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**No. 11 of 2023**

**RODRIGUES**

**FIFTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY**

**DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

**(UNREVISED)**

**TUESDAY 19 DECEMBER 2023**

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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

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**PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS**

Mr Chairperson            -            Leopold, Mr Joseph Christian, GOSK

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**

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**Debate No. 11 of 2023**

**Sitting of Tuesday 19 December 2023**

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

**The National Anthem was played**

*(Mr Chairperson in the Chair)*

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**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**Mr Chairperson:** The Table has been advised that PQ B/160 has been withdrawn. Member Allas, you have to call the number of the question.

**NATIONAL LIVESTOCK INFORMATION SYSTEM**

**(No. B/159) Mrs M.A.L. Allas (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the National Livestock Information System being implemented by his commission, he will inform the House on: -

- (a) when same will be fully implemented, and
- (b) the beneficial effect thereof, if any, for the livestock sector in Rodrigues?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, first I would like to thank respected Member for this intelligent question. I know that she is working very hard with the farmers' communities in her region and I wish to reassure her that my Commission and myself will be focus and will deliver for the improvement, progress of the farmers' community in her region and in Rodrigues at large.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the National Livestock Information System is a modern system and it is an indication system meant for the Republic of Mauritius. It involves identifying all livestock in the Republic by microchips and setting up of a database. Formerly, animals were identified by means of ear tags.

The project is fully sponsored by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). It started in Mauritius in 2018 and 2019 on a pilot basis. However, I am sad and it is highly deplorable that in December 2020 the then regional government requested a delay in the implementation of this important project in Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the current system of livestock identification which makes use of numbers printed on plastic tags which are inserted into the animal ears showed a lot of weaknesses which are as follows: -

- (i) livestock farmers remove the ear tags;
- (ii) the ear tags often fall off;
- (iii) the ear tags at sometimes get dirty and subsequently, the numbers become unreadable.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the identification of livestock forms the basis of its traceability which is crucial to follow the animal along the production chain, let say from farm to fork - *de*

*la ferme à la fourchette*. It is also extremely important in the implication of an effective disease control measures within an animal health management framework and to properly address veterinary public health issues which may crop up in meat and meat products derived from the livestock. The weaknesses of plastic tags undermine an effective traceability system.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (b) of the question, I must say that the livestock sector in Rodrigues, it is a major sector and it contributes significantly in the socio development economic development of the island - very important. And, according to our estimates it contributes about Rs 200 m. each year.

The beneficial effect for the sector are as follows: -

- (i) it is important for the traceability of animals;
- (ii) plastic ear tags are fragile and easily fall off;
- (iii) in case of conflict, farmers used to tamper or completely remove the ear tags;
- (iv) during larceny, robbers used to remove the ear tags;
- (v) in case of disease outbreak, animals can be easily identified;
- (vi) for the purpose of disease surveillance, it is also easier;
- (vii) for the different scheme benefitted by farmers such as Calf Productivity Scheme (*gagne Rs 15 kan bef met bas*), and
- (viii) it is easy to confirm microchip numbers from database and readers.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the development of the livestock sector in Rodrigues, my Commission is finalising a strategic foresight and innovation plan. In the context of the National Livestock Information System project funded by the FAO, a delegation headed by the Dr Beeharry, was in Rodrigues from 26 to 29 November to deliver training sessions on the insertion of microchips on pigs. A three-days' working session were organised and technicians concerned by my Commission and the main features discussed include the following. I must say that I also have a very important working session with the delegation and we will have to modify some protocol and other regulation regarding importation of meat or meat products into Rodrigues. Later on, I will be in a position to give more details about these changes that we have to bring to regulation in Rodrigues.

So, the main feature that was discussed with stakeholders and staff of my Commission include: -

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- (i) Procedure for registration of farms and allocation of a georeferenced –Premises Registration Number (PRN), that is, the code number that we have to give to each premises for registration number.
- (i) Presentation of procedures for microchipping.
- (ii) Status of microchipping in Rodrigues.
- (iii) Identification of staff who will be responsible to carry out the exercise.
- (iv) Animal movement. Very important. We will look after stray animals also including these rules.
- (v) Slaughter of animals in Rodrigues. This also is a very important issue that we have to address.
- (vi) Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Surveillance in Rodrigues.
- (vii) General animal health status in Rodrigues.
- (viii) Demonstration exercise was carried out.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards the implementation of the project in Rodrigues, some activities will be supported by FAO. But a provision of Rs 10 m. will have to be made in Budget 2024-2025 - National Livestock Information System in Rodrigues. Thank you very much.

**The Minority Leader:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been listening religiously to the Commissioner for Agriculture on this question. *Donc, si j'ai bien compris il disait qu'il regret qu'un moment l'ancien gouvernement a fait renvoyer ce projet. Alors, que moi je me souviens personnellement, j'étais Acting Commissioner for Agriculture, mon collègue était convalescent, donc j'avais reçu le consultant Mr Mario Beffa, en février 2019. Il y avait une grosse délégation de Maurice du 27 au 30 septembre 2020 pour un workshop. Donc, le projet était bien lancé. Je pense que le Commissaire doit pouvoir testify what he is saying because I am sure we had these workshops and we launched the project. And, I would like him now to tell the House, given that he mentioned that the project is fully financed by the FAO and then he is talking about the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) should made a provision of Rs 10 m. So, to what tune did the FAO finance the project and whether this FAO financing is still ongoing actually?*

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the FAO project is for Mauritius. It started in 2018 and we are at the end of this project, but according to my information. In fact, I am looking at the big picture, I am not going to enter into details. What has been done has been done. But in December 2020, there was a high level meeting in Mauritius, the representative of Rodrigues

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requested to delay the project because there was some problem in Rodrigues. It is written if the honourable Member want... I can table the copy of this correspondence later this day.

*(Interruptions)*

Delay, not postpone, for a delay. I do not know.

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please. Let me listen to the Commissioner.

**Mr Perrine:** Maybe we should have the reason why. For me, I am very disturbed by that. This is a very important project for the livestock sector and for unknown reason we just requested that the project be delayed, that the implementation be delayed in Rodrigues. For me, it is very sad, I am very sad. But we are going to deal on matters that aroused three years back. We are looking on the way forward, focusing on what we have to do to redress this important sector with new technique and innovation. We must have tools. We do not have a database on the number of animals in Rodrigues. Where are they? What are they doing with these animals? We do not know. This is very important. We have 26,000 animals in Rodrigues. And, we do not know how many pigs exactly we have, how many cows, how many sheep and goats. We rely on hearsay evidence. The farmer just phoned and then we rely on that to plan and to make management. This is not good management. That is why for me for every project/plan, we must have scientific data that are reliable that we can build on that. Thank you.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, the Commissioner for Agriculture stated in that there has been a pilot study which has been done on pigs with the coming of delegation for the FAO but he has not given any indication as to the timeframe that he has set for the full implementation of the project itself. Can he state same to the House?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I said in the reply which has been prepared by the Technician of the commission. So, first of all, we have to contact FAO to know whether Rodrigues can submit a specific project for Rodrigues. I must tell you frankly, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that projects which are for Mauritius and Rodrigues, we have been *désavantageux*. Because the project has to be implemented first in Mauritius and then extended to Rodrigues. That is why I discussed with consultant coming to Rodrigues and I request, as far as possible, that we have a specific program for Rodrigues. We cannot continue with the project which is for Mauritius, the representative of FAO is in Mauritius and then we in Rodrigues we must talk to them and then they will send to Madagascar to have the answer. We want to deal directly with Rome, with Macuto for the project which are being implemented. That is why we are not going ahead with this project. We are coming with our own project. We will request our colleague

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Commissioner of Finance to have the programme for Rodrigues and also for consultancy, for assistance and capacity building then we will rely on consultant coming from abroad. But for local procurement, equipment that we need for Rodrigues, we will make provision in our budget.

**The Minority Leader:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, if I understood well, the Commissioner has been saying *tout et son contraire. Au depart il a dit que c'est* totally financed by FAO, now he is talking about a specific project for Rodrigues. At some point in times, he is talking about financed from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for next financial year.

We would like to know how far this national project, including Rodrigues, FAO has been financing, up to what amount and whether he is telling that as from now on he will no longer work in this project and he will have to submit another project?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the respected Member has not listen well, may be my voice is a bit rough this morning. I have said that the project is fully supported by the FAO. The National Information is a system meant for the Republic of Mauritius, not Rodrigues.

*(Interruptions)*

This is your belief. And, it is my belief also but in practice it is not like this.

*(Interruptions)*

The problem is that we have to contact with people in Mauritius, have them approve it. And, they cannot realise our need is urgent for Rodrigues. And, when it will be implemented in Mauritius then it will come to Rodrigues. This is detrimental to us. The FAO knows it very well.

What we are going to do, we are not going to tell them that we do not want the money that has been put in the budget in this programme for Rodrigues. But I tell you one thing, for the microchip, we need about 26,000. Do you know that we have to wait for one year to have this equipment? And, I am telling you that we want to start the project next year and where are the microchips that we have to install and the scanner and have equipment in Rodrigues? You have to wait '*mathusalem*' to have it. So, my point is that for equipment that we can afford to purchase, we can do it. But for technical support for capacity building then we will rely on the external agency.

I am not making criticism but you know, to purchase, to make procurement with foreign agency, it takes time. We have to respect their procedures but it takes a lot of time and we have to wait. We want to start, to go fast, but unfortunately we have to wait. That is why, I think that with Rs 10 m. we will be able to purchase the scanner and the microchips and we will start the project.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner, whether for the implementation of the project, it would involve specialised officers, meaning veterinary officers or if there will be other officers who will be trained for the insertion of the chips in the animal?

**Mr Perrine:** *For this important project, we will have to set up a special unit, equip with all the equipment in all trained personnel. You know, à la Réunion, quand un animal arrive à l'abattoir, comme il arrive à l'abattoir les techniciens est au courant depuis la naissance de l'animal, comment il a évolué, qu'est-ce qu'il a consommé – traçabilité qu'on appelle jusqu'à là. A Rodrigues 'ou pa mem koné sine touye enba pié'. Ce n'est pas possible. Et si on veut développer le secteur de l'élevage, exportation carcasse, etcetera, ce qu'on doit faire. Mais malheureusement, il faut revoir tous les systèmes de traçabilité et de certification, etcetera. C'est pourquoi ma commission est en train de mettre beaucoup d'emphasis sur ce système. Vous savez même les gens qui ne respectent pas vaccination ou bien quand il y a le zoning concernant FMD mais à partir de ce système, on peut retracer facilement où est l'animal. C'est un outil important, pas seulement pour nous mais peut-être pour l'autre gouvernement qui va venir aussi encore à l'avenir, ils vont voir que c'est un outil important que l'agriculture a besoin pour pouvoir développer, innover et aider les agriculteurs surtout.*

**Mr Lisette:** Maybe you have not understood my question as it should be. We very well know that even during the vaccination of animals we are short of Veterinary Officers. But in your answer you stated that there will be a specialised team, I mean that the specialised team is meant for the follow-up as you mean from **room to fork**, as you said. But my question relates to the persons who will be specialised for the insertion of the chips in the animals. Because we well know that there can be a lack of Veterinary Officers if they are to be done by the Veterinary Officers. My question relates to this, are there specialised people for that specific function itself?

**Mr Perrine:** No, we do not have specialised persons up to now. When the team from Mauritius came, they carried out two or three training sessions, practical and also theoretical. But

this is the beginning. Maybe we will have to send them abroad but in the meantime what will we be doing in Rodrigues will be supervised by the Livestock and Veterinary Division (LVD) team in Mauritius until that we have specialised persons in Rodrigues. We expect by next year. Middle next year they will be specialised. But it will be different with Veterinary Officer. This is only for insertion of microchip in the animal. And, this also is important. You know when the animal will be exported we have to remove the chips and also when there is death of animal, we have to remove the microchip also.

**Mr Chairperson:** One last question.

**Mr Baptiste:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir. At a certain point in time, the Commissioner mentioned that we do not have enough data, for example, about the number of heads of animals and so on, is he aware that officers from the Commission for Agriculture have had training relating to collection and analysing of data? I can remember, for example, in 2014 there was a presentation by officers of his Commission and all these information were available and obviously they should update same. I would like to know what has the Commissioner done since he is in office to ensure that these information are readily available and up to date?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I must laugh. You know for certain officers whenever they attend meeting, to become expert and they just say; what we have, we will do, and when they come back to the Commission we see that it is not like this. And, sometimes the Commission we have problems with my colleagues because they will say that your officer has said that this can be done in Rodrigues while this is not true. I have had a meeting with the officers. The Minority Leader is looking at me, I am looking at the file for lemon and I see action that was to be carried out by officers of my Commission. But this is unbelievable. How could they say that? So, I am not blaming them but the truth is that we have to build capacity in this Commission at every level. And, that is all my prayer when I discussed with foreign agencies - capacity building, this is very important. For instance, I will tell you one thing, now we are exporting animals from Mauritius, we have to do blood extraction and then send to Mauritius to be analysed/tested and have report back. But this is not acceptable. You know, we have requests to export female animals to Mauritius. You know, one of the condition is that we must do pregnancy test and that the animals are not pregnant. But unfortunately, we do not have the capacity here. We have to wait, we have to import equipment from South Africa and then to carry out this exercise. Hopefully, next year we will be able to export female animals to Mauritius. Because you know, since five years' pregnant animals, females are not being exported. *Rodrigues ine vine ene pays de dame*. We have to export them. So, just to answer to

your question, noble friend, is that we do not have capacity to carry out all the tests in Rodrigues and then we must send that specimen to Mauritius to be analysed and then to have the answer. Hopefully, let say after one year, the Commission for Agriculture, Veterinary section and also qualified person. We have just been recruiting Lab Technician, Laboratory Officers, being trained to Mauritius, be able to take over the work. This is all I have to say. Thank you.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

#### **FALL IN THE PRODUCTION OF PIGS - RODRIGUES**

(No. B/160) **Mrs M.A.L. Allas (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether he will inform the House on if there has been a fall in the production of pigs in Rodrigues indicating, in the affirmative, any action he proposes to take to address the issue?

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **DEVELOPMENT – BLUE ECONOMY SECTOR - RODRIGUES**

(No. B/161) **Mrs M.A.L. Allas (Fifth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the development of the Blue Economy sector in Rodrigues, he will inform the House on if the action plan has been completed and, if not, to state when the plan will be operational?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the blue economy or the ocean economy, is a term used to describe the economic activities associated with oceans and seas. The World Bank define the blue economy as the ‘sustainable use of ocean resources to benefit economies, livelihood and ocean ecosystem health’.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to the World Bank, the blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem. The European Commission defines the blue economy as ‘all economic activities related to oceans, seas and coasts’.

Additional information – the father of the Blue Economy concept is a Belgium, called Gunter Pauli, in 1956.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the activities commonly understood to represent the blue economy activities that are considered in the sector of blue economy are: marine fishing, aquaculture, coastal tourism, renewable energy, water desalination under sea crumbling and sea bed extraction industry, and deep sea mining, marine genetic resources and bio technology. I know



also, Mr Chairperson, that the blue economy is a Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and it is number 14 of the SDG Goals.

In Mauritius, I must say that the blue economy constitutes about 10% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and there are about 700,000 people employed in this sector. So, to tell you that it is a huge sector and going worth, which my Commission is not neglecting. We are focusing on this sector and much energy is being lose to have this sector develop, set up and start in Rodrigues.

In this context, the FAO is supporting this project in Rodrigues and in Mauritius in the preparation of the Blue Economy Policy. A workshop was held in Mauritius on 10 July 2023 and one staff of my Commission participated to provide inputs from Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with a view to have a broader consultative meeting with all stakeholders in Rodrigues, four Consultants, namely Professor Sauer, Dr. Bhikajee, Dr. McCafferty and Dr. Chikhuri were in Rodrigues from 22 to 24 November to organise a similar workshop in Rodrigues with all stakeholders. One-day workshop was organised on 22 November to present initial findings, determine priorities and elaborate strategic directions for the Blue Economy in Rodrigues.

During their mission a consultative workshop was held on 22 November at my Commission with different stakeholders to present the findings and to start determine priorities and so how to draft, to elaborate also the strategic directions for the Blue Economy Policy in Rodrigues. On 23 November, a course on the implementation of policy for the development of the Blue Economy was delivered to officials, officers of my Commission, who were trained in negotiation skills and policy tools for the successful implementation of the Blue Economy Strategies in Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, my Commission is awaiting for the report from the FAO which is expected by the end of this month and we will be able to elaborate much more on it and inform the House on what we intend to do regarding blue economy sector in Rodrigues. Thank you.

**Dr. Agathe:** M. le président, j'ai écouté attentivement le Commissaire. Alors, ce que j'ai compris, c'est que c'est plutôt un document stratégique qui est en question. Je voudrais savoir quelles sont vos priorités stratégiques pour le développement de ce secteur, le secteur Blue Economy ?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, my policy that and what I am doing, what I have always done, is that we cannot manage what we do not know. We manage what we know. So,

to answer to my noble friend, we are waiting for statistical data, scientific data to be able to know what direction/orientation we will give to this Blue Economy Development. But we are not sitting and waiting. We have started with the Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI), they have been carrying a survey on sea pearl culture and seaweed farming and we are expecting to have them both and let say, *après Pâques* and then we will come to the Assembly. Here also, I have to inform the House that... I am not blaming, but you know MOI has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the government which lay back since 2016. Absolutely nothing has been done in this MOU. And, this organisation is very important, and I am doing survey related to our eco-system, our biodiversity.

Et pour aller plus loin, il nous a fait comprendre qu'en 2018 il y avait des... Vous savez quand on parle de Blue Economy, un peu de tout. Par exemple, les algues que nous avons à Rodrigues. *Medicinal properties*, très, très important. D'ailleurs, il y a des gens qui sont intéressées avec ça. Et c'est pourquoi on est en train de faire une étude dessus pour savoir les algues que nous avons à Rodrigues, quelle possibilité nous avons. Et là, je dois dire qu'en 2017/18, je suis en train de faire des recherches, on a envoyé 15 kilos d'éponges à la Réunion. Et vous savez que l'éponge est très, très demander pour faire des médicaments, pour antioxydant pour le cancer. *We have no information about the outcome. Where are les éponges? Where are the report?* C'est ça mon petit problème. Parce qu'il n'y a pas de suivi. Mais, on va voir avec ces éponges qui sont à la Réunion, une grande demande en France pour faire fabriquer des médicaments. Et nous allons voir. Je suis en train... *You know, ça ne coute rien de blâmer. Now we have to start with look ahead, big picture. We do not look at small thing.* Mais, je dois faire ressortir, *Hence*, mais qu'il faudrait quand il y a des études, des rapports, il faudrait qu'il y a un suivi. C'est un petit peu notre *property* ça sinon ça peut arriver comme le limon. C'est notre propriété mais on est en train de faire des parfums avec les limons de Rodrigues. On est en train de vendre miel de Rodrigues à partir de Maurice. Mais, il faudrait qu'on arrive à saisir la GIS pour qu'on puisse contrôler nos produits. Merci.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, en parlant de Blue Economy, je vois qu'au niveau de Maurice, the Economic Development Board (EDB) est très impliquer. Il y a même des *Schemes* spécifiques. Etant donné que nous avons la présence de EDB à Rodrigues, est-ce que le Commissaire compte justement *tapped these facilities/experiences and schemes from the EDB and ensure that same schemes are implemented in Rodrigues ?*

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, as far as I know EDB is for the marketing. But I have said to start policy/planning, we need to have scientific data. We cannot sell, ask promoters to

come to Rodrigues to do the sea pearl culture but we do not know how many oyster we have in Rodrigues? What are the species and what can be done? So, for me, first we must assess the stock that we have in Rodrigues, know the possibility that exists and then we look for promoters. There have been promoters who coming to Rodrigues, my friend knows it too well. They will start doing this project in Rodrigues. No, we will come with a policy, we will give but first we have to assess the stock and then we will give it. It should be sustainable. We cannot just give. And, for your information, Madam, we will privilege community project, women project for Rodrigues, first. If we need capacity building. These projects that we are going to do with seaweed and sea pearl culture, it will be for women and FAO will give us support and then, of course, EDB will step in when it comes to marketing, exportation and promoters they will come in. But for the moment we are doing survey, we are collecting scientific data first and then we will come with a policy, institutional framework and then with the promotion. But I must say that EDB is welcomed. Of course, EDB is helping us for coffee and other projects. It is very important, but as I have just said a moment ago, we cannot manage what we do not know. We must manage what we know. This has been a problem of the answer, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Thank you.

**Dr Agathe:** Quand même, M. le président, j'avais posé une question pour savoir quelles sont les priorités stratégiques, pourquoi ? Parce que vous avez déjà certains nombres de documents qui ont été fait, SIDPR, projet sur la pêche...

**Mr Chairperson:** Are you answering your question? Put your question !

**Dr. Agathe:** Donc, vous devez être en mesure d'annoncer quelques priorités stratégiques. Et puis, les études il faut en faire de toute façon mais je voudrais dire quand même qu'il y a des initiatives qui relève du privé. Il y a déjà des communautés qui font du *seaweed* ou du *sea pearl*. Donc, on ne peut pas dire qu'il n'y a rien qui a été fait. Donc, de dire ces priorités stratégiques, quel est la part qui revient au communauté, au privé ou le Rodrigues Regional Assembly, dans quelle direction on veut aller ? Quand même on n'a pas bien compris.

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, my noble friend is an economist, he knows too well what I am talking about. So, to come back to seaweed farming that he is saying, I do not know if he is aware there are promoters that are very interested with the seaweed that we have in Rodrigues, for medicinal purposes, for fertilizers and for consuming also. But if we open the door, everybody can come with their money, what will happen? No we must know – first, we came with the institutional framework, we have so many stock of sea pearl in Rodrigues and

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we want it to be exploited sustainably. Not that how they have done in other countries, after two or three years they closed and they went away, nothing is left.

For seaweed farming, I will tell my friend that we are very interested in what is being done in Zanzibar and where the community is fully involved and also, in the Republic of Madagascar.

And, I will conclude, Mr Chairperson, just to say that when the community is involved in the supervision, the control of their product, it is very, very effective – *très, très effectif, au lieu de payer des milliers de personnes pour surveiller.*

A Madagascar, l'ourite – passe dans un communiqué, il n'y a pas de garde-pêche. C'est simplement, les personnes responsables qui pêchent et qui contrôlent. *Veye zot lasiet manzé comen zot dir.* This is a very important issue and we have to take it into consideration. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Chairperson:** The Table has been advised that PQ B/164 will be answered by the Chief Commissioner. Next question.

**MAIN REQUIREMENTS – CHILD DAY CARE CENTRE**

**(No. B/162) Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K. (Minority Leader)** asked the Commissioner for Child Development and Others whether, in regard to the main requirements for a child day care centre as per the second schedule of the Child Day Care Centre Regulations 2022, she will state the measures taken by her commission to ensure that the child day care centres in Rodrigues can obtain their license and the time-frame set therefor, if any, to ensure that same is completed?

**Ms. Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, within the framework of the Children's Act 2020, the Child Day Care Centres Regulations 2022 have been made to regulate the activities of Child Day Care Centres for children in the cohort of 14 weeks to three years. The Regulations set out the appropriate norms and standards for the different types of services and also make provision for the physical and emotional safety of children.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, on my taking of office in 2022, I have made it a must to have a meeting the managers of the Child Day Care Centres in Rodriguesto have an overview where they are regarding the registration of their Child Day Care Centre and to inform them of the importance that they activate things for the registration of their centres and that my Commission will support them as far as possible.

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Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that 12 Child Day Care Givers have completed their training in Early Childhood Care, Development, Protection and Education on 08 September 2023. The Child Day Care Givers will go on one-week job placement in Centre d'Eveil in Mauritius early next year.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the Child Day Care Centres Regulations there is no time frame set or moratorium for the Child Day Care Centres to obtain their registration. The time frame for a Child Day Care Centre to obtain its registration will depend on where the Child Day Care Centre is with regard to compliance with the different requirements, terms and conditions to obtain its registration. As soon as the Child Day Care Centre has satisfied all the requirements for their Child Day Care Centre to obtain its registration, needful will be done to issue a Certificate of Registration to the Child Day Care Centre.

Thank You, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, c'est clair que les Règlements de Child Day Care Centre Regulations ne stipule pas la durée pour laquelle vous devez leur donner leur permis. Mais je pense que madame la Commissaire est au courant que depuis quelques temps ces Child Day Care Centres sont régulièrement visités par les Policiers de par leurs responsabilités parce que ces Child Day Care Centres n'ont pas leurs permis. Ce qui veut dire qu'il y a une urgence pour que ces Child Day Care Centres aient leurs permis. C'est pour ça qu'on demande à madame la Commissaire en fonction de ces développements qu'il y a eu récemment par rapport au visite régulière des Policiers, quel est le *time frame* que sa commission a mis en place pour assurer que chaque Day Care Centre soit doté de leur permis. Bien sûr en prenant en compte les besoins qu'il faut ou sinon elle doit nous dire qu'est-ce qu'elle compte faire pour assurer que ces Day Care Centres soient aux normes pour éviter qu'elles sont visitées régulièrement pour ces raisons d'absence de permis ?

**Ms. Agathe:** *M. le président, merci à la respectée Membre pour sa question. Par rapport au time frame, il y a certains qui manquent des documents, par exemple il y a un Child Day Care Centre qui manque le Professional Qualification.* For example, there are others which miss Medical Certificate, Certificate of Character. They are still waiting for these documents. When all these is completed, then they will be able to obtain their registration. There is also one lady who has almost completed with all the papers but there is still missing the insurance cover for the Child Day Care Centre. When all the documents arrive at the

Commission then needful will be done. I think in a timeframe, one week for them to obtain their registration.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, donc, je pense qu'au niveau de ce dossier, madame la Commissaire est au courant qu'il y a deux niveaux de demande de permis. D'abord, il y a ceux qui avait leur permis, d'une durée de deux ans. *Their licences have been lapsed.* Maintenant, depuis mars 2023, elles demandent leurs renouvellement. Donc, si elles avaient leurs permis, je ne pense pas qu'elles ont beaucoup de difficulté. Pourquoi est-ce que cela a mis autant de temps pour que jusqu'ici, à l'heure où je vous parle, ces permis n'ont pas été renouvelé pour ces personnes ?

**Ms. Agathe:** M. le président, comme j'ai déjà mentionnée, il y a trois qui font le renouvellement de leurs permis, mais malheureusement il manque certains documents. Par exemple, pour le renouvellement, leurs 'Fire Certificate', ils doivent faire l'application pour avoir leur 'Fire Certificate', ainsi de suite. Par exemple, le 'Medical Certificate'. Du moment qu'ils emportent tous leurs papiers à la Commission, on va faire le nécessaire. Merci.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, c'est dommage que cela prend plus de dix mois pour renouvelé un permis qui exister et j'ai l'impression qu'à chaque fois ces personnes-là viennent, on leurs demandent d'apporter les documents nouveaux et c'est ce qui fait tarder.

Donc, maintenant je demanderais à madame la Commissaire, elle a parlé des formations. Je suis contente qu'elle a poursuivi le projet. Je crois aussi qu'on la dit plusieurs fois que pour nous, la sécurité des enfants, leurs bien-être et leurs confort, on est intransigeante là-dessus. Cependant, je souhaiterais demander à madame la Commissaire, en lien avec la nouvelle loi, les nouveaux règlements de janvier 2022, est-ce qu'elle a eu l'occasion déjà de parcourir le document pour savoir quels sont les prérequis pour avoir ces licences ? Est-ce qu'elle à visiter ces douzaines de Care Givers et est-ce qu'elle peut nous dire si ces douzaines de Care Givers en formation *will be able to comply with what is expected in the Regulations, the law so that they can have their licences though they came to your office and submitted their documents? Whether according to you they will be able to comply and to have these licences, if yes, when is the timeframe to have them, if not, what are you doing in order that they have their licences?*

**Mr Chairperson:** I am sorry. The Standing Order is clear about this. You put one question at a time.

**Ms. Agathe:** M. le président, par rapport au visite au Child Day Care Centres, non je n'ai pas effectuée aucune visite au Child Day Care Centres. Parce que je pense que cela reste sur la responsabilité des Technical Officer parce que moi je ne dois pas aller comme un chien de garde pour veiller au Child Day Care Centres. Parce que les officiers eux ils savent exactement ce qu'ils doivent faire ou bien pour dire s'il y a quelque chose qui ne va pas chez les Child Day Care Centres pour qu'il puisse changer ou modifier quelque chose.

Et par rapport au, vous aviez dit, c'était par rapport au *compliance*. *Compliance* encore une fois c'est par rapport à tous les documents qu'ils vont soumettre à la Commission et aussi par rapport à tous les conditions qu'ils doivent respecter pour pouvoir avoir leurs enregistrements.

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, if we are to apply the Regulations, the Child Day Care Centres Regulations as it is provided by law, all the day care centres in Rodrigues have to be closed down because there is no compliance as regards to the requirements that are stipulated in the Regulations. And which is not good, this will bring chaos, especially for those mothers who need these Day Care Centres. I would like to ask the Commissioner, being given that the law provides for an Advisory Committee, which is chaired I think, by one officer of the Ministry, I would like to know from her, whether at least she made an application for exemption to allow at least some or all of the Day Care Centres to keep on working until they become in compliance otherwise all is going to close down in Rodrigues?

**Ms. Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that this situation that the Child Day Care Centres is now is that they have already been operating since years back before the law was not there and when the Republic pass the law about the Child Day Care Centres, we gave them time and we informed them. And, the Minority Leader when she was in the former government, they also did different training to help these Child Day Care Centres to obtain their registration. However, these were not met. But the context for Rodrigues is that it is different from Mauritius we know, and for these Child Day Care Centres that is known to the Commission, we have talked to them and I want to reassure the House that no contravention has been given to them and that everything is being done so that they can still operate and that no one is close. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**The Minority Leader:** Bon, je suis sûre que madame la Commissaire est au courant qu'il y a une des garderies qui est fermée à la suite de la décente des Policiers. Donc, j'espère qu'elle va voir comment les choses se passe avec cette garderie. Donc, est-ce que je peux savoir

de madame la Commissaire, étant donné qu'on sait que de par les règlements et la loi stipule, les gens qui sont intéressés dans ce service au niveau de Maurice, moi j'ai eu l'occasion de visiter plusieurs garderies d'ailleurs, j'inviterais madame la Commissaire de la faire. Si c'est vrai c'est un travail technique, *as a policy maker I think that you should know what is happening*. C'est comme ça que vous développez des politiques. Donc, je vous inviterai à aller visiter. Et surtout, au niveau de Maurice, est-elle au courant que l'investissement de départ pour mettre en place une garderie pour environ dix enfants, de par la loi, le montant est d'environ Rs 1 million. Ce qui fait qu'une garderie n'est pas une institution profitable. Ce qui fait que, c'est important aussi de savoir, ces personnes pour être *compliant with the law*, est-ce que madame la Commissaire a été avisé par ces officiers quel est le montant nécessaire pour qu'une garderie peut vraiment arriver au norme et bien sûr comment elle compte le faire aussi, comment les aider ?

**Ms. Agathe:** M. le président, malheureusement non. Je n'ai pas été avisé par les officiers de ma commission par rapport au montant qu'on doit pouvoir avoir pour le *start-up* du Child Day Care Centres. Mais j'aimerais bien ajouter à la Chambre ici présent qu'il y a aussi le *One-off Cash Grant Scheme* par le National Children's Council *up to Rs 5,000* et là où les Child Day Care Givers de Rodrigues, les managers peuvent faire leurs applications pour pouvoir avoir une aide par rapport au niveau infrastructurelle, par rapport au training, au Medical Certificate pour l'achat des *furnitures*, des *elictrical applicances* et aussi par rapport aux différents jouets qu'ils peuvent acheter pour les Child Day Care Centres. Mais malheureusement, il y a une seule garderie, une seule Child Day Care Centre qui a pu avoir ce *one-off grant*. Mais, j'ai appris aussi au niveau du ministère qu'il pense retravailler le *scheme* pour que plus de Child Day Care Centre peut soumettre leur application pour avoir ce *grant*. Merci, M. le président.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, as a question of proactivity, when we look at the law, as regards to the human resource requirements for the running of a Child Day Care Centre there should be, I think, no less than at least three to start with and with the application of the minimum wage in the Republic of Mauritius, you can easily understand the burden that will be borne by those managers who will be operating Child Day Care Centres. I would like to know from the Commissioner whether she will opt to, in a way subsidise or help these Child Day Care Centres managers, being given that I think that they do welcome most of them, six or seven, which at a rate of Rs 2,500 per month will not be profitable for their business? And, this,



of course, is causing reluctance for them to go forward with the project, which is a very important project for women who go to work, Mr Chairperson.

**Ms. Agathe:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to add that I have laid emphasis on the importance that the Child Day Care Centres regroup themselves in association so that my Commission could better assist them. And, I am pleased to tell you that they are in the right track so that they can finalise their registration to become an association and this will be more easy for us to help them through grants and also we can, for instance, subsidise for families which have low income to send their child to the Child Day Care Centres. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay, last question.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, en écoutant - d'ailleurs mon collègue la ci-bien dit par rapport au... Je vous ai parlé du montant de départ qui est très élevé et d'ailleurs le service de garderie n'est pas profitable dans un petit pays comme Rodrigues. Etant donné que quand nous regardons, quand nous analysons les besoins par rapport au Child Day Care Centres Regulations, on est presque sûre que la majorité, plus d'une dizaine de ces Care Givers ne pourront pas fonctionner au norme parce que les dépenses ne sont pas – *not affordable*. Point de vue du Human Resources avec, comme mon collègue là dit, au niveau du *minimum wage*, est-ce que madame la Commissaire peut nous dire si elle compte venir de l'avant avec un projet pour avoir des règlements adapter comme ça se fait dans beaucoup de pays, des grands pays comme la Swiss aujourd'hui, ils font des garderies familiales. Parce que comme on la dit aussi, la question de garderie c'est la sécurité des enfants mais aussi un maillon fort dans la lutte pour le *gender equality*. Parce que quand l'enfant n'a pas de place sécurisante pour aller, pour passer sa journée, c'est d'abord la maman qui doit prendre la décision de rester à la maison alors qu'elle aurait pu travailler. Est-ce qu'elle va considérer au plus vite de voir comment les règlements peuvent être contextualiser ? Donc, ce sont des règlements nouveaux et au plus vite assurer que règlements soient votes pour que ces garderies soient au norme et surtout aussi pour ceux qui veulent demain investir et démarrer un projet dans ce sens.

**Ms. Agathe:** M. le président, la situation de nos garderies à Rodrigues n'est pas pareil qu'à Maurice parce qu'à Maurice on a plutôt des garderies privées où il prend des coûts vraiment élevé par rapport à leur standard aussi. Mais, à Rodrigues ce que je peux dire, les garderies ils ajoutent un petit bout avec leur maison, on peut dire *home based* aussi. Il y a beaucoup qui ont fait beaucoup d'amélioration et j'ai pu constater et parler avec certains. Ils

achètent des équipements, par exemple, des jouets aussi. Par rapport au descente que la Police ont fait, qui est quelque chose de positif pour eux aussi pour qu'elles bougent un peu plus vite par rapport que si c'était la commission qui leur disait de faire ceci et de faire cela. Et aussi, par rapport au aide que le gouvernement peut aider les différentes garderies c'est par rapport du moment où ils peuvent avoir leurs enregistrements comme association, on peut leurs aider plus facilement. Merci.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, thank you, sorry I have forgotten about the regulations. Thank you.

We are working on a regulation but I cannot tell the House right now because we are working for babysitters also because we have different babysitters in Rodrigues. They are not doing it officially; we do not know them at the Commission. But we are trying to devise training for babysitters, for parents who want to have, for instance, a person to look at their baby only and not with different children as it is the case in the Child Day Care Centre, also. We are working on regulation *pour les nounous*, we are working also on adapted regulation for the home based Child Day Care Centres in Rodrigues. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLE LICENCES – BUSES, TAXIS AND CONTRACT  
CARS IN RODRIGUES**

**(No. B/163) The First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huîtres (Mr N. Lisette)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the issue of Public Service Vehicle Licences for buses, taxis and contract cars in Rodrigues, if there has been any issue thereof during the year 2023 and, if yes, to state:

- (a) If any report has been carried out beforehand;
- (b) The name/s of the beneficiary/ies, and
- (c) The procedure adopted for the selection of the successful beneficiary/ies?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to the Question B/163, the answer is yes. The meeting of the Rodrigues Transport Committee held on 15 and 16 December 2022 has approved the following:

- (i) 14 applications for Public Service Vehicle (Contract Bus) Licence
- (ii) 8 applications for Public Service Vehicle (Contract Car) Licence

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- (iii) 3 applications for Transfer of Public Service Vehicle (Contract Bus) Licence
- (iv) 1 application for Mutual Transfer of Road Service Licence
- (v) 1 application for Transfer of Road Service Licence
- (vi) 2 requests for the Delay of Replacement of Public Service Vehicle (Contract Car) Licence
- (vii) 2 Requests for Delay for the replacement of Public Service Vehicle (Taxi) Licence
- (viii) 2 applications for Public 'A' Carrier Licence

The above decisions were communicated to the applicants in May 2023.

As regards to part (a) of the question, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, an enquiry is carried out in respect of all applications for Public Service Vehicle Licences for buses, taxis and contract cars in Rodrigues. For each application, a Road Transport Inspector carries out a survey and submits a report which is referred to the Rodrigues Transport Committee.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regard to part (b), I would prefer not to disclose the names of the beneficiaries due to confidentiality reasons.

As regards to part (c), the applicants were convened and interviewed by the Rodrigues Transport Committee prior to a decision as to whether to grant or to reject the application.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in addition to the licences issued by my office, a regretful situation has occurred whereby, the National Land Transport Authority in Mauritius has granted two road service licences along Route 206/207 Plaine Corail/Camp Pintade and Route 211 Citron Donis/Port Mathurin on a temporary basis in October 2023 without the approval of the Rodrigues Transport Committee. The situation is being considered as a matter of great concern by my Commission. We will not give consideration for its implementation in Rodrigues. The attention of the Ministry of Land, Transport and Light Rail has been drawn accordingly and to the following:

- (1) Land Transport in Rodrigues falls under the areas of responsibility of the RRA under Section 26 and forth schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001;
- (2) The National Land and Transport Authority Act (NLTA) 2019 has established under Section 16 the Rodrigues Transport Committee which shall for the

purposes of Rodrigues has the same function and power under the Road Traffic Act in relation to the issue of Road Service Licences.

My Commission has also requested the Ministry of Land, Transport and Light Rail to take necessary actions to cancel the Road Service Licence which have been issued without proper procedure.

Thank you.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I refer to the answer of the Deputy Chief Commissioner with respect to that two licences which were issued without the approval of the Rodrigues Transport Committee. I would like to know from the relevant authorities which you issue same as regard to how they come to issue such permit based on regulations or discussions that are provided to them.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a private visit in Mauritius, I met the Minister. I talked to him and my attention was drawn. I was made aware that they issue these licences under Section 19 of the NLTA at 2019. So, I also draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that under the NLTA 2019 just as I have just mentioned, the Section 16, the only body who can issue licences in Rodrigues is the Rodrigues Transport Committee. So, that is why we insisted to... I talked to the Minister and we insisted to cancel these two licences which have been issued in Rodrigues.

**Mr Lisette:** We very well know that it has not been canceled so far and we are still awaiting, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Now, I understand that the Ministry has a prerogative as regard to a regulation made for in 2023 itself, in July 23 and this is where the question comes. Because for the Ministry to take that decision, he has to meet three conditions and the three conditions are that: there should have been complaints received from communities and users of public transport as regard to the level of service provided. I would like to know whether there has been any report which has been sent from the Commission for Public Infrastructure to the Ministry over to the NLTA for to allow the Minister to take such a decision on this particular point of law.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes. Mr Chairperson, Sir, we usually make reports. Okay? So, I asked for continuous reports on the different routes so that they can take decision. We will hold a Transport Committee very soon. So, I want to know about the taxi services. So, how much taxi he will need and with the upgrading of the airport, so, we will need more taxis. So, I asked for reports regarding taxis, regarding contract buses, regarding also buses along

various routes in Rodrigues. So, there are reports, yes, of course. So, and these reports, when they are made by the NLTA, they are also available at the main office in Mauritius.

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, based on the reports, if ever there is a complaint as regard to the service being provided, it is up to that Commission and most specifically for the Rodrigues Transport Committee to take decision. It is for the Rodrigues Transport Committee to take decision on such matter. But how is it that there seems to have been a bypass of the Commission whereby, instead of taking stock of the reports by the Commission in Rodrigues, it is the Ministry or the NLTA who has acted on that report.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes. I think he has to ask his colleague, Mr Leopold to put the question. Because the Minister took the decision without informing us. So, the only way to know, to answer to your question, you ask your colleague to put the question there. And, I have just said it in my answer, this situation is being considered as a matter of great concern by my Commission. And, we will not give consideration for its implementation in Rodrigues. This is clear. This is the position of this Government. I have discussed with my colleagues of the Executive Council. It is a sort of breach of the NLTA and we will not be agreeable to the issue of this licence in Rodrigues or any other licences.

Parce que sinon, M. le président, on va donner permis de taxi à Maurice, on va donner des permis de *contract bus* à Maurice. Mais qu'est-ce qui va se passer? Donc, on a fait comprendre que l'autonomie de Rodrigues, il faut respecter. J'ai parlé personnellement au Ministre mais pour avoir plus d'information, c'est vrai qu'il faudra peut-être poser une question là-bas pour dire mais il faut attirer l'attention dans l'Assemblée nationale à Maurice. Merci.

**Mr Lisette:** Yet, another condition that has to be met by the licencees is that he has had to provide adequate service on any route operated by him. Another condition for the Minister.... And, I would like to ask the Commissioner is he aware that the very same person who was issued a licence is the very same operator who is not providing the necessary service in Rodrigues. As at now, he has a bus who is running at Gravières who is out of service for more than three months. Will he use his good office to investigate into the matter as regard to that particular bus operator?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank the respected Member for the information. We will be looking into it but we are also doing an overall survey on all the... regarding all the PSVs, all the holder of the PSV licence. So, we are doing a survey, carrying out a survey and to see which decision we are going to take afterwards.

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, one of the interests that is at stake in this matter, it is the bus owner's cooperative society. And, I think you should have been made aware that they stated that there is that question of "*bus lougarou*" which is operating on our roads. I would like to know from the Commissioner whether in light of the information that has been provided to him, whether he is willing to go ahead with an investigation as regard to those buses who are not in conformity with respect to the law. Because I know very well there has been some NTA members/NTA officers. There have been some NTA officers who have come from Mauritius but when they came here, they found nothing. But we very well know and the cooperatives very well know that there is some bus "*lougarou*" '*ki dérouler dan Rodrigues*'. What his Commission will be doing about that?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I met the bus owner. This is a matter of great interest for us, also. It is a matter of security. What will happen if there is a "*bus lougarou*"? I do not know what do you mean by "*bus lougarou*". But we call it "*bus lougarou*". To me, it is an old bus or I do not know. Well, yes, of course. We have to do the needful. And, I have talked to the bus owners and I told them if you see that nothing has been done, there are other institutions where you can go and make complaints. Mr Chairperson, Sir, there has been some officers of the NTA who came to Rodrigues. They made crack down checks and they found nothing. And, for me, this does not mean that there is nothing. I agree with you. We have to ask for further investigations because according to my information, there may be some cases where there are some *bus*, I will not say "*lougarou*" but some buses who will be examined.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, my last question. If the Minister of the NLTA has so acted to issue a permit...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Lisette:** No, it is not a hypothetical question. It is a reality question. Since the Ministry has acted to issue to permit, there has been report submitted with respect to the service that are being provided on the two different routes that you mentioned. I think routes 206-207 and route 211. I would like to know why is it that the Commission for Transport in Rodrigues did not act on these reports to request for applications to be considered by the Rodrigues Transport Committee.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, il y a une chose. C'est vrai il y a eu des rapports et c'est vrai aussi avec le nombre de bus qu'il y a à Rodrigues, des fois on se

permet de retirer par exemple, un bus sur telle ligne et pour aller compenser le manque de bus sur le pays. Ça se fait. Le membre doit être d'accord avec moi. Oui, on le fait. Mais bien sûr, M. le président, après la recommandation de l'Officier en charge de la NTA, on agit. Donc, lui, ce qu'il a fait, donc, il a fait ses propositions et la Commission, bien sûr, se laisse guidé par... Et ça se fait, M. le président, que des fois, on retire des bus dans un endroit pour aller compenser le manque de bus dans d'autres endroits.

Mais bien sûr, on est en train d'étudier justement pour voir comment faire pour bien sûr, après discussion avec les *bus owners* de Rodrigues, pour voir comment on va rajouter d'autres bus sur d'autres lignes et quelles lignes. Parce que vous savez, M. le président, l'industrie du transport à Rodrigues est très fragile. Donc, avec le nombre de véhicules qui entre à Rodrigues, il y a ce problème de manque à gagner pour les propriétaires d'autobus. Donc, tout ça, il faut prendre en considération. Donc, bien sûr, bientôt, il y aura un *Rodrigues Transport Committee*. On a déjà écrit au Ministère et pour pouvoir décider et en même temps pour voir comment faire pour pallier à ce manque de bus pour d'autres services publics à Rodrigues.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay, next question!

**Mr Chairperson:** Chief Commissioner?

**RODRIGUAN EDUCATORS EMPLOYED BY RODRIGUES EDUCATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LTD (REDCO) – DETERMINATE/TEMPORARY**

**(No. B/164) The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste)** asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to Rodriguan educators employed by the Rodrigues Educational Development Company Ltd (REDCO) on a determinate duration or temporary basis for replacement for the year 2023, he will seek information and state on:

- (a) The number per college, and
- (b) If they are eligible and have been paid an end of year bonus and, if not, the reasons thereof?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will answer this question because it concerns Educators employed by REDCO.

With respect to part (a), I am informed by the management of the Rodrigues Educational Development Company (REDCO) Ltd that the services of 24 Rodriguan Educators

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were enlisted on determinate duration or temporary basis against vacancies and for replacement of Educators on leaves during the academic year 2023 and were posted to the following secondary institutions:

- Ten at Ananias André Le Chou College;
- Three at Grande Montagne College;
- Five at La Ferme College;
- Three at Maréchal College; and
- Three at Terre Rouge College.

With regard to part (b), I am further informed that 17 temporary Educators have been paid their End-of-Year Bonus whereas seven temporary Educators have not been paid same for the following reasons:

- (i) one Educator whose End-of-Year has been paid by the PSEA who caters for his salary as from the month of November 2023; and
- (ii) four Educators who have resigned and whose services were enlisted for a period of less than eight months' and two Educators whose services were required for temporary replacement over a period of one month in accordance with the provisions of the Workers' Rights Act 2019.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the absence of suitably qualified candidates following the promulgation of the Education (Amendment No. 3) Regulations 2022, I am informed that REDCO Ltd had no other alternative than recruiting these temporary Educators so as to ensure continued provision of secondary education in Rodrigues and classes are not left unattended.

I would like to thank these Educators for their services as well as effort and dedication for the advancement of secondary education at the level of REDCO during this Academic Year 2023.

Thank you.

**Mr Baptiste:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner to see into the matter because it seems that there is a confusion with regard to end-of-year bonus since some, maybe they have not received their pay slip to see the items relating to end-of-year bonus, specially I am talking about those who are on replacement or for short period of time. And, I will also ask him to see with regard to Section 54 of the Worker's Rights Act which mentioned nothing relating to the number of months but which simply



stipulates that “[...] Where a worker remains in continuous employment with the same employer for only part of the year.” So, it has nothing to do with the number of months. So, Section 3 (a),

“[...] shall be paid”... Sorry, for “only part of the year and –

(a) his employment is terminated in the course of the year for any reason;”

“the worker shall be paid, not later than the last working day of the month in which his employment is terminated, [...] a bonus equivalent to [one-tenth] of his earnings for that year.”

Which means that even if some employees have worked for less than one month or less than eight months, less than three months, they should be paid according to this.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are taking good note of these proposals. I must state that the initial directive of the Executive Council was to pay these persons not only their end-of-year bonus but their salary for the month until 31 December. The issue is that their contract of work ends on the day the academic year closes. Definitely, they have to be paid what is owed to them according to the law and I will request the Manager of the REDCO to look into these legal implications and see to it that these persons are paid their end-of-year bonus.

**Mr Baptiste:** May I ask also the Chief Commissioner to see to it not only for this academic year but it seems that in the past years also because these are legal implications obviously. If these are due, to see also to it that those who were employed for the previous year(s) and who have not been paid also, they are being catered for.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said, the REDCO will be requested to look into this matter. They do have specialist personnel there, HR people. They can also seek legal advice where necessary. But, I would invite any person, any employee, any person who have worked for the REDCO and who has not, maybe not been paid correctly, to write to the REDCO and to give the arguments that may be put forward for their payment. I also wish to encourage those persons who have been working with the REDCO years and years, maybe one, two, three years but who are unfortunately not able to secure registration with the PSEA, I invite if they want to keep in teaching to upgrade their qualifications and see to it that they are employable by the REDCO. The issue is that also, if we keep these people in employment for one year, they become employees as you are aware. But there is an issue with their qualifications. How can we let them become employees when they are not qualified according to the PSEA? So, there is a paradox a bit in it.

**Mr Baptiste:** Okay, I just wish to make a clear point. It is a matter of being employees. We can have a contract for one year. For example, if you know that the replacee, the person who is on leave will not come within a period of one year, even if they are not qualified, they can be employed by REDCO for a determinant duration. And, this does not entail them to become permanent employees. Because we see that every year at the beginning of the year, specially, then, they have to go through the same exercise. Maybe I would also request to see, to review the mode of recruitment instead of giving for replacement for just part of the year and then, in the next academic year, they will go through the same exercise, knowing very often that they will not have candidates obviously until the problem is resolved from the terms, with recruitment of fully qualified educators.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the issue is that if we give these workers revolving terms of employment, they do become, they do acquire certain rights according to the law. But this is why we have to terminate the contract of employment when the academic year ends. But again, we do feel that these teachers need, these people need better recognition. This is why we are sponsoring for the BEd, all the PGCE training at the MIE so that they become fully employable. Unfortunately, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we cannot keep employing certain people as replacement teachers. In fact, they are not even teachers because according to law, they should not even be in schools. But we cannot leave school unattended. Problem is not us. The problem is national policy. I have no issue that somebody who has a degree, has an HSC, a degree attends a school and becomes a sort of *surveillant*, a sort of person watching over other kids if their teacher is absent. But we do not have these holdings for teachers today. We do not have replacing teachers or the concept of *surveillant* like they have in France. And, of course, these people have to upgrade their qualifications or alternatively, find other employment.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** M. le président, le Chef commissaire en répondant, a ouvert la porte justement à cette question de *upgrading of qualifications*. Est-ce que je peux prendre l'opportunité pour lui demander où est-ce qu'on en est avec ce projet justement pour ces éducateurs qui n'ont pas leur degré pour le sujet dans lequel ils sont en train d'enseigner mais qui avaient entamé un projet de formation avec la MIE pour justement devenir employable par la PSEA? Est-ce qu'il peut nous donner des informations où est-ce qu'on en est avec ce projet?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are a number of trainees at REDCO and these people, they are in continuous employment from what I understand. We

have a list here of at least 17, 17 trainees whose contract had been renewed for the year 2023 and they are enrolled for example, on BEd, Bachelor of Education, English, P.E. all sorts of subjects. And, they are undergoing their bachelor of education. So, their contract has been renewed even though they do not have their PGCE. But as you are aware, for three of them, last year, we could not renew their contract or employ them because they had failed to enroll, to meet the requirements to enroll in an educational course which would further their career. Maybe some of them, they did not have a full S.C.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay, next question.

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, B/165.

## **SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **– MARÉCHAL COLLEGE**

**(No. B/165) The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the school buildings and infrastructure at Maréchal college, he will state to the House on if any investigations/surveys have been carried out by consultants/ engineers thereat, from 2020 to date and, if so, to give information about the findings and recommendations thereof, and to state where matters stand as regards to Executive Council decision taken on 30 September 2022 in relation thereto?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that during the implementation of waterproofing and repairs works at Maréchal College for Block A, B and C, the Global Consultant for selected development projects in Rodrigues has drawn the attention of the Commission on 16 December 2021 of the following with respect to the school buildings and infrastructures thereof:

#### **Block A**

Concrete spillings have been observed on first floor of the Block and the existing reinforcement have rusted considerably. The ground floor was observed to be in relatively good condition.

#### **Block B**

Part of the concrete had spalled and some fell at the soffit of the roof slab at the audio visual room and adjacent corridor. The existing reinforcement have rusted considerably. The first floor needs to be vacated whereas the ground floor was in relatively good condition.

As regards of the:

**Block C**

Part of the concrete from the top of roof slab came out exposing the reinforcement which have rusted considerably. The block was in a very poor condition and recommended that same be vacated with immediate effect.

As regard to the:

**Gymnasium**

It is unfit for use. There are cracks in the beams and the ceiling and same has been vacated.

Moreover, the Consultant has reported on 10 January 2022 that investigations have confirmed their doubts and has advised that the preferred way for moving forward is to terminate the current waterproofing contract, compensate the present Contractor if need be in accordance with the Conditions of Contract and prepare new tender for the strengthening/reconstruction work. They have also proposed the following options:

**EITHER** : **Option 1**: Pull down all the blocks; and

**OR** : **Option 2**: Strengthening works to the blocks. However, although the building is strengthened same will have a limited lifetime.

However, following technical recommendation of the Commission for Public Infrastructure on 09 February 2023 to seek the advice of consultants for the structural assessment (including relevant investigations) for Block C and submit recommended solution (including design) with estimated cost for rehabilitation to render the Block C safe for occupation/use, the management of REDCO Ltd has effected several visits with various consultants at Maréchal College who have confirmed that Block C is structurally safe.

In addition, I am informed that REDCO Ltd has on 19 October 2023, requested a private consultancy firm to provide a Certificate of Structural soundness of the six secondary schools namely Maréchal, Le Chou, Mt. Lubin, Terre Rouge and Grande Montagne College. As such, the findings have revealed that major parts of the infrastructures at Maréchal College are still in safe conditions for occupancy but need repairs or routine maintenance to avoid further deterioration as follows:

**Block A**

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There is need to proceed with concrete repair and the building can be occupied in the meantime.

**Block B**

Access to be restricted to the Audio Visual Block located on the first floor.

**Block C**

There is need to proceed with concrete repair but the building can be occupied in the meantime.

As regard the:

**Gymnasium**

Building shall not be occupied until repairs works have been completed.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to announce that we have been able to save Block C at Maréchal College and circumvent pulling down a building which is still structurally safe thus avoiding unnecessary wastage of limited funds available for infrastructural development in Rodrigues. It is clear that the soundness of Block C has been put in doubt when the former contractor has irresponsibly used inappropriate machinery which has deteriorated the state of building while engaging in its waterproofing works.

I am informed that following the Executive Council's decision at its meeting held on 30 September 2022 to provide a grant to REDCO Ltd for the construction of six temporary classrooms at Maréchal College to accommodate students of the College, the management of REDCO Ltd in a letter dated 27 July 2023 has notified that they would not proceed with the construction of the six additional classrooms at Maréchal College as they have appointed the services of a private Consultant. The latter has also certified that Block C is structurally safe but there are still waterproofing and repairs works that need to be carried out at the said block.

As such, I am informed that arrangements have been made by REDCO Ltd to refurbish the first Floor of Block C and thereafter Grade 13 students who were accommodated at the swimming pool since February 2022 were shifted back to the school in August 2023.

I am further informed that Bids through the Restricted Bidding Method were launched for the repairs and waterproofing at Maréchal College on 26 October 2023 with closing date set for 16 November 2023. Contract has already been awarded to the lowest evaluated substantially responsive bidder on 11 December for the sum of Rs 4,328,000 including

contingencies and excluding VAT. The Handing over of the site was effected on 18 December 2023.

Thank you.

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand that there is a contradiction or different views between the first report by the Consultant and by the other... of the Private Consultant. I would like to know whether engineers of the Public Infrastructure have been also taken into account, they have taken into account the views of the Public Infrastructure's Engineers so that we can really have a more balanced decision about this?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I personally visited the Block C and I must say I am also qualified in construction, having a Certificate Four in... Yes, I am qualified in construction. I have a Certificate Four in Building and Construction in Australia. I am not an Engineer; I am below an Engineer. And, it is surprising that we have had a report stating that Block C must be pulled down. I have never seen such a foolish and inappropriate recommendation being made, Mr Chairperson, Sir. And, we here, at the level of the Executive Council, we do not take the words of consultants and whomsoever being the words of God. So, we requested the Commission for Public Infrastructure to have their engineer to visit it together with a Consultant and they were unanimous that the building should not be pulled down. And, if you want other opinions, we requested Mr Wong So, Mr Claude Wong So, Chairman of the RPUC together with other engineers at the RPUC to visit the site and they were unanimous to tell that the building is structurally sound.

There is no need to pull this building down, which will be a big waste of money. The columns of the buildings, the beams of the building, there are no cracks which represent a danger to students or a risk of structural collapse of the building. It is just a building with one floor; not 10 floors. And, this is why we have undertaken the necessary preparation, contract, tender documents and the building is being repaired. The issue which happens, Mr Chairperson, Sir, and it is to be put on their record, is that I do not know whom got a contract for the water proofing. And, what they did is that they used *marteau piqueur* on the roof of the building, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Can you imagine what will happen when you use a *marteau piqueur* on the roof to remove waterproof material from the building?

If we crack all the building, it will crack the ceiling inside and this is what happened, Mr Chairperson, Sir. And, this is where the issue came in. We should not just take the words of consultants, whatever, whoever they are. We have to think for ourselves because here, at the

level of the Regional Assembly, we do encourage people to rebuild their slabs, '*craze dale refer dale*'. '*Nou pa kav craze dale, refer dale?*' So, we have had the full, extensive, at least three engineers have confirmed that the building should not be pulled down and we have repaired it and it is to our credit. We are repairing it.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** M. le président, au risque de contredire ou... franchement, je ne comprends pas comment aujourd'hui, le Chef commissaire peut venir nous dire que ce *building*, le bloc C, *is safe for occupation*. Puisque je me souviens, on avait visité ce bâtiment puisque le consultant en janvier 2022, avait donné un rapport défavorable par rapport à l'utilisation du bloc C, je me souviens, on avait *convened an urgent meeting with the Head of Infrastructure, Public Service, who is also an Engineer and we were looking with him*.

I remember, we were the whole team of the Commission, DH, Members of the Board, the different officers, the Consultant and we were saying with the Engineer, the Head of Public Infrastructure whether, what the Consultant is saying can be... maybe we can accommodate the children though we have this report and he was adamant and he gave a written report that what the Consultant, Lux Consultant is saying is right and we cannot use this building to house students. That is where the decision was to vacate the building for the security of the students. Can the Commissioner now tell the House that the decision of the Consultant, the Engineers from the Consultant has been put aside, the decision of the Head Infrastructure has been put aside and whether, he has other reports how he can say that these other reports can outweigh the reports of the other Consultants.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Minority Leader is not an Engineer. She is neither a construction person. The only thing she wants is that this building be pulled down. Have you heard any building being pulled down in the history of Rodrigues because of structural problem here? Which building have you heard in Rodrigues has been pulled down? Where? Which building has been pulled down? I am not aware. All buildings have been pulled down. Which building has ever been pulled down, concrete building? Have you been at Maréchal? Have you looked at the building? I have been there. I am a qualified construction person, not to the level of Engineer; below an Engineer. We have here, a report... '*Mo dan tou, mwan!*'

**Mr Chairperson:** Order!

**The Chief Commissioner:** '*Mo bon dan tou.*'

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please!

**The Chief Commissioner:** *'Mo koné ki mo pe dir.'* We have here, a report, from Mr Vinoy Daby, Bachelor of Technical Owners Diploma and the Civil Engineering UK, registered Professional Engineer Civil, CRPE No. 68688 and here, they have conducted a structural soundness certification and they have said:

“Audiovisual grade 7 main teaching blocks. Areas where spalling noted to be sound tested to identify extent of concrete spalling, proceed with concrete repair, work to be carried out within next six months. Building can be occupied in the meantime.”

Who are you to contest expert report? We are different. Your Consultant, the Consultant said something. *'Nou pane pren li pou parole béni. Noune ale gueter par nou meme parski penan l'argent pou Rs45 millions pou investi.'* The building is sound and as Commissioner for Education, Chief Commissioner, I can guarantee that the repairs which are going to be made are just cosmetic repair; not even structural repair. The issue has arisen because of the Contractor for the water proofing destroyed the building himself. I do know who he... maybe he should be sued for this. The Structural Soundness Certificate is here, Mr Chairperson, Sir. If you want to destroy the building, you can go and destroy the building by yourself.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** M. le président, le Chef commissaire crie pour faire peur. Pour nous, la sécurité des dizaines et des centaines d'enfants vaut beaucoup plus que Rs45 millions. C'est pour ça que nous maintenons que... aujourd'hui, on trouve bizarre que le Chef commissaire pour une question d'argent, vient de l'avant avec un *sound structuring* pour *outweigh* deux rapports des ingénieurs pour dire que le building est en forme et peut être occupé. Et surtout, *the Head of Infrastructure who is an engineer, I think these people, you should see what to do with them.* M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Chef commissaire par rapport aux recommandations, l'*assessment* des bâtiments au niveau du collège de Maréchal, *whether the different specialist room*; audiovisual, computer, library, staff room, physic lab, junior lab and boys' and girls' toilet have been relocated or also these have been seen sound to be occupied?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is no structural problem at Maréchal College in the buildings. There are issues with waterproofing, issues with painting, issues with maintenance which you have not done since the 10 past years. REDCO had not had the money. You have not given REDCO the money to repair this beautiful college, this *bijou* and the issue today is that these students are being penalised because of your past irresponsibility. Now, what you want, pull down, pull down, pull down. What do you want to



pull down? There is nothing to be pulled down. The buildings are to be repaired and we are allocating money for the repairs, repainting of this school. Because this school is becoming a shame.

The parent/teachers association has written to us telling that the painting of the building, the general environment of the building, there is a sort of *laissez-aller* at Maréchal College, Mr Chairperson, Sir. We have to be frank. Some people here, they are not doing their job. They have to do their job. I have been there many times. There are pieces of woods everywhere. There is waste deposited everywhere. Things are not maintained. So, it is up to me, to the Chief Commissioner to go and paint the room? The people at REDCO, the people at Maréchal College, they have to take their responsibility and not just come here and say: ah the building is structurally unsound. No, it is not structurally... Every building there is still and will still be structurally sound within 50 years. If you do not take care of water infiltration, water infiltrates into the building, into the reinforcements of the building, it is normal that the building will deteriorate.

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am not an engineer. I will not argue with these things. But my concern is about the security of the students. I would like to know whether, a risk assessment has been carried out at Maréchal College where in the Block C as you have said, those students who were initially vacated to be housed in the swimming pool have been back to this building which as you have said, have some problems, maybe not infrastructural but with problem of water infiltration et cetera. So, whether any risk assessment has been carried out and if so, when and what are the recommendations? Because now, there is no rain but everybody knows that during rainy seasons, these classes are not fit/suitable to accommodate students. What will happen then if we get a full month of January if we expect it will be raining because of the problem of water?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member is not a construction person. I am a construction person. I insist, I am a construction person. The issue of structural problem is not the same as the issue of water penetration. Okay? So, if there is water penetration, we do not solve the water penetration. We say it is a structural problem and we ask for pulling of the building? This is not how it works. We have, here, the latest report from V Strength Ltd. Structural Soundness Certification and everywhere, they do not say that we should pull down these buildings. So, this is the latest report. I do not care over what they have said, whoever has said it. I care what is my opinion, Mr Chairperson, Sir, my opinion which has been confirmed, the opinion of Mr Wong So.

Will you challenge the opinion of Mr Wong So? Are you challenging the opinion of Mr Wong So, a Senior Rodriguan Engineer? I have asked him to visit the gymnasium, which they have said must be pulled down. They have said let us close the gymnasium. It has been closed for so many years. They have not been able/capable to repair the gymnasium because they have been told it must be pulled down. Mr Wong So has said it is not going to be pulled down. It is structurally sound. What is coming down is *crépissage* and there are some cracks in the beams, but not all the beams. We are going to put splicing, metal support into the beams to pierce the beams and to bolt it up. We are going to bring the solutions. There are solutions to consolidate structurally buildings which are having some structural issues.

Why did you not for 10 years take the solution, bring the solution? We are going to reopen the Maréchal gymnasium during the course of this year. If the tender is not ongoing, it is going to be reopened. What have you done? You let the college rot. You let the college be deteriorated and then, you come and ask question: pull down, pull down? Because a consultant has said let us pull down? Okay. So, we have to see what the consultant say. Consultant wants to pull down because they want concrete to be pulled because they get money on concrete. Every metre cube of concrete which is pulled, they get money. So, they say pull down so that they get money. This is the reality. And, this is why you are on the Opposition today; because you believed every paper and every person who tells you X and Y.

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, my question was about risk assessment. I said that I would not argue with the infrastructural engineers because this is not in my capacity but the risk assessment for those students who are now sitting in this classroom.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will not table this because I do not want to table it. But, it is here. The Management of REDCO also said: “Okay, let us have third opinions. And, the conclusion is here based on the above. Based on the above, all the buildings are reference and they say V Strength Limited of 2027, Marcel Di Castri. They are Structural Engineers and they have submitted a Structural Soundness Certification and they say:

“Based on the above, the buildings can be deemed to be structurally safe for occupation subject to the restrictions mentioned above.

Restrictions:

- Buildings are not to be occupied until repairs
- Buildings can be occupied
- Buildings shall not be occupied until repairs

- Buildings can be occupied.”

So, what do we do? We pull down Maréchal College? We pull it down? We put an atomic bomb on it? We are going to repair it! We are very sad for the kids who go there. My young girl goes there and it is a shame that today, Maréchal College, everywhere, water is infiltrating. Somewhere, somebody has not done their job. *‘Ou pou dir mw ki mo bisin kozer? Ou ti ava ine élu dan mo plas!’*

**Mr Chairperson:** Let us move to the next question.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Sorry? Okay, last one.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like the Chief Commissioner to tell the House with regard to his last assessment done by the Engineers, the other Engineer, he can inform the House about the cost estimate to address the structural issues that he is talking about and how much has been transferred to REDCO to repair and the priority.

**The Chief Commissioner:** I have already stated what has been transferred to REDCO. We have transferred money to REDCO for six additional classes. They have been convinced that they need not build new classes. Block C can be repaired. It is a wonderful block. You can go and visit. I give you permission. As regard to the cost for the repairs, she has to understand that the report which was asked from the Engineer was a Structural Soundness Report. If the building had to be pulled down, the Engineer would have said pulled down. But, it does not include analysis of how much it would cost to repair. There are many issues at Maréchal College. We are going to tackle them. One of my priorities, I have asked Mr Wong So, people like him, other consultants to give a helping hand. In 2023, I want...we are going to reopen the gymnasium. It is going to be reopened.

The problem also, Mr Chairperson, Sir, is during 10 years, what have they done? They have let them being influenced by consultants and people who want to make money on concrete. Why do we have to have in Rodrigues very big structures, gymnasiums with concrete roofs which are heavy and which are costly? We have to have tin roofs, *avec tôle, structure métal*. It is easier to build, it is cyclone proof and it is better for the students. They build all sorts of concrete, *béton* partout and this is what happen today. When you put a very big concrete, look at the Le Chou Gymnasium. I was there last Saturday. Le Chou Gymnasium, you have two small doors like this.

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If you have to put an elevator into it, there is no place to put an elevator. If you have to bring a lorry, the lorry that the pulling infrastructure has, the elevator, to repair the roof, the false ceiling of the roof is falling. Part of it is in suspension. Parts of the ceiling at Le Chou College, it is in suspension. I am surprised why this is not being addressed. Because it is too tall. It is maybe 20-25 metres high. How do we bring machinery in this elevator to repair it? Can I ask you who designed it? The exit is like this. How do you bring machinery to repair this? So, we have to look at the design of what we do. Maréchal has a concrete roof. It is very heavy. This is what is causing cracks. If we put metal roof, it is not going to crack and it is cyclone proof.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay, next question!

**GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ALLIANCE PLUS (GCCA+)**  
**- MT DU SABLE & ANSE ALLY**

**(No. B/166) Dr H. Agathe (First Local Region Member for Grande Montagne)** asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) at Mt Du Sable and Anse Ally, he will, for the benefit of the House, provide information relating to the value of the project, the amount disbursed from the contribution of the EU funds and the amount financed by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, and to table a breakdown of the expenditure incurred to date?

**Mr Volbert:** Mr Chairperson Sir, allow me to state at the outset what I fail to understand how a project on Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) and Climate Smart Agriculture Project has landed at Security not at the Commission for Environment and Agriculture under the previous regime.

Upon assumption of office, I was made aware of this project and I called for a meeting among officers of the Commission. Mr Chairperson, Sir, I regret to inform the House that officers of the Commission for Social Security were not aware of the project and worst, the project was not submitted by the Commission for Social Security to the European Union (EU). From information gathered, it appears that even the former Commissioner for Social Security was not aware that his Commission has submitted a project to the European Union.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, a quick encounter with the officers has revealed that upon announcement to the call for project by the European Union, the then Commissioner for Agriculture requested that no other commission should submit projects as the Commission for Agriculture has a well-designed project to be funded under this call for proposal.

**/UNREVISED/**

This is a serious matter and today we found ourselves, Mr Chairperson, Sir, in a very delicate situation to have benefitted from a project that we have no idea and how to implement it.

I am informed that there are two files at the Commission for Social Security with no project write-up and no clear policy on what the project which wish to achieve. I have gone through the files and noticed that there was no Project Manager to supervise the said project. The first folio f(1) of the file RRA/COMS/SOC/RB/W1/7 of 2019-2020 starts with the letter from a Civil Engineer dated 28 May 2020 stating, I quote: *“(i) As agreed during the meeting held on 15 May 2020 with the Commissioner, the tender will be split into separates smaller tenders in view to start the construction work the soonest possible.”*, unquote.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to law we are all aware that splitting of tenders is illegal. The more so, it should had come from the Departmental Bid Committee (DBC) not from the former Commissioner.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the second file start at folio (1) with a note of meeting of the DBC for the setting up of a Lime and Honey Farm at Anse Ally, Rodrigues. In the absence of the full project write-up submitted to the European Union which is not available in file at my Commission, we have sought a report from the Economic Planning and Monitoring Unit (EPMU).

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the EPMU informed that the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) established by the European Union has launched a call for proposal under the fact sheet initiate supporting the Climate Smart Agriculture for small holders in the Republic of Mauritius on 03 July 2017.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am also informed by the EPMU that Climate Smart Agriculture firstly integrates climate change and its effect into the Planning and Development of Sustainable Agricultural Systems. A project proposal was submitted followed a call for proposal under the fact sheet initiative GCCA+, supporting Climate Smart Agriculture for small holders in the Republic of Mauritius on 29 June 2017 entitled, ‘Setting up of an Integrated Organic Chilli Farm at Montagne Du Sable and Lime and Honey Farm at Anse Ally’. The project comprises of the following two components: -

- (1) Setting up of an Integrated Organic Farm at Montagne Du Sable targeted 28 beneficiaries, and
- (2) Setting up of a Lime and Honey Farm at Anse Ally targeted 15 beneficiaries.

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Lime and Honey Farm at Anse Ally, Mr Chairperson, Sir, on 07 September 2020, the Commission for Social Agriculture and Others awarded the contract for the setting up of a Lime and Honey Farm at Anse Ally for the sum of Rs 24,987,200 (inclusive of VAT) to SDR Ltd.

The scope of works comprised:

- Construction of new rainwater harvesting pond at Roche Bon Dieu;
- Fencing of the Lime and Honey Farm at Anse Ally;
- Procurement of lemon seedlings and melliferous plants;
- Construction of nursery store and toilet at Anse Ally, and
- Construction of a track road.

Works started on 04 October 2020 and the duration of the contract was for a period of 210 days with completion date of 01 May 2021. However, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the contract was actually completed on 22 July 2021, the site was handed over to the Commission on 06 July 2021. The defects liability period ended on 22 July 2022.

The works were completed except for:

- Supply and laying of Polyethylene Geomembrane to the new rainwater harvesting pond, and
- Supply and fixing of solar power system for the nursery and store building.

Decision was taken by the Commission that the geomembrane liner to the pond and the solar panel would be completed during the defect's liability period.

On 10 June 2019, a private Consultant was requested to quote for providing consultancy services to the project, for which he submitted a quote of Rs 569,250 (inclusive of VAT). The scope of works was:

- Survey, preparation of drawings and tender documents, and cost estimates.
- Inspection of works at construction stage.
- No liquated damages at the rate of Rs 10,000 per day up to 10% of the contract price was charged on the ground that the extension of time up to 22 June 2021 has been approved by the Consultant. However, approval of the DBC was not seen, Mr Chairperson.
- Laying of geomembrane and solar system was not completed as at 22 June 2021.

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- There was no Commissioning Certificate from the Consultant, certifying that the whole works, which consisted of a pond powered by solar energy, was actually working.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the site at Anse Ally was not surveyed by the private Engineer before submitting the quote of Rs 569,250 on 27 June 2019.

On 05 September 2019, the Engineer wrote to the Commission, informing that the site of the rainwater pond of 1000 m<sup>3</sup> at Anse Ally was not appropriate due to technical reasons and the rise in cost of additional works involved. He proposed another site at Roche Bon Dieu which was more elevated, thus no pump and water supply network would be required.

No Commissioning Certificate for Construction of rainwater harvesting pond at Mt du Sable, Mr Chairperson, Sir,

The contract for the construction of rainwater harvesting pond at Mt du Sable was awarded on 05 June 2021 with contractual completion date 31 December 2021. No Commissioning Certificate was however issued by the Consultant certifying that the pond powered by solar energy was actually functioning.

On 10 June 2019, a quotation of Rs 569,250 was submitted by the Project Engineer for the setting of Chilli Farm at Mt du Sable. And, on 27 June 2019, the same Project Engineer submitted another quotation of Rs 5,250 for the Lime and Honey Farm at Anse Ally, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Direct procurement method was wrongly chosen as the consultancy service for the two project was procured on a project wise basis. Had the two projects, Mr Chairperson, Sir, being considered together, the threshold for direct procurement would have been exceeded and tender procurement should have been resorted to.

Recourse to direct procurement as the method of procurement for the selection of the private Engineer for the two projects was not compliance with section 25 of the Public Procurement Act (PPA) as no due diligence exercise was done.

The total consultancy fees amounted to Rs 1,138,500 (inclusive of VAT) instead of Rs 569,250.

The fencing and associated civil works were completed on 20 February 2021 and the construction track road was actually completed on 14 November 2020. No liquidated damage. The maximum of which amounted to 10% of the contract was charged by the Commission.

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On 14 July 2020, the European Union conveyed its approval for extending the project coverage island wide rather than limiting to the two sites as was initially foreseen to target more beneficiaries. However, as the Commission had not completed the project as at August 2023 and gather the experience therefrom it could not replicate it in other part of the island.

Ownership of the project was disputed between the Commission for Health, *c'est-à-dire*, Commission for Social Security and the Commission for Agriculture. The latter was not responsible for their implementation although both projects involved mainly agricultural activities, such as plantation of lemon seedling and melliferous plants at Anse Ally and chilli plantation at Mt Du Sable.

According to the project write-up, a total cost of the project as per signed contract is € 300,082.05, out of which EU contribution € 1 million representing 76.92% contribution and RRA contribution € 300,082.05 representing 23.08% contribution.

As at 26 August 2023, the closing date of the two projects, a total amount of Rs 3.5 million. amounting to € 667,448.19 has been disbursed by the EU and an amount of Rs 7,206,120 (€ 148) representing the balance of final amount of the grant which has not been disbursed.

I am tabling the breakdown expenditure incurred to date. Thank you.

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, I am happy to have heard so many details that I even did not know. So, the Commissioner at the beginning of his answer mentioned that there was no project write-up and no project file but this is the lengthiest answer that we have obtained here and so much information. Can I know from where this information was obtained, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

**Mr Volbert:** As I said in my reply, I sought information from the Economic Planning and Monitoring Unit (EPMU), Mr Chairperson, Sir

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Baptiste:** Okay. As far as I know, the contract was signed between the RRA and the EU, and there is only one RRA. Anyway, is the Commissioner aware...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** No cross-talking, please. Order! Order please!

*(Interruptions)*



**Mr Baptiste:** Even from the EPMU I understand...

**Mr Chairperson:** I said order!

**Mr Baptiste:** Even if the information came from the EPMU, it is still from RRA. I understand that the Commissioner is now aware that the project was there. So, is he aware that in the project write-up there was a Project Monitoring Committee to ensure the follow-up of the project, comprising of the Departmental Head for Agriculture, for Social Security and for Gender, which is often normally *présider par le Commissaire*. Is he aware of that? That in the project write-up...

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have a point of order on this question. The Member has asked a question, benefit of the House, information related to the value of the project – amount disbursed, contribution of the European made, amount financed break down expenditure. He did not ask about anything committee *si pa ki* organising committee. Even if the Member wanted, this is new matter being introduced – if the member wanted information of this, he should have been specific in his questioning. So, this is out the purpose of the main question.

**Mr Chairperson:** So, unless the Commissioner wants to answer the question. Because in your answer you canvass on this.

**Mr Volbert:** I would request the respected Member to come with a substantive question next time.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**Mr Baptiste:** I would like to know whether, I have not yet received the list but I understand that there was also a contract, a tender which was launched for derocking, clearing of site and ploughing of land at Mt Du Sable during your tenure of office. I would like to know whether this also is included in the list relating to disbursement?

**Mr Volbert:** Je ne pense que ça se trouve dans le *break down* qu'on m'a donné. Parce que je ne le vois pas. Non, je ne pense pas.

**Mr Baptiste:** But is the Commissioner aware that there was a contract for the derocking and ploughing of land at Mt Du Sable, *justement pour ce projet* which was completed somewhere in June of this year?

**Mr Volbert:** I do not know on what date maybe yes, there is a contract issued but I am not aware on what date. I do not have the information right now, on what date the contract ended.

**Mr Baptiste:** Anyway, in this case does it mean that the amount has not yet been paid and there is still amount due to contractors for work carried out during that period.

**Mr Volbert:** I am not aware of this question, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Will the respected Member come later on with a substantive question?

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, est-ce que je peux savoir du Commissaire par rapport au évaluation que le European Union a fait sur les projets, donc quelle a été un peu les recommandations ? Les recommandations de l'Union Européenne par rapport à ce projet après l'évaluation ?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Again, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this was not in the main question. A question, supplementary question is for the elucidation of the main matter which has been put. You are asking on the report of the European Union. This is not in the main question. Where will the Commissioner get this information?

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay, Chief Commissioner. Respected Members, I will ask you as far as possible to follow the main question, please.

**The Minority Leader:** Le Commissaire a aussi parlé du nombre de bénéficiaire pour les deux projets dans sa réponse, peut-il nous dire combien de bénéficiaires sont actuellement dans le projet par rapport au nombre identifier au départ ?

**Mr Volbert:** A Anse Ally il y a dix bénéficiaires, il ne reste que dix bénéficiaires et à Mt Du Sable 18 bénéficiaires.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, if I am not mistaken as regards to the answer given by the Commissioner for Social Security, there is still some part of the money which is yet to be disbursed either by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or by the European Union. Being given that the lapse of time that payment has to be made or the project to be completed is over, I would like to know whether the European Union is still committed for the payment of the funds which are yet to be disbursed?

**Mr Volbert:** Comme le projet est terminé, M. le président, et qu'il y aura un audit complet de la part de l'Union Européenne, je pense après le rapport de l'audit complet, à ce

moment-là l'Union Européenne va voir s'il va nous donner le restant de l'argent du projet ou si ça va fermer.

**Mr Lisette:** I would like to know from the Commissioner whether there has been any correspondence in that direction which has emanated from the European Union?

**Mr Volbert:** I am not aware, you come with a substantive question next time, I give you all the required information you wish.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**ALLOCATION OF SEATS IN COLLEGES – PRIMARY SCHOOL AWARD  
CERTIFICATE (PSAC) RESULTS 2023**

**(No. B/167) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the allocation of seats in colleges around the island following the Primary School Award Certificate (PSAC) results 2023, he will state to the House:

- (a) on if there have been any recent modifications to the criteria applied and, in the affirmative, to provide details thereof;
- (b) and table, the number of seats available in the different colleges together with the respective number of students allocated thereto, and
- (c) the number of complaints/requests for transfer received from parents to date, together with the corresponding outcomes?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as the House is aware, with the implementation of the reforms of the education sector namely the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE), pupils at the end of primary the education have to take the assessment leading to the award of the Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC). As stipulated at Paragraph 5, Sub Paragraph (b) of the Education Act – Regulation 6 of Government Notice No. 227 of 2015, the Admission to Grade 7 in a regional school shall be determined on the basis of –

- i) the choice of the responsible party;
- ii) the residence of the pupil in the geographical zone in which the regional school is located, and
- iii) the aggregate of the pupil in the PSAC assessment.

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And where two or more pupils are equally meritorious in accordance with the criteria of admission specified above, admission to Grade 7 shall be determined by the basis of the proximity of the residence of each of the pupils to the regional school.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as the House is aware the educational institutions in Mauritius are regrouped in four educational zones and Rodrigues through the Commission for Education is considered as one geographical zone, thus defacto, a fifth zone.

As such, for the purpose of the admission of a pupil to Grade 7 in a school in Rodrigues, the responsible party of that pupil shall fill in the application form and indicate in order of preference, all the regional schools which are located in the geographical zone in which the pupil resides.

With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the Mauritius Examination Syndicate (MES) has reported that there has been no change in the criteria for the allocation of seats for admission to Grade 7 for Academic Year 2024 and the same criteria have been used as the past years.

As regards to part (b), I am informed that according to submission of seats available by the Management of REDCO Ltd and Rodrigues College to the Private Secondary Education Authority (PSEA), a total number of 590 seats are available to accommodate the Regular Stream and 20 seats at each secondary school are available for the Extended Programme as follows:

Schools	Regular Stream	Extended Programme
Rodrigues College	100 (50 boys and 50 girls)	20 each per school
Ananias Andre, Le Chou College	90 (45 boys and 45 girls)	
Marechal College	90 (45 boys and 45 girls)	
Mont Lubin College	90 (45 boys and 45 girls)	
Andre Lelio Roussety, Songes College	55	

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<b>Schools</b>	<b>Regular Stream</b>	<b>Extended Programme</b>
Grande Montagne College	55	
La Ferme College	55	
Terre Rouge College	55	

The number of seats allocated to each school by the MES at Regular Stream and Extended Programme are as follows:

<b>Schools</b>	<b>Regular Stream</b>			<b>Extended Programme</b>			<b>Grand Total</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Rodrigues College	55	50	<b>105</b>	14	05	<b>19</b>	124
Ananias Andre, Le Chou College	51	56	<b>107</b>	11	10	<b>21</b>	128
Marechal College	50	51	<b>101</b>	14	06	<b>20</b>	121
Mont Lubin College	48	50	<b>98</b>	16	05	<b>21</b>	119
Andre Lelio Roussety, Songes College	19	30	<b>49</b>	07	05	<b>12</b>	61
Grande Montagne College	30	35	<b>65</b>	12	10	<b>22</b>	87
La Ferme College	19	37	<b>56</b>	13	07	<b>20</b>	76
Terre Rouge College	13	28	<b>41</b>	13	06	<b>19</b>	60
<b>Grand Total for intake 2024</b>							<b>776</b>

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the number of seats available with the different colleges for the Regular Stream and Extended Programme together with the respective number of students allocated thereto by the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate.

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As regards to part (c), I am informed that there is neither any written complaint nor request for transfer to date. Some 50 parents called at the Commission for Education on Wednesday 13 December to enquire whether the criteria for allocation of seat in schools have been changed and admission to Grade 7 has been done on a regionalization basis. Subsequently, parents were informed that allocation of seats in secondary schools is done by the MES and the same criteria since the introduction of PSAC have been used for admission to Grade 7 in a school.

In line with the calendar of activities issued by the MES, following the declaration of PSAC results, registration of students for admission in Grade 7 in secondary school is scheduled for 19 December 2023 and the exercise for transfer will be held on 21 December 2023 whereby parents will have to report to the Commission for Education to apply for transfer as per communiqué issued.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House of the landmark performance of our Rodriguan pupils at the PSAC Assessment 2023.

Out of the 776 pupils who sat for the PSAC Assessment, 619 have succeeded – 282 boys out of a total of 384 have passed compared to 337 girls out of 392.

According to results which were released on 12 December 2023 by the MES, the overall pass rate for Rodrigues for Academic Year 2023 is 79.77% compared to 77.4% and 74.53% for Academic Year 2021/2022 and Academic Year 2020/2021, respectively.

In addition, the percentage pass rate for Rodrigues is for the first time above the pass rate for Mauritius and for the Republic which are at 77.34% and 77.47% respectively.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, following strategies put in place by the inspectorate team and management of schools as well as Educators to improve performance of learners and schools, it is noted with much satisfaction that not only the overall pass rate for Rodrigues has increased compared to the last two years but also the quality of results by our Rodriguan pupils has improved.

By the matter of fact, out of Academic Year 2023, 265 pupils namely 138 girls and 127 boys have scored Aggregate 4 at the PSAC Assessments compared to 196 for the Academic Year 2022. For the first time in history, the second best opted secondary institution observed as per the choice of parents is Le Chou College have been allocated only pupils who have scored Aggregate 4. All students admitted at Le Chou College, have Aggregate 4 (for

Rodrigues College better be aware in seven years), that is, 107 Grade 7 students for Academic Year 2024.

This academic achievement showcases a combination of tangible outcomes which highlight students' performance, effective teaching, continuous improvement and quality education and emphasis laid on examination preparation by the Commission for Education and this regional government. It is a fact that the most preferred school in Rodrigues according to parental choice at present has a limited seat capacity to be able to absorb all learners who have scored Aggregate 4. As a matter of fact, the management of the school has highlighted difficulties encountered in Academic Year 2023 resulting from an over allocation of students in Grade 7 by the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate. 140 students were offered a seat in the school whereas the intake capacity is 100.

All colleges in Rodrigues, Mr Chairperson, Sir, are good colleges. They have the best, all of them have the same quality of teachers and all of them have the necessary infrastructure to enable each and every student to thrive.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as such there is the need to shift our given mind-set that success is solely determined by the institution attended. There is need to adopt a positive one which focuses on personal growth, resilience and the learning experiences that come from challenges.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, meeting will be held shortly with the management of REDCO and all Head of secondary schools to prepare for Academic Year 2024 and so as to ensure among others that:

- i) Personalised attention is given to students;
- ii) Focus is laid on individual strengths;
- iii) Unique teaching approaches are promoted;
- iv) Supportive learning environment are fostered, and
- v) Quality and meaningful education is provided.

I wish to seize this opportunity to congratulate all students for their achievement and to state to them that your PSAC result does not determine already your Higher School Certificate results. I wish to wish them good luck for their secondary education and congratulate them heartily.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to all the Head of Schools who have worked with the Commission, with myself, who have had meetings for examinations preparation before the start of the PSAC examinations last year and we have listen and given

to them necessary means and this is why we have the spectacular results today. We have contributed greatly in the success of these pupils and for their commitment, dedication to ensure a conducive learning environment to all our pupils in Rodrigues. At the same time, we are going to focus on those schools whose performance are not satisfactory and there are a number of improvement to be made in those schools who are on the relative scale poor performance. We are going to help them improve their infrastructure and accompany their staff so that performance is levelled up for all schools above 80%.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, directive have been given to REDCO to give full support to all the PSAC students entering in Grade 7, to improve the *encadrement* and the preparation, *l'accueil des élèves de PSAC* in year 2024 at all REDCO colleges. This comes from commitment from the staff. I am sure that with colleges like Le Chou receiving all of its students, Grade 4 students, even Mont Lubin College receiving Grade 4, four aggregates students are going to show their best capabilities in the future. I am convinced that laureates will start coming from all colleges in Rodrigues. It has already started. We already have had to HSC laureates from Marechal College. It is going to continue.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, je vais profiter de l'occasion aussi pour féliciter nos petits enfants qui ont très bien travaillés et l'ensemble des acteurs qui ont contribués à avoir ces résultats. Donc, il y a beaucoup de facteur. Le Chef commissaire en a mentionné quelque uns et je suppose qu'aussi c'est peut-être un impact positif du COVID, il y a eu un prolongement de l'année scolaire. Peut-être les enfants sont plus matures, il y a eu donc des classes qui ont été répète. Donc, ce sont aussi des conditions qui ont favorisés les bons résultats des enfants et ce n'est pas deux années de travail qui donne de tel résultat. Est-ce que le Chef commissaire est au courant que... en effet, il y a eu de très bons résultats mais cette année c'est sans précédent le nombre d'enfant qui a pleuré et le nombre de déception dans la communauté éducative elle-même, les parents aussi par rapport à l'allocation des sièges dans les collèges. Par exemple, aucun enfant de Batatran Government School n'a pu avoir une place au Rodrigues College, aucun enfant de Rivière Coco, aucun enfant de l'école de La Ferme. Rivière Coco, Batatran, il y a plusieurs comme ça. Enfin il y a quatre écoles qui n'ont pas pu avoir une place au collège. Je demanderais au Chef commissaire quel message il dirait à nos enfants pour leur faire comprendre parce qu'il n'a pas eu de changement de critère comme il la mentionnée, donc comment peut-il éclairer nos petits-enfants et la communauté éducative ?

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, pourquoi vouloir absolument aller dans un collège X ou Y ? Pourquoi, M. le président ? Le premier, si ma mémoire est bonne et mes



informations sont correctes, le premier doctorat Rodriguais, le Dr Richard Casimir, n'est-ce pas, était un élève jusqu'à la Forme 5, du Marechal College. Et puis, le Dr Casimir – c'était la pratique à l'époque, *my classmate, Mr Lisette who was with me in HSC will remember that* les élèves qui réussissent la Forme 5 dans les autres collèges de Rodrigues venaient tous faire leurs HSC au Rodrigues College, n'est-ce pas ? Parce qu'il n'y avait pas de HSC avant dans les autres collèges, c'est après qu'on a eu HSC au Le Chou College en premier. Le Dr. Casimir a été éduqué au collège de Marechal, instruit si vous voulez, et il est venu après au Rodrigues College et a été lauréat. Il est allé, comme M. Léopold et moi-même en France faire ces études et il a été qualifié pour faire un doctorat, il est venu docteur en sciences, je ne sais plus quelle discipline – Chimie. Docteur en Chimie. Aujourd'hui, je crois que M. Richard Casimir est une sommité dans son domaine au niveau mondiale. Pourquoi vouloir aller dans X collège, M. le président ? La logique voudrait que chaque élève du PSAC, qui va au Grade 7 aille dans le collège le plus près de chez lui, de par sa résidence. Il faut briser cette obsession, M. le président. Et là, j'ai appris que c'est un peu pour motiver leurs élèves que les enseignants du PSAC ont comme motivation, dit aux élèves, tu vas aller au Rodrigues College ou au X collège, il faut avoir quatre '1'. Et c'est un peu une erreur de leur part parce que 265 élèves ont eu quatre unités et malheureusement le Rodrigues collège qui peut prendre qu'une centaine ne peut pas tous les prendre. Est-ce que ces élèves-là doivent pleurer ? Non ! Est-ce que Mme Marielle Labour qui est une des meilleures enseignantes de langue de l'île et qui travaille au collège Le Chou, ne serait pas content d'avoir ces élèves dans la HSC ? Est-ce que tous les enseignants de la REDCO, M. Baptiste, M. Lisette, ils ne sont pas heureux d'avoir tous ces élèves-là ? Est-ce que nous ne faisons de notre mieux pour que ces élèves-là réussissent ? Est-ce que notre collègue, M. Alex Flore, enseignant de Physiques, HSC, qui est un faiseur de lauréat au Marechal College, faiseur de lauréat, M. le président. Deux lauréats au Marechal College, je vous donne leurs noms, juste une seconde. Voilà. M. le président, nous avons en 2017, Jean Rivaldo Ravina, lauréat HSC du collège du Marechal. Quel était leur ranking, le résultat PSAC de Jean Rivaldo Ravina ? M. Rivaldo Ravina lauréat du Marechal College en 2017 est maintenant un *Telecommunication Engineer in an IT company*. Pas lauréat de la REDCO ! Lauréat de Rodrigues. Il avait été admis au Marechal College. Melle. Josianna Collet, lauréate HSC 2018, Marechal College. Elle est maintenant, Client Accountant in a management company. This is what we must show to the kids. Je vois Mme Agathe sourire, elle était prof de Mathématique, sûrement elle a dû travailler avec ces lauréats. Il y a des faiseurs de lauréate comme Alex Flore, comme M. Kulpoo, M. le président. M. Kulpoo était le Recteur du collège Marechal et avec une direction approprier, ils ont produit

des lauréats. Ça veut dire que le résultat du PSAC ou le collège que vous avez n'est pas nécessairement le facteur qui fait de vous quelqu'un qui réussit votre HSC avec brillance. C'est pour ça qu'à la REDCO, nous allons mettre les moyens qu'il faut pour avoir tous les lauréats un jour. Il faut demander aux collèges HSC de travailler leurs élèves, leur donner les facilités, leur donner l'attention qu'il faut et la motivation qu'il faut. Et je suis convaincu que tous ces 265 qui ont eus quatre unités sont tout autant capable et même les autres. Donc, il faut briser ce tabou que X collège est meilleure, Le Chou est meilleur que ça, il y a comme un *ranking* de collège. Le collège de Songes est en dernier ou le collège de Terre Rouge est en dernier ou le collège de La Ferme est en dernier. Il faut briser ces tabous-là, il faut dire, il faut que tout un chacun puisse dire aux élèves - les enseignants de la REDCO, l'infrastructures de la REDCO, l'encadrement de la REDCO sont tout aussi bon que tout autre collège. C'est à chaque collège, M. le président, de construire cette espèce d'environnement, d'atmosphère pour donner aux élèves. Et c'est ça que le Rodrigues College a, cette encadrement, le suivi des élèves. On me dit qu'on appelle des parents dans certains collèges REDCO, les parents ne viennent pas. On me dit on demande des rendez-vous avec les Recteurs... Il faut un accompagnement, il faut un *commitment* de la part des collèges, des enseignants de la REDCO, l'amour pour le collège et l'amour pour l'enseignement. On n'est pas des enseignants qui le travail c'est venir le matin, à midi ils vont fumer dehors là, devant le collège et puis à 2h15-2h30 *pack up and go, just get their salary. Being a teacher is also being committed to the community of the school, being committed to parents, being committed to students, giving more of the teaching itself.* C'est ça être dans un collège, M. le président. Et c'est peut-être ça que le Rodrigues College a, que Le Chou a commencé à acquérir, que Marechal a et que d'autres collèges peut-être n'ont pas. Regarder le comportement même de certain responsable de certain collège. Il faut changer, il faut motiver, il faut *show example*, M. le président. Et c'est ça un travail que nous avons à faire et j'invite les Membres de l'Opposition à nous accompagner dans ce travail.

M. le président, vous voyez des professeurs de la REDCO de Grande Montagne, des Membres Parlementaires, elles sortent, elles rentent quand elles veulent. Elles sortent elles vont où elles veulent quand elles veulent.

*(Interruptions)*

*Ben ça mem nou pou fer la !*

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, ce discours du Chef commissaire disant que tous les collèges sont bons ainsi de suite, ce n'est pas un discours que nous entendons pour la

première fois. Le Chef commissaire Serge Clair en a parlé et nous de ce côté de la Chambre nous avons vécu et nous avons voulu – on était Commissaire, mon aîné a été au Le Chou College, mon collègue à sa fille à Le Chou.

*(Interruptions)*

Jamais on n’a intervenu pour qu’elle change de collège, pour nos enfants changent de collège. Donc, parce que nous croyons ce que nous disons.

*(Interruptions)*

Nous on n’a jamais. Parce qu’on croit dans ces collèges et *we walk the talk*.

M. le président, je parlais justement de cette déception dans la communauté éducative et je pense que les gens ont besoins d’information. Le Chef commissaire n’a pas répondu à ma question – comment il expliquerait à nos petits-enfants, à leurs parents comment les choses se sont passés...

**Mr Chairperson:** Put the question.

**The Minority Leader:** Oui, je mets ma question. Le Chef commissaire un moment dans ces rencontres officielles avec les chefs d’établissements a voulu faire comprendre qu’il y a eu l’intervention de la Commission. Donc, dans une de ces communications avec les chefs d’établissements, par exemple, on me dit – il a été rapporté que le Chef commissaire a parlé d’ingrédients de qualité, *donne manger de qualité, ingrédients gâté, donne manger gâté*, ce qui fait qu’on a voulu avoir un partage équitable au niveau des écoles en regardant les résultats. C’est ce qui a été dit dans une communication officielle avec les chefs d’établissements. Est-ce que je peux savoir du Chef commissaire s’il y a eu intervention ou pas de la Commission dans le cadre de la répartition des collèges ?

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, la Minority Leader doit savoir, elle a été ça, que les examens sont conduits par le MES, les papiers sont corrigés par le MES sauf le Créole Rodriguais qui a été corrigé ici mais même ça s’est repris par le MES et que les résultats sont émis par le MES et que les collèges alloués à chaque étudiant est aussi alloués par le MES. La Commission de l’Education, autant que je sache, n’a rien à faire dans l’allocation des collèges. Le problème, M. le président, que moi j’ai remarqué, j’en ai parlé aux officiels de la Commission, c’est que comment distinguer un élève qui est allé dans X collège qui a eu quatre unités qui voulait aller dans le collège Y. Un autre étudiant est parti avec quatre unités. Deux étudiants, quatre unités, un qui est parti dans le collège de son choix, *very good*, et l’autre qui

est parti dans le collège du second choix. Le problème c'est qu'il serait peut-être intéressant, utile d'avoir ce qu'on appelle un *Grade Point Average* pour chaque étudiant. Je suppose que les élèves qui sont partis et qui ont eus leurs collèges de choix ont leurs *Grade Point Average*. Parce que la marge pour avoir une unité c'est entre 75 et 100. Donc, si un élève a eu une moyenne de 80 et l'autre a eu une moyenne de 90, il est normal que celui qui a la moyenne de 90 va avoir plus de marge de manœuvre dans ces choix. Mais, est-ce qu'on veut vraiment retourner sur le system de *grading*, de *ranking* d'auparavant ? Non. Mais c'est ça, maintenant on est dans le *grading*. Donc, il est faux de dire que la Commission intervient. La Commission n'intervient dans rien et surtout pas dans Rodrigues College parce qu'ils ont leurs propres critères, leur choix, des places réservés selon leurs propres critères, les enseignants qui travaillent chez eux, etc.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I remember very well that the Chief Commissioner and it is nice to hear that he has changed, *his idée-pôle en quelques sortes* because we were part of the same Select Committee in 2004. I was a member and he was a member. There were two members of the opposition and I remember that the Select Committee was working specifically as regards to the admission of student, at that time at the Certificate of Primary Education level. I remember that he was vehemently against that question of regionalisation. I remember that well. The question and the *l'incompréhension au niveau de Rodrigues aujourd'hui face aux résultats* is the lack of the due process element where parents feel that there is no fairness, equity and transparency, as he has said in his answer himself, one child who is living in Batatran having a four *unité*, first choice – Rodrigues College, second choice – Le Chou and today he found himself at Marechal. This is where there is a lack of understanding from the part of the parents and from the part of the students and the same will apply also. There is a student with *quatre unités* living in the southern part of the country, having as second option Marechal and now he found himself at Le Chou, because he has not got Rodrigues College. This is the misunderstanding. I think that the message that the Minority Leader was expecting from the Chief Commissioner was to explain to these students how to explain such a situation as regards to what has happened, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, may I remind to the respected Member that the proceedings of a Committee of the House is confidential and that it was inappropriate for him to express without my permission what was my opinion. So, this is not appropriate.

*(Interruptions)*

This is not appropriate; you have to agree.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, having said this, I am surprised that he is saying that, as if Marechal college was not good for the student who got four *unité*. Are you saying this?

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, on a point of explanation. I think that the Chief Commissioner has not understood what I have said. I have never said that I am against regionalisation nor what has happened as it is but I was speaking about the misunderstanding as regards to the reason that has been brought in the mind of the student.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay.

**Mr Lisette:** I have never uttered anything against having four *unité* in which one college or another.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, let us look at the repartition of the 265 students who have got four *unité*. Rodrigues College took 105, Ananias André Le Chou College took 107, 36 went to Marechal, 16 to Mont Lubin College, one student with four *unité* went to La Ferme College. And, this is according first to their results, you look at their results. Second, their choice, and third their place of residence. So, if you are the top student, you will get the college of your choice, even if you put La Ferme, you will get it. So, I do not see why some people are not understanding what is fully understandable, Mr Chairperson, Sir? If we have a drum of water we have to put it in buckets, *dan sého*, we fill first *sého*, second, third, *céki resté*. What is difficult to understand? The problem I said, we do not know the GPA of each student. If I do not know, therefore, all four *unité* are the same. We do not know, we, we do not know. The Commission we do not have this data. We do not have the GPA of each student to say to a parent – okay, your student went to Marechal College because your GPA is 75.2. Okay? Your GPA is 79. All those who went to Rodrigues College are above 90, suppose. We could tell this. *Cekine ale Rodrigues College li laho 90 average, pou ou 85 bé li pane gagne Rodrigues College line ale Le Chou*. This is fully understandable. Why are some people making it difficult to understand? My message to the student is that all secondary schools in Rodrigues are good. Okay? Just like Mr Clair said it in the past – *tou l'endroit Rodrigues bon pou resté*. And those *l'endroit ki pa ti bon pou resté lontan* like Baie du Nord, like Plaine Corail, Terre Rouge, they are the best today. The best places to live.

**Mr Chairperson:** Last question.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, le Chef commissaire, à un moment il y a eu un communiqué de la Commission de l'Education, je suppose en lien avec toutes ces spéculations qui allait bon train d'ailleurs, qui continuent au niveau de l'admission dans les collèges. Je vois que dans ce communiqué, d'ailleurs je l'inviterais à lire, très, très mal foutu pour une Commission de l'Education. Je me demande qui a pu faire ça ?

Premier point, il parle de *grading*, justement il vient d'en parler là, comment le GPA, d'après lui est compte pour l'allocation dans des collèges alors que nous savons que dans la réforme *ranking is abolished. Ranking is abolished*. Le Chef commissaire fait un communiqué qui nous informe qu'un élève obtient une unité dans le sujet où s'il/elle obtient plus de 75 points sur 100 même celui qui à 99 à une unité ainsi de suite, et puis vous parlez un pourcentage. Même parmi les quatre unités ceux qui a un pourcentage meilleur sont alloués les collèges de leurs choix. Donc, ça c'est l'*official* communiqué de la Commission de l'Education. La question qu'on se pose, est-ce que seulement les enfants de certaine école qui peut avoir les meilleurs résultats ? Parce qu'aujourd'hui on a vu beaucoup d'enfants dans les autres écoles n'ont pas eus de place au Rodrigues College. Par exemple, c'est clair qu'aujourd'hui que beaucoup plus d'enfant dans la région du nord a eu Rodrigues College. Est-ce que c'est seulement ces enfants qui ont eus les meilleurs résultats ?

Maintenant un Chef commissaire, sa Commission qui prend, qui émane, qui émet un tel communiqué pour dissiper les doutes de la population et des parents. A-t-il vérifié avec les autorités concerner, le MES et le ministère pour assurer que ces informations sont vrai et sont véridique ? Parce que nous savons que *ranking is abolished* et la question dont le Chef commissaire parle de la qualité du GPA n'a rien à voir avec l'allocation des collèges.

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, je n'ai pas beaucoup, un B en Français *Main HSC*. J'ai effectué quatre ans d'études tertiaire en France. Ma Departmental Head, elle est je crois ancienne prof de langues d'Anglais et de Français et d'autres encore qui ont travaillés sur le communiqué. Qu'est-ce qui est mal foutu dans le communiqué ? Qu'est-ce qui est mal foutu ? Ça veut dire quoi mal foutu, M. le président ? Ça veut dire quoi ? Des fautes, des accents aigus, des accents graves ?

(Interruptions)

Ça c'est votre opinion et je crois c'est votre opinion qui est mal foutu, M. le président. On sort un communiqué pour expliquer et pour dire – est-ce que nous devons dire ce que le MES doit nous dire ? Nous disons ce que nous voulons. Nous disons ce que nous voulons, M. le président.

**/UNREVISED/**

Nous sommes dans une autonomie, nous sommes une institution, une Commission de l'Education et on dit ce que nous pensons. M. le président, on doit prendre les instructions de X, Y, Z ?

*(Interruptions)*

Comment le MES fait pour dire à tel étudiant ? Comment le MES fait pour dire à tel étudiant ?

*(Interruptions)*

*To pa commissaire la toi. To dan n'import la toi. To dan l'opposition la. To dan l'opposition la. Pa sofer, pa sofer, l'anné pe vini. Kas ene pose.*

*(Interruptions)*

M. le président, il est évident le *ranking* a été aboli et c'est bien. Mais comment le MES fait pour dire à un enfant de tel école ou de même école – deux élèves ont eus quatre unités chacun, un va à Rodrigues College, l'autre va à Marechal. Comment le MES fait ça ?

*(Interruptions)*

*Be ki fer mo bizin deman li ?*

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order please.

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, mais c'est à travers son *Grade Point Average*. Le point que l'enfant a eu. *It is not the policy of the MES to disclose marks scored by the candidate*. On ne peut pas demander ça. Et on a dit, on a bien dit dans notre communiqué, on suppose que le MES...

*(Interruptions)*

Mais on suppose, M. le président. Il est interdit de supposer quelque chose ?

*(Interruptions)*

Non, mais est-ce qu'il est interdit de supposer ? Quel est votre problème avec notre communiqué ? Regardez la page Facebook de l'Assemblée Régionale, on a atteint 10,000, M. le président. 10,000 – qu'est-ce qui vous gêne que vos '*lives*', les gens n'atteindre vos foutu *lives*. Vos foutu *lives*, reprenez vos foutu *lives*. Si vous croyez que vous êtes fort, M. le président.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Non, M. le président, pour terminer dans cette question de PSAC, on est content. Elle a parlé sur deux années. Ce n'est pas deux années, M. le président. Quand on est devenu commissaires en 2006, M. Grandcourt, Commissaire Perrine était là, d'autre était là. Le taux de réussite en 2006, quand ils sont partis nous sommes arrivés. Taux de réussite – un élève sur deux, 50% *fail*, M. le président. Qu'est-ce qu'il faisait ? C'est nous qui avons commencé, redynamisé les écoles, photocopieuses pour les écoles, journaux pour les écoles, séances de séminaire en début d'année à Cotton Bay pour les professeurs de primaire. Une revalorisation du métier de l'enseignant, redonner confiance à ces gens. Regarder les résultats pendant leurs mandats ? Ça stagnait autour de 70%. Et comme je reviens, on invite les Maitre d'Ecole...

*(Interruptions)*

Comme je reviens, oui, M. le président. Comme je reviens, je suis un éducateur, je suis fier du résultat.

*(Interruptions)*

Pas ingénieur, contremaitre. Vous pouvez dire fièrement sous la houlette du Chef commissaire Johnson Roussety, Commissaire de l'Education, Rodrigues a battu Maurice. Et c'est ça la fierté et il n'y a pas de foutu dedans. C'est ça la fierté. En 2023 sous le gouvernement L'Alliance Libération, CPE nous avons battu Maurice et nous allons continuer de battre.

**Mr Chairperson:** Merci. So, let us break. Let us break. It is time to break.

*At 1.23 p.m., the sitting was suspended for one hour.*

*On resuming at 2.30 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.*

**Mr Chairperson:** Mr Ramdally.

### **BED BUG INFESTATION – QUEEN ELISABETH HOSPITAL**

**(No. B/168) The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to bed bug infestation at the Queen Elisabeth Hospital at Crève Coeur, he will enlighten the House on:

- (a) when and where same occurred in the compound;
- (b) the measures taken to eradicate same, and
- (c) the measures taken to house the patients due for admission at concerned ward/s?



**/UNREVISED/**

**Mr Volbert:** Mr. Chairperson Sir, following a viral video on social media on a political page concerning bed bugs in the Paediatric Ward of QEH, an inspection was promptly carried out by officers of the Public Health Office and the following observation is being submitted to my office. A full report was requested from the Public Health office concerning the infestation of bed bugs for the last 10 years.

I quote

“Please note that due to several transfer of the Public Health Office over the last decade, no records of works carried out by the officer over the past decade is available.

With regards to proliferation of bugs in different health justification, we can recall from memory that regularly (about three times yearly) we got complaint about bugs proliferation mainly in male, female and paediatric wards of Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Out Patient Department (OPD) of La Ferme Area Health Centre.

Whenever there is a complaint and there is evidence of infestation, the concerned ward is fumigated on three occasions over a period of 10 days with K-othrine which has a residual effect of three months.

Since the arrival of this new Regional Government in March 2022 to date, the only time bed bugs were detected was on 15 November 2023.

I am informed that on 15 November 2023, the presence of five bed bugs have been noted in the kids’ corner also known as the resting area allocated to parents accompanying their admitted infants of the Paediatric Ward on the sleeve’s edge of one mattress, within joints of a sofa bed.

Upon notification, the infested furniture was immediately removed from the ward.

The Ward Manager informed the Hospital Administrator of the problem who also contacted the Public Health Office for immediate inspection and urgent remedial action, that is, fumigation is taken.

It has been recommended that in order to eradicate the bed bugs and eggs, there was the need for a three step disinfection on day 0, day 06 and day 10.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, as regard to part (c) I am informed that consultation with higher officers of the Commission for Health, decision to relocate patients and new admissions in the Ex-Operating theatre which was fully set-up into Paediatric Ward for the whole period of the disinfection was taken.

Thank you.

**Mr Ramdally:** M. le président, est-ce que je pourrais demander au Commissaire de la santé si actuellement, la salle de pédiatrie est fonctionnelle?

**Mr Volbert:** Oui, depuis le 12, M. le président.

**Mr Ramdally:** Donc, concernant les mesures qui ont été prises pendant la période où il y avait la fumigation, est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous dire où est-ce que les enfants ont été dirigés exactement?

**Mr Volbert:** I repeat this part of the answer. With regards to proliferation of bugs in different health justification, we can recall... as regard to part (c) I am informed that consultation with higher officers of the Commission for Health, decision to relocate the patients and new admissions in the Ex-Operating theatre which was fully set-up into Paediatric Ward.

**Mr Ramdally:** On a reçu des informations concernant des enfants qui ont été relocalisés dans le *Male Ward*. Est-ce que le Commissaire peut confirmer s'il y avait...

**Mr Chairperson:** I am sorry. The Commissioner has already answered the question. An information that you get elsewhere, you cannot put it as a question, here. This is hypothetical. Rephrase your question, please.

**Mr Lisette:** I would like to ask the Commissioner whether there has been enough place in the Ex-Operation Room or if not, whether any kids have been relocated in the male ward.

**Mr Volbert:** Ça a été toujours une pratique si la sale concernée est rempli, à ce moment-là, on trouve d'autres moyens pour que les enfants, même les autres patients soient admis. Peut-être mais je ne suis pas au courant de cette information. Si jamais l'*ex-operating theatre* était rempli, à ce moment-là, on devait faire le nécessaire pour que les enfants soient...

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** Est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire s'il y a eu aussi la présence des punaises, des *bed bugs* dans le OPD?

**Mr Volbert:** Je m'attendais à cette question. Vous savez, pour qu'une punaise change de la coque, il faudra que ça soit présent là pendant plusieurs jours. Les punaises se nourrissent du sang. Mais là où on a vu une coque de punaise sur une chaise roulante, ce n'était pas évident. Nous-mêmes, on pose des questions comment se fait-il. Parce que la chaise est nettoyée régulièrement. Donc, d'où sort cette coque de punaise? Voilà, ma réponse.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** Est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous dire s'il y a eu une enquête pour déterminer d'où vient, quelle est l'origine de ces punaises parce qu'apparaît-il, il y a eu des noms cités dans des réunions pour dire que c'est untel ou untel qui est....

**Mr Volbert:** Je ne suis pas au courant de cette réunion. Peut-être que la respecté *Minority Leader* avait été là. C'est elle qui *chair* cette réunion. Elle a les informations. Mais moi, je ne connais pas. Je n'ai pas entendu et je ne vois pas la nécessité pour une enquête parce que dans tous les hôpitaux, même à Maurice, il y a des punaises. Donc, quel est le problème? Et nous, on fait notre mieux. *We are caring government. I am a caring Commissioner* et on fait notre mieux pour qu'on éradique ces punaises. Voilà.

**Mr Ramdally:** M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de la santé pourquoi, il a mentionné dans sa réponse qu'il n'y avait qu'une seule salle où il y avait la présence de punaise. Pourquoi il a fermé toute la salle pédiatrique?

**Mr Volbert:** La salle pédiatrique, il n'y a qu'une seule salle pédiatrique mais on avait d'autres compartiments sous la varangue où les parents, *the mother rested*. Donc, on ne peut pas. Vous savez une idée comment est-ce qu'on peut faire ça si on ne peut pas fermer le *Paediatric Ward*? La varangue se trouve dans le *Paediatric Ward*. Mais ce n'est pas là où il y a les bers. Voilà, on a dû fermer tout le *Paediatric Ward* pour qu'on éradique ça.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** Est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire le nombre de jours qu'une salle doit être fermé dans le cadre de cette fumigation et est-ce qu'il a été contraint d'ouvrir des salles avant parce qu'il y a eu des opérations pour les enfants?

**Mr Volbert:** Les salles sont fermées pendant 10 jours. Ça, c'est les protocoles qu'il faudra observer. On a des zéros, des six et des 10. Donc, c'est pendant 10 jours.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** Je voulais savoir est-ce qu'on a été contraint d'ouvrir les salles en avance parce qu'il y a des enfants qui ont fait des opérations et qui devaient être admises. Donc, on n'a pas pu attendre 10 jours.

**Mr Volbert:** Je n'ai pas cette réponse. Je ne pense pas que c'est une c'est une question qu'il faudra poser parce que comme je vous ai dit, s'il y avait des enfants, qu'il faudrait que ces enfants soient admis dans des salles, on va ouvrir dans des *male ward*, des *female ward* dépendant de leur âge pour qu'on puisse faire admettre ces enfants-là. Mais de là venir dire ouvrir les salles, je ne pense pas. Ce n'est pas possible.

**Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis:** Est-ce que je peux demander au Commissaire de vérifier si les enfants qui ont été opérés par le ENT n'ont pas été admis dans ces salles? Donc, je pense que c'est important pour lui de vérifier. Est-ce que je peux vous demander de vérifier ça?

**Mr Volbert:** Je vais vérifier et puis je vais vous laisser savoir.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay. We are left with two minutes. I allow the last question. Next question.

**RESURGENCE OF COVID-19 IN RODRIGUES – JULY 2023 TO DATE**

**(No. B/169) The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the resurgence of COVID-19 in Rodrigues, from July 2023 to date, he will enlighten the House on the:

- (a) number of cases registered per month together with the number of deaths, if any, and the number of active cases as at to date;
- (b) present status of COVID-19 as per the World Health Organisation(WHO), and
- (c) genetic variation of the virus prevailing in Rodrigues together with surveillance measures, if any, that are being implemented in regard thereto?

**Mr Volbert:** Mr. Chairperson Sir, from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 to date , I am informed that the number of COVID-19 positive cases per month are as follows:

SN	Month	No. of Cases
1.	July	8
2.	August	3
3.	September	0
4.	November	249
5.	December (as at 18 December)	181

As from 01st July 2023 to date, we have no death related directly to COVID-19.

Mr. Chairperson Sir, as regard to part (b) of the question, as per the World Health Organisation, globally, during the 28-day period from 23 October to 19 November 2023(WHO latest COVID-19 report), 104 countries reported COVID-19 cases and 43 countries reported COVID-19 deaths. 43 countries.

## **/UNREVISED/**

From the available data, the number of reported cases and deaths during the 28-day period have declined, with over half a million new cases and over 2400 new deaths, a decrease of 13% and 72%, respectively, compared to the previous 28 days (25 September to 22 October 2023).

According to WHO, trends in the number of reported new cases and deaths should be interpreted with caution due to decreased testing and sequencing, alongside reporting delays in many countries.

Data presented in the WHO reports for every 28 days' period are therefore incomplete and should be interpreted considering these limitations.

Some countries continue to report high burdens of COVID-19, including increases in newly reported cases and, more importantly, increases in hospitalizations and deaths – the latter of which are considered more reliable indicators given reductions in testing.

As many countries discontinue COVID-19-specific reporting and integrate it into respiratory disease surveillance, WHO will use all available sources to continue monitoring the COVID-19 epidemiological situation, especially data on morbidity and the impact on health systems. COVID-19 remains a major threat, and WHO urges Member States to maintain, not dismantle, their established COVID-19 infrastructure.

It is crucial to sustain, inter alia, early warning, surveillance and reporting, variant tracking, early clinical care provision, administration of vaccine to high-risk groups, improvements in ventilation, and regular communication.

Regarding part (c) of the question, Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am informed that all restrictions on account of COVID 19 Pandemic have been lifted. However, we are still maintaining individual sanitary precautions to avoid proliferation of the disease.

Thank you.

**Mr Ramdally:** Dans sa réponse, le Commissaire a mentionné qu'il n'y a pas eu de personnes qui sont morts directement de la COVID. Est-ce qu'il y a eu des patients, des personnes qui sont décédées quand ils étaient à Mont Lubin?

**Mr Volbert:** M. le président, je n'ai pas cette information et si le membre veut avoir une réponse claire et plus précise, qu'il vienne avec une autre question la prochaine fois.

### **LOCAL MEAT MARKET – SHORTAGE IN THE SUPPLY OF PORK**

**/UNREVISED/**

**(No. B/176) The First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Dr H. Agathe)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the local meat market, he will inform the House on if he is aware of the shortage in the supply of pork and, if so, to state the reasons thereof together with the measures that his commission is implementing or envisaging to address this shortage and its consequences?

*(Withdrawn)*

**BALADIROU YOUTH AND TRAINING CENTRE**

**(No. B/184) The Second Island Region Member (Ms M. N. Raffaut)** asked the Commissioner for Youth and Sports and Others whether, in regard to the Baladirou Youth and Training Centre, he will inform the House on if it is still operational and, in the affirmative, to state and table for which purpose, providing details of any recent activity/purpose it has been used for since January 2023 to date and the delegations if any that have used the facilities?

*(Withdrawn)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay, so, time is over.

**STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE  
(COP 28) – DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to make the following statement in connection with my participation of the COP 28, United Nations Climate Change Conference whereby delegates from nearly 20 countries gathered in Dubai from November 30 to December 12 2023 for the COP 28 Climate Conference. Mr Chairperson, Sir, leaders on the world stage have for the first time reached a major milestone through collectively agreeing to the transition away from the use of fossil fuels. The goals of the climate change adaptation are to reduce risk and vulnerability to climate change, strengthen resilience, enhance well-being and the capacity to anticipate and respond successfully to change.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, COP 28 came at a crucial time for the key target to limit long-term global temperature rise to 1.5 °C. This was agreed by nearly 200 countries at COP 21 which was held in Paris in 2015. COP 28 gave an opportunity to identify global solutions for limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 °C by accelerating the green transition whereby nearly every country in the world agreeing to transition away from fossil fuels. This agreement represents a millstone for the climate progress by turning it into real world decarbonisation which will

require support from all industries including finance and investment. Mr Chairperson, Sir, the policy of this Regional Government is to achieve at least 50% of energy collection from green sources by 2030 and 100% by 2050. I will come further with a statement in due course to clearly spell out other long-term policy in the field of decarbonisation in the production of electricity which I think to be a matter of great concern for all of us. Mr Chairperson, Sir, here are some facts.

“If we don't limit greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, the consequences of rising global temperatures include massive crop and fishery collapse, the disappearance of hundreds of thousands of species, and entire communities becoming uninhabitable.”

Secondly, Mr Chairperson, Sir, climate change is the single bigger threat facing humanity. Climate impacts are already harming health through air pollution, disease, extreme weather events, false displacement, pressures on mental health and increase hunger and poor nutrition in places where people cannot go and find sufficient food. Mr Chairperson, Sir, I had the honour of being a guest speaker in the forum organised by the Global Solar Council and the Greening the Island Foundation whereby, the title of discussion was: How Small Islands States Can Lead the Way. Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is the first time we have someone from Rodrigues that is a Commissioner attending COP 28 conference. Mr Chairperson, Sir, it was an excellent opportunity for Rodrigues which we seize to present the Island of Rodrigues as a case study in the field of renewable energy. Mr Chairperson, Sir, along with our partner Greening the Island Foundation, it was agreed by the foundation we carry out a proper study with the following objectives:

Prepare complete methodology to identify concrete projects to advance the decarbonisation of the island's energy system and corporation with all local stakeholders for 100% renewable energy by 2050. Secondly, tailor make a methodology of 100% renewable energy to Rodrigues Island East, taking into consideration specificity and to select the best scenario based on circular economy approach. Thirdly, promote the creation of Island Multi Stakeholder Approach to engage local communities in the 100% renewable energy initiative by 2050.

Fourth, create specific investment teasers for specific projects within the selected scenario to facilitate funding opportunities.

Fifth, undertake case study through a project report to present an electric scenario towards 100% energy.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with these words, I can assure the House that this Regional Government's commitments towards the transitioning to a sustainable, renewable energy target by 2050 is on. Mr Chairperson, Sir, thank you for your attention.

*(Applause)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Yes, respected Members, I forgot to inform you that the table has been advised that PQ B/176 and B/184 have been withdrawn by the respective Members.

**INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY, UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY AND  
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**The Commissioner for Family Welfare and Others:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, allow me to make a statement on the three international days that we commemorated in November 2023, namely the International Men's Day, the Universal Children's Day and the International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the International Men's Day is commemorated on 19 November and has as key objectives, valuing male role models, acknowledging the contribution of man and boys, improving male health, tackling discrimination and disadvantage, fostering positive gender relations and making the world a safer place for everyone. Throughout the years, emphasis has been put on empowering women in the society through various activities and training programmes without as such including men.

In view of working towards an inclusive society where both women and men work in collaboration, aiming at promoting gender equality, promoting men inclusion is a vital point. It is of utmost importance for my Commission that every Rodriguan independent of gender role does not feel left aside or being marginalised.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, on the 19 November 2023, my Commission organised the Second Edition of the International Men's Day. In this respect, an event was held on the football playground of Ile Michel, putting emphasis on valuing male role models and improving male's health. The local theme chosen to celebrate the International Men's Day 2023 was "*Zom, fer to la santé vine ene priorité*". Mr Chairperson, Sir, the commemoration of this day was an ideal platform to deepen sensible issues such as men's mental health as well as promoting positive contribution of men in the Rodriguan society.



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Mr Chairperson, Sir, the activities organised for the Second Edition of the International Men's Day comprised of a Walk for Health from Rivière Cocos to Ile Michel. Screening exercise by the Commission for Health, Seven Aside Football Tournament, talk on mental health by the psychiatric, Beach Volley Competition, tug of war, talk on spiritual health, anger management and managing stress by Brahma Kumaris and domino tournament among others.

Boys and men who attended the event demonstrated enthusiasm. However, many men are still sceptical about the holding of an activity to honour them. Unfortunately, men are most of the time referred to negatively, for instance as perpetrators of domestic violence, gamblers, alcohol or drug addict among others. Many of these are the result of societal perception of a man: man or boy should not cry, should not do household chores, should be strong.

We must admit, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that these have created stereotypes as the role of men and women in the society. The celebration of the International Men's Day is one of the strategies to break down the existing barriers and stereotypes. My Commission expresses its gratitude to members of the organising committee and to commissions which have collaborated with my Commission, namely the Commission for Sports and the Commission for Health for the success of the event.

As with regard to the International Universal Children's Day, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the commemoration was held on the football playground of Mourouk Anse Enfer and was organised in collaboration with children of villages around Mourouk like Port Sud-Est, Songes, Mourouk Anse Enfer, Park Tortue, Anse Raffin, Tamarin, Ile Michel, Petite Butte, Grand Var and Anse Baleine. The theme established by the United Nation to commemorate this day was "For Every Child, Every Right".

The Universal Children's Day is commemorated every 20 November and represents the date in 1959 when the UN General Assembly adopted the declaration of the rights of the child and the date is 1989 when the UN General Assembly adopted the convention on the rights of the child. It has been observed, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that two main factors preventing people from fully enjoying their fundamental rights are poverty and discrimination and eliminating them is a key priority for my Commission.

For the 2023 commemoration of the Universal Children's Day, several activities were organised. Firstly, sensitisation campaign was organised in four villages whereby, children were given the opportunity to voice out their problems, identify not only their rights but also their responsibilities and factors hindering them from fully enjoying their rights. There has

been the participation of children from four identified villages namely, Parc Tortue, Anse Baleine, Anse Quittor and Dans Cocos. Preparation of a clip on children's rights with the collaboration of School of Arts to inform children on their rights and responsibilities.

Same was broadcasted on the social media and on the 20 November 2023, all the children of Rodrigues were invited to celebrate this day whereby talent shows comprising of songs, slams and sketch on bullying at school and other activities such as face painting were organised for all children present in collaboration with School of Art and *Les Enfants d'Abord* Association. And, about 300 children of different region of the island attended the celebration on the football playground of Mourouk Anse Enfer.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread persistent and devastating human rights violation in today's world which remains largely unreported due to the stigma and shame surrounding it. The theme chosen for 2023 to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls is "UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls". No excuse entailing that the solution to eliminate violence against women and girls lies in a robust response including investment in prevention. Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is sad to observe that a significant number of women of our Island had lost their life due to domestic violence and femicide.

In this respect, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls, this year, emphasis has been put on promoting social change regarding gender-based violence, advocating for women and girl victims of violence, raising awareness on domestic violence and its impact, sensitising the public on the protection from domestic violence act and encouraging victims to report cases and making them aware of the different services available at the level of my Commission. Activities organised to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls are:

Sensitisation campaigns on domestic violence in eight villages, reaching 102 participants from end of October 2023 to mid-November 2023. The villages are Le Chou, Papayes, Brûlé, Montagne Malgache, Mangue, Terre Rouge, Petit Gabriel and Baladirou. The objectives of the sensitisation campaign was to increase awareness of the public on the issue of domestic violence as well as stress on the fact that it is important to report cases of domestic violence. It is important for the victims to realise that they are not alone and can come forward for help and support at the Commission for Family Welfare without fear or shame. Secondly,

a pacific march with about 100 participants was held on 27 November 2023 to raise awareness on gender-based violence.

The march started from Malabar and headed to Mont Lubin whereby family members are women victims of feminicide and other stakeholders assisted to the inauguration of a.... followed by a wreath laying ceremony in memory of those women who lost their lives in abusive relationship and a 16<sup>th</sup> day activism campaign was launched on 29 November 2023 to conclude on 10 December 2023, which is the International Human Rights Day whereby the population has been sensitised through the media on various themes, promoting healthy relationship between men and women and gender equality such as respect, responsibility, protection, participation, tolerance amongst others. Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to put on record also that the Minority Leader, Mrs Rose Gaspard Franchette Pierre Louis also participated in the 16<sup>th</sup> day activism.

Mr Chairperson, Sir...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please! Let the Commissioner...

**The Commissioner for Family Welfare and Others:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, investing in gender-based violence prevention is fundamental to achieve equality and peace as well as the fulfilment of women and girls' human rights. From the various activities organised to mark the international day for the elimination of violence against women and girls, more people are now aware of the service being provided by the Family Welfare and Protection Unit, the Family Counseling Unit and the hot line number which is the 117.

Moreover, people are more aware about what is domestic violence and its consequences and victims are aware of the law as well as their rights. To note, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that in the context of the three international days commemorated during the months of November and in view of better tackling, abuse against children and violence against women and girls, training programmes for law enforcement officers on the Children's Act 2020 and the Protection from Domestic Violence Act 1977 were also organised. In collaboration with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution on 29 and 13 November 2023.

To sum up, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the commemoration of these international days has been an important platform on raising awareness on the various societal issues affecting our beloved island as well as collecting essential information to enable my Commission to devise

effective strategies to tackle various issues raised during the holding of activities pertaining to these three international days.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

## **SEASON'S GREETINGS**

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, allow me before I move for the adjournment of the House to express the traditional end-of-year greetings.

M. le président, l'année 2023 tire à sa fin et nous voilà juste au seuil de 2024. Comme à l'accoutumée, je voudrais profiter de cette période préfestive pour présenter mes vœux de fin d'année. Avant cela, M. le président, je voudrais remercier tous les membres de la majorité, le Chef commissaire adjoint ainsi que tous les Commissaires pour le travail accompli au cours de cette année qui se termine dans quelques jours. Des changements comme prévus dans la Cour électorale de notre équipe dirigeante auront bien lieu en 2024 et je passerai le bâton du poste de Chef commissaire à l'adjoint au Chef commissaire comme convenu. Le travail que nous avons entamé continuera sous l'impulsion de notre plan quinquennal 2022/2027 ainsi que du plan du développement durable et intégré de Rodrigues, le SIDPR.

M. le président, permettez-moi de rappeler brièvement ce que je considère comme les réalisations majeures de cette année 2023. Je note avec fierté entre autres, la relance du SIDPR accompagné d'un plan directeur pour le tourisme durable et d'un plan d'aménagement du territoire. Les Assises de l'Eau avec la participation de nombreux partenaires locaux, nationaux et internationaux. L'accord de la Banque mondiale pour financer le projet de la construction d'une nouvelle piste d'atterrissage de l'aéroport de Plaine Corail ainsi que des infrastructures associées. Le financement comprend également des composants, le financement pour accompagner la mise en œuvre des recommandations du SIDPR dans le domaine de l'eau, la sécurité alimentaire, l'agriculture et la pêche et le tourisme.

L'opérationnalisation de la RPUC avec une remise en fonction de 100% des unités de dessalement. L'obtention des fonds de la MIC pour les investissements dans l'amélioration du secteur de l'eau – Rs540 millions. Les routes de Tamarin, Citron Donis, Patate Théophile, La Ferme, Citron, Vangard. La construction de 15km de *track road*. Les débuts de la construction de 100 maisons. La bonne performance de nos athlètes au Jeux des Iles de l'Océan Indien avec de bonnes médailles. L'obtention des *Swiss Awards* dans le tourisme et la reprise spectaculaire dans le tourisme. Les excellents résultats du PSAC avec 80% de réussite, Rodrigues dépassant

pour la première fois, le pourcentage national. Je pourrais continuer, M. le président, mais je vais m'en tenir à ces quelques-unes des réalisations que nous avons établies.

Permettez-moi, en mon nom personnel et celui de mon épouse, de vous présenter à vous, M. le président, à votre épouse et à votre famille les meilleurs vœux de Noël et pour la nouvelle année 2024. Mes vœux de joyeux Noël et de bonne année 2024 vont aussi à tous mes collègues commissaires et à leurs familles, au Leader de la minorité et à Monsieur Pierre Louis et à tous les membres de cette auguste Assemblée ainsi qu'à leurs familles.

M. le président, puis-je vous demander, 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 GCSK, et à Madame Roopun, 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 GCSK, au Leader de l'Opposition, l'Honorable Luc Xavier Duval GCSK, et Madame, et aux membres de l'Assemblée Nationale et à leurs familles, nos vœux de bonne et heureuse année 2024. 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, aux *Departmental Heads*, les conseillers de l'Assemblée régionale. Comme je l'ai dit, tous les personnels des différentes commissions, des différentes compagnies de l'Assemblée régionale 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, les personnes autrement capables, mes vœux de joyeux Noël et de bonne année, heureuse année 2024. Nous souhaitons ardemment que l'année 2024 soit une meilleure année pour Rodrigues. Nous avons beaucoup appris et vécu en 2023 et nous gardons en tête les meilleures réalisations et les meilleurs souvenirs. Que tout un chacun continue dans notre petite île à vivre dans la liberté et dans l'espérance du progrès à tous les niveaux. Joyeux Noël et bonne année 2024 à tous.

Merci.

*(Applause)*

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, permettez-moi comme à l'accoutumé de me joindre au Chef commissaire en ce temps de festivité pour vous adresser mes vœux et les vœux de notre l'équipe de ce côté de la Chambre, à vous et à votre épouse et votre famille, au Chef

commissaire, à son épouse et sa famille, à l'adjoint au Chef commissaire, à son épouse et sa famille, à l'ensemble des membres du Conseil exécutif et leur conjoint et leurs familles, à tous les respectés membres de l'Assemblée régionale et leur conjoint, leurs familles. Je me joins aussi au Chef commissaire pour vous demander de faire parvenir nos vœux les plus chers 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 et tous les membres du Parlement et leurs familles.

Mes meilleurs vœux vont aussi au PPS François, notre Leader et le membre Léopold et leurs familles, à Mme *Clerk, the Deputy Clerk* et leurs familles, à l'ensemble du staff qui nous servent ici à l'Assemblée régionale et leurs familles, au *Island Chief Executive*, les *Departmental Heads* et leurs familles et à tout le staff de l'Assemblée Régionale. Nos pensées vont aussi à tous les enfants, les jeunes, les adultes et les aînés de notre île Rodrigues, à tous les acteurs économiques et sociaux. Nos bonnes pensées vont aussi à toutes ces familles qui auront la chance de célébrer dans la joie et qui vivront des moments de retrouvailles heureux mais aussi à tous ceux qui ne fêteront pas dans cette période dans la joie, à ceux qui sont à la prison, ceux qui seront malheureusement à l'hôpital, ceux qui ont la mauvaise chance d'avoir perdu un proche pendant cette année, à tous ceux qui ont perdu leur emploi ou certains qui ont dû partir à Maurice, à notre Leader honorifique, Louis Serge Clair et sa famille, à la population de Rodrigues dans son ensemble. Nous leur souhaitons un heureux Noël et une bonne et heureuse année 2024. Nous sommes aussi contents de ce côté de la Chambre d'avoir eu une année remplie avec un sens de responsabilité et de dévouement. Nous souhaitons que la solidarité et la bienveillance réchauffe le cœur de chaque famille de Rodrigues, que 2024 nous permet d'écrire ensemble un nouveau chapitre de la vie de notre île Rodrigues, un chapitre meilleur. Donc, je souhaite joyeuse fête et meilleurs vœux pour une nouvelle année pleine d'espoir.

*(Applause)*

**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

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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 2023 and a Happy New Year 2024 on behalf of the Secretariat of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, and 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 Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the Deputy Clerk, 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.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I move that the House be adjourned to Tuesday 06 February 2024 at 10.30 a.m. Thank you.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.**

*Question put and agreed to.*

*At 3.15 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 06 February 2024 at 10.30 a.m.*

**Mr Chairperson:** Yes, we come to Adjournment Matters.

## **MATTERS RAISED**

### **PROBLEME D'ECLAIRAGE ET DE SECURITE – TERRAIN DE MONT LUBIN**

**The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr Spéville):** Merci, M. le président, de me donner la parole dans cette auguste Assemblée. Ma requête s'adresse au Commissaire des Sports. Il m'a été rapporté que des sportifs dans les différents villages comme Mont Lubin,

Montagne Cabris, Grande Montagne entre autres éprouvent des difficultés pour pratiquer leurs activités sportives, surtout la nuit. M. le président, j'aimerais lui demander de bien vouloir faire le nécessaire afin que toutes les infrastructures sportives soient bien éclairées la nuit et que toutes les mesures de sécurité soient respectées. M. le président, après plusieurs doléances, je fais un constat et effectivement, il y a un problème d'éclairage et de sécurité sur le terrain de Mont Lubin. M. le président, on peut constater qu'il y a des lampadaires suspendus au pilonnes et qui représentent un danger potentiel pour les jeunes athlètes qui s'entraînent sur le terrain. Je peux déposer des photos, M. le président. M. le président, je partage la souffrance de nos athlètes qui ne méritent pas un tel traitement, surtout nos jeunes qui ont plus besoin d'encadrement et de support. Par exemple, j'ai rencontré des jeunes footballeurs habitant Montagne Cabris Corail qui sont contraints d'aller s'entraîner à Dans Cocos parce qu'il y a un problème d'éclairage de terrain et ces problèmes perdurent depuis août dernier. Je souhaite que la Commission des Sports va faire le nécessaire pour régler ces problèmes et je demande au Commissaire d'agir au plus vite dans l'intérêt de nos athlètes et le bien-être de la population. Je vous remercie, M. le président.

#### **REPLY TO THE FOURTH ISLAND REGION MEMBER – MR SPÉVILLE**

**The Commissioner for Sports and Others (Mr Ravina):** Mr Chairperson, Sir, after 10 years.... I will do my best. I will do all the needful to look into the matter....

*(Interruptions)*

*(mic problem)*

#### **EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS**

**The Second Island Region Member (Ms Raffaut):** M. le président, j'ose en cet après-midi plaider en faveur de ces travailleurs qui en cette fin d'année sont laissés pour contre. Ces travailleurs qui en cette fin d'année, nous savons tous, ne symbolisent pas la joie mais au contraire, semblent être servis d'un plat d'amertume. Ils sont les ouvriers du sentier de construction, ils sont des pères de familles, M. le président, et comme beaucoup, ils veulent égayer leurs enfants, leurs familles en cette fin d'année. J'ai une pensée spéciale, M. le président, pour ces jeunes, ces pères de familles, ces ouvriers, ces maçons qui n'ont pas de travail et qui se retrouvent graduellement licenciés.

Ils sont une cinquantaine de personnes cette année. Il y a des jeunes aussi qui vont travailler pour la dernière fois cette année demain, c'est-à-dire, le 20 décembre et je fais un appel au Commissaire de l'infrastructure publique pour trouver des alternatives l'année



prochaine pour pouvoir booster l'industrie de construction afin que 2024 puisse apporter de la joie, du travail à ces travailleurs pour subvenir aux besoins de leurs familles.

M. le président, j'ai un deuxième point à soulever. Cela concerne le Commissaire...

**Mr Chairperson:** I am sorry. It is one at a time. Allow the Commissioner to answer.

**Ms Raffaut:** Okay, thank you.

**Mr Chairperson:** You have only one matter to raise. Commissioner?

**The Commissioner for Employment and Others (Mr Wong So):** M. le président, je vais essayer quand même de répondre au *respected Member* Raffaut. Je me vois mal de pouvoir répondre à cette sollicitation parce que c'est vrai que la notion économique n'incombe pas tout le monde ici dans cette Chambre de pouvoir quand même respecter et de savoir un petit peu la tenure. Ce qu'on est en train de dire en ce moment-ci que dès qu'il y a une démission et qu'on est en train de dire que bon, le pays va mal, '*crise lor crise*'. Or, ce n'est pas vrai. Si vous avez au moins une notion économique, vous devriez savoir qu'en ce moment-ci, l'île est en train de se développer.

Bien sûr, il y a des démissions de part et d'autre. Mais c'est normal à la fin d'un contrat, il faudra quand même que les gens perdent leur emploi, quitte à être réemployé par la suite. Mais néanmoins, ce sont des choses qui arrivent dans l'économie d'un pays. Donc, il ne faut pas à chaque fois qu'il y a des démissions en bloc lors de la fin d'un contrat, on se dit que le pays est en crise. Il faut savoir. Je reviendrais par la suite avec un *statement* pour vous donner éventuellement l'état de la situation économique du pays. Merci bien, M. le président.

#### LACK OF ROAD LIGHTING AROUND RODRIGUES

**The Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres (Ms Roussety):** M. le président, merci de me donner la parole lors de cette dernière session parlementaire de cette année 2023 pour informer la Chambre d'un problème qui perdure à Rodrigues. Cela concerne les éclairages de nos routes, M. le DCC. J'ai déjà soulevé ce point lors de la session de 22 août dernier. Nul ne peut le nier encore une fois que beaucoup de lampadaires installés aux abords de nos routes sont toujours hors d'usage. Les réparations ne sont toujours pas faites, et qui est très dangereux pour les usagers de la route. Pendant la nuit, cela peut aussi occasionner des voleurs. De ce fait, M. le président, je fais encore un plaidoyer auprès du Commissaire responsable des utilités publiques de faire le nécessaire pour que les lampes soient réparées avant les fêtes de Noël et le nouvel an.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, oui, j'en suis conscient. C'est vrai qu'il y a quelques lampadaires qui sont défectueux. Mais ce qu'on va faire, M. le président, on est en train de solliciter aussi l'aide des contracteurs pour pouvoir réparer ces lampes parce que notre camion élévateur est tombé en panne. Malheureusement, c'est tombé en panne. Mais le souci qu'on a qu'il faut comprendre, M. le président, c'est que le réseau électrique à Rodrigues est très sensible, est très instable depuis tout le temps. Depuis tout le temps, ça a été le cas, M. le président. Moi aussi, j'ai posé des questions. Oui, à l'époque. J'ai attiré l'attention mais c'est vrai qu'il y a une réalité. La réalité, c'est que des fois, après une forte pluie, après une coupure quelque part sur le réseau, bien sûr, il n'y a plus de lumière. Donc, à ce moment-là, il faudra passer et revoir ça. Mais on est en train de faire de notre mieux lorsqu'on repart à Accacia, par exemple, ça tombe en panne à Baie aux Huîtres. Donc, il faut à chaque fois passer. Donc, on est en train de voir comment inviter. On va faire un tender pour inviter ceux qui sont intéressés à nous aider à gérer ce problème de lampes qui sont défectueuses. Merci.

**Dr Agathe:** M. le président...

**Mr Chairperson:** Order, please!

#### **UNEVEN ACCESS FOR DOING BUSINESS FOR SOME TOURIST OPERATORS – CRUISE SHIPS**

**The First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Dr Agathe):** M. le président, je voudrais vous remercier de me donner l'opportunité de prendre la parole. Mon intervention concerne les récentes visites de bateau de croisière à Rodrigues. Nous sommes au courant que certains opérateurs touristiques et non touristiques étaient en attente de bénéficier de certaines retombées économiques de ces visites. Malheureusement, cela n'a pas été le cas. Les retombées économiques étaient faibles. Étant donné le faible nombre de visiteurs débarqués pour visiter l'île, et les circuits de leur visite.

Je voudrais faire un appel au Commissaire du tourisme pour qu'un travail, un meilleur travail de planification et de coordination soit mené afin que les visiteurs soient bien informés des attractions de l'île et d'autres parts, d'impliquer au maximum les opérateurs locaux afin qu'ils puissent saisir de cette opportunité pour réaliser des affaires.

Le secteur touristique est plus capable que beaucoup d'autres secteurs à permettre à notre pays de mobiliser ses ressources. Encore faut-il travailler pour permettre cette mobilisation de nos ressources. L'Office du tourisme a un rôle premier en matière de promotion

de notre attraction. Nous souhaitons à ce que l'Office du tourisme puisse jouer un plus grand rôle en concertation avec les autres constitutions du pays.

Merci.

**The Commissioner for Tourism and Others (Mr Wong So):** Merci, M. le président. Merci, *respected Member* Agathe de me donner l'occasion de pouvoir quand même répliquer par rapport au secteur touristique. Malheureusement, je crois je ne vais pas être long mais il est temps quand même pour prendre congé pour les fêtes de fin d'année. Sauf que je dois dire quelque chose que si vous attaquez au secteur du tourisme en ce moment-ci, c'est que vous attaquez à la vie économique de Rodrigues. Je vais dire d'emblée, M. le président, que c'est un secteur qui est le pilier économique de Rodrigues, qui génère les chiffres d'affaires plus d'un milliard de roupie, M. Agathe, *respected Member*. Pour votre information, faut-il savoir que cet argent ne va pas dans les poches d'une certaine personne mais dans les poches de tout le monde au sein de la population.

Vous parlez des croisières. Je dois vous dire que ce n'est pas terminé. Il y en a justement une troisième arrivée pour le 25. Voilà, c'est pour votre information. Aller dire maintenant que ça n'a pas été justement un succès, on vous donnera le bilan par la suite et vous saurez ce qu'il en est par rapport à ce secteur. Je vous demanderai à vous tous ici présent que ce secteur, c'est un secteur vital pour Rodrigues et que nous, nous ferons tout ce qui est de notre côté au niveau de cette Chambre de faire le nécessaire pour que Rodrigues puisse porter haut le flambeau. Vous parlez justement des activités de l'Office du tourisme. Nous savons d'ores et déjà que les activités que nous menons au niveau de l'Office du tourisme portent ses fruits. La preuve, vous voulez que je vous dise?

A l'heure que je vous parle, jusqu'au novembre, il y a 85000 touristes qui sont débarqués à Rodrigues. 85000, M. Agathe. Et que si le compte ne me fait pas défaut, j'espère pouvoir réaliser 100000 à la fin de décembre. C'est pour vous dire si on atteint la barre de 100000 touristes pour l'année 2023, si la moyenne de dépense par touriste à Rodrigues se situe dans la fourchette des 10000 à 12000, si vous faites le chiffre, vous allez savoir le montant que ça génère au niveau du développement économique.

Donc, par pitié, je vais vous demander de bien vouloir de ne pas s'attaquer au secteur touristique en tant que tel parce que ce secteur bénéficie à quand même pas mal de gens au niveau de Rodrigues. Que ce soit... Je vais vous le dire. Je vais vous dire, M. Agathe. Je vais vous dire. Il ne faut pas prendre quand même qu'il y ait un chauffeur de taxi.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order! Allow the Commissioner to reply, please.

**Mr Wong So:** Allow me to answer to this.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Chief Commissioner, allow the Commissioner to reply.

**Mr Wong So:** Oui, je vais continuer. Simplement, je voulais juste vous dire, c'est que nous, nous tenons à cœur notre travail. Il y a une question qui a été posée au sein de cette Assemblée que je devais répondre. Malheureusement, je n'ai pas eu le temps. Mais j'aurais expliqué un petit peu la teneur de cette réponse. C'est qu'il faut savoir que maintenant, vous aurez d'ici deux ans, avec la contribution de la nouvelle piste à Plaine Corail, vous verrez l'essor que le secteur du tourisme va prendre au sein de notre économie et vous verrez que cela génère. C'est toute la population, Madame, qui va en bénéficier. N'allez pas croire que ça va entrer dans les poches de certaines personnes. C'est toute la population qui vont en bénéficier. Donc, s'il vous plaît, n'attaquez pas le secteur touristique. Merci bien.

### **ECOLE MATERNELLE 'LA MARGUERITE' – CONSTRUCTION D'ADDITIONNELLE SALLE DE CLASSE**

**The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally):** M. le président, j'aimerais attirer l'attention du Chef commissaire et commissaire de l'Education sur une situation qui sévit depuis un certain temps à l'école maternelle 'La Marguerite' à Petit Gabriel causant divers soucis aux parents et leurs petits qui y sont scolarisés.

M. le président, une des conséquences de la COVID-19 a été suite à l'extension de l'année académique, une augmentation de *l'intake* a un moment donné dans cette école maternelle. Donc, ne pouvant accommoder tous les écoliers, le précédent gouvernement avait temporairement aménager un espace au centre communautaire d'Eau Vannée pour y accommoder l'excédent d'écolier en 2021 en attendant la construction des salles de classe additionnelles. En 2023, la direction a posté les élèves à l'école maternelle 'Les Abeilles de Malartic'. Donc, d'une année à l'autre, la direction doit trouver des solutions pour accommoder l'excédent d'élèves.

En 2024, encore, M. le président, des élèves qui ont passé une année à 'La Marguerite' doit changer d'école et bouger vers 'Les Abeilles de Malartic'. Il était même question qu'ils

bougent à Lataniers mais la direction a dû revoir leur copie devant la désapprobation et l'insistance des parents.

Il faut savoir, M. le président, qu'une grande distance entre l'école et la maison de l'enfant pose problème aux parents surtout lorsqu'ils doivent se rendre à l'école pour récupérer les enfants au cas où ils sont malades ou encore lors des intempéries.

De notre côté, changer d'école constitue une instabilité pour les élèves qui sont en dernière année de maternelle, une année cruciale pour leur préparation pour entrer au primaire en 2025.

Je fais donc un appel au Chef commissaire pour regarder ce dossier du projet de construction de salle de classe additionnelle à l'école maternelle 'La Marguerite', pour voir à ce qui s'y passe afin que ce projet soit accéléré pour le bien-être des élèves, des parents et la communauté de l'école en générale.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Oui, M. le président, on va regarder la situation et proposer les solutions.

## **LOGEMENTS SOCIAUX**

**The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste):** Merci, M. le président. Donc, ma requête s'adresse une nouvelle fois au Commissaire des Infrastructures Publiques, l'Adjoint au Chef commissaire et c'est sur un sujet que j'ai déjà évoqué l'année dernière en décembre justement 13 décembre 2022. C'est justement concernant les logements sociaux.

Donc, on constate qu'un nombre grandissant de famille nécessiteuse est toujours en attente d'une réponse de leur demande de logement. Donc, elle continue à nous solliciter de jour en jour car beaucoup parmi eux vivent dans des conditions vraiment déplorables et là nous pensons surtout à ceux qui habitent dans des maisons en tôle ou des maisons dites Trust Fund et surtout avec des toits très abimés et il y a aussi des familles quand même qui vivent dans des conditions assez surpeuplées dans une maison. Donc, même ceux qui ont déjà signés leurs contrats constatent que leurs matériaux de construction arrivent à contre goutte.

Donc, c'est pourquoi je voudrais lancer un appel pressant à l'Adjoint au Chef commissaire de trouver la bonne formule, la meilleure formule afin de pouvoir concrétiser les différents projets de logement sociaux au plus vite en vue de permettre aussi à ces familles de

retrouver leurs sourires et de permettre aux enfants de vivre la magie de Noël. Donc, nous comptons beaucoup sur vous. Merci, M. le président.

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, je vais réagir, ce n'est pas une maison qui va, par exemple aider l'enfant à vivre la magie de Noël. Un enfant, on peut le faire. Il n'y a pas que ça. Il ne faut pas venir inventer des choses ici soit disant pour nous...

*(Interruptions)*

Non, il n'y a pas que ça.

*(Interruptions)*

M. le président, concernant les maisons. J'ai entendu beaucoup parler des maisons, dans les meetings, etcetera, etcetera, on parle des maisons. Oui, on a donné des maisons. Et, vous savez, M. le président, auparavant c'est vrai il y a eu un programme de logement et ils ont dit à des contracteurs d'aller construire des maisons, etcetera, etcetera. Et il y a eu beaucoup de problème, beaucoup de *defects*, beaucoup de maison qui restent fermer parce que les gens ne veulent pas accepter.

Je viens de recevoir une lettre de la banque pour nous dire de payer trois cent et quelques roupies dans dix jours parce que sinon la maison va être saisi. Pourquoi ? C'est parce que l'Assemblée Régionale a garanti pour Rs 98 millions ces maisons.

*(Interruptions)*

Nous sommes venus, nous avons discutés avec ces gens-là et ils sont tombés d'accord qu'ils vont prendre des matériaux à hauteur Rs 1 million pour construire leurs maisons. Et là, la Membre, qui a parlé des employées des compagnies qui n'ont pas d'emplois. Vous savez combien de gens avec ce programme de maison, combien de maçon qui travaille ? Vous savez combien de contracteur qui travaille ? C'est pareil comme avant, sauf que s'est financé par les gens eux-mêmes, les bénéficiaires eux-mêmes. Ceux qui vont à la banque, qui prennent... On a été vérifié, M. le président. On a été vérifié à la banque et nous avons constaté qu'il y a beaucoup de ces bénéficiaires vont à la banque effectivement faire un emprunt pour aller construire leurs maisons. Il y a beaucoup de maison qui sont en phase de finalisation. Il y a beaucoup de maison qui sont en phase d'arriver à la dalle. Il y a quelques personnes qui ont terminées leurs maisons. Arrêter de mentir dans les meetings de dire qu'aucune maison n'a été construite. Il faut arrêter, M. le président.

Nous avons aussi le programme de maison pour ceux dont leurs maisons ont pris feu. On a déjà construit trois ou quatre maisons pour ceux qui ont eus leurs maisons détruites par le feu. On a aussi les tôles, *lakaz tol avek tube*. Bien sûr, ça aussi on a. On vient d'acquérir de la tôle et aussi des tubes. Donc, on va donner bientôt, au mois de janvier. Il y a aussi les gens qui ont le Trust Fund *type*, donc on les conseille justement d'agrandir leurs maisons et on leurs donnent l'argent dalle. C'est un autre politique et bien sûr avec le Rodpro, donc on attend toujours l'approbation du Premier ministre pour mettre en place Rodpro et Rodpro bien sûr va voir comment faire pour construire des maisons. Mais, en attendant, nous nous avons fait de notre mieux et nous donnons et nous allons encore donner une centaine de bénéficiaires l'année prochaine ces maisons là et bien sûr on va continuer avec le programme de logement. Mais, à la fin de la journée, M. le président, quelqu'un qui reçoit des matériaux pour construire sa maison, au bout d'un an ou deux ans cette personne-là va avoir sa maison sans aucune garantie et cette personne-là va avoir une maison pour elle et sans avoir des liens avec la banque. Donc, je pense que ça aussi si vous le dites ça peut contribuer aussi mieux à ce qu'un enfant fête Noël et profite de la magie de Noël.

*(Interruptions)*

Mais dites-vous bien, M. le président, qu'on reçoit des lettres des banques, je ne vais pas citer quelle banque, nous disant, l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues de payer des arriérages des bénéficiaires.

*(Interruptions)*

Et au-dessus de tout cela, M. le président, il y a certains bénéficiaires qui transforment leurs maisons en pensionnat.

*(Interruptions)*

Est-ce que le but ultime c'est de donner un logement social à quelqu'un pour que cette personne-là transforme ça en pensionnat ou bien qui loue avec une tiers personne, M. le président ? M. le président, est-ce que vous avez identifié les bonnes personnes à qui donner ces maisons ? C'est ce que nous nous avons fait ! C'est ce que nous nous avons fait, M. le président.

*(Interruptions)*

Il y a des maisons, *aret dir ça hein*. Il y a des maisons qui ont été... un jour peut-être je vais l'inviter à aller bien sûr visiter ces maisons ou bien on doit faire une vidéo pour montrer qu'il

y a au moins une, comme vous dites, *ni ene lakaz pa encor fer* – une maison que les gens ont terminée.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Donc, M. le président j'espère qu'ils ont bien compris. Et bien sûr, je sais que c'est leur... ils sont concernés par ça. Nous aussi, nous sommes concernés. C'est vrai qu'il y a des gens qui sont vulnérables mais on va continuer à les aider et bien sûr, à les donner. Mais il faut nous respecter. Nous avons notre politique à nous et nous faisons les choses dans notre façon. Merci.

### **LACK OF ROAD MARKINGS AND TRAFFIC SIGNS AROUND RODRIGUES**

**The First Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres (Mr Lisette):** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, thank you for giving me the floor. My pledge this afternoon is directed towards the Deputy Chief Commissioner and it is related to the issue of road safety and security and that prompts me to come with such a statement is to the fact that I, myself, I was almost a victim of the lack of markings and road signs along the road and I can say that this almost happened at Pointe L'Herbe when I was coming into the middle lane to move right from Baie Aux Huîtres. There is no marking and the fact is that it happened that it was a visitor who was coming in front of me and we almost happened to have a head to head knock. So, if we... We, locals, we normally drive by habits and most of the time, we know the different sign post and the different markings of the road but for a coming visitor, this is very efficient for him.

So, this is why I will try to provide to the Deputy Chief Commissioner some of the markings that are quite dangerous these days that need immediate attention, especially what... There is a philosophy, especially for visitors, road maintenance, sign post, reflects and mirrored the image of governance of a country. So, I have mentioned the case of Pointe L'Herbe. Anybody who drives there will see that this is a danger. You have also the stop line which is absent at the junction of Brûlé coming from Rivière Banane.

Any driver, especially visitors, if they are coming from Rivière Banane, they can easily have an accident from those driving from Pointe Coton. And, I would also add as regard to the image that is projected to the visitors of the island, when we come here, just here, Kennel Bégué sign post is overturned. I mean, I have seen this for almost one month. There are guard rails which have been destroyed for so long. I mean, at Hauteur Accacia, which is giving a very bad sign for the country. You have had... There has been an accident, I think, at Hauteur Baie Lascars. The guard rail has remained damaged. I mean, for months. Yes, quite long. And, of



course, there are so many sign posts around the island. I know that there are even during my tenure of office, there are two main roads which are very frequently, how to say, “*vandalized*”. Mainly the one from Le Chou MITD to via Soupir and then, you have the roads from Grand Baie to Baladirou.

Many a time, we used to change sign post almost every month but there are always vandals that will cause trouble to these sign posts. So, my pledge is to call for action from the Deputy Chief Commissioner to make an island wide survey as regard to sign posts which are missing and especially markings along the road which can be a danger.

**REPLY TO THE FIRST LOCAL REGION MEMBER OF BAIE AUX HUÎTRES –  
MR LISETTE**

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, je remercie le respecté Membre pour avoir attiré l’attention. C’est vrai que nous avons pris presque tous les points dans le *Road Safety Committee* et bien sûr, nous allons agir. Par exemple, on va donner. Je n’ai pas pu répondre à la question. On va faire beaucoup de *patching*. Bien sûr dans les endroits comme Mangues, Dans Sami, allant vers St François et cetera. C’est vrai, nous avons aussi donné l’ordre de changer justement, faire un *survey*, changer des *sign posts*. En ce qu’il s’agit de Kennel Bégué, je vais voir ça. Mais le membre aurait bien pu retourner le poste. C’est ça, le civisme. Etre Rodriguais, ne pas critiquer mais aussi, il faut quand même mettre sa main. Moi, je l’aurais fait gentiment.

Donc, M. le président, on va voir. Certainement, on va voir. Vous parlez des routes mais nous aussi, on peut dire la même chose. Auparavant, je critiquais moi aussi. Vous faisiez des routes des deux côtés. Au milieu, il y avait la terre. Il n’y avait pas de routes. Et là, on a aussi cette route de Montagne Malgache. Donc, si quelqu’un vous dites que c’est vilain pour les visiteurs mais moi, j’ai vu les visiteurs qui prennent la route de Port Sud-Est qui montent et puis, doivent retourner parce qu’entre ces deux routes, Montagne Malgache et Port Sud-Est, qui normalement devaient se relier, donc, entre ces deux routes-là, il n’y a rien. Donc, c’est, on peut dire pareil aussi. Mais on va voir. On va voir et je remercie le membre pour son intervention.

**TARDY SETTLEMENT OF BILLS – DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS OF RRA**

**The Minority Leader (Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis):** M. le président, je souhaiterais m’adresser au Chef commissaire qui est aussi le Chef commissaire responsable des finances en cette période de fin d’année. Donc, j’ai eu l’occasion de prendre la parole par rapport à ce sujet-

là au cours de l'année. Je reviens au nom de ces nombreuses personnes. Les fonctionnaires, les entreprises ou compagnies dans divers domaines que nous rencontrons tous ici et qui nous font part de leurs calvaires, du calvaire qu'ils subissent pour avoir leurs paiements de l'Assemblée régionale, les paiements dus soit pour le travail déjà fait. Certains n'ont pas été payés encore leur *cyclone allowance* depuis la période de février. D'autres, leurs *overtimes* depuis juin, d'autres entreprises qui ont offert du service pour le rapatriement des corps.

Encore d'autres pour l'hébergement des patients ou d'autres pour avoir offert, livré des produits au gouvernement. Donc, on sent qu'il y a un problème assez généralisé au sujet des paiements de ceux qui travaillent en tant que fonctionnaire, ceux qui donnent des services ou des produits à l'Assemblée régionale. Donc, je fais un appel pressant au Chef commissaire et Commissaire des finances. Je suppose que ce sont des choses qui empêchent des gens à célébrer Noël comme il se doit. Ils ont travaillé; ils ne sont pas payés. Donc, je pense contrairement à ce que l'adjoint au Chef commissaire a dit, ce n'est pas ça '*ki pou empes zot fet Noël*', je pense que ça va leur empêcher de bien fêter Noël. Donc, je fais un appel pressant pour que ces paiements soient effectués avant la fin de l'année. Nous sommes à une dizaine de jours de la fin de l'année.

Donc, je demande au Chef commissaire de bien vouloir assurer que ces personnes soient (pas récompensées), soient dûment payées pour service offert au travail accompli. Donc, je profite de l'occasion aussi pour faire mention des professeurs, des *Supply Teachers* qui sont attachés aux écoles du gouvernement et qui ont vu qu'il y a une disparité, *a discrepancy* entre leur salaire et le salaire d'autres *Supply Teachers* qui sont attachés aux écoles de la RCEA. Donc, certains ont eu bonus et salaire pour le même travail pour la même période. D'autres ont eu que bonus et pas salaire et certains ont eu compensation et d'autres non alors que normalement, ils devraient avoir ces paiements. Donc, je lance un appel au Chef commissaire pour assurer qu'autant que possible, surtout pour l'Assemblée régionale, donne l'exemple d'être un bon payeur pour ceux qui donnent des services et qui travaillent pour continuer à motiver des gens à travailler. Donc, merci.

#### **REPLY TO THE MINORITY LEADER – MRS GASPARD PIERRE LOUIS**

**The Chief Commissioner:** Oui, M. le président, on va voir pour les *Supply Teachers*. Comme on a dit pour la REDCO, tous les salaires doivent être harmonisés. En ce qu'il s'agit des paiements de l'Assemblée régionale, *I am a policy maker. I cannot draw and work out bills, process bills*. Chaque Commission, comme vous le savez, a son département finance et

c'est la responsabilité de chaque Commission sous la houlette de son *Department Head* de *process the bills* et de les envoyer à finance, l'Administration centrale pour que les paiements soient faits. Nous avons eu pas mal de problème à ce niveau. Il y a comme vous le savez, manque de staff.

Dans la Commission de la santé, par exemple, nous avons étudié la situation et nous avons vu qu'il y a un manque aigu de staff pour faire toutes les étapes du *processing des bills* mais quand même, on a dit on a fait part au *Island Chief Executive* au sein du Conseil exécutif de la nécessité d'accélérer les choses dans toutes les Commissions et que pour les paiements, surtout pour les *small claims*, que cela doit être fait au plus vite. Nous allons continuer d'étudier la situation et je pense que s'il y a manque de personnel, on va essayer de trouver comment traiter ces *claims* et toutes ces personnes qui ont des paiements en suspense, je leur demanderais de s'adresser au *Departmental Head* de la Commission concernée.

The Departmental Head is the Accounting Officer of the Commission. It is him or her who must see to it that the bills are paid to date. The policy of the Regional Government, the directive given by the Chief Commissioner, Commissioner for Finance by the Executive Council is that these bills are paid within a reasonable delay. If there are delays, it is the responsibility of the Commission to see to it that these delays are eliminated. So, I invite.

J'invite tous ceux qui ont des paiements en suspense d'aller voir ces *Departmental Heads* dans les Commissions concernées, de leur dire «Voilà, j'ai soumis ma facture tel date. Il s'est passé tant de temps.» Et ce *Departmental Head*-là doit faire le nécessaire pour payer ces gens. C'est la responsabilité du *Departmental Head*, c'est la responsabilité de la personne qui est responsable des finances, des stores dans chaque Commission. Il faut que chacun fasse son travail et s'ils ont des problèmes, les *Departmental Heads* doivent s'adresser à l'*Island Chief Executive* qui, lui, va me consulter, Commissaire des finances, pour voir comment on peut faire. On doit dire que certaines personnes ne font pas leur travail aussi, ne font pas leur travail et c'est pour ça qu'il y a des gens qui souffrent. Donc, voilà comment...

(Interruptions)

**The Chief Commissioner:** Je ne peux pas forcer quelqu'un, un fonctionnaire qui ne veut pas travailler, à travailler. Vous savez comment c'est. L'argent, il y a. Il y a l'argent. La question, ce n'est pas une question qu'il n'y a pas d'argent. Arrêtez de propager de fausses polémiques. Il n'y avait pas d'argent pour payer les *Bad Weather Allowance*. Notre budget de *Bad Weather Allowance* s'est épuisé parce que le budget a été *underprovided*. Ce n'est pas

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nous! Je ne suis pas dans le *Estimates Committee* qui va à Maurice pour négocier les items budgétaires; ce sont des fonctionnaires. Et si au Ministère des finances, on leur dit: ok, prenez ça et puis, on va voir. Voilà. Donc, nous avons tant, un budget nécessaire pour le *Bad Weather Allowance*.

Nous avons mis ce qu'il faut mais ils ont donné jusqu'à telle date. Mais on sait bien que ça ne va pas être suffisant. Mais c'est une dépense nationale. Maintenant, il faut que le Ministère des finances réapproprie ça. Donc, je fais un appel à tous ceux concernés, les officiers concernés, surtout les *Departmental Heads*. On va être franc et clair.

They have to do their job. If bills are accumulating at your Commission, it is your responsibility and I agree. I fully agree with the Minority Leader. I concur that someone cannot have submitted a bill in March and is still not paid on the eve of Christmas. We agree on this. So, these people have to do their job. If they cannot, they have to inform officially why they are not able and we will take necessary adjustment measures.

Thank you.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** The House stands adjourned.

*At 3.54 p.m., the Assembly, was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 06 February at 10.30 a.m.*

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**BUDGET MEASURES – RETURN TICKET FROM MAURITIUS**

**– POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS**

**(No. B/170) The Minority Leader (Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K.)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the budget measures concerning the return ticket from Mauritius for post-secondary students, he will state and table the:

- (a) criteria to benefit therefrom and the mechanism applied therefor;
- (b) number of applications received and the number of eligible students, and
- (c) amount disbursed for the project?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as the House is aware I announced during my Budget Speech for Financial Year 2023/2024 that ‘....*chaque étudiant issue de familles dont le revenu mensuel ne dépasse pas Rs 50,000 bénéficiera d’un billet aller-retour Rodrigues-Maurice-Rodrigues sur une base annuelle jusqu’à la fin de ses études*’.

This measure aims to ensure that students can return home and celebrate with their families during the end of year celebrations as well as alleviate the financial burden on their families if there is the need for students to come back to Rodrigues during the course of their studies.

Subsequently, the Executive Council at its meeting held on 08 September 2023 has decided that my Commission implements the “Air ticket Scheme” to provide return air tickets to eligible post-secondary students as from November 2023. Students can benefit from the Air Ticket Scheme once during a financial year up to the end of their studies.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

(a) With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the eligibility criteria to benefit from the Air Ticket Scheme are as follows:

- (i) Student should have studied at least three years of his/her primary schooling and either Grade 10 to Grade 11 or Grade 10 to Grade 13 in Rodrigues;
- (ii) Student should be studying a full time course in a recognized post-secondary or tertiary institution;
- (iii) Student should not be in employment with any monthly remuneration; and

The student’s family income shall not exceed Rs 50,000.

I am further informed that the modalities to benefit therefrom are as follows:

- i) students should fill-in and submit an application form available at the level of the Commission for Vocational Training for refund of air fare;
- ii) applications are screened by a screening committee chaired by the Departmental Head and Officers of the Human Resource Development Centre;
- iii) the student is informed accordingly of the outcome; and the refund of airfare is processed.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

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- (b) With regard to **part (b)** of the question, I am informed that to date **ten (10) applications** have been received under the Air Ticket Scheme.

The applications have been screened on 23 November 2023 and six (06) applications were found eligible for refund.

Four applications were found not eligible for the following reasons:

- i) two (02) students have to submit relevant documents to confirm family income;
- ii) one (01) student is beneficiary of a scholarship; and
- iii) one (01) student needs to submit invoice for purchase of air ticket.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

- (c) As regards **part (c)** of the question, no funds have been disbursed yet for the scheme.

Further to the screening exercise, an amount of Rs 46,491 (Forty Six Thousand Four Hundred and Ninety One rupees) will be refunded to the six eligible students and the payment is being processed at the level of my Commission.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling the eligibility criteria and the modalities regarding the Air Ticket Scheme from Mauritius for post-secondary students including the number of applications received and the number of eligible students together with the amount disbursed.

**IMPORT OF CEMENT TO RODRIGUES**

**(No. B/171) The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste)** asked the Commissioner for Consumer Protection and Others whether, in regard to the import of cement to Rodrigues, she will inform the House on the:

- (a) number of registered importers;
- (b) yearly breakdown of the volume shipped from 2013 to date;
- (c) monthly breakdown of cement shipped since 2017 to date, and
- (d) actual available stock thereof and expected level to be shipped for December 2023, indicating if same will be sufficient to meet consumers demand till the end of the year?

**Reply:** Mr. the Chairperson, Sir,

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- (a) Information has been obtained from the Consumer Affairs Unit that there are as at date ten (10) registered importers of cement in the island of Rodrigues.

As regard to part (b) of the question, as per statistics submitted by the Consumer Affairs Unit, yearly breakdown of cement shipped since 2013 to date is:

- 698 containers in 2013;
- 807 containers in 2014;
- 840 containers in 2015;
- 1,000 containers in 2016;
- 1,033 containers in 2017;
- 1,211 containers in 2018;
- 1,183 containers in 2019;
- 1,191 containers in 2020;
- 1,367 containers in 2021;
- 1,076 containers in 2022; and
- 1,141 containers in 2023.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

For part (c) of the question, I am tabling the statistics regarding monthly breakdown of cement shipped since 2017 to date.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

(d) The actual available stock of cement is 520 tons (26 containers), 320 tons (16 containers) remaining from Black Rhino Voyage BR/164 of 11 December 2023 and 200 tons (10 containers) received today by Black Rhino voyage BR/165 to meet consumers demand till the end of the year. I would like to inform the house, that there is actually no shortage of cement and that the Consumer Affairs Unit has not received any complaint to that effect.

Furthermore, all the importers of cement have been contacted by the Consumer Affairs Unit and they have all stated that the stock of cement available will meet the demand till the end of December 2023.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

**FACILITIES AND RENTAL FEE PAID BY ARTISTS**

**(No. B/172) The Second Island Region Member (Ms. M. N. Raffaut)** asked the Commissioner for Arts and Culture and others whether, in regard to the facilities and rental fee paid by artists, he will inform the House since when there has been a change in the cost of using the podium at Malabar?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the change in the cost of the using the podium of Malabar for public ticketed events (commercial use) and public political event (non-commercial) is effective as from 7 April 2023 whereby the rental fee has been revised from Rs. 2, 000 to Rs. 4, 000 and a refundable deposit fee of Rs. 5, 000. In addition,

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a scavenging fee of Rs. 12,000 has been also included for the cleaning of sites and waste collection immediately after the event. This scavenging fee together with the rental fee are waived for public events (non-commercial use) and the applicant has only to settle for a refundable deposit fee of Rs. 5,000.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the same respect the general conditions for the authorisation to use podium of Malabar has been revised on 4 August 2023 with the same rates as already mentioned. I wish to inform you, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that since August 2023, the conditions have been incorporated in form of an undertakings to be signed by the applicant which has been vetted by the Legal Advisor on 17 July 2023.

**CONSTRUCTION OF GYMNASIUM**

**– LA FERME COLLEGE/PISTACHES**

**(No. B/173) The First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huîtres (Mr N. Lisette)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the construction of the gymnasium at La Ferme College/Pistaches, he will state the:

- (a) contractual completion date thereof;
- (b) cost of the project;
- (c) progress of work as at date, and
- (d) amount of money paid so far and if there are any outstanding payment due to the contractor?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir,



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(a)& (b) I am informed that a contract was awarded for the construction of a gymnasium at La Ferme College for the sum of Rs 91,396,675.04 exclusive of VAT. Works started on 08 October 2020 and the intended completion date was 31 December 2021.

The revised contractual completion has been fixed for 26 May 2022. However, same is strongly being disputed by the Contractor who has requested for an extension of time of 458 days whereas the Consultant has recommended only 76 days as extension of time.

(c) As regard to part (c), I am informed that the progress of works as at date is around 96.5% completed.

(d) Regarding part (d), I am informed that an amount of Rs 78,239,111.36 exclusive of VAT as certified by the Project Manager has been paid to date. An estimated amount of Rs 13 Million is due to be certified progressively subject to completion of the works. The exact amount shall depend on final measurements and the contractor's final account.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following request regarding the way forward, the Consultant has advised the Commission on 10 November 2023 to consider the following three options:

- Option 1 :** Terminate the contract on the basis of the fundamental breach of contract by the Contractor;
- Option 2 :** Proceed with the works; and
- Option 3 :** Omit outstanding works and proceed with taking over.

The matter is under consideration and a decision in consultation with the Commission for Public Infrastructure will be taken shortly.

**DIFFERENT MISSIONS UNDERTAKEN ABROAD**

**– PROMOTION OF RODRIGUES AS A TOURIST DESTINATION**

**(No. B/174) The Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres (Ms K. Roussety)** asked the Commissioner for Tourism and Others whether, in regard to the different missions undertaken abroad for the promotion of Rodrigues as a tourist destination, from January 2023 to date, he will state and table, for the benefit of the House, the:

- (a) detailed breakdown of each mission destination;
- (b) composition of each delegation together with each delegate's capacity, respectively, and
- (c) missions attended by the Commissioner, indicating in each case the purposes thereof, and a breakdown of the cost of participation thereto?

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**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir,

The core mandate of my Commission (Tourism) through the Rodrigues Tourism Office (RTO) is to promote and market Rodrigues as a tourism Destination and in order to achieve such objective, our participation in international tourism fairs/events is of prime importance to increase the visibility of Rodrigues on the regional and international markets.

Therefore, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that from January 2023 to date, Rodrigues has attended/participated in the following regional and international events for the promotion of Rodrigues as a tourist destination, as follows:

- (1) ITB Berlin in Germany from 07 to 09 March 2023;
- (2) Salon Destination Nature in France from 16 to 19 March 2023;
- (3) 1<sup>st</sup> Salon du Trail, de la Course à Pied et du Sport de l'Océan-Indien in Reunion Island from 23 to 25 June 2023 ;
- (4) IFTM Top Résa in France from 03 to 05 October 2023;
- (5) Les Florilèges and Workshop and Workshop in Reunion Island from 13 to 22 October 2023;
- (6) Swiss Tourism Award and Swiss International Tourism Exhibition in Switzerland from 03 to 05 November 2023;
- (7) World Travel Market (WTM) in England from 06 to 08 November 2023.

With regards to missions attended by the Commissioner at Part (C), Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that I attended all of the events listed above except for the Salon Destination Nature which was held in France and the 1<sup>st</sup> Salon du Trail de la Course à Pied et du Sport de L'Océan-Indien in Reunion Island.

As such, I am tabling in the House information pertaining to detailed breakdown of each mission destination, composition of each delegation together with each delegate's capacity and financial breakdown indicating the purposes thereof in respect of each mission I attended.

**TECHNOPARK PROJECT – BALADIROU**

**(No. B/175) The Minority Leader (Mrs. R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K.)** asked the Commissioner for Information and Communication Technology and Others whether, in regard to the Technopark project at Baladirou, he will inform the House on the: -

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- (a) state of completion of the building and the targeted period of operationalization thereof;
- (b) item vote from which payment is being made together with the sum disbursed as at date; and
- (c) type of activities to be run there and the status thereof?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir,

I have been informed that the contract for the construction of Technopark at Baladirou was launched and awarded by the Rodrigues Business Park Development Co. Ltd to Laxmanbhai & Co. (Mauritius) Ltd in 2021 for the total sum of Rs 254 Million inclusive of VAT (Rs 221 Million + VAT). The site was handed over to the contractor on 15 February 2021 and the duration of the project was 18 months, thus was scheduled to be completed in August 2022.

However, same has and could not be completed by the expected completion date because of consequent delays encountered during the contractual period due to the following prevailing external factors which were beyond our control, such as:

- Covid 19 Pandemic;
- Closure of the Airport;
- Scarcity of water and Cement on the island; and
- Permit for importation of skilled foreign labour, amongst others.

Subsequently, Mr Chairperson, Sir, these issues being far behind us, consequent progress have been achieved thereto so far. Today the infrastructural works component of the project is completed at 77% and is expected to be completed by the end of the current financial year. Hence, the outstanding works that need to be completed include:-

1. Finishing works;
2. Fixing of tiles;
3. Installation and Commissioning of Lifts; and
4. Offsite infrastructure including access road.

With regard to Part (B), Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that payment to the contractor is being made by the Rodrigues Business Park Development Co. Ltd and not

under the budget of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA). The Rodrigues Business Park Development Co. Ltd has contracted a loan amounting to Rs 254 Million from the Development Bank of Mauritius for the implementation of the project. As such, I have been informed that a total amount of Rs 139.5 Million has been disbursed and paid up to date.

As regards the last part of the question, Mr chairperson, Sir,

The activities that will be run at the Technopark will be exclusively ICT related/ICT enabled businesses. However, I further wish to inform the House that my Commission (Information Technology and Telecommunications) we will be working in close partnership with the Economic Development Board (EDB), Rodrigues ICT Development Promotion Ltd as well as other potential marketing agencies to market the business space and its facilities.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for your kind attention.

### **GASTROENTEROLOGY SERVICES IN RODRIGUES**

#### **– EXISTING FACILITIES/ARRANGEMENTS/ COLLABORATION**

**(No. B/177) The Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres (Ms K. Roussety)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to gastroenterology services in Rodrigues, he will provide information to the House on any existing facilities/arrangements/ collaboration already available therefor and state his policy to enhance same, including procedures initiated for the empowerment of staff?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

The gastroenterology is a component of endoscopy. The endoscopy is the examination of the alimentary tract (from mouth to the anus) with endoscopes (an apparatus with camera. It includes the Gastroscope (examination of mouth to small intestine) and colonoscopy (examination of anus to the small intestine).

I wish to inform the House, that presently patients who need gastroenterology services have to be sent to Mauritius for further management or have to await visiting specialists in the domain. Some patients have to wait for more than two years before such examination is being performed.

I wish also to inform the House that presently there is no dedicated place for waiting room, patient preparation, recovery and storage of equipment. All the five hospitals in Mauritius have an Endoscopy Unit except for Rodrigues. Presently, there are two gastroscopes

and one colonoscope apparatus that are functional but located in the recovery room of the Operation Theatre.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

One (1) Acting Specialist/Senior Specialist (General Medicine) has already undergone one (1) month on-the-job-training in Mauritius in Gastroenterologist/GI Endoscopy with effect 30 October 2023. Furthermore, I am informed that eight (8) Nursing Officers (4 males/4 female) will undergo on-the-job training in Mauritius shortly. They will run the Endoscopy Unit after their training.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

I wish to further inform the House that one Professor Frossard from Switzerland will be in Rodrigues in early January 2024 to deliver further training to the staff that will operate the Endoscopy Unit.

In the same instance, the Acting Specialist/Senior Specialist (General Medicine) will continue her training in Mauritius in February 2024 for a period of one month.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

I am pleased to announce that my Commission has already assigned a section of the new hemodialysis unit for the setting up an Endoscopy Unit in Rodrigues. The Consultant in gastroenterologist/Hepatologist was on mission in Rodrigues from 8 to 10 December 2023 and he was accompanied by an architect to assist in the setting up of the Unit.

#### **POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES – PROMOTION OF HANDBALL**

**(No. B/178) The Fourth Island Region Member (Mr. J. P. Spéville)** asked the Commissioner for Youth and Sports and Others whether, in regards to sports in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House state and explain the policies and activities of his Commission with regard to the promotion of Handball, giving details on any collaboration with the Sports Federation based in mainland Mauritius?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson Sir,

The Rodrigues Regional Handball Committee has the responsibility to manage all the activities related to the promotion of Handball in Rodrigues. The Committee acts under the aegis of the National Handball Federation whose role is to promote and organise handball across

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the country. Similarly, to all sports disciplines in Rodrigues, the Rodrigues Regional Handball Committee works in close collaboration with the Federation for the promotion of the discipline.

Mr. Chairperson, I am informed that 3 coaches from Rodrigues actually form part of the board of the federation and as such they ensure that the needs of the handball community of Rodrigues are always taken into account in whatever decision being taken.

Mr Chairperson Sir,

As regard to the policies and activities of my Commission with regard to the promotion of Handball in Rodrigues, I have to point that my Commission mainly acts as a facilitator for the promotion of discipline in Rodrigues and does not interfere in policy decision as regard thereto as this is the role of the Federation. However, we do organise activities for the promotion of the discipline and we annually support the committee financially so as to allow the organisation of its activities, purchase required equipment and empower its members.

Mr. Chairperson, I am informed that numerous activities have thus been organised in this respect since 2022 namely:-

- Upgrading of the technical structure through the creation of Centre de Formation
- Creating opportunities for the participation of Rodriguan handball teams in National and International events: in this respect, during period 28 April 2023 to 06th May 2023, the Commission funded the trip of 15 handballers, 01 coach and 01 Official to follow a training camp in Mauritius. In the same line, my Commission funded the trip of 04 handballers and 01 coach to the final training camp and selection for the IOIG 2023.
- Organisation of the Republic Cup 2023
- Organisation of a Beach Handball Tournament at the Mourouk Public Beach on 17th of December 2023.
- Organisation of Intercolleges handball festival at Nassola on 19 May 2023.

Mr. Chairperson,

The main policies of my Commission with regard to handball development comprise interalia:

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1. Upgrading of existing handball infrastructures, including Nassola, Trefles, Manique
2. Organise Inter-island competitions with the participation of island of the Indian to promote technical exchanges.
3. Facilitate access of Clubs to existing school infrastructures
4. Promote the development of indoor handball structures
5. Setting up of an U20 handball under the Rodrigues Academy
6. Provide assistance for training and capacity building of coaches and referees.

**ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION SITES FOR ROADS**

**– CONTRACTS/WORK ORDERS**

**(No. B/179) The First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huîtres (Mr N. Lisette)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, he will state and table, for the benefit of the House, the list of active construction sites for roads as per contracts/work orders given by his commission as at 01 December 2023, indicating the respective number of workers on each site?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson Sir,

The lists of active construction sites for roads in Rodrigues as at 1 December 2023 and their respective number of workers is as follows:

Roads under construction by Transinvest Construction Ltd

- (i) Terre to Vanguard Road Phase
- (ii) La Ferme to Marechal road Phase
- (iii) Citron Donis to Anse Raffin road Phase 2
- (iv) Parking facilities and other upgrading works at Lataniers Fountain

Roads under construction by Laxmanbhai (Mauritius Ltd)

- (i) Track road at Citronelle
- (ii) Track road at Caverne Provert
- (iii) Concrete road at Pave La Bonté

The list is being tabled as requested.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there are still workers on those sites.

The list is being compiled and will be submitted in due course.



**DUMPING GROUND – MONTAGNE PLATE**

**(No. B/180) The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the dumping ground at Montagne Plate, from January 2023 to date, he will:

- (a) state if same is identified as a full-fledged dumping site and to give a list of problems encountered on the site together with the remedial measures adopted therefor;
- (b) give a list of the type/s of waste that can be discarded thereat; and
- (c) state if any authorisation is required to cast-off waste thereat and, in the affirmative, to state the eligibility criteria and the procedure to be followed to benefit from this facility?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson Sir,

With regard to part (a)

Mt Plate is not a full-fledged dumping site but a rock quarry site. It is common practice around the world that rock quarry sites are filled back with inert materials after exploitation. Same is also implemented at Mt Plate.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

Some problems are observed at times at the Mt Plate site and include illegal dumping practices despite the regular checks and patrol effected by Police de l'environnement and environment enforcement officers. It has been noted that these practices occur during very odd hours such as late during weekend and public holidays. In order to restore the site, my Commission used to contract out private services for clearing and levelling of wastes.

A case of fire outbreak has also been reported at the mentioned site whereby intervention of Fire Services has been solicited.

In order to ensure any further problems at Mt Plate, my commission has awarded a contract for the construction of a gate to strictly control access right at the beginning of the entrance of the site.

With regard to part (b)

Inert wastes which are not flammable in nature for example construction debris, soil and scrap metal are given authorisation to be discarded at Mte Plate.

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With regard to part (c)

An appropriate application form has been designed and is available at the Environment Division. Information requested as per the designed form include: the type of waste, the amount of waste to be disposed, Date and time of disposal of waste and the vehicle number of authorised vehicle to transport waste.

Any member of the public who wants to dispose such authorised waste have to call thereat. Technical officers of the Division will inspect the wastes to be disposed before issuing the authorisation.

Same is copied to *La Police de L'Environnement* and dumping site supervisor.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

Several cases of illegal dumping have been observed at the entrance to the rock quarry and the Commission for Environment has been able to be traced back a case to a construction site. In an act of good faith, the contractor has agreed not only to clear its illegal dumping but also clean the whole site at Mt Plate at its own cost.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

My Commission is examining the possibilities to install solar camera and setting up of necessary facilities to better control and monitor the dumping of inert waste at Mt Plate rock quarry.

**ITEM VOTE 25110006 – RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**APPROVED BUDGETS – SUBSIDY ON SOLAR WATER HEATER**

**(No. B/181) The First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Dr. H. Agathe)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to item vote 25110006 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Approved Budgets, in relation to subsidy on solar water heater, he will state to the House on if there has been, since 2022 to date, any Scheme/Tender/Expression of Interest launched in relation thereto and, if so, when and the respective number of applicants and beneficiaries thereof?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

I am informed that in budget estimates 2023-2024 there is an amount of Rs 1 million allocated under vote item 25110006 - Subsidy on Solar Water Heater

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

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The Subsidy on Solar Water Heater is a scheme devised in line with the Regional Government objectives to promote the use of renewable energy in Rodrigues whereby the Commission for Environment provide subsidies for the purchase of solar water heater to selected eligible households.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

The targeted beneficiaries are households whose family income does not exceeds an amount of Rs 25,000 monthly. The household should not have benefitted from similar scheme from any government institutions in the past.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

The Commission for Environment provide to each eligible beneficiary an assistance of Rs 15,000 to meet the cost of the purchase of a 150 litres solar water heater. Any excess amount of the said solar water heater is contributed by the beneficiary himself or herself.

Mr, Chairperson Sir,

A communique was advertised on the MBC radio on Monday 06, Wednesday 08, Friday 10, Saturday 11, Monday 13, Wednesday 15, Thursday 16 of February 2023 morning and afternoon and Friday 17 February 2023 in the morning inviting potential suppliers of Solar Water Heater to register on prescribed forms available at the Commission for Environment, Deputy Chief Commissioner Office Bay Lascar.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

Concurrently another communique was broadcasted on MBC radio on Sunday 12, Monday 13, Tuesday 14, Wednesday 15, Thursday 16 of February morning and afternoon and Friday 17 February 2023 in the morning inviting potential beneficiaries to submit applications for Solar Water Heater Scheme on the prescribed forms.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

On Friday 05 May 2023 a meeting was held with the three (3) potential bidders who registered with the Commission to explained the objectives and modalities of the Solar Water Heater Scheme.

In addition, their eligibility to participate as a supplier in the Solar Water Heater Scheme were verified.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

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A first list of 42 applications including 3 applications for Permanent Physically Disabled persons were referred to the Environment Division for Survey to assess eligibility of household applications and to submit recommendations by 17 March 2023.

A second Batch of 41 Applications were submitted to the Environment Division for survey and recommendation by the Officers from the Environment Division.

Kindly note that Officers of the Environment Division were accompanied by a team of officers from the Deputy Chief Commissioners Office.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

Recommendations have been received in two batches of 39 and 41 and same are presently under process at the Commission. This brings a total of 80 eligible applicants.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

In a spirit not to leave any one behind, my Commission aims at giving all those eligible beneficiaries a solar water heater.

As funds are available to meet the cost of some 65 applications out of a total of 80 applications, my commission is exploring the possibility to use the funds of RS 300,000 for a Solar Photovoltaic rebate scheme for SME's to entertained all the 80 applications.

The Executive Council approval is being sought for the reallocation of the necessary funds and approval of lists of beneficiaries before letter of award are issued to all beneficiaries.

Thank you Mr Chairperson Sir.

**ACCELERATED PROGRAM – GRADE 2 TO GRADE 3 PUPILS**

**(No. B/182) The Minority Leader (Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K.)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the accelerated program from Grade 2 to Grade 3 pupils, implemented at the primary level for the present school year, he will inform the House on if any evaluation has been carried out so far therefor and, in the affirmative, to briefly outline the outcome thereof, giving details of any corrective measures taken/to be taken?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

I am not aware of any accelerated programme from Grade 2 to Grade 3 which is being implemented at Primary School level.

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I am informed that the Accelerated programme from Grade 1 to Grade 2 was introduced in Academic Year 2021/2022 in the context of the extension of the school calendar after the resumption of classes following the COVID-19 pandemic and offered Grade 1 pupils with the opportunity to be upgraded to Grade 2 in the same academic year upon the consent of parents.

I am further informed that in a letter dated 25 October 2022, the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has notified my Office that all pupils born between 01 June 2016 and 31 December 2016 who have applied for admission to Grade 1 in January 2023 will be allowed to move to Grade 2 after the school-based evaluation upon the wish of the parents.

The accelerated programme concerns upgrading of pupils from Grade 1 to 2 and not from Grade 2 to Grade 3.

The cohort of pupils of Grade 1 who have chosen to be upgraded to Grade 2 has followed a dedicated curriculum that meets their developmental needs during the first term and had had to take part in a school based evaluation which determines their readiness to Grade 2 at the end of the first term. Thereafter, the pupils have moved to Grade 2 as from May 2023 and have been provided with textbooks for Grade 2 at the beginning of the second term.

I am further informed that there are 161 pupils in Grade 1 of which 101 in Government Primary Schools and 60 in RCA Schools who have been promoted to Grade 2 in May 2023.

Upon completing Grade 2, these pupils that will join Grade 3 will follow the normal school curriculum.

Following the evaluation carried out for the Grade 2 pupils at the end of the academic year, it is noted that those Grade 2 pupils in the accelerated programme who took part in an assessment in October 2023, 141 out of the 161 have succeeded which represents an overall pass rate of 87.5%.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

I am also informed that the following strategies have been elaborated to ensure a smooth transition from Grade 1 to Grade 2:

- (i) Differentiated approach in teaching to cater for the individual learning needs;
- (ii) Individual attention is provided to pupils
- (iii) Close monitoring by managing team; and

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- (iv) Moreover, special attention is provided to pupils with learning difficulties throughout Grade 1 to Grade 3 by Support Teachers who are required to provide support to teaching staff of Primary schools in handling children facing problems in acquiring foundational learning skills so as to give them an opportunity to catch up with academic programmes;
- (v) Remedial actions are taken to ensure that learners acquire the necessary competence and skills.

In case pupils are not able to follow the Programme for Grade 2, parents are advised to revert back their wards to grade 1.

**BAD STATE OF ROAD – MANGUES TO QUATRE VENTS**

**(No. B/183) The Fourth Local Region Member for Maréchal (Mr J. P. Spéville)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, he has been made aware of the bad state of the road from Mangues to Quatre Vents and the measures he envisages to take and the time frame set?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

My Commission has recently conducted a survey on the state of roads around the island and has identified some roads along which repairs and patching works are required.

These roads include Mangues to Quatre Vents, Montagne Tonnerre to Dans Samy, St Francois, Baie du Nord, Eau Vannee, Ti Brulé, Grand Var, Tambes and Mt Cherie.

A Quotation has been received on 30 November 2023 from the Contractor Transinvest Construction Ltd. A Works Order to the tune of Rs 6,009,310.46 has already been issued on 18 December 2023 under the annual rate contract for Maintenance, Upgrading and Construction of roads.

Works are expected to start on 20 December 2023. The completion date for all the works is 31 January 2024.

**FOOTBALL IN RODRIGUES**

**(No. A/1) The Fourth Local Region Member for Maréchal (Mr J. P. Spéville)** asked the Commissioner for Youth & Sports and Others whether, in regard to football in Rodrigues, he will inform the House on if any reform will be brought about to promote the discipline in Rodrigues and, in the affirmative, to give details thereof?

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson Sir,

As the House is aware, football remains the Sport Roi par excellence in Rodrigues as witnessed by the number of followers and people practicing the sports around the island. The last official match that was organized at La Ferme Jean Paul II Stadium in the context of Football Republic Cup 2023 bears testimony of the status of football in Rodrigues whereby more than 3000 persons attended the event. The level of the match was beyond our expectation and reflected the direction which this current government wants to bring football and sports in general in Rodrigues.

However, we need to admit that there are major issues that are yet to be addressed in football in general. Hence, following the different meetings I had with the Rodrigues Football Association, technical staff of my Commission and other stakeholders, we are working together to improve this discipline.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

The major issues affecting the football section in Rodrigues, include inter alia:-

- (i) lack of role clarity, organizational responsibility and functions;
- (ii) poor overall governance and administration of clubs;
- (iii) lack of funding and poor financial management of clubs;
- (iv) lack of sponsorship;
- (v) poor management and inefficient utilization of training facilities;
- (vi) lack of exchanges and competitions with other nations; and
- (vii) inadequate qualification of coaches and supporting staff.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

Hence, the policy of my Commission with regards to the promotion of football in Rodrigues is therefore based on addressing these shortfalls as follows:-

- (i) Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the local football organization, including clubs and the regional football association;
- (ii) Improving the general governance in football, including financial management;

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- (iii) Continuous improvement of football infrastructures, including levelling and lighting of playgrounds;
- (iv) Addressing the shortage of qualified human resource and technical skills;
- (v) Enhancing the promotion of football as a tool for social development and cohesion;
- (vi) Implementation of a comprehensive integrated sports development structure starting from grassroots up to elite level; and
- (vii) Diversification of football activities including the development of futsal,

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

The above goals will be translated on the field as follows:

- (i) Recruitment of additional coaches and animators.
- (ii) Developing futsal structures and infrastructures around the island general.
- (iii) Organisation of Inter-village Youth Tournaments, in addition to regular tournaments of football schools.
- (iv) Participation in exchange programmes with development centres and academies in Mauritius and with countries of the region.
- (v) Pursuing the continuous upgrading of existing sport infrastructure including the installation of professional lighting.
- (vi) construction of at least one standard synthetic playground.
- (vii) Organisation of capacity building programme for football clubs' representatives through continuous accredited courses and local refresher programmes.

Enhancing the development of women football for clubs and at grass root level.

- (ix) Providing financial support to registered clubs so that all players have access to quality equipment.
- (x) Re-introducing gate-money collection at selected football infrastructure.
- (xi) Creation of a local football selection which will be ready to represent Rodrigues in friendly matches with other countries.
- (xii) Organisation of school football league for both gender.



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(xiii) Organisation of veteran football tournament and exchanges.

Mr. Chairperson Sir,

I can positively affirm that the reform in the football sector has been initiated. This can be seen since the start of our mandate by the increase in financial grant to football teams and extending the grant to all team sports.

Furthermore, the reform can be witnessed by enhanced communication between the Rodrigues Football Association and the Mauritius Football Association, which further to my intervention has put at our disposal 500 balls for clubs and football development structures.

Mr. Chairperson,

Another testimony that the reform has been initiated can be seen by the promotion of exchanges between the Liverpool Football Academy and our development structures in Rodrigues. Following the visit of the (under U18 section of Liverpool Football Academy), we have agreed to work on continuous exchange programmes whereby our young players will have the chance to compete with their counterparts in Mauritius and in Rodrigues alternately. We are planning to start the Rodrigues Sports Academy early next year. This project will consolidate our actual football structures in the age groups 12 years to 21 years.

The Rodrigues Sports Academy aims at facilitating the promotion of football in Rodrigues by recruiting new technical staff and acquiring equipment for different structures and help athlete's student in the academic field (provide tuition).

**PATIENTS ADMITTED AT QUEEN ELISABETH HOSPITAL**

**SINCE AUGUST 2023**

**(No. A/2) The First Local Region Member of Saint Gabriel (Mr J. R. Ramdally)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to patients admitted at Queen Elisabeth Hospital since August 2023, he will inform the House on if:

- (a) there has been any case of nosocomial infection and, in the affirmative, to give details thereof together with the remedial measures taken thereto, and
- (b) there is an existing protocol with regard thereto and, in the affirmative, to table a copy of same.

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that no case of nosocomial infection has been detected at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital since August 2023.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir,

As regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that a protocol exists for nosocomial infection.

I wish to bring to the attention of the House that **Nosocomial Infection** is a Hospital Acquired Infection which is managed through the implementation of Infection Prevention and Control guidelines.

I am hereby tabling the Infection prevention and Control Guidelines.

**Protocol for Nosocomial Infection**

**Nosocomial Infection** also known as **Hospital Acquired Infection** is managed by the implementation of Infection Prevention and Control guidelines. The protocol is as follows:

1. **Standard Precautions** - They are the minimum infection prevention practices that apply to all patient care, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status of the patient, in any setting where health care is delivered.
  - Hand Hygiene
  - Respiratory Hygiene
  - Use of Personal Protective Equipment
  - Safe handling of patient care equipment
  - Environmental cleaning and disinfection
  - Safe handling of linen
  - Isolation of suspected/confirmed case from other **cases**

2. **Transmission based precautions** - They are a set of measures used in addition to standard precautions for patients who may be infected or colonized with certain infectious agents for which additional precautions are needed to prevent infection transmission.

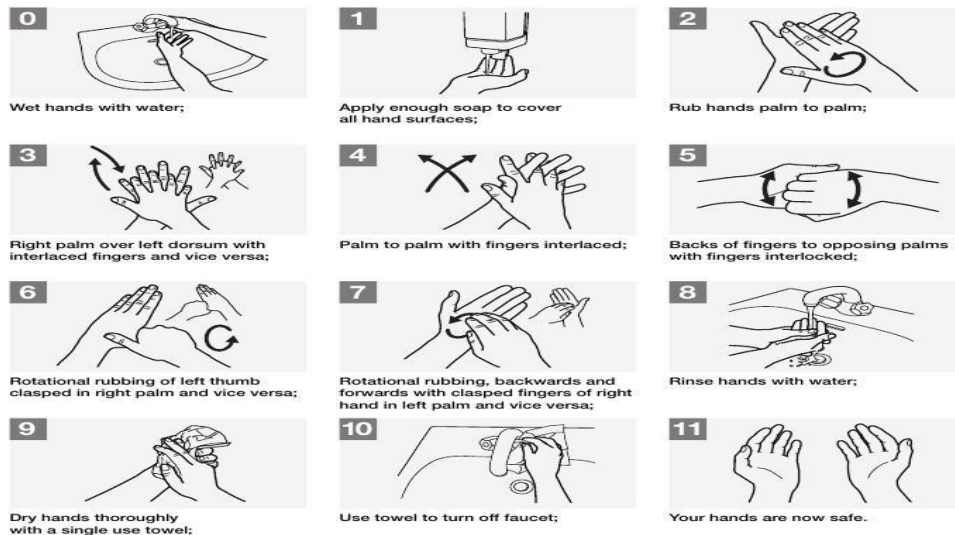
### **HAND HYGIENE**

Hand hygiene reduces the transmission of microorganisms to ourselves and to others.

Hand hygiene is performed:

- Before/After touching a patient
- When the hands are visibly dirty or visibly soiled with blood or other body fluids
- After using the toilet
- Before preparing food for patients
- After handling waste
- Before putting on and after taking off PPE
- Before handling an invasive device for patient care
- Before handling medications
- If moving from a contaminated body site to another body site during care of the same patient
- After contact with surfaces and objects in the immediate vicinity of the patient e.g medical equipment, patient bed and patient charts

After removing sterile or non-sterile gloves



## **RESPIRATORY HYGIENE**

It is a practice done to reduce the spread of germs among patients/staff with respiratory symptoms (for example, cough).

When coughing, sneezing, wiping or blowing the nose, staff and service users should use disposable tissues and dispose of used tissues into a waste bin or bag immediately after use.

Afterwards clean hands with either liquid soap and warm running water or moist (non-alcohol) skin wipes, e.g. baby wipes, followed by alcohol based hand rub.

Moreover, physical distancing can significantly help in reducing the transmission of microbes via droplets: Healthcare workers and patients who are coughing or sneezing should remain at least 1-2 metres away from other persons.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENTS**

Personal protective equipment (PPE) acts as a barrier for protections from patients' blood and body fluids and protects the staff from microorganisms contaminating the patients.

All PPE must undergo quality control and must fulfil the standard and specifications as guided by the WHO.

### **Types of PPE:**

- Headcover

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- Hood
- Goggles
- Mask
- Face shield
- Gown
- Coverall
- Apron
- Gloves
- Thick rubber gloves
- Boots/Shoe covers

### **INJECTION SAFETY**

This is a set of practices that aim to prevent the transmission of pathogens like hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C virus, HIV and Ebola virus during sharps related accidents.

A clean and organised work space is necessary to prevent and ensure the safe preparation of the injection.

Always practice hand hygiene before preparing and injection.

Always use a sterile, new and well-sealed packaged syringe and needle.

Use a single dose sterile vial or medication and diluent whenever possible. If you use a multidose vial, take more precautions to avoid contamination.

Disinfect the skin before injection.

Collect sharp objects and place them in an appropriate sharp resistant box.

Ensure the appropriate management of waste.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND DISINFECTION**

The correct implementation and control of environmental cleaning procedures in healthcare setting is crucial in mitigating the transmission of HAI.

One major way that infections can spread is via contact with fomites, especially high touch surfaces (i.e areas that are frequently touched like door knobs, taps, table surfaces).

Transmission may also occur via medical devices such as blood pressure cuff as well as items that have prolonged patient contact (e.g mattress).

Types of cleaning:

- Routine Cleaning
- Terminal Cleaning

### **Routine Cleaning**

During routine cleaning, concentrate on the following areas:

High-touch surfaces\*

light switches

Non-critical medical equipment\*

Bathrooms and floor.

High touch surfaces: tables, chairs, Bp/temperature charts, door knobs, drawers, counter of pharmacy or records, taps...

Non-critical medical instruments: sphygmomanometers, thermometers, stethoscope...

### **Terminal Cleaning**

It is indicated when a patient room or bed becomes vacant.

Perform routine cleaning and furthermore, concentrate on cleaning difficult to reach areas of the room, low frequency touch surfaces, the bed e.g rails, headboard, sideboards

Change the bed sheet, remove waste and linen

Clean corners of the room, decontaminate drawers

Do a thorough cleaning of the bathroom.

### **Cleaning/disinfection principles**

Always proceed from the highest area to the lowest area.

Always proceed from the cleanest area to the dirtiest area.

Always be sure to clean/disinfect patient care equipment between patients.

One bucket = one task

Buckets intended for specific uses must be labelled and/or of a specific colour.

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Isolation cleaners must be stored and used only in isolation.

The isolation area must always be cleaned/disinfected last.

### **SAFE HANDLING OF LINEN**

Soiled linen should never be placed on the floor or on any clean surface nor allowed to touch the handler's skin or clothing.

Linen should not be shaken out during handling before washing to avoid aerosolisation of microorganisms.

Wet linen should be placed in a pink plastic bag before being deposited in the linen bag.

The linen should be transported in sealed impervious bags to the laundry, in a covered cart according to the appropriate color code.

Yellow bags for collecting linen from patients with infectious conditions.

Red bags for heavily soiled linen.

White bags for dirty linen from wards and departments.

Separate carts should be used for soiled and clean linens.

Staff handling the linen should wear gloves, and in case of handling soiled linen, use gowns or aprons

### **ISOLATION FACILITIES**

Anybody who has an illness that is considered highly contagious or is infected with a pathogen that can cause an outbreak.

Isolation protocols exist and are expected to be followed.

#### **Isolation areas**

Preferably single rooms

If not available, beds should be > 1 meter apart, preferably 2 meters apart

Provide en-suite toilet facilities:

If not available, use bedpans or urinals

If still not possible, at least, do not mix staff toilets with patient toilets + clean toilets more frequently

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Guideline on cases that need isolation

Pathogens or conditions	Type of isolation	Duration of isolation
Disseminated herpes zoster or chickenpox	Airborne + Contact Precautions	Duration of illness
Extra-pulmonary tuberculosis with draining site	Airborne + Contact Precautions	Discontinue precautions only when patient is improving clinically, and drainage has ceased or there are 3 consecutive negative cultures of continued drainage
Avian or swine influenza	Airborne Precautions	For the 7 days after illness onset or until 24 hours after the resolution of fever and respiratory symptoms, whichever is longer
Measles	Airborne Precautions	For 4 days after onset of rash
Pulmonary tuberculosis	Airborne Precautions	Discontinue precautions only when patient on effective therapy is improving clinically and has 3 consecutive sputum smears negative for acid-fast bacilli collected on separate days
<i>Clostridium difficile</i> infection	Contact Plus Precautions	Duration of illness
Major draining abscess or infected decubitus ulcer that is draining	Contact Precautions	Until drainage stops or can be contained by dressing
Acute viral conjunctivitis or parainfluenza infection in children	Contact Precautions	Duration of illness
Impetigo, lice or scabies	Contact Precautions	For 24h after initiation of effective therapy
Multi-drug resistant organisms, methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> , <i>Candida auris</i> or carbapenem / colistin resistant <i>Enterobacteriaceae</i> / <i>Pseudomonas spp.</i> / <i>Acinetobacter spp.</i>	Contact Precautions	Varies (until no longer colonized based on 2 consecutive swabs) – for duration of hospitalization or at least 6 months since last positive culture

**LABOUR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ISSUES**

**– JULY 2022 TO DATE**

(No. A/3) The Second Local Region Member of Grande Montagne (Mr L. D. Baptiste) asked the Commissioner for Industrial Relations and Others whether, in regard to labour and industrial relations issues from July 2022 to date, he will, provide the following information the:

- (a) total number of complaints registered in the labour office therefor, the nature thereof and total number of employers and workers concerned;



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- (b) monthly breakdown of the number of workers who have been laid off/ have had their contract of terminated, and
- (c) number of workers laid off/ contract terminated per industry/ trade?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir,

With regards to Part (a) of the question, some 800 complaints have been registered at the Labour Office for period July 2022 to November 2023, pertaining to labour and industrial relations issues ranging from Termination of Employment, End of Contract, Non-payment of Wages to miscellaneous matters involving 800 workers and 527 employers as detailed in the table below:-

<b>Nature of Complaint</b>	<b>Number of Complaints Registered</b>	<b>Number of Workers</b>	<b>Number of Employers</b>
Termination of Employment	178	178	143
End of Contract	202	202	95
Non-payment of Wages	339	339	229
Reduced Payment of Wages	27	27	20
Gratuity on Retirement	2	2	2
Violence at Work	9	9	6
Miscellaneous	43	43	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>527</b>

Concerning Part (b) Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the same period, 380 workers were laid off and/or have had their contracts terminated, with a total of 178 workers for Termination of Employment and 202 for End of Contract and the monthly breakdown thereof is tabulated below:-

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<b>Month /Year</b>	<b>Termination of Employment</b>	<b>End of Contract</b>	<b>Number of Workers</b>
July 2022	11	22	33
August 2022	11	23	34
September 2022	3	4	7
October 2022	10	11	21
November 2022	5	12	17
December 2022	13	17	30
January 2023	18	27	45
February 2023	12	7	19
March 2023	9	19	28
April 2023	21	4	25
May 2023	9	7	16
June 2023	8	5	13
July 2023	7	5	12
August 2023	14	4	18
September 2023	6	12	18
October 2023	5	6	11
November 2023	16	17	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>380</b>

Subsequently, Mr Chairperson, Sir,

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Regarding the final section of the question, a total of 380 workers have been laid off for Termination of Employment/End of Contract from July 2022 to November 2023 and as such, the number thereof per industry/trade is provided below:-

<b>Industry (Remuneration Regulations)</b>	<b>Termination of Employment/End of Contract</b>	<b>Number of Workers</b>
Block making, Construction and others	186	186
Catering & tourism	38	38
Cleaning Enterprises	10	10
Distributive Trades	56	56
Domestic workers	8	8
Information Communication Technologies	17	17
Private security Services	15	15
Public Transport	8	8
Others	42	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>380</b>

**UPGRADING OF FOOTBALL GROUNDS AND SPORT COMPLEXES IN THE  
DIFFERENT VILLAGES IN RODRIGUES**

(No. A/4) **The Fourth Local Region Member for Maréchal (Mr J. P. Spéville)** asked the Commissioner for Youth and Sports and Others whether, in regard to the upgrading of football grounds and sport complexes in the different villages in Rodrigues, for the period July 2022 to date, he will enlighten the House on where matter stands, giving details of the cost of project, scope of work and if there has been tendering procedures, to provide the name of awardees to date, if any?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson Sir,

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I wish to inform the house that the upgrading of sports infrastructures around the Island is entrusted to the Rodrigues Sports Company. Works are executed using materials already available at the store of my Commission or procured by the Rodrigues Sports Company Limited.

As per the decision of the Executive Council dated 10 November 2023, the Company will also implement the following projects.

**UPGRADING OF ANSE RAFFIN FOOTBALL GROUND**

Scope of works:

1. Fencing works (15 feet over a distance of 70m and 6ft high over a distance of 270m
2. Provision for 1 large gate and 4 small gates
3. Construction of concrete foot around a perimeter of 340 m painting of galvanise poles
4. Painting works

Cost estimates:           RS 600 000

**UPGRADING OF PORT SUD EST FOOTBALL GROUND**

Scope of works:

1. Fencing and fixing of galvanised posts over a perimeter
2. Provision for 1 large gate and 4 small gates
3. Construction of concrete footsteps
4. Levelling works (cut and fill) to playground area and to allow access road around playground to inhabitants
5. Fixing of high fence
6. Painting of galvanised poles
7. Construction and Installation of new pair of goal post

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8. Construction of concrete foot around a perimeter of 340 m painting of galvanise poles

**Cost estimates: Rs 1,4**

**UPGRADING OF RIVIERE COCOS FOOTBALL GROUND**

Scope of works:

1. Fencing and fixing of galvanised posts over a perimeter
2. Provision for 1 large gate and 4 small gates
3. Levelling works (cut and fill) to playground area and to allow access road around playground to inhabitants
4. Fixing of high fence
5. Painting of galvanised poles
6. Construction and Installation of new pair of goal post 6
7. Construction of concrete foot around a perimeter of 340m painting of galvanise poles
8. Block and rendering works
9. **Cost estimates: Rs 1,4**

**List of Infrastructures upgraded since July 2022**

SN	PROJECT	SCOPE OF WORKS	ESTIMATED COST	EXECUTED BY
1	Upgrading of Roche Bon Dieu Sports Complex	Installation of Lighting system	Inhouse	Rodrigues Sports Company Limited
2	Upgrading of Grande Montagne Sports complex and football ground	- Fencing works - Painting of stands	Inhouse	Rodrigues Sports Company Limited
3	Upgrading of Gravier Football Ground (phase I)	- Fencing work	70 000	Rodrigues Sports Company Limited
4	Development of Football Ground at Eau Claire	- Excavation works	150 000	Inhouse

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<b>SN</b>	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>SCOPE OF WORKS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COST</b>	<b>EXECUTED BY</b>
5	Levelling of Football Ground at Songe	- Levelling works	215, 000	Trans invest Construction
6	Up grading of lighting on football and other infrastructures	- Installation of new floodlight and electrical devices	500 000	Rodrigues Sports Company Limited
7	Up grading of Ile Michel Football Ground	- Fixing of straining wire to galvanised poles - Fixing of fencing to a perimeter of 270m (6ft height)	150,000	Rodrigues Sports Company Limited
8	Construction and installation of goal posts	- Construction and installation of Goalposts		Rodrigues Sports Company Limited
9	Construction of shelter for substitute at Jean Paul II Stadium	-		Rodrigues Sports Company Limited

**PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN RODRIGUES**

(No. A/5) **The Second Island Region Member (Ms. M. N. Raffaut)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the Pre-Primary Education in Rodrigues, he will inform the House on:

- (a) where matters stand with regard to the registration of the schools with the Early Childhood care and Education Authority, and
- (b) if the project of providing free education at pre-primary level in mainland will impact local schools and, if so, to provide details

**Reply:** Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, the setting up of a private company Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues (EMR) Ltée was announced in the Budget Speech of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the financial year 2023/2024 with the objective to ensure the welfare of the pre-primary school teachers and the restructuration of the pre-primary sector in Rodrigues with a view to meeting the required norms and standards of the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority (ECCEA).

The setting up of the Company is in line with the recommendations made further to the mission of a delegation from the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology in December 2022 to assess the situation of the provision of private pre-primary

education with a view to propose recommendations for the restructuring of pre-primary education in Rodrigues including a review of salaries and conditions of service of teachers of private pre-primary schools. One of the functions of this new entity will be to process applications for the registration of private pre-primary schools and transmit its recommendations to the ECCEA.

With a view to facilitate the smooth setting up of the Company, the Commission had retained the services of a Consultant to advise the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on the modalities for the setting up and operationalization of the Company and propose the company's structure as well as recommendations for the harmonisation of salaries and conditions of service of teachers of Private Pre-primary schools in Rodrigues with those employed by the Early Childhood Care Education Authority (ECCEA) and propose recommendations accordingly.

The Consultant will submit a final report in January 2024.

The conditions for registration of the pre-primary schools with the ECCEA are, among others, as follows:

- (i) a minimum of 10 children aged 3 years up to entry to primary school.
- (ii) sanitary conditions clearance;
- (iii) health and safety clearance;
- (iv) posting of a full-time Manager;
- (v) registered teachers (ratio of teacher to children should be 1:25)
- (vi) possession of a Character Certificate, a Medical Certificate and an X-ray Certificate (every 5 years) by all staff 1 week prior to renewal of registration; and
- (vii) possession of a Building and Land Use Permit and a valid Fire Certificate.

As regards part (b) of the question, pre-primary education in Rodrigues is free following a decision of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in 2013. Since then, the Commission for Education has been providing funding to the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues (AEMR) to meet the payment of salaries in favour of Pre-primary Teachers of thirty-one (31) pre-primary schools and other staff. The Commission also caters for maintenance of school buildings and infrastructural upgrading of the buildings. Moreover, since the outbreak of

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COVID-19 in 2019, funds are also provided for the procurement of cleaning materials and other school requisites to the Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues.

Following the announcement of free pre-primary education in Mauritius as from January 2024, the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has come up with a Grant-in-Aid (GIA) Scheme for the implementation of the Policy.

The Grant-in-Aid Formula for the implementation of free pre-primary education in Mauritius will comprise the following:

- (i) staff costs in respect of salaries payable to Managers, Assistant Managers, Teachers, Assistant Teachers and School Attendants; and
- (ii) operational costs to meet expenses for educational materials/equipment, stationery, office equipment, utilities, minor repairs and rental fees, among others.

A Committee comprising officers of the Commission for Education, the Ministry and the Early Childhood Care Education Authority (ECCEA) is working to harmonizing the provisions of the Grant-in-Aid Scheme with grants provided by the Commission for Education. The Committee is expected to meet early January to finalise the specific provisions for Rodrigues.

Thereafter, it is expected that any back pay arising from the adjustment in salary for staff of the AEMR shall be paid at the end of February 2024.