

No. 1 of 2021

RODRIGUES
FOURTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 1 of 2021

Sitting of Tuesday 23 February 2021

The Assembly met in the Assembly House,
Port Mathurin, at 10.30 a.m.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2021

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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-Ravina	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

Serjeant-at-Arms - Constant Perrine, Mr Stenio

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ANNOUNCEMENT

PRIVILEGE COMPLAINT – FIRST ISLAND REGION MEMBER, VON-MALLY

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, I have one announcement this morning. I wish to inform the House that there has been a Privilege Complaint by the First Island Region Member, Mr Louis Joseph Von-Mally as regards the broadcast of the proceedings of the Assembly sitting of 23 December 2020.

I have taken note in extenso of the complaint in the light of applications, rules and legal provisions for the purpose of determining matters of contempt or breach of privilege. 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 the Rules and Regulations of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly as regards the complaint made by the Respected Member, I am of the view that the circumstances reported does not amount to any offence and per the provisions of paragraph 5 of Standing Order 69, the Privilege Complaint by the First Island Region Member, Mr Louis Joseph Von-Mally shall lapse. Therefore, the matter is considered close. This is my ruling on the matter. Thank you for your attention.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader.

COVID-19 VACCINATION – NO. RECEIVED/TARGET GROUP

(No. B/1) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the Covid-19 vaccination in Rodrigues, he will inform the House of the number of vaccines received to date and the target groups identified by his Commission therefor together with the set selection criteria for the purposes thereof?

Mr Roussety: Madam Chairperson, on 04 February 2021, a delegation from the Ministry of Health and Wellness fielded an official mission to Rodrigues in the context of the vaccination campaign for COVID-19 in the Republic of Mauritius. The delegation carried a first batch of 4,200 doses of COVID Shield from AstraZeneca Group of India. The vaccines are kept at the vaccination centre, at Queen Elizabeth Hospital under the custody of the Acting Health Director.

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Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that the first batch of COVID-19 vaccines are designated for front-liners between 18 to 65+ in the line of the national policy. However, the vaccine is administered provided that the person is willing and subject to the conditions that the person is not under certain medication, such as, Aspirin, Clopidogre, Heparin and Lovenox treatment

A total of 1,905 front-liners from different stakeholders have been identified as follows:-

S.N.	Department/Unit	No. of People
1.	Health/Hospital and Commission for Health	815
2.	Public Health	11
3.	Police Officers	587
4.	Airport Staff: - Air Mauritius - Airport of Rodrigues - Duty free	} 135
5.	Fire Services	60
6.	Ports Authority	MPA: 12 Stevedore: 85
7.	Rod Clean	160
8.	Prison	40

They have all been informed of the vaccination programme.

On 05 February 2021, a-half day training dedicated to officers of the Health Services to be involved in the vaccination programme was delivered by the delegation from the Ministry of Health and Wellness at English Bay Youth Centre.

On Saturday 06 February 2021, an open training session was also organised at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. All frontliners were invited to attend same before the start of the vaccination on the same day.

On Monday 09 February 2021, a TV program was recorded with the Medical staff of the Health Services who are responsible for the vaccination campaign in Rodrigues.

I must point out that some persons concerned are very reluctant to the vaccination in spite of the on-going sensitisation programme. We are continuing our sensitisation campaign so that the frontliners accept to be vaccinated to protect themselves, their families and all those at their place of work.

Madam Chairperson, I must avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Health and Wellness to run this vaccination programme concurrently in Rodrigues. It is an important step towards the immunisation and protection of our population against the COVID-19.

In spite of the fact that we are COVID free so far, it is essential that our population get vaccinated to offer better protection against the disease in the face of the external world. According to discussion we had with the delegation from the Ministry, the vaccination will be continued to all other components of the Mauritian and Rodriguan population. The Ministry is targeting that at least 60% of the population get vaccinated.

I am making an appeal to all the front-liners and to the population at large to use this opportunity to get themselves vaccinated for their protection and that of their surroundings. The vaccination is essential particularly when considering future re-openings of the national borders and subsequently of our greater exposure to the pandemic. The Ministry of Health has ordered a stock of 300,000 vaccines and Rodrigues will benefit from additional doses to continue the programme.

Mr Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, can I ask the Commissioner, can he describe the protocol prior to and after the vaccination process?

Mr Roussety: I have already answered the question, Madam Chairperson. The protocol is that all frontliners should be vaccinated first and then for others it will be at a later stage.

Mr Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, on the same point. So, after the front liner gets vaccinated, is there a follow-up? This is what I want to know from the Commissioner, is there

a follow-up and, how is it done? How is the follow-up done after the vaccination and how many doses are injected to that person?

Mr Roussety: Madam Chairperson, there is a sensitised programme before the frontliners get vaccinated. And, when the frontliners had got their dose of vaccine they have to remain in attendance at the hospital for at least 30 minutes or one hour and after that there is no protocol that has been made in place after the vaccines programme.

Mr Grandcourt: Does this mean, Madam Chairperson, that there is no follow-up after the vaccination process?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, si la personne qui a reçu le vaccin est malade, normalement il y a une carte qu'on donne aux *frontliners*, un numéro de téléphoner. Alors, la personne vaccinée doit téléphoner à l'hôpital de Crève-Cœur.

Mr Volbert: Yes, Madam Chairperson, in his reply the Commissioner stated that, half-day course has been given to staff from medical section how to administer the vaccine. Can I know from the Commissioner how it is handled and disposed afterwards?

Mr Roussety: Madam Chairperson, the vaccines are stored in a refrigerator at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital between a temperature of 2 and 8 degrees Celsius and the vaccines come from a vial with 10 or 11 doses so that if we have ten persons to be vaccinated, that is okay. We do not open a vial if there is only three/four persons to be vaccinated.

Mr Grandcourt: So, the Commissioner has been talking about the frontliners, some of them to be reluctant to do the process. Can we know why are the frontliners reluctant?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, comme on avait dit, ce qu'ils ne sont pas obligés de faire des vaccins. Alors, on ne peut rien légalement faire contre eux.

Mr Grandcourt: Pourquoi, Madame la présidente, que la personne, c'est ce que le commissaire n'a pas dit, doit signer. Est-ce que c'est obligatoire le '*Consent Form*' avant de faire vacciner ?

Mr Roussety: Bien sûre, Madame la présidente, la personne doit signer le '*Consent Form*' avant de se faire vacciner. Dans tous les procédures à l'hôpital, même pour une opération, il y a un '*Consent Form*' que le patient doit signer.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Agathe.

Mrs Agathe: Madame la présidente, avec ce '*Consent Form*' là et d'après la réponse du commissaire, il faut signer ça. Mais quand je vais à l'hôpital, je fais un vaccin ou bien je fais une piqure, il n'y a pas de '*Consent Form*'. Est-ce que ce n'est pas une façon de cacher quelque chose, d'après moi ?

Mr Roussety: Non, Madame la présidente, il n'y a rien à cacher. Dans tous les procédures des vaccins, même pour un bébé, la maman doit signer le papier.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, est-ce que je peux demander au commissaire Simon Pierre Roussety. Il a dit dans sa réponse, les *frontliners* sont les premiers à être vacciné contre la COVID-19. Est-ce que je peux lui demander, est-ce qu'il y a d'autres personnes qui ont été vacciné à l'heure où on parle à part les *frontliners*, si oui, pourquoi ? Sinon, donner des détails.

Mr Roussety: Bon, Madame la présidente, effectivement il y a deux personnes qui ont été vaccinées et un dedans n'est pas un *frontliners* mais il a écrit à la commission qu'il doit partir à l'extérieur et ce vaccin va l'aider à avoir le visa nécessaire pour qu'il puisse partir. Et l'autre qui a été vaccinée, c'est un employé d'une firme et il restait une dose de vaccin et alors on l'a vaccinée.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, alors parmi le nombre de vaccin qui a été reçu, donc il y aura bien sûr les *frontliners* qui vont être vacciné. Après comment ça va se passer ? Est-ce que le public, les membres du public peuvent aller à l'hôpital pour demander à être vacciné, comment ça va se passer ? Est-ce que le commissaire peut nous expliquer ?

Mr Roussety: Bien sûr, Madame la présidente. Le ministère de la Santé a passé une commande de 300,000 doses de vaccins de l'Inde et ils auront aussi pour Rodrigues et on va passer une annonce à la radio et à la télévision. Et, nous avons beaucoup d'appel que les personnes disent qu'ils veulent se faire vacciner mais on attend avec les *frontliners* avant et puis les autres.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, quelles sont les critères pour se faire vacciner ? Est-ce qu'il y a une préférence, par exemple, pour des personnes âgées, des personnes malades, comment est-ce que ça va se passer ? Est-ce qu'il a déjà mis à l'hôpital un genre de protocole justement pour le public qui veulent venir se vacciner à l'hôpital ?

Mr Roussety: Oui, Madame la présidente, définitivement il y aura un protocole que les personnes âgées vont être vaccine en premier mais tout ça on a le temps pour le faire. On doit finir avec les *frontliners* avant.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Augustin.

Mr Augustin: Merci, Madame la présidente, est-ce qu'on peut savoir du commissaire de la Santé sur le nombre de personne qui ont été vaccinée, est-ce qu'il y a eu des gens qui ont eu des effets secondaires ?

Mr Roussety: Non, Madame la présidente. Il n'y a pas eu des effets secondaires. Tous marchent très bien. Et, depuis hier et aujourd'hui, là il y a beaucoup de *frontliners* qui sont en train de se faire vacciner à l'hôpital, d'après mes dernières informations.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, est-ce que le commissaire peut nous dire la durée de vie, si on peut dire ça comme ça, du vaccin dans le corps d'un homme Rodriguais ou d'une femme ?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, c'est encore technique et je ne peux pas me prononcer directement combien de temps ça va durer dans le corps des personnes mais toujours c'est comme le vaccin contre la grippe, c'est que tous les ans les personnes âgées doivent se protéger contre la grippe et ils doivent refaire le vaccin. Mais là pour le Covicile AstraZeneca, on n'a pas encore de dernier nouvel combien de temps ça va prendre dans le corps des personnes.

Mr Volbert: Oui, Madame la présidente, si jamais, on a des *side-effects* sur les personnes/patients, les personnes qui ont été vaccinées, est-ce que la commission est prêt pour atteindre ses patients-là, est-ce qu'ils auront le service nécessaire dans ces cas-là ?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, nous on est prêt. S'il y a des personnes qui ont des *side-effects*, des allergies à cause du vaccin, on est là pour les aider et dans leurs cartes de vaccination, il y a un numéro qu'ils doivent appeler et nous on est prêt pour aller secourir ce patient.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, il y a une chose que je ne comprends pas. Le commissaire ne sait pas, il a mis des vaccins à des gens et lui-même il ne sait pas quel est la durée de vie de ce vaccin dans les corps des gens. Donc, il faut faire attention. On administre des vaccins, il y a des gens qui viennent, ils sont des *frontliners* comme il dit, ils se font vacciner et puis, l'hôpital ne peut pas dire. Mais qu'est-ce que c'est ? Quelle est la solution à cela ? On nous envoie des vaccins, on ne sait pas. Qui c'est qui va savoir ?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, nous avons seulement l'administration de la commission de la Santé et le *policy* se trouve à Maurice avec le ministère de la Santé. Et, aussi ils n'ont encore été ...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Order! Order, Respected Members! This is not in order.

Mr Roussety: Même le ministère n'a pas été encore confirmé par l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé, quelle est la durée exacte des vaccins. Mais une chose est sûre, c'est que les vaccins sont performants. Même en Angleterre tous les anglais ont été vaccinés par AstraZeneca.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Respected Member, Volbert.

Mr Volbert: Merci, Madame la présidente. Dans sa réponse le commissaire a dit qu'il y a certain membre du service hospitalier qui ont suivi le cours pour savoir comment administrer. Peut-on savoir combien de ces officiers ont pu suivre ces cours ? Et, si le nombre qui a déjà suivie le cours, si c'est suffisant ?

Mr Roussety: Oui, c'est suffisant, Madame la présidente. Il y a au moins une dizaine de Nursing Officers et des docteurs.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, est-ce qu'on peut (excusez-moi j'ai mal compris) avoir le chiffre du nombre de personnel soignant qui ont suivi ce cours ?

Mr Roussety: J'ai répondu à la question, Madame la présidente. Mais peut-être que le respecté membre Minority Leader, n'entend pas mais il faut qu'il ouvre bien ces oreilles. Et, une dizaine de personne, une dizaine de Nursing Officers et deux Medical Officers sont là pour administrer.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, est-ce que le commissaire de la Santé trouve ça normal avec une population de 43,000 habitants, on a que dix Nursing Officers qui sont... Il s'agit de notre survie. Est-ce qu'il trouve ça normal lui qu'il y a seulement dix personnes qui ont suivi ce cours ? Pourquoi pas tout le monde ?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, c'est normal pour le moment avec 1,900 *frontliners*, les dix Nursing Officers et les deux médecins sont nécessaire. Mais quand nous arrivons à la rivière fit d'un pont, on va le sauter/traverser et puis on va voir.

Mr Volbert: Merci, Madame la présidente. Il y a que dix officiers, dix personnels hospitaliers qui ont suivi le cours. Mais s'il arrive que ces dix personnes-là ils ont les effets négatifs, quelles sont les autres personnes qu'on va procéder avec, parce qu'il y a que dix ?

Mr Roussety: It is hypothetical, Madam Chairperson, so I cannot answer this.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, this is hypothetical, yes. Next question.

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT – PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

(No. B/2) Mr J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the employment contract of pre-primary school teachers in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state where matters stand as at date, indicating if they all have signed the contract and, if so, since when?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, pursuant to agreement between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly provides a grant to the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues to cater for the salaries of the private pre-primary teachers. The conditions of employment of the teachers is an internal affair of the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues, which is the employer of the private pre-primary teachers.

Madam Chairperson, this question was raised by Respected Member, Mr J. R. Augustin during the sitting of 15 September 2020. I provided a reply and by that time, it was understood that the pre-primary teachers have signed the contract of employment provided to them by the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues.

However, Madam Chairperson, feeling concerned about the point raised by Member Augustin in sitting of 10 November 2020 about whether, all the pre-primary teachers have really signed their contract of employment as per reply submitted at the sitting of 15 September 2020, the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues was contacted to clarify the point.

It is to be noted, Madam Chairperson, that in the meantime, the composition of the Managing Committee has changed following the last election held on 19 September 2020. The Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues has now responded that no teacher signed the contract. Madam Chairperson, in view of the above, I am planning to meet the new managing team to have a clearer picture of the situation and to listen to their representation, if any.

Furthermore, Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues during the budget consultation exercise for financial year

2021/22 has made a submission to my Commission for a revision in the conditions of service of the private pre-primary teachers and I wish to reassure the House that due attention is being given to the submission of the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues in the limit of what could be afforded in the budget allocation 2021/2022. I am also informed that the teachers are being paid as per Pre-primary School Employees Remuneration Act 2019.

Mr Augustin: Yes, Madam Chairperson. Can we know from the Chief Commissioner with the answer given on the 15 September 2020, I quote: *“All pre-primary teachers have a duly signed Contract of Employment with the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues and salaries are in line with Pre-primary Schools Employees Remuneration Regulations.”* And, now the Chief Commissioner has said that this an internal affair for the Association des Ecoles Maternelles and, no one now has never signed any contract as pre-primary teachers of the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues. Can the Chief Commissioner explain to the House whether, he has misled the House on the 15 September 2020?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I have just received a copy of Employment Relations Act, I have just mentioned in my answer. These Regulations may be cited as the Pre-primary Schools Employees Remuneration Regulations 2019. I have mentioned that in my reply. Well, I have said I will have a meeting with the new committee of the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues. And, I do not know whether what the Member did say, I have misconduct...

Madam Chairperson: Misled.

The Chief Commissioner: Why I misled the...

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: It was the information from the Association des Ecoles Maternelles, that is what I said.

(Interruptions)

The Chief Commissioner: That is why, Madam, I did mention that I will have a meeting with the Association des Ecoles Maternelles just to clarify all that have been said, you know. And, whether these pre-primary teachers, some said that they have not signed and then some have signed, some have not signed. And, just to clarify all the problems, you know, within the Association des Ecoles Maternelles. And, what I said also, it is during the consultation with

the Association des Ecoles Maternelles for the budget 2021/22, we are going to take into account what they have said, you know. Thank you.

Mr Augustin: Is the Chief Commissioner saying that he was wrongly advised in September last?

The Chief Commissioner: What I am going to say? I have been advised by the Ecoles Maternelles? I do not know. That is why I said I will have a meeting with the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues, you know. And, I do not know whether... the problem is that what I replied to the Member during session before in 2020, you know, Madam Chairperson, this question was raised by Respected Member Augustin during the sitting of 15 September 2020, I provided a reply by that time. It was understood that the pre-primary teachers have signed the Contract of Employment provided to them by the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues. That is what I said, you know, in that replied to that question. However, Madam Chairperson, feeling concerned about the point raised by Member Augustin in sitting 10 November 2020 about whether all pre-primary teachers have really signed the Contract of Employment as per reply submitted at the sitting of 15 September 2020. The Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues was contacted to clarify the point.

Mr Augustin: The Chief Commissioner just conceded that he was wrongly advised. Can I know from the Commissioner whether he will enquire on that subject?

The Chief Commissioner: I was not wrongly advised, Madam. I just got information and I said I will have a meeting with the new committee in order to know exactly the main problems and how they are going to work because I have just received a copy of the Employment Relations Act, you know. This Regulations may be cited as the Pre-primary Schools Employees Remuneration Regulations 2019. I just mentioned that in my reply, you know. It is a letter to have this meeting with the Association des Ecoles Maternelles in order to clarify the situation. Thank you.

Mr Von-Mally: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This is really weird. The Chief Commissioner is saying that he was not wrongly advised. But the truth is there. On the 15 September last, he gave an answer which was not correct. This is why, we said in order to give the correct answer of this Assembly, will the Chief Commissioner conduct an enquiry to know who ill-advised him. Who gave him the wrong advice. Because we are doing this for his own sake.

The Chief Commissioner: I take notice of the question.

Mr Augustin: Can we know from the Chief Commissioner whether, he is aware of a contract of employment which was circulated to all pre-primary school teachers where on the contract: “(2) *The contract shall be indeterminate duration and deem to be effective with effect from January 2014.*” Is it for that reason why all these pre-primary school teachers have not signed the Contract of Employment?

The Chief Commissioner: I will found out, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS 2020/2021- ONGOING

(No. B/3) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Sports and Others whether, in regard to sports infrastructure projects earmarked in the approved 2020/2021 budget by her Commission, she will state and table a breakdown of all ongoing projects including the respective timeframe and percentage completion to date?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chairperson, the development of new sports infrastructure and the upgrading of existing sports infrastructure remain a priority for this regional government as we are convinced that it is the prime condition *sine qua none* for the improvement and development of athletes’ performances.

This is why, Madam Chairperson, we have planned to invest massively in this sector during our mandate. Although we often face technical delays due to procurement procedures, we remain committed to providing safe and modern infrastructure to our athletes and the population at large.

Madam Chairperson, we have targeted to implement some major sports infrastructure during the Financial Year 2020/2021, of which are:

- (i) Four are at design stage:
 - (a) Construction of cloakrooms at La Ferme and Baie Lascars;
 - (b) Construction of a Domelike Structure at Mte. Goyaves;
 - (c) Construction of Maison des Arts Martiaux at Pointe Venus;
 - (d) The master plan for the Ecological Sports Complex at Grande Montagne.
- (ii) Under evaluation at the Central Procurement Board, we have Roche Bon Dieu Stadium.

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- (iii) Two projects will be launched, tender documents will be launched this month, namely: (i) The Parcours de Santé at Baie Lascars; and (ii) the upgrading works at Camp du Roi Stadium.
- (iv) Three contracts will be awarded today itself for the fencing works at Grenade, Mt Cabris and Baladirou football ground.
- (v) The tenders for the upgrading of the football grounds at La Ferme, Maréchal and Oyster Bay will be launched shortly in view of promoting security for competitions. It should be noted that in the same context, the fencing works at Grande Montagne Stadium has already been completed.
- (iv) Two of the projects are on-going, namely: (i) The Multipurpose Ground at Roche Bon Dieu; and (ii) The development of Football Field at Ste. Famille.

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chairperson, I am pleased to inform the House that my Commission has completed and inaugurated the following projects, of which are:-

- (i) The Mourouk Football Ground;
- (ii) The Construction of Nassola Cloakroom;
- (iii) The Cloakroom at Camp du Roi; and
- (iv) The construction of a new fitness room/fitness centre;
- (v) The upgrading and inauguration of Champs Cloak room and Volleyball Ground;
- (vi) And also, we have nearly completed the first phase of Camp du Roi Stadium.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the House that not less than eight other sports infrastructure will be upgraded until the end of this financial year, that is, for fencing and levelling works.

Madam Chairperson, I am also pleased to announce that 96 new floodlights have already been installed on 14 sports infrastructure during this financial year. 54 others will be installed by the end of this year:-

- (i) Mangues Sports Complex;
- (ii) Allée Tamarin Football Ground;
- (iii) Grenade Football Ground;
- (iv) Roseaux Football Ground;

- (v) Baie Topaze Football ground;
- (vi) Camp Pintade Football ground;
- (vii) Maréchal Football Ground;
- (viii) Anse Raffin Football Ground; and
- (ix) Pte L'Herbe Sports Complex.

Madam Chairperson, I am hereby tabling the status of on-going infrastructural projects under this current this financial year, including their time-frame and percentage of completion where appropriate.

Mr Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, can we know, the Commissioner has been talking about four projects which are still at design stage. So, can she name the projects and tell us why they are still on the design stage?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chairperson, I have already named the projects at design stage. The consultant and the client have to agree on same. So, it is at design stage, I have already mentioned.

Mr Grandcourt: Can we ask the Commissioner whether, these projects which are at design stage, they will be completed by the end of this financial year?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: They will have started.

Mr Von-Mally: Madame la présidente, pourrais-je demander au respecté commissaire, étant donné qu'on est en train de parler des infrastructures sportives, pour le bien de Rodrigues, est-ce qu'elle est en train de contempler la possibilité d'avoir au moins un stade homologuer, un stade de football homologuer à Rodrigues ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, laissez-moi vous dire que le stade de Camp du Roi, c'est un stade où on fait beaucoup d'activités. On a déjà une piste qui est là, on a déjà un parcours semi-marathon et on a vu pour les Jeux des Iles, les personnes étaient là, qu'on a déjà un terrain de foot qui *fit the norms as I would say. But however, in view of this question, the phase 2 is coming to put Camp du Roi on track on this thing.*

Mr Von-Mally: Madame la présidente, juste pour ajouter sur ce que je viens de dire. Pourquoi s'est important d'homologuer un terrain. Sinon jamais un match de football ne sera reconnu ailleurs, c'est pourquoi il faut l'homologuer. C'est pourquoi j'ai demandé cela. Sinon aucun match de foot à Rodrigues ne sera reconnu comme un match important.

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: We understand, Madam Chairperson, and I say again that we are talking about Camp du Roi and Camp du Roi is on the project that are to be completed.

Mr Félicité: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Commissioner mentioned fencing of Montagne Cabris football playground. Can we know which one, whether it is at Corail or at ...?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Montagne Cabris Est.

Mr Félicité: Concerning the upgrading of Montagne Cabris Corail Football playground, can we know from the Commissioner where matter stands?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madam Chairperson, with regard to playground at Montagne Cabris Corail, Camp Pintade and Reposoir, cost estimates have nearly been completed. The tender documents are under preparation.

Mr Grandcourt: On a l'impression que le commissaire a tous laissé à l'abandon et puis à la veille des élections, elle vient mettre...

Madam Chairperson: Your question, please.

Mr Grandcourt: ... elle vient mettre les lampadaires, etc. Donc, concernant le projet de Roche Bon Dieu, est-ce que je peux demander au commissaire, où est-ce qu'on est avec la relocation des gens qui devaient être bouger dans un autre endroit par rapport à ce projet, qui était sur le site du projet ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, permettez-moi de dire que les infrastructures sportives n'étaient jamais à l'abandon et que la rénovation des terrains se fait sur une base régulière et d'après nos ressources financiers et personnels.

Deuxièmement, Madame la présidente, par rapport au projet, au relogement des trois personnes qui doivent bouger, leurs maisons sont en bonne voie. Malheureusement, il y a eu un manque de ciment sur le marcher, sinon ça aurait été plus loin. Mais on va terminer les travaux d'ici la fin du mois de mars.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Respected Member, Volbert?

Mr Volbert: Merci, Madame.

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader, please.

Mr Volbert: Yes, merci Madame. A ce qu'il s'agit des vestiaires de Baie Lascars et de La Ferme, ces projets-là ont t été mentionné dans le discours budget 2018-19 si je ne me trompe

pas. Est-ce que ça ce n'est pas une priorité étant donné que les dames se servent de ces lieux-là pour la pétanque, etc., et ces gens-là se changent derrière les bateaux, les petits bateaux. Est-ce qu'elle va faire le nécessaire afin que ce projet-là se réalise au plus vite que possible.

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, j'ai déjà donné le *timeframe* et le *status* où on en est par rapport au *cloak room* de La Ferme et de Baie Lascars. J'espère que le respecté membre va en prendre note.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Augustin.

Mr Augustin: Merci, Madame la présidente. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir du commissaire des Sports concernant le centre de boxe de Malabar ? Elle a parlé la dernière fois pour la rénovation, quand est-il à ce jour ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Donc, on a déjà fait le *survey*, Madame la présidente. Donc, ça aussi le *tender document* est en préparation pour être rénové. Mais je dois dire qu'en ce moment nous allons assez vite et je suis confiante que la rénovation va être complétée.

Madam Chairperson: Minority Leader.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, il y a eu des problèmes qu'on a soulevé dans ce Parlement concernant le Roche Bon Dieu, le contracteur qui a entrepris des travaux là-bas. Il y a eu des litiges, des problèmes qui ont été soulevés dans différents documents, que ce soit l'Audit entre autres, est-ce que...

Madam Chairperson: Your question, please.

Mr Grandcourt: Est-ce que la commissaire peut nous dire un peu plus là-dessus ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: *Madame la présidente, je pense que the issues have been or is being settled. Because as at now, since the tender have been launched and is being under evaluation and people are being moved towards their new houses, there is no issue with regard to the construction of Roche Bon Dieu. As at now no legal issues, no procurement issue. So, this discussion does not arise. I think that the Minority Leader wants to make fuss out of it.*

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Agathe.

Mrs Agathe: Madame la présidente, concernant mon village, je voudrais demander à la commissaire comment se fait-il qu'un contrat a été *awarded*, après retirer, après remettre à la veille des élections ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, vous ne voyez pas mon sourire mais permettez-moi de sourire à cette question. Je n'ai pas le droit de retirer mon masque, malheureusement. Donc, ce que je dois dire à propos de Roche Bon Dieu, c'est que l'Assemblée Régionale nous avons eu la volonté politique d'avoir ce stade construit à Rodrigues. Nous avons lancé le contrat, une fois, deuxième fois. On a eu un contracteur qui n'a pas su ou pu faire le travail comme il se doit. On a dû *terminate the contract*. Now, on a relancé, on n'a pas eu de *responsive contractors*, on relance. On a quelques contracteurs, on est sous-évaluation. *This is normal process. There is no need to elections, there is no need for any of the thing, who are just honouring a political commitment, a policy commitment made to these people and to the athletes of this country. So, I feel that, since the project is moving everybody is waking up and is trying to make a fool out of it but things are moving quite surely.*

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Respected Member, Agathe.

Mrs Agathe: *Fool or not fool*, Madame la présidente, est-ce que Madame la commissaire peut nous dire dans le rapport du Public Accounts Committee, page 20, il y a Rs 284,160 de matériaux qui restaient sur le terrain quand les travaux ont été abandonné. Qu'est-ce qu'on a fait de ça ? Dans un pays où on crève de faim, les matériaux voltiger. J'ai été regardé, il n'y a rien. Comment est-ce qu'on a disposé de ça, Madame ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, quand il y a un contrat, je me pose la question – est-ce que l'opposition ne veut pas qu'on construise le stade de Roche Bon Dieu ? C'est la première question que je me pose. Ne veulent-ils pas que ce stade se réalise ? Parce que c'est maintenant qu'ils voient des piquants dans les routes, ...de ce stade.

Deuxièmement, par rapport au *what has been completed*, aux matériaux que la dame dit, Madame la respecté membre parle. Donc, tout cela a été pris sous les *tendering procedures* d'après les méthodes légales. Donc, en tout cas, il y a des procédures, ...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: En tout cas, il y a des procédures, ma commission va d'après les procédures. Maintenant s'il y a des gens qui ne sont pas content, je ne peux rien faire.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, pourquoi nous parlons de ce stade de Roche Bon Dieu, parce que les gens ne sont pas satisfaits. On a beaucoup de plaintes. A chaque fois que les gens de là-bas nous rencontrent, ils disent : *'ki pé arrivé, ki pou arrivé, ki*

pé arrivé ?. Parce que les gens ne sont pas satisfaits. Parce qu'elle n'a pas fait son travail, Madame la présidente. Et, j'aimerais poser cette question à la commissaire. Par rapport à tous ceux qui faisaient de l'entraînement sur le terrain de Roche Bon Dieu, qu'est-ce que la commission a fait pour palier à ce problème dans ce village ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, les premiers qui n'étaient pas content, qui n'étaient pas satisfait du progrès des travaux au niveau de Roche Bon Dieu c'était nous. Les villageois aussi ont criés pour dire que les travaux comme vous l'avez dit dans le passé aller à la vitesse de *courpa*. Tout le monde a vu, tout le monde n'était pas satisfait. Alors ce qu'on a fait c'est qu'on a dû *terminate the contract* pour relancer, pour avoir un contracteur qui puisse faire les travaux dans les délais que l'Assemblée Régionale avait établi et bien sûre, d'après les normes qu'on avait établies.

Deuxièmement, par rapport au membre de l'équipe qui devait s'entraîner, on a fait les ajustements qu'il fallait. On a rencontré ces équipes-là. Ne croyez pas qu'on n'a pas rencontré les gens. J'ai rencontré ces gens-là avec les commissaires de la région, on a fait des réunions pour leurs expliquer l'état des choses. Et, on est tombé d'accord ensemble. Qu'il fallait qu'on paye leurs transports pour qu'ils puissent poursuivre leurs entraînements. Alors, le transport, la commission prévoit une assistance financière pour que ces athlètes-là puissent bouger vers un autre terrain pour s'entraîner.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, tout ce que le commissaire dit concernant les contrats, les travaux lents, ce n'est pas notre problème. Notre problème c'est que vous avez failli à votre tâche de superviser le projet et que le projet est encore à l'état initiale.

Madame la présidente, concernant le *upgrading* des terrains. Je dois demander au commissaire, au niveau de sa commission, s'il y a une équipe qui travaille, qui vont faire les *minor works* au lieu de faire des contrats ici, là-bas, est-ce qu'il y a une équipe qui travaille dans ce sens, qui entretient les terrains à Rodrigues ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, je suis très choqué de l'attitude du Minority Leader pour dire que ce n'est pas leur problème que les procédures sont un peu lent. Mais je vais dans le passé pour dire qu'il y a quelques personnes qui avaient dit : *'ki pou fer avek avec la loi dans ce pays ?'* On va d'après les procédures, on va d'après des protocoles établis et on fait les choses d'après les règlements. *Problème pas problème*, we are acting on it, we are doing it.

Deuxième chose, par rapport à l'équipe que le Minority Leader a parlé, c'est qu'il y a une petite équipe à la commission qui font des *minor upgradings* mais tous les gros *upgradings* ça doit être *tendered*.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Félicité.

Mr Félicité: *Concernant le complexe sportif de La Ferme.* So, can we know from the Commissioner whether, she is considering of repairing the playground?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, on a déjà fait une visite avec l'adjoint au Chef commissaire et toute son équipe d'ingénieur et autres sur le terrain de La Ferme. On a vu l'état de ce terrain-là. Ce qu'on a fait, c'est qu'on est tombé d'accord pour que ce terrain-là soit rénover sous le *Works Order* qui est déjà disponible au niveau de la commission des Infrastructures Publique. Nous avons déjà fait les correspondances nécessaires pour assurer que cela se fasse le plus vite possible dans tout le programme déjà établi par le bureau de l'adjoint au Chef commissaire donc ça va se faire très bientôt sous le *Works Order*.

Madam Chairperson: Last one, Respected Member, Volbert.

Mr Volbert: Merci, Madame la présidente. J'aimerais demander à la commissaire qu'elle est ou qu'elles sont les raisons ou la raison qui a emmenée à la résiliation du projet de Roche Bon Dieu ?

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Madame la présidente, breach of contract.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

CONSTRUCTION – BRIDGE – BAIE MALGACHE

(No. B/4) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (Minority Leader) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of a bridge next to the concrete apron (radier) of Baie Malgache, he will state to the House on the total costs of the project, who designed same; and, if the bridge is according to the norms and, if so, to give details?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the National Development Unit has awarded the project "Raising of Ford at Baie Malgache" to Transinvest for a contract amount to Rs 32,716,350 (Inclusive of VAT). The project was designed and is being supervised by Luxconsult (Mtius) Ltd. The project was awarded on 09 June 2020 and the contractual start and completion dates are 24 August 2020 and 31 March 2021, respectively.

The main scope of works consists of the following:-

/UNREVISED/

- (i) Construction of new reinforced concrete culvert bridge of 17 m span and height 1.5 m and width about 8.5 m wide;
- (ii) Vertical realignment of existing road profile inclusive of asphalt works over about 120 m;
- (iii) Cleaning and desilting works over about 35 m along existing river;
- (iv) Embankment protection and rock revetment to embankment over about 35 m on both sides of the bridge;
- (v) Provision of 1.2 m wide footpath over about 120 m and other road infrastructure; and
- (vi) Construction of 500 mm by 500 mm reinforced concrete drains under footpath over an approximate distance of 103 m.

The percentage of progress of the project as at February 2021 is 75%.

Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the bridge is according to norms and that the design has been carried out based on a return period of 100 years.

Mr Grandcourt: Madam Chairperson, so can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner about who designed the bridge?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, it was designed by the consultant Luxconsult.

Mr Grandcourt: How many apertures are there in the bridge? You have not talked about the apertures, how many apertures are there along the bridge and what is the width of it?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: All these have been given in my answer, Madam Chairperson, may be I will have to read it back. The width of the bridge is 8 m wide, it is 8 m wide and, of course, there are different apertures. And the fact, is that their apertures as well as the width has been considered taking into consideration the flow of water that has passed through that side over a period of 100 years.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, on a eu la critique de quelqu'un qui vient de Maurice, il a dit que ce pont-là, quelqu'un du gouvernement, que ces pont-là ne se construisent plus à Maurice. Parce que justement, les *apertures*, les différents couloirs, comme on peut dire, oui, les petits carrés dans le pont, c'est trop petit. Donc, qu'est-ce qui va se passer lorsqu'il y aura des grosses pluies. C'est la raison pour laquelle j'ai posé la question, est-ce que c'est au

norme, sachant que lorsqu'il y a des grosses pluies, comme on dit en créole '*lavalas*', il y a aussi des branches qui vont venir boucher ces ouvertures-là. Donc, c'est ça notre souci.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you for the question.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, if ever this problem is to arise, it can be solved *en amont*. How? What we have to do? We simply have to ensure and I think that it is the duty of the Commission for Environment to ensure that the bed of Rivière Baie Malgache, it remains clean. As long as there is no debris and there is no tree within the bed, it is true that the problem that is being raised by the Minority Leader will not prop up.

Mr Grandcourt: Est-ce que le commissaire est d'accord avec moi que ce problème peut arriver ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, in the project, as I have mentioned, there will be a *revêtement* of 35 m inland. 35 m inland, not only there will be a *revêtement* of 35 m inland but there will be also a gabion that is going to be built. And, as such, if ever there is any debris that is going to come down whenever there is heavy rainfall, there will be less risk of the debris reaching the bridge where it is right now.

Mr Perrine: Yes, Madam Chairperson, can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner, I know that there is other bridge that will be constructed, who are in line in this budget or whatever being designed, can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner to consider the issue that has been raised in this House today. Because unfortunately, all the flow of water is not the same in all the places. For example, if you see at Anse Ally, the flow of water is bigger than Baie Malgache. At Port Sud Est, it is different, at Baie Diamant also. Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner, confirm to the House that necessary will be done to take into consideration the points that has been raised in this House for the betterment of our population?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, whenever bridges are designed and built, anybody doing same consider, of course, the hydraulic flow of water that has been experienced in that particular site, in the case of Baie Malgache, for the last 100 years. What they have done in this case, they have taken of course, the annual rainfall from the meteo, considering the catchment area of the capacity that this area may hold whenever there is a heavy rainfall. Of course, there are certain uncertainty. The uncertainty arises with the fact that, now we are experiencing flashflood. Because I remember, for example, in Rodrigues in 2019, I think we did experience within five hours from midnight to five in the morning, there was a flashflood leading to 120 mm of water. This is why the design of new bridges has to go in flow

with that issue of climate change. The point that has been raised, I think it is worth considering, we are going to, of course, make the Consultant or any other body designing bridges to take into consideration that aspect that the Member has raised.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Yes, *Madam Chairperson*. J'aimerais attirer l'attention du Chef Commissaire adjoint. J'avais fait à un certain moment donné, une série de photos à Gravières, une série de photos à Camp du Roi où ça a été construit récemment. J'ai fait mention de ce *flow of water which is not tallied with the passage, with the length of the bridge*, le gabion que vous avez mis. Tout ça, on a fait ça pour attirer votre attention. Ce n'est pas la première fois. J'ai mentionné deux cas et encore une fois, on se retrouve avec un autre cas à Baie Malgache. Donc, c'est pour ça que je dis que le Chef commissaire adjoint doit prendre une ferme décision parce que le problème, ce n'est pas lui. Le problème, c'est la population. Nous travaillons pour la population, pour le bien-être de la population. Donc, j'aurais demandé fermement pour que ces problèmes-là ne se répètent pas et que les prochains ponts qui vont être construits soient fait aux normes qu'il faut pour justement donner un *good flow of water* pour éviter que les branches ne se réfugient pas sous le pont. Parce qu'aujourd'hui vous comprenez vous-même. Il n'y a pas lieu de maintenance...

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you, Respected Member.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It remains to say, Madam Chairperson, that whenever bridges are designed, there is a simulation. And, in the case of whatever bridge is designed, there is a simulation of the hydraulic flow as I have mentioned previously. There is a simulation of the pressure that crops in and, of course, that question of debris, I think it is worth having a thought over it. So, this is why as a precautionary measure and to ensure that there is no blocking if ever of the bridge then we will have to ensure at the level of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, especially through the Commission for Environment that the river bed remains free of debris or any plants.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, j'aimerais poser la question au Chef commissaire adjoint, demander qui c'est qui a approuvé le *design* ? Est-ce que c'est son bureau, le Conseil Exécutif ou bien un autre bureau ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As mentioned, Madam Chairperson, the project is under the National Development Unit which has its own team of engineers, first. Second, there is the Luxconsult who makes the design which is of course, how to say, crosschecked by the

Engineers of the National Development Unit and, of course, my Commission also because we have a working group, a technical working group together with the NDU and there is a representative of my Commission who sits on that technical working group and if ever there is a discrepancy in the design, submitted by the Consultant then there is the Engineer of my Commission together with the Engineer of NDU who will crop up the matter.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, next question.

ROAD DRAINAGE CONSTRUCTION WORKS – PORT MATHURIN

(No. B/5) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (Minority Leader) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the road drainage construction works at Port Mathurin to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table a list of outstanding works, if any?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, the National Development Unit awarded the project “Drain Project at Port Mathurin – Phase 2, Rodrigues” on 26 November 2019 to Transinvest Ltd for a contract sum of Rs 191,863,842.60 (Inclusive of VAT). The project is being managed and supervised by Luxconsult (Mtius) Ltd.

As at beginning of February 2021, the percentage of progress achieved on the project is 85% and the following works remain to be undertaken:

- (i) In terms of roadworks: scarification and laying of asphalt within the whole project area in Port Mathurin;
- (ii) Part reconstruction of road along Rue Ofted Roussety;
- (iii) Drain works and construction of footpath along part of Rue Ofted Roussety near Berno Snack;
- (iv) Gabion protection works across river;
- (v) Placing of flaps at drain outlets;
- (vi) Other remedial measures such as additional kerbs, gulley inlets along roads where asphalt has not been laid yet.

The project is expected to be completed by May 2021.

Mr Grandcourt: Madame la présidente, excusez-moi. J’aimerais demander au Chef commissaire adjoint, le Luxconsult qu’il a mentionné, est-ce qu’il y a des Rodriguais qui travaillent dedans ? Parce qu’on a l’impression qu’ils ne connaissent pas la réalité rodriguaise. Ils font des *designs* et puis, on se retrouve au point de départ. Quand il pleut à Port Mathurin,

il y a le même problème. On doit pomper de l'eau. Mais je ne sais pas. Est-ce que le commissaire peut me répondre, peut m'éclaircir ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, if we refer to the different discussions that we have had in this Assembly, I think since the start of this Assembly itself, we all know that there was accumulation of water in Port Mathurin mainly at Cliderlex Building. There was accumulation of water near North-Coombes Building... North-Coombes Building, yes, next to the library, there was accumulation of water there and, there was also accumulation of water sometimes, next to the pharmacy. Up there, yes. When we look... The respected Member, the Minority Leader is questioning about the *intelligency* of Luxconsult.

If we look at the first phase of Port Mathurin road projects from Marine Area, Mechanical Workshop up to Rodrigues College, is there any major problem that has cropped up so far in the phase project? I do not see any. Now, there is the second phase which is going on and we know very well that the second phase is not yet over but we can already observe how beneficial it has been for the town. Already, it is not over because there is still asphaltting work which has to be completed and you will note when you move across Port Mathurin, the gullies that have been built, it is not yet being operational because it is only when the last asphalt work which is going to be completed, then all the water will get into the gullies and pour into the drains and go to the rivers. This is why at this point in time, whenever it rains in Port Mathurin, there are some accumulation of water here and there because there is the last asphalt work which has not been completed. So, we consider that once the asphalt work will be completed, we will have a final idea of what the works have been and if ever there is any accumulation of water somewhere, there is the defect reliability period of one year after completion of the work and of course, I am sure that the NDU will take the contractor and the Consultant into question about any discrepancy that is noted.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Volbert.

Mr. Volbert: *Thank you, Madam. Madam Chairperson, j'aimerais demander au Deputy Chief Commissioner, il y a une sortie pour l'eau sur le quai. L'autre jour, j'ai été là. Il y a la marée montante et je vois que l'eau en grande quantité, rentre dans le canal comme on peut appeler, jusqu'à bien loin. Imaginez-vous s'il y a une grosse pluie et on a la marée montante, qu'est-ce qui va arriver ? Est-ce que vous comptez aller vérifier ça et remédier à la situation ?*

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I do not have to go to verify, Madam Chairperson, because it has already been verified. This is why in my answer, I said, one of the works that

have not been completed, it is the placing of flaps at drain outlets. At the outlets of the drain, there will be flaps that are going to be built to ensure that whenever there is the uprising of the sea, it close

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: A sort of non-returning valve, yes. It is going to be closed and when the tide goes down, it is open and if ever there is water, then, it is going to flow down.

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: This has been considered in the project and this is going to be installed when the whole project... at the right time during the course of the project.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Minority Leader and the Commissioner for Environment, this personal conversation is not allowed. Yes.

Mr Von-Mally: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. One problem that has cropped up in Port Mathurin is the narrowness of the roads and many drivers are facing severe problem with that. Can I know what are the remedial measures that his Commission is contemplating to take?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: True to say, Madam Chairperson, that there are some signs that at certain places, the road will get narrow but the case as it is right now, it is due to the fact that the asphaltting is not yet completed. Now, there is a difference between the concrete works which have been done and the first asphalt work which has been completed. Once at certain places in the project, when the asphaltting work will be completed, the level which is now the difference in level, between the asphalt and the concrete, will be of the same height. Nevertheless, as a precautionary measure, we have considered the cases in the Road Safety Committee together, which comprises of Engineers of my Commission, the Police and we have already noted some sites where there may be danger as regard to road safety. I can cite two of them.

The first site that has been identified, it is the road next to Ben Gontran, Ex-Ben Gontran leading to Carrefour. There is an issue there. There is an issue because whenever there is any motor vehicle take that bent, there is danger of the back wheel getting on the pavement. We have already notified the NDU about the project.

We have also identified a problem next to North-Coombes. Already, you will see that the motorcycles are already using part of the constructed pavement as parking. This will have

to sort out with the... Right for the time being, it is no problem because I see that somehow, it is helping the motorcyclists but whenever the project is completed, we will come up with the proper traffic signs to ensure that there is no illegal parking as regard to... so as it does not cause any problem with respect to road safety. There are at least four or five such matters, discrepancies that we have noted and which is being taken up by the Road Safety Committee of my Commission and which is being discussed under the technical committee of the NDU.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Minority Leader.

Mr Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs Chairperson, Madam, I do not understand. So, will traffic signs alone solve the problem? Because there are many places. It depends on which, whether it is a lorry or a bus or even a 4 x 4. So, we are facing some difficulties at Port Mathurin. At times, we have to drive on the pavement itself. So, I would ask the Commissioner to look into it. So, the question is about tabling. So, is he going to table the information? Because we need.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, I read the works that remains to be completed but if the Minority Leader needs a copy of the remaining work, there is no problem for me tabling same. It is no problem. Yes.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, last one. Respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, est-ce que je peux demander au Chef commissaire adjoint que s'est-il passé avec le tronçon de route qui relie le métro André Allas jonction main road Max Lucchesi? Que s'est-il passé exactement ? Il y a eu enlèvement des drains qui ont été cassés et refait. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire adjoint peut nous éclairer là-dessus ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: **With** the road of Rue Ofted? *La Rue Ofted?*

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Non. I am not... I need notice of that question.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Metro, yes.

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: This is not allowed, respected Member.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Cliderlex...

Madam Chairperson: No, one.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It is near Berno... But the fact I think that there has been a problem and the problem is being taken on board, if I consider. If there has been noted that there has to be a change in the design because of unforeseen circumstances, but I think that it is to the goodwill of the Consultant and the contractor to make good so that we preempt beforehand and ensure that the problem does not crop up when the project is completed. So, if the work is being done, that means that, there has been a problem noted and it is being rectified to ensure that such matter does not crop up upon the completion of the...

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

CONSTRUCTION OF CITRON COMMUNITY CENTRE

(No. B/6) Mr Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Community Development and Others whether, in regard to the construction of Citron community centre, he will enlighten the House as to where matters stand as at to date?

Mr Roussety: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that following a decision of the Executive Council in August 2015, a Contract Agreement was entered with the Village Committee of Citron representing the RCSS for the construction of a Community Centre in the locality on a self-help basis. I have been further informed that the then Village Committee encountered many difficulties to mobilise volunteers to progress with the construction works and could not implement the project. In the meantime, there were changes in the Village Committee members, which complicated follow up actions. The new Committee has reiterated its request for a Community Centre in the locality. Same is being considered and included in the proposal of my Commission for funding for the forthcoming financial year 2021/2022 under the relevant capital item-vote for community development. We intend to proceed with the construction of the centre subject to provision of funds in the forthcoming budget.

Mr Félicité: Can I know from the Commissioner what his Commission has done in order to tackle the problem of these villagers who have difficulty to complete the centre?

Mr Roussety: Madam Chairperson, it is now that the new President of the Village Committee that has contacted us so that they could have a Community Centre in that locality and we are now going to help them for a new Community Centre in their villages.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Volbert.

Mr. Volbert: *Yes, Madam. Madam Chairperson, j'ai été à Citron et j'ai vu que les matériaux ont été jetés comme ça. Il y a plus de 100 pocket de ciment, comment on dit, ine*

gaté. Est-ce qu'il y a un suivi de la part de la Commission de *Community Development* pour ce genre de projet ?

Mr Roussety: Madam Chairperson, *ce projet, c'est un projet entre la commission et Rodrigues Council Social Services for the construction of the community centre in this locality.* It will be RCSS that have to follow this project on a self-help basis.

Mr Félicité: Can I know from the Commissioner what was exactly the role of RCSS in implementing such project?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, c'est le RCSS qui devait suivre ce projet de construction.

Mr Félicité: Can I know from the Commissioner whether there was no officer from his Commission who follow or monitor the progress of the work for the construction of the centre at Citron?

Mr Roussety: En principe, non, Madame la présidente. Il n'y avait pas d'officier de la commission pour suivre ce projet étant donné que le RCSS a fait toutes les directives nécessaires pour suivre ce projet.

Mr Félicité: So, can I know from the Commissioner what was the initial cost for this centre?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, je n'ai pas le chiffre de *initial cost* mais ce qu'on m'a informé que la commission en 2015 allait donner tous les matériaux nécessaires pour la construction de ce centre.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Félicité.

Mr Félicité: He mentioned 2015. So, why no action has been taken before? Now, why is it only now you have taken action in order to implement?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, ce n'est que maintenant que le nouveau comité, le président est venu frapper à la porte de la commission du Développement Communautaire de voir comment on peut les aider pour construire un centre de communautaire dans le village de Citron.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, ce centre était supposé être sous la supervision de la Rodrigues Council of Social Service depuis 2015. Le Rodrigues Council of Social Service

est un des partenaires clés de ce gouvernement pour implémenter des projets dans les villages. Depuis 2015 à ce jour, six ans écoulés, est-ce que je peux demander au commissaire Simon Pierre Roussety si le RCSS est venu rapporter ce cas de Citron entre de 2015 et 2017 ou 2018 ?

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, le RCSS est un partenaire clé pour la commission et on a travaillé beaucoup de projets avec le RCSS. Peut-être que seulement ce projet qui a échappé au control de Rodrigues Council of Social Services mais nous, on va régler la situation pour la construction d'un nouveau centre à Citron.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, l'Assemblée régionale est devenue vache maigre. Quand on veut venir prendre de l'argent, on prend de l'argent et alors que le Chef commissaire de l'autre côté vous parle de la transparence et de dépense sou par sou contrôlées par l'Assemblée régionale. Est-ce qu'en 2021, cette affaire-là est possible alors que le Chef commissaire, il est le Commissaire des finances ?

Madam Chairperson: Your question.

Mr Perrine: Ma question est : est-ce que le Chef commissaire...est-ce que l'Assemblée régionale va autoriser encore une fois les sorties d'argent pour faire un centre alors que c'était la RCSS qui était responsable ?

Mr Roussety: Oui, Madame la présidente.

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr Roussety: Définitivement, on va reprendre le projet en main au niveau de la commission pour que les habitants de Citron puissent avoir un local pour eux.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Volbert.

Mr. Volbert: Yes. Peut-on savoir du commissaire de *Community Development* s'il y aura des sanctions, si jamais il y a des gens qui ont fauté ?

Mr Roussety: *Ki sanla ine fauté?* On va voir.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member Félicité.

Mr Félicité: Can I know from the Commissioner will the Government continue in the future on constructing centre on self-help basis?

Mr Roussety: *Enfin* if the need arises but I do not think so that we will continue on a self-help basis.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member Agathe, yes.

Mrs Agathe: Madame la présidente, concernant ce centre de Citron, étant donné que l'argent, c'est l'argent public, la RCSS ne peut pas faire ce qu'ils veulent. Mais comment se fait-il que ça n'a pas été contrôlé ? Ça veut dire on donne de l'argent, tu fais ce que tu veux avec. Est-ce que le Commissaire peut voir...

Madam Chairperson: No allegations, please!

Mrs Agathe: ...Que dans le future, quand on donne de l'argent à n'importe quelle association, que l'argent soit dépensé à bon escient ?

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Yes, last one. Respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Can I ask the respected Commissioner, will his office conduct an enquiry to determine who has faulted in this project and to bring remedial solutions to this kind of fault in the future?

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, première priorité de la commission, c'est qu'on va régler les problèmes de ce centre pour construire un nouveau et là, ils ont accusé beaucoup le RCSS mais peut-être qu'il y a beaucoup plus de personnes qui sont responsables. On ne dit pas les coupables pour le moment mais on va régler le problème.

Mr Perrine: Yes, can I have one last question?

Madam Chairperson: Next question! It was your last one. Next question.

PROJECTS/FISHERWOMEN – 2012 TO DATE

(No. B/7) Mr J. N. Volbert (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Fisheries and Others whether, he will state and table the list of all projects involving fisherwomen as from 2012 to date indicating, in each case, if any funding was provided by partner organisations, giving details, together with the outcome for each project?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, let me inform the House that many projects are being put in place for the fisher community at large in Rodrigues by my Commission but to answer the question, only the Combava Project involves specifically the fisherwomen from 2012 to date.

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Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the project was jointly funded by the European Union and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly through a Grant Support Agreement and the contributions to the two parties are as follows:

BUDGET	USD
European Union	230,500
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	61,000
TOTAL	291,500

Madam Chairperson, I am also informed that the following activities have been completed:

- (i) Practical training for the beneficiaries in:
 - Customer care and Eco-Entrepreneurship;
 - Bio-agriculture;
 - Food processing; and
 - Eco-packaging.
- (ii) A four-day study tour in Mauritius.
- (iii) The production of 200 grafted plants.
- (iv) The rehabilitation of an identified site at Montagne Goyaves for the establishment of a Combava organic orchard.
- (v) Plan preparation for the construction of a processing unit.
- (vi) Soil profile test and the evaluation of the phyto-sanitary status of the Combava grafts and existing mother plants.
- (vii) Recruitment of a Consultant to guide book preparation.
- (viii) Procedures for the procurement of agro-processing equipment.

Madam Chairperson, it has always been the case since the inception of this project that Members on the other side of the House keep saying that there are no Combava in Rodrigues and that the project has failed.

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This is why, Madam Chairperson, I have personally this morning taken the time at exactly 06.59 a.m., to take a picture of the Combava plant already producing two beautiful fruits in Rodrigues and it is with great pleasure that I table for the attention of the House, the nice pictures.

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Order, respected Members!

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, these are the two pictures.

(Interruptions)

Mr Payendee: Combava, I table the pictures together with...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, you will have time for supplementary questions afterwards.

Mr Perrine: On a point of order, the Commissioner is tabling a picture which we cannot verify. We do not know where he has taken this picture and this is not correct to table a kind of picture in the House.

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Yes, the Commissioner has to substantiate but it is not a pretext for the minority group to debate in a sitting position in the House.

Mr Payendee: Yes, Madam Chairperson, the pictures have been taken this morning and I have the proof on my telephone, all the time and everything.

(Interruptions)

Mr Payendee: *Mo penkor fini, matelot! Less mo fini!*

Madam Chairperson: Order! Order, please!

Mr Payendee: I have the proof. Everything is here. Then, I will ask these Members because they keep going and check these plants to go and find out themselves where the plants are.

Mr Perrine: Madam Chairperson, again, on a point of order. This is not correct. The Commissioner cannot come in this House and tell us that he has taken a picture at Baie Lascars or wherever and he cannot substantiate that.

Madam Chairperson: Yes.

Mr Perrine: This is not correct! I want you to rule on that, please!

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member. There is no need for so much excitement on this issue. I will rule, yes. Commissioner, this is not in order. You cannot come and bring picture for which you do not have the source. Your telephone is not a proof for the House. I am sorry for that.

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the pictures have been taken in the gene bank of Oyster Bay where... The project consists...

(Interruptions)

Mr Payendee: Yes, yes.

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr Payendee: You know, these plants are supposed to be planted on Montagne Goyaves and also in the gene bank because we want to keep, you know, the genes of the plant to be able to propagate it further. So, these pictures have been taken this morning in the gene bank of Oyster Bay. So, anyone who wants to go and see, I can take them there.

Mr Grandcourt: Yes, Mrs...

Madam Chairperson: Please. Commissioner, you have completed with your answer? So, please proceeds.

Mr Payendee: Yes, as I said, Madam Chairperson, the aim of the project was to prepare 200 grafts and as far as graft is concerned, the plan is to have some plants growing in the orchard at Montagne Goyaves and some in the gene bank so that we can continue to propagate the plant to get enough material for grafts and for the propagation. And, the pictures come from these grafts, Madam Chairperson. And, also, we have recruited a Consultant for the guidebook preparation, procedures for procurement and agro processing equipment. Yes, I think that is it, Madam. And, I have already tabled all the information as they needed.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Respected Member, Volbert.

Mr Volbert: *Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson.* Concernant le projet de Combava, que le gouvernement conjointement avec le Green Africa ont donné à ces dames de Montagne Goyaves, ces *fisherwomen* de Montagne Goyaves, est-ce que le commissaire peut

nous dire si toutes ces dames, toutes ces pêcheuses sont pêcheurs professionnelles et elles ont leurs cartes professionnelles, pêcheur professionnel ?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, this project has nothing to do with professional cards. It concerns Combava projects.

Mr Volbert: Comment se fait-il, Madame la présidente, comment est-ce qu'on peut identifier les pêcheurs s'ils ne sont pas pêcheurs ? Ils n'ont pas de carte.

Mr Payendee: It is not a question of only fisherman; it is a question of empowering women in producing Combava.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Agathe?

Mrs Agathe: Madame la présidente...

Madam Chairperson: Your microphone, please.

Mrs Agathe: ...Le projet dit '*concerning fisherwomen*'. Maintenant, est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous expliquer pourquoi maintenant il vient dire *empowering women*? (*To ti capav ine met moi la dan!*)

Mr Payendee: It is about empowering women in the fishing community. So, the person may be a professional fisherman or not. You know? There are different... If a person come and say 'yes, I want to get'. And, people know that there are a lot of fishermen, especially from Rivière Banane, who have handed back their cards and wanted to do something else. And, these women fall in these projects.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Respected Member, Volbert.

Mr Volbert: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. Est-ce que le commissaire peut nous dire... Can the Commissioner inform the House whether there is a time frame for such a project since six years elapsed?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I have been explaining quite a lot of things on this project. There is no time frame for planting trees and to get from the fruits in return. So, it takes the time it has to take. So, there is no time frame. The time frame for setting up the project has gone. Yes, but to start producing because I said in my answer that we wanted to produce only 200 grafts. That was the possibility that we had. We had someone from Reunion, who came to teach us on how to do it. But in order for the project to be profitable, we have to mass propagate, we have to mass plant Combava, 200 plants are not enough. So, we have to plant about 2,000

plants. To plant 2,000 plants means producing, putting in the gene bank, grafting more and it will take time.

Mr Volbert: Madame la présidente, ce projet c'est un projet pour les femmes pêcheurs, *les fisherwomen*. Donc, six ans, le projet est là. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir du commissaire si c'est un *ongoing project* et si tous les *funds* ont été utilisés ?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, the fund that needed to be used has been used. There is some funding that remains but as I said, it is an ongoing project. They need more money to keep propagating the plant and to plant more. So, if you want it to be a profitable project, as I said, we have to plant about 2,000 plants. Actually, we produce, the person from Reunion, came to train the people on how to do it. And, now that we know how to do it, we will continue to propagate but before propagating, we need to have the plant planted in a gene bank, which is found at Oyster Bay.

The Minority Leader: Madam Chairperson, the Commissioner has been talking in his answer about the processing unit. So, can we know where matter stands regarding the processing unit?

Mr Payendee: I also said in my answer that the plan to produce, to make the processing unit has been made, the plan. There was no money for the time being for the construction of the processing unit and also, it is not normal to do the processing unit, to construct the unit until we get enough materials to process.

Madam Chairperson: Last one. Respected Member, Félicité.

Mr Félicité: The Commissioner mentioned that we should plant 2,000 plants.

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr Félicité: Can I know from the Commissioner whether his Commission has already identified places/areas where we can plant these 2,000 plants?

Mr Payendee: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I said 2,000, it may be much more, it depends. But with regard to planting of these plants, they will be planted, we will put them together with the agro-forestry projects and also together with the lemon projects. So, especially this plant grows mainly on the coastal areas, I mean, if you look at Rodrigues, you know you can say that all the places are coastal. But it is mainly about Montagne Goyaves, is one of them. So, everywhere on Rodrigues we can plant this but we have to be able to adopt it. Because for the time being, Combava is not something, is not a plant, it is a new thing for

Rodrigues. So, people are not very used to it. So, with time when the people get used to the plant, they see the benefit, economical benefit of it, then it will be encrusted in the agro-forestry project.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORM

– ONLINE SALE OF PRODUCTS

(No. B/8) Mr Z. Félicité (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Trade, Commerce and Licensing and Others whether, in regard to the creation of a digital marketing platform for the online sale of products announced in the Budget Speech 2020/2021, she will enlighten the House as to where matters stand as at to date?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, as the House is aware, the Chief Commissioner in his Budget Speech for Financial year 2020/2021, announced the setting up of a Digital Marketing Platform as a post COVID-19 measure with the main objective to implement an e-commerce website so as to facilitate online sale and marketing of local products.

It is an undeniable fact that the pandemic COVID-19 has had and is still having a negative impact on the world economy and though Rodrigues is a COVID free island, we have also not been spared from the economic “turndown”. Indeed, the pandemic has adversely impacted on the agro-processing and handicraft sector in Rodrigues mostly due to a decline in tourist arrivals and a reduction in the number of flights between Mauritius and Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson, as a responsible Regional Government, we have come up with several measures and action so as to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on our local entrepreneurs through the organisation of “Marché Solidaire”, Training of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and the setting up of a Digital Marketing Platform among others.

To date, having an online presence is no longer an option in Rodrigues - it is an expectation. The digital marketing platform will give our local enterprises the opportunity to access the global market, will increase the visibility of the local products and will increase the productivity of the enterprises by enabling the entrepreneurs to save valuable time and effort to market their products to customers.

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The platform/website will also enable two-way communication that will provide valuable feedbacks on the products and services which in turn can be used effectively to optimise the products that are being offered.

Madam Chairperson, the project is being implemented in collaboration with the Commission for Arts and Culture as the online marketing platform will target both entrepreneurs and artists. A working committee was set up to work on the project.

As at date, several meetings with different stakeholders namely, the Commission for Arts and Culture, the IT Unit, the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Corporation (RTMC) Ltd and artists/entrepreneurs have been held to discuss the modalities for the implementation of the project.

With regard to the developing of the Digital Marketing Platform, an expression of interest was launched on Monday 20 July 2020 to enlist entrepreneurs and artists willing to avail themselves of the e-platform opportunity. At the closing date of Thursday 30 July 2020, 8 artists and 16 entrepreneurs submitted their applications to market their products on the platform.

In addition, contacts have been established with companies dealing with shipping and postage of products to discuss the possibilities that they:

- i) act as an agent to ensure and facilitate the postage and delivery of local products on the digital platform; and
- ii) provide their payment gateway to facilitate payment of products online.

Following the recommendations of the Committee, out of the different options for the implementation of the platform, it was discussed and agreed that it would be more appropriate that one service provider be responsible for the setting up and management of the platform whilst ensuring the shipping and payment of the sold products.

As such, being the marketing arm of the RRA, the Rodrigues Trade Marketing Company (RTMC) Ltd has been identified as the ideal entity to implement and manage this project. The Company will have the responsibility to:

- i. Manage the platform;
- ii. Devise digital marketing strategies;
- iii. Collect, receive and ship the products;

- iv. Make follow-up and track the products;
- v. Receive and redistribute payment to entrepreneurs and artists; and
- vi. Ensure that the site is active and the product is always available.

The Executive Council at its meeting held on 27 November 2020 has approved that a grant be given to the RTMC to procure services to design and develop the online platform and thereafter manage and operate same. As such, a request for proposal was launched by RTMC on 09 February 2021 and the closing date for submission of offers has been set on 09 March 2021. Meanwhile, the RTMC Ltd will launch a new call for expression of interest to have a consolidated database of entrepreneurs who will be interested to sell their products online. It is expected that the Digital Marketing Platform will be launched in May 2021.

Mr Félicité: So, can I know from the Commissioner, does the RTMC have all the competencies in terms of labour, capital, in order to implement and also manage such project?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, yes, because in the request for proposal, the Contractor who will construct the site will have also the responsibility to train those who will be working with this project and with regard to the capital, I just mentioned in my answer that a grant will be given to RTMC for the design and development and to maintain and support the project.

Mr Félicité: She mentioned grants. Can we know from the Commissioner how much?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, it might not be wise to give the figures now itself because the request for proposal is on and at any time, we can in the future, I would be able to disclose the amount because the contractor, those willing to bid, they are actually working on that.

Mr Félicité: So, can we know from the Commissioner what procedures the Commission will put in place for the purchasing of local products? So, what procedures?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, j'ai déjà étalé dessus et c'est la RTMC qui aura cette responsabilité pour collecter les produits et aussi après, distribuer le montant qu'il faut aux producteurs.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: *Can we know...* Est-ce qu'on peut savoir du commissaire pourquoi la RTMC a été choisie pour mener ce projet *which is quite a new project: Digital Marketing Platform?* Pourquoi la RTMC ?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, je pense que le nom de la RTMC lui-même reflète l'objectif et la vertu même de la compagnie : *the Rodrigues Trade Marketing Company Ltd.* Donc, c'est l'entité désignée par le gouvernement pour faire le *marketing* et le *trade* à Rodrigues. Donc, pour nous, *it is a policy decision and it is based on* la compagnie même, la constitution de la compagnie, ce que la constitution de la compagnie permet.

Mr Perrine: *Madame la présidente,* everybody in this House knows that RTMC is working at loss since years. *Comment se fait-il que la RTMC ne peut même pas rembourser ses dettes et actuellement, on est en train de provide grants to RTMC again to add insult to injury?* Will the Commissioner consider an another option to this specific project for the benefit of the population or the artist etc.?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, déjà, j'ai dit que c'est un *policy decision*. Aussi longtemps que nous sommes au gouvernement, nous allons continuer à aider la RTMC à œuvrer pour accompagner les entrepreneurs. Un jour quand ils viendront, s'ils viendront, il va voir ce qu'ils auront mais nous, nous croyons que la RTMC, on a la responsabilité et le devoir de l'accompagner pour aider les entrepreneurs et les producteurs.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, le Chef commissaire a souvent mentionné qu'il faut faire bon usage des fonds publics. Quand il s'agit des *grants*, c'est l'argent des contribuables. Le Chef commissaire serait d'accord avec moi que la RTMC actuellement, n'est pas viable, n'est pas rentable. Ils sont en train de travailler à la perte depuis des années. L'Assemblée régionale a injecté Rs 8 millions qu'ils ne peuvent pas rembourser jusqu'à maintenant.

Madam Chairperson: You have already said that, yes.

Mr Perrine: Est-ce que la commissaire en question peut nous dire s'il compte mettre en place un comité de gestion à part pour gérer ce projet de Digital Marketing avec la bénédiction du Chef commissaire ?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, je maintiens que le Chef commissaire nous répète tous les jours qu'il faut faire bien avec le peu qu'on a. Aujourd'hui, nous savons pourquoi il y a eu des difficultés à la RTMC. La RTMC a eu des difficultés parce que pendant toutes ces années, elle a toujours compté que sur les produits agricoles qui, très

souvent, font face à des difficultés. Quand il y a le cyclone, on n'a pas autant d'haricots. Quand il y a le cyclone, on n'a pas autant d'oignons, on a des problèmes, il y a eu des maladies. Mais on maintient, Madame la présidente, on maintient notre position. On utilise l'argent de l'Etat bien. Il n'y a pas eu de vol, il n'y a pas eu de fraude. La RTMC va continuer à fonctionner tant que nous sommes là. Un jour quand ils viendront, dans 10 ans, 20 ans, 30 ans, 40 ans, à ce moment-là, ils le font.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Félicité.

Mr Félicité: Yes, thanks, Madam Chairperson.

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr Félicité: So, before, there was a similar project such as Go Export. So, this project has not been realised. Can we know what has happened? Why? Especially in COVID-19, it could have been used. This E-marketing is selling to help our entrepreneurs. Why this project, Go Export, has not been realised? What has happened?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, j'aurais pu ne pas répondre parce que le Go Export en lui-même est un projet. Ici, la question se refaire au Digital Marketing Platform. Cependant, je dois dire aussi que le Digital Marketing Platform est une composante du grand projet Go Export qui est... C'est un projet qui va continuer. D'ailleurs, on a signé un contrat avec Scott pour la vente du safran sous le projet Go Export et ce projet, c'est un projet qui va continuer. Ça a mis du temps, c'est vrai, mais le projet arrive et on est bien content que l'année dernière, je crois, j'ai élaboré sur ce qu'on a fait, ce qu'on va faire pour l'export du safran de Rodrigues à Maurice. On a déjà travaillé avec les associations. On a déjà structuré la filière et ça va décoller très, très bientôt.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Qu'est-ce que le commissaire compte mettre en place pour assurer que ce projet Digital Marketing Platform arrive à bon port ? Parce que nous avons vu différents projets qui ont été mis en chantier par la respectée commissaire qui aujourd'hui, sont chaos, *out of service*. Qu'est-ce qu'elle compte mettre en place pour nous assurer que l'argent qui vont être injectés dans cette compagnie-là, dans ce projet-là va *sustain profits*? *Out of service*.

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, nous travaillons avec les entrepreneurs. Ils demandent à les accompagner ; on les accompagne. Des fois, c'est vrai, il y

a des projets qui ne marchent pas comme nous aurions souhaité. D'ailleurs, quand les projets ne marchent pas comme il se doit, les premiers à être déçus ou à poser, à avoir des questions, mais c'est nous parce que nous sommes conscients que c'est important que les projets que nous mettons en œuvre marchent et donnent des résultats. Malheureusement, ni moi ni aucun autre commissaire, on ne peut pas aller travailler dans ces entreprises. Ce n'est pas notre responsabilité. On accompagne, on donne de l'aide. Il y a certains qui bougent plus vite. Il y a d'autres qui bougent moins vite. Il y a d'autres qui n'arrivent pas et c'est normal. Dans tous les pays du monde, il y a toujours un bon pourcentage d'entrepreneurs qui n'arrive pas. Nous, on est fiers de donner les moyens dans la transparence aux entrepreneurs qui demandent, on les accompagne. Je suis contente que durant la consultation pré-budgétaire, beaucoup de ces personnes sont venus dire merci pour l'aide qu'on a apportée. Il y a certains... Bien sûr, quand on sème, il y a toujours certaines semences qui tombent dans les terres arides mais il y a aussi, on reconnaît, qu'il y a des semences qui poussent et qui rapportent des fruits. Nous allons continuer à accompagner ces entrepreneurs. Nous avons les mains propres. Nous avons la conscience claire. Nous avons l'ambition et l'intention de les accompagner et nous allons continuer à le faire.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member Félicité.

Mr Félicité: Yes, thanks, Madam Chairperson. So, can we know from the Commissioner what types of products are going to be sold on this, on Digital Marketing Platform?

Madam Chairperson: Madame la présidente, je l'ai dit aussi dans la réponse que j'ai donnée au départ. Cette plateforme va concerner les artistes et les producteurs en termes d'agroalimentaire ou artisanat. Donc, ils se sont fait inscrire. On va relancer un appel pour... Peut-être il y a eu des retardataires ou bien ceux qui ne savaient pas le projet, on va relancer et tous ceux qui ont des projets de qualité, qui sont *available*, donc, on va les considérer.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, je vais faire une proposition à la commissaire. Je vais lui demander de faire un comité conjoint – gouvernement et l'opposition pour superviser et veiller à ce que ce projet de Digital Marketing arrive à terme et que tous ces projets qui ont été mis, qui ont été placés n'ont pas marché jusqu'à maintenant, je lui demanderais que nous sommes disposés à donner un coup de main volontairement, «*pro bono*» pour que tous ces projets qui sont *caput* revivent pour une fois.

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, j'invite le respecté Membre à attendre l'année prochaine. Il y aura une élection. Quand il sera élu à ce moment-là, il va mettre en place ses projets.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Félicité. Order! Order!

Mr Félicité: Yes. Madam Chairperson, thank you. So, you mentioned shipping facilities. I think this platform will be on a global. So, can we know from the Commissioner whether the government will subsidise the freight for transporting, for shipping?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, il y a tout un projet qui a été travaillé à l'heure où je vous parle. Il n'est pas question de *subsidise* et on va mettre en place le projet et on croit que ça va marcher. Donc, le *grant* qu'on a travaillé, on a pris en compte tous les composants qu'il faudrait pour que ce projet avance.

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

At 12.29 p.m., the sitting was suspended for one hour.

On resuming at 01.33 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.

[Part 1 ends at lunch break: 12.36.34]

Devi second part 01:59:27/13.40.25

At 12.29 p.m., the sitting was suspended for one hour.

On resuming at 1.33 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.

Madam Chairperson: Second Island Region Member.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS – RODRIGUES

(No. B/9) Mr J.L.R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the execution of infrastructural projects in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table, if all projects were completed in time from March 2017 to date, indicating:-

- (a) the contractual date of commencement and of completion for each project;

- (b) the respective actual completion date thereof, specifying if extension of time was granted or delay damages claimed, giving details; and
- (c) how many projects were subject to challenge or litigation, indicating the status of the dispute as at date?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, since the information requested relates to more than 150 projects, the information is being compiled from the different Commissions and will be tabled in the Assembly.

Mr Perrine: I have not heard the reply of the Commissioner. Can he, please?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, that since the information that is being requested relates to some more than 150 projects, we are compiling the different information from the different Commissions and same will be tabled in the Assembly.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, est-ce que je peux savoir du Chef commissaire adjoint, quand est-ce qu'il compte me faire avoir ces informations-là pour que je puisse me préparer ? Merci.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: We will do as fast as possible, Madam Chairperson, as it is possible we will do it before the next sitting once the information has been gathered from the different Commissions.

Mr Perrine: Will these information be tabled in the Library or in the Chamber here?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Whether in the Chamber or in the Library, it is going to be in the Assembly, Madam Chairperson.

Mr Perrine: So, can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner, because we have seen that many problems that we are having actually with regard to project, especially capital projects, is concerned delays. *Il y a plusieurs projets qui ont été retardé, d'autres projets contrat terminer parce que c'est une question de temps.* Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner inform the House whether, there has been measures, since this is not the only project, whether there has been measures and even if there is some reports also, which has been circulated in this Assembly, concerning delays and projects, whether this problem of delay is being tackled, what has been put in place for the good monitoring and the good conducting of each and every projects especially capital projects in his Commission or in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, itself?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, it is true to say that there are delays that accrued, to I should say, a lot of projects, justified or not justified, reasons vary as per different projects. A reason could be lack of cement, others could be climatic conditions, some contractors have also stated about the lack of workers. And, of course, in the analysis of the Project Manager, they are going to see whether the reason put forward by the contractor is justified or not and if it is not justified, we are going to go as per the contract document. This means, the different clauses of the contract and if ever, there are some penalties that have to be applied, then we are going to apply the penalty. But to say the least as regards to monitoring, every Commissions through the Accounting Officer has the responsibility to ensure that the project is done in time. There is also at the level of the Chief Commissioner's Office, there is the Budget Monitoring Committee which is set, where we call the consultant to see whether instructions are being given on time to contractors, whether if ever there is any variations or modification to be made to contractors, it is done on time. So, there is a lot of factors that top in whenever a project is on and it is important that same is monitored on time.

Mr Perrine: Being given that the Deputy Chief Commissioner mentioned the word 'Consultant', I would like to put a question to that effect. *Le fait que* is he as the responsible Commission for the Consultant, is he satisfied with the output of the Consultant with regard to the different projects that the contractor monitored in the RRA under your Commission?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I think that the question was once put in this Assembly itself. And, I did state that the point that for certain projects I was not satisfied with the Consultant. I, myself at the level of that Commission are litigation with the Consultant itself as regards to the project, of intake of Anse Goeland and it has been reported in fact, in the Audit Report, that my Commission has put to task the Consultant as regards to the monitoring of sub-project at my Commission itself.

Mr Perrine: Thank you, Deputy Chief Commissioner. Whether again, with regard to the different contractors, which you are having problems actually, has there any report, which has been sent to your Commission with regard to complain against these contractors who are not performing, who are taking lots of time to deliver, has there any report or any action which has been taken with regard to this issue in the RRA?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Normally, Madam Chairperson, there are site meetings which are done on site and whenever site meetings are done by the consultant, there is the presence of one Officer of my Commission. In fact, for any project of the other

Commissions whenever there are site meetings, there is in attendance and the presence of Commission. As I have said there are various factors that crops in. We have seen in some projects that there are not enough personnel as stated in the contract document. And, we did in fact, put to task the contractor to ensure that the number of personnel as stated in the contract document is abide to. Whenever there are delays that is observed, because every time there is a program that is provided by the contractor as regards to his progress of work, whenever there are delays, there are questions that are asked and the contractor will have to give explanation for that. Some reasons that are given may be valid, others are invalid. Let me take an example, say that it is stated that today there is by next week there will be the installation of say in a particular building, the installation of windows. And, it happens that the contractor does not have the window coming from Mauritius on time. This is going to be his reason as such. But that does not depart him from his contractual obligations because he is under contract with us under specific conditions and he is supposed to abide by these conditions. So, we are going as per explanation define whether the reason is valid or not, depending whether there has been delays in the scheduled of ship. If there have been no delays, then it is up to him to ensure that his equipment or his materials come on time to ensure that there is the timely construction or the timely setting of the project.

Mr Perrine: Pourquoi je dis cela, Madame la présidente. Vous savez actuellement nous avons plusieurs qui sont en retard parce que justement *there has been a breach of fundamental rights of the clients*. C'est-à-dire, au départ même le contracteur ne donne pas suffisamment des personnels qualifiés sur le site pour que le site puisse démarrer. Nous sommes en face, je parle actuellement, du projet de l'école communautaire de Baie Malgache, qui a un souci. Quatre ans, ça fait quatre ans. Je parle de Terre Rouge, du gymnase de Terre Rouge, le contrat a été terminé et aujourd'hui on apprend aussi que *the same contractor has been able to tender again, to bid again. In the future, Madam Chairperson*, est-ce qu'il n'y a pas lieu de revoir la structure ou les structures qui sont mise en place pour contrôler, parce que ça joue non-seulement au niveau du gouvernement mais au niveau de Rodrigues en général. La population est punie, on peut dire ça comme ça. Mais est-ce qu'il n'est pas grand temps de revoir la façon d'opérer, les structures qu'il faut mettre en place pour que ces problèmes-là ne viennent pas nous bousculer dans un proche avenir ? N'est-il pas temps de revoir ce structure-là ou les structures qui sont mise en place pour pouvoir contrôler et les contracteurs et les consultants aussi au niveau de l'Assemblée Régionale ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, as regards to control of contractors, this is defined by law. We cannot go above. Everything is defined by law and whenever there is any litigation that crops in, of course, the contractor will fight back. He is going to rebuke back. That is for sure. So, this is why in such cases most of the contract under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, there are possibilities for disputes resolution either through mediation or it can end up, up to Court. So, we cannot say today as a public body the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, that a contractor is not performing as per our satisfaction, that we can take such and such action against that contractor. There is a procedure defined by the Procurement Board, the Procurement Act, what should be done whenever a contractor defaults or is in fundamental breach of his clause of contract. So, it is, I should say, it is not as straight forwards as it appears. Because there will always be the fighting back from the contractor. Say that tomorrow we are not satisfied, even we are not satisfied with say, in fact we are not satisfied with the delay at Baie Malgache, even for the case of Terre Rouge. The law provides under such cases that there; we can lead up to the debar of the contractor up to the suspension. But for that, there is a procedure that should be followed and it is the responsibility and the duty of each Accounting Officer of every Commission to ensure that the procedure it kicks started so that such defaulters are eliminated from the process of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Putting structures in place as you are proposing will not help much but we should apply what the law provides.

Mr Volbert: Merci, Madame la présidente. Si dans des cas où le *Responsible Officers* dans les commissions, *l'Accounting Officers*, je veux dire s'il y a des trucs qui ont passé et qu'ils n'ont pas rapporté le cas, est-ce que à votre niveau vous pouvez nous dire si vous pouvez prendre des actions par rapport avec ça parce qu'il y a beaucoup, le rapport de l'Audit, tout ça fait mention, où le rôle *d'Accounting Officer*, il n'a pas respecté tel ou tel parti. Est-ce qu'il y a des actions qui peuvent être prises à votre niveau contre ces *Accounting Officers* ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I am a policy maker and there is the administration, at the administration level, which are two different things. I consider that if ever there is, how to say, I will not go up to '*maldone*', let say there has been maladministration as such to a particular project and which is set up in the Audit Report, I think it is up to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to see how to remediate such thing. I know that at the level of the ICE's Office, there is a committee that has been set in line with the view of questioning and questioning the responsible officers of actions that have to be taken in line with discrepancies noted in the Audit Report. And, I see at the level of my Commission, very

often there are letters, correspondences coming from the ICE's Office to see, to ask whether as regards as to such, such points to report back if ever any action has been taken to mitigate same. So, there is an administrative level, something that is being done. But as policy maker, I cannot sanction a public officer. So, sorry for that.

Mr Volbert: Une dernière question, Madame la présidente. J'aurais aimé demander au Chef commissaire adjoint, étant donné il y a, je prends pour le projet du collège de Terre Rouge où le contracteur a vu son contrat résilier. Et, après ce même contracteur, il *bid again*. Est-ce que ça c'est normal ou on peut prendre des actions par rapport, parce qu'il a fauté, le contracteur résilier et puis il *bid* encore, et il aura le contrat. Est-ce que c'est normal?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As long as he has not been debarred, as long as he has not been officially debarred, we cannot prevent any contractor from bidding on a particular project. But I will not go far as regards to that particular project that is under way. What I can inform the House is that, there has been an action which has been taken by the responsible Commission as regards to that specific project. If I am not mistaken, the project has already been awarded, for Terre Rouge it has already been awarded and there is already litigation under that project with the contractor which you are speaking about. Because somehow we have taken action in order to, knowing his past experience, we have somehow after seeking the advice of the Public Procurement Office and the State Law Office, some actions have been taken by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the responsible Commission.

Madam Chairperson: I have one last supplementary question.

Mr Grandcourt: Yes, Madam Chairperson. Concerning in the tender documents, concerning the eligibility criteria. Can you put one more condition in the eligibility criteria to eventually disqualified those who have not completed a project for example? So, I think it is feasible, but we have to seek legal advice, I suppose. So, just to help, can it be done? Just to prevent us from having problems in the near future.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, the tender document, whenever it is to be launched, there is a particular template that has to be followed and any notification that has to be brought therein should be in line with the law. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly cannot by itself state that we are going to add such and such clause in a particular contract document unless or until we have the vetting by the Central Procurement Board. Because for projects that are above a certain value, the tender document is vetted by the Central Procurement Board before it is launched. And, it is only after it has been vetted by the

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Central Procurement Board then that we can upload it on the site or then we can send it on the newspaper for eventual bidding by the different contractors. So, of course, the proposal looks fine but we have to ensure that it is also in line with the law of the Procurement of Mauritius.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

RRA (SHIPMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES) REGULATIONS 2017

- AMENDMENTS

(No. B/10) Mr L. J. Von-Mally, GOSK (First Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Shipment of Motor Vehicles) Regulations 2017, he will state where matter stands concerning amendments which are to be brought thereto, indicating if these Regulations will be revoked in the meantime and if not, why?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, a Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of the Chief Commissioner to consider amendments to be made to the existing RRA (Shipment of Motor Vehicles) Regulations 2017. A revised draft Regulations has already been worked out which will be submitted to the State Law Office after vetting by the Legal Advisor

Mr Von-Mally: Therefore, this being so, can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, because he has not answered the second part of the question, whether he is contemplating the possibility of revoking the Regulations that have already been voted here to prevent vehicles more than seven years to come here, to be imported? Because so many poor Rodriguans are being penalized.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, we do not intend to revoke the actual Regulations until the next one come into operation. It will not be revoked until the next one come into operation.

Mr Von-Mally: Madam Chairperson, because we are already in an illegal position. I have been made to understand that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly government has gone against the provisions of the RRA Act. Therefore, to be safe, to be on the legal side, what is rational behind keeping this Regulations? We should do without that the soonest possible.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As far as I know, Madam Chairperson, there is... (I do know), as far as I know, there is a case which is pending before the Court of Mauritius.

That is for sure and up to now, there has been no judgement that has been given so far, that has not been given so far with respect to that case, which is before the Supreme Court.

Mr Von-Mally: It seems that the Deputy Chief Commissioner has talked about that. Is he aware that his Legal Adviser has written to His Lordship, the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice to ask for, if you allow me I can read, to ask for the matter to be removed from the Cause List of cases coming for Merits on the 21 September 2020? As he said, I have been informed by client, that is, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, that they are currently working on the new Legislation and/or Regulations which will address and cater for the issues and grievances set up in the present application. Therefore, it is the government, the Rodrigues Regional government itself, that has asked for the postponement of that. But pending this, this is why I am asking what is the rationale of keeping this Regulations? Why not just revoke it? I think this will be fair to everybody.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Certainly, if there have been some points in law which has been raised and needs to be amended, we are going to consider it under the draft Regulations, that is, under study right now. This is why as I have said, we are at the verge of coming to the end of the Regulations. So, there is one more step that needs to be crossed – vetting by the State Law Office, and once the State Law Office has approved the draft Regulations, we are going to bring it to the Assembly for eventual debates and, of course, for eventual approval by this Assembly, itself. We, at the level of the regional government, we are considering it as fast track so that we can come up with this Regulations in this Regional Assembly as fast as possible.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member, Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, merci. Madame la présidente, le fait que, c'est vrai, c'est vrai, nous sommes tous au courant de ce qui se passe en Cour, que l'avocat du Rodrigues Regional Assembly a demandé un délai jusqu'en septembre pour pouvoir *sort out the issue* en attendant que l'Assemblée Régionale revienne avec un autre *new Regulations*, pour justement empêcher les Rodriguais qui sont possiblement capable d'acheter un véhicule. Mais dans ce sens-là, qui c'est qui a la prérogative, si je dois m'acheter une voiture plus de sept ans, qui c'est actuellement, à qui dois-je m'adresser pour pouvoir avoir ce *Import Permit* concernant la voiture que j'ai vu et qui est en bonne condition, qui sont en bonne condition selon la NTA, à qui dois-je m'adresser pour pouvoir emmener une telle voiture en attendant que la nouvelle loi se fasse proclamer ici ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: As at now, Madam Chairperson, the Regulations is still in force. As at now the Regulations of 2017, this is still in force and it defines within that Regulations what are the step that should be taken so that a person who want to import a vehicle what are the procedure that has to be adopted for the importation of any vehicle from Mauritius. The Regulations is still in force.

Mr Von-Mally: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The Deputy Chief Commissioner has said that they are fast tracking the amendments for the Regulations. Since, the 21 September last, your government is working on the amendments. Is this what we called fast tracking? This is why I am saying, being given that you are taking plenty of time, why not revoke this amendment? And, can I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner, he is saying soon we are amending it, can I know how soon is soon, how long it will take, if you have a time frame?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I think that, there is a Regulations, this is my stand. There is a Regulations, first, okay there is a Regulations. There is a case pending before the Court. There are some matters that has cropped in during debates in Court. We should not all at once just create a sort of vacuum. We should not create a sort of vacuum in the law, as such. So, what is the best forward as per the actual situation, is that we move fast with the new Regulations and come forward when the new Regulations is passed, then if the need is felt, then we revoked the existing one. Yes, it is.

Mr Von-Mally: The Deputy Chief Commissioner, is saying that there will be a vacuum. There will be no vacuum. Because before this Regulations was voted, there were laws and we were abiding by the Laws and Regulations of the Constitutions of Mauritius. Therefore, there is no vacuum. Actually, we have put a Regulations that is against the RRA Act, this is why I am saying, we must go according to the law. Therefore, the best way to do see, is to revoked this Regulations. This is why, I am asking Deputy Chief Commissioner to remove it.

Madam Chairperson: I do not think this question is admissible here.

Mr Volbert: D'après le Deputy Chief Commissioner, la loi, le règlement existe toujours. Mais ces derniers temps on a vu le débarquement de plusieurs véhicules plus de sept ans. Il y a même le camion toupille qui vient de rentrer qui a huit ans. Est-ce qu'il y a une.... Qui c'est qui donne ces prérogatives pour que ces gens-là, ils emportent des véhicules plus de huit ans ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The Law provides, the Regulations provides that the Departmental Head can exceptionally approve an import permit above the age specified

limit, from to case to case basis. I have once in this very Assembly, I think I have once stated or tabled the number of vehicles that have been allowed to be imported from Mauritius which is above the age limit. There are various criteria that we do consider and in fact, the different criteria that we have considered, we are working on it so that it is considered in the next Regulations. The cases that we have considered, it relates to specialised vehicles for handicap. We have allowed this, specialized vehicles for handicap. In the case of the vehicle, *la toupie*, that you are speaking about, yes there has been a request, a demand from the Transinvest with respect to the construction of track roads in Rodrigues. The Transinvest Co. has only one *toupie* and as per the contract that has been given to him for the construction of 25 km of track roads, it was impossible for him to go as fast as we would like here. Since, it will take month for him to procure another new *toupie* to come to Rodrigues, then he has made a request for another one that it has in Mauritius to be shipped in Rodrigues. But it is conditional. We have given it conditionally, because it is not going to be permanently settled here, this means after the construction of track roads, it is going to be shipped back.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, one last.

Mr Perrine: Madame la présidente, je voudrais demander au commissaire, actuellement nous avons des véhicules qui sont arrivés de Maurice de 1992. Je sais qu'il y a provision dans la loi pour les vintages. Je ne sais pas si c'est en 1992 se considérer comme vintage. Mais il y a l'autre côté, il y a des véhicules qui sont de 2007, 2005, 2004, 2003 qui sont emmenés par des fonctionnaires qui viennent travailler ici *on tour of service*, et après leurs départs, la voiture est vendue à Rodrigues, je ne sais pas comment. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire adjoint, peut nous garantir que cette section de provision de loi va être amendé, aboli une fois pour toute et on place tout le monde sur une même pied d'égalité ?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: All the discrepancies noted in the actual law, will be taken on board. This I can assure the Respected Member.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

CELEBRATION – RODRIGUES DAY/12 OCTOBER

– SPECIAL PUBLIC HOLIDAY

(No. B/11) Mr L. J. Von-Mally, GOSK (First Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the celebration of the Rodrigues Day, he will arrange with the Central Government to have the 12th of October declared a special public holiday for Rodrigues for the better commemoration thereof, giving details?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, it is no doubt that the 12 October is a very important day for the population of Rodrigues; the more so as we have celebrated the 18 years of the Autonomy of Rodrigues in 2020. I wish to inform the House that a request has already been made to the Office of the Prime Minister to consider declaring the 12 October as a regional public holiday.

Madam Chairperson, pending a decision by Central Government, the Executive Council has agreed to the following arrangements being made on the 12 October every year:

- i. No school at pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary levels on 12 October except for those sitting international examinations;
- ii. Public officers are released at noon to allow them to attend the celebrations; and
- iii. An appeal is also made to the private sector to release their employees to attend the celebrations.

Mr Von-Mally: Madam Chairperson, I believe out of respect for the Rodriguan population, this day should be declared a public holiday. Can I ask the Respected Chief Commissioner whether, he has received any answer from the Central Government, concerning same?

The Chief Commissioner: No, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Next question.

INCENTIVE – AGRICULTURAL CROP PRODUCTION – FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/2021

(No. B/12) Mr Z. Félicité (The Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the approved budget item 22900959 Incentive for Agricultural Crop Production for financial year 2020/2021, he will state and table for the benefit of the House on:-

- (a) The objectives of the incentive;
- (b) The eligibility criteria to benefit therefrom; and
- (c) The amount of money disbursed therefor as at to date?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, with your permission I will reply to question B/12 and B/20 together as they deal with the same subject matter.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you may proceed.

Mr Payendee: I wish to inform the House that the objective of the budgetary Item 22900959 - Incentive for Agricultural Crop Production is to promote agricultural production through the provision of assistance and facilities to planters. Being given that the policy of this government is to promote and encourage planters to produce locally, this budget item responds to the demand of the planters' community.

In order to meet this objective seven schemes have been put in place by my Commission, namely:-

Scheme 1

Allocation of subsidy/allowance for payment of labour cost up to a maximum of Rs 250 per day up to a maximum of 12 man days per crop cycle per acre to provide practical training to young Rodriguan farmers. The fact that they asked for the eligibility criteria.

Details of scheme and eligibility criteria:-

- (a) Planters must be involved in staple crop, cash crop production activities over a minimum area of 1 acre and 2000 m² respectively and those involved in protected culture.
- (b) Planters must have involved in the plantation of staple/cash crop continually during the past three years and priority will be given to those who have adopted new techniques and technology.
- (c) Planters and the persons employed for the work must be above 18 years' old and both must not be in the same household or cultivate the same plot.
- (d) Planters must hold a valid land permit/agricultural permit or the lease or must show proof and they have applied for same or renewal of same at the Commission for Agriculture and planters must be well known to the Extension Services.
- (e) The scheme is eligible to only one planter per household or per plot per parcel.

Scheme 2

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Provision of subsidy up to a maximum of Rs 2,000 per acre for the land preparation (ploughing and furrowing for the planting of local red bean, staple crops and cash crops to help planters to boost up production.)

Details of scheme and eligibility criteria:-

- (a) Priority will be given to full-time planters, self-employed entrepreneurs and cooperatives, deriving their income solely from agricultural activities.
- (b) Planters must hold an Agricultural Permit or must have applied for same at the Commission for Agriculture
- (c) Priority will be given to planters cultivate their land regularly, known to the Commission for Agriculture and show proof that he/she is going to cultivate crops mentioned above for the season 2020-2021.

Scheme 3

50% up to a maximum of Rs 25,000 to eligible planters for the purchase of materials to fence their agricultural plot in order to protect their crops against straying animals.

Details of scheme and eligibility criteria: -

- (a) Planters who are holders of a valid or expired Agricultural Permit or lease.
- (b) Planters who are holders of a Farmer's Card and are still cultivating from agricultural activities.
- (c) Priority will be given to planters deriving their income mainly from agricultural activities.
- (d) Planters who can show proof of funding for the remaining amount on the fencing project.
- (e) Priority will be given to farmers whose crops recurrently have been damaged by stray animals and having reported same to the Commission for Agriculture.
- (f) Beneficiaries of agricultural production schemes of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will not be eligible.
- (g) Priority will be given to planters whose plots are isolated.

Scheme 4

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Agricultural Incentive Schemes for Agricultural Projects for Ex-BPA and CAPA Trainees to allow the young and trained farmers to implement their respective projects.

Details of scheme and eligibility criteria:-

The following facilities are proposed to the beneficiaries:-

- (i) The water tank and rainwater harvesting, a maximum of Rs 50,000 for a minimum water storage of capacity of 20 m³;
- (ii) A maximum of Rs 100,000 for the procurement and installation of an irrigation system;
- (iii) A maximum of Rs 10,000 for the procurement of tools and equipment;
- (iv) A maximum of Rs 10,000 for the purchase of seeds and seedlings and provision of 1,000 kg compost per acre of land;
- (v) A maximum of Rs 12,000 for the construction of a strait house of 3 m x 3 m for the production of seedlings and other materials;
- (vi) A maximum of Rs 30,000 for the construction of a store or a shelter.

Scheme 5

Setting up of 10 Onion Seeds Production Unit to locally produce quality onion seeds and at the same time become more autonomous in this field.

Details of scheme and eligibility criteria:-

- (a) Priority will be given to self-employed and entrepreneurs who are involved onion bulbs/onion seeds production on a commercial basis;
- (b) Applicants must have at least three years of experiences in production of onion bulbs or seeds and are still involved in this production;
- (c) Applicants must have access to water for irrigation or possibility to harvest rain water as well;
- (d) The proposed site must be isolated from other onion seeds production plots to limit cross contamination;
- (e) The proposed site should not be exposed to strong winds; and
- (f) The farm must have a well aerated store with floor space of at least 3 m x 3 m for storage.

Scheme 6

Setting up of five Garlic Production Units to boost up the production of garlic in Rodrigues

Details of scheme and eligibility criteria: -

To provide technical and financial assistance to farmers for the production of garlic bulbs for propagation upon justifications by project brief submitted. All costs to be incurred in the project should be detailed to facilitate disbursement of fund. Financial assistances will be up to an amount of Rs 300,000.

- (a) Priority will be given to self-employed or entrepreneurs who are involved garlic production;
- (b) The beneficiaries must have at least three years of experiences in production of garlic;
- (c) The prospective beneficiaries must have the basic technical background on the production of garlic;
- (d) The plot of the beneficiaries must have access to water for irrigation or possibility to harvest rain water;
- (e) Applicants must have access to water for irrigation;
- (f) The site should not be exposed to strong winds;
- (h) The farm must have a well aerated and floor space of 3 m x 3 m for garlic bulbs.

Scheme 7

Setting-up of five Bean Seed Production Units to maintain the quality of our local beans.

Details of Scheme:

- (i) Provision of permit or lease on land for the project;
- (ii) 90% grant up to a maximum of Rs 80,000 for fencing of land;
- (iii) 80% grant up to Rs 100,000 for the purpose of drip irrigation system;
- (iv) 75% grant up to a maximum of Rs 160,000 for purchase of compost, manure, sprayers, bio-pesticides and bio-fertilizers;

- (v) 75% grant up to a maximum of Rs 100,000 for the purchase of tools and equipment;
- (vi) 75% grant up to a maximum of Rs 10,000 for the purchase of seeds.

Eligibility Criteria:-

- (a) Priority will be given.... (you asked the question, I have to answer it)

Priority will be given to local bean producers including, self-employed full time planters, part-time planters, cooperatives and entrepreneurs, deriving their living solely from agricultural activities.
- (b) Applicants must have at least five years' experiences in production of local bean;
- (c) Applicants who have ...

Mr Perrine: Madam Chairperson, on a point of order. I understand that the Commissioner want to exposed a list of what things done and not done also. But I think, I would ask him, humbly because he is wasting time of Members, I would ask him if he can *résumé* or shorten his answers or table these answers, accordingly, Madam Chairperson?

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Yes, indeed, Commissioner the question here is state and table. So, you could circulate the remaining to Members, please.

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, I am nearly done. Because if you look at section (b), of the question.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, please try to summarise.

Mr Payendee: I said there are seven schemes. I was at my seventh. So, it was...

Madam Chairperson: Please, proceeds.

Mr Payendee: And I am answering two questions, Madam Chairperson.

Last thing is the applicants must have less.... Let us shift to the most important thing, think that they are looking for, Madam Chairperson.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I am tabling the information.

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(Interruptions)

The last thing is with regard to part (c), unless they do not want me to answer this bit. I table.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Respected Member, Félicité.

Mr Félicité: Can I know from the Commissioner, the amount of money disbursed?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, when I said that I tabled the answer or I said it, the Members said I table. So, I tabled it. So, they look at it and then they ask the questions.

(Interruptions)

Mrs Agathe: Madame la présidente, avec tous les critères que le commissaire a nommés pour être *eligible*, je voudrais demander au commissaire, combien de planteurs seront éligible pour ces projets-là ? Combien il a déjà reçu?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, this is a difficult question to answer. If I can give one example, suppose for the Fencing Scheme, we have had 336 applicants. And, out of it around 200 eligible. But the rest is difficult to say, there is seven. Unless, you want me to do another statement. There are seven schemes.

The Minority Leader: *Madam Chairperson*, avec tous ces *schemes* qu'on voit, qu'on entend, le commissaire a dit qu'il veut augmenter la production de l'ail, par exemple. Mais on voit d'après les statistiques la production de l'ail à Rodrigues est en baisse. Mais comment se fait-il qu'il y a des *schemes* et de l'autre côté, la production de l'ail est en baisse. Donc, comment est-ce qu'il peut expliquer ça ?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, je crois que le membre n'a pas vraiment compris tous ce qu'il y a derrière. Si la production de l'ail était en hausse, on n'aurait pas mis des *schemes* pour faire augmenter la production. Qui est logique, d'après moi. Donc, la raison pour laquelle on a mis le *scheme* pour l'ail dans cette année budgétaire, je pense que c'est logique que ça soit pour booster la production de l'ail. Ça veut dire que si on veut booster la production de l'ail, ça veut dire qu'il n'y en a pas beaucoup et qu'on veut faire augmenter la production. Donc, j'admets qu'il n'y a pas beaucoup. Donc, c'est pour ça on met beaucoup d'argent dedans pour intéresser les gens à produire davantage.

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr Félicité: Since there are seven different schemes. So, can I ask the Commissioner whether the fund approved in this budget is sufficient in order to implement all the seven schemes?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, of course, the part (c), we have about Rs 5 m. to implement all these schemes. We have already spent Rs 4 m., which means that we are doing the right things, we are using the money. And, it is common practice in the budget that whose people, those Commissioners, those Commissions who have spent the money can ask for more money. And, this is what my Commission has done and we have already got approval for about Rs 10 m. to invest in these schemes.

The Minority Leader: Madame la présidente, revenant sur les *schemes* pour booster la production. Alors, le commissaire est en place, ça fait quatre ans, il a mis ça l'année dernière, ce *scheme*-là et pendant ces trois ans, il était en place. Donc, j'aimerais savoir qu'est-ce qui s'est passé avant de constater qu'il y a des baisses dans la production des produits à Rodrigues ? Donc, qu'est-ce qui s'est passé avant qu'il prenne la décision de mettre des *schemes* ?

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, ce n'est pas nouveau les *schemes*. Depuis, pas forcément depuis que je suis commissaire de l'Agriculture, même le Chef commissaire était là, il y a toujours eu des *schemes*. Mais la priorité change d'année en année. Si on a, pendant une année, c'est de sorte que ce produit est en train de faire bien. Ben, l'année prochaine on bouge, on change. La dans le budget qui arrive, il y aura d'autre priorité. Donc, la priorité change, le gouvernement reste mais la priorité change.

Mr Volbert: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. Dans la réponse qui a été *tabled*, les critères pour l'éligibilité, il y a le critère: "*(b) – Applicant must have access to water for irrigation or a possibility to harvest rain water for irrigation, applicants must have enough water for irrigation for all crops circle in case during the crop production.*" Ben, je vois là avec ce critère-là, il n'y aura aucune qui sera éligible.

Mr Payendee: Je crois que le membre se trompe. Parce qu'il y a dans beaucoup d'endroits il y a des planteurs qui ont tout le temps de l'eau. Parce que si on veut vraiment produire des semences pour la production, on ne peut pas investir, parce qu'on investit beaucoup dans production de semence, parce que la production de semence c'est pour l'année qui arrive. Donc, il faut absolument mettre le paquet pour qu'on puisse réussir. Mais c'est sûr que ce n'est pas partout qu'il y a tout le temps de l'eau mais il y a beaucoup d'endroits il y a de l'eau tout le temps. C'est pour ça on dit, on va favoriser, ça ne veut pas dire qu'on ne donnera

pas les autres. Mais quand on met des critères c'est pour donner priorité à ce qu'on donne plus de chance pour qu'on réussit le projet. Donc, pour la production de semence, c'est très important qu'on ait de l'eau sinon on est parti pour faillir quoi.

Mr Félicité: So, you mentioned that Rs 4 m has already been utilised. Can we know approximately how many planters have already benefitted from the seven schemes?

Mr Payendee: I do not have the figure, Madam Chairperson, but I can assure the Member, that the money has been well utilised. But I do not have the number of planters who have benefitted from it.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/18, B/19, B/21, B/22 and B/23 have been withdrawn. Thank you. Next question.

EX POINTE VENUS HOTEL – EMPLOYEES WELFARE FUND (EWF)

(No. B/13) Mr J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Industrial Development and Others whether, in regard to the sale of Ex. Pointe Venus Hotel to the Employees Welfare Fund (EWF), she will, for the benefit of the House, state where matters stand as at date indicating if:

- (a) the EWF was the only organization which expressed interest in the acquisition thereof;
- (b) any evaluation report from the Government Valuation Department has been obtained, and if yes, to state when, indicating the amount evaluated therefor;
- (c) any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by concerned parties, giving details; and
- (d) any letter of intent for industrial lease has been submitted to EWF by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and, if so, to state when?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that with regard to part (a), there was no expression of interest for the acquisition of Pointe Venus building as I have told in my answer to PQ 36 of the sitting of 14 May 2019, upon the advice of the Ministry of Finance following a consultation meeting held by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development led by the Hon. Prime Minister, Honourable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth in March 2018, it was decided that no expression of interest is required since the EWF (Employees Welfare Fund) is a corporate body.

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With regard to part (b) of the question, with reference to a letter emanated from the RRA on 05 November 2015, on 29 February 2016 we got the report from the Director Evaluation and Real Estate addressed to the Island Chief Executive, where it is mentioned that the assess value of Pointe Venus Hotel exclusive of furniture and plant and equipment is Rs 55 m.

With regard to part (d) of the question, a letter of intent for the industrial lease was issued on 10 March 2020 to the Employees Welfare Fund.

Mr Augustin: Yes, thank you, Madam Chairperson. Can I know from the Commissioner how many report from the Evaluation Department has been done?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: One report, Madam Chairperson.

Mr Augustin: Madam Chairperson, the Commissioner just said that with meeting held the sum of Rs 55 m. was agreed. But I have another information that on 10 May 2018, with a meeting with the ICE at the Chief Commissioner's Office, the sum for proposed for acquisition of ex Pointe Venus was Rs 75 m. Can I know from the Commissioner how is it that the sum has decreased?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, in fact, the report from the Evaluation Department, that I mentioned, it was the result of the Evaluation Report we requested for the acquisition of Pointe Venus Hotel by the RRA, that is, we pay Rs 55 m. to the promoter of the Pointe Venus Hotel and the Evaluation Report mentioned that. So, I supposed that the Respected Member, is referring to the amount discussed with the EWF for the RRA to sell the premises to the EWF.

Mr Augustin: Yes, I think I was wrong on this part, it is true that the Rs 75 m. was the sum proposed by the EWF. So, can I know from the Commissioner why the part (c) has not been answered? If any Memorandum of Understanding was signed by concerned parties, giving details?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: In fact, I think I skipped the part (c), Madam Chairperson. So, regarding to part (c), the Memorandum of Understanding highlighting the terms and conditions of the sale and acquisition of the property was signed by the Employees Welfare Fund and the RRA on 12 April 2019.

Mr Augustin: Yes, Madam Chairperson. Can we know from the Commissioner on what date the letter of intent for industrial lease has been submitted?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: So, I mentioned it earlier. The letter of intent for industrial lease was issued on 10 March 2020 to the Employees Welfare Fund.

Mr Augustin: Can we know from the Commissioner whether there has been a new evaluation for ex Pointe Venus Hotel?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: In fact, Madam Chairperson, what has happened is that when we proposed to the EWF that we will sell the premise for Rs 75 m., they themselves carried out a sort of evaluation and they finally discussed and re-evaluate, that instead of Rs 75 m. with the advent of COVID and all that, we agreed finally on Rs 65 m. So, we bought the premise from the promoter of Pointe Venus at Rs 55 m. and EWF is buying it from RRA to the amount of Rs 65 m. and this sum will be contributed to the project of Techno Park of Baladirou.

Mr Augustin: Has the Evaluation Department evaluate for this decrease in the sum of Rs 65 m?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: In fact, I think it is clear. At our request, the Evaluation Department sent the report for Rs 55 m. Normally, we should be selling it at Rs 55 m. Because we have done no added value to the premise. But still, we have negotiated and we have ... Because it is the building, it is the cost of the building because it is the building what brought value to the land. So, this is for the building that we...

Madam Chairperson: Yes, Respected Member, Perrine.

Mr Perrine: *Kot mette sa Madame la enan problème. Madam Chairperson, est-ce que je peux savoir de la commissaire qui c'est qui est responsable actuellement, le propriétaire de Pointe Venus et qui est responsable pour le gardiennage de Pointe Venus actuellement ?*

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madam Chairperson, as at now, the RRA is still the owner of the Pointe Venus.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Augustin.

Mr Augustin: Merci, Madame la présidente. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir la raison pourquoi le chiffre de Rs 75 millions a été baissé pour arriver jusqu'à Rs 65 millions ? Quelle est la raison derrière ?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: En effet, il y avait la discussion au départ pour Rs 75 millions sans qu'il y avait l'évaluation du côté de EWF. L'Assemblée régionale proposait un montant et c'est quand l'évaluateur envoyait par EWF, ils ont fait leur évaluation et puis, ils

ont considéré aussi qu'avec la situation de COVID et surtout aussi, en plus de ça, ils vont devoir investir au moins Rs 300 millions pour remettre le bâtiment à jour. C'est pour cela qu'il y a eu des discussions et *the agreed price of Rs 65 m. has been finalised.*

Mr Augustin: But the MoU has been signed before the COVID. It has been in April 2019. It has nothing to do with MoU, in 2019.

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, *unfortunately, with the new normal*, tous les contrats sont renégociés aujourd'hui, malheureusement. Nous, on aurait voulu vraiment qu'on puisse avoir les Rs 75 millions. Quand on a eu le *proposal* de Rs 65 millions par le nouveau *board* de EWF, surtout en lien avec... quand ils ont évalué par rapport au COVID, nous, on a voulu chercher les conseils du ministère des Finances et ils ont accepté. Ils ont dit que: *okay*, c'est bon, on peut aller de l'avant pour l'acquisition, pour la vente de ce *premise* à EWF à 65 millions. D'ailleurs, comme ils l'ont mentionné, d'ailleurs, dans ma réponse, je l'ai dit aussi. *EWF is a corporate body and it emanates from the Ministry of Finance itself.*

Mr Augustin: Yes, Madam Chairperson...

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member Perrine.

Mr Perrine: Madam Chairperson, est-il vrai que ce bâtiment de Pointe Venus, cet hôtel de Pointe Venus a été dévalué à cause du piteux état de l'enceinte et que le complexe a été pillé, tous les meubles envolés.

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Madame la présidente, j'espère que tout le monde comprend l'anglais ici. J'avais bien mentionné que l'évaluation qu'on a eu, le rapport de l'évaluation du 29 février 2016, *they assessed the value of the buildings of Pointe Venus Hotel exclusive of furniture and plant and equipment at the amount of Rs 55 m. I think this is clear English.*

Madam Chairperson: Yes, respected Member Augustin.

Mr Augustin: Yes, Madam Chairperson, can we know from the Commissioner with the selling of ex-Pointe Venus, will the Commissioner inform the House whether, the sum that we will receive from EWF will be invested in our project here in Rodrigues?

Mrs Gaspard Pierre-Louis: Yes, indeed, Madam Chairperson, this was the discussion and this amount of Rs 65 m. will be directly ingested in the company putting up the Techno Park and it will not be sufficient and there are other contributions for the building, yes.

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Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/14 has been withdrawn. Next question.

SURVEY CARRIED OUT – LAND UNDER CULTIVATION

– 2012 TO DATE

(No. B/14) The Second Local Region Member of La Ferme (Mr. J. N. Volbert) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, he will state and table, for the benefit of the House, if any survey has been carried out by his Commission to determine the number of hectares of land under crop cultivation from 2012 to date and indicating, in regard to agricultural permits from his Commission for the corresponding period: -

- (a) the number thereof delivered and renewed, respectively; and
- (b) the number of permit applications rejected, giving the reasons therefor?

(Withdrawn)

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/17 has been withdrawn.

RENTAL OF COMPUTERS – GOVERNMENT PRIMARY

& SECONDARY SCHOOLS – RODRIGUES

(No. B/15) Mr J. R. Augustin (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the rental of computers for Government primary and secondary schools in Rodrigues, he will state, for the benefit of the House, where matter stands as to date indicating:

- (a) when bids were launched therefor, the closing date, the names of the different tenderers as well as the successful one;
- (b) if computers have already been installed in the different schools, giving details and the number thereof having benefitted therefrom up to date; and
- (c) the total cost of the whole project, the funds that have been disbursed therefor up to date and when same will be completed?

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that for the primary sector, the contract for rental of 41 computers was initially

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launched on 29 July 2020 and closing date was fixed for 18 August 2020. The restricted bidding method was used and 17 bidders were invited to submit their quotation.

I am further informed that the opening of bids, only two bidders out of the 17 bidders have submitted their bid. The bids were referred to a Bid Evaluation Committee for technical evaluation and the Committee has recommended that tender be re-launched as bids received were non-responsive. The bidding exercise was accordingly cancelled.

Madam Chairperson, the requirements for 41 computers were meant for; 20 for Grand La Fouche Corail; and 21 for Montagne Charlot Community Government schools.

Following the cancellation of bids, my Commission has decided to re-launch the bidding exercise with reviewed specifications and estimated cost. It was also considered wise to relaunch bids this time for rental of computers for another additional three schools in view of replacing their fleet of old computers. The computers for all the remaining primary schools will accordingly be replaced progressively. The contract for rental of 110 computers was therefore launched on 10 December 2020 and closing date for submission of bids was 07 January 2021. Invitation for bids was sent to nine potential bidders.

I am informed that only one bid was received and same is still under evaluation. Since the last tender exercise is still at evaluation stage, installing of computers has not been done yet.

Madam Chairperson, in case the present bidding exercise for rental of 110 computers for pre-primary schools is successful, the substantially responsive bidder will have 30 days from date of issue of purchase order/letter of acceptance to commence their services. Therefore, it is expected that the project will be completed before start of school calendar year 2021/2022.

Madam Chairperson, for the secondary sector, I wish to inform the House that the Executive Council at its meeting held on the 02 August 2019 has conveyed approval to provide 210 computers and other IT equipment to REDCO colleges and a financial grant was provided to the company.

The procurement procedure was carried out by REDCO Ltd. I am informed that the restricted bidding method was used and bids were launched on the 01 October 2019. The closing date for submission of bids was fixed on 21 October 2019 and five bidders were invited to submit bids.

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Madam Chairperson, I am further informed that the contract for renting of 210 computers was awarded to Leal Communication & Informatics Ltd at the rate of Rs 12,377 inclusive of VAT per computer per year. Deliveries were made in February and May 2020 and 30 computers per college have already been installed. The total cost of the project, spread over a period of five years is Rs 12,995,460 inclusive of VAT.

I am tabling a list of potential bidders who were invited to submit their bids for the procurement exercises for rental of computers for both the government primary schools and REDCO colleges.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to part (c) of the question, I am informed that a sum of Rs 2,599,092 has already been disbursed by my Commission to cater for payment of rental of 210 computers by REDCO for the year 2020 and that my Commission will provide funding to REDCO Ltd for payment of rental fees for the following four years. Additionally, an amount of Rs 2 m. has been provided under Vote Item: 2303-31112002 - Equipment Furniture & Others under this financial year budget to the Commission for Education for the procurement of computers.

Madam Chairperson: Respected Members, the table has been advised that PQ B/16 has been withdrawn. Question time is over.

EXPEDITION AFRICA EVENT – RODRIGUES – 2019

(No. B/16) The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr. J. R. Augustin) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Expedition Africa event held in Rodrigues in 2019, he will obtain information from any relevant authority, including Discovery Rodrigues Ltd., to state, for the benefit of the House, on if:

- (a) the financial agreement retained in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the two concerned parties has been fully observed, and if so, to give details on the different commitment thereof;
- (b) all promotional materials have been handed over to Discovery Rodrigues Ltd., and, if so, to table same; and
- (c) any promotional activities have been held whereby these promotional materials have been put in contribution?

(Withdrawn)

WATER DISTRIBUTION – RODRIGUES

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(No. B/17) The First Island Region Member (Mr. L. J. Von-Mally, GOSK) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to water distribution in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) how far the execution thereof has been achieved once every week, tabling the list of localities benefiting therefrom; and
- (b) the measures that his Commission is taking in order to reduce the disparities between the different localities as far as the frequency thereof is concerned; giving details and the timeframe?

(Withdrawn)

AMBULANCES AND OTHER VEHICLES

– QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL AND AREA HEALTH CENTRES

(No. B/18) The Third Island Region Member (Mrs. M. T. Agathe, PMSM) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to ambulances and other vehicles attached to Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the area health centres around Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the number thereof, indicating if all such vehicles are in proper running condition for the transport of all patients and, if yes, to give details and, if not, to state why?

(Withdrawn)

GRADE 9 – STUDENTS NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

– ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021

(No. B/19) The Third Island Region Member (Mrs. M. T. Agathe, PMSM) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to Grade 9 students undertaking the national examinations at the end of this academic year 2020/2021, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the protocol and measures put in place for the future channeling of unsuccessful candidates who will have to leave school?

(Withdrawn)

CROP PRODUCTION – RODRIGUES

(No. B/20) The Third Island Region Member (Mrs. M. T. Agathe, PMSM) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to crop production in

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Rodrigues, including maize and cassava, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the protocol put in place by his Commission to boost up same?

(Vide reply PQ B/12)

ILLEGAL EXCAVATIONS – COASTAL REGIONS – RODRIGUES

(No. B/21) Mr J. L. R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to illegal excavations around the coastal regions of Rodrigues, from 2017 to date, he will inform the House of the: -

- (a) number of cases detected or reported and to give details thereon;
- (b) outcome in each case including list of equipment seized per site; and
- (c) measures taken by his Commission to date to deter such acts and to secure the best interests of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly?

(Withdrawn)

HIDDEN TREASURE – ST. FRANÇOIS

(No. B/22) Mr J. L. R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Arts and Culture and Others whether, in regard to the hidden treasure of St. François, she will inform the House on where matter stands as at date?

(Withdrawn)

SOCIAL HOUSING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

(No. B/23) Mr J. L. R. Perrine (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Housing and Others and Others whether, in regard to social housing in Rodrigues, he will inform the House of the number of applications received to date at his Commission with respect to the different schemes in place, indicating the number of applications per scheme which were not successful together with the reasons therefor and specifying if any was due to lack of financing from banking institutions?

(Withdrawn)

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

Madam Chairperson: Commissioner for Environment.

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, thank you to give me the chance to do two statements on two important issues that are happening on this island. First one is about the

control of stray dogs in Rodrigues through mass sterilisation and sensitisation campaign. *Sa osi enan.*

CONTROL OF STRAY DOGS IN RODRIGUES ISLAND

Madam Chairperson, Rodrigues comprises of an estimated dog population of about 10,000 heads. Many of these dogs, roam around the island in the absence of their owners and thus are considered to be stray dogs. Stray dogs are a nuisance to Rodrigues. They cause problems such as damage to property and livestock, contaminate the environment by depositing their excreta and odours everywhere. They are generally a nuisance due to their barking and howling. They are a potential source of zoonotic diseases and they negatively impact the tourism industry. Since the establishment of this government, we have been trying hard to solve the problem of stray dogs in Rodrigues. Several negotiations with the Ministry of Agroindustry and MSAW, several visits and discussions on the matter, donation of a van to collect dogs by MSAW, revision of the compound etc. These years have passed and I must admit that the problem of stray dogs and cats still persists.

Madam Chairperson, today, this thing about picking up dogs on the streets and take to impound is being seen not to be a good practice and is against animal welfare. In order to be in line with good practices, my Commission has to readjust its policy and this is why, Madam Chairperson, I am doing this statement to present our new policy and action that will be implemented by my Commission for the following project to address the problem of stray dogs and cats in Rodrigues. The main activities of this project will be:

- to sensitise the public on responsible dog ownership,
- to mass sterilise to control the population of dogs and cats,
- Registration of animals and enforcing all laws relating to stray dogs and cats and animal welfare.

❖ Education on responsible dog ownership

An Animal Welfare Unit under the veterinary services of my Commission will be set up. The responsibilities of the unit will include:-

- The promotion of responsible dog ownership through education. This unit will organise regular talks in villages to sensitise the population on responsible dog ownership.
- Ensuring the enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act of 2013.

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- Issuing of import permits for dogs;
- Registration of dogs;
- Registration of dog breeders; and
- Registration of all complaints pertaining to dogs and taking necessary action.

These actions will definitely help to reduce the number of dogs allowed to roam in nature, improve the health and welfare of dogs and minimise the risk that dogs pose to the community.

❖ The Setting up of a Mass Sterilisation Programme Team

The team will comprise of a Veterinary Officer, a Support Officer and a Stockman. The duties of veterinary officers will be to sterilise dogs and monitor anaesthesia. The Support Officer will record a statistical data on each animal sterilised such as:

- Species;
- date sterilised;
- name of and address of owner;
- weight of the animal;
- sex; and
- about the anaesthesia.

A support officer will also assist surgeon; helping in preparation of surgical site wound dressing, dispensing of oral tablets and giving post-operative advice. The stockman will be responsible for restraining the animals for drug administration, carrying them on the operating table and to the vehicle post-surgery.

❖ The Sterilisation Exercise

My Commissioner has already purchased an air condition and movable office container which will be placed in different localities for the sterilisation exercise. I am pleased to table a picture of the building, of the container already purchased which is in front of my Commission for the benefit of the House. All the drugs and materials for the exercise have already been purchased. This exercise will be done mainly on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. A target for about each occasion will be around 15-20 animals (dogs and cats) and since

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sterilisation will be done at village level, the co-operation of the RCSS will be requested. I am pleased to announce that the campaign will be launched at the beginning of March at Citronelle and proper announcement will be made through radio programmes and newspapers.

This is about the first statement. Now, let me go to the Waste Management in Rodrigues. I am sure the Member from Roche Bon Dieu will be happy to hear this.

WASTE MANAGEMENT IN RODRIGUES

The purpose of this statement is to inform the House of the actions being taken by my Commission to address the issue of waste management at Roche Bon Dieu Dumping Site.

Madam Chairperson, we all know that Solid Waste Management is a vital ongoing public system which affects people's health, the aestheticism and health of our environment. Wastes are generated through consumption of resources by human beings and continuously need to be managed in order to minimise its impact on humans and on the environment.

We also know about the regular fire outbreaks that occur at the dumping site and the major impacts of resulting intoxicating smoke on nearby residents.

Madam Chairperson, my Commission has been bold at taking necessary decisions in order to keep the fire at bay. As a result of those decisions, for the whole year of 2020, no fire outbreaks occurred at the dumping site of Roche Bon Dieu. These decisions include; dedicating a CAT D 6 plant equipment to manage wastes on site; (*Madame, ou ti koné ene lané pane gagne difé labas?*) backing the D6 with an excavator in case of breakdown to ensure wastes are well compacted and void space is available for daily dumping; seeking assistance from the Ministry for Environment for long term solutions to waste management at the Dumping Site.

Madam Chairperson, during the last visit of the Minister for Environment, Hon. Ramano in December last year, a request was made for the Solid Waste Management Division of his Ministry to provide technical advice and assistance in the elaboration of an action plan regarding solid waste management at the Roche Bon Dieu dumping site and for Rodrigues in general.

Last week, two experienced Engineers of the Waste Management Division of the Ministry for Environment namely; Deputy Director, Bhaguthsing Beerachee and a Principal Project Officer, Mr Deochan Dookee were on mission in Rodrigues.

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The Officers have made recommendations to be implemented at various levels; immediate, short term and over a longer period of time and in consultation with officers of my Commission.

The main objective of this new management approach is to convert Roche Bon Dieu Dumping Site into a landfill. Immediate measures apply mostly to the rehabilitation of a dumping site of Roche Bon Dieu. The activities proposed will be carried out by the Commission itself using the plant equipment available with other civil works that need to be...will be contracted out.

(Interruptions)

Mr Payendee: The proposed immediate actions will increase the space available at the dumping site for an additional period of at least five years and will eliminate completely the risk of fire outbreaks.

The following activities have been recommended:

(a) Reprofilling of waste and construction of aesthetic wall.

The wastes will be pushed and levelled towards the hillside followed by compaction. This will allow the creation of additional space inside the dumping site. At the same time, the site facing the track road will be embellished, Madam, using decorative and other plants.

An aesthetic block wall will also be constructed along the periphery of the dumping site with fence at the upper part to retain wind-blown wastes.

(b) Clearing a stretch of 5 m along the upper perimeter of the dumping ground

This would provide for space for wall, drain and temporary track road for working purposes. The drain will divert water from the hill in order not to mix with the wastes that may cause further environmental nuisances. The soil generated from the excavation will be used as cover and capping afterwards.

(c) Construction of Access Road inside the Dumping Site

Actually, wastes are being dumped along the main entrance, mostly during period of rainfall as there is no appropriate access road to get further into the site. An access road will be constructed inside the dumping site together with a tipping platform.

Madam Chairperson, the new management which will be implemented at the dumping site is not the solution, is not the only solution, Mr Von-Mally, and is not the solution of the

problem of waste management in Rodrigues and it forms part of the whole strategy because whatever measure: measures of sorting, recycling, reusing that may be envisaged, there will be always some wastes that will have to be dumped in a landfill. Apart from this, my Commission remains focused on waste segregation *pour une économie circulaire*. As announced in the last budget speech, waste segregation will be carried in six villages, namely Dans Coco, Rivière Coco, Mt Cheri, Allée Tamarin, Roche Bon Dieu and Pointe Canon. Two segregation bins and one compost bin will be donated to each household and the following wastes will be segregated and collected separately; namely plastic.

In the same context, a Civic Amenity Centre (which called a *déchèterie*, which is new for us, which is being done in Mauritius but this is important, a *déchèterie*) will be constructed to receive the segregated wastes. The tender document for the centre is being finalised and will be launched shortly and this is very important because people can come back and pick up whatever things that have been put in the *déchèterie* for reuse.

As a medium term measure, a full fledge material recovery centre will be constructed at Roche Bon Dieu annexed to the Civic Amenity Centre. This will allow further waste segregation (*to pou trouvé avant election ta*) activities to be carried out thereat so that a very small amount of wastes will be left for final disposal.

Madam Chairperson: Order!

Mr Payendee: Madam Chairperson, in a medium term, provision will be made for the construction of a proper sanitary landfill to receive the amount of wastes to be left in a highly controlled manner. Madam Chairperson, people are asking when will this start – as from next week, a delegation from my Commission is proceeding to Mauritius, I mean by the 03 or 04 of March where they will be going with these Engineers that came to Rodrigues. They are going to the landfill of Mare Chicose to study and to see what is going on and also, the operator of the machines, these people also will proceed to Mauritius to study what is going on there so that we can... Of course, they have been copying us for years and it is not a problem for us to copy what is being done in Mauritius as long as it is good for the environment. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Commissioner. The Commissioner for Youth and Others.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SPORTS

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Mrs Edouard-Ravina: *Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for allowing me to do a small speech this afternoon.* Donc, je vais parler de quelques développements au niveau du sport. Je voudrais aujourd'hui, féliciter deux jeunes athlètes qui font la fierté de Rodrigues en ce moment. Premièrement, mes sincères félicitations vont à M. Patrice Milazar pour avoir été sélectionné comme arbitre par la Confédération Africaine de Football, la CAF pour la Coupe d'Afrique des Nations, la CAN pour les moins de 18 ans, du 13 au 31 mars prochain au Maroc. L'Assemblée régionale qui dans son habitude va lui soutenir et faciliter son déplacement dans les meilleurs des façons possibles pour qu'il puisse réaliser ce beau projet sportif et bien sûr, pour qu'il puisse faire la fierté de notre République.

(Interruptions)

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Bravo à ce jeune homme pour son sens profond de discipline et de rigueur. Nous lui souhaitons bonne chance dans cette belle et nouvelle aventure. Deuxièmement, je voudrais aussi féliciter Mademoiselle Christianne Legentil pour avoir été élu Présidente de la Commission des athlètes au niveau du Comité Olympique de Maurice.

(Applause)

Mrs Edouard-Ravina: Elle sera épaulée par Bruno Julie et devra parmi ses responsabilités s'assurer du bien-être des athlètes pour les prochaines compétitions. Je souhaite bonne chance à ce nouveau comité. Mes sincères félicitations à Christianne Legentil dans ses nouvelles responsabilités. Je suis sûre qu'elle fera un joli travail, un beau travail avec tous ses collègues. Donc, félicitations à ces deux jeunes qui font vraiment la fierté de la République de Maurice et de Rodrigues région autonome. Je suis sûre que Christianne et Patrice sauront vraiment montrer la capacité Rodriguaise tant au niveau sportif, tant au niveau de management et de prise de décision. Merci.

(Applause)

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Commissioner.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, I beg to move that the Assembly does now adjourn to Tuesday 26 March 2021 at 04.00 p.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, we have matters at adjournment. Yes, respected Member Von-Mally.

MATTERS RAISED

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY PATIENTS

– BLOOD TESTS RESULTS

Mr Von-Mally: Madame la présidente, je voudrais m'adresser cet après-midi au respecté commissaire de la Santé au nom des patients qui font face à pas mal de problèmes quand ils vont à l'hôpital pour des tests sanguins, des tests sur des... d'autres échantillons. On doit faire des tests. Il y a des tests qui se font à Rodrigues. Il y en a d'autres qu'on doit envoyer à Maurice. Mais le problème se situe au niveau du temps que ça prend. Il y a des patients qui doivent attendre la plupart du temps les résultats des tests ont pris 14 jours. Après 14 jours, ils ont ces résultats et là aussi, parfois, on perd... on dit c'est perdu, il n'y a pas de dossiers, il a disparu, on doit refaire les tests. Je crois que ce n'est pas bien. Et aussi, parfois quand les résultats arrivent, le pauvre patient a passé l'arme à gauche. Donc, étant donné que ces patients-là rencontrent pas mal de problèmes, je voudrais demander au commissaire de la Santé pourquoi ne pas investir davantage dans le laboratoire à l'hôpital Queen Elizabeth pour essayer de faire autant que possible les tests ici ? Faire de maximum de tests ici. Là, je crois que c'est un bon investissement pour la population Rodriguaise, pour qu'on puisse faire le maximum de tests à Rodrigues et qu'on puisse avoir les résultats le plus vite possible. Parce qu'à Maurice, la plupart de tests, au maximum trois jours, on a les résultats, au maximum. La plupart des tests, oui ! Des *samples*. Allez voir ! J'ai des amis qui travaillent là-bas. Il y a...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: No cross-talking, please!

Mr Von-Mally: Il y a des tests qu'on peut avoir tout de suite, oui. Il y a des tests, c'est vrai, il l'a dit. Il y a des tests qu'on arrive à avoir des résultats tout de suite mais il y a des tests à Maurice, ils l'ont dans trois jours, à Rodrigues, on a après 14 jours. Il ne faut pas se voiler la face. D'ailleurs, je parle au nom de ces patients-là. Ce n'est pas moi qui parle là. Je parle au nom de ces patients qui souffrent. Moi, je n'ai pas fait des *samples*, rien, moi mais ces pauvres gens-là, je parle pour eux. Donc, si on peut améliorer les choses, c'est *above party politics*, ça. Je n'essaie pas de capitaliser dessus pour avoir des points politiquement parlant, non ! C'est pour aider les patients parce que les gens qui souffrent le plus, ce sont les malades. Essayons de faire quelque chose. Si nous, dans l'opposition, on arrive à faire des propositions, si vous

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voyez que c'est bon et qu'on puisse aller de l'avant pour aider ces gens-là, et bien, allons-y. Pourquoi pas équiper nos laboratoires d'une meilleure façon et trouver l'argent qu'il faut ? Là, c'est de l'argent qui serait bien dépensé. Je vous remercie, Madame la présidente.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, respected Member. The Commissioner for Health would like to react. Yes?

REPLY TO INTERVENTION OF MR VON-MALLY

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, je suis d'accord avec le respecté membre de la Minorité mais les tests qu'on envoie à Maurice, définitivement, ça prend plusieurs jours parce qu'à Maurice aussi, ils attendent plusieurs échantillons pour pouvoir analyser. Lorsque le membre dit que ça prend trois jours, c'est facile. Ici aussi, le test prend trois jours, le test prend un jour mais il y a certains tests qu'il faut attendre, qu'il faut analyser deux, trois fois. Alors, c'est pourquoi ça prend plusieurs jours.

Madam Chairperson: Fourth Island Region Member.

PLIGHT OF CARDIAC PATIENTS - HOSPITAL

Mr Augustin: Merci, Madame la présidente. Je voudrais aussi également m'adresser au commissaire de la Santé concernant les patients qui ont des problèmes cardiaques et on voit que de plus en plus, ça devient alarmant. Donc, les gens quand ils arrivent à l'hôpital, ils attendent des tests qui se font en laboratoire, ils attendent dans le *casualty* pendant 20 ou 30 minutes pour connaître le résultat. Donc, le commissaire de la Santé vient de dire qu'il y a des tests qui prennent beaucoup de temps mais il y a des tests que vous avez tout de suite. Il y a un appareil spécifique pour tester le problème des gens qui ont des problèmes de cœur et cet appareil, on le nomme *Trop T* ou bien *Troponin I*. C'est petit. C'est comme le glucomètre. C'est rapide, efficace, précis, *life-saving* et *time-saving*. Et tous les hôpitaux à Maurice, ils se servent de ça. Et j'aimerais bien demander au commissaire de la Santé s'il peut faire le nécessaire pour que dans nos hôpitaux aussi, ils puissent avoir cet appareil. En plus, dans le Intensive Care Unit de Crève-Cœur, il y a un gros appareil Trop T et cet appareil est inutilisable depuis pas mal de temps parce que d'après les informations, les *cartridges* qu'on s'en sert là-bas, ça coutent plus cher que la machine. Donc, ce Trop T là, Troponin I va résoudre ce problème d'appareil de Trop T aussi dans le ICU. Merci, Madame la présidente.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, respected Member. Commissioner for Health?

REPLY TO INTERVENTION OF MR AUGUSTIN

Mr Roussety: Madame la présidente, ce que vient de dire le membre de la Minorité, c'est vrai mais on a déjà fait le nécessaire avec les spécialistes pour que nous ayons tous ces équipements très bientôt à Rodrigues.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Commissioner. Minority Leader?

HOUSING SCHEMES – UPGRADING OF ‘TRUST FUND’ TYPE HOUSES

Mr Grandcourt: Merci de me donner l'opportunité d'intervenir. Alors, Madame la présidente, je vais intervenir sur le *New Housing Scheme for Upgrading and Extension of Trust Fund Houses*. Il y a beaucoup de gens qui attendent pour que leurs maisons puissent être agrandies et réparées. Mais il y a un cas où (il y a plusieurs cas d'ailleurs) il y a des personnes qui reçoivent des lettres de pré-sélection comme c'est le cas de quelqu'un de la région 6 qui connaît très bien le commissaire de la Sécurité Sociale et cette personne-là m'a dit de venir parler à son nom, au noms de tous ceux qui ont ce problème. Alors, il est vrai que l'Assemblée régionale contribue 75% et la personne doit contribuer à 25%. Mais le problème, c'est qu'on donne la lettre de pré-sélection et puis, on va faire les enquêtes. On va enquêter si la personne doit de l'argent à X compagnie ou... qu'est-ce qu'on a ? La banque, on a aussi Rogers, voilà. Entre autres, pour savoir si la personne doit de l'argent parce que normalement, la personne doit contribuer à la hauteur de Rs 100,000 mais si jamais cette personne doit de l'argent à une banque ou CIM, par exemple...

Madam Chairperson: D'autres institutions vous pouvez mentionné. Ne mentionnez pas le nom de l'institution, s'il vous plait.

Mr Grandcourt: Oui, oui, oui. Par exemple. Alors, cette personne-là n'a pas le droit à ces aides. Alors, la personne en question me dit si jamais ils veulent contribuer eux-mêmes à travers des matériaux à hauteur de Rs 100,000, ils ne sont toujours pas éligibles.

(Interruptions)

Mr Grandcourt: Il y a un problème. Si cette personne-là peut donner, par exemple, en terme de main-d'œuvre, ça aussi, zéro. Donc, je fais un appel au commissaire. Je ne sais pas. Peut-être c'est un cas un peu particulier. Je fais un appel au commissaire de revoir si jamais ces personnes-là peuvent contribuer même s'ils doivent de l'argent à une institution, de voir comment aider ces gens-là. Parce que si l'Assemblée régionale peut contribuer à la hauteur de Rs 300,000, je ne comprends pas pourquoi l'Assemblée régionale ne peut pas contribuer un peu plus ou bien sinon, on *a case-to-case basis*, on amène ça au Conseil Exécutif pour être approuvé par ses collègues. Donc, Madame la présidente, on a un cas là. Pour cette personne-

là, il était emballé et cette personne-là est déçue en ce moment. Il ne sait pas quoi faire parce qu'il a essayé de... Il a même eu les plans. Regardez le plan. Il a même eu les plans. Alors, soit on vérifie bien d'abord avant de donner un plan, avant de donner un *letter of award* à quelqu'un soit... Oui mais pré-sélection, ce n'est pas très bien parce que la personne croit qu'elle va obtenir l'aide du gouvernement et puis...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Respected Member Perrine, I should be able to hear the intervention of the Minority Leader without any interruption, please.

Mr Grandcourt: *Thank you.* Et puis, il se trouve que tel n'est pas le cas. Donc, je demande au commissaire de Housing, de la Sécurité sociale de voir ces cas-là, soit on a case-to-case basis, soit de revoir sa politique en termes de financement pour ces gens qui attendent pour que leurs maisons soient rénovées. Merci.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you, Minority Leader. The Commissioner for Social Security and Others.

REPLY TO INTERVENTION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

Mr Baptiste: Madame la présidente, je pense que les procédures sont claires, bien établies. D'abord, il y a la lettre de pré-sélection. Pré-sélection, justement, c'est que à la base, les bénéficiaires potentiels... donc, les critères de bases. Mais à partir de cette lettre, c'est à partir de là qu'ils vont pouvoir faire les négociations, les démarches auprès de leurs banques. Donc, ça, ce n'est pas notre problème parce qu'on n'a pas le droit de faire ça. On n'a pas le droit d'aller vérifier si quelqu'un a les... *credit worthiness* auprès des banques. Ce sont les procédures bancaires. Donc, c'est à partir de cet instant-là pour ceux qui n'ont pas pu avoir leurs emprunts auprès des banques, ils doivent retourner auprès de la commission du Logement et non pas auprès des membres de l'opposition parce que dans plusieurs cas, nous avons aidé ces gens-là à trouver d'autres formules. D'ailleurs, nous travaillons sur plusieurs autres formules parce que nous avons remarqué certainement qu'il y a pas mal de personnes.

Sur 364 cas de ceux qui ont reçu leur *letter of pre-selection*, il y a seulement 57 qui sont venus nous voir pour dire qu'ils n'arrivent pas à trouver, à avoir cet emprunt auprès des banques. Et là, nous travaillons sur une autre formule et très bientôt, j'espère que nous allons pouvoir le faire. Mais par contre, l'information est erronée, c'est complètement faux. La personne, soit il a mal compris, soit il donne ça par exprès pour vous faire croire le jour et la nuit. Il y a pas mal de bénéficiaires qui ont contribué *in kind*. C'est-à-dire, les contracteurs

évaluent les valeurs des matériaux de construction qu'ils ont et il y a plusieurs cas et ça peut se faire. *Yes, they can give their contributions in kind after evaluation by the contractor.* Et, si c'est la même personne que vous parlez, je connais cette même personne et j'ai expliqué à ce bénéficiaire potentiel qu'il peut le faire mais pour des raisons peut-être pour avoir quelque chose de vous, tant mieux.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you, Commissioner. The Second Island Region Member.

ISSUES IN CONSTRUCTION OF TRACK ROADS

Mr Perrine: Merci, Madame, de me donner l'occasion de rapporter quelques cas. Donc, certains ont pu me voir sans doute dans des régions sur différentes *issues*. Aujourd'hui, je suis content que le commissaire est venu répondre. Je suis content. Donc, il faut travailler. Il faut aller sur le terrain et non pas dans le bureau. Donc, aujourd'hui, je vais m'adresser au *Deputy Chief Commissioner* concernant les cas de *track road* qui se font autour de l'île Rodrigues. Je me souviens dans une des interventions qu'il a fait concernant le cas de Nicolas. Il a dit que dorénavant, nous allons considérer les cas de routes asphaltées au lieu de *track road* dans des morcellements dans des régions spécifiques. J'espère que ce qu'il nous a dit, il va tenir parole et il va faire une suite dans ses idées.

Deuxièmement, sur cette affaire de *track road*, les *track road* se font autour de Rodrigues. Bien sûr, j'ai été à Anse aux Anglais l'autre jour. Un *track road* de cette profondeur là, les deux côtés mais au milieu, il y a ça comme distance. Dans d'autres régions, la profondeur est extrêmement 'fond'. Il faut absolument combler. Je ne sais pas qui c'est qui va faire ça mais c'est comme ça. C'est laissé comme ça là. Lorsque j'ai fait la vidéo, on m'a dit que on va revenir mais je n'ai rien vu jusqu'à maintenant. Dans d'autres cas, le *track road* est fait pour désenclaver les gens, Madame la présidente. Aujourd'hui, nous constatons d'année en année que des *track road* se font sur une base politique et une base *piecemeal*. C'est-à-dire, s'il y a des gens qui habitent dans le fond, qui n'épousent pas l'idéologie de ce présent gouvernement, ils sont laissés pour contre. On commence. J'ai vu et je peux vous donner la preuve, là.

Le *track road* commence à tout près de ces personnes qui épousent leur idéologie. J'ai parlé du cas de Mme L'Eveillée à plusieurs reprises. On a fait, on a parlé ça à M. Nicolson Lisette ici même présent, le *Deputy Chief Commissioner*. Jusqu'à maintenant, la route est déjà faite et la personne est toujours enclavée chez elle, une personne malade. J'ai été au court de cette semaine, lundi pour être plus précis, à Bigarade où il y a plusieurs familles

qui souffrent d'un manque d'accès, d'un accès dangereux. Il y a des roches qui bloquent la route. Ces familles-là souffrent depuis un bon nombre de temps malgré des diverses interpellations, que ce soit des députés du gouvernement, que ce soit les commissaires du gouvernement pour venir aider ces personnes-là, en vain. Il y a des personnes handicapées, Madame la présidente. Je préfère ne pas dire le nom ici.

Il y a même des commissaires qui vont rendre visite souvent à cette personne handicapée mais devant sa porte, c'est la boue. Les étudiants marchent dans la boue quand il pleut. Est-ce que vous trouvez ça normal en 2021 ? Il faut que ce soit une fois pour toute réglé. Il faut que ce soit clair. Les *track road*, c'est pour les personnes d'abord. C'est ça, la politique du *track road*: c'est pour les personnes qui sont enclavées et dans un deuxième temps, pour les personnes qui sont alitées, handicapées ou il y a des problèmes de gauche à droite et après, pour les petits copains si vous voulez faire. Mais aujourd'hui, ce n'est pas ça qu'on voit sur le terrain. Ces *track road* sont fait sur une base politique. J'ai parlé au commissaire Lisette d'un cas de 10 mètres de *track road* à Baie Malgache.

Ça fait trois ans que je suis derrière lui. Aujourd'hui, c'est toujours, rien du tout. Cette personnes-là, c'est un handicapé. Il connaît bien ces personnes. Est-ce que je dois venir au Parlement pour dire que je vous ai parlé pour pouvoir réagir ? Ça, c'est une chose. Mais maintenant, les réparations des *track road*. Si un gouvernement a fait un *track road*, l'autre gouvernement est responsable pour les maintenir. Ce n'est pas mes responsabilités, ça. Il faut à chaque fois quémander au commissaire ou à la commission pour dire il faut faire quelque chose pour la réparation de ces *track road* ? On est en 2021. Il faut qu'on réagisse une fois pour toute et on dit voilà, la politique du *track road*, c'est ça et il faut donner à tout le monde parce que c'est les Rodriguais qui doivent sortir gagnant ; pas les politiciens ! Bon, j'espère que le message a été entendu pour la dernière fois et que les choses se font juste après. Merci.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, respected Member. The Deputy Chief Commissioner, yes.

REPLY TO INTERVENTION OF MR PERRINE

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Madam Chairperson, my first reaction to this intervention is the fact that this very Member once came into the House, questioned about the construction of track road and when we explained the procedures as regards to the difficulties that we are meeting for the allocation of the contract, I remember on a sitting position, he entitled me as an incompetence. I remember this very well. And now, this very same Member

is coming to give me orders as regards what is to be done. His intervention as a Member of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is fair enough. That is not fine... That is not to be discussed because it is his own right but many of what has been said in his intervention can be put into question because they are not the right information.

If I am to go and take examples of what happened when the Minority Leader was Commissioner for Public Infrastructure as regards to question of track road. Yes, many can be said but I will not go into these examples because he is speaking about political interventions and he is stating that there is... we are giving priorities on a political basis. If we are to discuss on this basis, there is much to be said on that matter and a lot of examples to be given, Madam Chairperson. So, I will not go into the details. I will not go into the details of this, yes. Nevertheless...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Order! Cross-talking is not allowed!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Nevertheless, what I would like to add as regards to this construction, there has been the award of 30 km of track road around Rodrigues, 5 km per region and we have set priorities. We have announced publicly and we will ensure that this is done. First, all persons who are suffering of...who have to undergo dialysis, they will be provided either with a track road or with a footpath, first. Second, Madam Chairperson, when we have drawn the list at the level of my Commission, we have taken a lot of factors. Of course, if we go to the different regions, there is certainly more than 5 km to be entertained. Some regions need 10 km other can go up to 15 km and knowing how you are proceeding, if I give A, you will say B should have it. If I give C, you will say that E needs it. *Comme dit la chanson...* Yeah, this is the bad politics of you.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: This is why...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: It is said...

Madam Chairperson: Order!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The song goes like this. How does the song go?

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Order! Order! Deputy Chief Commissioner, please, be brief.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, I am going straight. The song goes like this: “*Mo pa marié dimoune y koze mwan, mo marié dimoune y koze mwan*”. It is the same thing with the opposition. If I give A, *l’opposition y koze mwan*. If I give B, *l’opposition y koze mwan*. Yes, so, how do we proceed then? How do we proceed? Yes, you have the right. This is why I say you are in your ultimate right to bring such matters to the Assembly but it is also in our ultimate right to decide as regards to information that we have gathered and as regards to requests that have reached my Commission and as regards to information that has been gathered by the respected Member of this side of the House about their regions. Yes, this is it! So, coming to say that we are giving track road on a political basis...

(Interruptions)

Madam Chairperson: Order! No cross-talking, please! Minority Leader, please!

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I do not agree at all with that. I can even go as far as saying, if ever there is any persons who are handicapped, the same could have been provided to my Commission and we would have considered as far as possible to see how to alleviate his suffering, to alleviate him as regards to the mobility that he should, whenever he has to go to the hospital or whenever he has to leave his house. But saying that matters have been considered on a political basis, this is not my philosophy and this is not the philosophy of this Regional Government.

The second thing, Madam Chairperson. straight over. The second thing, there is the saying that...

Madam Chairperson: Deputy Chief Commissioner, please, be brief. Other Members have to raise other issues.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: But it is a point that has been raised.

Madam Chairperson: No, you should be brief.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: The point has been raised with respect to backfilling. They are saying that the track road is of such a high level. Yes, you will see that formally, the level of track road was 150 mm. In order to strengthen and to ensure the sustainability of track roads as have been discussed, mentioned by the Member itself *par rapport à bane track road kine kassé*, we have gone through the construction of track road for 175 mm this time, 17.5 mm to ensure durability and sustainability. And, of course, what? The

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contractor is responsible for the backfilling of the middle of the track road. It is the responsibility, it is the contract of the contractor for the backfilling of the track road and to ensure that the level is lessened so as to reduce the possibility of a motor vehicle getting out of track. This is his responsibility that we have to ensure.

Third thing, there has been the mention of track road in Morcellement. Yes, we do know that there is an issue on that matter. It is an issue on the matter. We have started to attack the problem. We have started with Anse Nicolas, of course, and you will note also throughout this financial year, we have done at least in order to reduce the suffering of people, we have done not less than seven roads around Rodrigues and we are continuing. Now, we have come to... we have reached Champ. Now, we will be attacking at the region of number 6. Not later than this week, we have provided works order for the construction of Baie Malgache. We have provided works order for Baie Malgache and then, for Malartic.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, thank you, Deputy Chief Commissioner.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: There is much to say that can be said more than this, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Yes, you can come with a statement later on. Yes, the Third Island Region Member.

ILL-TREATMENT OF OLD PEOPLE

Mrs Agathe: Merci, Madame la présidente. Etant donné que l'adjointe au Chef commissaire a beaucoup parlé, je n'ai pas beaucoup de temps. Donc, *I shall be short but sweet, Madam*. Je vais parler concernant la maltraitance des personnes âgées. Je vais m'adresser principalement au commissaire de la Sécurité Sociale mais à tout le monde ici présent pour que vous jetiez un œil aux personnes âgées. Parce que j'ai eu l'occasion aussi de parler au commissaire. Nous savons qu'à Rodrigues, il y a beaucoup de personnes âgées qui sont vraiment maltraitées. Plus on devient vieux, plus les enfants veulent avoir les parents et puis, bien souvent, on est plus maltraité. Pourquoi je dis cela ? Tout récemment, nous sommes descendus, je suis allée dans un endroit et j'ai rencontré une vieille dame et elle est sur un fauteuil roulant. Supposé la personne qui doit s'occuper d'elle habite bien loin. On l'a confiée à quelqu'un d'autre. Nous sommes allés un samedi matin et la personne, son *carer* est venu vers 09h00. Arrivé là-bas vers... on n'a pas vu le *carer*. Elle était seule dans son fauteuil et quand on a regardé un petit peu partout, la maison était dans un état piteux. Dans son *rice cooker*, il y avait du riz.

Et puis, Madame la présidente, c'était vraiment écœurant de voir qu'une personne qui a Rs 9,000... Et il a son riz et puis, on a eu comme on dit en créole : '*Dé ti bingue frir lor so rice cooker*' et c'était son repas pour samedi parce que quand nous, nous sommes arrivés, je crois qu'elle avait déjà déjeuné. Avec peine, elle va se servir et puis, en partant, son *carer* lui a dit : « *Ein, demain dimanche, mo pa pé vini. Mo pou vini lundi.* » Mais maintenant, on a fait des démarches. La personne était *keen* pour aller au *respite care* mais maintenant quand les bénéficiaires, ceux qui touchent de l'argent ont su ça, ils ont mis de la pression sur la personne. Maintenant, la personne ne veut pas y aller. Donc, ma question, c'est que qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire pour ces personnes-là ? Parce que maintenant, on peut voir un cas comme ça vraiment. On a le cœur. *Fer bon pou pleurer osi.*

Mais si on va à la police, définitivement, le *carer*, la personne qui s'occupe de cette personne-là, on doit la mettre en prison. Mais maintenant, si on met cette personne-là en prison, qui va s'occuper de la vieille ? C'est un cas spécial mais il y a plusieurs. Mais maintenant au *respite care*, le *respite care* n'est pas équipé pour héberger le cas des maltraitances. Donc, ce que je voudrais demander au commissaire de la Santé, il y a des *Elderly Watch* et vu que ces personnes qui sont les plus souvent maltraitées, ils sont enregistrés, est-ce que de temps en temps, des *Elderly Watch*, ils font de la visite à ces personnes-là ? Le fait qu'ils reçoivent de docteur à domicile, est-ce que le docteur, je ne sais pas si c'est dans ses prérogatives mais en tant que personne humaine, n'aurait pas pu informer la Sécurité sociale des maltraitances des personnes qui ont des visites à la maison ? Merci, Madame.

Madam Chairperson: Short reaction from the Commissioner for Social Security. Be brief, please. Time is already over.

REPLY TO INTERVENTION OF MRS AGATHE

Mr Baptiste: Merci, Madame la présidente, d'avoir attiré l'attention sur ce cas. Tout d'abord, moi, je dois dire quand même que la plupart des personnes âgées à Rodrigues sont bien traitées mais c'est malheureux, c'est vrai, qu'il y a quelques cas de maltraitances qui sont de temps en temps notifiés et aussi grâce aux différents programmes mis en place par l'Assemblée régionale, notamment les *carers* qui passent chez les personnes qui reçoivent quand même le *Carer's Allowance* qui sont alitées... Il y a les médecins mais nous travaillons aussi avec d'autres ONGs tels que Caritas, il y a le *Elderly Watch* mais c'est vrai, ce cas, c'est un cas... Je pense que je connais ce cas parce que moi-même, personnellement, je visite beaucoup de personnes. Une fois, bon, je suis allé là-bas et moi-même, j'ai donné des conseils

mais malheureusement, il y a des choses qui s'améliorent tout de suite. J'ai demandé à plusieurs autres institutions qui connaissent ce cas quand même parfaitement. Ils ont fait un suivi pendant un, deux mois. Les choses sont améliorées mais malheureusement, on ne peut pas être là, présents à chaque fois 24 sur 24 pour veiller, pour s'assurer que tout se passe bien durant notre absence. Mais le plus gros problème, c'est que c'est plus un problème de connivence aussi familiale, je dois dire. Parce que très souvent, ils ne veulent pas dénoncer. Ils ne veulent pas qu'on prenne des actions contre leurs proches. Donc, c'est là, le plus gros problème. Mais chaque cas de maltraitance est un cas de trop et nous essayons de tout mettre en œuvre pour éviter qu'il y ait des *recurrent cases*. C'est surtout ça. Ce sont plus des quelques cas qui, donc, récurrents. Mais là, je dois dire aussi avec la mise en place de *Elderly Unit*, il y a ce qu'on appelle le *paymaster*. Il y a une personne qui maintenant est dédiée à ça. Donc, nous allons pouvoir quand même aller faire des visites beaucoup plus rapides et beaucoup plus efficace et en mars, il y aura une équipe de Maurice du *Elderly Unit* qui vont venir pour former davantage les officiers de la commission par rapport à *how to tackle difficult cases in relation to* donc *ill-treatment of elderly persons*.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Commissioner. The House stands adjourned.

At 03.37 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Friday 26 March 2021 at 04.00 p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

LAUNCHING OF SAFE TRAVEL CERTIFICATE - RODRIGUES

(No. B/24) Mr J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the launching of the Safe Travel Certificate in Rodrigues, he will enlighten the House about the objective thereof, specifying the conditions surrounding the delivery thereof and providing details about any mechanism, if any, put in place to monitor compliance by tourism promoters?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, the "Safe Travels" Certificate is a label developed by the World Travel Tourism Council. It has as objective to enable travelers to identify destinations and businesses around the world which are adopting health and hygiene global standardized protocols so that consumers and holidaymakers can experience 'Safe Travels'.

The "Safe Travels" forms part of the protocol of meaningful action plans to optimize sector-wide recovery. The protocols take into account the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

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I am informed, Madam Chairperson, that Mauritius, as a tourism destination, has applied for the Safe Travels Certificate in May 2020. The Tourism Authority with the partnership of Mauritius Telecom has developed a web application to streamline the procedures for operators to apply for the certificate. The “Safe Travels” web application was then launched by the Tourism Authority in June 2020.

Madam Chairperson, following the launching of the web application, my office made a request to the Tourism Authority for the extension of the certificate to the tourism businesses in Rodrigues.

I am pleased to inform the House that Rodrigues being COVID free, Tourism Authority found no objection to extend the Certificate to Rodrigues. Hence, a first presentation about the “Safe Travels” was done during the “*L’Assise du Tourisme*” held in July 2020 to inform the operators of its implications and their responsibility.

Since then, the Tourism Authority, Mauritius Telecom and my office had to create a database of the local tourism operators so that our operators could enjoy the same facilities as their counterparts in Mauritius, that is proceed with their application online.

The particulars of the application for Rodrigues were finalized end of January 2021.

My office seized the opportunity of the mission of the Deputy Prime Minister in Rodrigues last week to launch the “Safe Travels” Certificate in collaboration with the Tourism Authority.

Madam Chairperson, following the official launching, my office in collaboration with the *Association du Tourisme Réunie* will start a sensitization and communication campaign on the Safe Travels Certificate.

The Tourism Operator who wishes to apply for the certificate will have to proceed online on the web page designed for this purpose. All tourism operators applying for the certificate will have to abide to a list of sanitary guidelines and ensure that their tourism businesses are in compliance with the conditions.

I wish to point out that my Commission will ensure the monitoring of the certificate and failure to comply to the conditions attached may entail suspension of the license.

SCHOOL CALENDAR YEAR – CHALLENGES FACED

(No. B/25) Mr J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St Gabriel) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in the wake of changes brought to the school calendar year, he will inform the House of the challenges that his Commission is facing in relation to the pre-primary, primary and secondary education sectors, respectively, and on the measures undertaken or being considered to address same effectively?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, following changes brought to the school calendar for Academic Year 2021/2022:

For the pre-primary sector, I am informed that the admission exercise for the pre-primary sector is on-going and will be completed on 05 March 2021.

However, an increase in intake for June 2021 is being expected and additional infrastructure and teachers will be required to address same.

For the primary sector, statistics were collected on new entrants in primary schools for academic calendar year 2021/2022 and after analysis it has been noted that there will be an increase of 37% in admission in Grade 1 in June 2021 for the Government primary schools and 43% for the RCEA Schools compared to 2020.

The increase in new entrants is mostly due to the policy decision of the Ministry for Education, Tertiary Education and Science Technology to open registration to Grade 1 to children who will be of age 5 up to 31 May 2021.

As regards to the Secondary sector, I am informed that there is no major implication involved in the short term.

The challenges that my commission will be facing are mainly in terms of infrastructural requirements, equipment and furniture and human resources.

With regard to infrastructural requirements:

For the pre-primary sector, I wish to inform the house that the tender for the construction of one additional classroom in four pre-primary schools namely:-

- (1) Abeilles pre-primary school at Malartic;
- (2) Colombe pre-primary school at La Ferme;
- (3) Hirondelles pre-primary school at Lataniers; and

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(4) Paille-en-queue pre-primary school at Montagne Goyaves.

has already been launched on 16 February 2021 and the closing date for submission of bids was fixed for 16 March 2021.

In the meantime, pending the construction of the additional classrooms, internal arrangement will be made to accommodate the increase in the number of pupils for the first term until construction works are completed.

With regard to the government primary schools, I am informed that the existing infrastructure allows for arrangement to accommodate the increase in intake for June 2021.

As regards to the RCEA, due to the percentage increase in admission, the RCEA will require additional classrooms in three RCA schools in the short term, namely:-

- (i) One classroom at Notre Dame de Lourdes RCA School to cater for 91 new Grade 1 entrants;
- (ii) One classroom at St. Esprit RCA School to cater for 94 new entrants; and
- (iii) Two classrooms at Father Ronald Gandy RCA Schools to cater for 108 new Grade 1 entrants.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to inform the house that the Executive Council at its meeting held on 05 February 2021 has already conveyed approval to provide a financial grant to the RCEA for Construction of additional classrooms in the above schools.

With regard to Human Resource requirement:

Concerning the pre-primary schools, my Commission will provide additional funding to the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues for recruitment of additional teachers during this financial Year 2020/2021. A special induction training will be provided to these newly recruits in May 2021.

For the government primary schools, the exercise for the recruitment of Supply Teachers is currently being finalised to cater for short term staff requirements. The new recruits will undergo an induction course prior to the resumption of classes in June 2021. It is to be noted that presently, there are 31 funded vacancies for the post of Trainees Educator (General purpose) in the budget 2020/2021. The vacancies have already been advertised.

Concerning additional staff for the RCA schools, I am informed that the RCEA has recruited new Supply Teachers, and will pair them with full-fledged, experienced Grade 1

Educators for mentoring throughout the year. The RCEA informed that there are Trainee Educators presently following their course in Mauritius and their training will be completed in January 2022.

Madam Chairperson, with regard to equipment and furniture, with an increase in number of pupils in Grade 1 in 2021, I am informed that in line with the Early Digital Learning Programme, additional digital equipment will be required and a request will be made to the Ministry of Education, Tertiary, Science and Technology. For additional furniture such as chairs and tables, same will be catered under this current financial budget.

Madam Chairperson, I wish to reassure the house that the education of our pupils is the priority of my Government and that all supports will be provided to ensure that appropriate infrastructure and human resources are put in place for the betterment of our pupils. In the wake of the different challenges being faced by the education sector due to the changes brought to the school calendar year, the Commission for Education is reviewing its planning exercise for the short term, mid-term and long term. In this connection the preparation of a master plan for Infrastructural requirements for the pre-primary, primary and secondary sector is under preparation.

CONSTRUCTION OF TRACK ROADS

(No. B/26) The Second Local Region Member of St Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of track roads around the island, he will enlighten the House on contracts, if any, that have been awarded, giving details on the successful bidder/s, if any, the costs implications thereof together with the time frame for completion of the project/s?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, Procurement for the Construction of about 30 km Track Roads including Footpaths and other Civil Works in Rodrigues was launched on 16 July 2019 and awarded to Laxmanbhai & Co (Mauritius) Ltd for Lot 2 only on 30 October 2019 for a total sum of Rs 19,069,863.50. The duration of the work was 6 months.

A second Procurement for the Construction of about 25 km Track Roads including Footpaths and Other Civil Works was launched on 26 May 2020 and was awarded to Transinvest Construction Ltd on 31 July 2020 for the sum of Rs 86,000,000. The intended completion date for the whole of the project is 24 months. The duration of each lot is 6 months.

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Works orders have been issued as follows:-

No.	Works Order No.	Project	Works Order Value Updated (Incl. VAT)
1	W.O/ CTR/01/ REG. 6- Dec 2020	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 6-Works Order No.1	9,871,991.00
2	W.O/ CTR/01/ REG. 4- December 2020	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 4-Works Order No.1	9,790,254.00
3	W.O/ CTR/01/ REG. 1 - January 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 1-Works Order No.1	9,796,626.00
4	W.O/ CTR/01/ REG. 3 - January 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 3-Works Order No.1	8,737,824.00
5	W.O/ CTR/01/ REG. 5- January 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 5- Works Order No.1	8,619,988.00
6	W.O/ CTR/02/ REG. 1 - February 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 1-Works Order No.2	7,403,374.00
7	W.O/ CTR/02/ REG. 3 - February 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 3-Works Order No.2	8,462,176.00
8	W.O/ CTR/02/ REG. 5- February 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 5- Works Order No.2	8,500,000.00
9	W.O/ CTR/02/ REG. 6- February 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 6- Works Order No.2	7,328,009.00
10	W.O/ CTR/02/ REG. 4- February 2021	Construction of Track Roads and Footpaths in Local Region 4- Works Order No.2	7,409,746.00
		Total work Order Amount	85,919,988.00

**NEWLY PROPOSED PLAN – UPGRADE OF ‘TRUST FUND’ TYPE HOUSES
AND OTHER RELATED HOUSING STRUCTURES**

(No. B/27) Mr J. R. Ramdally (Second Local Region Member for St Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Housing and Others whether, in regard to the newly proposed plan for the upgrade of ‘Trust Fund’ type houses and other related housing structures, he will inform the House as to where matters stand as at to date?

Reply: Madam Chairperson, in the wake of the cyclones Gelena and Joaninha, the Prime Minister during a visit to Rodrigues in 2019, announced the introduction of a new scheme for the upgrading of Trust Fund housing units and Corrugated Iron Sheet (C.I.S) houses, as they were severely damaged during the two cyclones.

The purpose of the assistance is to provide a safe cyclone-proof housing unit to the beneficiaries in line with the vision of the present Regional government of *‘enn fami enn bon lacaz’*.

Madam Chairperson, on 19 June 2019, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development gave its approval for the implementation of the project by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) in collaboration with the Mauritius Housing Company Limited (MHC).

Subsequently an agreement was signed between my Commission and the (MHC) on 03 January 2020. As per the scheme, the RRA will give a grant of Rs 300,000 to the beneficiary and the latter will have to contribute Rs 100,000 through their own savings or a loan from the MHC for a repayment period of up to 25 years at a preferential rate of interest.

Madam Chairperson, on 20 November 2020, a first batch of 88 applicants were approved and pre-selected to benefit from the assistance.

However, the MHC Ltd has informed that among the 44 pre-selected potential beneficiaries who have already opened their *Plan Epargne Logement* (PEL) accounts, only seven are eligible for loan as per MHC criteria. The remaining ones are either already indebted, do not have repayment capacity, are old age or other reasons which make them ineligible for a loan from the bank.

In view of the above, the Executive Council at its sitting held on 15 January 2021, has decided to approve that my Commission reviews the existing extension scheme for the upgrading of Trust Fund and corrugated iron sheets houses based on a new formula.

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Madam Chairperson, discussions have been held with the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) and Credit Unions in view of easing access to credit facilities for beneficiaries who are unable to obtain their loan through the MHC and same is being finalised for approval.

In the meantime, the Inspectors of Works of my commission are doing surveys of some 320 applications received in October 2020 so that upon receipt of necessary clearances from the Ministry of Finance, there will be no delays in implementation. I thank you, Madam Chairperson.