House next sitting, Madam Chair.... question to table it.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Chairperson, is the Commissioner aware that one of his *collègues* tampered this site at Saint François?

Madam Chairperson: This is not allowed here! This is serious allegation. You have to withdraw! You have to withdraw! Unconditionally, you have to withdraw. This is not allowed, respected Member.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, there are appropriate forums to deal with those allegations.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, please! There are appropriate forums to deal with those allegations and the Assembly is not one of them. Please, respected Members from both sides of the House, I will make an appeal for both sides of the House to maintain the dignity, the discipline and the decorum of this House. Yes. Next question!

The Deputy Chairperson: Madam Chair, B/135.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

(No. B/135): The Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel (Mr. J. R. Ramdally) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the socio-economic study and the environmental impact assessment undertaken by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in connection with the airport development project, he will enlighten the House on if same has been completed and, in the affirmative, to state the major findings and recommendations of both, and, in the negative, to give details about the status as at to date of the two studies?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as a prerequisite to the financing of the Construction of a new runway at *Plaine Corail*, *l'Agence Francaise de Développement (AFD)* and the European Union (EU) have requested that two studies be carried out namely:

- a) A Socio-Economic Study; and
- b) An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment.

As regards to the Socio Economic study which is financed by the AFD, the contract was awarded to the consultancy firm, Deloitte (Mauritius) in February 2019. The objective of the study is to identify and quantify all the socio-economic impacts of the construction of a new runway.

Following the submission of the draft report in August 2019, the views and comments of RRA and AFD were thereafter transmitted to the Consultant for finalisation. It is expected that the final report would be submitted by the end of this current month.

Madam Chairperson, I am further informed that the major conclusions of the report are as follows:

- a) An Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of the investment at around 6% which is considered to be very promising;
- b) Tourism: With the opening of other air routes to Rodrigues, based on the target of 120,000 tourism arrivals by 2030, tourist expenditure on the island may potentially increase by 50%. Moreover, it is also expected that the number of rooms will have to be increased to 1,200 compared to 900 presently, to be able to accommodate the expected 120,000 visitors. This would lead to the creation of a minimum of 300 additional direct jobs in the travel and tourism sectors.
- c) Agriculture: With the construction of the new runway, based on the potential cultivation of 1500 hectares, the number of persons involved in the agricultural sector could be tripled.
- d) Fisheries: Opportunities for off lagoon fishing would be created given the increase in demand for local consumption by the population and the visitors and also the creation of export prospects to Mauritius and to neighboring islands. A minimum additional Rs 225 m. in terms of gross output could be expected in that specific sector.

- e) Export: Opportunities of export of some high value local products such as chili, lemon, octopus, superior grade fish amongst others would be created with the availability of air cargo facilities.
- f) Job Creation: The construction of the new runway will have an impact on indirect and direct employment both during the construction phase and during the operation phase.

During the construction phase, it is estimated that some 500 workers would be required and 1,000 indirect jobs will on the other side... on the other hand be created.

Madam Chairperson, as regards, the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, the draft final report has been submitted on 02 August 2019.

The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment study covers amongst others the following:

- A baseline environment study;
- A socio cultural impact study;
- Development of an environmental and social management plan;
- Proposals for mitigating measures;
- Development of an environmental monitoring plan.

The report has been widely circulated amongst all stakeholders for their views and comments before finalisation. A consolidated version of all the comments is being worked out for further transmission to the consultant before finalisation. I wish to further inform the House that this report shall be on the basis of the EIA report to be submitted to the Ministry of Environment for the issue of an EIA License.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that no major critical environmental and social impacts have been identified on the new land-based alignment of the runway as compared to the alignment proposed in the Ecorys Feasibility Study Report.

Madam Chairperson, once both reports would have been finalised, I shall come with a detailed statement to the House on the final findings.

On the basis of the positive preliminary findings of both studies, AFD has already approved a loan of €85 m. for the construction of the new runway and associated facilities whereas the European Union (EU) is in the final process of approving a grant of €16 m.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, in fact, by dillydallying, by beating about the bush, Rodrigues has lost about ten years on this project. Therefore, can I ask the respected Chief Commissioner whether concerning the Ecorys Report, prior to tabling of the Ecorys Report, can I know whether the EIA that has been according to him was not done properly? Prior to the proposal of the four options?

The Chief Commissioner: What EIA done properly? Which EIA? We are now preparing after the two reports, we will... will send our request for the Ministry of the Tourism in Mauritius for an EIA. I do not know what it is about the EIA in the past.

The Minority Leader : Well, Madam Chair, the Chief Commissioner himself has said that for the Ecorys Report, there was a problem with the EIA. This is why I am putting the question. Is he saying that the EIA prior to the Ecorys Report, was the EIA badly done? This is what I am asking because we have lost 10 years.

The Chief Commissioner: Ecorys. Ecorys has proposed a runway parallel to the one now and what will happen? What will happen? A lot of caves under what they are proposing whereas what we are proposing, it is along the seaside, you know. This is, you know... Well, I think it is better for you to put a question on that to my friend here, you know.

[Interruptions]

The Chief Commissioner: No, no, no! We do not know! We know!

[Interruptions]

The Chief Commissioner: We know!

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Chief Commissioner: What Ecorys will done if we have a runway...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Chief Commissioner: ...parallel to the one now, you will know exactly what will happen...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Chief Commissioner: ...to the construction of this runway proposed by Ecorys.

The Minority Leader : Madam Chair, the Chief Commissioner is saying that there are case for the option form, case. Well, is he saying that these professionals coming from Europe, they have badly done their job and that they were to give us a runway on caves? Can you table that? Table it!

[Interruptions]

The Chief Commissioner: Well, I ask one of our Members of this side in the future to put a question on if the Ecorys, the runway proposed by Ecorys, what would be the dangers caused to our environment at Plaine Corail.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Volbert.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Le Chef commissaire a parlé de *socio-economic study*. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire est au courant qu'il y aurait un impact majeur en ce qui concerne avec le déplacement des habitants de Sainte Marie avec leurs bétails et avec les bétails de ceux résidant de la région. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire peut nous dire qu'est-ce que son Gouvernement compte faire pour remédier à ça.

The Chief Commissioner: C'est le rapport ! C'est le rapport ! Et on a lu un peu. C'était écrit qu'il n'y aura d'animaux autour du *runway*. Ça, c'est *okay*. Alors...

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Next question !

[Interruptions]

The Minority Leader : B/136, Madam.

FORTHCOMING DRY SEASON – MITIGATION PLAN

– PIPE WATER LEAKAGE

(No. B/136): The Minority Leader (Mr. L. J. Von-Mally) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to measures considered for the smooth distribution of water island-wise during the forthcoming dry season, he will state if any mitigation plan for pipe water leakage has been put in place at his Commission, giving details?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Madam Chairperson, with the existing water distribution system in Rodrigues, water leakage is considered as negligible based on the following:

- (i) Distribution pipelines are laid above ground whereby leaks are easily detected and quickly repaired.
- (ii) Galvanised pipes and associated fittings are prone to corrosion and leakage... which are prone to corrosion and leakage are being progressively replaced by HDPE pipes and fusion couplings which are relatively leak free.
- (iii) With the gravity distribution system, instead of pressurised, there is less pressure in the pipeline and therefore, volume of water loss by leakage is not consequent.
- (iv) The actual water distribution is made by turns of laterals and therefore, the leakage on laterals is minimal.

Notwithstanding the above, the Commission is continuously working to reduce the water leakage by:

- Involvement of our maintenance team:
Each of the four sections of the Water Resources Unit has a maintenance team, which ensure rapid intervention in case of leakage and for upgrading of the network.
- We have provision of sufficient stock of pipes and fittings for intervention.
There is an annual budget for procurement of pipes and fittings which are used for reparation and upgrading of network.
- And, then, we are replacing the remaining galvanised pipes progressively.

Madam Chairperson, it is worth to note the project undertaken to reduce leakage of water namely:

- 2,997 m of old ductile iron pipes were replaced by buried HDPE pipes from Anse Rafin treatment plant to Rivière Coco Reservoir;
- 2395 m of HDPE pipes between boreholes and reservoirs were repaired and buried;
- 200m of galvanised pipes were replaced with buried HDPE pipes at Terre Borne/ La Ferme;
- The galvanised pipe from Grand La Fouche Corail to Cascade Jean Louis has been replaced with about 1 km of HDPE pipes;
- We have had 100 of galvanised pipes which were replaced with buried HDPE pipes at Cascade Jean Louis and then;
- There have been 4,000m of HDPE pipes were used to replace galvanized pipes in Port Mathurin for Phase 1.

As regard to the actual projects, the second phase for renewal of pipelines in Port Mathurin has already been initiated. The project is actually being designed by the consultant, Luxconsult Ltd. We have decided to simultaneously merge the project with the NDU Drainage Project (phase 2) in Port Mathurin so as to reduce the cost to a minimum.

The Minority Leader : I am astonished by the answer given by the Deputy Chief Commissioner saying that there is negligible leakage when in fact, here and there in Rodrigues, you name it. In different regions, you have leakage...

Madam Chairperson: Come with your question, please!

The Minority Leader : Of course. He has been making statement. I am just talking, introducing myself, you are stopping me? I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether he has a hotline to help any people seeing leakage everywhere to just tell that?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner : Madam Chairperson, I have stated in my answer that we have maintenance team which are established in each and every section. The people, whenever they have a problem with water, they know where to phone. They have our section at La Ferme, our section at

Malabar. We have just established another section in the East to expedite matter and of course, we have our Water Section in the northern part of the island. Whenever there is any problem, there are telephones lines which are available by any villager, by any citizen to phone to these different sites.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mme. la présidente, j'aimerais entendre le Commissaire sur une réalité qu'il y a à Rodrigues. La réalité c'est que dès fois lorsque l'eau coule sur une ligne, comme on dit, il y a un jeu d'eau. Et là, lorsqu'on demande au Valve Operator qu'est-ce qui se passe ? *Pé tir l'air dan tiyo* ! Et, on apprend que ce sont les Valve Operators qui percent le tuyau et qui laisse partir, soit disant l'air, l'air qui a été compressé dans le tuyau. Ça on peut comprendre. Est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous parler là-dessus ? Comment il explique le fait que ça arrive ? Qu'il y a des Valve Operators qui ont du recours à percer les tuyaux. Et, maintenant il nous dit que s'est *negligeable* la perte d'eau dans les tuyaux.

[Interruption]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, exactly. Yes, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Order! Respected Member, you please allow the Commissioner to answer.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As my colleague is saying this is not a new system in Rodrigues. Water is not distributed on a daily basis. As such, many of the laterals they remain empty. And, whenever water is to be distributed sometimes there is pockets of air which remain in the lateral or sometimes in the main also. Unfortunately, or I should say fortunately, we have had an ingenious way of removing these which I have given instruction myself to place the appropriate air valve so as to ensure the removal of these. So, we have, I have said in my answer. We have a budget which is provided for the supplies of equipment and pipes for the betterment of the system, we in that provision has provided for the purchase of additional valve and progressively we are going to ensure that we remove that. Now, there is leakage which is negligible. Why do I say negligible, Madam Chairperson? Because if you see the different reports, the different reports that have been written, even under your government, it is considered that in Rodrigues there is loss of water leakage which is less by 10% compared to the countries where they have a leakage of 30% or more. So, this why on a comparative basis as regards to other countries, it is considered as negligible. Because our leakage water is only 10%.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I feel that I need to make this clear for all Members. Far from attempting to restrict Members' fundamental freedoms I have to emphasize that any freedom exercise in this Chamber must be done in conformity with the Standing Orders and Rules of this Assembly. Rules which do not emanate from the free and personal will of the Chair but that has been adopted by this August House.

At this point of the Fourth Regional Assembly's mandate, Members will agree that, one and all is seasoned with the practice and convention of parliament. There can therefore be no reasonable excuse or justification to any affront and disrespect towards the solemnity and decorum of this House.

Respected Members, allow me to remind one and all, for the last time I hope, that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is an August House where order, discipline, loyalty and fairness amongst others should prevail. And, if everyone abides to the Provisions and of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Regional Assembly, the running of the public business of this House will ensue fairly.

To conclude, Respected Members, on both sides of the House, I request you to give due respect to this institution, be responsible in your action, in your debate to show the right signal for the benefit and progress of the Rodriguan people at large. Thank you for your attention.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: Madame, Mme. la présidente, cette affaire de fuite d'eau.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, before you proceed, I would like to remind you of supplementary question. There is no need to introduce any supplementary questions. Standing Order 22 is very clear about that. You just ask for any clarification.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: *Can I proceed? Thank you.* Par rapport à cette affaire de *leakage*/perdition. Tous les jours je circule à travers Rodrigues. Tous les jours il y a des perditions partout. Il y a même des perditions au Latéral Tindoye ou l'eau coule tous les jours dans certaines régions de l'île. Mme. la présidente, ce qu'on veut faire, on veut apporter notre contribution pour résoudre ce problème. Actuellement là, à l'Anse aux Anglais, à Roseaux il y a des fuites d'eau. Quand on téléphone aux différentes institutions concernées. Personne ne répond ou personne... où on te dit, on va arriver. Mais jamais ! Nous ce qu'on veut, ce qu'on souhaite, avec le Commissaire, qui je pense veut aussi la même chose, ce qu'on souhaite c'est que, il y est quelque chose de solide, de structurelle qui est mis sur place et que, par exemple, sur une

brochure, par exemple, on nous dit ben voilà, pour la Région 1 il y a ça, pour la Région 2 il y a ça. Si vous avez des fuites d'eau il y a tel numéro de téléphone à téléphoner, etc. Si jamais, il y a quoi que ce soit, vous rapportez directement au DH. C'est ça, ce qu'on veut. A Latéral Tindoye actuellement, ça coule.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you have already made your point.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The point, Madam Chairperson, is that; in every section be it at La Ferme, in the Northern, Eastern which has just been established or in the Central part, all the villagers know about the available phone number that can be used whenever there is a problem either with leakage or where there is a problem with water distribution. Yes! There is, they already know about this, Madam Chairperson. Yes. I, personally made a survey and I requested my officers to give it to me, about complaints regarding water leakage. Yes! Yes! Within one week we had only five complaints as regards to water leakage. Meaning that the villagers and their citizens they are helping us in this endeavour. And, I would of course, seize the opportunity to encourage every citizen to inform my Commission whenever there is any water leakage that occurs within their villages or on the lines lateral which are serving them.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Yes, Madam, can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether there is any special squad available in your Commission to look into damage pipes and leakage around the island?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I table, Madam Chairperson, that we have a maintenance team at each level, at each section and we have also set up a squad during the weekend. Whenever there is, because some people, these maintenance team they work up to 10.45 during Saturdays and there is a gap, a vacuum from 10.45 on Saturdays to Monday at 08.00. So, this is why we have given instruction for the setting up – it has been set up already in fact, since 2017 of a squad which will, how to say, intervene whenever there is a problem of water leakage during that period.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, I would like to ask the Commissioner, he talked about a survey. I would like to ask him when did he made the survey? Whether it is winter or summer? Because he has been talking about only five complaints being received. Whether the survey has been carried out in winter or in summer?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, survey can be of different times. The Respected Member himself he is a scientist, he knows that we can have informal surveys, we can have formal surveys, we can have samples. There are so many ways that surveys can be carried out. So, from

myself, I said I did it personally. What did I do? I can ask anybody I phoned just to have an outline of the situation. Yes!

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

The Minority Leader: B/137.

**ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION – NO. OF PROJECTS – INDIAN
OCEAN COMMISSION (IOC)**

(No. B/137) Mr. L. J. Von-Mally, GOSK (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to environment protection in Rodrigues, he will state and table on the number of projects that have been proposed or financed by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), from 2017 to date, giving details and indicating the number thereof that has been completely implemented, their respective time-frame and the amount of funds used therefor?

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam, Chairperson Madam, three projects have been co-financed under the IOC/RRA program since 2017 as follows:

- (i) Model Eco-Village Project at Rivière Coco;
- (ii) Production of Energy from organic wastes for cooking purposes;
- (iii) Setting up of a nature reserve at Cascades Pigeon.

Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the first IOC project, co-financed project is the model eco-village project at Rivière Coco which forms part of our vision in making Rodrigues an ecological island; mostly regarding the use of renewable energy sources.

The model eco village project at Rivière Coco comprises the following activities:

- setting up of a solar P.V Farm for the benefit of the whole village;
- setting up of a solar charging station and procurement of an electric vehicle for demonstration purposes;
- installation of six bio digesters for biogas production; and

/UNREVISED/

- installation of solar street lightings.

Madam Chairperson, the model eco village started in August 2017 and the scheduled completion date is November 2019. The project value is Rs 15 m. and co-funded by the European Union to the tune of 50 %.

As at to date the following activities have already been implemented:

- Installation of 40 street lightings
- Procurement of an electric vehicle
- Setting up of a charger station for the electric vehicle
- Construction of 6 bio digesters

The only activity which is not yet completed is the setting up of the solar PV farm of capacity 100 KW. Procurement exercise has already been launched and the contract will be awarded shortly after finalisation of some technical modalities with the CEB. The cost of the P.V farm project is around Rs 8 m.

Mrs. Chairperson, the second IOC co-finance project is the household biogas project which started in November 2017 and the completion date is November 2019. This project consists of the implementation of 153 bio digesters at Le Chou, L'Union, Graviers, Remir, Ile Michele and Palissade. Beneficiaries were selected by each of the Village Committees and submitted by the Rodrigues Council of Social Services, an official partner on the project. For the purpose of this implementation, the project also included, the training of masons by a consultant which was assigned to Mr. Moses Pumpuni from Ghana. The training was conducted over a period of one month last October. Out of this 153 digesters, 60 have been constructed and preparatory works have been completed for 140 digesters. Two teams of masons are now active on the site. The project is expected to be completed on time.

The total project budget is Rs 20 m. of which 50% is contributed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, the third IOC project co-finance project is the setting up of a natural reserve at Cascade Pigeon. The project started on 25th of March 2017 for a total of 172,000 Euros. The project consists of the rehabilitation of Cascade Pigeon catchment area in collaboration with the surrounding communities by:

- (i) eradication of exotic and invasive species;

- (ii) developing the site as eco-tourist site;
- (iii) providing support to existing apiculture in the vicinity;
- (iv) preserving and protecting the existing water facilities.

The project is still ongoing and in this present budget there is provision of Rs 1 m. to complete the planting of native species that died during plantation.

Some 75,000 seedlings will be planted by the local community of the surrounding during the next planting season from January 2020 to June 2020.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, for the sake of transparency, I will ask the Respected Commissioner, to table the three projects? And, for the sake of transparency, I would like to know whether he will do so? And, can I know what is the percentage of completion of each project?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I said the percentage. I said the second one will be completed on time. You know! And, all the projects are to be completed on time, that is, the end of the project is in November. Since the completion date is not finished.

Madam Chairperson: Are you tabling? You have to say you are tabling.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, I am tabling the information.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson Madam, during his Budget Speech, the Commissioner has been talking concerning the eco-village at Rivière Coco. And, he has been talking a lot but he has enumerated only a few projects which have been achieved prior to this project so far. So, I would like to ask him as regards to green roofing. He has been talking about green roofing at that time, I remember. So, where matter stands regarding this project?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, green roofing was one of the activities that was supposed to be implemented in the project. But unfortunately, after having done quite a lot of research, after having gone to different places where this project was supposed to have succeeded, it was proved that this is not something to consider. That is why, you know whenever you have a project you normally, if the project is working, you go forward with it, if it is not working then you change. So, the activity was changed. Even the one for the solar panels. It was supposed to be individual solar panels. But unfortunately, it did not work. So, we had to go towards the big solar farm. And, the budget which

was allocated for green roofing has been shifted to put in the budget of the big solar panel.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner, whether any project emanating from the IOC has been discarded or set aside?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I am not aware of this, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: On the same line. He has referred to the Budget Speech itself, he has talked last time about the conversional *piquant loulou* project, the IOC. Converting *piquant loulou* into electricity. So, I am very surprised not to see this project mentioned in his answer. So, I would like to ask him where matter stands regarding this project concerning the eradication of *piquant loulou*?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Yes, Madam Chairperson, in fact, yes. This is a project that we are in the pipe line. This is, we have had some consultants, *bé atan!*

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: We have had some consultants who have come to do the study but there is no money, there is no project, there is no budget for this. This is coming soon. But before implementing any project, we have to do the study. We are waiting the reports from people, from SIRAD who will give the reports soon. After that, then we will implement the thing.

[Interruption]

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, the Respected Commissioner, has been talking of... the project is coming soon. Can we know how soon is soon? Whether he has a time frame for that?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: This is not true, Madam Chairperson. How soon is soon? We cannot, how can we implement a project where the consultant has not yet submitted the report. The project will be implemented as soon as we get... and this I have no control on it, unfortunately, Madam Chairperson.

[Interruption]

The Minority Leader: I would like to ask the Respected Commissioner, is it not true that being given...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member Grandcourt, please.

The Minority Leader: Is it not true, I would like to ask the Respected Commissioner, due to the sluggishness in taking decision from the part of the government, is it not true that the project concerning the eradication of *acacia nilotica*, the *piquant loulou*, is it not true that the project has lapsed?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: This is not true, Madam Chairperson. There has never been any project about... there has been projects with eradication of *piquant loulou*. And, this is an ongoing project which is done by my Commission. Yes, but it is not as I produced, just given to the Members, it is not a project in itself which has been funded by IOC. Because the question was most about this, about projects which are being funded under the IOC. So, this project is not funded by/under the IOC. This is implemented by my Commission. There is another one coming regarding *piquant loulou*. There is another as well with what we did with *piquant loulou* to make the furniture. And, this is not funded by IOC. There is a lot of projects being run by my Commission. The question was about; questions was clear that projects funded under IOC. So, the projects, if you want me to elaborate on all the projects. There is plenty of projects being done by my Commission. But this project is not... the *piquant loulou* project is not funded under the IOC.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs. Chairperson, B/138.

REPAIR OF ROADS

(No. B/138) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether in regard to the repair of roads in Rodrigues, he will state, for the benefit of the House, where matter stands as at to date?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, a Works Order to the tune of Rs 1.7 m. was issued on 14th June 2019 for repairs of different roads around the Island as hereunder: -

1. Soupir – Mt Charlot;
2. Cyganges;
3. Port Mathurin;
4. Anse Raffin - Rivière Coco;
5. Reposoir – La Ferme;
6. Malartic access road;

/UNREVISED/

7. Access Mourouk reservoir;
8. Access Brûlé reservoir;
9. Accacia;
10. Anse Pansia and Baie Malgache; and
11. Baie Topaze.

These repairs have already been completed.

Another Works Order was issued on 27th August 2019 and have been completed on 2nd September 2019 to the tune of Rs 746,183 for repair of the following roads -

1. Brûlé to Bel Air;
2. Quatre Vents to Montagne Tonnerre;
3. Mangues to La Ferme; and
4. Route de L'Autonomie.

As I have said the above repairs have been completed.

As regards, to Mont Charlot road which was damaged during torrential rains of 1st June 2019, a design has been submitted by the contractor and evaluated by my Commission. The contractor has been instructed to proceed forwards with the repairs and works are expected to start shortly.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, regarding Montagne Charlot, the road has been damaged the 1st June and as at to date nothing has been done. We have put so many questions. I think it is the third question we are putting on the Montagne Charlot road. So, I would like to ask the Commissioner who is responsible? What is his power as Commissioner to put pressure on these guys to repair the road? People are suffering, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. So, what is his stand on this road? Everybody can come and say soon.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you. You have already put your question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, so I would like to ...

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, if the Member remember well, I elaborated lengthily on the procedures that are to be adopted for the repairs of that road. The first thing is that we have to wait for the evaluation of the assurance by the contractor. Because what has...some of the

damage will have to be... has been ensured and we will have to be paid by the contractor itself, one thing. Once the assurance report has been submitted, then we go ahead with the evaluation of what is to be done. This has been submitted to my Commission. The report has been submitted by the contractor. It has been evaluated by my Commission. I have made undue diligence to ensure that this proposal of the contractor is cross-checked by an independent body. This means by the consultant, which work under my Commission to ensure what is to be done is completed. I have stated that we have given instruction for the reparation of the road. And, as I have been informed the contractor is awaiting for the shipment for some of its materials to start the preparation.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, all that the Respected Commissioner is saying, this is not our problem. Our problem is that the road has not yet been repaired. That is our problem. That is our point. That is our point. So, I would like to ask him why is it the bitumen concrete, that is, the final layer of the road has not been put. May be this is why this is causing, it has caused damage to the... I would like to ask him why this road has not been completed?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chair, I have given explanation to the Respected Member. We have reevaluated what happened on 1st June. Yes! Of course, this is not your problem. You are not Commissioner; this is not your problem. Of course! It will be... *Li commence amerde moi!*

[Interruption]

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: On a point of order. *Tone tomb dan piège!* On a point of order, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. Section 36 of the Standing... he is imputing motive as if I am "*amerde li*". So, can he just remove his words, please?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I remove what I have said. Okay, yes, it is okay.

[Interruption]

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, we have to be clear, Madam Chairperson. I know about, I know...

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please. You have to wait for my ruling.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Yes, indeed. Respected Member, for your information this is not section 36 and indeed the Commissioner has been using a word which is offensive in this House and you have to withdraw.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I withdraw the word. But to give additional information to the Respected Member. Yes, there has been damaged caused to the road. He was speaking about the rehabilitation of the surface – *coltar*. In fact, there is a whole set of works which have to be done on the road with respect to what happen on 1st June. It is not only the bitumen layer that is going to be rehabilitated. We are coming ahead with the introduction of French drains. This is why it has to be studied by an independent body. We are incorporating also a new cross drain just near Mr. Allas. And, of course, we are also additional... we are adding duo textile membrane under the road. This is why I have said in my answer that we are... the contractor is awaiting for the shipment of his materials so that we can proceed along with the complete reparation.

The Minority Leader: The Respected Commissioner, has been talking of drains. And, I have been made to understand this is because of the problem of drains that the road has such problem with the cyclone. Can I know whether there will be enough drain being built? Now, he has been talking of drain near Allas. There was a drain there. There was a bridge that has been cancelled. I do not know why. Can I know from the Respected Commissioner, whether several small bridges will build like before in order to avoid such problem, the recurrence of same?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, with respect to question which has been asked in the past, I elaborated that what happened at Montagne Charlot is not due to one factor but to many factors. There are so many factors which are associated with that damaged. I spelled out, I remembered well about the water which is draining from Soupîrs to that part. This part of the road is not completed. I spoke at that time about the associated drainage system which has to be worked out uphill so as to canalized the water at a particular point on the road so that it does not... Yes, in the new design which has been provided by the contractor, evaluated by the Commission and by we are producing, this is why we are using duo textile membrane. And, along the road there will be what is known as perforated pipes, perforated pipes all across the road. 20 metres at intervals so that if ever there is water which crops underneath the road, then it is going to be channeled into the drains which are alongside.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: B/139.

**WATER LORRIES SUPPLYING WATER – FIRE
OUTBREAKS/ROCHE BON DIEU DUMPING SITE**

(No. B/139) Mr. F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to water lorries supplying water to control the recent fire outbreaks at Roche Bon Dieu Dumping site, he will state the: -

- (a) number of lorries involved therefor per day, indicating the number of days this operation has taken place; and
- (b) amount of money to be paid per trip and the procurement method used therefor, if any?

The Commissioner for Environment and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, this is to inform the House that three fire outbreaks were recorded on the Roche Bon Dieu Dumping Site for the month of August 2019. The first one, a major outbreak was initially reported to my Commission on Tuesday the 1st of October 2019 on about 05.00 hours in the morning. 1st August 2019. *Sorry gagne droit fer ene ti erer, non?*

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please. Be serious about replying your answer.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: The Fire Services were immediately alerted of the issue and a fire fighting operation started at about 06.30 a.m. on the same day. The second outbreak occurred on the 22nd of August 2019 and the last one on the 31st of August 2019.

As regards, to part (a) of the question:

- (i) Five water tanker lorries were involved in the firefighting operation for nine days as regards to the fire outbreak of 01 August to 11 of August 2019;
- (ii) One water tanker lorry was involved in a firefighting operation for one day as regards to the fire outbreak of the 22nd August 2019 from 07.30 hours to 16.00 hours; and

- (iii) Three water tanker lorries were involved in a firefighting operation for nine days as regards to the fire outbreak of 31st of August 2019 between noon to 18.00 hours.

Madam Chairperson, Madam, as regards to part (b) of the question, the water tanker lorries were paid at a tune of Rs 2,000 per trip. Since it was an emergency issue, as per procurement Act 2006 Section 21, Emergency Procurement was used. The owners were contacted by phone to provide water supply services to the firefighting operation.

In addition to the five private water tanker lorries, as regards to the fire outbreak of the 1st of August, one private crawler at a tune of Rs 5,175 (VAT inclusive) per hour and one government bulldozer were also mobilised for the operation. Furthermore, water was provided by the Agricultural Services from the '*Retenue Collinaire*' at Batatrand. Some 1300 cubic metres of water was needed to light out the major fire.

Madam Chairperson, Madam, the costs of operations to circumscribe the first outbreak started from 1st of August amount to Rs 540,000 for the services of water tanker lorries and Rs 217,350 for the services of a crawler.

As regards to the fire outbreak of 22nd August 2019, the costs of operation amounted to Rs 12,000 for the services of water tanker and for the 31st of August the total cost amounted to Rs 18,000 for the service. Thank you, Madam.

The Minority Leader: Can I know from the Respected Commissioner, being given that the fire outbreak occurred on three occasions, can we now know whether this was by bacterial activity or criminal activity?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I cannot give a definite answer to this one. Bacterial, I do not know. But criminal, we do think that it could have been criminal.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, can we know from the Commissioner what has been the output of enquiry from the Police?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Enquiry still on, Madam.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, if I heard well, Rs 540,000 has been disbursed for lorries and divided by 200, this make a total of 270 lorries. *Non*, 270 trips. 270, 270 *courses*. This is multiply by 5 m³. *Comier li fer ban la?* I mean, more than 1000 m³ of water has been put, has been put in the dumping

site. So, can I ask the Commissioner what about leaching? What about percolation? Because we have been there! We have been there – 270 trips of water there has been leaching. So, we have percolation as well. We have been on site. So, can he tell us what about this issue? Whether he has taken this issue under consideration?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, what about leaching? What about leaching? What is leaching? Does leaching not happen when it rains, Madam? So, how much, you know, how many cubic metres of water have been with the last rain that we had? So, what was the...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr. J. R. Payendee: What was the issue, Madam? The issue was there was fire. So, how do we put fire off? Is there any magic way of putting it up if we do not use water? So, I do not see this question as being a very responsible one, Madam, sorry.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, we are dealing with waste. He is always playing in this Assembly, Mrs. Chairperson, Madam. He is always playing! We are talking about waste. There is the Environment Protection Act, there is the Health Act, there is the Ground Water Act, which need to be taken into consideration. So, I would like to ask him once more, what has happened because we are talking about waste, contamination and so on. That is why it is fenced. That is why it is fenced, the dumping site. That is why Police is enquiring on the matter. Because this is serious we are dealing with waste. So, it is different with rain water. So, that is why I am asking him whether he has taken this into consideration, yes or no? So, that is why... from him.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, was the fencing supposed to prevent leaching? The fencing? No, this is wrong! The question is we had to put this fire off and the only means that we had to use was water and we did what we had to do and the fire is now gone, Madam.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, if I have been made to understand...

Madam Chairperson: Order.

The Minority Leader: If I have been made to understand that this fire started spontaneously because of bacterial activity, if we want to put prevent this happening again, can I ask the Respected Commissioner to see to it that *le*

triage des déchets se fasse dans le plus bref délai? Et, que le broyeur soit utilisé à bon échéant pour qu'on puisse enlever toute la matière organique et utiliser cette matière organique pour l'agriculture. Ainsi il n'y aura plus de feu là-bas une fois pour toute.

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chair, je suis d'accord avec le Membre que oui, le tri de déchet. Mais il est en train de défoncer une porte déjà ouverte, Madame. La porte est déjà ouverte. On a le projet, on a le projet déjà là. Il vient parler... *We have seen this, Madam. They keep talking about projects ... When we start with a project and then they do a press conference saying: « Would it not be good for them to do that? » We are doing it! Yes! We have Rs 150 m. We have seen this. You know? This is a political game the Member is playing. But the project is on. We have already launched the tenders. We have the budget, Rs 150 m. for that and the Centre de tri is the solution to this problem, I agree. And, we have taken it. On a déjà pris les taureaux par les cornes, Madame.*

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Yes, Madam Chair, in a previous question here, the Commissioner said that in a view to control this fire at Roche Bon Dieu, there will be the construction of firefighting facilities comprising with water storage tank, pump and other equipment. Can he enlighten the House where is this project?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: The tank is already there. If they go to Roche Bon Dieu you look at the top... the only problem is how to fill the tank. And, we have discussed... the tank is already there. The firefighting equipment is already there as well. What is missing is how to refill the tanks on a permanent basis, that is, we have already connection to fill the tank but when we have a fire it does go like this and we have to fill it again. So, how do we fill the tanks is something that we are working with the Commission for Water to solve that.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mme. la présidente, normalement dans un dépotoir qu'est-ce qui brûle ? Ce sont les matières organiques. Donc, j'aimerais demander au Commissaire, une des solutions c'est de prendre le broyeur que nous avons acheté à l'époque de mettre là-bas de broyer les déchets organiques. Donc, j'aimerais lui poser la question, où est le broyeur et si le broyeur est en train de broyer les déchets organiques au dépotoir ?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, oui, le broyeur est toujours là et en service. Et, la dernière fois dans une des réponses que j'ai données c'est sur le comblage de Baie aux Huitres. C'est sur le comblage de Baie aux Huitres. Et, déjà dans l'exercice budgétaire de cette année on a fait la provision pour d'autres broyeurs, Madame.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Madam the Chairperson, B/140.

**PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLE (TAXI) LICENSE/APPLICATION
RECEIVED/LICENSES APPROVED, REFUSED**

(No. B/140) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Public Service Vehicle (Taxi) License in Rodrigues, from 2012 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the eligibility criteria to obtain same, indicating the number of: -

- (a) applications received together with the respective proposed operating area/region; and
- (b) licenses which have been approved and refused, respectively?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, a notice and communiqué was issued on 30th April 2018 inviting application for Public Service Vehicle (Taxi) Licence for Zones 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9,10, 11, 12, 13 and 14. By the closing date on 25th May 2018, 42 applications were received. The licences were issued on 11th June 2019 and licencees have given a delay of six months to implement their respective licence.

I am tabling the eligibility criteria to obtain Public Service Licence, details of the number of applications received, approved and not approved and a table showing the respective zones of operation of the taxi.

Madam Chairperson, no licence was granted for Zone 12 as the only application received was rejected because the applicant informed the Rodrigues Transport Committee that he has joined the Public Service.

Madam Chairperson, another notice and communiqué was issued for Zones 4, 6, 12 and 14 on 1st March 2019 with Closing date for submission of applications fixed for 5th April 2019

Number of applications received is as tabulated in the document which has been tabled:

Zone 4:	Oyster Bay	3 applications
Zone 6:	Grand Baie/Montagne Goyave	5 applications
Zone 12:	Rivière Coco	1 application
Zone 14:	Coromandel/Graviers	2 applications

These applications will be considered in the next Rodrigues Transport Committee meeting.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Yes. So, can I know from the Deputy Commissioner the reasons why some applications have been rejected?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, if the Member refers to the information that have been tabulated, there are some zones where we have more applications that were supposed to be given. If I take the case of... if I refer to the table, I take the case of C, Zone 1, Baie Topaze. Let me take this as arbitrarily. Number of applications received – 7. Number of licence to be issued – 1. It is a fact that six of the applicants, we have to refuse the application of the six of the applicants. So, if the number of application outlines/exceeds the number of licence to be issued. Of course, after evaluation by the Rodrigues Transport Committee, then it is ultimate, it has to be rejected.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Can I know from the Deputy Commissioner who decide to approve or reject the application? Whether it is a board or your officer?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, there is... the procedure is clear for the approval of the application. The application is made to the Rodrigues Transport Committee. There is a survey which is done by the National Transport, National Transport Authority to ensure that the particular person which has applied resides in the zone as per the criteria which has been set. Because we have to ensure that the criteria have been followed as scrupulously and then the applicants are called for an interview with the Rodrigues Transport Committee. If ever, and then they are informed whether their application is rejected or approved. In case that the application is rejected, then they have the possibility of making an appeal to the Commissioner responsible for transport.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Yes, can I know, Madam Chairperson, whether the address of an applicant is one of the reason or the reason to reject an application though the person resides in the same locality?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The Member will if further refer to the criteria which has been set. It is clearly stated that one of the criteria is that, that very person... just to... The first criteria: they must be resident of the appropriate zone as per Annexure E because there are... the different are clearly defined and must produce documentary evidence to that effect. This is one of the criteria.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: In the case of L. Ramdoo, can you give us more detail why his application has been rejected? Because *la question avancée a été l'adresse mais la personne réside dans la même localité.*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as regards to the applicant's L. R., he in fact made an application, if I remembered well, for Zone 2 or Zone 12. Let me check it out. Yes, he made an application. He also made an appeal to me as regards to the reject of his application. In his very own answer, he incriminated himself. Yes, he incriminated himself because the first criteria states that you have to give documentary evidence of where you are living. This means that you should be living in a particular house at a particular place. But what did he say in his answer? He has got a residential lease at Cascade Jean Louis and that particular point of time when he was making his application, he was residing and I think, he is still residing at La Ferme, which is not in the zone in which he applied. This is why his application was rejected. Even in his application also. I will not go further there are also many flaws which have been determined.

Mr. Z. Félicité: So, in region where there is shortage of public bus, okay, so I think he can provide/invite applicants to apply for taxi services. So, what is your policy on this? Especially from Montagne Charlot, we have Montagne Charlot and some regions from Citronelle, Soupirs and so on.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The policy is clear. If I refer to Montagne Charlot specifically, Montagne Charlot as well as Soupirs it falls within Zone 5, Port Mathurin. I think so. I think it is in Zone 5 of Port Mathurin. Before any application, before any invitation for application is made, the NTA made a survey as regards to the number of people living in that particular zone, first. The second, we have to ensure about the number of taxi which is already operating in that particular zone. Because there is an economic matter that has to be taken into account. Because if we increase the number of taxi in a particular zone, it is going to have an effect on the bus industry. We are going to have confrontation of course, with the bus industry. So, we have to keep an... we have to ensure an equilibrium between that taxi system and of course, the bus industry system. This is why upon request and upon evaluation we have decided to launch application for additional zones which was not considered in the first communiqué that was sent. Here, I refer to Oyster Bay, to Baladirou/Montagne Goyaves and then the two zones where there was not enough approval made may be due to lack of successful candidates. I think, it was for Graviers, Coromandel, there was two licences to be approved and only one successful. So, we have launched it back in the communiqué of 1st March 2019.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Yes, can we know from the Commissioner the number of appeal/application he has got till now for the taxi service vehicle?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: For the applications that was made in fall last year and which was approved in this year 2019, out of the 42 applications, there were three appeals which were made. Two from Zone 5 and one from the person that you mentioned just previously.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Yes, en ce qui concerne la route Mont Charlot-Port Mathurin. Là où il y a beaucoup de taxi marron. Est-ce que votre commission aller faire le nécessaire pour régulariser ces taxi marron-là ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, we have to be very careful. I have stated formerly. We know very well about the issue of the Montagne Charlot road and it dated back for so long. At a particular point in time, the bus owners were even refusing to use their buses because most of their passengers were using taxi marron. Okay? We have had to find a solution to ensure that they go back on the road. This is why after consultation with the Bus Owner Cooperatives Society, we decided to come up with another road, modify from Port Mathurin to Soupîrs via Citronelle. Even when we came with that there were objections from the bus owners from Grand Baie, were using the road from Grand Baie-Terre Rouge. But nevertheless, keeping in mind that the person who are living in Citronelle deserves also a system of transport to be served, we go ahead, even I remember very well, there was a case which was put at the Court. The issue was... yes was quashed out by the Court and we go ahead with the setting up of that road.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Madam Chairperson, B/141.

INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES EVENTS – JULY 2019

(No. B/141) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to the recent Indian Ocean Island Games events held in July 2019 in Rodrigues, she will, for the benefit of the House, state and table: -

- (a) all hotels and/or other accommodating place where athletes and officials were put;
- (b) the eligibility criteria applied for the selection of institutions, if any; and

- (c) a breakdown of the sum paid to each accommodation facility including transport facilities?

The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina): Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a), I wish to inform the House that the choice of hotels and other accommodations for hosting athletes and officials in the Indian Ocean Island Games in Rodrigues in 2019 was made by COJI Mauritius, following various visits conducted by the CEO, the *Commissaire Général des Jeux* and representatives of COJI Rodrigues.

During the preliminary visits, Madam Chair, a number of hotels and other accommodations were visited in the Northern Region of Rodrigues and a choice was made for eight hotels and accommodations as follows: -

- (i) Les Cocotiers;
- (ii) Auberge Anse aux Anglais;
- (iii) Coco Villa;
- (iv) Les Filao Hotel;
- (v) Résidence Kono Kono;
- (vi) Le Récif Guest House;
- (vii) Le Manoir Guest House; and
- (viii) Résidence Dhalia.

With regard to part (b), Madam Chair, the eligibility criteria applied for selection of establishments include inter alia:

- (i) Availability of a well-ventilated rooms;
- (ii) Proximity to the main road;
- (iii) Ability to conform with the prescribed menu for athletes and officials;
- (iv) Well secured establishment; and
- (v) The strength of different delegations

Madam Chair, with regard to part (c) of the question, I wish to inform the House that the services provided by hotels and other accommodations did not include transport facilities. I am hereby, Madam Chair, tabling the requested information. Thank you.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Yes, can I know from the Respected Commissioner, who has financed the cost for accommodating the athletes and all the officers?

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, all the cost was borne by the COJI Mauritius.

The Minority Leader: Well, Madam Chair, being given that certain establishment was put aside and the Respected Commissioner has said that it was all chosen by the COJI. Can I know whether the Executive Council, her Commission has nothing to do with that?

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, with regard to Jeux des Iles, I mentioned it again, we decided to set up a COJI Rodrigues in order to be able to have an at part in situation that deals with COJI Mauritius. And, of course, we had a *droit de regard* on this. But the final decision was made by the COJI based on the requirements and on the number of athletes that came actually to the island. Because we made a forecast, then the number also changed. This is why some establishments did not have accommodation as well. So, it all depended on the criteria that you asked for.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, can I ask the Respected Commissioner, being given that certain establishment was chosen, is it not true that there were complaints concerning certain athletes that some of the owners of the Etablissement Hôtelier, they say that they were put *devant les faits accomplis*. They were asked to provide accommodation for a certain number of athletes and at the end they were given more athletes than previously they were asked for. Can we know... and this is given a bad publicity for Rodrigues. Is this not true and how is she going to make good for that?

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, we did not receive any complaint in that sense. But in any case, I mentioned it earlier, we made a forecast for delegations and tried to accommodate them in respective institutions. However, the real figures came towards the game, near the games. This is why certain adjustments have to be made. But complaints as such we do not receive.

The Minority Leader: *But Madam Chair, it is... c'est très bizarre étant donné qu'il y a des athlètes, j'aurais aimé demander s'il n'y a pas eu des plaintes officielles au Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports. S'il n'y a pas eu des plaintes officielles concernant des athlètes ? Parce que certains ont dit, on a dû dormir à plusieurs dans un lit, on a été obligé de manger à des heures indues. Mais ça ce n'est pas de la bonne publicité pour Rodrigues ça.*

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, this is first use. Because the criteria and the rules and regulations about accommodating the athletes were very, very strict. Reason why we asked the permission from the Chief

Commissioner, who is the Commissioner for Tourism, for the COJI Rodrigues to meet the hotels that were to welcome, that were to house the athletes. And, the bedding capacity also was a criteria. In a room there was a number of bed that was to be agreed and accepted. So, we have not received any complaint in that sense neither has the Ministry sent us or the COJI of Mauritius sent us any complaint in that sense, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member Félicité.

Mr. Z. Félicité: Yes, can I know from the Commissioner whether all hotels have already received their due payment?

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, as per the agreement with the establishments, the payment of hotels was to be done in two parts, that is, upon booking and upon completion. So, we are expecting that these are finalized by the end of this month. Because we sent an officer to Mauritius to get all issues cleared. Because some issues were not cleared. So that these are finalized by the end of this month.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, can we know which issues she is talking about? Because it is here from the figure as my colleague stated, some have been paid some have not yet been paid. So, can she elaborate on the issues she is talking about? What ... issues?

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: I was talking about issues relating to the games in general. I said it some... the hotels that accommodated the games, they had part payment, 50% upon booking and full amount upon completion. So, here you have an update of what has been paid in the annex. And, the remaining is to be done at the end of this month. There are no other issues regarding accommodation itself. It is more about payment but there were other issues that had to be cleared with regard to the games in general. This is what I meant.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, because out of eight accommodations, three of them have not yet even been paid the 50% upon reservation. So, she has been talking about being paid but they have not been paid. So, can she explain the fact that they have not even been paid the first part, the 50% upon reservation. Has there any problem or any issue on why they have not been paid the first 50%?

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chair, it may be that these people they did not come. But I need notice of this, I will confirm and give the answer

to the House. I will give the answer to the House. I do not have the reply and I will not mislead the House.

[Interruptions]

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

At 12.31 p.m., the sitting was suspended for one hour.

On resuming at 01.44 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I have to inform you all that I have just received at the end of lunchtime a privilege complaint from the Commissioner Louis Daniel Baptiste whereby a video of the press conference as well as a document is attached. I will have to view same and I will give my ruling on the matter at the end... at the next sitting of this Assembly. Next question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: *Toi osi to vine demane complaint tou? To enan droit?....*

Madam Chairperson: Your question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, please. B/142.

**SOCIAL AID/ALLOWANCE PAYABLE
TO CANCER PATIENTS – JANUARY 2017 TO DATE**

(No. B/142): The Fourth Island Region (Mr. J. L. R. Perrine) asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to social aid or any other allowance payable to cancer patients, from January 2017 to date, he will state and table:-

- (a) the number of beneficiaries and the amount paid thereto for the period;
- (b) if there was discontinuance of payment in any case and, if so, provide the reasons therefor; and
- (c) if any special consideration is given in these specific cases and if so, to give details thereon?

The Commissioner for Social Security and Others (Mr. L. D. Baptiste): Madam Chairperson, with regard to cancer patients, I am informed that the Ministry of Social Security Guidelines used by medical practitioners for the assessment of percentage of disability during medical boarding and recommendations for payment of Social Aid or Basic Invalidity Pension or Carer's Allowance are as follows:

Conditions	Criteria	% of Disability	Duration not to exceed (may be reboarded thereafter)
Cancer			
Carcinoma without metastasis	Under treatment (Radiotherapy/Chemotherapy)	60+	Basic Invalidity Pension (BIP) not exceeding 2 years and reboarding thereafter
Carcinoma with metastasis	Under treatment	60+	BIP and Carer's Allowance permanent
Leukemia	Depending on stage of illness	30 - 59	Social Aid up to 2 years and reboarding
Lymphoma (Hodgkin's)		30 - 59	Social Aid up to 2 years and reboarding
Lymphoma – non-Hodgkin		60+	BIP not exceeding 2 years and reboarding

Madam Chairperson, over and above the foregoing cancer patients, (depending on stage of illness) may apply for a one-off grant of Rs 15000 from the National Solidarity Fund under the cancer and other severe Medical Diseases Scheme.

Regarding part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that whenever a claimant calls at my Commission for payment of Social Aid, Basic Invalidity Pension or Carer's Allowance due to any type of disability, their ailments for nature of disability is not recorded.

It is only the medical recommendation... the Medical Board's recommendations on whether the case has been awarded and its duration or whenever it has been disqualified that is recorded in the system.

Hence, Madam Chairperson, it is not possible to retrieve the exact number or even any individual case of cancer patient or any other medical conditions whose payment has been discontinued.

As regard to part (b) of the question, Madam Chairperson, it is possible to have discontinuance of payment for cancer cases and the reason is normally related to the end of the duration for payment as recommended by Medical Board and thereafter, non-eligibility while reboarding as per the guidelines which I spelt out just in my introduction. In any case, there is always the possibility to re-apply for boarding or to make an appeal if the case is discontinued or disallowed.

I am tabling the Ministry's Guidelines relating to cancer patient to enlighten members of the House on the how it works.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (c) of the question, special consideration is given to patients who are bedridden to be medically boarded at home. Those following chemotherapy or radiotherapy and haemodialysis have their Medical Board scheduled on days they are not under treatment. The most urgent cases are usually put on fast track.

Any patient who feels aggrieved by the recommendations of the Medical Board have one month to file an appeal which will appear before the Medical Tribunal. However, any other special considerations can be given to concerned patients on a case to case basis.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Madam Chairperson, I have been made to understand in the reply of the respected Commissioner that a sum of Rs 15000 allocated to patients suffering from... Is it a one-off grant, you say, you mentioned? Yes, concerning patients, a one-off grant. This policy, is it from Government, the National Government or is it Regional Government? Because I understand at a point in time that Mr. Simon Pierre Roussety mentioned that there is a sum of Rs 25000. If I am wrong, you correct me. If I am right, you give me explanation on that please?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Yes, Madam Chairperson, it is a national policy for all citizens of the Republic of Mauritius and obviously, it is an application which is sent to the National Solidarity Fund for consideration and obviously, some... I do not know exactly when, it was Rs 25000 but this amount has been reviewed... yes, has decreased to Rs 15000.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, being given that Rodrigues is a special case with specificity and people suffering from cancer in Rodrigues, they are sometimes... they have to travel to Mauritius for treatment and so on. May I made a plea to the respected Commissioner, a plea to the Commissioner, to the respected Commissioner to see to it that these patients suffering from cancer... Is there something *komik* in my...

Madam Chairperson: Yes, please, proceed with your question.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Excuse me?

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Je vais demander... Je veux faire un appel au Commissaire, au Commissaire Baptiste. Il y a des personnes que je connais, il y a des cas de *disallowance* en occurrence et aussi cette affaire de *special one-off grant* de 15000 etc. Donc, je vais faire une demande spéciale au nom de ces patients qui souffrent actuellement du cancer de demander au Commissaire de considérer *over and above ces 15000 allocated because there has been 25000 in the past*, pourquoi ne pas revoir le cas de Rodrigues pour top up pour que ces personnes-là puissent terminer leur fin de jour comme il se doit dans la décence.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: So, I have said that all other cases, anything that can be add up or topped up will be considered on a case to case basis. If ever we obtain a request just how we have done in the past, sometimes, it might be even more than 10000 that you are talking about. So, it depends on the situation. It is on a case to case basis.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Is there a specific condition to apply for this case to case basis?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Generally, it is based on income, the income level and we will consider the hardship, degree of hardship of the particular patient.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, the Medical Board, the consistence of the Medical Board. Is it the same or there is a special board who are being put for these patients suffering from cancer?

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: So, it is not related to Medical Board. This is for pension purposes, Medical Board but when we receive any request from an individual patient, then, there is a social enquiry report carried out by officers of the Social Security Division and then, upon their recommendation, we might consider any type of assistance or financial help.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Est-ce que le Commissaire a une idée combien de personnes qui ont bénéficié de ce *grant* jusqu'à maintenant ? De 10000 ou 15000.

Mr. L. D. Baptiste: Unfortunately, we do not have the answer because normally, the National Solidarity Fund, they will issue the cheques directly to the patient and it does not come through the Commission.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: B/143, Madam.

OFF-LAGOON FISHING - RODRIGUES

(No. B/143): The Second Island Region Member (Mr. J. L. R. Perrine) asked the Commissioner for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to off-lagoon fishing in Rodrigues, he will state and table to the House on where matters stand concerning the use of the six outer lagoon fishing boats previously owned by ex-Rodrigues General Fishing Company Ltd, indicating: -

- (a) the current operator in each case and the yearly production per boat, from 2017 to date; and
- (b) if anyone thereof is currently not operational, and if so, to give details?

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Madam Chairperson, with your permission, I will answer question B/143 and B/151 together as both are on the same subject matter.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you may proceed.

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Okay, thank you. Madam Chairperson, since 2009, the six outer lagoon boats... fishing boats were managed by the Ex-Rodrigues General Fishing Co. Ltd. Following winding up of the Ex-Rodrigues General Fishing Co. Ltd. as recommended by the Director of Audit, my Commission repossessed the six outer lagoon fishing boats.

Madam Chairperson, as regard to part (a) of the question, following...

[Interruptions]

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee): Both together.

[Interruptions]

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):
All the answers will be in both... Answers to both questions will be in my answer. As regard to part (a), following...

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam, on a point of order. Yes, he is replying to part (a). What part (a)? Is it the question of B/143 or... Yes, that is my question. Why do you not answer?

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):
Be oui tous les deux ensam! Bisin commence par (a). Apré ale (b), (c), (d). Li pa commence par...

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, please!

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):
Yes. Following the recommendation of the Director of Audit Report...

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner, you allow me to rule first of all.

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

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, your Point of Order, I will rule on that. You must allow the Commissioner first of all to give his reply and then, if there is any clarification, you have the right to put supplementary question and ask for further elucidation but, first of all, please let the Commissioner answer first of all. Yes?

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):
Thank you, Madam. *Mo penkor mem répone ki concise?*

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner!

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):
Yes?

Madam Chairperson: Please be serious about answering this question.

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others (Mr. J. R. Payendee):
Madam Chairperson, as regard to part (a), following the recommendation of the Director of Audit Report, after repossession of the six boats from the Ex-Rodrigues General Fishing Company, my Commission carried out a survey and invested Rs 6,348,000 to repair the boats because all of them were not operational due to engine breakdown.

Also Fishing equipment (fishing line, Reels and Rod, Hooks) navigation and communication equipment (these GPS, Magneting compass, VHF Radio) were purchased for the six boats.

Mrs. Chairperson, as regard part (b), on 27 February 2015, the Executive Council decided to approve that the six outer lagoon boats... fishing boats previously managed by the Ex-Rodrigues General Fishing Company be allocated under the promotion of the Outer Lagoon Development Scheme. An expression of interest was launched to invite those interested. After the exercise was completed, six potential bidders were selected and the six outer lagoon fishing boats were allocated to them as follows:

We have the boat:

- Maman Rouge given to Mr. M. C.
- Dorade to E. C.
- Sacrechien to G. R.
- Becune to J. P. F, Mr. J. P. F.
- Vacoas to Mr. C. R. and
- Vivano to Mr. J. C. A.

Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, as per agreement signed between the Society and the Commission, at Paragraph 13.0 – it is clearly mentioned that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will rescind this Agreement if:-

- (a) the boat is not used for the purpose of off-lagoon fishing in an efficient and profitable manner;
- (b) the overall performance of the Fisher is poor; and
- (c) the Fisher breaches one or more of the terms of this Agreement.

Mrs. Chairperson Madam, as the above report suggested that conditions of the agreement have not been respected because for 2015, there is only Sacrechien that gave the... handed over the report with regards to the catch, that is, the catch in 2017 was 3,221 kilos and 2018 was 3,203 kilos. And, then, only

Vivano after in 2017, they submitted a catch of 80 kilos. So, each Representative of Society was informed by letter on 14 March, 2019.

In addition, a Departmental Committee was set up for the monitoring of repossession of the five outer lagoon fishing boats/equipment comprising of the Chairperson, a Technical Officer, a Fisheries Research and Training Unit Officer and Members, Acting Assistant Controller of the Fisheries Division, Fisheries Protection Service, Training Instructor, Fisheries Research and Training Unit and one Office Management Assistant. That was the Departmental Committee that was set to get back, repossess the boat.

Given that there is a lot of implication in terms of repossession of equipment being put at the disposal of the several societies, legal advice is being sought on the way forward.

The file is presently being examined by the Legal Advisor.

Mrs. Chairperson, Madam, as regard to part (c), the Cooperative Polyvente de Pêcheur Espoir du Sud were provided with the following materials/equipment to operate the Fishing Boat Francois Leguat:

- (i) Eco-sounder;
- (ii) Fishing materials;
- (iii) One new battery;
- (iv) Ropes and;
- (v) Insurance cover.

Thank you, Madam. I am tabling the report.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: I am a bit confused with this two questions in one. Anyway, I have not even seen the catch per year for each and every boat and I understand also that there has been huge sum of money which has been spent for the repairing of boat, these fishing boats in Rodrigues. Can I ask the Commissioner responsible for Fisheries whether with regards to these repossession of boats and equipments, if... whether all equipments have been taking back or there are missing equipments in the list?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Mrs. Chairperson, I said in my answer that the equipments, the thing is being... We will repossess everything. We have not yet repossessed the thing. That is why, you know, I cannot say if everything is being returned back or there is still something missing. The Legal Advisor is working on it.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, he mentioned that in March 2019, there has already been letter sent to these cooperatives. Is it not? Yes, since that time, nothing has been done with regards to repossession of these equipments? Can we know exactly what has happened?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I said that a committee has been set up, we are working on that, I have sent a paper to the Council and we have... There are some legal issues which are being dealt with by the Legal Advisor. So, they have not been possessed, repossessioned yet. It is underway.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: Can I know from the Commissioner whether the fishing boat François Leguat which was allocated to Cooperative Polyvente de Pêcheur Espoir du Sud will be repossessioned as the others?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: Chairperson, François Leguat is a different case because from the very beginning, the boat was not performing and since the boat was not a fishing boat as such, it was to be given to Polyvente Fishing in the sense that to help them. But unfortunately, they did not use it well but, the fact that Diego is not really working for the time being, we have taken back François Leguat to be used for training of... for the... to be attached to the Fisheries FRTU.

Mr. J. R. Augustin: The Commissioner just mentioned that the Commission spends about Rs 6 m. for the reparation of these boats. Can the Commissioner give us a breakdown what has been used for these Rs 6 m.?

Mr. J. R. Payendee: I said in my answer that the Rs 6 m. was used to repair the engines because all the engines had to be removed completely and repair this. It is mainly about the engines. So, I do not have exactly how much we put in which boat but all the engines were repaired completely.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

Mr. J. N. Nemours: B/144.

UPGRADING WORKS – BATATRAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

(No. B/144): The Second Local Region Member of Maréchal (Mr. J. N. Nemours) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the upgrading works at Batatran Government School, he will enlighten the House as to where matters stand as at to date?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the project for the upgrading works at Batatran Government school was launched on the 12 July 2019 through Open National Bidding. Two bids were received at the opening of bids and same have been referred to a Bid Evaluation Committee for Technical Evaluation.

The Bid Evaluation Committee has submitted its report and same is under consideration by the Departmental Bid Committee. The contract is expected to be awarded by the end of September 2019.

Madam Chairperson, it has to be noted that this project was a measure announced in the 2019/2020 budget. The scope of works comprises the following: -

- (i) Construction of Preau and toilet block for Pre-primary at ground floor with a total built up area of approx. 115 m²;
- (ii) Extension of two classrooms at first floor with a total built up area of approximately 142 m²;
- (iii) Services Installation comprising inter-alia electrical and mechanical installation;
- (iv) Drainage and site works comprising fencing works, boundary walls among others;
- (v) Waterproofing work to existing classroom block; and
- (vi) Covered metal structure over existing staircase.

I am further informed that the project is expected to start in October 2019 and the project duration shall be 300 calendar days as from start date.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

Mr. J. N. Nemours: B/145.

“CARNET SCOLAIRE” PROJECT – PRIMARY SCHOOLS

(No. B/145): The Second Local Region Member of Maréchal (Mr. J. N. Nemours) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the “Carnet Scolaire” project in primary schools, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:-

- (a) the objectives thereof;
- (b) what have been achieved up to now in the design and development thereof; and
- (c) the timeframe for the implementation thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, following the ‘Assise de L’Education’ that was conducted by my Commission on 07 March 2019, it was agreed that a *Carnet Scolaire* be designed and developed for the Upper Primary Education, that is Grades 4 to 6.

This project is a joint collaboration between the Mauritius Institute of Education and the Commission for Education. The ‘*Carnet Scolaire*’ will cater for the five main subjects: English, French, Mathematics, Science and History and Geography.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the Government has already introduced a Primary School Readiness (PSR) assessment to help teachers assess the school readiness of the new entrants at the primary level.

The *Carnet Scolaire* is being introduced to bridge the gap between the lower grades to upper grades as a record keeping tool that allows systematic and continuous monitoring of students’ achievements from Grades 4 to 6. The main objectives of the *Carnet Scolaire* will be: -

- (i) to assess how the student is developing as an individual and according to the Teaching and Learning Syllabus;
- (ii) to provide guidance to the Learner;
- (iii) to provide Primary Educators with a clear idea of where the student is heading;
- (iv) to provide student with adequate support to attaining the goals set for a particular grade; and lastly;
- (v) to serve as a useful reference for writing progress reports for parents.

Ultimately, the *Carnet Scolaire* provides a comprehensive picture of the student’s performance both academically and holistically highlighting his strengths and weaknesses so that targeted teaching can be structured accordingly.

Madam, Chairperson, I am further informed that the draft ‘Carnet Scolaire’ has already been vetted and validated by the Mauritius Institute of Education and the Commission for Education.

Madam Chairperson, the introduction of the ‘Carnet Scolaire’ for pupils in Grades 4 to 6 is a first in Primary Education Sector in the Republic of Mauritius. The ‘Carnet Scolaire’ is expected to be introduced in Grades 4 and 5 in January 2020 and in Grade 6 in 2021 such that all students sitting the Primary Achievement Certificate (PSAC) examinations in 2021 will join Secondary School with their ‘Carnet Scolaire’.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/153, B/154, B/155, B/163 have been withdrawn by their respective Members. Thank you. Next question!

Mr. J. N. Nemours: B/146.

**CONSTRUCTION OF PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL
– JARDIN MAMZELLE**

(No. B/146): The Second Local Region Member of Maréchal (Mr. J. N. Nemours) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of a pre-primary school at Jardin Mamzelle, he will enlighten the House as to where matters stand as at to date?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the contract for the Construction of Pre-Primary School at Jardin Mamzelle will be awarded by the end of September 2019 and that construction works are expected to start by October 2019.

I am also informed that the project was launched on the 12 July 2019 through open advertised bidding. At opening of bids, four bids were received and were referred to a Bid Evaluation Committee on the 15 August 2019 for technical evaluation.

The scope of work for this project comprises: -

- (i) Construction of concrete building at ground floor level in reinforced concrete structure, block walling, sheet metal coverings and aluminium opening over an approximate gross floor area of two hundred and twelve square metres;
- (ii) Mechanical and Electrical Installation; and

(iii) Eternal works-fencing, embankment, play area and drainage works.

Madam Chairperson, I am further informed that it is expected that the construction works be completed by July 2020 for the school to be operational for the third semester of 2020.

Madam Chairperson: Next question!

Miss M. R. Collet: Thank you, Mrs. Chairperson. B/147.

INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS GAMES TORCH – RODRIGUES – JULY 2019

(No. B/147): The First Local Region of Maréchal (Miss M. R. Collet) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, she will enlighten the House with regards to the coming of the Indian Ocean Islands Games torch in Rodrigues prior to the opening thereof in July 2019 and provide details of the preparation of the event itself in Rodrigues?

The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina): Madam Chair, the organisation of the activities related to the coming of the torch in Rodrigues was entrusted to a special committee under the egis of the *Comité La Flamme de Rodrigues* and my Commission. Its main responsibilities were to prepare the population for the coming of the flame and to recommend the COJI of all requirements pertaining to the organisation, including the list of bearers, the security and medical issues, accompanying groups, logistics, the '*parcours*' of the flame and other related issues in Rodrigues.

Mobilisation with regards to the arrival of the flame started from the date of arrival of the Mascot of the Games i.e Kouink in Rodrigues. The latter travelled to many schools on the island to carry the rallying message behind the Flame of the Games. Meetings were also held with presidents of villages and their committees for that purpose.

The itinerary, Madam Chair, of the torch was 28 kms and it started from Plaine Corail to end at Camp du Roi Stadium.

Madam Chair, six sites were used as stop-overs namely Maréchal Swimming Pool, Petit Gabriel Community Village... Community Centre, sorry, Malabar (*Monument de l'Autonomie*), Palissade Ternel, Mont Lubin Bus Terminal and English Bay Youth and Family Centre.

A popular and successful concert was held at the parking of Camp du Roi Stadium up to midnight where it was an opportunity for our local artists to participate along with our guests from Mauritius.

In addition, Madam Chair, at the *Monument de L'Autonomie*, there was a “*cérémonie solennelle*” whereby all members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and our representatives of the National Assembly and high officials of Rodrigues Regional Assembly were attended. Those who were present have had the opportunity to bear and hand over the flame to the monument at Malabar.

Madam Chairperson, in recognition of the works of the Sports Regional Committee in Rodrigues, all Presidents of all Sports Regional Committees were invited at Mont Lubin Bus Terminal to relay the torch, whereas the staff of the Commission of Youth and Sports were bearers at English Bay Youth and Family Centre.

Madam Chair, the arrival of the torch is once in a lifetime event. It happened in 2003 when the games took place in Mauritius and many of us may not be here to witness the next opportunity. We have therefore seized the opportunity to allow the maximum number of people from different spheres of the Rodriguan population from the sports, social, cultural, political background to relay the torch across the Island.

Madam Chair, famous athletes and ex-expatriate athletes like Jean Marc Ithier, ex-Football player (from South Africa), Henri Speville (ex-Footballer), Christiane Legentil (Judoka), Bernadette Perrine-Ravina (athletics), Mirella Charles Pullut (ex-athlete), were invited to participate in the event in recognition of their contribution in the field of sports, and, for having put Rodrigues in the forefront in the Indian Ocean Games and at international level.

Madam Chair, the population responded enthusiastically to the event despite inconvenience caused due to late arrival of the torch in Rodrigues. Many people had gathered massively along the road to welcome the flame in a spirit of national unity and belonging to the Rodriguan identity and as people of the Indian Ocean.

Madam Chair, I seize this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the police and the fire rescue services for their precious collaboration and support extended for the smooth running of the activity, especially the five police officers who escort the flame from the Airport to Port Mathurin.

Special thanks to the MBC Rodrigues, which actively participated in the event and for the full coverage, the different commissions and departments of the Regional Assembly, the staff of my Commission, the COJI Rodrigues, the different sub Committees. And, as a whole, I would like to thank the whole of the Rodriguan population who showed resilience and much affection during this game. My thanks also is extended to the Chief Commissioner and the Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the Executive Council and Members of this side who showed their support and meaningful and memorable presence for the... during the games.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Order! Respected Member, please, you allow the Minority Leader to put his question, please.

The Minority Leader : Can I ask the respected Commissioner whether he can explain the reason behind the delay of the torch and the havoc that has caused in Rodrigues?

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Thank you, Madam Chair. I also thank the Minority Side for their presence at the airport and to have waited for the flame to arrive. Now, I would like to reply to the question of the Minority Leader which is a pertinent question. As per the different meetings with the different representatives of COJI Mauritius and the... and everybody that were consult, it was agreed that the torch will arrive from Reunion Island on the 06th of July and be handed over to me in Mauritius... from Mauritius to Rodrigues. On my arrival... this is what was agreed. On my arrival to Rodrigues, then, the flame was to be relayed to the Chief Commissioner who will in turn, relay it to dedicated athletes and torch bearers. Madam Chair, upon my arrival to Mauritius, allow me to tell this little story, it came to my knowledge that the torch will make an itinerary before coming to Mauritius and this was not communicated to us at any point in our meetings yes...

[Interruptions]

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Before coming to Rodrigues, yes. Let me... I am answering!

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, please!

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Let me answer the question, please.

/UNREVISED/

Madam Chairperson: You can put your question later in an orderly manner, please!

[Interruptions]

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: Yes, Madam, on a point of order, Section 36, Standing Order 36, the respected Chief Commissioner imputing motives *ine dir moi* “*areté do foutou*”. I want it to remove and apologise for it.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, everyone...

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, please!

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: No, this is not allowed! However, this word if it was said... it was in a sitting position, the mic was off. It is not on record. So, I cannot rule on a matter which is not on record.

Mr. J. L. R. Perrine: May I, on a point of explanation, can we go for the... *comment on appelle ça là?* Records to hear what the Chief Commissioner said?

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: No, you know very well that this is not allowed. It is not allowed... Respected Member Perrine! As a seasoned politician, having served this Assembly for several years and I am sure that you are a wise gentleman that will understand that we are guided by the rules and regulations of this Assembly, the Standing Orders and Rules of the Regional Assembly.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: I cannot act upon the wish of each and every Member. This is impossible. Standing Orders are clear about that. So, we proceed and I will make an appeal to each and every Member. Please, this is not allowed to make any comment in a sitting position and respected Member Perrine, you should give the example yourself, yes.

[Interruptions]

Madam Chairperson: Thank you.

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I was saying that it came to my knowledge that the torch was to make an itinerary that was not communicated to us in our different meetings that we had here in Rodrigues. As from then, I voiced out my feelings about the issue and I had no control on the torch as from then, Madam Chair. I was later informed that the flame was not to be handed to me for the transmission was not to be handed to me in Mauritius but it was to be handed to me in Rodrigues itself.

[Interruptions]

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: *I am telling the story. What happens is that the delegation that came with the torch was headed by the Minister for Youth and Sports and the Members of the COJI. Madam Chairperson, I wish to draw the attention of the House that in Mauritius, je n'ai pas touché à la flamme. Donc, ça, c'est une chose que je dois attirer l'attention de tout le monde. C'était chagrinant, c'était chagrinant, je suis d'accord avec vous. C'est chagrinant et c'est difficile mais en arrivant à Rodrigues, j'ai été estomaquée ainsi que mes collègues ici présents comme vous d'ailleurs qui était présents à l'aéroport, d'entendre que la flamme est restée. Malheureusement, à ce jour... Malheureusement à ce jour, je ne peux dire, donner la raison officielle parce que je n'ai rien reçu d'officiel.*

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner Payendee, respected Member Grandcourt, this personal conversation cannot continue, please!

Mrs M. R. Edouard-Ravina: And, if you could recall, the person that came to address the public at the airport was the Minister himself because he is the one at that point of time to hold all the information. On this, I want to enlighten the House how the flame stayed there and that *je n'ai jamais touché à la flamme à Maurice. Merci.*

The Minority Leader: I would like the Respected Commissioner, to enlighten us on that. Whether there has been prior consultation, prior discussion with the Minister? Has there been? Or *saken fer céki li envi?*

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: I have mentioned ... Madam Chair, already. That there were meetings previously and things were agreed. And then, I was verbally informed there. This is what I am trying to tell the House.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: *Was your visit to Mauritius important for... c'était important pour emmener la flamme ici, votre visite à Maurice? Et, comment expliquez-vous que la flamme n'a été arrivée en même temps que vous ?*

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Oui, moi aussi je ne peux pas répondre à cette question. Parce que j'ai tout dit. J'ai tout dit. J'ai dit...

Madam Chairperson: Order.

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: J'ai dit ce jour-là, le Chef Commissaire ainsi que tous les collègues présents, d'ailleurs je tiens à remercier le Chef Commissaire, Mme. Franchette, Mons. Daniel et tous les autres collègues qui étaient avec moi. On s'est soutenu mutuellement. Parce que c'était un moment vraiment très dure. Mais malheureusement, moi aussi je n'ai pas compris pourquoi j'y été mais la flamme j'ai pas touchée.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members Grandcourt, would you please put your question in an orderly manner?

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, I am... She said that she does not know why she has been to Mauritius? But why has she been to Mauritius on which occasion? She said that she does not know! So, I am asking her on what behalf? Has she been attending any...

Madam Chairperson: You, please address the Commissioner...

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: The Commissioner to you.

Madam Chairperson: You please call Commissioner and not her.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt: Yes, Commissioner. I would like to ask her whether she has been attending any opening ceremony or she has been there only to bring the *flamme*, the flame to Rodrigues?

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Yes, I remove the thing, I knew what I was doing there but I was not allow to do what I was supposed to do.

[Interruption]

The Minority Leader: Can I ask one last question? Can I know whether the Respected Commissioner, has filed a complaint concerning same? *C'est une manqué de respect envers l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues.*

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Indeed, Madam Chair, I seized the opportunity to talk to the CEO and to the Minister and my colleagues also followed suit. Even the Chief Commissioner expressed. So, I think they were there. There was an official meeting. And, an official meeting is an official way to process things personally. And, we were together while speaking that. Even at the airport I spoke lengthily to the concerned persons about the feeling of the Rodriguans at large with regard to that particular issue.

Madam Chairperson: Do you have a question Respected Member Agathe? Yes, next question

Mr. J. N. Volbert: B/148.

EXPEDITION AFRICA

(No. B/148) Mr. J.N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether in regard to the Expedition Africa event recently held in Rodrigues, he will state, for the benefit of the House, on: -

- (a) when decision was made for the organisation thereof in Rodrigues and by whose authority;
- (b) the sum disbursed therefor by each participant and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, respectively;
- (c) any Memorandum of Understanding signed between the representative of Kinetic Events and Rodrigues Regional Assembly, to table same; and
- (d) any outcome thereof for the tourism sector in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, with your permission, I will reply to Questions B/148, B/158 and B/162 at the same time since all three questions relate to the same subject matter.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you please proceed.

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as you are aware, Expedition Africa was organized on the island of Rodrigues from the 30th of August to 08th of September 2019. This kind of event was for the first time organised on the island and in the Republic of Mauritius.

The organisation of this event was announced in my Budget Speech of 2018/2019. Kinetic Events, the organiser, contacted the Rodrigues Tourism Office at the end of 2017. The company was then exploring the possibility of organising an adventure race in Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson, Kinetic Events has the franchise to organize the race as part of the World Series in the African region and one of their main strength is their capability of creating memories by bringing people to unknown, undiscovered places and to showcase an area or a destination to the world.

Expedition Africa is a multi-day adventure racing which comprise of multi discipline endurance sports where a team of four participants compete from control points to control points, from biking, trail running, swimming, kayaking, roping and others. They normally cover a distance of around 500 kms in four to seven days. In our case, the race covered 350 kms including land and islets around Rodrigues.

Expedition Africa has been organized in different regions of Africa such as the Western Cape, Namaqua, Port Alfred, twice in India, Kouga, and Swaziland. It was the 9th Edition which was held in Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson, following the first contact with the Rodrigues Tourism Office as mentioned above, a scouting visit was held by the Directors and three video crew members in January 2018, to explore the island and the possibilities of organising one of their biggest adventure event on our island. The Rodrigues Tourism Office provided full assistance to the company since the project was in line with the ecotourism development of my government.

I am informed Madam Chairperson, that following the scouting mission, the company submitted a project and confirmed the possibility of organising the 9th Edition of Expedition Africa in Rodrigues for 2019 over a 350 kms race.

I am further informed that the dates of the event and logistics for same was discussed in April 2018 following a meeting at the World Travel Market Africa, which the former Managing Director of the Rodrigues Tourism Office and an officer from my Commission attended. Initially, the event was scheduled for June instead of September 2019. However, in order to allow us to better prepare for the event, it was mutually agreed to conduct same during the month

of September known as an off-peak season for the tourism industry in Rodrigues.

In view of the scope of this event, and to better prepare for same, the former Managing Director was delegated to attend the 7th Edition of Expedition Africa in Namaqua West Coast, South Africa in order to experience, take stock and prepare for the event in Rodrigues.

Further to the above, the Executive Council endorsed the project, following which an agreement was signed between Discovery Rodrigues and Kinetic Events wherein the responsibilities of each party were clearly spelt out.

Discovery Rodrigues, being the main promotion agency for Rodrigues, had the responsibility to ensure that all logistics assistance was extended to Kinetic Events for the smooth running of the race. On the other hand, Kinetic Events was responsible to ensure that a minimum of 200 international participants would be brought in during the event.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the entries for the participation to the race were launched on the 1st of August 2018 and after only two days, the entries were sold out with 50 teams registered for the race and 20 teams waitlisted. Eventually, we mutually agreed to extend the number of teams to 60 bearing in mind our capacity to accommodate such an event in Rodrigues. *Je peux continuer?*

Madam Chairperson, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Kinetic Events and Discovery Rodrigues for the organisation of the event. Being both private entities, it will be unethical to table this document to the Assembly. However, I can enlighten the House on the main responsibilities entrusted upon both parties whereby Discovery was responsible to provide for:

- Boats for the respective teams;
- Air tickets and accommodation for the core crew;
- Accommodation for the international volunteers;
- Internal transport arrangements for the core crew and the participants;
- Free of charge air tickets (excluding taxes) for the route Mauritius to Rodrigues and back; and

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- A one off fee to Kinetic Events against the submission of the race maps, race handbooks, drone images and videos.

Kinetic Events was, on the other side, responsible for the following:

- A minimum of 200 participants for the race;
- Visibility of Rodrigues as the host destination of the event;
- Media coverage from the press teams;
- Best quality maps of the island with the different race circuits; and
- Drone images and videos of the island to be handed over to Discovery Rodrigues.

Following the signature of the MOU, Discovery Rodrigues entered into negotiation with different stakeholders such as Air Mauritius for air tickets, and other companies for sponsorship of the event.

Madam Chairperson, since there is already a collaboration between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and Air Mauritius with regard to rebate tickets to international visitors travelling from different destinations to Rodrigues, the through fares have been applied in the context of the Expedition Africa Event for the participants and families travelling for the event, provided that they purchase the ticket for the whole route with Air Mauritius. Hence no costs for imputed to the Tourism Office for that item. It was also agreed that all bookings were made through the Air Mauritius, Rodrigues Branch.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chair, on a point of order. The Chief Commissioner is being too long. Why not...

Madam Chairperson: Chief Commissioner, please resume your seat, there is a point of order.

The Minority Leader: Why do not he table... because he is being too long. He is going on and on.

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader in fact, the Chief Commissioner is not actually offending the Standing Order in any way. But still... You allow

me, please. But still I would request the Chief Commissioner if he could be a bit shorter just because question time is almost over.

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, this event is a very important one for Rodrigues, for the future of Rodrigues, for tourism in Rodrigues.

I have been informed that 346 international visitors from 17 countries travelled for the event as follows:

- 236 Participants;
- 57 relatives and families;
- 08 Media Persons;
- 21 Core Crew including their own Media Person; and
- 24 Team Managers and International Volunteers.

It is to be noted that the response from their companies in sponsoring the event were very positive because of the scope of the event and its international visibility.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to the financial contribution of Discovery Rodrigues to this event, a sum of about Rs 5.5 m. inclusive of contribution from sponsors has been budgeted. I wish to point out to this Assembly that the gist of this budget has been invested in the local economy during the holding of the event. Various service providers have been contracted such as:

- a) 22 artists were outsourced to cater for the different shows;
- b) 35 service providers for transport facilities such as buses, minibuses and lorries;
- c) 07 service providers for catering;
- d) 70 boat owners; and
- e) 09 service providers for promotional items as hats, t-shirts, trophies, bags.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to point out that with regard to the procurement of service providers, all the procedures have been followed in line with good governance and transparency.

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Based on the first estimation on spending trends from the different participants and family, an estimated minimum revenue of Rs 13.5 m. has been worked out as follows:

- a) Accommodation for the 346 persons for six days' amount to Rs 2.5 m.;
- b) Breakfast for 10 days - Rs 1 m.;
- c) Lunch and dinner for 10 days - Rs 7 m.; and
- d) Personal expenses and others - Rs 3 m.

I have been informed, Madam Chairperson, that 40 tourism accommodations ranging from hotel to *gîte* and tourist residence amongst others were involved in hosting the teams and their families during the event. *Tout dimoune ine gagner là-dans!*

According to feedback received from the organisers and the participants, it is the best Expedition Africa ever organized since Rodrigues Island in itself, is a Paradise.

Most of control points were fixed in places the organiser wanted the participants to visit, mainly tourists' sites, for example, the different islets around Rodrigues, the caves at Caverne Patate and Francois Leguat Reserve, Cathedral of Saint Gabriel, Mont Limon, Cascade Pigeon, Montagne Tonnerre, Pont Suspendu and Tyrolienne at Montagne Malgache.

Madam Chairperson, allow me to quote two reviews on the social media from two participants.

I quote from a participant of Nevarest Adventure racing team of South Africa:

"Rodrigues is like a first aid kit for life. Small, compact and unsuspecting but perfectly designed for adventure and restoration. When you start looking and unpacking its contents, you realize it has absolutely everything you could possibly need and more. I do love Rodrigues." I love Rodrigues!

[Applause]

Team from Argentina cited as follows:

“Expedition Africa 2019 Island Rodrigues, a raid of the best so far. We did it!! Very happy of the whole trip from beginning to end; an amazing experience”.

Voilà, c’est ce qu’ils ont dit.

Madam Chairperson: Chief Commissioner, please. question time is nearly over.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, I finish, Madam. I have already finished. Only two pages.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, rest assured Members from the Minority, I will allow, I will be flexible on the matter. So, rest assured on that.

The Chief Commissioner: We are expecting an increase of more than 9 % of tourism arrivals for the month of August compared to the same month of 2018. Moreover, the visibility of Rodrigues has been greatly enhanced in South Africa on social media. The South African market, one of the emerging market remains a potential source of visitors for Rodrigues Island. The number of South Africans visiting Mauritius in 2017 was 112, 129 and 128, 97 in 2018, a significant increase of 14.2 %. However less than 2% of those tourists visited Rodrigues.

A well-known Tourism Tour Operator from South Africa has already established contact with the Rodrigues Tourism Office for the possibility to sell Rodrigues as a destination in the future. My office is presently working with the Association du Tourisme Réuni (ATR) to work out a proposal for same.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to point out that this event has been a sharing of experience for the local team who has been racing and also the different NGO’s on the island such as the Rod Trail Association, Rod Riders Club, the Kite Surfing Association and the local medical team. The maps and race handbook submitted by the Kinetic Events will be used for future sport events on the island.

There has been a positive response from local volunteers who have been sharing their experience with the international volunteers on the different transition points where teams had to go through.

Madam Chairperson, I hope that this event will be a booster for local NGOs for future organisation of similar international event. Expedition Africa

has proved that the size of Rodrigues does not matter. It is a fact now that it is possible to organise a 350 kms race on land area of 108 kms.

Madam Chairperson, in view of the positive economic returns of such events, my Commission will support any initiatives so long the organisers can guarantee a significant number of international participants. One more page.

Moreover, the visibility of Rodrigues is greatly enhanced in South Africa on social media. The South African Market, one of the emerging market remains a potential surface source of visitors for Rodrigues island. The number of South Africans visiting Mauritius in 2017 was 112, 129 in 2018, a significant increase of 14.2%. However, less than 2% of those tourists visited Rodrigues. The South African market, one of the emerging market remains a potential source of visitors for Rodrigues Island. The number of South Africans visiting Mauritius in 2017 was 112, 129 and 128, 97 in 2018, a significant increase of 14.2 %. However less than 2% of those tourists visited Rodrigues. A well-known Tourism Tour Operator from South Africa... I think I have already read that. Okay, okay!

Madam Chairperson: The table has been advised that PQ B/150 and B/149 have been withdrawn by the respective Member. Yes?

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Merci, Madam Chairperson. Le Chef Commissaire a dit que pour la raison d'éthique, les documents ne vont pas être déposé à l'Assemblée. Mais j'ai été un peu plus chanceux. Deux semaines de cela, j'ai eu des documents relatifs que je vais déposer à la fin de ma question à l'Assemblée dans ma boîte au lettre. Et, je pense aller vers les autorités compétentes aussi pour déposer ces documents-là. Une question que je vais poser au Chef Commissaire. Les organisateurs, du moins l'organisateur de Kinetic Events, Mme. H.M., H. Muller, avec une délégation de six personnes était ici à Rodrigues le 16 octobre 2018 pour une durée de sept jours et il y avait une copie qu'une somme de Rs 174,508 que l'Assemblée Régionale a payé pour leurs séjours. J'aurais aimé demandé au Chef Commissaire de nous expliquer ça étant donné que le MOU n'a pas été signé à cette date-là.

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Pas de problème. Une deuxième question le concernant encore. Il y a le 4 novembre 2018, Mons. et Mme. Muller, ils ont voyagé de l'Afrique du Sud, Johannesburg pour Roland Garos à l'île de la Réunion pour la somme de Rs 36,575 et encore c'est l'Assemblée Régionale qui a payé ça. Je veux avoir les éclaircissements du Chef Commissaire ?

The Chief Commissioner: Il est impossible que je donne des réponses à ces personnes-là. Il faut que j'aie fait des recherches, Madame pour pouvoir répondre à ces questions. *I need notice of the question.*

Madam Chairperson: There is a point of order.

Mr. J.L.R. Perrine: On a point of order. The ICE during our question, he is having conversation in the Chamber which is not allowed. May I ask you to withdraw the ICE?

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: I would ask officials in the Chamber to please refrain from speaking or interrupting the proper... the business of the House. But unfortunately, Respected Member I cannot ask the ICE to withdraw from the House. But I will look into the matter. Rest assured that... Respected Member, I am ruling on the matter. Once more, I am issuing a note of warning for all officials in the Chamber to please be silent during the business of the House. Yes, Chief Commissioner has already answered. Another question?

Mr. J. N. Volbert: ...et puis je vais déposer les documents. Et du 9 décembre 2018 au 5 janvier 2019. 28 jours avant, *before signing of MOU*, cinq membres d'une seule famille. Ce qui nous donne l'impression que le Kinetic Events *is a family business*. Il y a Mons. et Mme. Muller, *their two sons and the grandmother. They came here on a visit prior to the signing of the document of MOU*. L'Assemblée Régionale a loué une maison pour la somme de Rs 50,000 pour eux. Du *Subsistence Allowance* Rs 1,100 par jour...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, ...

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Oui, je vais déposer.

Madam Chairperson: All these documents are ...

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Oui, je vais tous déposer. Ne vous en faites pas.

Madam Chairperson: Okay. Yes, you may proceed.

Mr. J. N. Volbert: Car rental Rs 900 per day, scooter rental Rs 500 per day, air tickets from South Africa Rs 121,834, air tickets to Reunion Island I have just mentioned Rs 36,575 qui fait la somme de Rs 309,209 que l'Assemblée Régionale encore a payé avant que le MOU a été signé. Je veux

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demander ... au Chef Commissaire s'il allait répondre, bien sûre ? Et puis, *I table these documents, Madam Chairperson. I table.*

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Order!

[Interruption]

Madam Chairperson: Order. Question time is over.

LIST - INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN RODRIGUES - FROM 2012 TO DATE

(No. 149) Mr. J.N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Industrial Development and Others whether she will state and table, for the benefit of the House, the list of all industrial projects implemented in Rodrigues from 2012 to date, indicating their respective operational status as at date and providing details on the number thereof for which her Commission approved any grant or other support in regard thereto?

[Withdrawn]

COMMUNITY AND HEALTH CENTRE – OYSTER BAY

(No. B/150) Mr. J.N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the construction of a community and health centre at Oyster Bay, he will inform the House on where matters stand as at date, specifying if there is any dispute or legal action initiated involving the contractor as regards the settlement of claims and, if so, to give details on the reasons therefor?

[Withdrawn]

OFF-LAGOON FISHING - RODRIGUES

(No. B/151) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the six outer

lagoon fishing vessels that were previously managed by the ex-Rodrigues General Fishing Co. Ltd, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table:-

- (a) measures taken by his Commission for the good running thereof indicating all support, financial or otherwise, provided therefor;
- (b) since when these vessels have been allocated to fishers for operation indicating their state as to date together with their respective average number of trips and catch per year, and
- (c) facilities given to the *Cooperative Polyvalente des Pêcheurs Espoirs du Sud* to operate the fishing boat *François Leguat* and to provide information on the sustainability of the project?

(Vide Reply PQ B/143)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER'S RELIEF FUND

(No. B/153) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Chief Commissioner's Relief Fund, he will inform the House of the total amount of money credited thereto since January 2019 to date indicating:-

- (a) the respective sources therefor and intended use thereof; and
- (b) if any specific sector has been identified to benefit therefrom and, if so, to provide any set time frame for the implementation thereof?

[Withdrawn]

KILLING OF A YOUNG MOTHER – CITRON DONIS/AUGUST 2019

(No. 154) Mrs. M.T. Agathe, PMSM (Third Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner of Family Welfare and Others whether, in regard to the killing of a young mother of three underage children in August 2019 at Citron Donis, she will state to the House on all actions undertaken at the level of her Commission to ensure that her children as well as immediate relatives caring therefor get appropriate continuous support overall, including on any psychological and/or financial assistance plan established in relation thereto?

[Withdrawn]

RECRUITMENT – HOLISTIC TEACHERS/9 YEAR-CONTINUOUS SCHOOLING PROGRAMME

(No. B/155) Mr. J. L.R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the recruitment of holistic teachers for the implementation of 9 year-continuous schooling programme in Rodrigues, he will state and table:-

- (a) if the programme has already been implemented therein, and if so, since when;
- (b) the number of teachers already trained therefor by the Roman Catholic Education Authority (RCEA) and Government, respectively, as at date;
- (c) the number thereof already in posts in RCEA and government schools, respectively; and
- (d) on any recruitment process done therefor indicating the outcome in each case?

[Withdrawn]

EXPEDITION AFRICA

(No. 158) Miss M.R. Collet (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the 9th Edition of the Expedition Africa recently hosted in Rodrigues, he will enlighten the House thereon, indicating the:

- (a) number of local and international participants thereof;
- (b) contribution of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly therein;
- (c) intended impact on the tourism sector in Rodrigues; and
- (d) revenue generated in Rodrigues therefrom?

(Vide Reply PQ B/148)

EXPEDITION AFRICA

(No. 162) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the international event Expedition Africa recently held in Rodrigues, he will enlighten the House about the outcomes thereof for the tourism sector and Rodrigues in general?

(Vide Reply PQ B/148)

CONSTRUCTION – MARKET AT GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL

(No. B/163) Mr. Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of a market at Grand La Fouche Corail, he will, for the benefit of the House, state the:-

- (a) successful bidder thereof, and the amount allocated therefor;
- (b) sum paid to date to the contractor, indicating the work progress thereof; and
- (c) expected completion date thereof?

[Withdrawn]

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

VIOLENCES DOMESTIQUES

Mrs. M.R.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis, CSK: Mme. la présidente, merci de me donner l'occasion de dire quelques mots sur un sujet assez préoccupant, le sujet de la violence domestique à Rodrigues.

Mme. la présidente, le 20 août 2019, tous Rodrigues s'est endormi avec un émoi, un grand chagrin et beaucoup de colère. Une femme de plus s'en est allée sous les coups de son ex-conjoint. Chansela Perrine d'une vingtaine d'année laisse derrière elle trois enfants en bas âge. J'exprime une fois de plus mes condoléances à la famille éprouver. Mme. la présidente, dès que ce cas fut rapporté à la Police et à mon bureau, deux Family Protection Officers ainsi qu'un Psychologue attachait à la Commission ont été sur les lieux. Ils ont eu l'occasion de parler à la famille et de voir leur besoin. Et, personnellement en tant que Commissaire de la Famille, des Enfants et des Femmes, j'ai aussi été rendre visite à la famille accompagnée du Chef Commissaire et du Commissaire de la Sécurité Sociale et du Logement. Ainsi il a été décidé en sus du Social Aid qu'une aide immédiate sous le Family in Distress Scheme a été donné à la

famille ainsi qu'une aide pour étendre la maison des parents de feu Chansela Perrine afin que ces petits enfants aient un environnement correct pour grandir. Quelques jours après une autre femme ont été victime et est encore hospitalisé à l'heure où je vous parle.

Mme. la présidente, ces cas ont été l'occasion pour nous de réfléchir davantage sur la situation de la violence domestique à Rodrigues. Une situation qui démontre une tendance à la hausse avec 262 cas enregistrés en 2017, 274 cas en 2018 et 284 cas de janvier 2019 à ce jour. Ainsi au niveau de la Commission, nous redoublons nos efforts pour assurer que la population soit sensibilisée et que chaque personne, chaque membre de la famille puisse autant que possible prendre des dispositions pour assurer que leur famille évolue dans la bonne direction. Ainsi puisque ce sujet de la violence domestique est un sujet qui doit préoccuper tout le monde. Au niveau de mon bureau nous avons pris la décision de mettre en place un *High Powered Committee* avec les Membres de deux côtés de la Chambre, les ONGs et tous les partenaires et ainsi que les *survivors* des victimes de violence domestiques. L'idée du comité c'est de voir ensemble comment faire pour qu'aucune de nos mères ne perde la vie dans des circonstances similaires. Nous avons aussi pris l'occasion de revisiter le programme plus vif. Le programme de lutte contre la violence domestique envers les femmes et les filles en vue de sensibiliser d'avantage et de prendre des dispositions pour améliorer ce que nous faisons déjà. Des causeries, des rencontres au niveau des villages se font déjà sur le terrain. Et, dans le cadre, avec l'idée de consolider ce programme, nous allons étendre ces sensibilisations à plus de villages. Donc, dans un futur très proche. Nous avons constaté aussi qu'il est plus que nécessaire de pouvoir avoir un système coordonné pour capturer les données de la violence domestique, que ce soit par la Police ou au niveau de la Commission de la Famille. Ainsi, nous avons déjà sollicité l'aide du Ministère du Genre et on espère que dans de plus bref délai le programme DAVIS, qui est en cours actuellement à Maurice soit étendu à Rodrigues afin qu'on puisse l'utiliser. Et, comme je vous le disais au départ avoir des données plus coordonnées et surtout pour voir à travers les statistiques, prendre les décisions qu'il faut.

Nous avons aussi l'année dernière travaillé en collaboration avec le regroupement des femmes du Centre Carrefour pour emmener le programme de formation '*Manière élever tifi ti garçon*' dans une dizaine de villages. Cette année encore nous allons solliciter leur support afin que ce programme soit étendu à d'autres villages.

Nous avons aussi démarré un programme très intéressant, le 'éducation sexuelle complète' qui touche et les parents et les enfants dès le pré-primaire avec l'idée de donner la capacité au adulte de parler du sujet de la violence

domestique ainsi que de mieux accompagner les enfants donc dans le cadre de leur... donc, en tant que future adulte et citoyen responsable dans la population.

Nous avons aussi le projet d'ouvrir durant le mois d'octobre le premier '*Emergency shelter*' à Rodrigues. Un centre qui accueillera les femmes victime de violence où elles passeront un peu de temps, le temps de se reposer, de reprendre toute leur tête, leur énergie et de reconstituer donc dans le cours normal.

Au niveau du bureau nous donnons déjà un support psychologique et légal au victime de violence. Nous avons mis en place un programme, un groupe de parole qui permet au victime de violence de partager, de discuter et surtout aussi de reprendre goût à la vie. Un de nos projets aussi c'est de pouvoir former d'avantage tous les officiers de Police et les personnels de la Santé afin qu'ils puissent améliorer leur pris en charge, la pris en charge des patients et des victimes au niveau des services de la Police et de l'hôpital.

Dans le cadre de la journée de la lutte contre la violence domestique, le 25 novembre, une campagne '*Stop violence*', une campagne agressive sera lancée et touchera les jeunes des collèges dès le début de l'année 2020. Et, en même temps en ligne avec ce qui se font au niveau internationale, nous allons développer un programme pour accompagner les agresseurs et les agresseurs potentiels afin de diminuer le risque de la violence à Rodrigues.

Mme. la présidente, s'il est un fait aussi que la violence domestique aujourd'hui plus couramment on parle de la violence physique, sexuelle, financière, économique, il faut ce le dire aussi qu'avec le nombre grandissant de personne utilisant l'outil technologique qui a une nouvelle forme de violence qui se lève à Rodrigues et dans le monde. C'est la cyber violence envers les femmes et les filles. Et, il y a des chiffres aujourd'hui qui parle de cette situation naissante, la cyber violence où le *European Institute for Gender Equality* prévoit qu'une femme ou une fille sur dix va expérimenter la cyber violence dès l'âge de 15 ans. Et, je dois cette après-midi exprimer ma profonde solidarité à ma collègue, la Commissaire de la Jeunesse qui en ce moment même est victime d'une campagne de cyber violence, c'est-à-dire, l'utilisation de la technologie, de l'internet pour faire du tort à sa personne. Et, je lance un appel, je lance un appel à tous, parce qu'on peut voir qu'à travers ces violences, à travers ce cas bien spécifique, on a pu constater qu'il y a des Membres de cette Assemblée qui ont été associé, je dis bien associé à cette campagne contre sa personne. Aujourd'hui, c'est la Commissaire de la Jeunesse, demain ce sera moi, après demain ce sera vous. Et demain nos filles, nos sœurs, nos enfants, les gens que nous aimons. Donc, je lance un appel à tous pour que nous soyons responsables et que nous ne soyons pas des hypocrites, que nous dénonçons avec fermeté

tous cas de violence qui dénigre la femme, qui porte atteinte à la dignité des femmes et qui porte atteinte au droit humain. Donc, merci Mme. la présidente.

[Applause]

VIOLENCES DOMESTIQUES

The Minority Leader: Merci, Mme. la présidente, de me permettre de dire quelques mots, je voudrais de ce côté de la Chambre, nous associer à ce que vient de dire Madame la Commissaire et nous voudrions sans réserve nous aussi condamner les violences domestiques sous toutes ces formes surtout cette acte odieux qui s'est passé il y a un mois à Citron Donis et je demanderais à Madame la Commissaire d'essayer, parce que ça fait déjà un mois que cette famille vit dans la frayeur, qui ne se sent pas protégée parce que leur maison est vraiment dans un état pitoyable. Il n'y a qu'un seul membre, le papa qui travaille pour nourrir au moins six enfants maintenant qu'il a sous les bras. Je voudrais demander à Madame la Commissaire d'essayer *d'expedite matters*, essayer de faire vite parce qu'ils en ont vraiment besoin. Cette famille a vraiment besoin d'une nouvelle maison, d'une maison décente, *'ene famille ene bon lakaz' comment nous dire*. Merci, Mme. la présidente.

ORGANISATION DES JEUX DES FEMMES DE L'OCEAN INDIEN

Mrs. M.R.F. Gaspard Pierre-Louis, CSK: Mme. la présidente, je viens cette fois-ci avec un sujet un peu plus joyeux donc un peu moins triste. C'est l'organisation des Jeux des Femmes de l'Océan Indien qui se prépare donc pour cette semaine.

Mme. la présidente, je voudrais informer la Chambre que ma Commissaire organise la deuxième édition des Jeux des Femmes de l'Océan Indien du 27 au 29 septembre 2019. L'organisation de ces jeux est en ligne avec la vision du gouvernement régionale pour autonomiser la femme Rodriguaise et favoriser des échanges avec d'autres femmes des îles pour mieux développer leur compétence, capacité et talent. Ces jeux qui se situent également dans le cadre des activités qui sont organisés chaque année par ma Commission pour promouvoir le développement holistique de la femme Rodriguaise et aider à son épanouissement physique, mental et sociale. De ce fait, chaque année la Commission de la Femme organise des activités sportives destinées aux femmes Rodriguaises afin d'encourager la pratique du sport parmi les femmes non professionnelles. Donc, parmi les femmes, le sport à un niveau non professionnel et bien sûr leur aider à avoir donc, à promouvoir leur santé.

L'objectif de ces jeux, c'est bien sûr pour favoriser le développement d'un esprit d'équipe par les participants, l'intégration des femmes dans la société et puisque nous avons cette année aussi les femmes qui nous viennent des îles, c'est pour favoriser le réseautage des femmes des îles de l'Océan Indien.

Mme. la présidente, suite au vive sucée de la première édition des jeux organisés en 2015, la Commission de la Femme a tenu à organiser une deuxième édition sous le thème « *L'amitye zil o féminin* ». Dans ce contexte, nous aurons le plaisir d'accueillir à Rodrigues, une délégation des femmes de Maurice, de Madagascar et des Seychelles qui commencent à arriver cette après-midi même. Nous avons voulu innover pour cette deuxième édition des jeux. Ainsi, en sus du volet sportif des jeux, l'activité comprendra plusieurs autres volets, tel que culturel, touristique, environnemental et entrepreneurial. Il y aura aussi des échanges et des discussions sur des sujets qui préoccupent les femmes.

Mme. la présidente, le volet sportif des jeux débutera par une marche de santé le 27 septembre à partir de 13.00 heures à Baie Lascars, de Baie Lascars à Camp du Roi suivi des différentes disciplines qui auront lieu le samedi 28 septembre dans les différentes régions de l'île comme suit : le football et la pétanque à Baie Lascars ; la natation et le rugby à la piscine et au terrain de football de Maréchal respectivement ; l'athlétisme, le volley-ball et le fun games au stade de Camp du Roi. Par la suite, la finale de toutes les disciplines se tiendra le dimanche 29 septembre à partir de 14.30 au stade de Camp du Roi. Le volet culturel comprendra à la fin des jeux un concert pour les femmes de l'Océan Indien et nous aurons ainsi l'occasion de voir les artistes féminins des îles participantes à l'œuvre.

Cette année à travers les jeux des femmes de l'Océan Indien, nous avons voulu saisir l'opportunité de la participation de autres îles pour favoriser des échanges entre les femmes des îles avoisinantes et les femmes de Rodrigues. De ce fait, en collaboration avec la Commission de la Santé, la Commission des Genre et de la Culture, le regroupement des femmes du Centre Carrefour, Entreprendre Femme Océan Indien (OFOI), les collègues, la Mauritius Wild Life Foundation, le Comité Sport Féminin, ces différentes activités seront organisées comme suit :

- La mise en terre des plantes endémiques par les participantes des jeux à la Réserve de Grande Montagne afin de démontrer la volonté des femmes pour contribuer à faire de Rodrigues une île écologique ;

- Un expo vente des produits des Seychelles et de Rodrigues, des produits artisanaux pour valoriser les productions locales et valoriser le savoir-faire des femmes ;
- Des échanges, des discussions sur la violence domestique et le mécanisme mise en place dans les îles pour combattre et prévenir ces violences ;
- Une rencontre avec le personnel médical de la santé pour partager les bonnes pratiques étant donné que les délégations comprennent des femmes médecins ;
- Une session d'information avec les étudiantes des écoles secondaires dans le but de les encourager à entamer une carrière médicale et à contribuer au renforcement du service de la santé à Rodrigues.

Mme. la présidente, tout est mis en œuvre par ma Commission pour que ces activités se déroulent dans la bonne ambiance et dans un esprit d'amitié que nos participantes bénéficieront. Nous espérons à travers toutes ces activités que les femmes Rodriguaise continueront à faire honneur à notre île et contribueront d'avantage au développement durable et sein de notre île.

Je profite de cette occasion pour inviter tous les Membres de cette Chambre et toute la population de Rodrigues pour nous soutenir dans notre démarche et pour participer à la marche qui aura lieu le 27 septembre à partir de 13.00 heures à Baie Lascars. Et, à venir soutenir et encourager toutes les femmes qui prendront part aux jeux des femmes de l'Océan Indien. Je remercie tout mon staff qui se donne corps et âme pour que ces événements soient réussis. Je vous remercie de votre attention

[Applause]

HOMMAGE – FEU ISMAEL VALIMAMODE, EX-COMMISSAIRE DE LA SANTE ET DES SPORTS

Mrs. M. R. Edouard-Ravina: Mme. la présidente, Je vous remercie de me permettre de prendre le temps de cette Auguste Assemblée pour rendre hommage à feu Ismael Valimamode, ex-Commissaire de la Santé et des Sports, qui à travers son engagement comme sportif, en tant qu'entraîneur, infirmier et Commissaire, a laissé des marques indélébiles dans l'histoire de notre île Rodrigues.

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C'est pourquoi avec la bénédiction du Conseil Exécutif, nous avons décidé d'organiser la première édition intitulée « *Ismael Valimamode Sports Festival* » le dimanche 15 septembre dernier à la piscine de Maréchal et le terrain de football de Maréchal en son honneur et en honneur de toutes sa contribution dans le développement de Rodrigues après trois ans de sa disparition. La cérémonie d'ouverture de cette compétition a eu lieu à la piscine de Maréchal en présence du Chef Commissaire, moi-même, mes collègues et Mme. Valimamode entre autres.

Parmi les épreuves sportives au programme, il y avait la pétanque, l'haltérophilie, le Judo, le tennis de table, la natation (compétition et initiation) et le football pour les vétérans histoire de nous améliorer dans d'autres disciplines pour les prochains Jeux des Iles.

Je suis très fière d'annoncer, Mme. la présidente, que cette compétition a été une grande réussite avec la participation de pas moins de 1500 personnes notamment des enfants et des adultes. Cette journée a permis à la détection des talents pour promouvoir davantage les différentes disciplines à travers notre île. C'était le Sports pour Tous menant vers le Sport D'Elite.

Mme. la présidente, nous nous réjouissons aussi de la participation de six équipes vétérans à cette compétition, notamment dans le football, dont les joueurs ont certainement côtoyé Feu Ismael Valimamode comme joueur ou entraîneur.

Fort de ce succès, Mme. la présidente, nous envisageons de faire de cette compétition une activité annuelle afin que la philosophie de feu Ismael Valimamode soit perpétré parmi les jeunes générations et la population en générale afin que nous puissions nous inspirer de son optimisme, de sa bravoure et son sens de discipline.

Pour terminer, Mme. la présidente, je voudrais remercier tous ceux et celles qui ont contribué à l'organisation de cette activité spécialement Madame Valimamode et toute sa famille. Merci, Mme. la présidente.

[Applause]

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that this Assembly does now adjourned to Tuesday the 12th of November 2019 at 10.30 hours.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

At 3.20 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 12 November 2019 at 10.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

GELENA REHABILITATION LOAN SCHEME - DBM

(No.B/152) Mr. J.R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the Gelena Rehabilitation Loan Scheme set up at the Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM), he will obtain information from any relevant authority, including his Commission, to state and table, for the benefit of the House, the conditions and facilities associated therewith detailing the number of applications:

- (a) recommended therefor by his Commission, indicating the number of planters, breeders and fisherman concerned, respectively; and
- (b) approved by the DBM, specifying the areas concerned?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that following the passage of Cyclone Gelena early this year, Cabinet was informed on 15 February 2019 that the Development Bank of Mauritius will provide loan facilities under the Gelena Loan Rehabilitation Scheme to planters, farmers and fisherman who have suffered damages by the cyclone.

Madam Chairperson, all the conditions and facilities associated with the application of the loan is found on the internet and available at the Development Bank of Mauritius.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that according to records 29 planters and 10 farmers have called at the Commission in connection with their applications for the loan scheme. Over and above the conditions associated with the loan scheme offered by the bank, that is, ceiling amount, interest rate, penalty rate, repayment period, security amongst others, one salient feature involves the inputs from the Agricultural Services.

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As such, Madam Chairperson to operate the scheme, the bank has requested a comfort letter or certificate from my Commission testifying the damages incurred by the complainants.

Consequently, officers of my Commission proceed on field to assess the loss suffered by planters. As far as livestock is concerned, the Veterinary Officers assess and confirm the death of the animals.

Madam Chairperson, a letter certifying the planters/farmers loss is then issued and signed by the Departmental Head of my Commission so that the bank may do the needful in favour of the applicants and 25 testimonials were issued.

As far as fisherman are concerned, I am informed that 2 applications were recommended by the Fisheries Department.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the house that the scheme was extended to end April following the passage of Cyclone Joaninha in March 2019.

Madam Chairperson, with regards of part (b) of the question, although information has been sought from the parties concerned, the bank has been reluctant to provide these details due to confidentiality.

EMBELLISHMENT PROJECT – ROUTE DE L'AUTONOMIE

(No. B/156) Miss M.R. Collet (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether he will state and table to enlighten the House as regards the embellishment project along the Route de l'Autonomie, indicating: -

- (a) the types of trees being felled;
- (b) the types of plants being planted; and
- (c) the costs and duration thereof?

Reply: Mrs Chairperson, Madam, le projet de l'embellissement au long de la route de l'Autonomie est une continuité du projet de la mise en place d'une réserve naturelle à Cascade Pigeon.

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La phase 1 financée par la COI (Commission de l'Océan Indien) et le RRA consiste à la mise en place d'une réserve naturelle qui permettra la réhabilitation et la gestion de la forêt de Cascade Pigeon.

Ce projet s'inscrit dans la vision de ce présent du gouvernement régionale autonome de faire de Rodrigues une île écologique avec l'idée sous-jacente d'intensifier l'utilisation des fonctions écologique des réserve naturelle de l'île.

Le projet de réhabilitation et gestion de la forêt de Cascade Pigeon comporte une composante essentielle d'élimination des espèces envahissantes et exotique sur le bassin versant de cette région afin de permettre à la biodiversité de pouvoir s'épanouir dans ce milieu humide assez exceptionnelle de l'île.

Le projet vise à améliorer la biodiversité de l'île en ce qui concerne la protection des espèces endémique telle que la Chauve-Souris, la production d'eau potable, la productivité apicole aussi que l'attractivité touristique de l'île.

Les espèces exotiques qui sont en court d'éliminé sont :

1. *Tabebuia pallida*, tecoma
2. *Terminalia arjuna* , Razouna
3. *Eucalyptus teriticornus*, Eucalyptus blanc
4. *Terminalia catappa*, Takamaka
5. *Mangifera indica*, Manges
6. *Syzygium jambos*, jamrosa
7. *Pongamia pinnata*, Pongamme
8. *Ravenala madagascariensis*, Ravinal

Ils sont remplacés par les espèces endémique telle que:-

1. *Hyophorbe verschafeltii*, palmiste marron
2. *Latania verschafeltii*, latanier jaune
3. *Hibiscus liliiflorus*, Mandrinette
4. *Dracaena reflexa*, Bois Chandelle
5. *Sarcanthemum coronopus*, Sarcanthemum
6. *Fernelia buxifolia*, Bois bouteille
7. *Turraea laciniata*, Bois Balais
8. *Pandanus heterocarpus*, Vacoas
9. *Gastonia rodriguesiana*, Bois Blanc

Mrs Chairperson, Madam, la durée du projet dépendra de la capacité des espèces endémique de s'adapter à l'environnement et le changement climatique. Il faut aussi noter que le travail consiste à couper, remplacer et l'entretien des

nouvelles plantes. Donc après la plantation il y aura une longue période d'entretien qui sera une activité annuelle du Forestry Division

Mrs Chairperson, Madam, le remplacement au long de La Route de l'Autonomie sont en court et va être accentué avec la venue de la saison de pluie en janvier 2020 jusqu'au juin 2020.

Actuellement au pépinière de Solitude il y a plus de 5000 plantules endémique qui sont en préparation pour la saison de plantation.

Mrs Chairperson, Madam, le projet d'embellissement au long de la route de l'Autonomie est exécuté par le Forestry Division et de ce fait le cout et « in house » car les ressources existantes sont utilisés.

E-HEALTH PROJECT

(No. 157) Miss M.R. Collet (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether he will state and table to enlighten the House as regards the e-health project specifying:

- (a) the status thereof as at date giving details as regards the registration process, especially for vulnerable adults and children;
- (b) the total number of *Agents de Santé Communautaire* and other officers involved therein; and
- (c) the intended outcome thereof together with all costs associated therewith?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, in response to this question, I would state with slight amendments, the written reply which I have already provided to PQ B/124 as they relate to the same subject matter.

As the House is aware, my Commission with the collaboration of the Chief Commissioner's Office and the Commission responsible for ICT have embarked on the implementation of the e-health project since last year.

The overall aim and objectives of this project is to provide a modern, more reliable and secure system of health services that will enable individual health care providers and health care managers to access, view, use and share patient medical information as part of care provision through health centres around the island in a centralized database architecture.

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This new e-health system is expected to cover a range of services by relying upon solutions that are at the edge of health care and information technology.

Contract for the implementation of the project was awarded to State Informatics Ltd (SIL) on 3 September 2018 for the sum of about Rs 17 M after appropriate tendering procedure. The kick off exercise was done on 9 October 2019.

The implementation was scheduled to be done in phases with the release of a module on each phase. All the six phases provided in the scope of the project have already been released as follows:

1. Patient Management
2. Health Record
3. Consultation, Bed and Ward Management
4. Appointment and Chronic Disease Management
5. Physician Order
6. Pharmacy and Stock Management

As at date all the required infrastructure has already been set up. Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Zita Jean Louis Area Health Centre and La Ferme Area Health Centre are now interconnected. Moreover, the server room has already been completed and terminals for all users have been installed in all Wards and Consultation rooms.

My Commission has already started a mass registration exercise of the population with the collaboration of the Rodrigues Council of Social Services and some 100 Community Health Agents in Community Centres and villages throughout the island.

The Community Health Agents made door to door visits within their community to ensure that all members of the visited household including handicap persons, children and the elderly get registered on the basis of their National Identity Card and birth certificates in the case of children.

About 20 trainees have been recruited under the Youth Employment Programme to perform data entry collected by the Community Health Agents. Both the Community Health Agents and the YEP trainees operated under the direct supervision of the senior Health and Records Officer, the Hospital Administrator, officers of the ICT Unit. Advisers for Health and for Communication matters also provided their inputs in terms of community mobilization and communication respectively. An Implementation Committee

chaired by the Departmental Head of my Commission has been set up to facilitate and monitor the implementation of this activity and other aspects of the project.

As at date, about 36,500 people representing more than 83% of the population have been registered.

The registration campaign will be ongoing at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Zita Jean Louis Area Health Centre, La Ferme Area Health Centre for those who have not yet been registered.

Presently, my Commission is completing the data entry of the system. A patient card will be issued shortly to each registered person. We expect to kick start the e-health service by mid of forthcoming October, if everything goes well.

Prior to this, all users of the new systems are being trained and the User Acceptance Testing is being carried out. Posters and banners will be released shortly together with TV/Radio programmes in view of sensitizing the population and getting everybody prepared for this new service.

I must also inform the house that provision has been made to ensure security and confidentiality of data.

The next step is data migration where all the existing data regarding patient files will be migrated to the new system. Moreover, appropriate actions are also being considered to review the existing infrastructure at the Record Offices at QEH, Zita Jean Louis and La Ferme Health Centres to adapt to the e-health requirements, including the provision of ticketing machines for a better queue management system.

As regards to the outcomes, we expect in the short term that the delivery of health services at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Zita Jean Louis Area Health Centre and La Ferme Area Health Centre will be considerably improved in terms of waiting time by patients, stock management including drugs, wards and laboratory result management among others.

In the medium term, after discussion with the Honourable Minister of Health and Quality of Life during his last visit in Rodrigues, he has agreed that his Ministry, which will also introduce its e-health service in government hospitals in Mauritius, will consider the necessary arrangements to interlink both e-health systems Mauritius and Rodrigues so that whenever a patient is

transferred to Mauritius or vice versa, his file can be easily accessed through the system for necessary treatment.

In the long term, we intend to extend the e-health service to all Community Health Centres throughout Rodrigues.

RE-OPENING – SWIMMING POOL OF MARECHAL

(No. B/159) Mr. J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to the re-opening of the swimming pool of Maréchal, she will inform the House where matters stand as at date indicating:

- (a) if all tests required have been performed successfully, specifying the state of the mechanical equipment;
- (b) when the pool will be re-opened to athletes and general public;
- (c) if there is still any delay on the commissioning; and
- (d) the sum paid to date to the contractor?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a), the taking over of the Maréchal Swimming Pool was done on 23rd November 2018, after the required mechanical and technical tests were performed successfully. Following cyclonic conditions, two of the three pumps used for treatment of pool water broke down. The expert views of the consultants were sought and the Commission obtained their green light to operate the pool using one pump with a determined rest period until replacement of the two pumps. In the light of the survey, the consultant recommended that two new pumps be purchased and procurement for same has been initiated at the level of my Commission, closing date for the submission of bids was 18th September 2019 at 13 hours, local time.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (b), the swimming pool is already open to the public and athletes. In fact, the first activity organised at the pool was on 17th March 2019 with the launching of the “Natation Pour Tous” programme and the setting up of Centre Formation which will restart its activities next week.

In addition, a competition was organised on 15th September 2019 to commemorate Late Ismael Valimamode, ex Commissioner for Sports. The participants of the incoming “Jeux des Femmes de l’Océan Indien » are also

following training sessions at the Pool since August 2019. Shoals Rodrigues is also using the swimming pool as from August 2019 for the training of their trainers involved in Club “Mer”.

A final plan of use of the pool is being finalised at the level of my Commission to ensure the optimum use of the pool by the Educational institutions, the National Coast Guard, clubs and other relevant institutions.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (c) of the question, I wish to inform the House that all commissioning exercises have been completed in connection with the project of re-opening of the swimming pool.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (d), the sum paid to the contractor as at date is Rs 15,999,696.95. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

(No. 160) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Others whether, in regard to gender-based violence in Rodrigues, she will enlighten the House on the number of reported cases from January 2019 to date, indicating if same is on the rise together with the measures envisaged by her Commission to combat same?

Reply: Madam, Chairperson, with respect to Question B/160, I am informed that 239 cases of domestic violence have been reported from January 2019 to date as follows:-

- 39 cases at the Family Protection Unit; and
- 200 cases at the Police Family Protection Unit

Madam, Chairperson, based on the trend for cases reported in Year 2017 and 2018 which stood at 262 and 274 respectively, it is clear from statistics gathered for reported cases for period January to date that cases of domestic violence is increasing in Rodrigues.

Madam, Chairperson, this situation is viewed with great concern at the level of my Commission. There is thus the need to strengthen actions already being implemented and come up with new measures to increase awareness and sensitise the population on the negative bearing of domestic violence.

Being given that the response to domestic violence requires coordinated and concerted efforts from the Government and the Community, it has been

decided to set up a High Powered Committee, comprising Members of this August Assembly and Civil Society as well as one or two survivors of Gender Based Violence. The aim of the High Powered Committee is to reflect on the problem and devise strategies and measures that need to be taken to combat domestic violence in Rodrigues. One of the main objectives of the Committee is to formulate an action plan to determine specific tasks and activities that need to be implemented in order to achieve our goal of reducing domestic violence in Rodrigues and to have a coordinated approach with stakeholders involved in connection thereto.

Madam, Chairperson, much emphasis will be laid to reinforce actions of ongoing projects which aim at the prevention against domestic violence in Rodrigues as follows: -

i) PLUVIF Programme

Under the PLUVIF Programme, further sensitisations campaigns on the prevention and elimination of domestic violence targeting both men and women will be organized.

In addition, a pool of trainers will be set up to assist my Commission to disseminate information on the social and legal aspect of Gender-based Violence to the population.

Moreover, training on Men Empowerment in collaboration with *Groupe Zom* of the different parish of the island will be mounted shortly to promote healthy relationship in families.

ii) DOVIS Programme

The Dosis Programme will be implemented in collaboration with the Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare to create a database for shared data on reported cases at Police Stations and the Family Welfare and Protection Unit so as to avoid duplication of data and ensure proper statistics so as to enable further action.

iii) Programme “*Manière Elever tifi ti garçon in villages*”

The programme “*ki manière Elever tifi ti garçon*” run in collaboration with Centre Carrefour will be revived and extended to other villages.

iv) Education Sexuelle Complète

With a view to inculcate a responsible attitude and behaviour towards sex among boys and girls since their early childhood and promote values such as respect among them, the Programme Education Sexuelle Complète which has been initiated with the financial collaboration of the UNFPA and implemented on a pilot basis this year in eight (8) Preprimary schools will be extended to other schools early next year.

In addition to ongoing programmes, Madam Chairperson, it is proposed to enlist the collaboration of all public and private organisations to come up with a policy at the level of their organization to combat domestic violence.

Moreover, an aggressive campaign “STOP VIOLENCE” against women and girls will be launched to mark the International Day on Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls.

Madam, Chairperson, my Commission is not only initiating action to prevent domestic violence but is also taking incentives to provide necessary support to victims of domestic violence. In that respect, a temporary Emergency Shelter will be operational as from October 2019 so as to provide a roof to victims during emergencies pending procedures are completed for a Protection Order.

Additionally, psychological support and legal aids are provided to victims of violence. Groupe de Parole has also been set up to provide opportunity to victims to externalise their feelings and help them break isolation and start anew.

Madam, Chairperson, I rely on the collaboration and support of all Members of this August Assembly and the civil societies to collaborate and assist my Commission in its fight against domestic violence and for a better Rodrigues.

ORGANISATION DES JEUX DES FEMMES DE L’OCEAN INDIEN

(No. 161) Mr. J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St. Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Others whether, in regard to the *Jeux des Femmes de l’Océan Indien* that will be organised shortly, she will enlighten the House about the aims and objectives thereof, the costs implications therefor and any other matter pertaining to same?

/UNREVISED/

Reply: Madam Chairperson, with your permission, I would like to make a statement in reply to Question B/161.

(Vide Statement by Commissioners)