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No. 12 of 2022

RODRIGUES

FIFTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

(UNREVISED)

TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2022

/UNREVISED/

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The Executive Council

(Formed by Mr Johnson Roussety, G.O.S.K.)

Mr Johnson Roussety, G.O.S.K.	Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Central Administration, Civil Aviation (Administration), Education (Administration), Legal Services, Marine Services (Administration), Registration, Statistics in respect of Rodrigues, State Lands, Town and Country Planning, Cooperatives, Handicraft, Industrial Development, Trade, Commerce and Licensing, Vocational Training, Civil Status, Customs and Excise (Administration), Judicial (Administration), Postal Services (Administration), Marine Parks, Water Resources
Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt	Deputy Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Public Infrastructure including Highways and Roads and Public Buildings and Utilities, Transport, Environment, Community Development, Housing
Mr Louis Ange Perrine	Commissioner responsible for Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Production, Forestry, Plant & Animal Quarantine
Mr Jean Nicolas Volbert	Commissioner responsible for Health (Administration), Social Security (Administration), Fire Services, Prisons & Reforms Institutions (Administration)
Miss Marie Christiane Agathe	Commissioner responsible for Women's Affairs, Child Development, Family Welfare, Consumer Protection/Price Fixing
Mr Jean Alain Wong So	Commissioner responsible for Tourism, Employment, Labour and Industrial Relations, Information Technology & Telecommunications
Mr Joseph Varok Ravina	Commissioner responsible for Youth & Sports, Arts and Culture, Museums, Archives, Historical Sites and Buildings, Library Services

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Mr Chairperson - Leopold, Mr Joseph Christian

Deputy Chairperson - Tolbize, Mr Justar

Clerk - Legentil, Miss Marie Lyndia Yannick

Deputy Clerk - Clair, Miss Marie Chrismélanie

Serjeant-at-Arms - Perrine, Mr Joseph Laval

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RODRIGUES

Fifth Regional Assembly

Debate No. 12 of 2022

Sitting of Tuesday 13 December 2022

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

The National Anthem was played

(Mr Chairperson in the Chair)

PAPERS LAID

- *The Rodrigues Regional Assembly Annual Report 2021-2022 (Original)*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SEVERE SHORTAGE OF WATER AFFECTING PLANTERS & BREEDERS

(No. B/122) Dr H. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the severe shortage of water faced by planters and breeders all around the island, he will state to the House on:

- (a) measures that are being implemented by his Commission to enable fulltime planters and breeders to continue their activities, and
- (b) if consideration will be given for payment of compensation thereto and, if so, to give details?

Mr Perrine: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Since September this year Rodrigues is facing a drought which is caused by prevailing drier than normal conditions. This period of persistent dry weather with low precipitation and no rainfall, has continued for long enough to cause serious water supply problems not only to planters and breeders but also to the population at large.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, though we often say that drought is a creeping natural hazard, yet it is to be noted that, the outgoing regional government has failed to develop adequate mitigation strategies to curtail the impact of socio-economic droughts (agricultural and hydrological) in Rodrigues

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in view of pressing issues arising from recurrent droughts, my Commission with the assistance of the FAO will develop appropriate resilience strategies for drought in Rodrigues. The publication of a manual for drought preparedness and management is also envisaged.

In this context, an initial strategic planning workshop with all stakeholders will be organised around mid-February 2023 in order to address the acute problem of recurrent water scarcity on a long-term basis with UNCCD objectives.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in regard to measures that is being implemented to assist breeders, I am pleased to announced that: -

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The Livestock Feed Promotion Scheme available in Mauritius has now been extended to Rodrigues following the discussion I had with the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security. As from this month all cattle, goat and sheep breeders are eligible for a subsidy of Rs 10 per kg of feed. Concerning water for livestock, my Commission will supply all the water ‘*abreuvoirs*’ around the island with drinking water. Considerations will also be given to group of breeders whose animals are far from the “*abreuvoirs*”

Mr Chairperson, Sir, my Commission has also started to desilt dug wells and water points on request of breeders so that drinking water are made available. Moreover, to further assist breeders my Commission has negotiated with the Mauritius Meat Authority (MMA) and the Ministry of Agro-Industry so that female animals are also allowed to be exported provided that they satisfied NAPRO Regulations and are sterile or not pregnant. Besides, breeders are being encouraged to sell all male animals (cattle, goat and sheep) ready for slaughter through radio communiqué. Some 500 small ruminants will be exported during the month of December.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning availability of animal feed on local market, I am informed by the Mauritius Shipping Company (MSC) that 140 tons of animals feed has already reached Rodrigues on 10 December 2022 by Trochetia and MSM Douro is expected to arrive in Rodrigues on Thursday 15 December and a second voyage has been scheduled for 20 December. Two consignments of 140 tons of animal feed will be shipped to Rodrigues accordingly.

Furthermore, discussions with feed producers in Mauritius are ongoing so as to ensure that there is no shortage of animal feed in Rodrigues.

For planters, my Commission is ensuring water distribution to all irrigation networks around the island where water is available. Pumping of water from dug wells in the regions of Mourouk/Anse Enfer is being carried out.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, advices have been given to planters on ways and means to reduce water losses are to water more efficiently.

As regards compensation, it will depend on reported cases. The question will subsequently be taken up with the Farmers Welfare Fund.

Dr. Agathe: M. le président, je voudrais savoir du Commissaire si le subside qui est prévu sur l’augmentation pour les bétails s’adresse à tous les éleveurs de ruminants ?

Mr Perrine: M. le président, en principe sa s'adresse aux éleveurs enregistrer auprès de Small Planters Welfare Fund. Nous avons presque la totalité des planteurs et éleveurs de Rodrigues parce que nous avons au moins 3,000 qui sont enregistrés avec le Small Planters Welfare Fund.

Dr. Agathe: Est-ce que cela correspond à un nombre de bétail de combien ?

Mr Perrine: Le nombre de bétail c'est 8,497, *goat* c'est 11,747, *sheep* c'est 12,848. Ce qui fait à peu près un total de Rs 6,616,000 de subside.

Mr Lisette: The question that is to be asked now is whether those farmers who are not registered with the Small Planters Welfare Fund, will be taken on board by his Commission if ever they are not registered with association?

Mr Perrine: I think most breeders are registered. In case there are some who are not on the list, the Commission will consider it on a case to case basis.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, est-ce que je peux savoir du savoir du Commissaire, donc par rapport à ce '*Scheme*' national, qui est d'après lui étendu sur Rodrigues, quel est le budget qui a été alloué dans ce *scheme* pour ce projet de subside ? Est-ce que c'est la totalité des Rs 6 millions dont vous avez parlé ?

Mr Perrine: M. le président, le budget qui est inscrit dans le document c'est Rs 1 million mais il y a possibilité de discuter avec le Ministère des Finances pour avoir des fonds additionnels. Vous savez c'était prévu, on ne savait pas combien de *registered etc.* quand on a préparé le budget. C'est-à-dire, le chiffre c'est indicatif. La somme qui est prévue dans le budget, du ministère Agro-Industrie, s'il y a Rs 1 million '*Feed Scheme for Rodrigues*'. Mais ça c'est une indication. Nous comme je vous ai dit c'est prévu pour Rodrigues pour le mois de décembre c'est plus de Rs 6 millions. C'est-à-dire, ce qu'on a fait, on a demandé au ministère des Finances de nous donner l'addition. Maintenant s'il faut augmenter au-delà des Rs 6 millions, on va faire appel au ministère aussi. Ça c'est pour le budget d'un mois jusqu'à la fin de décembre.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as per the answer given by the Commissioner for Agriculture, he noted that there has been a persistent drought which has been prevailing in Rodrigues since September. Why is it that it is only now that in December that he is applying this scheme?

Mr Perrine: M. le président, tout le monde connaît qu'à Rodrigues à partir de septembre jusqu'à décembre, c'est la période sèche, il y a un problème de *water scarcity*. La question ce n'est pas qu'est-ce qu'on prévu, nous sommes là depuis mars. La question est qu'est-ce que vous avez fait depuis 10 ans ? Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait ? Je vous donne un exemple. Nous, le fait à adopter des mesures justement pour lutter contre l'érosion, contre la sécheresse, contre la manque d'eau, etcetera. Il a mis en place le projet FED, 13 sylvo pastoral areas. Que vous pendant 10 ans vous avez abandonné, dilapidé, il n'y a rien. On a même enlevé la clôture. Et moi, quand j'étais là en 2012, je dis ça pour M. Baptiste, Honorable Baptiste qui me regarde, j'ai les *degraded land*, j'avais clôture à Gravières, plus de 193 arpents pour la plantation de forage et des plantes. Et aussi, à Grenade. Vous quand vous êtes arrivé, à la pression des agents, vous avez succombé, vous avez accepté que les éleveurs de la région de Grenade puisse aller mettre leurs animaux dans les zones clôturer, protéger. Et maintenant, vous me dites qu'est-ce que nous avons fait depuis septembre mais vous qu'est-ce que vous avez fait depuis 10 ans ? Non, il n'y a même pas de plant, même pas de dossier, rien du tout. Enfin, ce n'est pas pour... *I am not type to set aside the question but* il faut regarder la réalité.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, le Commissaire passe son temps à retourner dans le passé. La situation est pressante sur le terrain. Partout où on passe on a vue des animaux qui sont déjà mort, est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous dire quand est-ce que ces mesures vont être en vigueur et quel est le mécanisme en place pour que les éleveurs puissent avoir accès à ces subsides ?

Mr Perrine: M. le président, ce qui se passe sur le terrain est intéressant. Il y a des équipes qui sont dans la recherche des animaux morts pour faire des '*lives*'. Ce n'est pas la moralité politique dont on parle. Et, une équipe avec des animateurs de radio live extraordinaire, des professionnelles. Ce n'est pas comme ça qu'on fait avancer le pays. Il faut être responsable. On parle de moralité politique. C'est ça la moralité politique. On ne peut pas courir après des gens pour savoir où sont les animaux morts, pour faire des '*lives*'. Ce n'est pas comme ça qu'on contribue au développement du pays, il faut être responsable.

Le programme qu'on a mis en place va commencer aussitôt que les éleveurs vont se faire enregistrer et vont avoir les vouchers pour qu'ils puissent avoir accès aux aliments. C'est aussi simple que ça.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, je pense qu'on va perdre du temps parce qu'ils sont déjà enregistrés, vous allez leur demandé de s'enregistrer de nouveau alors comme on

dit, la situation est pressante et on a déjà un registre de tous les animaux vacciner. Donc, je pense que pour aller vite, il faut aller dans ce sens-là et implémenter toute de suite. Entretemps, je voudrais demander au Commissaire est-ce qu'il est au courant que même si l'annonce des tonnes et des tonnes d'engrais qui arrivent pour les animaux, moi j'ai vu de mes yeux, dans mon village, deux jours de suite les gens mettent la queue depuis 5 heures jusqu'à 11 heures. Aujourd'hui pareil, pour après avoir les informations qu'il n'y aura pas d'aliment pour animaux. Donc, est-ce que sur ces bateaux qui vont arriver il y aura encore plus de conteneur pour satisfaire le besoin du marcher parce que j'ai l'impression que le Commissaire n'est pas au courant de la situation ?

Mr Perrine: M. le président, c'est en circulant des fausses rumeurs et des '*lives*' fausses qu'on arrive à créer une situation où il y a *panic buying* à Rodrigues pour les aliments. Sept containers sont arrivés par le bateau du 10. Ça fait 140 tonnes. Il y a 280 tonnes qui va arriver jusqu'à décembre. Je ne vois pas combien d'aliment on utilise à Rodrigues. C'est vous-même qui créer le *panic buying*, c'est pourquoi cette situation s'est aggravé à Rodrigues.

Mr Lisette: I would like to ask the Commissioner for Agriculture whether, there has been any mechanism set up at the level of his commission for encouraging farmers who are losing their animals at least to report there? Farmers who are losing their animals due to drought whether there is a mechanism which has been set up at the level of his commission?

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is an ongoing exercise. Any breeder who has problem, loss of animal, they know we have regional office. They have to call at this office and make their letter of doleances. This is recorded and in Citronelle there is a Livestock Committee which look after this issue and decision will be taken after. You know, when you look at what has happened in the past, that genuine cases will be approved not fake breeders coming and telling that they have so many animals, etc. and when you go in the field it is not the case. So, *ma politique sérieux est* accountable. Et, on ne veut pas des éleveurs irresponsables qui viennent déclarer n'importe quoi et pour des besoins politiques on ne fait qu'approuver. Je vous pose une question. La dernière. Moi aussi, permettez-moi de poser une question, M. le président. Vous savez pour le FMD, combien de compensation on a payé ? Rs 80 millions ! où sont ces animaux morts ? Moi, je ne vais pas répéter ça. Je vais approuver les *genuine cases*. Peut-être un jour je vais faire une commission sur cette affaire de Rs 80 millions d'animaux morts.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

APPROVAL FOR CUTTING DOWN & EXPORT – SANDAL WOOD

(No. B/123) Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K. (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether approval has been granted by his Commission for the cutting down and export of sandal wood and if so, to give details thereof indicating: -

- (a) the number of applications therefor received and their respective date;
- (b) the number of applications approved and their respective date of approval;
- (c) the number of trees authorised to be cut down per location, and
- (d) the approximate amount of wood in cubic meters that was due to be exported?

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have at the outset, to inform the House that my Commission has never, never granted permit to cut down Sandalwood (*santalum album*) to anybody. I have also to inform the House that there is an ongoing Police enquiry and the matter is before Court. It is clearly subjudice and I will not be able to supply more information on this issue as it will not be in order.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, c'est fie le commissaire informe la Chambre qu'il n'y a pas eu d'application, il n'y a pas eu de permission donner l'autorisation pour couper le bois de Santal. Est-il au courant qu'il y a eu une correspondance en date du 8 octobre émanant de sa commission d'où le sujet c'est *request for timber import* pour donner un certificat de phyto sanitaire qui est donne par la Commission de l'Agriculture. Est-ce qu'il est au courant s'il y a ça ? S'il n'y a pas de permission pour couper les plantes comment est-ce qu'on peut avoir une autorisation pour phyto sanitaire pour export ?

Mr Perrine: M. le président, je maintiens ce que je dis, la commission n'a pas donné aucune autorisation pour couper les Santalwood et je ne peux pas dire plus d'information. Comme je vous dis, il y a deux enquêtes, enquête départemental et une enquête policière. A ce moment-là, il y a les gens qui on était arrêté, libéré sur caution. Et, je crois qu'il ne sera pas *in order* pour moi de faire des déclarations. Laissez l'enquête terminer, on va voir après.

(Interruptions)

The Minority Leader: Okay, M. le président, si le commissaire insiste qu'il ne peut pas donner de plus ample information, j'espère que l'enquête va donner plus de lumière par rapport à ce sujet. Je souhaiterais, par rapport à ça, faire référence à une décision du Conseil Exécutif en date du 18 novembre, je crois, après le fait qu'il y a eu ce scandale alléguait,

jusqu'ici non élucider. Il y a eu la décision pour arrêter la vente de tous types de bois, excepter l'Eucalyptus. Est-ce que le Commissaire est au courant que suite à cette décision d'arrêter l'abattage des bois, il y a une centaine des personnes, des bucherons, des menuisiers qui sont pénalisés de manière irrationnel parce que c'est clair que c'est le Sandal qui est mise en cause et pas d'autres types de bois. Est-ce qu'il compte au plus vite lever cette arrêt pour permettre à ces personnes-là de continuer leurs travaux ? Ils sont punis de manière...

Mr Chairperson: Minority Leader, please, your question is about Sandalwoods. The Commissioner has already answered. If you come with a substantive question on this matter it will be...

Okay, next question.

BOTTLED WATER & WATER JAR – INTRODUCTION OF SUBSIDIES

(No. B/124) Mr L. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner for Consumer Protection and Others whether, in regard to bottled water and water jar being commercialised in Rodrigues, she envisages to introduce subsidies thereon and, subsequently, include these items on the list of controlled commodities for the benefit of all consumers during this period of water crisis and, if so, when, and if not, why not?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as the House is aware, Rodrigues is facing the worst water crisis of the decade which is a consequence of the climate change which is causing disruption in weather patterns and exacerbating water scarcity among others. The global climate crisis is already affecting water access for people around the world. Rodrigues is not an exception.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, decision has been taken by the Executive Council on 30 November 2022 to approve for the emergency procurement of 10,000 reusable jars of potable water to be provided to beneficiaries of Social Security assistance.

The Commission for Water has awarded a contract to Phoenix Beverages Ltd. to supply 4,000 reusable containers of capacity 18.9 L and supply of 18,000 packs, each of 6 x 1.5 L of bottled water. This measure is more efficient in meeting the vulnerable group instead of introducing subsidy on bottled water and water jar which is mainly commercialised. products which are mainly commercialised.

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Mr Chairperson, Sir, the respected Members already know that there is a well devised mechanism that we should follow and any subsidy should reach maximum people or targeted group for instance, subsidy on animal feed.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as at date no subsidy is envisaged on bottled water and water jar, following a survey carried out among the main importers of bottled water and water jars there has not been any fluctuation in the wholesale and retail prices. We can see that the wholesale price of 1.5 litre of water varies from Rs 20.50 to Rs 23.50 and the retail price from Rs 23 to Rs 25 depending on the brand of bottled water. The wholesale price of 11.3 litres jar of water is at Rs 184.99 per unit and retail price at Rs 190 per unit whereas for 18.9 litres jar of water, the wholesale price is at Rs 304.75 and retail price is at Rs 310 per unit.

Mr the Chairperson, Sir, the Commission for Water Resources has also contracted out the services of 12 private water lorries to support the water tankers of the Commission for distribution of water in the different regions of Rodrigues. This measure is definitely benefitting all consumers during this period of water crisis.

Mr the Chairperson, Sir, I want to reassure the House that officers the Consumer Affairs Unit of my commission will continue to monitor the prices of bottled water and water jar and the prevailing water crisis is also being closely monitored and if the need arises to take other measures, same will be done in due course. Thank you, Mr the Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Baptiste: Yes, Mr Chairperson, I think that earlier that the Commissioner for Agriculture also rightly mentioned that everybody is being affected by this issue of drought in Rodrigues. And, we know that water is a very important issue right now. I do not know if the Commissioner is aware, the price of a water jar in Mauritius is Rs 215 while in Rodrigues it is (I am talking about Rs 215 including the jar) Rs 404. So, if you have the jar and you give it back then it will be Rs 304. That is why, being given that many people including those who are working have now to get recourse to this water as it is not available in water tap, will the Commissioner reconsider this decision because I think this is only short term until water will be available during rainy seasons, hopefully, but this is important for the whole population of Rodrigues. Will the Commissioner reconsider her decision?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have already mentioned, the situation is being monitored closely by the officers of my commission. If the need be, I will consider the propose by the respected Member. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Baptiste: Yes, the officers, I know that they are working very hard but I know that there are many shops cater all over the island. I can give the... later on, places where these bottle of water which you mentioned normally sold at Rs 27 are being sold at Rs 40 with the price affix next to the 1.5 litres. And, this is not in one village but in at least three villages we have seen this. Would the Commissioner confirm that this is really, rightly monitored and that people are not penalised specially those living in scattered villages in the island?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would advise the respected Member Baptiste to come with an official complaint at the Consumer Affairs Unit so that we can tackle with the matter. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Lisette: She said that there is close monitoring by the officers of her commission but the law today does not allow these officers to act because bottled water and water jars are not among the list of controlled commodities. How is the monitoring going to be carried out then?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have rightly said that is the officers is monitoring the prices. We are not taking any further decision as we know that we cannot do it by law but we are monitoring if there is any fluctuation in the prices then we will take the decision needed. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given that we are coming close to the festivities of the end of year and it is clear that there will be an increase in the demand as regards to the bottled water with the high risk that there will be abuse by the shopkeepers. Is it not wise, Mr Chairperson, for the Commission for Consumer Protection to be proactive rather than reactive?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are already doing all the things that we can do. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Baptiste: I think that these are important decisions and I think, Mr Chairperson, that these are very important decisions. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether any ground work preliminary work has been done at least to have an idea how much it might cost and whether it is possible to cater for this somewhere in our budget or we can even request for additional because this is a very critical issue right now where water is really scarce?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have already said in my answers, it is not envisaged for now to introduce subsidy on bottled water and water jar but if need be, it will be done in due course. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

OPERATION OF BOREHOLES – PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

(No. B/125) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huîtres) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the operation of boreholes by private individuals in Rodrigues and for private use, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table:

- (a) the number of permits/authorisations delivered so far, giving details thereof as to names of owners and their locality, and
- (b) if in the context of the high water shortage being experienced in Rodrigues actually, he would consider making use of these boreholes for the interests of the population?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the operation of boreholes by private individual, the person has to apply and obtain a ground water licence under the Ground Water Regulations 2011 after paying the required fees specified in the First Schedule of the Regulations. No such licence has been issued so far, per se, for the operation of boreholes by private individuals in Rodrigues.

In the past, applications for Ground Water Licences have been received with respect to hotels using brackish water for desalination purposes. These applications have been processed and licences issued to them. But as far as private individuals are concerned as per available records, only four authorisations have been granted only for the drilling of boreholes. For the person to operate the borehole he needs to apply and obtain a Ground Water Licence. No application has been received and no licence has been issued, neither by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly nor by the CWA for the operation of boreholes by private individuals in Rodrigues.

With regard to part (b), Mr Chairperson, Sir, the four individuals who have been granted authorisation will be invited to submit their applications for Ground Water Licence. However, they are all collaborating in supporting with regular supplies from their respective boreholes.

Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, these boreholes will be used to assist in the current acute water shortage. I am also aware that the output of these boreholes are not high or even very low as 1 m³/ hour. It may not also be efficient to use them for public purposes given their low debit.

I must announce that we are waiting for technical consultations as we think that whenever conditions of the water table and rainfall allow it, we can grant Ground Water Licences to private operators like, farmers, water bottling plants, etc., just like the former

Regional Government granted one licence to Mr M.C. on 09 June 2020 for a water bottling business by exploiting water from his private property at Oyster Bay.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the list of private individuals to whom authorisation has been granted for the drilling of boreholes in Rodrigues for private use. Thank you.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, just to get matter clear, if I understand from the answer of the Chief Commissioner. There is authorisation for drilling of borehole and then there is application for the use of the ground water for exploitation, as ground water remains a public domain. Does he mean that, as at now, – I think he said it in the answer – there is no application for exploitation of the boreholes, which have been drilled yet, there are some individuals who are already exploiting the water. What he means actually?

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, he did listen very well.

Mr Lisette: So, this means that there is something illegal that is going on and I would like to know, based on the Act that the Chief Commissioner mentioned himself, that the Ground Water Regulations. I would like to know what is going to be his course of action as regards to that?

The Chief Commissioner: If it is legal, Mr Chairperson, Sir, then I will have to report the decision which was made on 09 June 2020 to allocate an authorisation to drill a borehole to Mr M.C. by the former Commissioner. So, if there is any illegality, he is part of it.

Having said this, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not think there is anything illegal. The former Commissioner and Member today must distinguish between Ground Water Licence and authorisation for the drilling of boreholes. We have only allocated authorisations for the drilling of boreholes in Rodrigues. If we allow Ground Water Licences it involves a much wider aspect, including exploitation, maybe resales of the water. And, as I have said, there is nothing to be worried about this. If he has read the BRLI Report, he would see that the BRLI Report states that the underground water potential for Rodrigues could be underutilised. This is the report of BRLI. So, I will have in January, a high level technical meeting in Rodrigues with experts from Mauritius, Rodrigues also, Reunion Island and other parts of the world where all these issues will be discussed.

If there is water underground on private land or even State land, we will allow according to Recommendations of specialists' people in this, that is, the Geologist, Hydro Geologist, who will see what are the considerations and we will allow additional boreholes as and when

required. It is a normal thing in Mauritius. And, in Reunion Island, for example, for private individuals to operate boreholes for productive purposes.

Dr. Agathe: En écoutant le Chef commissaire, M. le président, je voudrais quand même dire qu'il y a une importance de pouvoir distinguer un permis pour forêt et un permis pour exploiter l'eau. Pourquoi ? Parce que de l'eau c'est un bien commun et donc l'utilisation prive de l'eau peut entraîner des problèmes. Donc, il faut pouvoir contrôler l'utilisation prive. Donc, il est important de pouvoir avoir ce deuxième permis. Il ne faut pas considérer que donner seul le permis de forêt est suffisant. Donc, je pense qu'il est important de pouvoir réguler l'utilisation de l'eau à travers un deuxième permis. C'est très important pour la durabilité de l'utilisation de l'eau.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I did not get a question, I get a thought. So, I will reply on this thought.

Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, with the advent of the RPUC and the reform in the water sector, all boreholes, not only public boreholes but all boreholes, including private boreholes, the old one and maybe new ones, will be strictly monitored with smart meters. We will have a nevralgic centre for water control where all these boreholes will automatically via mobile network report on a daily or regularly basis about the volume of water being pumped from these boreholes. And, of course, they will have to pay for the water pump according to tariff to be determined. I have, for example, a verbal request from 'Four La Ferme' the bakery in La Ferme where they faced an acute shortage of water. But they sit on the second aquifer of Rodrigues, which is in the La Ferme region. Why not consider a borehole for them? Because they are an essential service and allow them to have the authorisation to dig and operate a borehole according to norms that the Commission for Water Resources, the Water Unit, which will remain as the regulator for water in Rodrigues operate under the control of this, limit them to a certain quota, put a price per meter cube.

Mr Lisette: The Chief Commissioner stated about the question of illegality that he may report. I personally will encourage him to go to report that case, if ever, as regards to that boreholes that we did allow to drill at Oyster Bay. We give the licence for boreholes not for exploitation of the water. He rightly said, with respect to the boreholes which are situated principally in the far west of Rodrigues, that it is found on an aquafire. The question is, there is a risk right now with the high shortage of water in Rodrigues, that there is the sale of water from these boreholes and it has happened also in the past, where we did call certain persons to

say – okay, this is not to be done. In fact, in the past, Mr Chairperson, we called these owners and we requested them to provide the Commission for Water Resources with at least two lorries per day to help in the interest of the public. And, they did agree. So, I do not understand why the Chief Commissioner is so reluctant in approaching these owners in that crisis that we are living, that we are right now living with, so that at least in the western part of the region these people can somehow – we can reduce the suffering of some of the villages in this region?

The Chief Commissioner: Nobody is reluctant, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I do not live at night, I wake up at 4 in the morning to think about the water issues in Rodrigues and to help our people who are working in the field to distribute water. I wish to thank all the Advisors of the Regional Assembly; with their help we have set up a crisis team to monitor water distribution in Rodrigues.

Mon problème, M. le président, c'est qu'à chaque fois on nous critique. On vient dire qu'on doit contrôler les *boreholes*. Est-ce que je peux entrer chez quelqu'un moi, aller contrôler son *boreholes* ou un officier entre chez quelqu'un et lui dire – on vient contrôler ton *boreholes* ? On which ground? We need the regulations and the laws for this. It is my intention to bring here a complete set of law, a complete law – I am in discussion with the Attorney General's office. We will meet them maybe next week. A law on water in Rodrigues. And, all this issue of controlling boreholes will be addressed into this. The meter, they will have to have a meter. If they go beyond that meter or they break the meter, we can shut the borehole. Nothing has been done for this in the last ten years and he comes here and speaks about the past. The past is him, Mr Chairperson, Sir. If he has failed during the last ten years to monitor correctly these boreholes, is it my fault today? And, I told him, I have enquired about these boreholes. I know everything what is going on in Rodrigues as Chief Commissioner. I know him from many sources. And, one of the sources is the lorries who go and pump water from these boreholes. They have to make for three hours, six hours for a water tank to be filled. Can you ask a lorry water tank to go at a private borehole and have the lorry fill in six hours? It is not economical, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Six hours – 6 m³. So, we know what we are doing. Do not think that we do not know what we are doing. Contrary to the previous team, we are addressing the whole water problem in Rodrigues in a holistic manner. So, you should not take us for people who are ignorant because we have the plans and we know what we are doing exactly. And, in January I have said we will have a multi-party, multi-level meeting. He will be invited and I hope he made his contributions where we will have experts from everywhere, every corner, the best experts of the world. I want them to come to Rodrigues and we will work on all the aspects

of the water issues, the water problems so that we can solve it before the end of our mandate not in the next mandate. Before our five years, we will give satisfaction to people. But we need to invest, we need to work, we need serious people and we need to put technology in this. We will do it.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, there are two questions. I will try to frame up.

He speaks about the BLRI, which I am going to take in the next question. The BLRI Construction. My question to him. Being given that he says that he has no power to intervene and I think that the Chief Commissioner is wrong on that. Is he aware that the regulation that he mentioned the Ground Water Regulations section 12 does provide him with the power of ... investigate in this private boreholes?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member is going wrong again. These Regulations do not apply to these boreholes because we have not granted ground water licences. But I am aware that in the authorisation that we give there are a set of conditions. When I said I cannot go, I mean me as a person, as Chief Commissioner, Commissioner for Water Resources. But the officer can go. But the officer can go. Did I tell you that any officer cannot go and ask for information? Did I mention this? I did not mention this! I said I cannot go and check this. Of course, the letter which has been issued for the authorisation includes a set of conditions and I remember, I granted one in mandate 2006-2011, there was a set of conditions including the condition of closing the borehole. Okay? So, everything is in order and everything is under control. Our concerned, Mr Chairperson, Sir, is not to go and, as if, punished people who have boreholes. They have invested their money. It costs Rs 500,000 to make a borehole and, it is helping them. There is nothing to dramatise in this. And, our Regional Government intend and will give according to hydrological reports, new boreholes to people with meters on it and this will help to alleviate the pressure on the network. This is our policy. We have on our table here a recommendation for six boreholes, one in Nassola on a private land, one in Cygangué, a number of boreholes according to the visit, the next question of the Mauritian Hydrogeologist. But we are careful because some people are already telling us if you did boreholes it will dry the stream down the valley. So, we have to think. We do not just, for example, put desalination plants in Baie Malgache and then Rs 200 m. have been wasted, wasted in the mud in Baie Malgache.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

WATER PRODUCTION BY BOREHOLES

(No. B/126) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to water production by boreholes in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table:

- (a) the number which are in operation and their respective production;
- (b) if any borehole/s has been set in operation lately, and
- (c) if he intends to set up new boreholes around Rodrigues and, in the affirmative, to give details thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Do not mess with me on this water issue, I master mind just like my colleague, Mr Volbert masters his health commission, I master my water commission. I am not wasting time unlike you did for ten years, a decade.

With regard to part (a), my Commission has actually 20 boreholes in operation (excluding desalination boreholes), this will be tabled.

SN	Name of Borehole	Production (m ³ /day)
1	Anse Quitar	6
2	Bassin Gallard	134
3	Camp Du Roi	180
4	Dans Bébé	34
5	Fond la Digue	230
6	Grand Baie	134
7	Graviers	59
8	La Ferme Hospital	4
9	Latanier 1	137
10	Latanier 2	432
11	Le Chou 3	187

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SN	Name of Borehole	Production (m³/day)
12	Malabar 2	386
13	Manique	180
14	Marechal	70
15	Mourouk	196
16	MT Bois Noir	77
17	Mt Croupier	14
18	Mt Lubin	348
19	Nassola	274
20	St Gabriel	112
	Total	3194

With regard to part (b), the following boreholes have recently been put in operation:

- (i) Anse Quitor Borehole
- (ii) Camp du Roi brackish water
- (iii) Manique borehole
- (iv) Fond la Digue

An abandoned borehole, I said abandoned borehole, at Fond la Digue has been reclaimed through airlift exercise. I am thankful to the team at the Water Unit, who did the work. The borehole was put in operation on 23 November 2022 with an approximate production of 8 m³/hr – that is very low. I was speaking to a geologist in Reunion Island when I was there last week and told him we have boreholes up to 400 m³, he asked me whether it was per hour. And, it is per day, very small. The water is pumped intermittently and channelled to Mt Fanal reservoir and Fond la Digue public fountain.

With regard to part (c), following the recommendation of the BRLi Report to increase the groundwater production through the drilling on new boreholes, as the groundwater potential appears to be still promising, my Commission has sought the services Mr R. Pokhun, Principal Hydrological Officer of the Water Resources Unit of the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities for the identification of potential sites. Five potential sites have been identified at:

- Mt. Piton
- Lataniers (Mon Plaisir)
- Nassola
- Cygangués
- Vanguard

Mr Chairperson, Sir, we need to be cautious prior to proceeding with the drilling of new boreholes. We will seek further technical advice on the impact of new boreholes on the water going downstream before taking a decision. And, I have mentioned a very important meeting, international meeting on water issue in Rodrigues that my commission, the Regional Assembly will be organising in January or February next year. Our objectives are to have a practical work plan for the next ten years. I am tabling the requested information.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, as in the previous answer, the Chief Commissioner mentioned about the BRLi Report, which in itself is not a survey but rather an overlook of the system. I would like to ask him how is he going to reconciled BRLi with the report that he himself made in 2010, the report of Jean Michel Chene and, actually we are witnessing that issue today. It is said: *'par ailleurs le potentiel des nouvelles ressources en eau souterraine ne semble pas être une option...*

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is it question time or ... be amended to give Members opportunity to make statements during question time?

Mr Chairperson: Please put your quest.

Mr Lisette: Yes, just what he stated because this report contradicts the BRLi. My question is, how is he going to reconcile BRLi with the report of Jean Michel Chene who said, listen clearly and we are in the mist of that issue today, listen carefully : *'par ailleurs le potentiel des nouvelles ressources en eau souterraine ne semble pas être une option si on observe la décroissance du niveau de production au moment de chaque saison sèche qui indique que la limite de surexploitation est atteinte.'*, unquote, Mr Chairperson. How is he going to reconcile this with the BRLi ?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, my job is not to reconcile reports of whoever has written them. I am aware of the contradictory...

Mr Chairperson: Let the Commissioner answer the question.

The Chief Commissioner: Contradictory findings between Jean Michel Chene, who said what he quoted in the report that it could be over exploited and the affirmation by BRLi that the resource could be underutilised. This is what I have replied that we have made a hydrologist come, Principal Hydrologist from the Water Resources Unit of Mauritius and, he has made some recommendations. This is why we are waiting. We do not want just to go and go into boreholes. In the year 2000, I remember it very well, 1998-1999-2000, a former Junior Minister dug boreholes all around Rodrigues and he said, he mentioned '*problem dilo in resoud dan Rodrigues.*' We know what has been the impact on the streams, on the sources in the valleys, rivers have stopped running in Rodrigues following this. So, this is why we are careful. My job is not to reconcile reports, my job is to look at the reports holistically and, this is why we are organising an international scientific, there will be a scientific part in it, where we will have scientists' hydrogeological scientists. I will invite you and water, UNDP, people from the Australian Embassy, people from St. Joseph. I have just met the Hydrological Engineer of the town of St. Joseph in Reunion, Mr Broyer of the town of Tampon, who has made a good report about the *retenue collinaires* that could be done in Anse Baleine, Tamarin. So, all this will be discussed and according to what we find following this conference, we will move forward. This is how we will move forward. But I repeat, we are not going for these new boreholes immediately. We have to be careful.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, the exercise is loadable being given..., it is loadable since if we go one step further without precaution there can be irreversible effect. This is why we are questioning on the matter because it is a very serious matter. Nevertheless, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner. He mentioned in his answer that he has set back into operation a borehole at Fond La Digue which is giving an inflow of 8 m³ per hour, amounting to say, 160 to 200 m³ of water. We very well know that we are in a shortage of water and every means is important to look for that water. But the risk remains and this my question, is there monitoring being done constantly by his commission to analyse the concentration of that water or to say straight forward if there is no infiltration of sea water as regards to that borehole since we have now two boreholes operating at Fond La Digue?

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am quite surprised by certain remarks because I am here since March, we have reached December and it is only nine months I have been here and he has been there in office for ten years. Where is your plan? I will do it but what have you done to monitor boreholes in Rodrigues? Do you have today an online tool? Do we have today an online tool? Do we have today a live tool where we can see how much water is being pumped from boreholes? What is the salinity of the boreholes? So, what you have not done in ten years, you want me to do it in nine months and I am doing it. We are doing it; we are doing it. Because all this water reforms requires preparation. This is the last hardship year, next year the situation will not be the same, Mr Chairperson, Sir. We will have personnel from the Water Unit, RPUC, who will take over the network. Today there is indiscipline in those people who have to distribute the water. I want to scrap this system because it is a nervous way of distributing water.

Since 1992, when they created the Water Unit, they politicised it up to today. You have only political agents, most of them are political agents.

The Minority Leader: *M. le président*, on a point of order, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I think that the Chief Commissioner cannot over and over again come with these kind of words here in this Parliament. I am so sorry for him; I think it is not professional.

The Chief Commissioner: What is the point of order, Mr Chairperson, Sir, can I know?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: I would advise both sides of the House. This is our last session for this year, let us be nice to each other. We can do it. Go and finish your answer, and we will move to next question.

The Chief Commissioner: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir. What I want to say is that there is much inefficiency. The water problem in Rodrigues I always speak about it, there is a climatic, natural part, I would say 50%. And, the second part is an organisational part and this involves people, this involves workers. And, we are going to change the attitude to inculcate a productive attitude, have new people under the RPUC so that we have hard work dedicated to solving the issue. Thank you.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

WATER PRODUCTION POINTE COTON DESALINATION PLANT

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(No. B/127) The First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Dr H. Agathe) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the water production by the Pointe Coton Desalination plant during the last three weeks, he will state the:

- (a) daily volume thereof;
- (b) volume being transferred to the different reservoirs, and
- (c) villages that are being served with this water and the frequency of distribution thereof?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a), the actual daily volume of water produced by Pointe Coton Desalination Plant is 16 to 17 m³ per hour, giving 380 m³ per day. Following repairs done by contractor, both plants were working and producing 874 m³ per day up to 06 November. Following the breakdown of the plant which was functioning, only 380 m³ is being produced since 06 November. The contractor will order the required fittings to undertake repairs and servicing by the end of this month to optimise water production from both plants.

With regard to part (b), the volume of water transferred for these three weeks are as follows:-

SN	Reservoir	Volume (m ³)
1.	Grenade	2000
2.	Montagne Pikant	800
3.	Roche Bon Dieu	2000
4.	Coromandel	1000

The villages served with the water on a frequency of 30-50 days are as follows: -

- Roche Bon Dieu
- Pointe Coton
- Rivière Banane
- Coromandel
- Trois Soleil
- Trèfles

- Anse Femie
- Mt Cabris Est
- Patate Théophile
- Mt Ursule
- Tasman

My Commission is having recourse to lorry water tankers, both private and operated by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to satisfy those where the frequency is long. Water from Mourouk.

Dr Agathe: Etes-vous au courant, M. le Chef commissaire, qu'il y a certains villages qui ne reçoivent pas l'eau pendant au moins deux mois, deux mois au minimum où ils ne reçoivent pas d'eau dans cette région?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, deux mois ne recevant pas l'eau, je suis au courant mais je suis encore au courant jusqu'à cinq mois. Ce matin, j'ai eu un message d'une personne qui n'a pas reçu l'eau depuis cinq mois. En tant qu'élus qui... Vous avez Rodrigues à cœur, je vous invite à participer à la réforme de ce secteur de l'eau. Ce n'est pas possible qu'autant d'argent ait été investi durant les dernières années depuis par exemple, l'avènement de l'autonomie de Rodrigues et qu'on ait aussi mauvais résultat dans la distribution. Comme j'ai expliqué, une partie des problèmes est liée au manque d'eau, au changement climatique, à la déforestation, au fait que Rodrigues ait un climat défavorable à la conservation de l'eau mais une partie du problème est un problème humain : la distribution.

Quand on a commencé, par exemple, à dire étant donné qu'on a remis en marche la production de Pointe Coton, que 500 m³ auraient été suffisants pour distribuer dans la région sur rotation et que les autres, l'autre moitié, la nouvelle machine 500 m³, on va transférer pour aider les autres régions, par exemple la région nord, le dessalement d'Anse aux Anglais n'avait pas encore été démarré pour la région de Baie Malgache, toute la région far ouest comme il a dit qui est jusqu'à cinq mois pas approvisionnée en eau, on s'est rendu compte qu'il n'y avait pas de réseau, il n'y avait pas de *network* pour transférer l'eau du dessalement de Pointe Coton vers par exemple, le réservoir de Vangassailles.

Il n'y a pas de network disponible, M. le président. Si on doit transférer l'eau, on doit par exemple, couper le *borehole* de Lataniers pour transférer l'eau vers le réservoir de Malartic et les autres réservoirs se trouvent plus bas. C'est pour ça qu'il faut un réseau, *a new water transfer network for the whole Island and we have to invest into this, maybe Rs300/Rs400/Rs500 m. so that we have a buried water transfer network* which will enable us to transfer water from for example, the Pointe Coton Desalination Park. We are building a desalination park there. We are concentrating there together with Songes where there are good results in that desalination. There are less breakdowns and we are going to have this network. This is one aspect, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I must inform, for example, this morning, I have got reports that the Anse aux Anglais Desalination Plant is also not working because the pump in the borehole is not working, has broken down and there are many issues with these. It could be mud; it could be other technical issues. So, we have also to have the technical know-how, the people who can manage desalination, run it properly. We have to send people to Israel, to other parts of the world to be trained so that we have an efficient desalination process. And, I must say, Mr Chairperson, Sir, part, some people think that we should go for desalination. I, myself, at some point in time, I was questioning desalination but unless, we go for desalination in dry periods like now, we will not be able to supply water adequately to people.

(Applause)

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I see that I am much appreciated for my speech. I thank them for their *ça*. They will be invited, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to this international conference on water; not a conference to talk, drink and eat but a conference which we produce a technical way forward. So, I invite them to think, to start thinking, technical people, how we are going to organise all this network, how we are going to put meters and they have to support us on this and they have to support their measures and we will discuss it with them so that if ever they come, I say if ever, if ever they come back, they know what we have done and they carry it forward. It is not the water reform, it is not the reform of the Chief Commissioner, of the L'Alliance Party or anybody. It is the reform of the Rodriguans and this is why we want one way forward, the best one with their support and I think I will get them.

The Minority Leader: J'aimerais demander au Chef commissaire, étant donné qu'il a mentionné que la station de Pointe Coton n'opère pas *fully*, étant donné qu'on connaît la situation à crise dans la région de l'est, *when is he expecting to have the plant fully operational?*

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have the report that I received today this morning. So, at Pointe Coton, there is one contactor; not contractor, contactor faulty. The officer is saying we urgently need to replace the contactor to proceed with additional test on the borehole pump. We are still waiting for the contactor since yesterday. I have spoken to Mr B this morning. So, we have to provide this spare part to reoperate it. I repeat, desalination is a very technical thing. We need the expertise. We need the correct personnel. Under the RPUC, we will be able to train people to take this aspect wholefully.

SUPPLY OF WATER – TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS

(No. B/128) The Second Island Region Member (Ms M. N. Raffaut) asked the Commissioner for Tourism and Others whether, in regard to supply of water to tourism establishments through his Commission, he will for the benefit of the House:

- (a) state the daily demand of water by the tourism industry;
- (b) state the mechanism set up by his Commission for the provision of water by private tankers thereto indicating any costs related therewith;
- (c) table the list of all tourism institutions that have benefitted therefrom so far together with the respective volumes?

Mr Wong So: Mr. Chairperson Sir, as we are all aware, Rodrigues Island has been facing a severe drought since the past few months. With the resumption in the tourism activities during the last months resulting in an increase in the number of arrivals, the need for water supply has considerably increased.

It is my responsibility as the Commissioner responsible for Tourism, to ensure the continuity of the Tourism Sector one of the main pillar of our economy. Unfortunately, it cannot be denied that tourism is an industry which cannot operate without water.

Hence, with the blessing of my Colleagues, the Executive Council at its meeting dated 28 October 2022, has agreed to a temporary measure during that period of water crisis, which is, that the Commission for Water Resources provides water to the tourism operators, by lorry tanker from the Pointe Coton Desalination Plant as per the following modalities:

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- The Commission for Water Resources to allow lorry tankers to collect water for Tourism Operators every week at Pointe Coton Desalination Plant against the payment of Rs 50 per cubic meter (m³); and that
- The application and payment to be carried out at the Tourism Enterprise Licensing unit of the Commission for Tourism.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, after these two years of closure due to the COVID 19 pandemic, every tourism business is recovering slowly, it is inconceivable for a business to close its door because of lack of water. Its contribution to employment and also other small and large businesses on the island, makes it a fundamental pillar of the economy.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, allow me to reply to part (a) of the question. It has been reported by the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO), that The impact of tourism activities on local water resources remains a largely understudied issue in environmental and sustainable tourism management.

It is regretful to say that up to day, no study is available with regard to the daily demand of water by the tourism industry in Rodrigues.

However, I wish to inform my colleagues that, my Commission, is planning to undertake a study on the Water Footprint of our visitors, as well as the local community during the next financial year. Water can become a constraint to sustainable development, a limit on tourist activities and an issue of conflict with local residents. It is of priority to ensure that these issues do not crop up for the survival of our industry and in view of the Certification of Rodrigues as Green Destination.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, with regard to part (b) of the question as mentioned in my introduction, for the smooth running of the support to the Tourism Operators, a mechanism has been put in place.

Namely, an Application Form is available at the Tourist Enterprise Licensing Unit since the introduction of the scheme on Monday 28 November 2022.

The Tourism Operator must call at the Tourist Enterprise Licensing Unit to fill in the application form and proceed with the payment as per the metre cube allowed per tanker that is Rs 50 per metre cube.

Payment is made at the Cashier's Desk of the Central Administration.

Following payment, a voucher is issued to the Tourism Operator to be presented to the Responsible Officer of the Commission for Water Resources at Malabar, then to the Pointe Coton Desalination Plant for the delivery of water.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, with regards to part (c), since the introduction of the support scheme, 31 Tourism institutions have benefitted from the scheme.

During the first week, that is, period Monday 28 November to 02 December 2022, the Tourist Enterprise Licensing Unit has received 24 applications and a total of 187 m³ of water has been delivered to the applicants.

For the second week (period 05 December to 09 December 2022), only 23 have submitted their requests and a total of 119 m³ delivered to the applicants.

I now table the list of all tourism institutions who have benefited from the scheme.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Baptiste: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner whether, this measure is also applicable to those establishment operators or hotels having their own desalination plant.

Mr Wong So: M. le président, au niveau de notre *Tourism Licensing Office*, ils ont reçu le mot d'ordre de pouvoir donner de l'eau à tous ceux qui sont enregistrés avec le bureau. Ceci étant dit, j'ai donné le nombre de personne, d'établissement qui ont fait la demande au sein de ma Commission pour avoir de l'eau. La preuve, vous avez les chiffres maintenant devant vous. Ça a été tablé à l'Assemblée. Merci.

Mr Baptiste: Yes, I understand but for a matter of fairness, we know that water is very scarce right now. Whether there is a mechanism set up by your Commission, whether this has been taken on board to consider that these water are distributed only to those not having their own desalination plant or borehole or whatever, whether this has been taken on board while taking the decision to allow private tankers to give water to these.

Mr Wong So: M. le président, encore une fois, je dis au *respected Member*, la réponse se trouve dans le document qui a été circulé. Vous verrez les noms qui apparaissent dessus. Donc, vous pouvez faire mention. Vous verrez les noms.

The Minority Leader: Entretemps, j'ai une question, M. le président. Donc, je vois que, j'avais noté que cette décision avait été prise le 28 octobre 2022 et ce n'est qu'un mois après, 28 novembre, que s'est entré en opération. Donc, est-ce que je peux demander au commissaire de nous dire étant donné que là avec la réponse qu'on vient d'avoir par rapport au dessalement de Pointe Coton qui ne fonctionne pas comme il se doit, est-ce qu'il y a des personnes qui ont fait la demande et qui ne peuvent être... Je dis des personnes, des établissements qui ont fait la demande et qui ne peuvent avoir....

Mr Wong So: Merci, Madame, d'avoir posé la question, M. le président. Je dois dire valeur du jour, c'est que ça pris du temps pour mettre en place le mécanisme parce que justement pour le besoin du travail, il fallait quand même faire les formulaires afin que tout le monde soit au courant et de passer le message. Ceci dit, quand c'était prêt, effectivement, dans le mécanisme, à notre niveau de la Commission, le problème se situait éventuellement au niveau des *deliveries*, c'est-à-dire au niveau de Pointe Coton Desalination Plant qui n'était pas en mesure de pouvoir fournir les opérateurs touristiques. Juste pour répondre à votre question, la dernière partie, c'est que nous en avons en attente plus d'une trentaine de personnes qui voudrait quand même se servir de ce mécanisme mais malheureusement, le circuit de Pointe Coton Desalination Plant n'est pas en mesure de pouvoir fournir. J'allais juste pour terminer, vous donner la réponse qu'éventuellement, on voulait *shifter* sur Mourouk mais éventuellement, il y a aussi un problème d'approvisionnement. Donc, on n'est pas en mesure de pouvoir le faire comme il se doit. Je suis vraiment navré.

Mr Lisette: My question goes in line with what the Commissioner has just said. We have just learned that the Pointe Coton Desalination Plant is out of service and of course... One unit. They are out of service. So, meaning that part of the tourism institution will have to sidetrack to the Water Resources Unit. My question is in the case of Pointe Coton running fully, do the tourism institutions allow to make application at the Water Unit or do they make application exclusively at the level of the Commission for Tourism?

Mr Wong So: M. le président, pour répondre à cette question, la façon que ça a été formulée ce *scheme*, c'est de pouvoir quand même apporter un soulagement aux opérateurs

touristiques. Ceci dit, si l'opérateur touristique a besoin de l'eau additionnelle, il est de son devoir et de sa responsabilité d'aller chercher de l'eau là où il en trouve. La raison est bien simple. C'est que le *scheme* qu'on est en train de mettre en place et de venir soulager les opérateurs, vous serez étonnés. C'est pourquoi j'ai fait circuler les chiffres. Vous serez étonnés du nombre de personnes qui utilisent ce *scheme* valeur du jour au niveau des opérateurs. Sachez qu'au niveau des opérateurs, si je ne fais pas défaut, il y en a 188 opérateurs dans l'île. Madame, vous avez le document devant vous. Vous savez le nombre de personnes qui ont utilisé ce *scheme* à ce jour.

The Minority Leader: Je souhaite demander au Commissaire du tourisme est-ce qu'en temps normal où la station de dessalement de Pointe Coton fonctionnait à plein régime, donc, avant la semaine dernière là, est-ce qu'il y a eu des applications des personnes qui opèrent dans le secteur et qui n'ont pu être donc satisfait? Si oui, pourquoi?

Mr Wong So: C'est tout à fait normal que lorsqu'on a mis en place le *scheme*, je dois aussi vous dire par rapport au *sizing* de l'établissement, il y en a certains qui sont venus vers nous pour avoir non pas un mais plusieurs camions par semaine et à ce moment-là, on est allé vers le Conseil exécutif pour pouvoir formuler un *scheme* qui dépendra éventuellement du nombre de chambres de chaque établissement. Ceci étant dit, c'est vrai, on a pu quand même satisfaire certaines demandes mais il y en a d'autres qui ne peuvent pas dû à des contraintes qui ne sont pas liées à notre Commission propre à nous. C'est que ce soit des conditions externes qu'on ne peut pas contrôler valeur du jour mais on espère bien pouvoir le résoudre d'ici peu.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, je voudrais savoir du Commissaire du tourisme est-ce que par exemple, il y a eu des cas? Nous savons qu'il y a certains opérateurs pour des raisons pratiques, il y avait donc, ils n'ont pas pu avoir leur licence encore, est-ce que ces personnes sont aussi considérées? Ils opèrent dans le tourisme. Ils n'ont pas leur licence pour des raisons pratiques. On connaît le cas de ceux par exemple, dans la région de Grand Baie, il y avait la question du terrain privé. Est-ce que ces opérateurs ont droit aussi à ce service?

Mr Wong So: Vous savez, je vais vous dire une chose. C'est que nous, valeur du jour, ce qu'on a mis en place, le *scheme*, ça a été clair et net, clairement mentionné que tous ceux et celles qui sont enregistrés avec le bureau de *Licensing Unit* de ma Commission seront pris en considération. Pourquoi? La raison est bien simple. On voudrait privilégier les gens qui sont déjà registered with the Commission so that we can cater for them. Il va de soi que la

Commission du tourisme ne pourrait pas résoudre le problème de l'eau à Rodrigues mais on est venu avec un *scheme* qui permet justement aux opérateurs touristiques de pouvoir quand même se sentir soulagés des contraintes administratives concernant l'eau. Mais je réalise par rapport à votre question, on sait déjà de qui on parle et de quoi on parle. Malheureusement, ceux qui ne sont pas enregistrés avec le *Licensing Unit* de chez nous ne peuvent pas en bénéficier de ce *scheme*. Mais il a le droit d'aller chercher de l'eau là où il se trouve avec d'autres camionneurs, je dois dire.

Mr Ramdally: Mr Chairperson, Sir, B/129.

SETTING UP OF A NURSING SCHOOL – RODRIGUES

(No. B/129) The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the setting up of a nursing school in Rodrigues, he will enlighten the House on:

- (a) the scope, the cost implications and the commencement date and the duration of the project;
- (b) if all the requirements for the smooth running thereof have been taken into consideration, and
- (c) what will be the duties and responsibilities of all the stakeholders thereof?

Mr Volbert: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I wish to inform the respected Members that following discussions since my first mission upon assumption of office on 17 April 2022, the proposal for the setting up of a branch of Nursing School in Rodrigues was discussed with the Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness and the responsible officer of the School of Nursing.

The request was met with a favourable answer, however, a few technical aspects were to be clarified at the level of the Ministry and the Tertiary Education Commission.

The setting up of a branch of School of Nursing in Rodrigues forms part of the vision of this Regional Government to concretise the project of Modern Hospital.

In view to provide adequately trained human resources for the proper manning of the hospital, the branch of School of Nursing will allow to increase the quota of Rodriguans who will be able to receive nursing trainings.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Ministry of Health and Wellness has given the green light for the Mauritius Institute of Health for the setting up of a branch of Nursing School in Rodrigues.

In this respect, the 2nd Floor at Block H and G of the New Mont Lubin Area Health Centre has been identified to house the said Nursing School.

However, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the setting up of such a specialised institution requires the involvement of those expert in the field of medical teaching.

A delegation from the Mauritius Health Institute will shortly field a mission to Rodrigues and will submit a Technical Report on the project implementation.

The availability of seats on the Air Mauritius is affecting the said visit to Rodrigues.

As regards to part (a), (b) and (c), I will invite the respected Members to await the visit of the Technical Report of the delegation of the Mauritius Institute of Health.

Thank you.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, j'ai entendu le Commissaire parler de ce projet comme étant un projet qui émane de la vision de l'actuel gouvernement. Est-ce que je peux savoir dans le cadre de cette vision, quel est le nombre de jeunes qu'ils ont prévu de former par rapport à cette école?

Mr Volbert: Il faudra avoir le rapport des experts, ceux dans le domaine, avant de prononcer.

Mr Baptiste: I know that we have to expect and wait for this delegation but do you have any expected timeframe; date you are planning so that you can start this school down here in Rodrigues? Have you set any target?

Mr Volbert: Les officiers du ministère, les experts du ministère, après avoir reçu le rapport, à ce moment-là, on va donner une date. Parce que *availability of seats in the flight, Air*

Mauritius flight, c'est ça qui cause le problème. Les experts auraient dû être là depuis longtemps.

Mr Ramdally: M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de la santé si les formations qu'il a pensé dispenser dans ce *school*, ce sont des formations initiales ou des formations continues?

Mr Volbert: Comment? Je n'ai pas compris....

Mr Ramdally: Ce sera une formation initiale ou une formation continue?

Mr Volbert: M. le président, comme j'ai dit dans ma réponse, je vais faire ressortir. Les *stakeholders* qui seront impliqués, il y aura le Ministry of Health and Wellness, the School of Nursing itself, officers and Mauritius Institution of Health and Commission for Health, officers from Commission of Health. Donc, ce sera une formation continue. On va faire deux tiers ici et un tiers à Maurice pour le *practical*.

Mr Baptiste: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand that there was already a site visit. A site visit has already been carried out by the Commissioner and I understand also that according to the eligibility, the constructed area, there are conditions attached to all these. And, he has already mentioned that *c'est la place, c'est l'endroit idéal*. I would like to know whether certain concerned institutions have already visited the place to find out relating to the size which will be required for the different services for this institution to be recognised as per the attached conditions, whether there has been already for example, the measurement for spaces like laboratory, lecture hall and so on.

Mr Volbert: C'est la troisième fois que je répète la même question. Nous attendons les experts de Maurice et à la lumière de leur rapport, nous allons pouvoir vous dire comment ça va se passer. Mais l'endroit idéal, c'est vrai, c'est à Mont Lubin, là, on a un grand rôle et c'est là l'endroit pour pouvoir mettre sur pieds ce *School of Nursing*.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the setting up of the school of nursing will without doubt require also a pedagogical SEL for dispensing the courses. With a view of optimising resources, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we know very well that there has been in the past, courses delivered by Polytechnics Mauritius. And, in fact, they intend to go forward with a BSC in Nursing within the school, community school of Baie Malgache. I would like to ask the

Commissioner for Health whether there has been any sort of I would not say negotiation but rather discussion with the Polytechnics Mauritius so that we do not have a duplication of matters with the Commission ensuring courses in BSC Nursing or whatever with the Polytechnic going in the same field, provided, given that the courses delivered by Polytechnic is already registered, is already recognised by the Ministry of Health. It is recognised.

Mr Volbert: Je vais répondre même si ça n'a rien à faire avec la question. Mais la formation, le *Polytechnics Mauritius* n'est jusqu'à maintenant pas reconnu par le ministère. Il n'est pas reconnu par le ministère. Seul la formation dispensée par le *Mauritius Institute of Health* qui est reconnu. C'est pour cela qu'il y a huit officiers qui ont complété leur formation, huit Rodriguais, mais n'ont pu être recrutés jusqu'à maintenant parce que la formation n'est pas reconnue jusqu'à maintenant.

Mr Ramdally: M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de la santé, plutôt avoir une précision sur ma question précédente, est-ce que ce sera des formations initiales ou continues? En continue veut dire que ce sera des gens formés qui vont avoir des cours là-bas ou ce sera des jeunes étudiants qui viennent de...

Mr Volbert: Il y aura des formateurs de l'île Maurice mais à Rodrigues aussi, on a des *Nursing Officers* qui ont déjà suivi des *diplomas* et ces *Nursing Officers*, ils vont être recrutés pour donner des cours. Les élèves? Et en ce qui concerne les élèves, comme j'ai dit dans ma réponse, nous voulons que ce *School of Nursing* soit mis en place parce qu'avec la vision de *new modern hospital*, on aura besoin de beaucoup de *Nursing Officers*. Donc, avec le quota que nous avons avec Maurice actuellement, ce ne sera pas possible. Donc, attendons le rapport et puis, nous allons... On peut prononcer à ce moment-là.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, donc, ma question va rejoindre celle de mon collègue. Donc, le Commissaire a parlé de la formation qu'il va faire ici. Donc, la formation initiale, pour nous, c'est recruter un jeune qui veut se faire infirmier/infirmière et faire cette formation de trois ans qui se faisait à Maurice et faire à Rodrigues. Le Commissaire dans sa réponse a parlé d'une formation deux tiers, un tiers. C'est-à-dire deux tiers à Rodrigues, un tiers à Maurice. Sachant qu'être infirmier/infirmière, c'est de la pratique. *Bed capacity, the ratio student bed, exposure*. A Maurice, nous savons combien il y a beaucoup de *unit* qu'on n'a pas ici. Est-ce que ce ne serait pas plus prudent d'aller pour une formation. Au départ, au contraire, deux tiers ici, si vous voulez faire la théorie mais je crois dur comme fer que la

formation pour devenir infirmier/infirmière, ce n'est pas deux tiers théories, un tiers pratique. C'est totalement le contraire ou sinon 100% théorie/pratique. Donc, est-ce que le Commissaire ne pense-t-il pas que ce serait plus... donc, dans le but d'avoir des *full-fledged*, vraiment des infirmiers/infirmières capables, exposés à d'autres domaines de pouvoir vraiment faire le maximum de formation à Maurice?

Mr Volbert: Je ne vois pas l'utilité de la question parce que, M. le président, on a un hôpital. A moins que ce n'est pas un hôpital pour vous. On a toutes les unités ici: radiologie, la maternité. Il y a presque toutes les unités mais c'est fort honorable pour nous de recruter, de commencer les cours ici et puis, envoyer. C'est un cours qui va durer trois ans. On peut faire deux ans ici et un an à Maurice. Mais c'est *okay*. Je ne vois pas aucun problème. Le problème, c'est quoi? Parce que vous n'avez pas pu mettre sur pieds ce *School of Nursing*? Allez, écoutez.

Mr Chairperson: It is time we are going to break for lunch. We break for one hour.

At 12.06 p.m., the sitting was suspended for one hour.

On resuming at 1.24 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.

Mr Chairperson: Next question!

WASTE SEGREGATION PROJECT

(No. B/130) The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally) asked the Commissioner for Environment and Others whether, in regard to the waste segregation project already started by his Commission, he will inform the House as to where matters stand as at to date?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, since my taking of office in March 2022, this year, a first visit has been conducted in the presence of the Chief Commissioner at the Roche Bon Dieu dumping site to take stock of the status of the site which in my opinion was in a shocking state.

Immediate actions were warranted in view of avoiding further environmental havoc.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to point out that a series of actions were already in place way back in 2010 when I was in office. Policies of waste segregation management were high on the agenda at that time.

A new dumping site was already earmarked and segregation projects were organised. The more so, allow me Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to show to the House a picture of the status of the dumping site when I left office in 2012. So, it is as you can see, Mr Chairperson, Sir, it was well organised and also well maintained.

Mr. Chairperson, as mentioned above, immediate actions had to be taken in the least delay where the impact should be visible. Indeed, a total of 27,000 segregation bins have already been procured as per the request of the Rodrigues Council of Social Services.

However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following a survey, this figure did not reflect the true number of eligible beneficiaries at household level. Accordingly, I am informed that procurement exercise of an additional of 5000 segregated bins has already been initiated.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the following activities have been implemented under the first phase of the waste segregation project:

1. Sensitisation

Sensitisation on the waste segregation at household level was carried out across all the villages regarding proper use of the segregation bins. The sensitisation activity was held in community centres by Officers of my Commission.

My Commission has launched the waste segregation project in each of the six electoral regions as follows in view of showing the importance of the project:

ELECTORAL REGION	VILLAGE	DATE
1	Pistaches	09 April 2022
2	Papayes	26 March 2022
3	Songes	25 March 2022
4	Petit Gabriel	13 April 2022
5	Montagne Goyaves	08 April 2022
6	Patate Theophile	22 April 2022

T.V Spot

We had also, Mr Chairperson, Sir, T.V Spot. A T.V spot has also been produced on the segregation activity and broadcasted just before the Rodrigues news over a period of one week.

ii. Recruitment of 300 youths.

Mr Chairperson Sir, 300 youths have been recruited in view of the smooth implementation of the waste segregation project which took effect as from 16 May 2022 for a period of three months. In each region, there was a team of 47 community field workers and their work are being monitored by three Community Leaders in each region.

The purposes for the recruitment of the youth are as follows:

- i. Sensitisation of the population on waste segregation practices that need to be implemented in line with the donation of the two bins to all households.
- ii. Collect data regarding the amount of recyclables produced for the establishment of appropriate collection program, including the number of households per region.
- iii. Coordinate specific cleaning campaigns organised such as for the glass bottles' collection and bulky wastes.
- iv. To provide the youths with employability skills.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, three lorries were contracted for the collection of the mentioned recyclables at the start of the project as Rodclean company was not yet equipped with the appropriate logistic thereto. Rodclean Ltd has been restructured and the latter took over the collection services since early September this year upon acquisition of a lorry which is convenient for trackroads and other secondary roads to enable maximum collection of recyclables.

The collection service is now being effected from Monday to Saturday and a dedicated team of five staff is well-trained for the collection exercise.

Since 07 July as to 09 December 2022, a total of 2400 m³ of recyclables were collected across the island and disposed at the new material recovery centre at Grenade.

iii. Material Recovery Centre

As per budgetary provision for financial year 2022/2023, a material recovery centre is under construction at Grenade. As at to date, excavation and levelling work with spalls and crusher run has almost been completed and the site has been fenced.

Procurement procedures have already been initiated for the acquisition of appropriate logistics for more efficient operation of the centre including that for a multipurpose baler machine, additional glass bottle shredder, wheelie bins and the construction of sheds thereto.

Other Actions

Mr Chairperson, Sir,

Collection of Bulky Waste

A massive bulky waste collection Campaign has been launched across the island during the event of World Environment Day Celebration with the collaboration of Communities, Rod Clean Company and private stakeholders; namely Trans Invest Ltd, Laxmanbhai Co Ltd, Welcome Industry and Société Kan John.

The bulky waste collection program was held across the Island.

The bulky wastes were pre-sorted for final disposal such as at Montagne Plate for old and damaged wooden furniture; bulky scrap metals are made available to local exporters holding permits issued by the Commission for Environment and other electronic wastes are stored temporarily on other sites.

Shredding of Glass Bottles

My Commission will procure another glass bottle shredder for glass bottles which are also collected separately during targeted cleaning campaigns across the island. An approximate amount of 45,000 glass bottles has been shredded.

Collection of Electronic Wastes

Mr Chairperson, Sir, my Commission has launched procurement procedures for acquisition of five additional containers which will be used to store temporarily electronic wastes pending their shipment to Mauritius. These wastes are classified as hazardous and need to be properly managed to avoid environmental impacts. The empty containers will be located across different electoral regions of the island.

Rehabilitation of existing Cell for Solid Wastes.

A Cell has been constructed at Grenade since the year 2009 for receiving wastes. The site is being rehabilitated including removal of acacia nilotica and reinstatement of earth bunds. Glass bottles dumped in the site have been discarded and shredded.

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Upon complete rehabilitation of the cell with the construction of access road and appropriate fence, same will be used to receive wastes.

In the same context, other cells will be constructed successively for receiving wastes.

We had also Cleaning Campaign, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Cleaning Campaign – “A nou netoy Dan Bois”

For the period of 29 October to 19 November this year, the following wastes and amount have been collected:

Total amount of Recyclable waste: 33 Lorries

Total amount of General waste: 36 Lorries

Total amount of Glass Bottle: 31 Lorries

My Commission is working closely with the local importers of products to finalise the strategic policies in regard to the other types of major wastes such as cartons, other plastic wastes and glass bottles on a much larger scale.

The objectives of the waste segregation project are as follows:

- i. To extend the lifetime of existing dumping site in view of its very near saturation.
- ii. To ensure the circular economy whereby wastes are being recycled into other useful products.
- iii. To decrease the risks of fires at the dumping site.

Under the first phase of the waste segregation project, the following types of wastes are being collected separately in the yellow bin granted to their households:

- i. PET bottles
- ii. Cans that include for drinks and food.

These two types of wastes can be easily segregated and compacted for eventually exporting to Mauritius.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Ramdally: M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de l'environnement, donc, qu'est-ce qui s'est passé avec... C'est quoi le projet pour les jeunes, les 300 jeunes qu'ils avaient recrutés pour ce projet?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président.... c'est un projet de trois mois. Bon, on les a pris pour justement aller expliquer aux gens dans les maisons, sensibiliser les gens comment faire le tri des déchets qui est très important. C'était un projet à durée déterminée, c'est-à-dire, trois mois. Donc, si le besoin se fait sentir, M. le président, et aussi on avait un souci de budget, donc, si le besoin se fait sentir, c'est sûr qu'on va venir de l'avant avec un autre projet afin qu'on puisse accompagner les gens chez eux pour mener à bien ce projet. Ça veut dire, le tri des déchets.

Dr Agathe: Donc, on a entendu beaucoup de choses dans la réponse mais on n'a pas du tout entendu parler du tri... Pardon. Pas du tri mais du recyclage. On fait du tri, c'est pour avoir des objets qu'on peut recycler mais rien n'a été dit sur le recyclage.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, au contraire, j'ai dit. Le fait que nous produisons par semaine 80 tonnes de déchets, parmi, il y a à peu près 15% de plastique par exemple. La composition du déchet qu'on dispose dans le dépotoir. Donc, oui, j'ai dit dans ma réponse qu'on est en train de stocker et bien sûr, tout ce qui est déchet des «ferrailles» comme on dit en créole, de fer, c'est exporter sur Maurice et il y a d'autres gens aussi qu'on encourage pour justement qu'ils prennent ces déchets-là, qu'ils exportent sur Maurice. On a déjà aussi parlé à la *Mauritius Shipping Company* pour qu'ils mettent à la disposition de ceux qui veulent exporter, les déchets à être recyclés, mettre à leur disposition, des containers vides afin qu'ils puissent exporter des déchets sur Maurice.

Dr Agathe: Je crois que l'intérêt aussi, c'est de créer des filières de recyclage. Donc, on n'a rien entendu là-dessus en termes de mis en place de filière de recyclage. Ça devrait être quand même associé avec un projet de tri qu'on met derrière les filières pour en fait, pouvoir mettre en valeur les déchets triés.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Je ne sais pas si le membre a bien écouté ma réponse. Non, j'ai dit dans ma réponse. On est en train de faire le *material recovery centre*. Qu'est-ce que c'est que le *material recovery centre*? C'est que lorsqu'on prend les déchets. Il y a une chose qu'il faut comprendre. On parle de filière. C'est bien, on a déjà la filière pour les ferrailles, par exemple, mais on n'a pas la masse critique. Il faut que le *material recovery centre*, ça tourne à plein régime, on ramasse tout ce qui est plastique, on arrive à compacter

tous ces plastiques-là. Parce qu'on ne peut pas envoyer, par exemple, si on envoie un container de bouteille plastique à Maurice, ben, ça va représenter combien en termes de poids? Donc, il faudra compacter. C'est ça, j'ai dit dans la réponse. On est en train de tout mettre en place pour justement après, qu'il y ait la suite comme vous avez dit. Donc, on est en train de tout mettre en place. Il y a l'autre budget qui vient. On va terminer le *material recovery centre*.

On pense aussi mettre dans différentes régions, des dépôts afin que les gens par exemple, ceux qui ont des bouteilles chez eux. Vous imaginez, M. le président, on a ramassé plus de 30 camions de bouteilles en verres. Il y a des bouteilles qui traînent partout. Je ne sais pas si ça a traîné pendant 10 ans. Nous, on a ramassé. Donc, on est en train de tout mettre en place. On a aussi écrasé 45000 bouteilles. Donc, c'est quand même beaucoup mais c'est en train d'être mis en place. Donc, bien sûr, lorsqu'on aura la masse critique, ceux qui sont intéressés bien sûr, ils vont bien sûr, voir comment disposer de ces déchets qui peuvent être valorisés dans une façon très contrôlée.

Mr Lisette: The Commissioner for Environment mentioned about sensitisation that has taken place by those that were employed on a contract basis but as a matter of whole and a matter of responsiveness of the villagers, I can witness it in my own village itself. I see that the response of segregation of waste within the village is quite low. Yes, because I see the waste carrier who comes to the village and many a times when it goes back, it is almost empty because forcibly, the villagers are still not segregating their wastes at home. My question is being given that there is no segregation at home, these wastes will reach Roche Bon Dieu and have to be segregated there. Is there a team that is segregating these wastes as per the different components at Roche Bon Dieu?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: M. le président, de là à dire qu'il n'y a pas de tri de déchet à la maison, c'est un peu aussi... le respecté membre, il a été Chef commissaire adjoint. C'est de l'autocritique parce qu'on avait commencé le projet en 2010 et en 2012, ils sont arrivés. Ils n'ont pas cru bon de continuer le projet. Si vous aviez continué le projet en 2010, aujourd'hui, cette même question que vous me posez en ce moment, dire que les gens de Fond La Bonté ne font pas le tri des déchets... Par exemple, les gens, je sais qu'il y a beaucoup de gens qui le font, il y a des personnes aussi qui ne le font pas malheureusement mais c'est une question d'habitude. Si on avait donné l'habitude depuis longtemps, ça aurait été déjà une avance pour nous en termes d'environnement. Nous, on est en train de remettre tout ça en... Alors, la question de si jamais ces déchets-là arrivent dans le dépotoir, on ne peut pas faire le tri parce qu'on a mélangé. Le déchet est déjà contaminé.

Donc, on ne peut pas aller là-bas, rentrer dans le dépotoir avec tout ce qu'il y a, d'aller chercher des bouteilles en plastique. C'est la raison pour laquelle c'est très important. On a donné deux poubelles et ces gens-là, ils mettent la plastique de côté et Rodclean passe et ramasse. Par exemple, chez moi, ils ramassent les mardis. Les mardis, ils viennent. Nous savons qu'il faut mettre tout ce qui est plastique au bord du chemin pour que Rodclean passe et ramasse et où va ces plastiques? Donc, ça va directement au *material recovery centre*. On n'a pas entendu. On a déjà commencé, on peut dire, le projet partiellement. Donc, c'est stocké là-bas. Si vous allez au dépotoir juste à côté, vous allez voir qu'il y a un *material recovery centre* et là, il y a des bouteilles en plastiques qui sont stockées. Il y a des gens qui déjà, ils demandent à prendre ces bouteilles en plastique et à envoyer sur Maurice.

Mr Baptiste: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been there. I go there quite often and obviously, the way these wastes are being dumped, I know that it is now becoming an eyesore. It is like extension of the existing waste... So, if you go for example, the opposite side of the existing dumping site, you will see the heavy wastes of electronic wastes and then, you are talking about the material recovery centre. But on the overhand, we see also a sort of segregation by winds in the *piquant loulou* with plastic bags. I would like to ask the Commissioner responsible for environment whether he will take this matter as urgent to see how to reorganise this dumping site the earliest because now, it is as I have said. It is a form of extension of this dumping site in the nature and if you go there, you will see that it is an eyesore and it is worsening as compared to what it was when you went there. Go and you will see.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner:première fois que l' élu de la région 6 va visiter le dépotoir. C'est que lorsqu'il est dans l'opposition. C'est très bien. Je l'encourage à y aller plus souvent. Lorsqu'on parle de dépotoir, mais dépotoir, c'est dépotoir. Qu'est-ce qu'on va voir dans un dépotoir? Mais saleté, bien sûr. Qu'est-ce qu'il y a? En bas, qu'est-ce qu'il y a? Bien sûr, on est en train de faire le tri de déchets et j'ai amené la photo, exprès. Regardez comment c'était. En 2012, c'était comme ça. On avait mis de la terre dessus. *I can table the picture*. Donc, qu'est-ce qu'on a fait, nous? Avant de partir, qu'est-ce qu'on avait fait? En 2009, on a commencé à faire les *cells*. Qu'est-ce qu'ils ont fait, eux? Ils arrivent en 2012, dans les *cells*, ça veut dire on allait justement fermer le dépotoir plus tard. Après cinq ans, on allait fermer le dépotoir pour ouvrir en bas. Qu'est-ce qu'ils ont fait? Ils ont pris des bouteilles en verres, ils ont mis dans le *cell*.

Ça veut dire, je ne sais pas s'ils voulaient effacer ce qu'on faisait avant et voilà, aujourd'hui, ils viennent me dire: ah il y a extension of ça, c'est un *eyesore* et cetera. Mais c'est

à cause de vous! Vous n'avez pas pris les décisions qu'il fallait! Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait, vous, en tant qu'élu de la région 6? Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait? Lorsque nous, on posait la question, nous, à l'époque, on disait il fallait fermer ce dépotoir, aujourd'hui, vous venez nous dire que voilà, c'est un *eyesore*? Mais c'est à cause de vous! Bien sûr, les sacs en plastique, il y en a partout. Vous savez combien de fois les gens de Rodclean passent là-bas pour ramasser? On avait mis des *high fences*, six mètres de haut. Où est le *high fence*? Ils ont tout cassé. Donc, oui, s'il y avait une politique du *solid waste* comme il fallait, si jamais ils avaient continué le projet qu'on avait mis en place en 2012, 2009, aujourd'hui, on ne serait pas là. Et laissez-moi vous dire, M. le président, que ça nous coûte très, très cher, extrêmement cher pour gérer les déchets à Rodrigues.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, j'aimerais juste savoir du Chef commissaire adjoint quelle a été le montant investi pour le recrutement de ces 300 personnes et pour leur formation si je comprends bien?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Normalement, c'est une question qui n'est pas liée mais quand même, je vais dire, ça a coûté à peu près Rs8 millions.

Mr Ramdally: M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de l'environnement, donc, il a parlé dans sa réponse d'équiper le *material recovery centre*. Donc, ces équipements, quand est-ce qu'ils vont entrer en opération pour compacter les...?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Bientôt, très bientôt.

Mr Baptiste: You have talked also about the closure of the dumping site. Have you a timeframe you have planned to close it and if so, when?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, soon. Very soon.

Mr Chairperson: Next question!

RECRUITMENT OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS – MEDICAL BOARD AND DOMICILIARY VISIT

(No. B/131) The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste) asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to recruitment of medical practitioners involved in medical board and domiciliary visit, he will state:

- (a) the number, the eligibility criteria and the current mode of selection thereof, and

- (b) where matter stands in relation to the recruitment thereof to work exclusively for the Commission for Social Security?

Mr Volbert: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I wish to inform the House that recruitment of Medical Practitioners involved in medical board and domiciliary visit stand as follows:

- (i) Dr. M. J. Legoff
Recruited in November 2012, resigned in May 2013.
- (ii) Dr. J. Spéville
Recruited in September 2014, resigned in November 2014.
- (iii) Dr. D. Casimir
Recruited in September 2014, resigned in November 2014.
- (iv) Dr. C. Prudence (Late)
Recruited in September 2014 and resigned in November 2014
- (v) Dr. S. Pillay Vinayagab
Offered employment on 31 January 2022 but will accept only if there is a change in conditions of employment.
- (vi) Dr (Mrs) O. Jeelall
Offered employment on 31 January 2022 but declined
- (vii) Dr. N. Domah
Offered employment on 31 January 2022 and declined
- (viii) Dr. K. Mangroo
Offered employment on 21 January 2022 but will accept only if there is a change in conditions of employment.
- (ix) Dr. J. A. F. GENAVE
Offered employment on 31 January 2022, assumed duty on 20 June 2022 and resigned on 01 July 2022.
- (x) Dr. N. Doobory (Miss)

/UNREVISED/

Was offered employment on 31 January 2022 but never attended duty in Rodrigues and was offered employment at the Ministry of Health and Wellness

(xi) Dr. K. K. Sewchurn

Was offered employment on 24 February 2022 but declined.

As matter stands today, there is no Medical Practitioner recruited by the Commission for Social Security to work exclusively for the Commission for Social Security.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, the fees payable to Medical Practitioners as per PRB Report 2016 are as follows:

- (i) Medical Board/Social Aid/Treatment in Institutions – Rs 1155 per session.
- (ii) Domiciliary visits – Rs 610 inclusive travelling expenses.

Given that it is difficult to get candidates for recruitment, my Commission is presently working on better proposal and incentives to attract doctors.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, as regard to part (a) of the question there is no Medical Practitioner recruited by the Commission for Social Security.

As it stands, the eligibility criteria and the current mode of selection are as follows:

- (i) Medical Practitioner should be fully registered under the Medical Council Act to work in Mauritius.
- (ii) Candidates should not have reached the age of 70 at the time of advertisement.
- (iii) Open advertisement and interview were conducted by the Ministry of Social Security.
- (iv) Interview was carried by a board of selection set up by the Ministry of Social Security.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (b), it is the vision of this Government to provide job opportunities to Rodriguan Medical Practitioners awaiting to serve their country.

Being given that there are presently four registered Rodriguan Medical Practitioners awaiting opportunity to serve their country, the recruitment process is at the level of the Public Service Commission.

Pending the recruitment of those four doctors, the existing arrangement with the Health Services is still needed.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson Sir.

Mr Baptiste: Yes, Mr Chairperson, I understand that there were some recruitment procedures at a certain point in time in line with the collaboration of the Medical Unit of Mauritius to recruit doctors to work specifically for Commission for Social Security because we know that there are lots of complaints relating to this issue. I would like to know whether, they intend to go with the propose package as it was in the previous exercise or whether the commission will change thing or will find out the mode of selection, something like that?

Mr Volbert: J'ai dit clairement, M. le président, que nous travaillons sur d'autre – *I repeat: Given that it is difficult to get candidate for recruitment, my commission is presently working on better proposal incentive to attract doctors.* Vous savez, M. le président, nous avons un manqué de docteur à l'île Maurice, croyez-vous qu'un docteur va venir ici travailler pour Rs 610 par patient ? Non. Donc, c'est pour cela que nous travaillons pour trouver d'autre alternative avec un autre package pour inciter ces docteurs de venir travailler ici.

Mr Baptiste: I think that the Commissioner may not have seen the file. But the package was not based on per session, per visit of Rs 610. It was a package just like Medical Officers attached to the Commission for Health whereby, they were proposed to come with a specific package which is quite the same as those of the Medical Officers from the Commission for Health. I want to know whether there has been a follow-up of this, whether the Commissioner is aware about this package that we proposed to attract doctors from Mauritius who are available?

Mr Volbert: Jamais, M. le président, il y avait un *attractive* comme le respecté Membre veut faire croire, *package*. Croyez-vous que les docteurs auraient assumés leurs fonctions après un mois ils vont laisser ? Mais non ! Ils ont refusé, ceux de Maurice ont refusés. Donc, dans ma réponse c'était claire. Pour Rs 610 *per patient and Rs 1,155*. Et puis, le respecté Membre vient nous dire il y avait des problèmes mais il était là pendant 10 ans. Ce n'est pas à la veille de son départ qu'il veut recruter. Et nous, on fait de notre mieux, M. le président. On est en train de recruter. Il doit attendre. Ils ont eu 10 ans pour prouver ce qu'ils pouvaient faire. Ils n'ont pas pu faire. Donc, *assizé atan geter ester !*

Mr Baptiste: I feel pity for the Commissioner who does not master his file. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether seven doctors initially agree to come to work exclusively for the Commission for Social Security including one Rodriguan by the end December/January

and because maybe the commission took too much time when they came to office that they then refuse to come?

Mr Volbert: M. le président, j'ai la réponse. C'était le 15 février 2022. Ils ont refusé. Vous étiez encore là, non ? Vous aurez dû reconnaître que ces gens-là, ces docteurs ont refusé. Il y avait six docteurs, non pas sept, six docteurs. *And, I can table it, Mr Chairperson, Sir.*

Mr Baptiste: So, I think yes, he is still confused with regard to the mode of selection from among doctors from Commission for Health to work on a sessional basis. This is we have seen that there are problems within, that is why we proposed this new system. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether, he is satisfied with the way things are going now or he will go in line with what has been, for example, proposed in the PRB Report to recruit an Assistance Health Coordinator to work specifically for the Commission for Social Security to avoid these situations of conflicts of interest whereby at times *le docteur traitant il est lui-même* doctor on the board and he is also going for domiciliary visit. So, there is conflict of interest. So, what we proposed was to recruit exclusively, is the Commissioner still going in this line or he will change completely the policy?

Mr Volbert: M. le président, j'ai dit dans ma réponse qu'il y a quatre médecins Rodriguais, leurs cas est devant le Public Service Commission (PSC). Donc, on attend. Nous avons préparé d'autre *incentive* pour eux et on attend. C'est vrai qu'il y a des manquements, ça a été dit dans le rapport de l'Audite et le cas devant l'ICAC. Oui, on est tous au courant. Mais il faudra attendre. Le cas devant le PSC, on ne peut rien faire, on doit attendre la délibération de la PSC pour pouvoir prononcer.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

CONSTRUCTION – FOOTBALL GROUND/LE CHOU COLLEGE

(No. B/132) **Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huîtres)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of a football ground at Le Chou College, he will state:

- (a) if the construction thereat has been completed;
- (b) the cost implication thereof, and
- (c) if the villagers and youths of the nearby community will have access thereto?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards to parts (a) and (b) of the question, I am informed that a contract for the construction of a football playground at Ananias Andre Le Chou College which comprised the construction of a football ground with high level fencing and surface water drainage and embankment works which was awarded on 25 November 2021 for the sum of Rs 11,541,100 excluding VAT.

The construction works started on 16 September 2021 and was substantially completed on 11 November 2022. I am further informed that the taking over of the works was done on 18 November 2022.

With respect to part (c), I am informed by the management of the Rodrigues Educational Development Company Limited (REDCO) that upon full completion of the football field, the facility will be put at the disposal of the villagers and youth living in the surrounding of Le Chou outside school hours.

As a matter of fact, the Consultant has advised not to hold any activities on the football pitch for the time being as the grass plantation thereof has not been established well to date.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, the Chief Commissioner will realise that there has been delays for various reasons as regards to the completion of this project and this is impacting on the teams especially those in the villagers nearby. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner being given that there will be still some time before allowing these youths to have access to the ground, if he can use his good office to make a request for these youths to have access to the playground of MITD until they can go for training on the ground of Le Chou.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner for Sports is listening. However, as you are aware the MITD does not fall under our responsibility and they may have their own policies as regards to access through their premises. There is also a football ground at Le Chou and also other football grounds which may be nearer to them that I invite the Commissioner for Sports to look into. May I also invite the Member to ask the President's or person responsible of these teams to get in touch with the Commissioner for Sports. Thank you.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

**COMPLAINT/ATTENTION BEEN DRAWN – SALE OF FISH/ABOVE
FIXED PRICE**

(No. B/133) Ms M. N. Raffaut (Second Island Region Member) asked Commissioner for Consumer Protection and Others whether her Commission has received any complaint or her attention has been drawn to the sale of fish in Rodrigues at prices above fixed price and, if so, to state which remedial actions she intends to take in relation thereto?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, information has been obtained from the Consumer Affairs Unit that no official complaints have been received regarding the sales of fish for year 2022 whilst in September 2021, the Consumer Affairs Unit Office has received two official complaints and two contraventions were established against the contraveners. This confirm once again that the sales of fish above fixed prices in Rodrigues is not a recent problem.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, it has been observed that fishes are being sold at exaggerated prices and the Executive Council has decided to approve at its meeting held on 18 November 2022, that the Commission for Consumer Protection initiated actions to review the prices of fish under the Rodrigues Consumer Protection (Chilled, Fresh and Guttled Fish) (Maximum price) Regulations 2018. The proposed new prices of fish have been discussed and agreed during an urgent consultative meeting under my chairmanship on 03 November 2022 with representatives of stakeholders involved in the fish sector in Rodrigues, that is, representatives of fishermen, fishmongers, the Commission for Fisheries, the National Coast Guard and representatives of the “*Association des Consommateurs de l’île Rodrigues*”. During the said meeting, the attention of the stakeholders involved in the fish sector present was drawn on the prevailing situation which is causing a distortion on the market and making fish accessible to only those consumers who can afford to pay the higher prices and leaving the vulnerable consumers behind.

The representatives of the fish sector present in the meeting as well as the representatives of the *Association des Consommateurs de l’île Rodrigues* were unanimous that the actual fixed prices of fish need to be revised and a consensus was reached on the revised maximum wholesale and retail prices of fish per grade.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the proposed revised prices of fish take into consideration protection of consumers to buy fish at an affordable price and cost of living affecting the fishermen community. To note that there has also been a rise in the cost of fishing equipment including price of Mogas since the last time the prices of fish has been reviewed. The new proposed prices of fish have already been communicated to the Ministry for commerce and Consumer Protection for necessary action for the new prices to be effective at the earliest.

It has also been noted, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that consumers require further awareness about their rights and the law protecting their rights. The absence or lack of complaints by consumers denotes that there is need for further education and awareness. To constantly raise consumers' awareness, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commission for Consumer Protection and Others has started awareness campaign on the radio. Actions have also been initiated for the production of sensitisation posters/pamphlets for the information of consumers as well as traders, fishmongers and other merchants. Display boards regarding affixing of prices will also be placed in the different markets of the island.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as soon as the new prices of fish will be effective, pamphlets on the new prices will be distributed to consumers coupled with sensitisation via the social media and the radio. Strict monitoring and control of prices will also be carried out by enforcement officers of the Consumer Affairs Unit as well as the Fisheries Division. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Baptiste: Mr Chairperson, I know that this is a quite a difficult exercise to set the price of fish because generally this will also reflect the demand and supply of fish on the market. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether, they have taken into consideration the current market price – we know that it is supposed to be fixed but in practice everybody knows that it is being sold at a much higher price, so whether, consideration has been taken also to the current market price and what mechanism she intends to put in place to ensure that once the new price is set there will be compliance and efficiency in all of this?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the last time prices of different grade of fish in lagoon has been revised by the former government now sitting at the other side of the House dated back to 2018. The House will agree with me that four years without revising the price of fish...

(Interruptions)

I am answering to the question. Thank you.

The House will agree with me that four years without revising the price of fish is too long especially in a context of prevailing inflation worsened by the largest global economic crisis in more than a century caused by COVID-19 pandemic. This situation that we can call "*laissez-aller*" has given rise to the exaggeration in the prices of fish being practiced in Rodrigues.

Yes, I have noted that fish are being sold to more than twice the price that is fixed. It has been your fault that you have not done what should have been done in the right time. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Baptiste: Mr Chairperson, I am happy that you have noticed that it is being sold at a higher price. I would like to know whether any action has been taken by your commission to stop these abuses and malpractices? What has been done?

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, action done, that is, we have done the consultative meeting. Also, we have worked with the Commission for Fisheries to try to put certain condition in the Fishmonger's Licence so that they comply to sell the fish in fish market. We, the actual government, we will introduce in Rodrigues. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Lisette: I would like to ask the Commissioner whether there has been during that consultative meeting with all the stakeholders, there has been proposal for the change in the grade of fish, meaning some fish which falls under the category of Grade 1, which is now going to fall under category of Grade 2 or vice versa.

Ms Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, yes.

Mr Chairperson: The Table has been advised that questions PQ B/136 will be answered by the Chief Commissioner. Next question, please.

LA FERME AREA HEALTH CENTRE - CHANGE IN ITS OPERATION

(No. B/134) Mr J. R. Ramdally (First Local Region Member for Saint Gabriel) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the Area Health Centre of La Ferme, he will inform the House of any change in its operation and, in the affirmative, to give the reasons therefor and its bearings on patients and staff thereat?

Mr Volbert: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is no change in operation as regards to Provision of Health Services at La Ferme Area Health Centre. However, there will be an upgrade in quality of:

- (i) Dental Services with the setting up of a Child Friendly Dental Clinic, and
- (ii) the setting up of a Modern Kitchen.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the setting up of a Child Friendly Dental Clinic will be the second type of clinic within the Republic of Mauritius after Odette Leal Area Health Centre in Mauritius.

We take in consideration the fact that dental anxiety and fear in children are the main reasons for avoiding dental care which inevitably lead to poor oral hygiene. It was decided after consultation with the Ministry of Health and Wellness to set up a Child Friendly Dental Clinic in Rodrigues. The dental services will soon be relocated. A Quarters annexed to La Ferme Area Health Centre has been identified to accommodate the clinic.

In this respect, a delegation headed by Dr. Ramdhin and two Technicians fielded a mission in Rodrigues upon request of the Minister for Health and Wellness to speed up the project. This will considerably improve access, quality and delivery of dental services by reducing waiting time putting emphasis on customer care, using latest dental technologies and upgraded infrastructure.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, unfortunately, we have to stop catering services at La Ferme as the only space available for the Child Friendly Dental Clinic is at the old doctor's quarters where catering services were being provided. However, as under previous government for Mont Lubin Area Health Centre, whereby the catering services were stopped and services were covered by Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the same arrangement is being made for La Ferme Area Health Centre, Mr Chairperson, Sir. However, unlike the previous OPR regime, we have identified a new space to house the kitchen.

My commission has had recourse to the services of a well-reputed Chef (Mr A.J.) to guide into the design and requirements for a new modern kitchen with international standard to provide meals to patients. The service of Chef A.J. has been requested as it is expected that some equipment at Ex-Vatel Tourism Hotel and Business can be used in the new kitchen.

The kitchen project is at designing stage while the Child Friendly Dental Clinic will be inaugurated by the next visit of Honourable Dr. Jugutpal, Minister of Health and Wellness to Rodrigues. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Ramdally: M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de la Santé s'il y avait des patients qui étaient admis dans ce Area Health Centre ?

Mr Volbert: Je n'ai pas les informations et je peux donner les informations en temps et lieux. Il faudra trouver les informations relatives.

Mr Baptiste: I think that this is an exceptional measure. There is no kitchen at La Ferme. And, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the commission has assessed the additional pressure that this will put on Queen Elizabeth Hospital being given, that now no patient will be admitted at Mont Lubin nor at La Ferme, which means that everybody will now

get their admission at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, whether they have assessed the additional pressure on Queen Elizabeth Hospital and as well as the problems that this will cause to patients living in the different regions of the island?

Mr Volbert: Peut-être il y a des patients qui sont admis à La Ferme, je n'ai pas les informations mais, M. le président, je peux dire que ça a été le cas à plusieurs reprises dans le passé qu'il n'y avait pas de patient admis à La Ferme et aussi bien qu'à Mont Lubin. Donc, les repas étaient préparés à Port Mathurin et il y a même, j'ai cette information, M. le président, à Mont Lubin – *Provision for dinner was contracted out for staff and patients during COVID-19*. On peut aller dans cette direction si le besoin se fait sentir, M. le président. Merci.

Mr Lisette: The Commissioner for Health, can he tell us, inform the House whether patients are still being admitted at La Ferme as at now?

(Interruptions)

Mr Volbert: Pas toute chose que je dois savoir. Pas toute chose qui se passe dans un l'hôpital que je dois savoir. S'il y a des patients qui ne sont pas admis à l'hôpital, là je lui dis oui et il n'y a pas de patient à La Ferme, M. le président. J'ai dit, je vais chercher les informations et je vais donner au respecté Membre. Donc, je ne peux pas répondre à quelque chose que je ne suis pas au courant. S'il y a des patients actuellement qui sont admis à La Ferme Area Health Centre.

Mr Lisette: Or it is right now there? I mean, if there is an addition to be done today at La Ferme whether, the Area Health Centre will admit that patient?

Mr Volbert: Dans le passé et ça a été à plusieurs reprises le cas, que quand on a pas suffisamment de place à Queen Elizabeth Hospital, on envoi des patients à La Ferme. Si ça doit être le cas, M. le président, on va admettre les patients, on va faire transférer les repas de Crève-Cœur à La Ferme, ce n'est pas difficile comme ça. Vous avez déjà fait dans le passé.

Mr Chairperson: One last question.

Mr Baptiste: You are talking about the construction of a new kitchen at La Ferme, can we know when are you planning to start work and to complete?

Mr Volbert: Very soon, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

NEW RUN WAY PROJECT – PLAINE CORAIL AIRPORT

(No. B/135) Dr H. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the New Run Way project at Plaine Corail Airport, he will state if the relocation of all the villagers and economic activities from Ste Marie have been dully completed, and if not, why not?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the relocation of villagers 15 inhabitants of Ste Marie Village have been relocated to other villages. All the families have already moved into their new houses. A few are still occupying the houses at Ste Marie, mainly for rearing of animals. We have talked to them and they now know that they will have to vacate in due course.

Two additional dwellings located at Mt Travers will have to be relocated. As part of the design process for the new runway at Plaine Corail, the Consultant has identified Mt Travers, as the best location for the Control Tower.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the relocation of economic activities various activities which were undertaken by inhabitants and non-inhabitants in the vicinity of the airport such as crop production, animal production and fishing activities had to be relocated.

The total number of projects identified for relocation is 43, consisting of 22 animal production and four fishing activities and 17 Crop production activities. 21 projects have been completed to date and nine other projects will start shortly. Nine beneficiaries for a total of 13 projects have not yet signed the agreement with my commission. A meeting is scheduled with these beneficiaries to reach a new agreement and agree on the way forward, through a conciliatory approach.

Three beneficiaries to be relocated at Les Salines after proper reallocation of land. The crop production activities of 11 beneficiaries will be relocated at La Boucherie after uprooting *accacia nilotica*, clearing and pegging of site by the Commission for Agriculture by early January 2023.

Relocation of Fishing Post/Boat House. As at date out of the five fishing posts/boat houses concerned, four fishing posts/boat house have been completed and handed over to the beneficiaries.

Construction of Fishing Lockers. Construction of building has been fully completed and will be handed over by January 2023 at latest. It is to be noted that this would be used as store for the relocated persons having fishing activities so that they may keep their fishing equipment safely near the shore and do not have to walk long distances with same.

The relocation of economic activities has been completed up to 70% as at date. My commission seeks to complete the process within the minimum delay so as not to hinder the smooth implementation of the project. Where agreement cannot be reached, my commission will look into the possibility of paying compensation, which the beneficiaries can use to continue an income generating activity. Thank you, Mr Chairperson Sir.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, le Chef commissaire a mentionné que tous les habitants qui devait être relogé ont été relogé alors, que pas plus tard que hier après-midi j'ai été là-bas, il y a trois familles qui n'ont pas bougés encore pour des raisons pratiques. Parce que justement s'ils bougent ils doivent quitter l'endroit où ils sont pour aller marcher très loin pour leurs activités économiques, la pêche, ainsi de suite. Puisque la construction des *lockers* pour les *fishermen* sont déjà complétés à 100% et que ces personnes en ce moment doivent marcher très loin, je pense qu'attendre janvier après autant de temps, M. le président, c'est quelque part une punition pour ces personnes. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire peut considérer au plus vite donner les clés à ces personnes-là pour qu'ils vivent de manière plus pratique dans l'endroit où on les a relogées ?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, from information I have, I repeat, 15 inhabitants of Ste Marie village have been relocated to other villages. All the families have already moved into their new houses. A few are still occupying their houses at Ste Marie mainly, for rearing of animals. We have talked to them and they know that they will have to vacate. It is, of course, possible that during her visit to the place there, the Minority Leader has come across some people who are occupying these houses. My information is that these people have already been allocated a house and they are playing with us. If they have signed a contract for relocation and they have had their house, they have to move. In any case, Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is State land, it is not private land and, even if it was private land, we could do, in the public interest public compulsory acquisition. So, I invite these people to be collaborative. We will not tolerate any infringement and any attempt to block project. They have signed a contract; they have their new houses. If they have issues, my office is opened, the Departmental Head can talk to them and we will see how to make things move forward.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, je voudrais quand même préciser qu'en ces moments je pense ces personnes sont réticents pour bouger. J'ai bien mentionné leurs problèmes, ils vont marcher des kilomètres et des kilomètres parce qu'ils ont leurs activités de pêche là-bas, ils ont leurs animaux, ils n'ont pas encore leurs terrains pour planter. Donc, le plus vite que le gouvernement régional aujourd'hui leurs donnent toutes ces facilités, ces

personnes vont bouger. Je voudrais demander au Chef commissaire est-ce que dans le cadre de ce relogement ces personnes devraient avoir leurs baux ? Est-ce qu'ils ont déjà leurs baux et, si non, quand est-ce qu'ils vont les avoir ?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think the current Minority Leader is well aware of this file, it is a project. I remember when we were in the Executive Council in 2006-2011, we delimited the airport zones so that no new leases were allocated to this. All these people, they are not being asked to move out of these place, out of the blue, they have a contract with the commission, a binding legal contract, which they have signed and there are houses which have built in it and in this contract the Regional Assembly will give them their leases. It is a question of administrative procedure to draw these leases. But they will get their lease, they have letters of intent, they will get their lease, they have their houses. It is out of question that they stay where they are, they have to move back. We agree that they may have some activities still going on there but as I have mentioned in my reply, they will be compensated for all their economic activities including fishing, farming and agriculture activities. We have proposed to them agricultural plots but they do not want some of them, they are not agreeable to the plots which have been identified for them. We should not be anti-patriotic on this issue. They have to move, it is a remote place there, I do not agree that they have to walk long distances. Where do they have to walk to for long distances? They have to walk to Pointe Corail, most of it. They have to walk to behind Bansilic. But this is where the airport is going to be. Where they have moved, they have been proposed land in the area opposite in the plateau of Plaine Corail. What do they want? They want to jeopardise this project? No, we should not jeopardise this project, we should support the project. Okay? So, they have a contract, you are mentioning their economic activities. They have a contract for this that they have to be moved and they are given land, they are given their goat pen, everything and we are contemplating, for those who do not agree to compensate them. And, it could be a good thing for us because material costs have increased since the contract were made and some of the contractors who are to execute the works, they are saying that they will not be able to execute the works because of the higher prices of materials. So, we are looking at the thing in a holistic approach.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, je pense que le mieux c'est que, comme le Chef commissaire l'a annoncé qu'il rencontre ces personnes parce que depuis neuf mois que vous êtes au pouvoir pour un projet si important où vous souhaitez que ces personnes bougent, vous les avez pas rencontré encore alors qu'ils arpentent les couloirs de l'Administration très, très

souvent. Je pense que vous avez des informations. Ceci dit, M. le président, donc, je redis *no one want to jeopardise the project*. Là où ils sont aujourd'hui ils doivent marcher pour aller là où leurs maisons étaient. Donc, le plus vite vous leurs donner les clés pour les *lockers*, le plus vite vous leurs allouer les terrains agricoles, ces personnes vont bouger et seront tranquilles. Donc, M. le président, j'aurais une petite question aussi en lien avec justement le relogement des pêcheurs dans cette localité. Un moment ici dans la Chambre, le Chef commissaire avait mentionné le cas, il paraissait un cas de fraude alléguer où il allait avoir recours à d'autre autorité, parce que je pense il avait mentionné ici même, il y avait une personne qui avait deux, dans le cadre de son projet de pêche – *deux ti lakaz dans un pêcherie* – et nous on a donné trois. Un moment il avait parlé qu'il allait avoir recours aux autorités compétentes pour *investigate*. Je voudrais savoir si cela a été fait, s'il y a eu une réponse et où on en est avec ?

The Chief Commissioner: I do not believe the second part of her question form parts of the purview of the question. I would therefore, I do not have the information, advise her to come with a substantive question as regards investigation on the issue. In any case, whatever may be determined does not mean that there may not have been preferences or *ça*. Because as you are aware one institution may deal with the law under it while another may deal with other things. We will act accordingly when we are in the presence of necessary information.

As regards, the first part of her question, I have one Mr Vunmally, Regis Vunmally, which has an issue with his cattle pen and he is also encroaching on some land. He has been coming to see me a hundred times. I have one, Mr Bruno Capdor, he has come to see me for the same issue regarding goat pen. I receive all members of the public every Wednesday. They call at my office and they give their names and then we call them for Wednesday to come and see in my office for their problems. Also, some people they just walk in on Wednesday. But where are these people? If they really have an issue where are they, Mr Chairperson, Sir? I would guess that they have an issue? On paper this is what I have. They have moved officially. Now, whatever they are saying, I have one person from there coming to meet me regarding an electricity issue there. They have no electricity. When they enquire they have not paid for electricity. It has been disconnected. So, you have an issue, you have to pay for your electricity. Otherwise, nobody has come to my office to consult on this issue. So, I would like them to come walk in this Wednesday and we will talk to them.

Mr Chairperson: Now, we move to the next question.

The Minority Leader: Last question, please.

Mr Chairperson: Very last.

The Minority Leader: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask from the Chief Commissioner with regard to the access road, the new place where these people have been moved, it was in the project to have the access road, whether he is contemplating to have this access road done soon?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we will integrate the *morcellement*, the new Ste Marie *morcellement* within the Airport Town project and they will have maybe not an access road but an avenue.

Mr Chairperson: Next question.

PROJECT – PRODUCTION OF ESSENTIAL OIL/RODRIGUAN LEMON

(No. B/136) Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K. (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the project for the production of Essential Oil from the Rodriguan lemon, he will inform the House on what has been done so far and if he intends to go ahead therewith in the interest of our lemon producers

The Chief Commissioner: With your permission, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to reply to PQ B/136 as it falls under my purview, Industrial Development.

I am informed that following the proposal from a potential investor for the setting up of a lemon oil extraction unit in Rodrigues, the then Regional Government through the Commission for Industrial Development decided in 2018 to implement the lemon essential oil project with a view to improve value addition to lemon. The price proposed for the procurement of lemon essential oil by the investor was Euro 1200 per litre and cost per limon to be bought from planters was Rs 1.50.

Being given that the project entails a trade and commercial aspect, the project was entrusted to the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Company (RTMC Ltd) which is a private Company 100% owned by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. As such, the Company made an application for finance lease facility of Rs 20,569,277 and a loan facility of Rs 7,367,939 from MauBank. the amount of loan applied was thereafter increased to Rs 33,637,166. The then Executive Council at its meeting held on 31 August 2018 gave its approval in principle for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to act as a guarantor with the bank in favour of the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Company Ltd for the project.

/UNREVISED/

Upon approval from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the then Executive Council at its meeting held on 10 August 2018 decided to grant an advance of Rs 5.8 m. to the company for the procurement of a lime juice extraction machine to the tune of Rs 28,546,965. The advance money was to be refunded to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly upon disbursement of loan from MauBank Ltd.

In May 2019, a down payment of Rs 5.8 m. was made to a company in Italy for the manufacturing of a lime juice extraction machine. In addition, it was decided to construct a new processing unit for the lemon essential oil project at Gravieres. The initial costs of Rs 9,890,000 exclusive of VAT were revised to Rs 14,623,000 exclusive of VAT in September 2021.

However, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that due to specific pre-disbursement conditions of the bank, the Rodrigues Trading and Marketing Company Limited was not able to secure loans from the bank thus resulting into non-settlement of remaining amount of Rs 22,746,965 for the procurement of the equipment which has already been manufactured and is ready to be shipped to Rodrigues since last year.

Following amendments brought to the Business Plan, the costs to be involved for the implementation of the project comprise the following:

- i) Capital Investment costs which consist of the procurement of the essential oil extraction machine, construction of a building to set up the Extraction Unit at Gravieres and other equipment/machine required to make the factory operational to the tune of Rs 46.5 m., and
- ii) Operation costs of Rs 14.5 m. on an annual basis.

I have also been informed that the real market price for lemon essential oil is Euro 70 per litre instead of Euro 1,200 as initially proposed at the onset of the project and no market was secured yet for the expected production of lemon essential oil.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is noted according to financial plan and investment appraisal figures that the project is not financially sound since both the Net Project Value (NPV) and the project Internal Rate of Return (IRR) generate negative values. Moreover, to date, due to changes in climatic conditions, the production of lemon has considerably decreased and the selling price of lemon has increased to Rs 10 per unit. Additionally, with the current economic context and the increase in foreign exchange rates the viability of the project is further undermined.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the new Executive Council at its meeting held on 06 May 2022 has decided that the new board of the RTMC explores opportunities for the way forward for the lemon Essential Oil Project and all debts and commitment of the RTMC be looked into.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Regional Assembly has made a down payment of Rs 5.8 m. as I have explained. There is now a debt of Rs 22,746,965 to be paid. I cannot see any provision in the budget for the payment of these. Sadly, Mr Chairperson, Sir, what may happen is that these Rs 5.8 m. may be lost and the reputation as a debtor by the Regional Assembly will be compromised internationally. Because as Commissioner of Finance, I do not see where I can get Rs 22,746,965 to pay for something which is not commercially and financially viable. Thank you.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, je ne sais trop où commencer. Je vois que le Chef commissaire a lu les dossiers *bits and pieces*, il vient avec celui qui le fait plaisir. Je voudrais savoir du Chef commissaire, est-ce qu'il est au courant qu'il y a eu après une évolution dans le cadre de ce projet où on a même jusqu'ici, donc au début de l'année on avait déjà fait des échantillons de parfum, plus de 40 échantillons déjà à Rodrigues, je suis sûre à son bureau, où le marcher avait déjà été discuter et presque agréé et que est-il est courant qu'avec une production en moyenne de 375 tonnes de limon en temps normal, ces échantillons déjà fait, on allait vendre ce parfum, est-il au courant, dans le dossier je suis sûre qu'il y en a, parce qu'il y a eu des gens de bonne volonté qui ont travaillé dessus. Ces 375 tonnes de limon allait nous donner environ 145,000 petit flacon de 50 ml, qui allait nous donner un profit sur chaque production annuelle de Rs 116 millions. Est-il au courant que dans les dossiers il y a ces informations ?

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, from what I have in front of me is that the internal rate of return for this project is negative, from the beginning. I do not know which the Minority Leader has and whether she can still save this project. We are not against the project but we do not at this point in time and, we do not wish either to commit Rs 23 m. in these times of hardships to a project which they mentioned, a litre of essential oil will be 1,200 Euro and now, the market says it is 70 Euro. The executive summary of the project. The project requires a substantial financing of Rs 61 m. for the acquisition of long term assets Rs 46 m. and a working capital of Rs 14,535. Experience in Rodrigues, we have experienced it. It should not be the role of the Regional Assembly even through its companies to embark on specially such non-viable projects. Because it is showing loss. Where will you get Rs 14 m. per year out of our budget to finance a company for extracting lemon oil at 70 Euro per litre. And, Mr

Chairperson, Sir, who are these persons which is Biolab, which has then changed, Mr Chairperson, Sir. So, tomorrow, Tom, Dick and Harry comes to Rodrigues and say: 'Okay, we are going to do such and such project, you finance us.', Mr Chairperson, Sir. I have seen the name of Biolab and then ownership of Biolab has changed. There have been other directors and the project has now from Biolabex, Mr Laurent and Mr Roule, *ine roule zot*, have introduced on 19 December 2018, Mr Laurent and Mr Roule have introduced the new company 'Yellow.com' which will be responsible for the purchase of *essence de limon*, Mr Appavoo has not formed part of the team. So, they move from Biolabex to Yellow.com. And, Yellow.com wanted a 15 year exclusive to Yellow.com with regard to the... Who are these people, Biolabex? Who are these people Yellow.com? Who come and walk in and give them a project and they are okay, commit Rs 5.8 m. And now, as Chief Commissioner and Commissioner of Finance I have a claim for Rs 23 m. Maybe the Minority Leader can enlighten me where we will get Rs 23 m. to pay for this machine which is waiting for payment in Italy. Maybe she can make a cheque, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

The Minority Leader: Mr Chairperson, Sir, again I do not know where to start. But what I can say is that the Chief Commissioner is reading the first line of the project dated *Mathusalem*. This is what I know and I am sure members of his Executive Council can confirm, I will not go into much details not to *pa met labour pa brille labou*. But, Mr Chairperson, Sir, what I am sure is that members of the Executive Council who read the files from start to the end, they are aware of where matters stand. If it is true that we started with Biolabex and so on, at the start, *d'ailleurs je sais que les Membres du Conseil Exécutif avec une bonne intention on rencontré ces personnes que nous avons rencontres et que nous avons mis ces personnes-là de côté, parce que nous savons qu'ils n'avaient pas des bonnes intentions. Je veux savoir du Chef commissaire est-ce que – 'vous parlez beaucoup comme l'eau salé et puis vous allez retourner votre veste, je suis sure.*

M. le président, est-ce que le Chef commissaire, un commissaire responsable du Développement Industrielle a lu et a compris qu'on est passé de la production de l'huile essentiel dans les dossiers, les commissaires peuvent voir, à la production de parfum pour Rodrigues où on avait déjà – une discussion, un pourparlers pour signer un MOU avec Inter Essence en France pour produire ces parfums pour être vendu dans le Duty Free de Maurice. Le Chairman du Duty Free de Maurice allait nous mettre en contact – tout ça on avait discuté, on avait des réunions – avec tous les grand Duty Free du monde pour ce projet et c'est pour ça que je maintiens que c'est un projet viable et je suis sure, que ceux qui connaissent le projet

vont dans le même sens que moi. Faut pas tenter de brouiller la piste, M. le président. Aujourd'hui, il faut admettre, c'est un projet important pour Rodrigues. Parce que les Rs 10 l'unité de limon, c'est aujourd'hui parce qu'on est en sécheresse. En temps normal, c'est 50 sous, c'est même 30 sous. Et, on avait discuté, les planteurs étaient partant. Est-il au courant que pour toute la production des 375 tonnes, ces planteurs allaient avoir environ Rs 2.50 l'unité, c'est-à-dire, on allait vendre par kilo et les planteurs étaient *in the project*. *Is he aware or is he reading the file bits and pieces just to blame the past government?*

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I need not read the file up from beginning to the end. The question is, I will inverse the role, I will ask her a question, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I will ask you a question. Can the Minority Leader tell the House where me, Commissioner for Finance, our budget, we will get these Rs 23 m. to pay for the shipment of that equipment to Rodrigues because we need to pay before they ship? This is the first question. Second, what will happen to the Rs 5.8 m., if we do not pay?

The Minority Leader: M. le président, je lui pose une question comme Chef commissaire. L'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues a investi Rs 5.8 millions, a-t-il prit sa responsabilité pour communiquer avec cette entreprise pour voir où est-ce qu'il en est ?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, for ethical purposes. It is not my duty – for ethical purposes. For ethical purposes it is not my duty to deal with suppliers. I do not do this. I do not know who is in charge of the project really, there is Invest Rodrigues. *La prevue*, she addresses her question to the Commissioner for Agriculture while the file is in the commission. What I want to tell her is that I agree with her, that we have to value the lemon extract. We have received in the Executive Council some sets of perfumes, which smell very good. I do not know where they are. They are with the Island Chief Executive, I believe or maybe the Commissioners, I do not know. So, it smells good but the lemon extract is just part of it. Okay? So, how does she explain that her initial feasibility first, put 1,200 Euro price per litre. Then it was revised to 70 per litre and then there is Roule, which has *roule* them. And, there is Biolabex. They are saying that Biolabex was not correct or was corrupt, I do not know. So, I invite her, Mr Chairperson, Sir, again *dans un esprit de collaboration, si elle veut sauver le projet de venir avec des propositions, elle peut passer me voir, même si ce n'est pas le mercredi* and we discuss how to make things move. Because I do not know how to make things move.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Yes, I think that the question has sufficiently been ... So, we are experiencing a new clause of the Standing Order. Maybe because it is the last session and this has not been amended. This is why we are moving to the last question of this session. The last question.

(Interruptions)

**REFURBISHMENT PROJECT – ‘LA MAISON DES PECHEURS’/POINTE
MONIER**

(No. B/137) Dr H. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others Whether, in regard to the refurbishment project of ‘*La Maison des Pêcheurs*’ at Pointe Monier, he will state:

- (a) the scope of work, the starting date and the expected date of completion thereof;
- (b) the list of bidders highlighting their respective bid value and indicating the successful bidder, and
- (c) where matters stand as at date?

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Executive Council in March 2022 approved a list of urgent measures to be implemented by my commission in order to boost the fisheries development in Rodrigues of which includes the Rehabilitation Project of ‘*La Maison des Pêcheurs*’ and, include its three cold rooms to enable it to operate as early as possible. This will provide proper cold storage and marketing facilities to Fisherman to support the development of the fisheries sector.

As regard to part (a), Mr Chairperson, Sir, the scope of works are:

- i) Renovation of fish procession unit which includes replacement of sheeting and openings and tiles, electrical and plumbing works, rainwater harvesting, etc.;
- ii) Renovation of generator and toilet block which includes replacement of sheeting and openings and tiles, sanitary wares, electrical and plumbing works, rainwater harvesting, etc.;
- iii) Renovation of fish shop which includes replacement of sheeting and openings and tiles, electrical and plumbing works, rainwater harvesting, etc.;
- iv) Cleaning of yard, removal of unwanted shrubs, garbage and debris;
- v) Replacement of damaged fence and poles;

- vi) Cleaning and painting of boundary walls including repairs to decorative sections;
- vii) Replacement of gate, and
- viii) Construction of drain for storm water drainage.

Works started on 18 August 2022 and were completed on 11 November 2022.

As regards part (c) as at date the refurbishment of '*La Maison des Pêcheurs*' premises and fish market have already been completed. The next step is the repairs of the three cold rooms. Tender process has started and same is expected to be completed by December 2022.

Dr. Agathe: I have not heard about the cost of the...

Mr Perrine: The contract for the renovation works at '*La Maison des Pêcheurs*' at Pointe Monier was awarded to Mr J.R.K for the corrected sum of Rs 3,925,906 excluding VAT after discount offered amounting to Rs 895,000.

Mr Chairperson: Time is over.

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS

RECENT MISSION – REUNION ISLAND – LAND USE PLANNING

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I would like to make a statement regarding the participation of a delegation from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the Executive Council to the UROI which was held in Reunion Island organised by the Township of St Joseph from 08, 09 and 10 December last and which was attended by myself, Commissioner Mr Varok Ravina and the planner at the Cadastral Office, Mrs Patricia Léopold. M. le président, c'est avec un sentiment positif du travail accompli que notre délégation est rentrée à Rodrigues après trois jours intenses de riches échanges et de discussions avec l'UROI. L'UROI, c'est l'Université Rurale de l'Océan Indien. Cette édition 2022 nous a permis à nous, nouveaux responsables politique de Rodrigues de comprendre ce que c'est que l'UROI est le principe, le concept est les valeurs de la ruralité.

Je crois que les autres membres, les membres de l'ancien exécutif sont bien au courant de ces concepts. L'UROI avait organisé sa session de 2019 à Rodrigues. M. le président, tous ces concepts de ruralité sont importants à la Réunion, au maire de Saint Joseph est aussi premier adjoint à la région Réunion. Ma délégation et moi, nous avons été bien reçus et nous avons au travers de tous les travaux auxquels nous avons participé, compris l'importance de préserver la ruralité, qui en faites est un des composants des concepts centraux de plan d'aménagement

du territoire que nous devons mettre en place à Rodrigues. M. le président, le concept de la ruralité est un concept qui vise à préserver les terres agricoles dans le milieu rural.

A Rodrigues, nous devons être au-devant de ces concepts et les appliquer parce que comme vous le savez, de plus en plus, il y a la pression sur les terres et les terres agricoles d'année en année, sont converties en résidence ou en terrains dites commerciaux ou industriels et nous perdons de cette ruralité dont nous devons travailler pour la préservation de la ruralité à Rodrigues et la conservation de notre âme. Ne pas ne rien faire, ne pas résister à la force du béton et du bitumage, que certains ont tendance à considérer comme des indices du développement, c'est abolir, vendre l'âme de Rodrigues. Il nous faudra donc ensemble avec le Conseil Exécutif et les autres membres et la population, dans un esprit consultatif en 2023, commencer à travailler sur l'application du plan d'aménagement du territoire.

Le gros du travail a déjà été fait. Je me souviens en 2010, nous avons publié le *outline scheme* qui a délimité les différentes zones, les zones naturelles, les zones agricoles, les zones résidentielles et nous devons expliciter et vulgariser largement nos instruments de protection et de promotion de la ruralité pour que cela s'ancre durablement dans les esprits. M. le président, les retombées de cette mission, c'est que Mme Patricia Léopold a été nommée nouvelle référente de LUROI pour Rodrigues. Mais nous allons discuter avec le comité organisateur pour que l'Assemblée régionale devienne un des organisateurs des prochains UROI qui seront organisés et nous avons aussi établi un bon contact avec le département hydrogéologique de la ville de Saint Joseph et un de ces hydrogéologues ensemble avec M. Boyer de la Mairie du Tampon seront avec nous en janvier lors de la réunion dont je parlais au début de cette première séance.

Nous souhaitons mettre... *put on record* notre appréciation de l'accueil que nous avons reçu à la Réunion et de la grande amitié qui s'est développée entre Saint Joseph et Rodrigues. Il y a aussi l'aspect du lycée agricole professionnel de Saint Joseph où nous avons visité un peu à la va-vite les facilités. Une délégation comprenant le proviseur sera Rodrigues pour voir comment relancer le lycée agricole de Saint Gabriel et aussi mettre en coopération dans le cadre du programme d'échange des jeunes, le programme d'aide à mobilité... *You want to speak?* Comment envoyer nos jeunes dans ce prestigieux lycée agricole de Saint Joseph pour des formations courtes et précises, par exemple, nous avons vu la préparation de jus pasteurisé, M. le président. Donc, nous encouragerons nos jeunes, les encadreront pour les envoyer à se faire former dans des domaines pareils au lycée agricole de Saint Joseph et dans d'autres domaines. Je remercie mon collègue, le Commissaire Ravina et aussi Mme Léopold qui pour nous, cette

mission a été très enrichissante avec des concepts très intéressants pour Rodrigues que nous commencerons à appliquer l'année prochaine.

‘ASSISES DE LA PECHE DE RODRIGUES’ – UPCOMING EVENTS

Mr Perrine: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is a point of information, an update on les ‘*Assises de la Pêche de Rodrigues*’ and the upcoming events. Les ‘*Assises de la Pêche de Rodrigues*’ has been a pledge of the new government to undertake transformative reforms in the fisheries and aquaculture sector as a game changer for the sustainable development of the island economy. The initiative aims to foster nature positive, people centred, climate resilient and profitable fisheries value chain as an accelerated growth sector share prosperity. Furthermore, it promotes a wealth management approach to drive the triple bottom line of sustainable and integrated development, that is, economic efficiency, social well-being and environmental health of our inner and outer fisheries lagoon resources in the context of the emerging blue economy paradigm. The envisioned outcomes of the endeavour are to maximise food and nutrition security, employment opportunities for women and youth, wealth creation and export earnings in the short, medium and long-term.

The Commissioner for Fisheries and Others has opted for an innovative and participatory approach in implementing this strategy impetus. The process engages and adopts interdisciplinary team of local public and private sector leaders facilitated by a fisheries economic expert of internal refute. Recently, a one-day multi-stakeholder consultation was organised on the side-line of the celebration of International Fishers Day in collaboration with the IOC.... *Fédération des Pêcheurs Artisan de L’Océan Indien*. The forum has contributed significantly to building a sheer understanding of the prospects and challenges including the way forward to formulate a realistic, sustainable and profitable artisanal fisheries strategy and action plan for Rodrigues. Building on the establishment momentum, the Commission for Fisheries and Others has convened a second strategic, orientation and technical consultative workshop to be held at Cotton Bay on 20 December 2022.

The event intends to capitalise on the experimental learning and best practices of Mauritius mainland and neighbouring island countries namely the Republic of Seychelles and France, La Réunion in the spirit of effective regional collaboration and cooperation. Therefore, I am very delighted to announce that the participation of honourable Sudheer Maudhoo, Minister of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping and a high delegation and honourable Jean-François Gabriel Ferrari, Minister for Fisheries and Blue Economy and a

delegation from the Seychelles to contribute to the upcoming forum.leaders of FPAOI and the *Comité Régional de la pêche maritime de La Réunion* have also confirmed their participation. Thank you very much.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN – REPATRIATION OF PATIENTS SENT TO MAURITIUS

Mr Volbert: Mr Chairperson, Sir, allow me to make a very short statement respecting patients from Mauritius going for treatment in Mauritius. M. le président, j'aurais aimé souhaiter, informer plutôt cette Chambre que ma Commission ne reste pas insensible aux appels de nos compatriotes qui sont à Maurice et qui ont terminé leur traitement. Il y a beaucoup de représentations de la part des familles, des parents des patients qui sont à Maurice après leur traitement. Il y a même quelques membres de l'opposition qui m'ont contacté pour demander à ce qu'on fasse le nécessaire pour ramener ces patients pour faire venir avant la fin de l'année. Et j'aimerais informer la Chambre ici que nous avons fait le nécessaire au niveau de la compagnie d'*Air Mauritius* pour que ces patients ainsi que leur accompagnateur rentrent ici avant la fin de cette année car il y a beaucoup parmi eux qui ont eu des tickets, des billets pour la fin du mois de janvier mais nous, on a fait le nécessaire pour que ces patients-là rentrent avant le 31 décembre. Merci.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF RODRIGUAN DELEGATION – COMMISSION DE LA JEUNESSE ET DES SPORTS DE L'OCEAN INDIEN (CJSOI) GAMES – MAURITIUS

Mr Ravina: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have the pleasure to inform the House that a delegation of 12 athletes, five coaches participated in the 12th edition of the CJSOI Games held in Mauritius from 04 to 12 December 2022. The delegation comprised also two youngsters for the youth and cultural component (*volet jeunesse*) and two young entrepreneurs of Rodrigues for the entrepreneurial part of the games.

I had the privilege to be present in the opening ceremony accompanied by the Departmental Head and concerned Heads of Divisions.

The delegation made an outstanding performance by winning 12 medals in all.

(Applause)

Mr Ravina: That is, eight gold medals, four silver medals and five bronze medals. The detailed performance per discipline is as follows:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| (i) Athletics; | 3 gold, 3 silver and 5 bronze medals |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|

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- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|----------------|
| (ii) | Boxing; | 1 gold medal |
| (iii) | Mentally handicapped; | 2 gold medals |
| (iv) | Visually handicapped; | 2 gold medals |
| (v) | Weight lifting; | 1 silver medal |

Indeed, it is the first time that Rodrigues, under the national team, obtain such a good yield of medals at this level. This outstanding result comfort us in our endeavour to provide the maximum support to our athletes and coaches in their quest to achieve high performance.

I would like to seize this opportunity to congratulate the whole delegation, the sport community for their precious contribution for the realisation of this achievement, especially the coaches, athletes, sport cadres and parents and Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

As announced during our last sitting in this House, the athletes will be rewarded in a special ceremony which will be held at the end of this month. On the other hand, my Commission is already working on a scheme for the preparation of our athletes for the next regional competition, that is, the Indian Ocean Island Games which will be held in 2023. A meeting with stakeholders will be organised in early January for this purpose.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

END OF YEAR GREETINGS

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, before I move for the adjournment of the House, I would like to in my capacity as Chief Commissioner and Leader of this House, to say a few words.

M. le président, l'année 2022 tire à sa fin et nous voilà juste au seuil de 2023. Comme à l'accoutumée, je voudrais profiter de cette période préfestive pour présenter mes vœux de fin d'année. Permettez-moi de vous présenter à vous, M. le président, à votre épouse et votre famille mes meilleurs vœux de Noël et de nouvel année 2023. Mes vœux de joyeux Noël et de bonne année 2023 vont aussi à tous mes collègues commissaires et à leurs familles, au Leader de la minorité et à Monsieur et ainsi qu'au auguste membres de cette Assemblée et à leurs familles.

M. le président, puis-je vous demandez, en mon nom personnel et au nom de tous les membres de cette Assemblée régionale, de transmettre au Président de la République, Son Excellence Prithvirajsing Roopun, et Madame, à Monsieur le Premier ministre, Honorable

Pravind Kumar Jugnauth et Madame Jugnauth, ainsi qu'aux membres de son Cabinet, au Speaker de l'Assemblée Nationale, l'Honorable Sooroojdev Phokeer, au Leader de l'Opposition, l'Honorable Luc Xavier Duval, et Madame, et aux membres de l'Assemblée Nationale et à leurs familles, nos vœux de bonne et heureuse année 2023. Nos meilleurs vœux de bonne et heureuse année vont aussi au *Clerk* et au *Deputy Clerk* de l'Assemblée régionale, à tout le personnel de l'Assemblée et à leurs familles, les policiers et leurs familles ainsi que tous les fonctionnaires de l'Assemblée régionale. Nos souhaits vont également au *Island Chief Executive*, au personnel de mon bureau, *Departmental Heads* et comme j'ai dit, tous les personnels des différentes commissions et leurs familles.

M. le président, je voudrais présenter à toute la population de Rodrigues, tous les enfants, les jeunes et les adultes et les personnes plus âgées, mes vœux de joyeux Noël et de bonne année, heureuse année 2023. Nous souhaitons ardemment que l'année 2023 soit une meilleure année. Au-delà de ce que l'année 2022, qui s'achève aura représenter pour chacun d'entre nous en terme d'épreuve et de joie, de défi et d'*achievement*, je les remercie de croire en notre gouvernement régional et l'intérêt et dévouement pour contribuer dans le développement de Rodrigues.

Je vous remercie, M. le président.

The Minority Leader: M. le président, je me joins au Chef commissaire en ce temps de fête et de jouissance pour vous présenter mes vœux et ceux de l'équipe de la minorité parlementaire, à vous et à votre famille, au Chef commissaire et à sa famille, à l'adjoint au Chef commissaire et son épouse, à l'ensemble des membres du Conseil exécutif et leurs familles, à tous les membres de l'Assemblée régionale et leurs familles. Je me joins aussi au Chef commissaire pour vous demander de faire parvenir nos vœux à Son Excellence le Président de la République et sa famille, à l'honorable Premier ministre et sa famille, les membres de son Cabinet et leurs familles, le Speaker, le Leader de l'Opposition, les membres du Parlement.

Donc, je souhaite aussi nos meilleurs vœux au PPS de Rodrigues et le membre Léopold. Nos vœux vont aussi à Mme *Clerk* et *Deputy Clerk* et leurs familles et l'ensemble du staff qui nous servent ici et leurs familles, au *Island Chief Executive*, les *Departmental Heads* et leurs familles et l'ensemble du staff de l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues. Nos vœux vont aussi à tous les acteurs économiques et sociaux de Rodrigues et nous avons une pensée les plus chères à toutes celles et tous ceux qui préparent avec joie ces moments pour des retrouvailles heureuses. Nous ne pouvons ne pas avoir une pensée spéciale en ce temps dure pour toutes ces

familles rodriguaises qui ne pourront avoir le cœur à la fête pour diverses raisons: le manque d'eau, la perte d'emploi, la perte d'un être cher et je pense à ces mamans, ces parents qui ont perdu cette semaine des petits enfants.

Donc, nous pensons aussi à ceux qui ont dû partir de force à Maurice pour trouver du travail. Donc, nous souhaitons que cette nouvelle année apporte la réussite, la santé et la prospérité à tous, que le bonheur soit au rendez-vous dans le cœur de chacune et de chacun et bien sûr, j'ai une pensée spéciale pour notre leader qui a servi 18 ans, presque 20 ans cette Assemblée, et sa famille et nous souhaitons un heureux Noël et une merveilleuse année 2023 à toute l'île Rodrigues et à la République de Maurice.

Mr Chairperson: Thank you, Minority Leader.

Respected Members, I wish to associate myself with the season's greetings as expressed by the House to the President of the Republic, His Excellency, Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, GCSK and Mrs, to the Honourable Prime Minister, Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and Mrs, to Mr Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Sooroojdev Phokeer, GOSK, to the Honourable Ministers and Honourable Members of the National Assembly and their respective families. In my own name and on behalf of the staff of the Regional Assembly, I thank the Chief Commissioner and the Minority Leader for their kind words and good wishes.

I am pleased to extend my best wishes for a Merry Christmas 2022 and a Happy New Year 2023 on behalf of the Secretariat of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, on my own behalf to the Chief Commissioner, Mr Johnson Roussety, GOSK and Mrs, to the Deputy Chief Commissioner, to all Commissioners, to the Minority Leader, to the Deputy Chairperson, to all Respected Members and their respective families.

Allow me to thank the Respected Members of this August Assembly for their kind collaboration and understanding all throughout these years. I also avail myself of this opportunity to extend my gratitude and thanks to the Clerk of the Regional Assembly, the Serjeant-at-Arms and his team and all the members of the staff of the Assembly for their collaboration the whole year round, and convey to them and their families my best wishes.

I direct the Clerk, to transmit the season's greetings of our Regional Assembly, including those of the Chief Commissioner and the Minority Leader to all concerned.

Once again, my best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all, thank you.

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ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I move that the House be now adjourned to Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Chairperson: The House stands adjourned.

At 3.14 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 10.30 a.m.

MATTERS RAISED

DIFFICULTIES BEING MET BY LOCAL BREEDERS – ANIMAL FEEDS

The Minority Leader: M. le président, donc, permettez-moi de dire un petit mot par rapport à la situation des éleveurs. Donc, on en a eu l'occasion brièvement de mentionner ce matin lors de la *question time*. En effet, donc, je voudrais alerter le Commissaire de l'agriculture de la situation traumatisante que vivent actuellement les éleveurs en ce temps de grande sécheresse. Donc, j'ai été témoin plusieurs fois parce que dans mon village, il y a un endroit, un point où on vend de la nourriture pour les animaux et à chaque bateau qui arrive, il y a une longue queue et ça devient donc, des queues interminables et même des bousculades. '*Dimoune pousser.*' Les gens qui sortent de Rivière Cocos pour arriver à Palissade, les gens qui sortent de Grand Baie pour arriver à Palissade, donc, et c'est le cas dans différents points de ventes pour denrées pour les animaux à travers Rodrigues.

Donc, je demande au Commissaire de l'agriculture de voir comment on peut le plus vite essayer de résoudre ce grand problème parce que les gens ne savent plus quoi faire et j'ai été triste ce matin quand j'ai vu... Les mêmes personnes qui étaient là hier jusqu'à une heure, aujourd'hui, revenir et après, arrivé à 09h00, ils doivent partir parce que le camion ne va pas venir livrer les aliments pour les animaux et ces personnes ne savent pas où aller. Bien sûr, ceux qui ont des voitures, ils font le tour de Rodrigues et ceux qui ne peuvent pas, malheureusement, ils ne savent pas quoi faire. Donc, je demande au Commissaire de l'agriculture de bien voir comment avec les bateaux qui vont arriver, au risque de doubler, de demander à doubler le confinement par rapport aux aliments pour les animaux et je pense que c'est nécessaire en cette période très, très difficile pour les éleveurs.

Mr Perrine: M. le président, je voudrais dire que ma Commission s'est assurée que les trois voyages qui vont être arrivés, nous aurons à peu près presque 500 tonnes d'aliments à Rodrigues et nous allons voir si... Nous communiquons avec aussi les producteurs à Maurice, Livestock Feed Limited.... pour qu'ils puissent avoir la possibilité d'importer, d'envoyer à Rodrigues la quantité du *containers* qu'ils peuvent. Mais j'ai beaucoup de regrets parce que vous savez, la maison des éleveurs est fermée et ils ont un grand store. On aurait pu stocker beaucoup d'aliments. C'est-à-dire, on est en train d'essayer toutes les possibilités qui existent et je peux assurer la *Minority Leader*.

J'ai dit et puis, le 21 aussi, un autre bateau qui arrive. Et nous allons aller très vite avec les *vouchers*. D'ici la semaine prochaine, ça va être disponible pour pouvoir aider les éleveurs. Je suis conscient. Je sillonne l'île presque tous les jours mais c'est une calamité naturelle qu'on ne peut pas éviter mais qu'on peut diminuer l'impact. Et ce que je souhaiterais, c'est que toute la population collabore parce que tous les Rodriguais sont un peu éleveur, pêcheur ou planteur. C'est qu'on n'essaye pas de tirer de capital politique dessus. On collabore et aussi, on fait comprendre que c'est un petit peu l'âme de Rodrigues qui est en souffrance. Je vous remercie.

PLIGHT OF AIR PASSENGERS – MAURITIUS TO RODRIGUES

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I just want to make a statement. I do not have any Commission as target but I want to make that statement as a pledge via the Chief Commissioner's Office to Air Mauritius. My statement is motivated by the fact that I witnessed something on my return to Mauritius on the 04 December, whereby I have seen an old person who is estimated to be about 70 years old to burst into tears when he was asked to pay for an excess of more than Rs 5000. On my observation, I noted that all those who come after him, they of course, they are allowed to pay for excess and those who have their Kestrel Flyer Card, they are allowed for excess on the Air Mauritius. Meaning that it is not a question of control on baggage as such but it is more of a question of a business by Air Mauritius. So, my request that I want to pledge via the Chief Commissioner's Office is that we, for the interest of the Rodriguan travelers and passengers, that we ask Air Mauritius to at least increase the baggage policy from 15kg to 20kg for those who are traveling between Rodrigues and Mauritius.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the price too when I travelled from Reunion, I was worried because I bought some *boucanés* and some *saucisses* in my luggage and we have to leave it because we believe that we had 15 kilos but when we were at the airport, we realised that we have 23 kilos on the ATR. And, then, I asked to myself but why we do not

have 23 kilos to Rodrigues. And the question came lucidly because of course, we have a very small airport and they cannot take luggage, more than 15 kilos because of the short runway. In Reunion, it is a big runway, the Roland Garros Airport but of course, the issue is the long-term to work out the new airport. And, also, the reintroduction, Mr Chairperson, Sir, of the passenger sea route.

This should be reintroduced because it enables small traders, handicraft people to take their goods to Mauritius to sell it themselves and for families to travel. If you have a big family as me, you must prepare Rs 50000 for a travel to Mauritius with a return ticket. So, you imagine the average Rodriguan if we have lot of children like me and you know how it is, to travel for a holiday in Mauritius, not even a holiday, for a visit in Mauritius which is a basic necessity. For some people, they have to buy some goods, visit their families, etcetera maybe for health reasons and it is very costly. So, I agree with them. We will propose to Air Mauritius but the answer will be this: that the airport is too small; they cannot take the full load on the ATR. So, it is also a private company, you know. I, myself as Chief Commissioner, I am asked to pay for two kilos on Air Mauritius. We have to pay. It is the policy. I do not have a Kestrel Flyer Card. I had it, I have to renew it. So, it is a question of commercial policy but yes, we will look into the matter with them.

PRECARIOUS HOUSING CONDITIONS – CYCLONIC SEASON – ASSISTANCE FROM COMMISSION FOR HOUSING

Mr Baptiste: Merci, M. le président. Donc, ma requête s'adresse à l'adjoint au Chef commissaire. Donc, comme vous le savez, nous sommes déjà en période cyclonique et Rodrigues en ce moment, fait face également à une période de sécheresse où il y a un manque cruel d'eau. Donc, je pense que nous prions tous avec beaucoup de ferveur pour que les grosses pluies arrivent au plus vite. Cependant, nombreuses sont les familles qui sont dans l'angoisse et qui nous sollicitent chaque jour qu'elles vivent dans des conditions de logements précaires, notamment dans des petites maisons en tôle ou des *trust fund* avec des toits très abimés ou d'autres encore dans des maisons surpeuplées. Donc, je pense en particulier à ces bénéficiaires qui avaient déjà signé leur contrat et qui attendent toujours. Donc, c'est pourquoi je lance un appel pressant à l'adjoint au Chef commissaire qui est également responsable du dossier du logement de réactiver et surtout de faire fonctionner au plus vite les différents *schemes*, les différents projets d'aide au logement afin de permettre à ces familles et surtout les enfants en cette période de fête qui rêvent en ce temps de Noël de vivre plus dignement et dans le bonheur, surtout aussi pour pouvoir affronter sereinement les intempéries. Merci.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Je remercie le respecté membre pour son appel. M. le président, c'est vrai que nous avons à cœur d'offrir un logement décent aux familles. Nous avons fait de notre mieux depuis qu'on est là pour aider ces gens-là. Je me rappelle il y avait un... Lorsque je regardais dans le dossier, on avait mis d'après les différents projets de logement, des différents programmes de logement qu'il y avait, on avait mis de côté 400 familles. Donc, il était de mon devoir de voir comment aider ces 400 familles-là. Donc, nous sommes en train de voir. Nous avons un bureau qui s'appelle le *Housing Unit* chez nous qui tourne à plein régime. Nous avons donné pas mal «d'argent dalle» comme on dit.

Donc, là d'ici la fin de cette année-ci, on va donner plus de Rs10 millions de «l'argent dalle». Il nous reste un *batch* de 44 personnes à donner bientôt. Donc, on a donné à peu près 86 personnes, 86 familles qu'on a pu aider. Et bien sûr aussi, on a ces gens comme le respecté membre dit, ces gens qui ont eu leurs contrats signés. C'est vrai, on a déjà commencé. Il m'a demandé de réactiver. Non. C'est déjà *on*. On n'a pas réactivé. Simplement, on a déjà commencé à donner des matériaux mais il y a un facteur que vous connaissez tous. Il y avait un manque de ciment. Il y a un gros manque de ciment. On a déjà alloué le contrat pour le ciment à quelqu'un. Donc, faute de ciment, pénurie de ciment à Rodrigues, donc...

Mais avec l'arrivée du nouveau bateau, donc, on espère avoir beaucoup de ciment et à ce moment-là, on va continuer le projet. Donc, c'est un projet qui nous tient à cœur. Bien sûr, on va continuer à voir ces 400 familles qui sont vraiment... qui n'ont pas eu de *loan*, que ce soit à la banque, qui n'ont eu de *loan* que ce soit au *credit union* de l'île. Donc, nous, on va voir comment aider ces familles-là. Bien sûr, il y a d'autres familles qu'on va aider. Donc, c'est un *continuous process*. Bien sûr, tout gouvernement qui tient à cœur le bien-être des Rodriguais bien sûr va dans ce sens. Donc, nous, on est là pour aider. Je rassure le membre qu'on va faire de notre mieux pour mener à bien ce projet. Merci.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY PATIENTS – SPECIALIST SERVICES AT HOSPITAL

Mr Ramdally: Merci, M. le président. J'aimerais porter l'attention de cette Chambre deux problèmes qui nous ont été rapportés par nos concitoyens en lien avec les traitements médicaux spécialisés. Donc, aux alentours du 15 novembre dernier, des patients malvoyants ont eu leurs rendez-vous avec des spécialistes pour les yeux. Donc, certains nous ont rapporté leurs difficultés qui peuvent se résumer comme suit.

Donc, contrairement à ce qui se pratiquait auparavant, il y avait un grand nombre de patients et ils sont restés bloqués de 08h00 à 15h00 pour ensuite avoir un bus qui sillonne toute l'île pour les ramener à la maison. Donc, vu l'état de certains de ces patients, donc, ils ont vécu cela très durement. Donc, nous demandons au Commissaire de la santé de revoir l'organisation autour de ces consultations, donc, pour le bien-être de ces patients. Donc, le deuxième problème, donc, le Commissaire a déjà dit qu'il a fait. Ça concerne les patients qui ont eu leurs sorties dans les hôpitaux à Maurice et qui n'ont pas un billet pour retourner à Rodrigues. Donc, je lui facilite pour les actions entreprises et j'espère qu'il n'y aura personne qui va rester pour....

Mr Volbert: En ce qui concerne les patients pour les soins des yeux, mais j'aimerais informer le respecté membre qu'auparavant, il y avait la visite des spécialistes une fois tous les trois mois. Maintenant, on a une fois tous les mois et ce pour deux semaines. Donc, je vois mal comment... Je ne dis pas que ce n'est pas vrai mais je vais enquêter. Je vais demander à ce qu'on enquête pour savoir les vraies raisons et en ce qui concerne pour le bus pour les ramener à la maison, tout le temps, c'était comme ça. On a un seul bus et on a fait acquisition pour un deuxième bus là et ça va régler, j'en suis sûr, très bientôt. Et en ce qui concerne les patients de Maurice, ça, comme j'ai dit tout à l'heure, on va faire le nécessaire et on va s'assurer, surtout les patients sur les *stretcher* pour que ces patients-là arrivent à Rodrigues parce qu'ils prennent six places dans l'avion et on va faire le nécessaire pour qu'ils arrivent avant la fin de cette année.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED – LACK OF WATER – PLED FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO WATER

Dr Agathe: M. le président, pour ma part, je souhaite dire quelques mots sur la situation de l'eau qui s'adresse au Chef commissaire responsable du secteur de l'eau. Alors, la situation actuelle dans le service de l'eau à Rodrigues, où la fréquence de distribution s'est longuement rallongée, avec des temps d'attente allant dans beaucoup de cas au-delà de trois mois, pousse les ménages et les entreprises à avoir massivement recours à des services payants pour se procurer de l'eau.

Ceux qui ont les moyens paient le service de camions, d'autres vont se ravitailler à des points d'eau. Dans certains coins de l'île, on voit apparaître des porteur d'eau à l'œuvre pour ravitailler des familles avec leur '*tolle*' sur la tête. Pour les lessives, on retourne à l'époque de '*Bake yaya lor la tête*'.

Quelques constats découlent de cette situation :

- Tant bien que mal, ceux qui ont les moyens arrivent à accéder à la précieuse ressource;
- Un accès spécial a été prévu pour le secteur touristique;
- Ceux qui n'ont pas les moyens, et ce sont souvent les plus vulnérables de la société, se retrouvent privés de cette ressource car le service de distribution par les camions de l'Etat n'arrive pas encore à desservir tout le monde.
- Certains font du business avec l'eau alors que l'eau est un bien commun, appartenant à tout le monde.

Résultats des comptes, l'eau coûte très chère d'accès, pour l'Etat comme pour les utilisateurs, et il y a des personnes qui sont aujourd'hui privées de cette ressource essentielle, nécessaire au bon fonctionnement quotidien des ménages et des activités économiques.

C'est l'efficacité des services qui est en cause, surtout celui de la distribution. Il est primordial que chacun puisse avoir accès à l'eau avec beaucoup moins d'inconvénients et de façon beaucoup plus équitable. Il est temps que les choses s'améliorent, on est face au mur, il est nécessaire de mobiliser les compétences, les moyens et la réglementation afin de redresser la situation.

Je voudrais répondre favorablement à l'appel que nous a fait le Chef commissaire ce matin de travailler ensemble pour apporter les réponses à une efficacité dans le service de l'eau.

Je vous remercie de votre attention, M. le président.

The Chief Commissioner: Brièvement, M. le président, merci pour répondre positivement à l'appel de travailler ensemble peut-être à travers un *Select Committee* sur l'eau ou des réformes de l'eau qu'on pourra venir de l'avant en 2023, comme j'ai dit, nous aurons des consultations. Nous sommes pleinement conscients de la souffrance de la population et bien évidemment des personnes les plus vulnérables. A la Commission, M. le président, j'ai des officiers et ces officiers, ils ont leurs limites, ils ont leurs contraintes. J'ai demandé à ce qu'on ait des camions prêts pour des contrats d'approvisionnement. Malheureusement, nous n'avons pas assez et j'ai dû prendre sur moi pour faire un *Emergency Procurement Under the Procurement Act and Under the Procurement Regulations* pour louer 12 camions, deux par région qui va nous coûter Rs1.8 millions jusqu'au 15 décembre et le 15 décembre approche et

vous voyez que la météo dans notre dernière réunion avait dit que nous aurons les pluies à partir du 15 décembre.

Si jamais à partir du 15 décembre, la situation ne s'améliore pas, nous allons devoir prolonger le contrat de ces camions en *Emergency Procurement* comme j'ai dit. Et j'ai participé à La Réunion avec les camionneurs, les *tankers*. Avant, ils étaient payés Rs2000 en moyenne et on l'acceptait. Le *price negotiation* est accepté autour d'un *Emergency Procurement* pour aller payer Rs2200. On avait fait appel à tout le monde. Il n'y a pas de préférence. J'invite les membres qui voient qu'il y a des favoritismes, j'ai vu sur Facebook des gens pleuraient qui peut-être, ils n'ont eu l'eau mais c'était des cas spéciaux ou peut-être on va donner à des personnes malades qui ont des enfants malades ou il y a des cas où il y a des décès.

On va leur donner la priorité. Situation est grave et pour la première fois à Rodrigues, l'Assemblée régionale a décidé encore une fois *under emergency procurement* de se procurer une moyenne de 18 à 20 litres d'eau pour chaque personne qui reçoit le *social aid*. Nous avons déjà 2000 bouteilles de 18.9 litres, les *jars* comme on dit, disponible auprès du fournisseur ici à Rodrigues et nous espérons. Nous allons demander à la MSC de *prioritise* le *shipment* de l'eau en bouteille parce qu'il n'y avait pas assez de ces *jars*. J'ai demandé à ce qu'on achète 10000 *jars* mais il n'y a pas assez à Maurice et donc, on va demander de l'eau dans des bouteilles de 1.5 litres. Nous allons commencer la distribution de cette eau d'ici la semaine prochaine avec l'arrivée du bateau et je vais demander... Je sais que c'est un gros travail, qu'il y a beaucoup de travail et je compte sur lui, au Commissaire de la sécurité sociale avec la Commission de l'eau, de superviser la distribution.

Je fais un appel au Club Service de Rodrigues, Rotary de Rodrigues, au Lions Club de Rodrigues, au Scouts de Rodrigues, à toutes les associations de Rodrigues si elles peuvent nous donner un coup de main pour transporter cette eau auprès peut-être des personnes qui devront les recevoir. S'il faut se procurer, si la pluie n'arrive pas encore, nous allons procurer... nous allons acheter encore plus d'eau. Nous aurons une réserve d'eau stratégique d'environ 4000 par 20 litres. C'est pour les hôpitaux, les prisons et peut-être les plus vulnérables. J'ai confiance que les grosses pluies vont arriver. Nous avons des signes que cela va venir mais espérons que d'ici avant la fin de l'année, nous allons pouvoir avoir ces fruits.

Au niveau de dessalement, comme vous savez, nous avons fait des efforts. Nous avons démonté le dessalement de Baie Malgache. Nous avons installé un à Anse aux Anglais. Malheureusement, il y a toujours des problèmes techniques. Donc, comme c'est un problème

qui touche tout le monde, nous allons en janvier, nous asseoir et réfléchir *what is the way forward* au niveau du réseau, au niveau de l'institution, au niveau du dessalement, au niveau du *billing*, les compteurs, tous les aspects, au niveau légal, tous les aspects de la réforme de l'eau à Rodrigues pour qu'on commence cette grande aventure de réforme et de production de bons résultats.

Je ne suis pas d'accord avec le membre que l'eau est un bien qui est commun. L'eau est un bien marchant dans tous les pays qui se respectent et dans toutes les communautés qui se respectent. C'est pour cela que l'eau va être tarifiée parce qu'on a besoin d'une mesure de contrôle bien évidemment en lien avec la déclaration de Johannesburg sur l'accès à l'eau. Il y aura certaines volumes d'eau que chaque personne aura dans son compteur au-delà de cela. Si la personne est un marchand de '*roti*', un marchand de sirop, il utilise 10 fois le volume d'eau normal qu'un individu utilise par jour. Bien évidemment, cette personne devra payer pour sa consommation qui dépasse l'eau qui va être offerte gratuitement. Donc, il nous faut des compteurs *smart*. Il nous faut reformer le réseau et il nous faut une participation et des consultations avec la population. Je suis confiant qu'on va réussir si on met la tête ensemble. Merci.

LACK OF TIMELY SERVICE BY AMBULANCE – CONVEYANCE OF PATIENTS

Mr Speville: Merci, M. le président, de me donner la parole dans cette auguste Assemblée. Je voudrais m'adresser au Commissaire de la santé sur un problème qui perdure pendant plusieurs mois et cela traduit toute la souffrance que la population endure en ce moment. M. le président, la population de Rodrigues se montre très inquiète au manque d'un service rapide au niveau des ambulances ou transport pour transférer les patients de l'hôpital vers leurs domiciles. M. le président, j'aimerais attirer l'attention du Commissaire de la santé sur cette situation incommode où il y a des patients qui attendent dans l'enceinte des hôpitaux pendant de longues heures voire même des jours et des nuits avant d'être transportés à la maison.

M. le président, je partage la souffrance de nos frères et sœurs de Rodrigues qui ne méritent pas un tel traitement, surtout nos aînés qui ont plus besoin d'attention et de support dans ces moments difficiles. Par exemple, j'ai rendu visite à Monsieur C.P. âgé de 90 ans qui est malade et alité à son domicile à Ile Michel. Il a eu l'autorisation de partir chez lui depuis 09h00 et jusqu'à 19h00, il était encore à l'hôpital car il n'y avait pas d'ambulance et il a dû y

passer la nuit avant de rentrer chez lui le lendemain. Je souhaite que la Commission de la santé va entendre ce cri de cœur et penser cette plaie dans le cœur et l'âme de la population. Donc, M. le président, je fais un appel pressant au Commissaire de la santé d'y trouver des solutions dans les plus brefs délais pour soulager toute la population de Rodrigues. Je vous remercie, M. le président.

Mr Volbert: M. le président, je ne sais pas si je dois rire ou pleurer. Vous savez, quand on est arrivé le 05 mars dernier, on avait que trois ambulances. Trois ambulances et eux, ils ont acheté quatre ambulances pendant 10 ans. Donc, on a fait nos efforts. J'ai même demandé à l'île Maurice. Ils nous ont envoyé une ambulance. On a réparé les ambulances qui étaient là pendant deux ans ou trois ans. Maintenant, nous avons 16 ambulances à l'hôpital. Il se peut qu'il y a un cas en particulier, je ne dis pas non, mais pour venir dire que des gens attendent des jours, des soirs et des nuits, c'est de la mauvaise foi. Excusez-moi, M. le président, parce que nous faisons tout notre mieux. On a mis à la disposition de la population et tout dernièrement, on a lancé les tenders pour acheter six nouvelles ambulances encore.

Donc, on fait de notre mieux. On a demandé à ce que les ambulances qui étaient en panne au *workshop*, on a demandé de les réparer. C'est ce que nous avons fait et peut-être il y a un cas, je dis, je répète, il y a un cas particulier, un cas isolé mais pour dire que tout le monde, ça, ce n'est pas bon. Ce n'est pas de la bonne foi. Mais tout de même, je vais enquêter. Je vais demander si c'était vrai que la personne a attendu des nuits, des jours pour arriver chez lui mais je vais quand même m'enquêter et venir après pour une prochaine fois faire une déclaration ici.

COMPLAINTS OF LOCAL ARTISTS – SELECTION FOR ALTERNATING PARTICIPATION – EVENTS ORGANISED BY COMMISSION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

Ms Raffaut: Je vous remercie, M. le président, de me permettre d'intervenir au nom de nos artistes de Rodrigues.

M. le président, j'aimerais attirer l'attention du Commissaire des Arts et de la Culture sur le fait qu'il y a un mécontentement au sein de la communauté des artistes qui se sont exprimés dans divers manières au sujet de la participation des artistes lors des grands événements tel que le Rodrigues Day et le Festival Créole.

Les artistes se plaignent et se posent beaucoup de questions sur le comment a été fait la sélection organisée par la Commission des Arts et de la Culture. Ils affirment qu'il y a une absence de mécanisme transparent pour sélectionner les artistes car le choix des participants est

resté pareil et qu'il n'y a pas vraiment de rotation pour permettre leur participation en alternance. C'était convenu au début, que tous les artistes auront le même traitement et qu'ils étaient tous pareil.

J'aimerais, M. le président, faire un appel au Commissaire des Arts et de la Culture afin de veiller à ce qu'il y a équité et justice dans la manière de procéder parce qu'on sait que quand il y a justice dans les choix des artistes, les artistes sont...ça les encourage de donner les meilleurs d'eux-mêmes et de consolider l'unité entre eux.

Je vous remercie monsieur le président.

Mr Ravina: La Commission des Arts et de la Culture, je dois vous dire que depuis que je suis là, je donne la chance à tous les artistes de participer dans toutes les activités qui se passent à Rodrigues. Pour vous dire qu'il y a des préférences, je dois vous dire que ce n'est pas vrai. C'est le Conseil Culturel qui choisit les artistes pour des événements qui se passe à Rodrigues. Je dois vous dire franchement que concernant s'il y a des préférences, je vais voir, je vais vérifier si vraiment, il y a des préférences pour tel ou tel artiste ou s'il y en a ça, je vais renseigner mais pour vous dire que ce n'est pas vrai s'il y en a ça en ce moment-ci. Merci.

(Interruptions)

Mr Ravina: Ce n'est pas vrai.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Yes, respected Members, before we leave, I wish to remind all of you, all Members and our distinguished guests of this day, as per our usual practice, you are all kindly invited for a toast immediately after this sitting in the Passenger Terminal. Thank you. The House stands adjourned.

At 15.44 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising adjourned to Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 10.30 a.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CONSTRUCTION OF RECREATION CENTRE FOR ELDERLY – BAIE LASCAR (CAMP PINTADE)

(No. B/138) The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste) asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to the construction of a recreation centre for the Elderly at Baie Lascar (Camp Pintade), he will inform

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the House on where matters stand as at date, providing information as to the procedures initiated so far and the outcome thereof?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I wish to inform the House that the project for the construction of a recreation centre to Elderly at Baie Lascars (Camp Pintade) was cancelled on 26 October 2021 as the previous Government has had to revise the cost estimates and the Consultant to amend bidding documents.

On 2nd August 2021, tender reference CPB/48/2021 was launched through the open national bidding method with closing date of 2nd September 2021. Sealed bids envelopes were to be deposited at the CPB Head Office, Rose Hill. Following a query raised by one private contractor on the bill of quantities, CPB postponed the closing date to 13 September 2021.

During the evaluation state, CPB noted several flaws and discrepancies in the bidding documents as follows:

- (i) Particular Conditions of Contract mentioned “1 bedroom block consisting of 12 identical rooms”.
- (ii) Drawings showed 2 bedroom blocks (Ground + First floor) comprising 24 identical rooms each.
- (iii) Bill of Quantities mentioned 1-bedroom block (Ground + First floor) comprising 24 identical rooms multiplied by 2 for 2 identical bedroom block.
- (iv) The cost estimate was for one-bedroom block of 24 rooms.

Following advice from the Attorney General’s office, CPB decided that the evaluation exercise be stopped and the Commission was informed accordingly as per letter dated 25 October 2021. Furthermore, CPB was of the opinion that the documents prepared by the Consultant was not of professional standard.

At the Departmental Tender Committee held on 25 October 2021, it was decided that the Consultant be informed for several flaws and discrepancies noted in the bid documents and to request to submit a revised bidding documents with an updated cost estimate.

I am therefore to inform the respected member that as it stands today, the project is at the state where the previous Commissioner for Social Security left it, that is in a cancelled state.

SETTING UP OF AN ‘OBSERVATOIRE DE L’EAU’ - RODRIGUES

(No. B/139) The First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huîtres (Mr N. Lisette) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the setting up of an ‘Observatoire de l’Eau’ in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state where matter stands as at date?

Reply: Mr Chairperson Sir, the ‘*Observatoire de l’eau*’ is a project implemented under the *FEXTE (Fonds d’Expertise Technique et d’Échange d’Expériences) Eau Programme of Agence Française de Développement (AFD)* with the assistance of the *Office de l’Eau, Réunion (OLER)* for Mauritius and extended to Rodrigues.

The main objective of the setting up of this ‘*Observatoire de l’Eau*’ is to enable the development of an information system (including database and analysis tool) which will help in the collection of data from all sectors, sharing of information, identifying priorities and facilitating decision-making and better resource management.

Two virtual induction trainings have already been held for the administrators and users on the 27th of April 2022 and 16th of May 2022. Thereafter, in-person training was conducted on the 8th August 2022 (half day) for the Administrators and 9th of August 2022 (full day) for the Users.

Mr Chairperson Sir,

The online platform for the *Observatoire de l’eau* of Rodrigues is now operational but still hosted on the contractor’s server. The Administrators and Users are actually gathering and processing the relevant data for inputs on the platform with the technical assistance of staffs of *L’Office de L’eau, Reunion*. The IT Unit of the RRA and the software consultant appointed by *Observatoire de l’Eau* have made necessary arrangements to transfer the data to the server of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The assistance of *L’Office de l’eau Reunion* has been extended till 30 June 2023. The Avenant is expected to be signed soon.

ACTIVITY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD – RODRIGUES

(No. B/140) The Minority Leader (Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the activity of the Economic Development Board in Rodrigues, he will obtain information therefrom and state to the House:

- (a) its mission and scope of intervention;
- (b) all projects implemented so far thereby or under the current purview thereof and the outcomes thereof;

- (c) its action plan or calendar of activities, and
- (d) the budget earmarked to implement the different activities for Rodrigues?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the House may be aware, the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development in his Budget Speech for Financial Year 2020/2021 announced the setting up of an Economic Development Board (EDB) Office in Rodrigues. It was considered that such a presence would give another boost and dimension to the sustainable economic development of the island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on 07 December 2020 between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) and the Economic Development Board (EDB) with a view to further promote the economic development of Rodrigues through investment facilitation and export facilitation. The EDB and the RRA have agreed to mutually develop a Sustainable Social and Economic Development Plan for Rodrigues and engage in concerted efforts to foster the development of the key sectors in the fields of Information and Communication Technology, Ocean Economy, Tourism and Agro-Industry.

(a) With respect to part (a), I am informed that the Economic Development Board has as mission the effective implementation of the national development agenda with respect to driving investment and trade, providing strong institutional support for strategic economic planning and economic policy formulation, and leading transformational initiatives to ensure a business environment conducive for investment and trade.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am further informed that the EDB Office in Rodrigues in line with its global mission has for objective to develop strategic economic planning, promote investment, trade and financial services and ensure a conducive environment for doing business in Rodrigues whilst giving due consideration to the specificities of Rodrigues.

In that connection, the EDB Office in Rodrigues works in close collaboration with various institutions, namely:

- (i) **Invest Rodrigues** which acts as a facilitator to promote local and national investment as well as assist local entrepreneurs to start their businesses;
- (ii) **SME Mauritius Ltd** that has as main mission to develop through various schemes Small and Medium Enterprises;

- (iii) **Economic Planning and Monitoring Unit (EPMU)** which is responsible to coordinate and follow up government projects; and
- (iv) **Office of the Registrar of Companies** that facilitates the registration of companies.

I am also informed that the EDB Rodrigues Office is committed to assist the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to assess the potential of new sectors in view of diversifying the economic landscape of the island and creating jobs in new growth poles. This collaboration is also geared towards facilitating the increased participation of institutions based in Rodrigues, as well as business operators, in the global outreach marketing and promotion initiatives led by EDB.

(b) **Mr. Chairperson, Sir**, as regards **part (b)**, I am informed that the major activities/projects undertaken by the EDB Rodrigues Office include:

- Development of an online brochure for investment opportunities in Rodrigues which is currently being reviewed by the Communication Directorate of the EDB;
- Discussions with EDB Japan Office on the potential export of octopus from Rodrigues; and
- Project facilitation for major investment projects.

In addition, the Office is assisting the RRA to develop the '*Made in Rodrigues*' label.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am further informed that with a view to encourage the development of plant-based cosmetics and medicinal products in Rodrigues, the Economic Development Board has organised a two-day workshop '*Comptoir des Plantes Aromatique, à Parfum et Médicinales*' (PAPAM) on 01 and 02 December 2022 with the collaboration of Qualitropic from Reunion Island in Rodrigues.

Moreover, as announced in the Budget Speech for Financial Year 2022/2023, my Commission in collaboration with the Economic Development Board is working on the organisation of the Rodrigues Expo in 2023. The Fair has as objective to increase the visibility of local entrepreneurs on the national market.

(c) **Mr. Chairperson, Sir**, regarding part (c), I am informed that since the coming into operation of the EDB Office on 07 December 2020, neither action plan nor calendar of activities has been developed to date.

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However, I am informed that the EDB will soon conduct an official mission in Rodrigues to further consolidate measures towards developing key sectors of the Rodriguan economy and meeting with the new Regional Government. An action plan including a calendar of activities will subsequently be discussed and finalised.

(d) With regard to part (d) of the question, I am informed there is no line budget allocated to the EDB in the budget of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Nevertheless, my Commission collaborates fully with the EDB Office in Rodrigues in terms of logistic facilities as and when required.

**COMMUNICATION MATTERS – WRITTEN PUBLICATIONS/ONLINE –
PROMOTING ACTIVITIES ORGANISED IN/OUTSIDE RODRIGUES –
RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

(No. B/141) The Second Island Region Member (Ms M. N. Raffaut) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to communication matters, in written publications or online, promoting activities organised in or outside Rodrigues for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will inform the House on any contract awarded to any individual and/or company from March 2022 till date and, in the affirmative, to state and table the list of awardees together with their respective associated costs?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that since March 2022, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has not awarded any contract to any individual or company for the promotion of its activities in written publications or on line.

**MEN’S NATIONAL RUGBY TRAINING MATCH OF RODRIGUES
– XV TEAM AGAINST MAURITIUS XV TEAM**

(No. B/142) The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr J. P. Spéville) asked the Commissioner of Youth & Sports and Others whether, in regard to men’s national rugby training match of Rodrigues XV team against Mauritius XV team, held in Mauritius in November 2022, he will state and table the:

- (a) cost incurred therefor and facilities given to the members of the delegation thereof by his Commission;
- (b) list of persons in the delegation and their respective responsibilities, and
- (c) scope and outcome of the match?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that Rodrigues XV Team participated in a training matches against the Men National Rugby XV Team in Mauritius on Friday 25 November 2022.

The estimated cost incurred for event is Rs 152,000 for the following facilities:-

- | | | |
|-------|---|--------------|
| (i) | 20 air tickets x 6,940 | = Rs 138,800 |
| (ii) | Refund of transport for airport transfer in Rodrigues | = Rs 6,000 |
| (iii) | Refund for transport for displacement in Mauritius | = Rs 7,200 |

With regards to part (b) of the question the delegation comprised of 19 players and 01 coach.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (c) the scope of the match was to identify talents and players in view of the upcoming Indian Ocean Islands Games which will be held next year.

As per report, submitted by the coach of the delegation I am informed that the outcome of the match was as follows:-

- (i) Rodrigues lost its match against the National Selection (35-0);
- (ii) Although the score does not reflect their performance, our players demonstrated great physical ability to play Rugby XV.
- (iii) Rodrigues will be invited to play two more matches;
- (iv) The National Rugby Coach is expected to visit Rodrigues next year.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

I am tabling the requested information.

Thanks you, Mr. Chairperson.

TOURNAMENT OF MAURITIUS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION CUP 2022

(No. B/143) The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr J. P. Spéville) asked the Commissioner of Youth & Sports and Others whether, in regard to the tournament of the Mauritius Football Association Cup 2022, he will inform the House on if Rodrigues has been excluded from the competition, and, if so, why?

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Reply: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I wish to inform the house that the onus for organization of football competitions in Mauritius remains, the responsibility of the Mauritius Football Association.

As per the Rules of competition of the Mauritius Football Association for season 2022/2023, the following competitions will be organized:

- (i) National Super league
- (ii) National Division One
- (iii) The National Division Two
- (iv) Inter-Regional Competition
- (v) Mauritius Football Association (MFA) Cup; and
- (vi) Republic Cup

Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am informed by the Mauritius Football Association that the Mauritius Football Association cup is dedicated for National Super league clubs, National Division One clubs and National Division Two clubs.

As Regional Clubs did not play or completed a league competition in 2020/2021 such that no winner had been determined, the Mauritius Football Association has decided to limit participation in the Mauritius Football Association cup to the only three league categories mentioned above.

As Rodrigues is categorized as a region, our Clubs are therefore playing at regional level and as a result will not be able to participate as it is the champion of 2020/2021 which could participate as per the rules governing the organization of Mauritius Football Association Football tournaments.

Based on information received from the Mauritius Football Association, we have been made to understand that this situation will prevail only for this season and that Regional Clubs including Rodrigues will be back in the next season.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, during this season an Inter-Regional competition will be organized with the participation of champions of all regions in Mauritius, including Rodrigues. As per our recent discussions with the Mauritius Football Association, it is expected that this competition will be maintained for subsequent seasons.

Rodrigues will therefore, have two teams that will participate in national competitions in Mauritius.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

**RODRIGUES INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION COMPANY LTD**

(No. B/144) The Minority Leader (Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K) asked the Commissioner for Information Technology & Telecommunications and Others whether, in regard to the Rodrigues Information and Communication Technology Development and Promotion Company Ltd, he will obtain information therefrom to:

- (a) state and table the detailed composition of the board of directors thereof together with board members' respective profiles;
- (b) state and table the mission and vision thereof, and
- (c) table the organisational structure of the company together with its action plan?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the Rodrigues Information and Communication Technology Development and Promotion Company Ltd was incorporated in April 2019 to manage the bandwidth capacity on the MARS Cable in Rodrigues. Thereafter in September 2021, the first board of directors was constituted, comprising one Chairperson and three Directors.

I am further informed that the Chairperson of the said board resigned in March 2022.

As such, Mr. Chairperson, the Executive Council at its sitting of May 2022 has taken the decision to reconstitute a new board of Directors with the following objectives:-

- To favor the right Ecosystem in order to attract investors;
- To develop secure and safe policies and standards aligned with local and international regulatory needs;
- To implement training programmes based on industry needs;
- To provide highest standards of ICT service to our customers;
- To be an advisory body and an implementation arm to the Commission for Information Technology and Telecommunications; and
- To create opportunities for the promotion of the industry in Rodrigues.

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However, I am informed that the board has not been able to start its activities since the Rodrigues Information and Communication Technology Development and Promotion Company Ltd is presently in breach of the Company's Act 2022 since it has failed to submit any returns to the MRA since its incorporation.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Office is in the process of clearing all the arrears and outstanding submission with all the relevant authorities prior to set up of a new board.

As such Mr. Chairperson Part (b) & (c) of the question cannot be answered for the time being.

**CONSTRUCTION OF MODERN HOSPITAL – QUEEN ELISABETH HOSPITAL
(QEH)**

(No. B/145) The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally) asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the construction of a modern hospital at the Queen Elisabeth Hospital (QEH), Crève-Coeur, he will enlighten the House as to where matters stand as at to date?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson Sir, I wish to inform the House that the Project for the Construction of a Modern Hospital at Queen Elizabeth Hospital did not pass the tendering stage as the tender documents were not up to the requiring standards.

Upon advice from the Central Procurement Board, given the high degree of Flaws in the tender documents, the tendering process was stopped.

The matter was brought up at the Executive Council and it was decided that instead of patching services in a very small space, a well-planned project to the next 100 years should be considered.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am therefore to inform the House that it is the policy of this Regional Government not to go ahead of the Modern Hospital at Queen Elizabeth but to instead process with a new state of the art at Camp Pintade.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, even the new UN Representative to Mauritius (*Her Excellency Ms. Lisa SINGH*) and the new World Health Organisation Representative, (*Mrs Ann ANACIA*) is agreeable with this Regional Government vision.

I am pleased to inform the House that the WHO will recruit a Medical and Health Consultant to conduct the Feasibility Study.

A concept note has already been submitted to the WHO Representative during her mission to Rodrigues last week.

‘MAISON DE TRANSITION’

(No. B/146) The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the *‘Maison de transition’* constructed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, he will state the purpose thereof, indicating the:

- (a) number presently available and the respective locations thereof;
- (b) number and location already allocated, if any, together with the conditions attached thereto, and
- (c) timeframe for allocation of those not yet granted?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that two “*Maison de Retraite*” have been constructed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, one at Anse Nicolas and one at Bel Air.

Mr. Chairperson, according to records, the previous Executive Council has decided to allocate a “*Maison de Retraite*” of 50m² to two beneficiaries on humanitarian grounds on Friday 18 August 2017.

Mr. Chairperson, I am informed that the project was completed in February 2021 but water and electricity connections as well as furniture and equipment were under the responsibility of the beneficiary.

As regards to part (c) of the question, the policy of allocating these “*Maison de transition*” is being revisited and the Houses will be thereon under the responsibility of the Commission for Women Affairs, Child Development and others.

**INTRODUCTION AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF ‘KREOL RODRIGE’ - SECONDARY SCHOOL**

(No. B/147) The Second Island Region Member (Ms M. N. Raffaut) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the introduction and implementation of *‘Kreol Rodrige’* in secondary school in Rodrigues, he will inform the House on where matter stands?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that presently, there is no teaching of *kreol* in secondary schools in Rodrigues compared to our primary schools.

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Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am further informed that the introduction of *kreol rodridge* at secondary school is a lengthy process and requires several steps that need to be followed to ensure the smooth introduction of teaching of *kreol rodridge* at secondary level. As such, there is the need to:

- i) Carry out a survey on the number of students willing to study *kreol rodridge* as a subject;
- ii) survey on the number of Educators that will be required for teaching of *kreol rodridge* in all secondary schools and the potential candidates with the requirements set by the PSEA for enlistment of Educators for the teaching of *kreol rodridge* in secondary schools;
- iii) initiate necessary procedures for the recruitment of trainee Educators for teaching of *kreol rodridge* and make necessary arrangement with the Mauritius Institute of Education for running of appropriate programme;
- iv) conceptualise *kreol morisien* textbooks into *kreol rodridge* for Grades 7 to 9 in the first instance;
- v) vet and validate the textbooks by a technical panel;
- vi) recruit qualified Educators; and
- vii) notify the Mauritius Examinations on the expected date of the introduction of *kreol rodridge* in secondary schools to enable sufficient time for the design of assessment papers for the NCE assessment.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am also informed that to date, none of the abovementioned procedures have been initiated upon the taking of Office of my Regional Government in March 2022.

As a matter of fact, the new Regional Government was made aware of the matter during the colloque organised in the context of the 20th Anniversary of the Autonomy as mentioned earlier.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I want to inform the House that my Regional Government will explore the potentiality of introducing *kreol rodridge* in secondary schools at it is believed that learning in the mother tongue is essential to enhance other critical thinking skills, second language and literacy skills. Research has also shown that native language plays a crucial role in the development of personal, social and cultural identity.

In addition, following the publication of the dictionary of *kreol rodrige*, the possibility to hold consultations with the Mauritius institute of Education and the University of Mauritius in collaboration with the *Akademi Kreol Rodrige (AKRo)* will be looked into to discuss the modalities for the conceptualisation of textbooks for the secondary sector in view of the introduction of teaching of *kreol rodrige* as from Grades 7 to 9.

ICT SUPPORT OFFICERS POSTED AND DISCHARGING DUTIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

(No. B/148) The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr J. P. Spéville) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the ICT Support Officers posted and discharging duties in primary schools, he will, for the benefit of the House state:

- (a) and table the number thereof per primary school, their salaries and qualifications held, and
- (b) if any recommendations have been made to upgrade their qualifications as at date?

Reply: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that following a change in the curriculum for the primary sector in 2001, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was introduced for the first time as a subject in primary schools. In Rodrigues, ICT was taught as a subject as from January 2003 and in that context, ten (10) ICT Teachers were recruited on a contractual basis on 10 June 2002. They proceeded on a full time training course at the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) in Mauritius. Each ICT Teacher was posted to a Primary Government school.

I am further informed that following the advertisement of the new grade of ICT Support Officer on 06 July 2012, the ICT Teachers were offered, after a selection exercise, employment as ICT Support Officers with effect from 03 December 2012 on a twelve months' probationary period. Thereafter, nine (09) ICT Support Officers were confirmed in a substantive capacity on 03 December 2013.

With the increase in the number of schools, to date, the nine (09) ICT Support Officers have to perform duties in twelve (12) Primary Government schools. They are either posted on a full time basis or on a roster basis in Government Primary schools mainly to provide support to Educators and pupils in the use of ICT resources and provide user support for standard hardware, software and network. They are also required, as per their scheme of service, to teach ICT, as and when required.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

(a) With regard to part (a), I am further informed that six (06) ICT Support Officers are posted on full time basis in a Primary Government school namely: Mont Charlot Community Government school, Basile Allas Port Mathurin Government school, Batatran Government School, Oyster Bay Government School, Grand La Fouche Corail Government School and Araucaria Community Government School. The other three (03) ICT Support Officers are called upon to work in two primary schools according to a roster, that is, at Terre Rouge Government School and Montagne Goyaves Community Government School; Fock Seng To Hu Nam Government School and Anse Quitor Community Government School; and Port Sud Est Government School and Marc Etienne Roche Bon Dieu Government School respectively.

These nine (9) ICT Support Officers are earning a salary of Rs 21,850 each as per revised salary of the PRB Report 2021 and they are being paid an ad-hoc allowance amounting to Rs 2,820 with effect from 01 July 2018 for the teaching of ICT Skills.

Among these nine (09) ICT Support Officers:

- six of them are holder of a School Certificate;
- two are holder of a Higher School Certificate;
- one holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Information and Technology Management; and
- All hold a Certificate of proficiency in Information and Communication technology Education run by the Mauritius Institute of Education in 2003.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am hereby tabling the list of ICT Support Officers on the RRA establishment including their posting, salaries and qualifications.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

(b) As regards part (b) of the question, I am informed that as per the PRB Report 2021 pertaining to the Vice Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, the following Recommendations were made:

Recommendation 2

19.37 - that the Ministry of Education, tertiary Education, Science and Technology considers the advisability of creating the grade of Primary School Educator in the field of ICT.

Appointment thereto should be made from among Trainee Primary School Educators who have successfully completed their training course leading to a Teacher's Diploma.

19.38 - that the grade of ICT Support Officer be made evanescent.

19.39 - that, with the above amendments to the grade of ICT Support Officer, consequential amendments should be brought to the scheme of service for the grade of ICT Technician/Senior ICT Technician by Management through the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that there are presently four (04) funded vacancies in the Budget for Financial Year 2022/2023 for the post of ICT Support Officer. However, the vacancies cannot be filled since the grade for the post of ICT Support Officer has become personal for Officers in post with effect from 31 December 2020.

Pending the implementation of the abovementioned recommendations made in the PRB Report 2021, the possibility of recruiting Supply ICT Support Officer on a temporary basis is being envisaged similarly to Mauritius in view to palliate the shortage of ICT Support Officer.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have also been informed by the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology that being given that teaching form part of the core duties of ICT Support Officer since the start of academic year 2016, it has been proposed to upgrade the qualifications of the ICT Support Officers.

Subsequently, the approved programme Teacher's Diploma Primary (ICT) has been submitted by the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for accreditation since August 2022 and a reply is being awaited.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the Members of the House are aware, the policy of education rests with the Ministry of Education and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has only the administration of the Education sector in Rodrigues.

As such, upon the implementation of the Recommendations made in the PRB Report 2021 by the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, same would be replicated in Rodrigues the more so that the scheme of service for the different grades in the Education Sector are similar in Rodrigues and in Mauritius.