

**/UNREVISED/**

**No. 9 of 2024**

**RODRIGUES**

**FIFTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY**

**DEBATES**

**(HANSARD)**

**(UNREVISED)**

**TUESDAY 16 JULY 2024**

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**The Executive Council**

**(Formed by Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt)**

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

**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. 9 of 2024**

**Sitting of Tuesday 16 July 2024**

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**

**LIVESTOCK EXPORT TO MAURITIUS**

(No. B/62) Mrs M.A.L. Allas (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the livestock export to Mauritius, he will:

- (a) inform the House on the number of large and small ruminants exported to Mauritius from January 2024 to date and the amount of money paid to Rodriguan breeders during the corresponding period, and
- (b) give details on the protocol in force therefor?

*(Withdrawn)*

**NO. OF BUTCHERS' ASSOCIATION/COMPANIES OPERATING IN RODRIGUES**

(No. B/63) Mrs M.A.L. Allas (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether he will state the number of butchers' associations/companies operating in Rodrigues making a brief statement detailing their mode of operation?

*(Withdrawn)*

**STATE LAND ALLOCATED/FENCED – MARECHAL/DEUX MONTAGNES  
– AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES**

(No. B/64) Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K. (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to State land allocated/fenced in the village of Marechal and/or Deux Montagnes for agricultural purposes, he will state and table the:

- (a) number of breeders, their names and the extent of land allocated therefor, respectively, including Rod Farm Ltd and Mr J.M.B.;
- (b) date of application and date of issue of the agricultural lease/agricultural permit therefor, and the conditions attached thereto, and
- (c) procedures and requirements for the breeders/farmers to be supplied with electricity?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commission for Agriculture has issued Agricultural Permits to seven persons for either Crop or Livestock

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Production and one Special Permission to one person for Bee Production on agricultural State land in the region of Deux Montagnes and Papayes.

I am also informed that one Mr J.M.B. has applied for an Agricultural Permit at the Commission for Agriculture on 07 June 2012 for a plot of land at Maréchal for crop production. In a letter dated 18 April 2023, he has subsequently made a request to the Commission for Agriculture for the Agricultural Permit to be issued in the name of ROD FARM Ltd in which he holds the majority of shares. The request and project of Mr J.M.B is still under consideration.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is unethical to disclose the name and extent of land allocated to farmers.

As regards to part (b), as I mentioned earlier, I will not provide details regarding individual applications for Agricultural Permit. Conditions which are normally attached to Agricultural Permits is being tabled.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (c), I am informed that farmers should apply for electricity connection to the Commission for Agriculture or the Chief Commissioner's Office responsible for State Land. Upon report from the Extension Services or the Police de L'Environnement, as the case may be, the application may be recommended to the Central Electricity Board (CEB) for electricity supply. Thank you.

**The Minority Leader:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner mentioned that application is still under consideration. Is the Chief Commissioner aware then that there has been a very large extent of land fenced for the same J.M.B., and if as he said, the application is still under consideration, is it normal that people can erect fence without their permit?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Oui, M. le président, il faut comprendre. Ce qui s'est passé c'est que ce monsieur-là c'est vrai pourquoi il a fait ça, il nous a expliqué, à travers les officiers et aussi la Police de l'Environnement, il a expliqué que, c'est une habitude à Rodrigues, c'est-à-dire, là où on habitait avant, parce que lui il habitait là-bas, donc ils ont clôturé l'endroit où ils habitaient pour justement transformer – et là il a demandé en bon et due forme un *permit*, un Agricultural Permit. Mais c'est vrai que nous aussi on a été sur le lieu, vous aussi vous avez été sur le lieu. *Okay*. Et nous avons vu qu'il a clôturé trop. Ce n'est pas d'après le *requirement* de la commission de l'Agriculture. Donc, on est en train de voir. *Okay*. Il y a la commission de l'Agriculture avec la Police de l'Environnement qui est en train de voir comment faire demander à ce monsieur-là de retirer tous les surplus de terre déjà

clôturer. Il est en train d'après nos informations de commencer à retirer le surplus mais on est en train de considérer le tout pour à la fin lui donner ce dont il a besoin comme préconiser par la commission de l'Agriculture.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, donc il y a aussi, on a vu qu'il y a eu, on a appris que c'est le commissaire de l'Agriculture lui-même qui a été à la Police pour justement – en lien avec – pour loger des plaintes par rapport à la connexion d'électricité. Donc, *is he aware of that?*

**The Chief Commissioner:** Non, M. le président, ça c'est les on-dit. Moi aussi j'ai entendu, j'ai vérifié, il n'y a pas de déclaration. Sinon nous, on aurait pu avoir le... D'ailleurs j'avais demandé le OB *number*. Si le Minority Leader peut venir avec le OB *number*, se sera aussi important pour nous de faire le suivi. Non, d'après mes informations il n'y a pas de déclaration, ou bien je ne sais pas quoi, à la Police de Rodrigues.

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner whether there has been any objection made from the Commission of Agriculture as regards to the supply of electricity to that ROD FARM Ltd?

*(Interruptions)*

Whether there has been any objection or any letter emanating from the Commission for Agriculture stating that ROD FARM was not supposed to have any electricity connection?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, il y a eu, M. le président. Il y a eu une objection disant *to stay action* par rapport à... Parce que c'est vrai après tous ces dénouements-là on a été sur le lieu on a dit qu'il faut... Mais il faut comprendre, M. le président, que parmi tant d'autres qui ont été donné, leur *approval* pour avoir de l'électricité chez eux, *farmers/breeders*, parmi il y avait ce monsieur J.M.B. Okay. Donc, c'est le Conseil Exécutif qui a approuvé. Donc, on n'a aucune objection temporaire mais le Conseil Exécutif a déjà approuvé. Là il y a une lettre émanant de la Commission de l'Agriculture disant que le Conseil Exécutif du 20 octobre 2023 a décidé d'octroyer/donner le *clearance* pour l'octroi d'électricité à 20 *farmers/breeders*, y compris monsieur... Il y a un petit souci, c'est vrai, on a dit là de ça... mais il aura bien sûr, ce monsieur-là, il aura de l'électricité en attendant qu'on lui dit de réduire la superficie dont il a clôturé à cette endroit.

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**Mr Lisette:** Yes, being given that the Chief Commissioner has the letter in hand, I would like to know on what date that letter was emanated from the Commission for Agriculture?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, the letter, Mr Chairperson, Sir, is dated 03 November 2023.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, quand j'ai écouté le Chef commissaire, ce qui me parer, aujourd'hui quelqu'un peut aller demander une connexion d'électricité *without prior an agricultural permit. Is this the normal practice now? Because this J.M.B. has got no agricultural permit, still the Executive Council gives approval for the connection of electricity. Is it the normal process?*

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, bien sûr, comme j'ai dit dans ma réponse -it is upon recommendation of the Commission for Agriculture or the Chief Commissioner's Office through the Police de l'Environnement. Okay. Do not forget the Chief Commissioner is responsible for Land. If ever there is somebody or a household who wants to have electricity even though that person does not possess a lease, it is the prerogative of the Chief Commissioner to ask the Police de l'Environnement to go and make a report on whether that person is eligible or he thinks genuine to be supplied with electricity. *Qu'est-ce que vous voulez qu'on fasse ? C'est vrai il y a beaucoup de personne à Rodrigues, des petites maisons, qu'est-ce que vous voulez qu'on fasse, on ne donne pas ? Sur une base purement humanitaire. On a le droit. Même si quelqu'un...*

*(Interruptions)*

Et il y a aussi... ça c'est notre politique nous s'il faut donner on va donner, M. le président. Et dans le cas de M. Bégué, on va lui donner.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Minority Leader:** *M. le président, un moment le Chef commissaire parlait de hearsay, par rapport à electricity, hearsay of la question de report to the Police regarding complaints to the CEB. Is the Commissioner aware that there has been an email dated 28 June 2024 emanated from the Office of the Branch Manager of the CEB mentioning that a Police Sergeant came to see him because the Commission for Agriculture informed the Police that there is an alleged illegal electricity supply to ROD FARM in Marechal. Are you saying that the Branch Manager is bluffing – there is hearsay? Are you aware that there is this?*

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**The Chief Commissioner:** *Mr Chairperson, Sir, the way you put the question, the supplementary question, as if you meant that they have gone to the Police. Yes. The Sergeant of the Police de l'Environnement, he has the right to go and see the Branch Manager. Yes - has gone to see him and say whether he has supplied electricity to this farmer. Okay. C'est tout à fait normal, oui, il y a eu. Mais le Branch Manager n'est pas le Chief Officer of Police (COP). Il n'est pas un Inspecteur de Police. Non, c'est nous qui décidons. Okay. Donc, lui il a répondu au mail, oui bien sûr, disant que ce monsieur-là... Il a une liste, je ne me rappelle pas du contenu, mais ce monsieur-là oui, on a envoyé une correspondance pour dire que ce monsieur-là on peut lui donner de l'électricité. C'est ce que le Sergent a été voir là-bas. Et il a confirmé que voilà. Mais il a aussi informé ce monsieur – le Branch Manager - qu'il y a un souci il faut attendre qu'on met de l'ordre. C'est ce qu'on fait, M. le président. Il faut comprendre, M. le président. Ce monsieur J.M.B., il a un projet. Le projet est là, M. le président. Il a un projet. Mais le seul reproche qu'on lui fait c'est qu'il a clôturé beaucoup, beaucoup trop. Et vous-même vous avez été là-bas. Vous avez été là-bas et j'ai appris qu'ils ont dit – *ki fer pa don ou papier* ? Et puis vous venez dire au parlement aujourd'hui et ça... Vous-même vous avez dit des choses contraire là-bas d'après ce que j'ai appris. Oui.*

*(Interruptions)*

Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire ? Il y a des allégations. Est-ce que vous, si vous voyez s'il y a problème est-ce que vous avez été à la Police ? Non. Mais nous on a *process*. Mais nous on a vu, en étant responsable. J'ai été sur le lieu. J'ai été sur le lieu moi-même pour voir. Après qu'on a reçu des plaintes des fermiers et des habitants, j'ai été sur le lieu avec mes collègues Commissaires et les deux représentants de la Région No. 2. Je pense que le Conseil Exécutif a été sur le lieu pour aller voir justement ce problème-là et nous sommes en train *d'address* ce problème-là comme des gens responsables, mais tout en tant bien sûr, sauvegardant le droit de ce Rodriguais d'aller de l'avant avec un projet pareil.

**Mr Lisette:** I would like to know from the Chief Commissioner...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, it is the right of the parliament to have things clear here. Yes, it is the right of the parliament to get things clear here.

*(Interruptions)*

Mr Chairperson, I would like to get things clear from the Chief Commissioner...

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*(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** On a point of order. The Members is wasting the time of the House to make things... Why is he making things clear? This is question time. You stand up to put your supplementary question not to make things clear! Lose the time of the House, Mr Chairperson, should be called to order.

**Mr Chairperson:** Respected Members, it is the first question on the agenda. So, I will ask Members go on with your question, please.

**Mr Lisette:** I am going for the question. If I understand the point raised by the Chief Commissioner, there was a decision taken by the Executive Council to give electricity to ROD FARM Ltd but later on the Commission for Agriculture objected as regards to the supply of electricity to the same...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order. Mr Chairperson, Sir, please. This Member is again taking the time of the House to waste it. The Chief Commissioner has never said in any letter here which he has spoken that the Commission for Agriculture objected to anything. The Commission for Agriculture made an enquiry with the CEB and the CEB responded. So, he is again misleading the House, okay, taking the time of the House to say silly things.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay. I am the one to...

*(Interruptions)*

I am sorry, I am the one to decide whether a question is in order or not. Let me listen to your question. Go straight to your question. Go straight to your question then I will tell you whether it is allowed or not.

**Mr Lisette:** My question was straight forward, Mr Chairperson, Sir. As the Chief Commissioner said there was approval by the Executive Council but later on there was a letter emanating from the Commission for Agriculture to say that in fact ROD FARM should not have been provided with electricity. Is that right, Mr Chairperson?

**The Chief Commissioner:** The answer is no. The answer is no, Mr Chairperson, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

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*(Interruptions)*

I am on my feet, please. How can the Commissioner for Agriculture object to a decision of the Executive Council? You have been a former member of the Executive Council. Okay. So, yes, there is an enquiry. Okay. That is on which we are working on. Okay. So, give us time and we will take the right decisions.

**The Minority Leader:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner, in his reply mentioned that approval was given on 28 October 2023 by the Executive Council. And, we see that the letter emanated from the Chief Commissioner's Office to the CEB dates far back as 24 August 2023. So, the decision to give electricity was taken prior to the decision of the Executive Council. 24 October, the letter. Is it the normal process today? *C'est le monde à l'envers, M. le président.*

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, please, please...

*(Interruptions)*

Please, calm down.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Order please!

*(Interruptions)*

I have said order. Any more question?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, on another stand point, Mr Chairperson, Sir, since the Chief Commissioner mentioned it in his answer as regards to ROD FARM. He stated that ROD FARM is a company which contains as shareholder, in major shareholder, Rodrigues shareholder, and I believe that the other shareholder is a non-resident of Rodrigues. Is it the policy of the Regional Government today to give agricultural land to companies of which non-residents are shareholders?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Allow the Chief Commissioner... Respected Members, respected Members, respected Members, allow the Chief Commissioner to answer the question.

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*(Interruptions)*

I have said order!

Order please!

*(Interruptions)*

Chief Commissioner.

*(Interruptions)*

Order please!

Okay, Chief Commissioner.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chief Commissioner:** When you gave...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** I suspend the House for five minutes.

*At 10.55 a.m., the sitting was suspended for five minutes.*

*On resuming at 11.00 a.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.*

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay, you may sit down. You are cool?

Now that everybody has calmed down, you will understand this is not a respect to the decorum of the House. That is why I suspended the House for five minutes. Now I will allow three more questions. Three more supplementary questions on question B/64.

**Mr Lisette:** Do you want to answer the question?

**The Chief Commissioner:** *I want to answer. I have a right to answer, Mr Chairperson, Sir.* Oui, la question si je comprends bien c'est de, si c'est notre politique d'autoriser des gens qui ne sont pas Rodriguais à avoir des terrains agricoles à Rodrigues. Pourquoi vous parlez que d'agricole. Terrain c'est terrain. Vous qu'est-ce que vous avez fait dans le passe. *Atan !*

*(Interruptions)*

*Please wait !* Non, non, pourquoi je ne peux pas parler ? pourquoi ? Non, attendez.

*(Interruptions)*



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Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait à Fumier, Plateau Corail Fumier ? Ancien - comment s'appelle où on fait du sel là-bas ? Les salines. Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait ? Heureusement, qu'on est venu en 2006, M. le président. En 2006, on est venu, ils allaient donner Anse Ally à une grande chaîne d'hôtel. Et nous sommes arrivés nous avons dit non, *chombo* ! Est-ce que ce n'est pas la terre de Rodrigues ? Est-ce que ce n'est pas les terrains des Rodriguais ? Pourquoi est-ce que vous restez tranquille ? *Koze* ! Pourquoi est-ce que vous restez tranquille ? Est-ce que vous vous rappelez de Baladirou ? Comment est-ce que vous aviez donné à quelqu'un 400 arpents, M. le président ? 400 arpents, Le Repère. Hein ! Qu'est-ce que le projet de Le Repère ? Le projet de Le Repère, M. le président, c'était, il allait faire quelques chalets et puis nourrir des animaux, cerfs, etcetera, etcetera. Est-ce qu'il y avait un Rodriguais dedans ?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, sorry, sorry, Chief Commissioner. On a point of order. I have a point of order.

*(Interruptions)*

The Minority Leader is using her phone to record the statement of the Chief Commissioner. She is using her phone to record the Chief Commissioner. This is not allowed here.

*(Interruptions)*

She is recording. I challenge her to put her phone and say that there is no record on it. She is recording.

*(Interruptions)*

She is recording, Mr Chairperson, Sir!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Minority Leader, I know, I know, you are a senior Member of this Assembly.

*(Interruptions)*

Mr Chief Commissioner go on with your answer.

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président,...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Thank you, thank you for listening to the Chief Commissioner.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Le projet de Grenade, 400 arpents. Heureusement, que nous sommes venus nous avons dit *stop, stop !* Qui c'est qui a donné un hôtel, qui est bien sûr là, en opération, très bien, Anse Ally même, à côté de Anse Ally. *Ki sanla inn donn sa ?* La plus belle plage ! Nous ? Là on parle – c'est vrai il y a cette personne qui a clôturé beaucoup de terrain. Oui, heureusement, nous sommes venus encore une fois comme des gens responsables, *inn dir non*, pas question, on va lui donner ce que prévoit dans les conditions d'un *agricultural permit, etcetera, etcetera*. On a stoppé. Est-ce que quelqu'un a stoppé ce projet de 400 arpents à Baladirou ? Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait ? Il ne faut pas venir faire... Vous êtes venu avec d'hypocrisie là aujourd'hui pour faire comprendre que nous sommes en train de *van later d'état*. Et heureusement, nous nous sommes venus. Et Delo Vert, le projet de Delo Vert ? Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait à Delo Vert ? Retirer tous les éleveurs pour donner à une personne. Arrêtez ! Il faut arrêtez d'être hypocrite, M. le président.

Cette personne-là on lui a dit qu'il a clôturé beaucoup de terrain, à peu près 10 arpents, à peu près, je ne sais pas, d'après nos renseignements, comparer à 400 arpents. Et là, on va lui dire de réduire et on va lui donner l'*extent* qu'il faut pour faire ce projet. Et bien sûr, cette personne, on va lui aussi donner de l'électricité pour justement faire son projet, continuer avec son projet.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, c'est une question sur ROD FARM, on ne va pas aller tourner en rond pour ne pas justement perdre le temps de la Chambre. On aura le temps de parler du tourisme après des projets touristiques. Je souhaiterais demander au Chef commissaire, il a mentionné dans sa réponse qu'il y a sept Rodriguais, sept personnes qui ont fait des applications dans la même localité pour les projets agricoles et qu'ils n'ont pas eu encore, est-il au courant que ROD FARM dont nous parlons ce matin, donc je faisais référence justement à un document du Registrar of Companies, il y a les Directeurs mentionné, trois Directeurs. Est-il au courant que les trois Directeurs ont leurs adresses à Maurice ? Donc, c'est une compagnie 100% - si vous regardez le 21 juin 2024, *Registrar of Companies, official document*, donc *the address* c'est Dodo 1, Les Quibies Pailles Mauritius *for all the Directors, that is, the company is fully owned by non-resident of Rodrigues*.

*(Interruptions)*

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**The Chief Commissioner:** *Eh ou la, eh ou la ! I challenge you. I am challenging you. I have got the information. Okay. C'est faux. Le 6 février 2023, j'ai eu la – le directeur c'est – voilà, Jean Marc Bégué,...* *Eh ou la, eh ou la, eh ou la, eh ou la, come on, come on, come on.*

*(Interruptions)*

It can be anywhere. It can be anywhere. Mr Chairperson, Sir, Mr J.M.B. is from Marechal and I have his ID and he is a Rodriguan and he holds 60% of the shares in the company. Okay?

**Mr Chairperson:** Last question. Last supplementary question.

*(Interruptions)*

Order please! Last supplementary question, please.

**The Minority Leader:** *M. le président, le Chef commissaire, on avait demandé - the extent of the land fenced. He seems not to be aware. And, can the Chief Commissioner confirm whether the fence raised have an approximate area of 90,969.86 m<sup>3</sup>, plus de 23 arpents de terrain clôturer valeur du jour et il a dit qu'il a demandé à la personne de réduire. Est-ce qu'on peut savoir – je pense qu'on ne peut pas demander à une personne de réduire comme ça – what has been approved base on this fencing, what has been approved officially for this project?*

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, normalement je ne vais pas répondre à cette question parce que j'ai déjà répondu. Mais quand même pour éclairer la Chambre.

M. le président, c'est ce que j'ai dit. Vous, d'après vous avec votre dessin sur Google qui n'est pas authentifié - mais quand même on va essayer de prendre ça disons comme... Allez, allez, okay, supposons. Mais c'est la commission de l'Agriculture qui va déterminer, M. le président. C'est la commission de l'Agriculture qui travaille là-dessus, il travaille là-dessus. La commission de l'Agriculture, vous auriez dû poser la question directement à M. Perrine. Vous m'avez posé la question. Okay. Donc, les éléments de réponse me donne qu'il travaille là-dessus. Donc, c'est ça je dit *the agriculture permit is under consideration. Under consideration means is being worked out/processed. Okay?*

*(Interruptions)*

Mr Chairperson, Sir, so...

*(Interruptions)*

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Is it clear for you? Thank you.

**Mr Chairperson:** I said three questions. I have said three questions. I have said three question. Okay, go on.

**Mr Lisette:** I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he is aware that there are clear guidelines set for providing facilities at the level of the Commission for Agriculture specifically for electricity, for provision of agricultural lease and which has been subject to scrutiny by ICAC giving clear guidelines as how to follow and how to proceed with this facility to farmers. Is he aware of that?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Member as a respected Member is free to go to the ICAC if ever he thinks...

*(Interruptions)*

The ICAC does not give guidelines as far as...

*(Interruptions)*

Let me explain. As far as policy is concerned. I am talking about policy. Transparency is another thing. I am talking about the policy.

*(Interruptions)*

The policy is the Commission for Agriculture. If there is any trespassing of this policy then of course, the ICAC steps in, Mr Chairperson, Sir. But we will stick to the policy of the Commission for Agriculture and that is why I said it is under process, it is under consideration. And, we will take also consideration of the guidelines and I know that all the officers of the Commission for Agriculture they are well versed. They know how to take into consideration all the guidelines of the ICAC or any of the established laws in Mauritius, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Thank you.

**Mr Chairperson:** We move to next question. Dr. Agathe?

**SALE OF ANIMALS – FROM RODRIGUES FOR MAURITIAN MARKET**

**(No. B/65) Dr. H. AGATHE (First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the sale of animals from Rodrigues for the Mauritian market, he will state if he has been made aware of any attempt to ship animals on Friday 14 June 2024 without required authorization and/compliance to the biosecurity protocol in force and, if so, to state the:

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- (a) number and type of animals involved;
- (b) reasons for this breach of protocol, and
- (c) measures envisaged by his Commission to prevent any such future attempts?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that I am not aware of any attempt to ship animals to Mauritius on Friday 14 June 2024 without required authorisation and/or in compliance to bio-security protocol in force. Therefore, part (a), (b) and (c), of the question is not relevant. However, I wish to bring to the attention of the House that the place where animals are weighed and placed in containers is an open area – *enn bazar* – accessible to members of the public. It is also a common practice that owners of animals to be shipped to Mauritius request permission from Mauritius Port Authority (MPA) to oversee and feed their animals over the night – *al dir zanimo aurevoir*. The officer of my Commission leave the premises once the weighing activities are completed.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish also to remind the House that the port area in Rodrigues is not entirely a restricted zone as it should have been declared long ago as per master plan. As long as the port area is not entirely declared as a restricted zone to prevent members of the public to get any time access thereto, attempt to breach security measures there should always be expected.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have requested the Officer-in-Charge of MPA to consider urgently the required declaration to strengthen security at the port area, I mean, declared restricted zone.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the meantime I had a meeting with different authorities having to do with the port and it has been decided that henceforth the following measures will be envisaged as a temporary measure to ensure strict control during embarkation process, a new entrance gate will be used for animals to be shipped. The embarkation area to be eventually declared a restricted area for long term planning.

Animal cleared for export to Mauritius to be marked by the vet officer for ease of identification. Weighing of animal will be allowed up to five o'clock - 17.00 hours in the afternoon.

Feeding of animals by butchers to be done under the supervision of the Commission of Agriculture and up to 18.00 hours. No access will be allowed/authorised as from 18.00 hours. The Butchers Trade Association has to hire extra duty police during payment to local breeders and a mobile shelter will be installed for that purpose.

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Accordingly, the association has also been severely informed that any breach of the agreement signed with my Commission will entail a revocation of their contract if any breach or default is being noticed.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the question is, who is to be blamed if ever there is bio-security protocol breach at the port during shipment of live animals to Mauritius. Who is to be breached, the breeders, the butchers, the Commission, the Port Authority? This is the big question.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the project of slaughter house which date back to 2011 was abandoned by the previous regime. Had this project been completed as scheduled in 2012, export of live animals to Mauritius would have been things of the past. Only carcass and cuts in great quantity will hind commercial benefit would have been shipped to Mauritius and thus curtailing down any attempt of breach of bio-security protocol. Unfortunately, the former government decided to allocate the slaughter house without equipment to a local breeder in complete opacity.

*(Interruptions)*

Following improper utilization of the slaughter house, the butcher had to be served with an eviction order and kicked out of the slaughter house.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to thank the Ministry of Agro-Industry to have supported our request to urgently finance the rehabilitation of the slaughter house at the earliest to the tune of Rs10 M for financial year 2023/2024. An additional budget of Rs77 M have been earmarked for the procurement of equipment and other facilities. Once the slaughter house is operational, the question of live animals to Mauritius will no longer be unsure. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Dr. Agathe:** M. le président, en écoutant le commissaire j'ai l'impression qu'on est en face d'une grande confusion, une confusion qu'on a entendu précédemment aussi. D'une part, d'un côté vous évoquez qu'il n'y a pas eu de problème et de l'autre côté vous avancez qu'il peut tout à fait y avoir des problèmes de non-respect de la sécurité du port puisque la zone n'est pas entièrement sécurisée. J'aimerais demander au commissaire s'il est au courant que le vétérinaire a déposé un *pre-measure (PM)* à la station de Police de Port Mathurin le 14 juin 2024, qu'il y avait un problème où il y avait des animaux non-autoriser, qui n'avait pas obtenu l'autorisation était sur le point d'être embarqué et qu'il y a eu des actions de sa part

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puisqu'il en est responsable et que les animaux qui n'avait reçu l'autorisation ont dû être débarqué et réacheminé chez leurs propriétaires. Être vous au courant de ça ?

**Mr Perrine:** M. le président, moi je fais des déclarations après avoir *fact check*. Je ne fais pas des déclarations à la légère. *Hearsay evidence, fake news*, moi je ne prends pas ça en considération. J'ai dit que *I am not aware*, je n'ai pas dit qu'il n'y avait pas. Maintenant, il y a des autorités dans le port que j'ai contacté, quand j'ai demandé le rapport, ils m'ont dit que c'était impossible de dire parce qu'il y avait tellement le bazar. Ce jour-là, le port operait jusqu'à 9hr du soir et on ne pouvait contrôler personne.

Concernant les caméras, ça s'est mal positionné, on n'a rien pu retracer. Sans les preuves, sans les *facts*, je ne peux pas venir accuser X, Y, Z. Le problème c'est que, là où on fait le pesage pour les animaux, là aussi on fait les dépôts pour les containers vides. Alors, comment contrôler ? Qui est responsable ? Qui va contrôler tout ça ? Non, moi je n'accuse personne, j'essaie de voir quel est la solution. La solution c'est l'abattoir qui va être opérationnel d'ici l'année prochaine. A ce moment-là, cette affaire de *live animals* envoyer à Maurice, embarquement, vous savez quel problème qu'il y a ? L'éleveur doit se lever à 5hr du matin, venir sur le port, attendre pour avoir l'accès du port, vendre l'animal, attendre le paiement, retourner chez lui 5hr du soir. Dans un pays moderne ce n'est pas comme ça qu'on fait l'embarquement. Et le FED avait raison, il avait construit des parcs de transit que vous avez converti en école maternel. Les 'parcs de transit là où les peser aller se faire et l'animal lorsqu'il arrive sur le port il va directement dans le bateau. Mais tout ça a été abandonné. Maintenant on se trouve avec un problème où il n'y a pas de responsabilité. Cette zone-là devait être décrétée zone *restricted*, ça n'a pas été fait. Et pendant dix ans qu'est-ce qu'on a fait pour le port ? Il n'y a pas eu d'amélioration simplement des faits d'annonces. On va faire ici, on va faire l'étude, etcetera, rien n'a été fait pour le port. Par contre, à Maurice, l'investissement qui a été fait dans le port pour qu'on puisse avoir un port moderne c'est extraordinaire. Je pense qu'avec le nouveau commissaire, on va voir que ce port de Port Mathurin accessibilité et transport est important pour le développement. Nous parlons. *We are not making focus on political interest, politics*. Nous, *we are focusing on people interest, l'éleveur interest*. Pas *political*. Je vous demande d'être moins *focus on political interest*. Merci.

**Dr. Agathe:** M. le président, la question était claire. Y-a-t-il eu des animaux qui étaient sur le point d'être embarqués qui n'avait pas reçu l'autorisation d'être mis dans un container

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qui était scelle prêt à être embarqué. La question c'était ça, est-ce que le commissaire n'est pas au courant qu'il y avait ce problème-là ?

**Mr Perrine:** J'ai dit s'il n'y a pas de preuve, contrôle les fait, il n'y a aucune preuve, ni de la MPA, ni de Velogic, ni de la commission, comment je peux dire il y a. Les palabres. Je sais qu'il y a eu beaucoup de téléphone, textes qu'on envoie mais ça je suis *out* de tous ça moi. Ça ne m'influence pas du tout. Je vois la realite. La realite, le rapport de MPA basait par les cameras qu'on peut voir, qu'on peut rien voir. Comment on peut savoir qui a fait quoi ?

**Mr Lisette:** I would like to ask the Commissioner for Agriculture. Because we did not expect the Commissioner of Agriculture to go to the Police Station for such... This is not his role. But I would like to know from him whether he has been informed in whatever way that officers of his Commission did go to the Police Station to make a preliminary precaution statement as regards to that issue that is under discussion here?

**Mr Perrine:** J'ai été informé que le veterinaire a été à la station de Police parce que ce n'est pas la premiere fois. Ce n'est pas simplement que quelques evenements recents c'est parce qu'il y a pression des eleveurs pour venir retirer le sang pour que les animaux puissent partir. Parce que vous savez il y a actuellement d'autre problème. Peut être on ne sait pas il y a seulement 13 containers et si on veut exporter 500 anmaux à Maurice, comment on va le faire ? 13 containers, ça fait à peu pres même pas 200. Il y a pression de tout part. Les veterinaires, les officiers sont menacés par les eleveurs aussi. Ce PM qui a été fait à la police, c'est pour protection parce qu'ils travaillent jusqu'au soir justement pour faire le passage, l'embarquement, ectera. Et il y a beaucoup de pression. *Mo zanimalo inn teste ki fer mo zanimalo pa pe ale?* Ce n'est pas facile le travail. C'est pourquoi je vous dis j'attends avec impatience l'ouverture de l'abatoir et ça va ... ce problème là.

**Mrs Allas:** M. le président, le commissaire a parlé de l'abatoir, est-ce qu'il peut nous dire quel autre avantage l'entrer en operation de l'abatoir de Baie Diamand apportera aux eleveurs Rodriguais ?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, here I am in charge and I will answer the question. I am in charge of my answer, I am in charge of my reply. So, I...

*(Interruptions)*

Vous savez le...



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**Mr Ramdally:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, on a point of order. This question is very far from the main question. You should rule on that.

**Mr Chairperson:** Unless the Commissioner decide to answer the question but next time respected Member, you should respect the main question. This is not link to the main question.

**Mr Perrine:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson, I will reply with great pleasure this question. And, any other additional question that the opposition would like me to answer. This is a parliament, we are allowed to speak and to ask question and not to sit down and listen.

*(Interruptions)*

It is up to you to decide. *Li inportan pou le developpement de Rodrigues et pour les eleveurs.* And I thank my colleague for...

**Mr Baptiste:** On a point of order. I think I should still... I will refer to Standing Order 22 relating to supplementary questions. I will like the Chairperson to rule on this issue of supplementary questions 22 -

*“Supplementary questions must not introduce matter not included in the original question.”*

**Mr Chairperson:** This is what I said. I said that the question is not link to the main question. Right? Unless the Commissioner decide to answer.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have said that I am in charge of my reply and with much pleasure I will answer the question.

*(Interruptions)*

I am in charge.

*(Interruptions)*

M. le président, nous exportons 2,000 à 1,500 têtes de bétails à Maurice tous les ans, excluant les petits ruminants. Ça tourne autour de 3,000 à 4,000. Mais il y a beaucoup de peau d'animaux qui sont disponibles et c'est pourquoi on pense avec les animaux qui sont abattus à Rodrigues on va venir avec un petit projet de tannerie pour qu'on puisse faire le tannage chimique, etcetera, à Rodrigues.

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**Mr Chairperson:** Mr Commissioner, maybe I think next time you come with a statement on this, it will be more proper for the House.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, based on the answer that was provided by the Commissioner, that there was a precautionary measure made at the Police Station and of which he has made aware, I would like to know as a responsible Commissioner, what was his course of action to ensure so that the trust is not jeopardised as regards to the animals that are being shipped to Mauritius? What was his course of action on learning that there has been suspicion of possibility of animals not being tested and have been put into the container before going to Mauritius?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will not dance to the music of the opposition. They should remember that. It is important to take into consideration. I am in charge of my reply and will tell what I think I should tell. Nobody will make me change.

Concerning your question, this is an issue to be dealt with the MPA (Mauritius Port Authority). The gentleman was in my office with the Chief of Police, we have discussed lengthily on this issue. And, this is not the duty of the Commissioner to act as policeman and to check who is doing that and what. Every sector has to take his responsibility. I am taking my responsibility as Commissioner and I have requested them that this area where the weighing activities are being done should be declared restricted zone. And, I do not know why they are taking a lot of time to have this decision. I do not know. But as long as this zone is not declared restricted area there will be no possibility for control to do what and what, I do not know but this is the main issue. So, they told me that this is being considered and hopefully it will be a reality within six months or before the end of the year. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**The Minority Leader:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner for Agriculture. I supposed that if we have... my colleague mentioned a pre-measure on 14 June, I supposed that an officer before going to the Police for a pre-measure, he will inform his Departmental Head (DH) and I am sure, the Commissioner should be informed. I would like to know whether upon information received by the Commissioner for Agriculture, he has decided to hold a meeting with all the stakeholders working in the... *par rapport à ce projet, la MPA, vous avez mentionné d'autre partenaire, est-ce que à la suite de cette information que vous avez reçu donc...* if you are not sure that there has been problem

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as a preventive measure, you have hold a meeting with the stakeholders and, if yes, when this meeting has been held?

**Mr Perrine:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed by my DH that this was done at 9 o'clock in the evening. You think the Commissioner will be on the jetty looking after the sheep and the cows being exported? I answer what am I am in charge of but security is the Police, the port is not me, it is not the Commissioner for Agriculture who gives instruction, who manage the port. But I was informed by the DH that the Chief Veterinary Officer made a PM at the Police Station of Port Mathurin at 9 o'clock. So, I inquire and it also... even before I have been informed they have been threatened by farmers who have not been satisfied that their animals are not being exported. The problem is also I have told you, the number of containers that we have to export animals and then we have to choose, the Veterinary Officer has to say – you, your animal will not go on this boat, next boat. And also, I must say that there are also butchers who are putting pressures everywhere. But they know that with me pressure does not exist. Thank you very much.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**OPERATIONALISATION – MUSEUM – BUDGET SPEECH 2024-2025**

**(No. B/66) Ms M. N. Raffaut (Second Island Region Member)** asked the asked the Commissioner for Arts and Culture and Others whether, in regard to the operationalisation of the 'Museum' as announced in the Budget Speech 2024-2025 at paragraph 263, he will inform the House on where matters stand?

**Mr Ravina:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, allow me to inform the House of the historical background of the project. The ex-Ram building was acquired by the former Regional Government in 2017 for the purpose of its conversion into the museum of Rodrigues. Subsequently, a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the provision of consultancy for the design of a museum was launched internationally on 21 February 2018 and the service contract was awarded to Mr Hans Goossens from Belgium 28 September 2018.

Accordingly, Mr Goossens has affected several visits to Rodrigues to commence the service contract. On 19 May 2020, the museum expert has submitted the Concept Brief. At this point in time, as a result of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the closing of borders between Mauritius and Rodrigues, the services of the museum expert. In the same line, the museum expert has submitted the preliminary infrastructural works on 21 May 2019

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which has enabled upgrading and demotion works to be carried out and the taking over of site was completed in July 2023.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, since the taking over of office in March 2022, my Commission has continued with the momentum to set-up the museum of Rodrigues. Thus, the technical assistance of the resource persons from the Mauritius Museums Council (MMC) was solicited to support the services provided by Mr Hans Goossens, Museum Experts. Consequently, a joint official mission was organized between the museum expert, the cadres of the MMC and the Commission from 28 August to 01 September 2023. At that time, it was noticed that the Commission has a very limited collection of artefacts which was not considered as adequate to set-up the museum. It was therefore advised by the experts to initiate action in a view to build-up the Museum collection and it is in this perspective that an Acquisition Steering Committee was established in September 2023. The Committee met on several occasions since then to take cognizance of the progress of the works and other pertinent issues such as acquisition of objects, discussions on the contents of the museum and implementation of latest technologies in the museum such as 3D formation of Rodrigues Island with volcanic eruption and also virtual reality.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the house that the International Museum Expert spearheaded the infrastructural development plan whereas the conceptualization of the Museum was entrusted to Mr Rupear and Mr Bhootooa from the Mauritius Museum Council.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as announced in the budget speech on Friday 22 March 2024, in the course of the financial year 2024-2025, it is planned to proceed with the procurement of equipment for operationalisation of the museum of Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the setting-up and the conditioning of the museum is being implemented on a phase-to-phase basis. As the House is aware, the building was acquired during the Financial Year 2018-2019 and the initial phase of the project which comprised of the upgrading and demolition works including construction of a parking area was completed during last financial year.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in a view to spearhead the setting-up process, the Museum Acquisition Steering Committee was set-up in September 2023.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as at date, a full list of specifications provided by the technicians from National History Museums in Mauritius has been floated and awarded with respect to acquisition of artefacts and procurement of showcases and display boards. Moreover,

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additional specifications have also been received, which inter alia include the design and print of museum panel and 3D animation video on the formation of Rodrigues. The whole electrical system will also have to be installed and commissioned in line with the specifications of a museum. A consultant has been appointed to submit the project design and bidding document and same is expected to be launched by mid July 2024

Mr Chairperson, Sir, this project will provide a unique opportunity for our people and staff from my Commission to work alongside with a pool of experts in museum and related field. In the context of building the museum collection, a list of museum activities will be carried out by designated experts.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that the museum once opened will be a permanent exhibition with 75% of the overall project. The remaining 25% will be principally on the building up of collections and introduction of virtual and augmented reality technologies in the museum so as to keep the place alive and attractive for recurrent visitors and our population.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, you will agree that a museum is the showcase of a country, its natural history, its people and its culture. As such my office is aiming at a high standard museum to showcase Rodrigues to our local population as well as its visitors and tourists in all its grandeur and magnificence.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Ms Raffaut:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir. So, the Commissioner for Art and Culture, he mentioned about launching of same, mid July 2024. So, can we know from the Commissioner, if the museum is fully staffed for this?

**Mr Ravina:** Mr Chairperson, I have not mentioned the mid of July. Maybe the launching of the museum will be expected in end of August or mid of September, Mr Chairperson. And, as regards to staffing, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are at present tackling staffing issue relating to the operationalisation of a museum. In the same respect, the Scheme of Service in the grade of Museum Technician and Museum Attendant on Roster are being finalised. In the meantime, an internal recruitment is being envisaged pending the recruitment of the staff of the museum.

**Ms Raffaut:** Mr Chairperson, can we know from the Commissioner, he mentioned about the setting up of a steering committee. Can we know the composition of the steering committee?

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**Mr Ravina:** Mr Chairperson, I need notice. I have no information about the members of the committee.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, comme là si bien mentionné le commissaire des Arts et de la Culture, ce projet de musée a commencé avant avec l'ancienne équipe du gouvernement avec une politique bien spécifique, donc un désir de spécificité en lien avec la politique du gouvernement qui avait commencé le projet. Est-ce que je peux savoir du commissaire quelle sera la spécificité de ce musée que vous mettez en place en lien avec la politique que votre gouvernement porte ?

**Mr Ravina:** I have already mentioned this in my answer, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

*(Interruptions)*

Mr Chairperson, I have already mentioned that this will provide a unique opportunity for our people and staff also for our culture. Yes, the museum has been designed to depute the following aspects of Rodrigues, participation of Ex-servicemen in World War I and II, national history and Solitaire section including, a marine and insects section, traditional job, 3D display of volcanic Rodrigues formation.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, for staffing issue like has been raised by the respected Member Raffaut, the Commissioner for Arts and Culture mentioned specifically as regards to the operationalisation of the museum, the technician which he is going to proceed with an internal recruitment. But I would like to know from that internal recruitment whether there are persons who are knowledgeable in curator, conservator and archivist, which are trades which appear in the list of staff within the Rodrigues Regional Assembly establishment?

**Mr Ravina:** Yes, Mr Chairperson.

**Mr Baptiste:** Can we know who will head the museum?

**Mr Ravina:** Of course, Mr Chairperson, it is the head of my Commission, the Departmental Head of my Commission.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, yes and the expert of the museum. Yes, yes and also the expert. Why, no?

**Mr Lisette:** I would like to have the view of the Commissioner on the matter being given that in last – because you used to refer to it – during last mandate, there was objection,

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objection as regards to the site of the museum because of the possibility of tsunami which may come and destroy the museum. I would like to know his point of view on the matter.

**Mr Ravina:** Mr Chairperson, it is a new matter. I need notice for this question. Mr Chairperson, Sir.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, yes.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**PATIENTS SENT TO MAURITIUS – SPECIALISED TREATMENT – PROTOCOL  
FOR TRANSFER**

**(No. B/67) Ms K. Roussety (Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to patients sent to Mauritius for specialised treatment, he will inform the House on the actual protocol for transfer of patients from Rodrigues to hospitals in Mauritius and back to Rodrigues, particularly with regard to the facilities offered and the follow-up arrangement in relation thereto?

**Mr Volbert:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House that transfer of patients from Rodrigues to Mauritius for further treatment, can be considered in two ways as follows:

- (i) On a first instance, the service of a Mauritius aircraft is being requested,
- (ii) Dornier aircraft of the Mauritius Police Force (Maritime Air Squadron/National Coast Guard) in case of emergency and should those requests cannot be undertaken on-board of Air Mauritius Ltd flight.

Before the transfer of the patients, the referring Specialist of the Commission for Health informs the receiving Specialists on-call in Mauritius. Depending on the seriousness of the case, the condition of the patient, and upon the recommendation of the treating Doctor, the SAMU team may be mobilised. Patients who are transferred for specialised treatment either by SAMU or by ambulance from the airport to the receiving hospital in Mauritius. Upon their arrival in Mauritius, there is a fast-track for patients referred from Rodrigues and they are registered and are admitted in ward.

Otherwise, Mr Chairperson, Sir, they are accommodated at Sikamifer hotel in Mauritius along with their accompanying relative on full board basis pending their appointment for treatment within the next one or two days. Weekly follow-up of patients is

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done by the Social Workers posted at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Upon discharge from Hospital, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the patients are transferred to Sikamifer Hotel for accommodation until they obtain their fitness to travel back to Rodrigues. All patients who are discharged from Hospital and have no further treatment are returned to Rodrigues while patients who have appointment within one or two weeks are accommodated at Sikamifer Hotel pending their next review. Upon completion of their treatment, the patients are transferred back to Rodrigues. Thank you.

**Ms. Roussety:** M. le président, le commissaire est au courant que plusieurs patients part pour Maurice pour un CT scan. Moi-même j'ai été témoin à l'hôpital de Jeetoo il y a un patient qui est martyrisé depuis plus d'un mois, qui attend pour faire un scan. Est-ce que le commissaire est au courant de cette situation de ces patients à Maurice ?

**Mr Volbert:** Je ne suis pas au courant de cette situation. Mais j'aurais préféré que la respecte Member venir nous informer au lieu de poser des questions ici pour nous dire ça. Vous aurez dû nous informer à la commission, nous envoyer un... Vous avez l'habitude de m'envoyer des petits texto, vous auriez pu m'envoyer un petit texto pour me dire aller voir ça commissaire, il y a ce petit problème là, il y a ce gros problème là, si vous voulez et on aurait pu faire quelque chose. Donc, venir poser des questions directement ici pour venir casser des paquets donc pour moi c'est, vous auriez dû agir...

*(Interruptions)*

*Kas pake ! Comme si casse paquet. Vous n'avez pas déjà casse paquet ? Tiou, kas pake.*

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, je souhaite demander au commissaire de la Santé, est-ce qu'il y a eu un changement dans le protocole des transfère des patients. Là je me réfère au protocole avant. Je ne sais pas exactement quand, à partir de 2015 je sais qu'il y avait un circulaire pour un *fast track* pour les patients qui quittent Rodrigues pour aller dans un l'hôpital à Maurice, un l'hôpital quelconque, il y avait un *fast track*, de manière à ce que ce patient quand il quitte l'hôpital, il arrive à Maurice, dès qu'il arrive dans l'hôpital où il va être admis ou il aura ses soins, il n'a pas besoin de recommencer tous les périples - aller devant le Record, attendre son tour, attendre quand on doit faire les tests. Y-a-t-il eu un changement dans le protocole de la prise en charge des patients donc récemment ?

**Mr Volbert:** Pour moi ce que je sais, on m'a informé que le protocole existe toujours dans certains hôpitaux. Donc, moi-même j'ai fait la demande auprès du ministère de la Santé. Moi-même quand j'étais malade en janvier j'aurais dû attendre pendant deux heures à



l'hôpital du Nord pour pouvoir être *view* par un Spécialiste et j'ai soulevé la question au ministère, la personne concernée au ministère et on est en train de faire le nécessaire s'il y a un problème par rapport à ça et on va résoudre.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, on that point I think that the Commissioner is right because I think we should have tried as far as possible tried to have direct access to the ward so as not to penalise those patient who have travelled sometimes two hours before reaching the hospital. Nevertheless, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Health, he mentioned in his answers that patients who have appointments for one or two weeks are kept in Mauritius for their follow-up. But is it not true to say also that there are some patients who are staying in Mauritius for more than one month and this is of course impacting on the budget of the Commission for Health?

**Mr Volbert:** Oui, M. le président, je suis au courant et j'ai dit dans ma réponse quelque part, je vais répéter. Pour un patient de pouvoir prendre l'avion pour venir à Rodrigues, il y a le *fitness certificate* que le *treating doctor* devait donner. Donc, si le patient n'a pas eu son *fitness certificate* pour pouvoir prendre l'avion donc il peut rester deux mois, trois mois, c'est le professionnel, le docteur qui est un professionnel c'est lui qui donne le certificat. J'aurais aimé moi aussi que ces patients-là rentre ici pour qu'on puisse avoir moins de dépense à la commission et au niveau de l'hôtel, etcetera.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, another issue regarding of course, the comfort of patients, we do know that it sometimes happens that there are delays in flight and patients have to travel as far late as one in the morning or two in the morning. So, I would like to know whether the Commissioner would like to look into the matter as regards to patients who are going to Mauritius and whose flights are delayed what minimum comfort should be provided to them at the airport or if they have to be taken back, what is the protocol, what suggestion does he have in that matter?

**Mr Volbert:** C'est vrai, M. le président, nous n'avons pas d'avion et nous attendons à ce que nous ayons des places sur les vols et c'est vrai que dans des cas très tard dans la soirée ou tôt le matin que nous avons des places pour pouvoir transférer – surtout les patients *on stretcher*. Donc, oui, j'ai vais soulever ça avec mes officiers, les officiers concernent pour voir comment on peut aider ces patients-là pour un diner, un déjeuner, je ne sais pas ou si on a la possibilité aussi d'envoyer le patient sur *next* vol. Je vais voir c'est une bonne proposition.

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**Mr Ramdally:** M. le président, est-ce que je peux demander au commissaire. Donc, dans sa réponse il a mentionné que lors d'un transfère le contacte ce fait entre le Spécialiste à Rodrigues et le Spécialiste qui va voir le patient à Maurice. Donc, à quel moment le Social Worker, celui de Maurice ou de Rodrigues il entre en jeu dans ce processus ? Le Social Worker.

**Mr Volbert:** Comme n'étant pas un Social Worker je ne peux pas répondre à la question tout de suite. *I need notice to this question.*

**TAKING OVER – SOUTHERN/WESTERN SECTION BY RODRIGUES PUBLIC  
UTILITIES CORPORATION (RPUC) FROM WATER UNIT**

**(No. B/68) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the taking over of the southern/western section by the Rodrigues Public Utilities Corporation (RPUC) from the Water Unit, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the:

- (a) number of staff who have had to be redeployed together with their respective grades;
- (b) status of the water production in the region as at date highlighting the sources, and
- (c) frequency at which water is being distributed from the different reservoirs to the villagers?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the RPUC has been active in the southern and western regions since August 2023 when it has been given the responsibility for the management of the *collectrice du sud*. Having gain experience in the distribution of water in the region, it has taken over the section and a number of staff of the Water Unit working there have been redeployed to other sections of the Water Unit. The Works Division of my Commission and other Commissions of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the number of staff who have been redeployed together with their respective grades are as follows:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| - Inspector of Works: | 1 |
| - Field Supervisor:   | 3 |
| - Driver on Roster:   | 1 |

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- Foreman:	1
- Plumber and Pipe Fitter:	5
- Tradesman Assistant:	2
- Operating Pump Station on Roster:	6
- General Worker:	24
- Surveillant:	2

A total of 45.

With regard to part (b) of the question, the actual water production for the southern/western region is a total of 1,733 m<sup>3</sup> per day.

With regard to part (c), I am informed that prior to taking over of the distribution networks in the southern and western region by the RPUC in August 2023, water was distributed at recipient's taps once every two to three months. RPUC has been able to bring the average frequency of distribution down to every month when most major water production units are functioning effectively and the goal within the next three months is to bring the frequency of distribution to once every fortnight. This will be possible with the commissioning of a new 350 m<sup>3</sup> bay reverse osmosis unit at Caverne Bouteille and the operation of new boreholes in the region of Quatre Vents, Mangues and Montagne Cabri. I am tabling the requested information. Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, Sir, Mr Chairperson. I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards to the staff of the RPUC, if he can give an indication of the number of workers already in the region?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not know whether I am getting this question right. I have lengthily listed all the workers which were in the region, a total of 45. I do not get this question, sorry.

**Mr Lisette:** My question is about the... What you gave in your answer was about those who have been redeployed. Now, I am asking about the staffing of the RPUC because they have taken over in the region?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** If the Member wanted this specific answer, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would have invited the Member to have this information asked. RPUC has a staff of two trainees, one Supervisor and 12 Plant and Equipment Operators overseeing

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production and distribution of potable water in the southern/western region. It is in the process of recruiting an additional - 42 additional Plant and Equipment Operators, System Analyst.

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, as regards to water production in the region itself, the Commissioner mentioned about the volume of 1700 m<sup>3</sup> but he did not mention about the sources, in his answers he did not stated about the sources. I do not know if it is mentioned in the paper tabled. But nevertheless, I would like to ask him, as regards to water production itself, why is it that the water of Anse Raffin, which is, of course, part of the production within that region is not being exploited to its maximum value?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am surprised about this question. And I am tempted to ask himself. Why did he let the water treatment plant at Anse Raffin get decommissioned after being abandoned? The simple reason is that when he was Commissioner for Water, when we take over the Anse Raffin Treatment Plant which need to treat the water from the dam was found in an abandon state of decrepitude, Mr Chairperson, Sir. We have now installed two mobile water treatment plants and they are giving, I think, about 400 m<sup>3</sup> of water there pending we rebuild anew a new water treatment plant at Anse Raffin. So, the answer is former government allowed the treatment plant of Anse Raffin to be in a state of decrepitude beyond repair, out of use.

**Mr Lisette:** This is the view of the Deputy Chief Commissioner of which I am not agreeable because in 2021-2022, the volume stock at Anse Raffin dam was very low and the quality of water was itself very bad and it was impossible to treat the water but with the good rainfall that has been obtained in December and even in January of this year, the treatment plant should have been able to work, Mr Chairperson, Sir. If there has been decrepitude as he is saying it happened during 2022 and 2023. 2022 and 2023 because when we left it was in good working conditions. Maybe he has been given the wrong information. Nevertheless, I would like to ask him as regards to the mobile treatment plant that is being used at Anse Raffin, what is the capacity that is being produced by these two and whether the specificities of these mobile treatment plant is suitable for the quality of water at Anse Raffin right now?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** I am afraid, Mr Chairperson, Sir, these are technical questions. I am responsible for policy. If the Member had asked about the capacity of these treatment plants, I would have been glad to search for the information. However, I do

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not have this information. Maybe he bought the treatment plant he knows the capacity, he ordered them, he knows the capacity. I do not have all these information, colour of water, etc. But I repeat the Anse Raffin Treatment Plant was out of use when I became Commissioner for Water. It was out of use. The dam itself was filled with mud. We have removed that mud. This is why we have water in it today.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, donc l'Adjoint au Chef commissaire a fait attendre longtemps, deux et demi qu'il est là, il n'a pas pu faire reprendre l'activité. Je souhaiterais savoir de l'Adjoint au Chef commissaire par rapport au *new reverse osmosis* qu'il a parlé dans sa réponse quand est-ce que cela sera opérationnel ?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** It is being delivered this month, July. We are happy to announce it. Three units of 350 m<sup>3</sup>, one will be installed at Caverne Bouteille. By the way the desalination plant at Caverne Bouteille has got a break down. There is a failure on the pump there, we are replacing the pump this week. We apologise towards the people suffering there. We will install another one at Anse aux Anglais and the third one will be installed at Pointe Coton. The RPUC has been proactive. They have already contracted out a works order for labour to build the base, the concrete base to place these containerised units which comes at a right moment. We will use them for the additional 1,150 m<sup>3</sup> per day to help the population. We also have the tender which is active now for the 3,000 m<sup>3</sup> units – 3 x 1000, this is the first time we are doing 1,000 reverse osmosis units. The building at Pointe Coton, foundation has been laid out. We are also building 2 x 1000 m<sup>3</sup> reservoir to stock the desalinated water at Pointe Coton. I invite the Minority Leader and other Members of the opposition to contact Mr Wong So at the RPUC. They can have a visit and see the spectacular works, the historic important works we are doing at Pointe Coton which is kick starting this reform of the water sector where we are moving from local network which we will keep to a globalised integrated island wise water network and we are convinced these will produce results.

**Mr Baptiste:** He has talked about the infrastructural works of the reservoirs and all, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner from which item vote or source of finance of all these projects of the RPUC being financed?

**The Deputy Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am surprised by this question. That a Member of this House, at this stage of the water reforms, he is still asking where the money is coming from, Mr Chairperson, Sir. At this stage! A Member who is

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involved in the public affairs of Rodrigues. A Member who is active in this House, in the press, everywhere. We have got the loan. The loan of Rs1 billion that they have done everything. They have done everything including one Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS). We have negotiated the loan and I must put on record the tremendous effort which have been put into this negotiation to get this Rs1 billion loan from the Mauritius Investment Corporation (MIC) by Mr Wong So, by Claude Wong So.

*(Interruptions)*

It is his job.

*(Interruptions)*

*Be enn boug inn fer enn travay be nou pa dir.* Mr Wong So who negotiated successfully for the loan under the supervision of the Executive Council. And, I am not aware of any Chief Commissioner having participated in an international loan donation agreement, I was in Mauritius with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the Minister of Finance, the Head of the AFD worldwide and we signed the agreement where we are getting 30 million euros to invest in the water sector. We have also funds coming and I am glad, we seize this occasion, Chief Commissioner, pardon me to say that government has signed the loan for the airport. It has been signed. You were saying it was not going to be signed. The loan for the airport has been signed with the World Bank and we are getting 10 million dollars. This time dollar. So, all the moneys we are getting - Rupees, Euros, Dollars, 10 million dollars to put in the water sector and we are going to bring results. *Sahem ki nou dir zot, zot pou res dan lopoizion.*

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**THREE TRAINEE NURSES RECRUITMENT – POLYTECHNICS MAURITIUS  
LTD (PML)**

**(No. B/69) Mr J. R. Ramdally (First Local Region Member for Saint Gabriel)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the three Trainee Nurses of the last recruitment exercise who undergone their training with Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd (PML) in Rodrigues, he will inform the House on:

- (a) the date they joined the service, including their grade as at date, and

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- (b) if they are fully compliant with the requirements of the Nursing Council, and, if not, to state the reasons thereof and the course of action contemplated to regularise their situation, if applicable?

**Mr Volbert:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that as at date there has not been any recruitment of Trainee Nurses who undergone their training with the Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd (PML) in Rodrigues. Therefore, the question of the respected Member therefore does not stand good. Thank you.

**The Minority Leader:** M. le président, est-ce que le commissaire peut nous dire si dans le recrutement des *Nurses* récemment il y a eu des jeunes qui ont été formés au PML ?

**Mr Volbert:** Si vous souhaitez avoir des information plus précis vous venez avec une autre question la prochaine fois.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**PROVISION OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE – NEEDY FAMILIES  
– BUDGET SPEECH 2024-2025**

(No. B/70) **Mr L. D. Baptiste** (Second Local Region Member for **Grande Montagne**) asked the Commissioner for Housing and Others whether, in regard to the provision of housing assistance to needy families, as announced in the Budget Speech 2024-2025, he will inform the House of any changes made thereto or any new scheme introduced therefor, stating the reasons thereof and the number of housing units expected to be completed in the current financial year?

**Mr Volbert:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as announced in the Budget Speech 2024-2025, I wish to inform the House that there has never been any announcement of any new Housing Scheme.

I wish also to recall that as per the Budget Speech read by the Chief Commissioner in March 2024, mention is made that, I quote “*..nous venons de l’avant avec un autre volet des plans d’aide pour le logement social*”.

I wish to inform the House that we are in fact improving the existing housing schemes. Indeed, the terms and conditions that apply to the above Social Housing Schemes have changed. Under this condition, the beneficiaries will be able to choose either to proceed with the self-help option or to proceed with the construction of their housing units by a contractor.

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The House is informed that the Housing Unit of my Commission is actually working on the terms and conditions for proceeding with the construction of the housing unit by contractors. We are maintaining the same terms and conditions for those who received construction materials under the still prevailing Self Help Scheme.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are expecting to complete a maximum number of houses for this current financial year. Thank you.

**Mr Baptiste:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, can we know who will manage all these new schemes that you are talking about? With the possibility either to be on self-help or to be built by a contractor? Who will manage this field?

**Mr Volbert:** *I think officers from my Commission is working on the terms and conditions as I have just said. Il y aura un officier, les officiers de Housing Unit à la commission. Il y a le Departmental Head. Il y a les Administrative Officers, tous ces gens-là. Je pense qu'ils vont mettre sur pied une unité plus spécifique pour pouvoir suivre ce scheme, les schemes qu'on va improve.*

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, in a reply to B/5 of the sitting of 31 May 2022, the then Commissioner for Housing who is now the Chief Commissioner mentioned that *la Rodpro sera l'exective arm de la commission du Logement. Donc, Rodpro Compagnie va prendre en charge pour la construction.* May I know where matter stands, whether this policy has changed now?

**Mr Volbert:** Je demande le respecte Membre de poser la question au Chef commissaire parce que ce n'est pas moi qui a répondu. Ce n'est pas moi qui a répondu, je ne peux pas répondre pour le Chef commissaire. Il est là et adressez-lui la question la prochaine fois vous aurez la réponse.

**Mr Lisette:** Being given that the Commissioner is now responsible for Housing, I would like to know whether with respect to these policies he is going to use Rodpro for introducing the scheme that he has been speaking about?

**Mr Volbert:** Je vais voir. Je vais voir où est ce dossier que vous mentionnez et si tel est le cas, oui.

**The Minority Leader:** Est-ce que le Commissaire peut nous dire quel est le coût approximatif d'une unité de logement qu'il compte construire dans le cadre de ce projet ?

*(Interruptions)*



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Le coût approximatif d'une unité de logement ?

**Mr Volbert:** Je vais répondre approximativement c'est plus d'un million de roupie. Je n'ai pas les chiffres exacts.

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would ask to state the reason for the change in the policy because now he has talked about the possibility of either self-help or to be constructed by a contractor? May I know for what reason you have decided to go for the contractor?

**Mr Volbert:** Je n'ai pas parlé de *change*, j'ai dit des *improvement*. On a vu que...

*(Interruptions)*

Vous voulez répondre la question la Minority Leader ? Vous connaissez la réponse ?

*(Interruptions)*

Okay. Mais j'ai dit qu'on va voir, on a parlé au niveau du Executive Council et on a vu qu'il faudra *extend* pour plus de personne d'avoir ces facilités.

**Mr Lisette:** The Commissioner is speaking of improvement, if i used his word, this means that there have been failures. If you want to improve this means you have observed that there has been flaws or failures. I would like to know as regards to the scheme that was previously being used what were the failures and flaws that you noticed therein?

**Mr Volbert:** Je n'a jamais dit qu'il y a des *failures*. Donc, je ne vais pas dire. Si vous voulez avoir plus de renseignement je vais dire – ne venez pas me dire qu'il y a des *failures*. Posez-vous la question d'une autre façon je vais répondre. Mais je n'ai pas dit, je n'ai jamais dit qu'il y a des *failures* dans l'ancien façon de donner les housing units. Donc, on va *improve* parce que...

*(Interruptions)*

Oui, c'est bien mais on veut faire mieux. C'était bien mais on veut faire mieux. Voilà.

**Mr Baptiste:** I would like to ask the Commissioner for Housing whether with the new scheme that he will be introduced for contractors, this will enable him or the government to meet the electoral promises, to give a housing unit free of charge to the beneficiaries?

**Mr Volbert:** Oui, ceux qui n'ont pas les moyens et non, pour ceux qui ont les moyens.

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**Mr Chairperson:** Last question.

**The Minority Leader:** A last question, please. We would like to know from the Commissioner when is he expecting to start with the project?

**Mr Volbert:** Next month.

**Mr Chairperson:** Okay. Next question.

**SITE FOR MOTORSPORT – CHANGE IN LOCATION**

**(No. B/71) Mr J. P. Spéville (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Youth & Sports and Others whether, in regard to the site initially used for motorsport events in the region of Pointe Palmiste, he will inform the House on if there has been a change in the location thereof and, in the affirmative, to give details thereof?

**Mr Ravina:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the house that my Commission is keen to give maximum support for the organisation of motorsport events in Rodrigues including infrastructure and logistics.

In this respect the Motocross tract at Pointe Palmiste will be relocated following representations from villages due to the fact that the dust generated by the activities on the tract had negative effects on their health and their general environment. Mr Chairperson, Sir, furthermore, this site has been earmarked for a future development project for the Commission for Health and Others.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have on several occasions I, personally accompanied members of the Rodriders Club and other motocross stakeholders in view of identifying an appropriate site to relocate the circuit. Amongst the different locations visited, it was agreed the site at Pointe Palmiste appears to be the most appropriate one.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, hence an official visit was therefore effected on Saturday 29 June 2024 at the site at Pointe Palmiste in the presence of the Chief Commissioner, Mr Franceau Aubrey Grandcourt and in presence also of the Deputy Chief Commissioner, Mr Johnson Roussety, myself, as well as other members of the Executive Council, Officers of my Commission and other stakeholders of Motocross and Rod Riders.

Mr Chairperson, the Chief Commissioner has given its green light so that the Commission for Youth and Sports proceeds with preliminary works on site by the end of this month to uproot the invasive Pikan Loulou plants and to level the area to ensure that the land composition meets the technical criteria of safety which is required for motocross sport.

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Mr Chairperson, Sir, the members of Rod Riders Club and other motocross athletes and stakeholders, will then be in position to assess the suitability and safety of the site for motocross activities. Following this confirmation, an approval of the Executive Council will be sought for vesting of the plot of land to my Commission to initiate the project.

A plan for installation of amenities such as toilets and changing rooms are also being worked out concurrently so that the new race tract provides basic amenities for public and for athletes as well.

The motocross community has also proposed to contribute to the works on site on a voluntary basis, so that the race tract becomes a reality in the shortest delay.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, we expect that provision of this new location will have the direct consequence of reducing the illegal speeding on our roads, hence improving security for the general public and also providing a regulated sports opportunity for our youth and for our spectators who are fan of such thrilling events. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

**Mr Spéville:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House when the estimated respected date exactly when the motocross event will be launched?

**Mr Ravina:** I have mentioned maybe about the end of this month. Yes.

**Ms. Roussety:** M. le Commissaire, moi j'allais dire pourquoi pas laisser l'activité sur le terrain jusqu'à ce que la nouvelle place soit prête mais on a entendu le Commissaire *relocated due to negative effect on the environment*. M. le Commissaire, peut préciser à la Chambre depuis quand ces personnes rencontre des *negative effects* parce que ça fait pas mal de temps qu'il n'y a plus d'activité à cette endroit.

**Mr Ravina:** Since I have taken office 2022, I have received many requests concerning the environment where the site is actually. It is not possible for them to continue the activities there.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**TOURISM DEVELOPMENT - RODRIGUES**

**(No. B/72) Mr J. R. Ramdally (First Local Region Member for Saint Gabriel)** asked the Commissioner for Tourism and Others whether, in regard to tourism development in Rodrigues, he will enlighten the House on his policy in relation thereto laying emphasis on the:

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- (a) tourism accommodation capacity;
- (b) standards for tourist enterprises, and
- (c) involvement of Rodriguans thereinto as regards training and tourism business facilitation measures?

**Mr Wong So:** Right at the outset, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to thank the respected Member Ramdally for this question as it is of utmost importance that we share in this House the vision that we have for the tourism sector as a whole.

The overall vision of the Commission for Tourism with regard to the tourism sector is to further consolidate the sector as the main economic pillar of Rodrigues and to position the island as a culturally distinct destination under the concept 'Ile Créole – Ecologique'.

In that regard, for the last two years, my Commission in collaboration with the Rodrigues Tourism Office has organised several activities in terms of: -

- Promotion and marketing of the destination;
- Training and capacity Building;
- Upgrading and renovation of prime tourism attractions, and
- Introduction of sustainable tourism projects.

On the other hand, Mr Chairperson, Sir, in terms of tourism arrivals, there has been a considerable increase from 2022 up to now. As such, I wish to inform the House that: -

- For 2019, prior to COVID 19 pandemic, there was a total arrival of 77,831 visitors;
- For the Year 2023, the number of arrivals was 99,066.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, you would recall that during the last budget speech in this august Assembly held on 22 March 2024, it was mentioned that we are aiming at 110,000 visitors for the year 2024. I am pleased to announce that with regard to the figures collected for the first six months, I am more than confident that we will achieve our target or even exceed the figure of 110,000.

For your information, Mr Chairperson Sir, from January to June 2024, the number of arrivals is 49,681 visitors, representing an overall increase of 19.66% compared to last year's first semester.

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It is obvious that the Airport Development Project will unlock the full economic potentials of the island which include avenues for tourism development in Rodrigues.

I wish to inform the House, that the project will be a Game Changer as it will have a multiplier effect, which will positively impact on all the economic sectors of Rodrigues; from the taxi driver, the farmers and planters, food and beverages services, entertainment and attractions.

Consequently, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the World Bank has earmarked an amount of USD10 million to support the development of the Tourism Sector in Rodrigues known as the Component 4 of the project. The Component 4 will include four sub-components which will lay emphasis on: -

- (i) Supporting tourism promotion and attraction of investments by providing technical assistance to enhance the Commission and other relevant stakeholders' capabilities in brand building and promotional product development;
- (ii) Implementing a comprehensive skills development program for the Rodrigues' tourism sector;
- (iii) Supporting sustainable tourism small businesses by providing matching grants for sustainable/green upgrades, interior remodelling, compliance with safety standards, digitalization of promotional materials and retrofits aligned with Rodrigues' brand standards, and
- (iv) Strengthening sustainable tourism infrastructure through the enhancement of tourism product offerings in Rodrigues, focusing on infrastructure, signage, trails, and site development.

Subsequently, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the success of tourism and hospitality businesses should primarily be driven by quality of its facilities and services. Hence, my overall policy is therefore to focus on quality rather than quantity by ensuring that:

- (i) Quality training is dispensed at all levels by means of quality training infrastructure and training programmes from foundation to higher diploma levels;
- (ii) Quality tourism infrastructure and services for visitors;
- (iii) Tapping into niche markets and offering high quality services to a high-class and affluent visitor segment, and

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- (iv) Continuous monitoring, quality control and supervision by the Tourism Enforcement Officers of the commission to ensure that tourist enterprises are operating as per the norms and standards stipulated in the regulation.

I further wish to inform the House that my Commission has recently reactivated the Tourism Advisory Committee with members having years of experience in the field of travel, tourism and hospitality. The Tourism Advisory Committee will be an additional support to the Commissioner by:

- Advising on the formulation of policies for the sustainable development of tourism;
- Making recommendation relating to tourism promotion and development, and
- Advising on standards for carrying out operations for tourist enterprises.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the tourism accommodation capacity, the policy of my Commission aims to develop tourism accommodation capacity in Rodrigues in a sustainable manner.

The number of tourism accommodation, that is, hotel, gites, chambres d'hôtes, guest house and tourist residence, in operation on the island is 197 with a room capacity of 1,129.

I wish to inform the House, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that the Sustainable Integrated Development Plan for Rodrigues (SIDPR) has been revised for all the different sectors of Rodrigues and same was officially released in May last year.

In this regard, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the House that there is the existence of one full document dedicated to the Tourism Development which can be termed as the 'Rodrigues Sustainable Tourism Development Plan 2023'.

The Sustainable Tourism Development Plan has come up with different scenarios in regard to the development of the sector. Consequently, the number of rooms being foreseen as per the Tourism Development Plan for Rodrigues 2023 to 2033 is as follows: for the year 2022 to 2027, we are moving from 1,013 rooms to 1,300. And for the rooms capacity the Consultants have also worked on the Tourism Development Plan have come up with a Sustainable Scenario in terms of room capacity for the period 2028 to 2033, which is as follows: moving from 3,350 to 1,500.

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Therefore, in line with the foreseen scenarios and recommendation of the SIDPR, there is the need to expand the range of accommodation options available to tourists while ensuring that growth aligns with the island's environmental and cultural preservation goals.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, my policy with regard to tourism accommodation is to encourage: -

- (i) Existing tourism accommodation to expand their room capacity. The rationale behind this policy is that the people already in the sector already have a know-how of the market, of how the tourism industry is performing and where it is going. It will be easier for them to increase their number of rooms.
- (ii) The development of new eco-friendly establishments that blend harmoniously with the natural surroundings of Rodrigues.

The Business Project Evaluation Committee at the level of the Commission for Industrial Development has recently been set up to fast-track approval of projects; and finally, setting up of hotels with higher standards such as one or more five-star hotels to meet the need of a specific segment of the market and to allow visitors to have a wider variety of offer.

Regarding part (b) of the question Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning standards for tourism enterprises, I wish to inform the House that:

- A set of clear guidelines have been developed by my Commission which encompasses aspects such as service quality, environmental sustainability, safety and cultural sensitivity. The set of guidelines if is such desired, can be tabled if ever any member of the other side of the House request same.

The new set of guidelines have as objectives, to: -

- Improve the overall standards of our tourism enterprises.
- Meet the needs of the visitors and trends in the sector since tourism is very dynamic.
- To facilitate promoters in the phases of development and implementation of their projects.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, my policy with regard to the standards of tourism accommodation capacity is to establish a limit in the number of rooms per hotel with a

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threshold of up to a maximum of 100 rooms per hotel structure. The reason thereof is due to the sizing of the island; we cannot accommodate more than that number so as to remain in line with our policy of sustainable development.

Furthermore, the existing Rodrigues Regional Assembly Tourism Regulations which is dated back to 2007, does not reflect the actual landscape of the tourism industry which is a dynamic sector. My Commission is actually working on the review of the regulation to cater for the new standards and also new tourism activities.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, concerning the last part of the question, regarding the involvement of Rodrigues as regard to training and tourism business facilitation measures, I wish to inform the House that:

- Several trainings have been carried out in the tourism sector with a Foundation Course in Tourism for all the employees of the sector. Some 1,000 tourism employees have already followed the Foundation Course in Tourism.
- My Commission has come up with specialized courses in front office, management and accounting. 57 Tourism Operators have already followed the courses. There will be new batch of training which will be organised shortly.
- The Rodrigues Tourism Licensing Committee is having meetings on a regular basis to approve new licenses and there is no outstanding demand for new licenses at my Commission right now.
- The provision of a Plan d'accompagnement which will have as objective to: -
  - (i) Assess the Tourism Enterprises in operation in Rodrigues,
  - (ii) Propose a list of recommendations and come up with an Action Plan, and
  - (iii) Assist the Tourist Enterprise in implementing the recommendations.

We are also looking at: -

- The setting up of a 'Hotel d'application' for the training of employees of the tourism industry and the young people interested in entering the industry.
- Over and above all, the budget allocated to my Commission in this current Financial Year 2024/2025 for an amount of Rs57 M, together with the USD10 M from the World Bank will ensure the continuous training and the professionalization of the sector.



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Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to ensure the House that overall, my policy seeks to foster sustainable tourism development in Rodrigues that benefits and will benefit both visitors, the inclusion of local community as our policy is mainly focused on the ‘Patriotisme Economique’, while preserving the island’s natural beauty and cultural heritage.

Mr Chairperson Sir, I wish to reassure the house and the population at large that my Commission will leave no stone unturned to achieve our goals so as to enable the population at large to reap the social and economic benefits therefrom.

*Ansam nou avanse*

Thank you for your kind attention, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Ramdally:** M. le président, est-ce que je pourrais demander au Commissaire si au niveau de son bureau il y a eu des plaintes contre des établissements qui opèrent sans permis et même des bateliers qui transportent des touristes sur les différents îles autour de Rodrigues sans permis ?

**Mr Wong So:** M. le président, il y va dans tous pays qu’il y a des gens qui essayent de braconner. Ça il n’y a pas de doute. J’en doute pas. Si la question du *respected Member is asking whether there are people committing such act. I would say yes, then there will be people like the Police du Tourism who will act upon this.*

**Mr Lisette:** So far, Mr Chairperson, as ... I got to the reply of the Commissioner for Tourism, with the objective of keeping the quality of the service, has there been any contravention made whenever there has been flaws or violation of regulations as regards to standard of enterprises? How many of such complaints have been received?

**Mr Wong So:** A ce jour il n’y a pas eu de contravention en tant que tel mais il y a eu interdiction de deux entreprises qui n’ont pas été à la hauteur des *expectations concerning the Tourism Regulations. So, they have been suspended, they have been asked for the next six years to cater for and then if need be we will see for approval once again.*

**Dr. Agathe:** Alors, vous avez dit vous-même que le secteur touristique c’est un secteur très dynamique et on voit que le nombre de touristes qui visitent Rodrigues augmente. Et est-ce qu’on assure, vous êtes en mesure d’assurer qu’il y a ce maintien de qualité avec cette croissance rapide du secteur touristique. Avez-vous dans votre commission des mécanismes de suivi permettant à la fois évaluer les *feed back* des touristes puisqu’il y a des

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*feed back* qui sont négatifs aussi, permettant d'ajuster justement la régulation, permettant d'assurer la qualité ?

**Mr Wong So:** M. le président, permettez-moi de dire à la Chambre qu'aussi longtemps que je serais le Commissaire du Tourisme, le *mass tourism* ne va jamais *occur in Rodrigues*. Pour répondre au respecté Membre Agathe, quel est le mécanisme qu'on a à valeur du jour au sein de la commission pour savoir quel est le *threshold*? *There is something what we call the carrying capacity*. Le *carrying capacity*, pour le besoin de la Chambre je vais essayer d'expliquer, c'est-à-dire, on essaye de prendre le nombre de touriste qui arrive sur une année par rapport à leur séjour et par rapport à la capacité de chambre que nous avons, quel est la quantité de touriste qui passe sur une journée leur séjour dans l'île. L'étude a été démontré au sein de ma commission que le maximum qu'on a en décembre et chiffrer à 1,825 touristes en une journée. *So, meaning to say, Chairperson, Sir, that the carrying capacity limit is not attain for the time being so matters does not stand for the time being.*

**Dr. Agathe:** Un des facteurs de la dynamiques c'est qu'en ce moment il y a beaucoup de touriste qui viennent ici en faisant leurs réservations à travers les plateformes en lignes. Donc, quel moyen vous vous dotez afin de réguler ce genre de flux parce que dans beaucoup de pays ils ont fait des efforts afin de pouvoir réguler et justement parmi des logements qui fonctionnent sans permit.

**Mr Wong So:** M. le président, à l'heure où je vous parle concernant les plateformes des réservations en lignes nous n'avons aucun contrôle dessus pour la bonne et simple raison que ce sont des gens qui font des réservations *worldwide* et à n'importe quel moment et on ne peut rien. La seule chose que j'ai l'habitude de dire aux opérateurs de faire bien attention parce que valeur du jour les plateformes électroniques de réservations sont en train d'encaisser de l'argent au nom des opérateurs parce qu'ils perçoivent une taxation de 15% sur la prestation.

**Mr Lisette:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I refer back to part (b) of the question as regards to the standard of tourist enterprises. We very well know that there is a classification as regard to big hotels, three stars, four stars and whatsoever, but specifically for 'les chambres d'hôtes', 'les gîtes', there is no such classification as such and the standard may vary from one *gîte* to another but they have the same name. I would like to know from the Commissioner for Tourism, how does he agree with the introduction of a classification for these types of tourist enterprises?

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**Mr Wong So:** M. le président, concernant la classification des prestataires dans le secteur touristique, je veux dire la chambre d'hôte, valeur du jour moi en tant que commissaire je ne suis pas partant. Je vais me permettre d'expliquer à la Chambre pourquoi je ne suis pas partant. Pour la bonne et simple raison en ce qu'il s'agit des hôtels opérant à Maurice et à Rodrigues, on a des *guidelines* bien spécifier permettant à tout un chacun de se positionner. C'est par rapport à la grandeur des chambres, les faciliter qui sont offertes et éventuellement aussi par rapport à la localité, éventuellement à des services et des prestations en annexe. Ça concerne des hôtels. Mais vous savez très bien, j'ai mentionné, nous en avons 187 opérateurs touristiques à Rodrigues, on en a que sept hôtels. Donc, ce qui me fait dire à la Chambre que nous en avons 190 opérateurs qui sont des *family based*. Dans le sens que, je vais vous dire une chose en toute franchise, si on essaye de faire une classification il y en a au moins une cinquantaine sinon plus d'opérateurs qui n'auront pas de classification par rapport à leurs établissements. Donc, *I think it is not fair enough to all concerned*, que nous essayons valeur du jour en 2024 d'essayer d'avoir juste une classification pour faire plaisir à certain. Moi, je trouve que les gens sont en train de travailler comme il se doit dans le secteur respectif et que tout le monde se retrouve quelque part.

*(Interruptions)*

Voilà, c'est que permettant à la population de pouvoir assimiler. Bien sûr, M. le président, avec la compétition ceux et celles qui ne sont pas dans la ligner des classifications vont tout faire pour pouvoir se joindre justement à cette classification parce que *if not they will be asked to be strike off*.

**Mr Lisette:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do understand the point of the Commissioner for Tourism but yet we are dealing what I will term as the 'hen with the golden egg' today. Yes, and in fact, with the big competition that are happening worldwide, it is a must that we have to preserve our standard here. So, I am telling the Commissioner for **Health**, to classify with stars or whatever but with a specific local classification as regards to...

*(Interruptions)*

*Samem mo pa pe trouv li kom Commision for Health, la. Okay*

Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner for Tourism. He has mentioned about economic patriotism and one of the proposal or suggestion of the SIDPR is in fact to introduce the principle of equity participation for local. I would like to know how far his Commission is moving towards this social equity where, as per SIDPR, it is mentioned

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that for the implementation of Tourism Enterprise Rodrigues, there should be at least 15% of equity participation by local?

**Mr Wong So:** En voici le document, M. le président. Je pense que le respecté Membre Lisette a posé une question qui mérite largement d'être débattu aussi au niveau de cette Chambre. J'ai mentionné dans ma réponse, il y en a 197 établissements à Rodrigues parmi dedans il y a que sept hôtels qui peuvent capturer que 18 à 20% des arrivées touristiques de Rodrigues. Les 80 autres pourcent vont à l'ensemble des opérateurs, c'est-à-dire, les 190 *ti operater dan Rodrig*. I hope that you understand my point. If you are talking about equity meaning to say that this sector belongs to the Rodriguans.

*(Interruptions)*

*Zot pa le.* Do you mean you would like people coming from Mauritius to invest in this sector and then we leave the Rodriguan's population aside?

*(Interruptions)*

If you are talking about the quality – that I answered before the last question. *La qualité viendra avec la compétition. Toute un chacun va devoir ci mettre afin de s'améliorer pour pouvoir être dans le secteur.*

*(Interruptions)*

Of course, as the policy maker, I am agreeable to this proposition.

**Mr Lisette:** I think that the Commissioner did not get me right. I do understand that as at now there are as much or as many as you have mentioned with respect to the number of Rodriguans who are already involved in the process. But nevertheless, the SIDPR mentioned that for future projects...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, for future projects, it is there - Development Integration and Community Participation. It is there. So, this is where I am asking for future projects which are coming as regards to tourism, how far your Commission is going to engage itself in introducing that principle of equity participation for locals?

**Mr Wong So:** M. le président, je vois le respecté Membre est en train d'insister sur ce point-là. Je vais le dire à la Chambre. Il n'a jamais été question de négliger la population Rodriguais sur ce plan-là. On donnera tout le soutien nécessaire au Rodriguaise et au

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Rodriguais qui veulent investir. D'ailleurs, pour ceux et celles qui m'écoutent à la radio ou dans la presse, j'ai toujours lancé l'invitation à tous ceux et celles qui veulent investir – je parle des Rodriguaises et des Rodriguais qui veulent investir dans le secteur, c'est le moment propice parce qu'on a deux ans et deux ans et demi à pouvoir éventuellement. Parce que lorsque la nouvelle piste va démarrer en 2027 ou éventuellement 2028, c'est que nous allons devoir pourvoir à 150, 175 à 200 mil arriver touristique. Donc, ce qui me fait dire qu'il n'y a pas de souci à faire au sein de cette Chambre.

*(Interruptions)*

Voilà, on va terminer éventuellement en 2027, 2028. Ce qui me fait dire que bon, nous encourageons au niveau de ma commission de dire aux Rodriguaises et au Rodriguais de bien vouloir investir. Comme j'ai dit dans ma réponse, tous ceux et celles qui sont déjà dans l'opération de ce secteur de bien vouloir agrandir leur établissement. S'ils ont trois ou quatre chambres de bien pousser à cinq ou six. S'ils sont dix de devenir 12. C'est de permettre aux Rodriguaises et au Rodriguais d'en profiter parce que nous générons à la population plus de Rs 2 milliard de recette par an.

**Mr Lisette:** My point, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Sorry, because I will continue on the same line otherwise, I am going to miss the ... My point that I wanted to raise is whether you are going to make it binding or statutory for any future investment in the tourist sector to have at least the participation of 15% as a joint-venture for local? This is my question.

**Mr Wong So:** Tout dépend, M. le président. Moi je pense dans le *fair trading act*, on ne peut pas exiger à ce que les Rodriguais soient participant ou à la hauteur de certain montant. Il va de soi que les Rodriguais voyant ce secteur se développer doivent se porter eux-mêmes partie prenante pour améliorer le service et développer ce secteur. Et de là à dire que de mettre dans la loi qu'éventuellement n'importe quelle sorte d'investissement dans le secteur doit comporter un plafond ou un minimum de 15% c'est dérisoire. Moi je pense que c'est...

*(Interruptions)*

Non, je ne parle pas de Rod Farm. Je veux dire dans les prochains projets à venir...

*(Interruptions)*

Je peux vous dire, je connais, pas mal de projet qui sont dans nos collimateurs pour faire en sorte à ce que Rodrigues puisse développer ce secteur-là. J'ai l'habitude de dire à tout un

chacun dans cette Chambre, ne toucher à pas ce secteur, c'est un secteur qui est sensible mais qui néanmoins qui permet aux Rodriguaises et Rodriguais de générer des revenus à la hauteur de Rs2 milliard qui sont repartis dans les 18,000 familles. C'est famille-là, c'est ça nous ça. C'est Rodriguaises et Rodrigues. C'est pourquoi que je dis, je suis prêt à recevoir de vous les Membres de l'opposition des recommandations, ça il y a aucun doute. Mais néanmoins soyons conscient que ce secteur c'est un secteur qui est porteur pour nous les Rodriguaises et Rodriguais.

**Dr Agathe:** Alors, M. le président, oui, le secteur touristique de par sa croissance impacte sur la société Rodriguaise. Je pense que vous êtes d'accord avec ça. Donc, vous avez avancé l'idée tout à juste, ce qui fait la compétitive du secteur, c'est notre culture, notre capacité à garder un marquage culturel spécifique. Alors, étant donné l'action du secteur qui impacte sur la société rapidement, il est important de planifier comment vous êtes en train de planifier dans le domaine culturel et de manière générale pour permettre aux touristes Rodriguais de garder ces spécificités ?

**Mr Wong So:** M. le président, si vous permettez, je ne vais pas faire comme un ministre pour dire qu'on ne peut pas casser les omelettes sans faire les œufs. Donc, c'est vrai tous développements nécessite qu'il y a des impacts éventuellement sur l'environnement. Moi, je suis conscient en tant que commissaire du Tourisme, je suis le premier concerné, je suis le premier conscient qu'éventuellement lorsqu'on parle d'un développement économique planifier on laissera des plumes quelque part. On n'y peut rien. De là à quelqu'un de venir dire qu'on va essayer de garder l'environnement intacte dans sa plénitude, c'est du bla, bla, bla. La seule chose qu'on doit faire au niveau de la commissaire d'essayer de voir comment on peut *mitigate* ce risque. Mais je vous le dis en toute franchise, moi je suis dans l'incapacité de vous dire que je vais essayer quand même de faire en sorte qu'il n'y ai pas de dégât collatéral par rapport au développement économique. Si vous avez la chance, je vous donne rendez-vous en 2027 de vous porter candidat et de venir ici et d'être le commissaire du Tourisme. Mais moi je vous dis franchement si on fait le développement du secteur touristique...

*(Interruptions)*

La planification réside justement dans ce que... Mais vous n'avez pas écouté respecte Agathe. J'en ai liste des tonnes et des tonnes pour dire *what is my policy concerning the*

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*sustainable tourism*. Mais malheureusement, vous venez avec une question pour dire que bon...

*(Interruptions)*

Mais non, mais voilà c'est ça.

**Mr Ramdally:** M. le président, le commissaire dans sa réponse a mentionné la remise à neuf du Tourism Advisory Committee. Est-ce qu'il pourrait donner à la Chambre la composition de ce comité ?

**Mr Wong So:** Alors, M. le président, je l'honneur et le plaisir de vous dire que ce comité a été mis sur pied et il va être dirigé par mon Chef de département et il aura six membres composés essentiellement de dames qui vont siéger dans ce comité dont la première réunion est fixée pour jeudi.

*(Interruptions)*

If you want the name I can table it, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Mr Chairperson:** Next question.

**GRANT – INDUSTRIAL LAND LEASE – TOURISM DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECTS/FROM 2022 TO DATE**

**(No. B/73) Dr. H. AGATHE (First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the grant of industrial land lease for tourism development projects on state land, from 2022 to date, he will state to the House the:

- (a) number of applications therefor approved by his Commission to date and stage attained in the processing of each;
- (b) beneficiaries thereof as at date, indicating the location and extent of land concerned, and
- (c) eligibility criteria and procedure to be followed for the granting thereof?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like first referring to part (c) to inform the House about the new procedure to be followed for the granting of an industrial lease for a tourism project.

It follows the decision of the Executive Council taken on 30 September 2022 to review the administrative processes for the evaluation of commercial and industrial projects.

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Prior to the review, all industrial and commercial projects had to undergo a series of evaluation processes before being approved by the Executive Council. However, the process was found to be inefficient because all projects, regardless of sector and magnitude, had to go through the same assessment. This created bottlenecks, as projects that did not align with the government's vision and policy still had to undergo the entire evaluation process.

A new process was therefore introduced and adopted to fast-track application processing. This process involves seeking policy approval at the start, which means that only projects that are aligned with the current policies such as hotel development, restaurant, workshop, shops and supermarkets are advanced to the next stage. This approach reduces the number of projects to be evaluated in the subsequent stages and alleviates pressure on the system. Moreover, the Entrepreneurship Committee under the Commission responsible for Industrial Development and which is also responsible for the in-depth evaluation of projects, was restyled to the Business Project Evaluation Committee which is comprised of representatives of the following departments: Industrial Development, Environment, Public Health, Tourism and Agriculture.

The new process flow adopted implies the following stages:

### **Step 1: Application Stage**

- All applications for projects are submitted to Invest Rodrigues;
- The project will be screened based as per established checklist which includes promoter's profile and his financial capacity to implement the project;
- A file is opened for the project, and
- An acknowledgement letter is issued.

### **Step 2: Policy Clearance Stage**

- All applications for projects will be referred to the Executive Council through the Commissioner responsible for Industrial Development for policy clearance, and
- The promoter is informed of the stand of the Executive Council, accordingly.

### **Step 3: Technical Stage**



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- After approval by the Executive Council, the project is referred to the appropriate authorities such as Environment, Forestry Services and Public Health, Tourism and Agriculture for views and clearances depending on the nature of the project, and
- Upon receipt of technical views, the Business Project Evaluation Committee (BPEC) formerly the Entrepreneurship Committee will technically assess the project so as to ensure compliance with the existing laws and regulations.

**Step 4: Land Lease Stage**

- Upon recommendation of the BPEC, projects are referred to the Commission for State Lands for planning views and confirmation for potential sites for the project, and
- Recommendations are submitted by the Cadastral Services to the Departmental Head, Commission for State Lands for further consideration by the Chief Commissioner, who is responsible for the State Land.

**Step 5: Approval Stage**

- The Chief Commissioner may approve or for major project, request the projects to be referred to the to the Executive Council for further approval, and
- Once approval is obtained, the promoter is informed and lease procedures are initiated by the Cadastral Office.
- For major hotel projects the lease procedures imply: -
  - (i) issue of letter of reservation with specific conditions, and
  - (ii) when the condition is fulfilled, a letter of intent is issued.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (a), from September 2022 to date, 33 applications have been recommended to my Commission by the Business Project Evaluation Committee of the Commission for Industrial Development. The different stages reached in the processing of these recommended cases at the Cadastral Office are as follows:

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- Four applications have been approved and letter of intent have been issued. The Government Valuer have also already assessed the four sites.
- The remaining 29 cases are presently under planning consideration and site stage confirmation.

With regard to part (b) of the question, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the details of these four cases which have been approved by my Commission and for which a letter of intent has already been issued are as follows: -

- (i) Paradise Guest House represented by Mr N.R. - an extent of 422 m<sup>2</sup> of state land at Baladirou for tourist residence;
- (ii) Mr. G. L. - an extent of 3560 m<sup>2</sup> of state land at Rivière Banane for guest house/restaurant;
- (iii) Mrs M.J.F.H. - an extent of 110 m<sup>2</sup> of state land at Fond la Digue for Restaurant, and
- (iv) Grandcourt Resto Co Ltd represented by Mr J.G.G. - an extent of 600 m<sup>2</sup> of state land at Baie du Nord for restaurant and cold Storage.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards to part (c) of the question, the main eligibility criteria are as follows:-

- (i) The investment analysis;
- (ii) Proof of fund;
- (iii) Market research;
- (iv) Operational plan;
- (v) Sustainability;
- (vi) Community impact;
- (vii) Permit and licences;
- (viii) Alignment with tourism strategy (if ever), and
- (ix) Investor confidence.

Amongst others, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

The promoter or any of the company which has a shareholder which is a non-citizen of Mauritius, he must have certificate issued by the Prime Minister's Office under the "Non-Citizens (Property Restriction) Act". Thank you, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

**Dr Agathe:** M. le président, j'aimerais demandé au commissaire, j'ai bien écouté donc la procédure qui est mise en place. Pour l'instant il n'y a pas que quatre projets qui ont

été approuvé, vous avez dit. Donc, il me semble que c'est peu par rapport à ce qu'on aurait pu penser. Mais j'aimerais quand même demander en ce qui concerne la phase *policy*. Vous avez énuméré les critères. Les critères de *sustainability* me semblent très importants eu égard des objectifs du développement touristique élaborés tout-à-l'heure par le commissaire, à savoir, de maintenir la spécificité culturelle de Rodrigues, la durabilité en terme environnemental. Quels sont les critères principaux qui sont retenus, qui sont utilisés pour choisir les projets que vous permettez de poursuivre la procédure technique pour la phase technique ?

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, j'ai déjà mentionné dans ma réponse. Donc, il y a bien sûr des... c'est-à-dire, si quelqu'un dépose un projet donc pour poursuivre l'autre phase donc il y a aussi... il faut que ces projets-là vont dans la politique de ce gouvernement. Okay ? Donc, il y a aussi comme j'ai dit au niveau *policy*... Bien sûr les projets qui vont en ligne avec notre politique. C'est-à-dire, comme j'ai dit, notre politique est reflétée par les critères que j'ai déjà mentionnés concernant la somme par exemple à investir, le *proof of fund*, il faut que la personne puisse venir de l'avant aussi soumettre le *proof of fund* si jamais il y a un grand projet ou bien tel ou tel projet, c'est un peu normal, ou bien, possibilité aussi d'avoir de l'argent et *market research*. Il faut voir aussi quelles sont les tendances par rapport au produit que la personne veut investir, *operational plan*. Donc, tous ce qui est l'expérience de la personne dans tel ou tel domaine. Et, *Sustainability* bien sûr, tous ce qui est environnement, etc., etc., parce que ça nous mettons beaucoup d'emphasis là-dessus du côté d'environnement. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous sommes en train de prendre notre temps pour bien évaluer ces projets-là et *get everybody on board*, tous les différents partenaires, les différentes commissions pour pouvoir si on peut aller de l'avant avec un projet ou pas. Bien sûr l'impact sur la communauté concernant *job creation*, sur l'économie, etc. Et aussi, tous ce qui est permis et qui est aligné aussi avec le *tourism strategy*. Donc, *our goals*. Mon collègue a bien parlé, a si bien exposé tous ce qui est la politique de ce gouvernement concernant par exemple, le développement touristique à Rodrigues. Il y a d'autre secteur aussi, économique qu'on va développer. Mais tout ça si ça va en ligne avec notre politique. Il y a aussi le *investor confidence*, le ... de ces personnes, de ce qui vont venir investir dans le domaine. Donc, nous prenons tout ça en considération justement pour assurer un développement économique sûr et fiable et soutenu à Rodrigues.

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**Dr Agathe:** J'aimerais savoir quand même, c'est quand même un peu étonnant que le Conseil Exécutif n'a approuvé aucun projet d'hôtel jusqu'ici ? C'est bien ce que vous avez dit ?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Non, projet touristique, oui.

*(Interruptions)*

M. le président,...

*(Interruptions)*

Oui, c'est en cour, bien sûr. C'est en cour. Je peux même dire, M. le président, on a eu des projets où on a été, de par leur faute, ces gens, ces promoteurs ont été à la cour et on a eu des jugements où on était mis devant les fait accomplis. Par leur manque de procédure administratif ou bien de *policy*, je ne sais pas. Mais aujourd'hui, on se retrouve... C'est la raison pour laquelle on est en train de prendre notre temps, de bien voir tous les projets. Et, comme la si-bien dit mon collègue, on met l'emphasis sur les petites structures. Le touriste lorsqu'il vient à Rodrigues forcément ce touriste-là... et si vous allez voir les *trends* dans les grands hôtels, M. le président, vous n'allez voir que des locaux, c'est-à-dire, des gens natifs de Maurice. Pas forcément ceux qui viennent de Réunion, ceux qui viennent de France, l'Allemagne, etc., d'Europe. Ce sont des gens qui viennent chercher des produits spécifiques. Or ces produits-là c'est des petites structures qui peuvent offrir ces produits et ce service. Donc, nous sommes en train... Bien sûr, des grands hôtels, oui il y aura, mais on met l'emphasis sur les petites structures comme préconiser, comme mentionner dans tous les rapports et aussi c'est notre politique d'aller de l'avant avec ces petites structures.

**Dr Agathe:** En ce qui concerne les grands hôtels. Ma question était quand même assez claire. Vous n'avez pas mentionné que le Conseil Exécutif a approuvé, a donné son *approval* pour des projets d'hôtels. Mais j'aimerais demander, vous avez plusieurs applications. Par exemple, il y a plusieurs applications qui sont formulées pour des demandes de terre pour développer des hôtels. Ça passe à Invest qui évalue et puis, les projets arrivent au Conseil Exécutif. Vous vous allez prononcer, vous allez donner votre aval ou pas. Quelles sont les critères majeurs que vous utilisez afin de pouvoir discriminer ? Je parle bien des critères majeurs, on aimerait savoir au-delà de tous ces critères que vous allez détailler quelles sont les critères majeurs que vous retenez qui permet de qualifier un projet comme acceptable méritant d'obtenir des terres pour le...

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**The Chief Commissioner:** Okay. J'ai déjà mentionné les critères, une fois, deux fois, je vais faire une troisième fois. J'ai parlé de *investment analysis*, j'ai parlé de *proof of funds*. Si quelqu'un débarque demain, M. le président, pour être plus clair, il veut 25 arpents à Rodrigues. Pour faire quoi ? On a eu dans le passé. On a eu une personne qui voulait faire quelque chose à Plaine Mao. Et puis, on a posé la question. *What about your proof of fund?* Non, on va chercher les investisseurs après. Spéculation ! Non. Donc, *proof of fund* très important. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous sommes en train de bien voir. Des gros projets, il faut faire attention. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous misons... Je redis encore une fois sur les petites structures, les Rodriguais qui peuvent investir et aussi leur donner la chance. Parce que ce secteur-là, cette industrie-là ne doit pas être hors de la main des Rodriguais.

Premièrement, 80%...

(Interruptions)

85% de structure appartiennent et est au Rodriguais. Et c'est ça le développement soutenu. C'est ce qu'on préconise. Et puis, les terres de l'état, M. le président, les terres de l'état, forcément s'est limité. Si comme vous-là quelqu'un a demandé 400 arpents, vous vous imaginez, M. le président. Si ce projet de 400 arpents par exemple était passé ? 400 arpents ? *kot enan 400 arpents pou don quelqu'une, don dimun.* 400 arpents, M. le président. C'est ça, ça aussi c'est important. Là aussi là, là on doit aller répondre à la cour. On doit aller répondre à la cour. Et puis si quelqu'un vient nous dire par exemple, le ..., j'ai parlé de *market research*. Mais si quelqu'un vient nous dire – écoutez-moi je vais faire un hôtel à mil chambres. Ben, vous êtes, c'est un peu normal, des critères, c'est normal. Bon, j'ai parlé de *sustainability*, j'ai parlé de *community impact*, *job creation*. Combien de Rodriguais auront des emplois. Très important. Est-ce que par exemple, la personne il vient dans son *write up*, il dit ben, je vais emmener des Bangladais. Je vais emmener des Chinois pour travailler. Ben, non. Il faut protéger le Rodriguais. Donc, vous serez les premiers à venir devant pour faire des *lives*. Donc, c'est important. *Alignment also with the tourism strategy*. Mon collègue a si bien – je le répète encore une fois. Parce que je vois que c'est important de le redire. C'est très important qu'il faut que ce soit en ligne avec ce concept de touriste Créole, durable et écologique.

**Mr Lisette:** One last question, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I agree on the point that are being raised by the Chief Commissioner especially as regards to that proof of fund. This is where matter curse with time because you have a lot of investment of investors who want to have

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the most beautiful places in Rodrigues to invest. But many a time that we have observed, I am going to say since 2002 and up to date, they use our land for pledging and they never invest. This is the question, Mr Chairperson, Sir. As regards to what you have been saying, as regards to preservation, preserving our land in itself, you of course, at the very stage you request for a proof of fund but once that investor will have his lease in his hand, of course, he is going to the bank and request for pledge of right so that he can have additional fund to put in the investment. This is the question of precaution. How far do we agree, how much do we agree as regards to the proof of fund that he provides from the very beginning and the value of pledge of work that he made once he has his lease in his hand?

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, je comprends. I understand the point of the respected Member. But there is also the track report. This is very important the track report of the investor. There is also – how can we prevent someone from pledging the land? Have you been able to solve it in the past? Non.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, we are discussing.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, yes. Even the Cotton Bay, they had to pledge for thousands of millions to be able to complete the hotel itself. Okay? So yes, I do agree with you. But you must agree with us also that we are also concerned. You have to think...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, maybe you are right. But how can we prevent someone from pledging his land, Mr Chairperson, Sir. So, we are working on it, yes. We have been talking to the Legal Advisor and we will find the best solution.

**Mr Chairperson:** I think it is the right time to break for one hour.

*At 1.15 p.m., the sitting was suspended for one hour.*

*On resuming at 2.18 p.m. with the Chairperson in the Chair.*

**ITEM VOTE 31112815: FAMILY TRAINING CENTRE  
- 2023-2024 BUDGET SPEECH**

**(No. B/74) Ms M. N. Raffaut (Second Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Family Welfare and Others whether, in regard to Item Vote 31112.815:

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Family Training Centre announced in the 2023-2024 Budget Speech, she will, for the benefit of the House, give a breakdown of all projects carried out in connection thereto together with their respective cost?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, if you will allow me, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Since the Commissioner is not present, I will answer the question.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the vote item 31112.815: Family Training Centre under Sub Head 6-102 - Women's Affairs, Family Welfare and Child Development of my Commission is meant to cater for capital projects of the Commission.

I am informed that the following projects/expenses were catered under Item Vote: 31112.815: Family Training Centre for financial year 2023-2024:

- (i) Procurement of computers and other IT equipment for the Head Office for an amount of Rs642,560;
- (ii) Procurement of furniture and equipment and minor upgrading and improvement works at the Integrated Family Centre for an amount of Rs1,222,059;
- (iii) Refurbishment of the Women Centre at Malabar in view of its re-opening for an amount of Rs252,264;
- (iv) An amount of Rs542,159 has been spent in connection with upgrading works at Foyer Marie Madeleine de La Croix;
- (v) Rs118,000 for the construction of a stele in the context of the celebration of the International Day for the elimination of violence against women and girls and Rs32,600 for the purchase of furniture for the shelter for domestic violence;
- (vi) An amount of Rs27 M was reallocated under vote item 31112.815 - Family Training Centre of which Rs20 M being for the project Setting up of Technopark at Baladirou.

Thank you.

**Mr Baptiste:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the 'Discours Budget 2023-2024' on the same item vote, I understand that Rs30 M were earmarked. And there are three capital projects : *Demarage de la construction d'un marché pour les femmes entrepreneurs dans la région de*

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*Corail Petite Butte* and also *construction d'un centre du miel familial ainsi que le démarrage d'un vaste programme d'amélioration des infrastructures au niveau des aires de jeux*. Can we know where matter stands relating to these three projects which were announced in this budget and under this item vote? *Paragraphe 197*.

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, we have had a problem with the consultancy services, Mr Chairperson, Sir, all throughout the last financial year. As at state, we are looking for consultancy services to be outsourced at the level of the Commission so that we can really start the project.

**Mr Baptiste:** What about the project '*construction d'un centre de bien-être familial*'?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Tender for request for proposal for consultancy services for project was launched in 07 March 2024 but unfortunately, tender exercise had to be cancelled. Tender has been relaunched on 20 June 2024 with a closing date for submission of bids set on 19 July 2024.

**Mr Baptiste:** Quant est-il du démarrage d'un vaste projet d'amélioration des infrastructures au niveau des aires de jeux ? Can we know which *aires de jeux* have been improved and upgraded so far?

**The Chief Commissioner:** I do not have the exact location of the *aires de jeux*, Mr Chairperson, Sir, but it is being done with the collaboration of other Commissions such as the Commission for Public Infrastructure and also the Commission for Environment.

**Mr Baptiste:** May be the last project, '*Conversion de l'ancien restaurant de Mont Limon*'?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the proposed scope of works and cost estimates have already been submitted by the Commission for Public Infrastructure. Same have already been validated by the Commission for Women's Affairs and Others. Design and preparation of Draft Tender document are in progressed at the level of the Commission for Public Infrastructure.

**Mr Baptiste:** Can the Chief Commissioner inform the House, from the amount earmarked for the different projects under this item vote, how much had been spent for the projects specifically mentioned in the budget?

**The Chief Commissioner:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered to this question.



**GYNAECOLOGICAL SERVICES - RODRIGUES**

**(No. B/75) Ms M. N. Raffaut (Second Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to gynaecological services provided in Rodrigues, he will, for the benefit of the House, state and table the monthly number of:

- (a) caesareans sections performed indicating the number thereof made after normal working hours, and
- (b) infant mortality from January to May 2024, together with the causes thereof?

**Mr Volbert:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, since there is no specific time frame concerning part (a) of the question, I could have not answered same. However, as a matter of transparency, we compiled the data as from year 2021.

I am informed that for 2021 there was a total of 863 births of which 325 delivered by caesarean sections (LSCS). I am also informed that the number of caesareans sections performed after working hours for that particular year stands at 187.

For 2022, there were 830 births amongst which 317 caesarean sections. For that period, I am informed that the number of caesareans sections performed after working hours is 142.

For 2023, there were 757 deliveries among which 316 were by caesarean. Out of those, there are 140 which were performed after working hours.

I am further informed that there have been 406 deliveries from January 2024 to June 2024, out of which 244 by caesarean. The number of caesarean sections performed after normal working hours for the period of January to June 2024 is as follows:

- For the month of January, out of a total of 41; 17 have been performed after working hours;
- For the month of February, out of a total of 28; 4 have been performed after working hours;
- For the month of March, out of a total of 41; 9 have been performed after working hours;
- For the month of April, out of a total of 38; 13 have been performed after working hours;
- For the month of May, out of a total of 52; 18 have been performed after working hours;

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- For the month of June, out of a total of 44; 16 have been performed after working hours.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to highlight that a gynaecologist on tour of service in Rodrigues covers the whole island on a 24/7 basis. The gynaecologist is responsible to carry out daily ward rounds to see antenatal and postnatal patients, conduct ANC and gynaecology OPD in Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Marie Jacqueline Félicité Area Health Centre, Dr. Christopher Prudence Area Health Centre, complete one-full day session and a second half-day session for the operation lists per week and has to attend to any emergency cases as and when required at any time of the day. Therefore, his planning is tailored in such a way so as to ensure that he is able to cater for and attend to all the services under his/her purview. Furthermore, the gynaecologist remains the only one who has the ability to decide on the indications and timing of intervention to proceed for a caesarean section (CS) and/or any other relevant surgeries.

As regards to part (b) of the question, Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to the published National Statistic Digest for Rodrigues, the number of infant mortality for year 2021 was 12. The main causes being extreme prematurity and associated fatal outcomes.

The number of cases for years 2022 and 2023 being as follows:

For 2022 - 3, and

For 2023 - 7

As per information obtained from Records Unit, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, I wish to inform the House that the recorded number of infant mortalities from January to June 2024 and their corresponding causes has to be vetted by the Chief Records and statistics offices before publication; as is the case for any other statistical records done at the end of a year. Thank you.

**Mr Baptiste:** But according to the trends, is there any likely tendency of an increase for this period of 2024 to June>

**Mr Volbert:** For what?

**Mr Baptiste:** For infant mortality rate.

**Mr Volbert:** I do not have the answer so far.

**Mr Lisette:** I do not know if the Commissioner for Health is right. But it is quite astonishing if he is right that just for January to June, we have had 244 caesareans out of 106,

which represents almost more than 50% of births which have occurred from January which is quite abnormal when we compared it as regards to the other years. Does he think as Commissioner that there is cause for concern as regards to that?

**Mr Volbert:** Comme j'ai bien dit dans ma réponse, le/la gynécologue est la seule personne qui décide s'il/elle devrait faire la césarienne. Donc, je ne suis pas habilité à commenter sur la décision que doit prendre un gynécologue par rapport parce que c'est lui/elle qui suit la patiente. Donc, je ne peux pas répondre à cette question.

**Mr Baptiste:** Yes, but if the trend is not according to the normal range, is the Commissioner ready to enquire to see whether there are specific cases of specific gynae who comes and where there is this increased in trend? Because we know they are on a tour of service as you have said. At times, we know that maybe it depends obviously on the specialist but is the Commissioner, will he carry out an enquiry to see and find out what are the possible causes?

**Mr Volbert:** De toute façon le Membre a dit '*if*', c'est-à-dire, il parle hypothétique. Donc, je vais essayer de répondre. Mais comme j'ai bien dit, je ne peux pas demander, qui suis-je pour aller demander une enquête sur un professionnel mais on peut faire une enquête départementale. Je vais demander à faire une enquête départementale mais je ne pense pas que c'est *in order* quand même.

**Mr Lisette:** Another question, just to get things clear. Are there additional fees which is paid to any practitioner when caesarean is done outside normal working hours?

**Mr Volbert:** M. le président, comme j'avais dit tout-à-l'heure, le nombre de césarienne pratiquer par les gynécologues *after normal hours* est relativement plus bas que le nombre de césarienne pratiquer pendant le *normal working hours*. Ça vous devez être clair là-dedans, M. le respecté Membre Lisette. Et de l'autre côté, je pense que oui, il y a un *fee* que perçoit le gynécologue. Je ne sais pas le montant mais il y a un *fee* par rapport au nombre de césarienne que pratique ces gynécologues. Donc, comme je vous ai dit, il est le seul à décider ce qu'il doit faire parce que *he is the only one*. C'est pour ça, comme j'ai dit dans ma réponse tout-à-l'heure, '*he is responsible to carry out daily ward rounds, antenatal etc., et aussi he remains the only one who have the ability to decide on the indications and timing of intervention to proceed for a caesarean section or any surgery.*

**Mr Lisette:** I do agree with the clinical stand point of the Commissioner yet; you will agree with me with the answer that you have given that there is possibility of an abuse

especially if there are extra remuneration which is done after normal working hours. Is there that possibility? You are not saying that there is but the fact that there is extra remuneration, there is a point of concern that there could be an abuse as regards to this. Because in the public opinion, it is stated, it is heard that sometimes the time of delivery is almost, I should say, delivery is at the point, that it is reported after working. So, this is the question that we are putting in front of the Commissioner, whether as a responsible Commissioner he wants to intervene, to show concern that this could jeopardise the health of our mothers even the child who is to come to life.

**Mr Volbert:** M. le président, cela fait la troisième que je réponds à ça. Il y a le gynécologue est seul, il y a un seul gynécologue à Rodrigues et il doit *tailor his time* par rapport, il doit aller faire des cliniques à Mont Lubin, à La Ferme et il y a aussi des *emergencies* pendant la journée. Donc, je ne vois pas comment et pourquoi le respecté Membre vient ici pour dire qu'il y a des abus, etc. Moi, je ne peux pas répondre ça, je n'ai jamais été gynécologue, je n'ai jamais été gynécologue, je ne peux pas répondre ça. Donc, si vous avez des informations, vous écrivez, vous faites votre plainte et non pas servir de cette Assemblée pour faire des allégations contre des professionnelles.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Ramdally:** M. le président, est-ce que je pourrais demander au commissaire si une patiente peut refuser de faire une césarienne ?

**Mr Volbert:** Je n'ai jamais été patiente. Allez demander à la patiente.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Miss Roussety?

#### **DOMICILIARY MEDICAL VISITS – ELDERLY & DISABLED**

(No. B/76) **Ms K. Roussety (Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres)** asked the Commissioner for Social Security and Others whether, in regard to the domiciliary medical visits for elderly and disabled, he will inform the House:

- (a) of the number of persons benefitting therefrom;
- (b) of the number of doctors engaged in the exercise, and
- (c) if he is aware that some elderly persons are being deprived thereof since several months?

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**Mr Volbert:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, regarding part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that as at 30 June 2024, 1,340 persons are benefitting domiciliary medical visits meant for elderly and disabled.

As regards to part (b) of the question, the House is informed that the number of doctors engaged in the exercise as at 30 June 2024 is 17.

Regarding part (c), I am not aware of any complaint received from any elderly persons who is being deprived of any domiciliary visit. Thank you.

**Ms. Roussety:** Après avoir lu le rapport de l’Audit, on a tous vu qu’il y a des docteurs qui reçoivent leurs dues mais que les patients n’ont pas été visité. Est-ce que le commissaire est au courant de ça ?

**Mr Volbert:** D’après le rapport de l’Audit, oui on a mené une enquête mais jusqu’à maintenant je n’ai pas eu *findings* pour savoir si c’est vrai ou faux mais je ne peux pas commenter là-dessus.

**Mr Baptiste:** I do not know if the Commissioner have tried to find out the answers from concerned officers that I know at least two persons have made complaints through the Commission to inform that their wards have not received the visit of domiciliary Medical Officers for at least two or three months. So, I would ask the Commissioner if he is not aware to go and find out, it seems that there is a problem but at least two persons have made the complaint at the level of his Commission. Will he look into the matter?

**Mr Volbert:** If it avers true, okay, we will see. Can you give me more details, if you have information you send me the information for... *Je vois que vous êtes mieux informer que moi, M. Baptiste?*

*(Interruptions)*

**Ms. Roussety:** M. le président, je voudrais savoir, M. le commissaire de la Santé si une personne qui est au Respite Centre à l’Union, est-ce que le docteur traitant doit aller le voir là-bas ou il y a un docteur qui est attaché au Respite Centre ?

**Mr Volbert:** Il y a le docteur traitant, je pense qui va là-bas. Mais s’il n’y a pas, je vais demander.

**Mr Lisette:** ...in the sense that the Commissioner is not aware but in the Audit Report itself, it is stated: A complaint register was introduced in medical unit in April 2023. Two complaints were made by relatives of two beneficiaries on 07 July 2023 and 11 July

2023. And, it was alleged that no monthly domiciliary visits have been effect by two visiting Medical Health Officers/Senior Medical Health Officers for three consecutive months and he is telling us in this House though there is an official report that he is not aware of such complaint?

**Mr Volbert:** Premièrement, M. le président, la question n'a jamais été mentionné de quelle date à quelle date, c'était vague. Donc, pour moi, je croyais que c'était 2024 parce que 2023 c'est déjà derrière nous. Vous auriez dû mentionner de quelle date à ce moment-là, j'aurais allé chercher la réponse.

**Mr Baptiste:** Anyway, the two complaints I mentioned was in June 2024, you have to go and find out. And, according to one person who made the complaint to me and I asked him to call to the office. It seems that the answer was from the Medical Officer that they are no longer going because of non-payment of his monthly fees. I do not know, is it true that some medical practitioners are not being paid their monthly allowances on time relating to this?

**Mr Volbert:** J'aurais aimé répondre la question à deux volets. La personne vous a contacté mais s'il vous plaît, M. Baptiste dites à la personne que vous n'êtes plus le commissaire de la Sécurité Sociale. Et deuxièmement,...

*(Interruptions)*

Et deuxièmement, laissez-moi parler. Vous avez parlé, j'ai écouté. Et la deuxième partie de la réponse. La deuxième partie de la réponse...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Mr Baptiste if you want to answer the question yourself, you asked the question, you want to answer it. Allow the Commissioner to answer the question, please.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Volbert:** Yes, I will try to answer to the second part of the supplementary question. M. Baptiste a dit, si je suis au courant qu'il y a des docteurs qui n'ont pas été payés pendant un certain temps. Je ne vais pas dire non ni affirmer ni confirmer aussi par rapport à ça, ni démentir aussi. Mais je vais essayer de mener l'enquête pour savoir. Je ne sais pas s'il y a des docteurs qui n'ont pas été payés. Je pense que si c'est oui, ils vont avoir leurs dues ce mois-ci ou le mois prochain, je ne sais pas parce qu'il y avait, comme tout le monde le sait, un problème de liquidité. Et si jamais, il y a ce problème, on va essayer de le résoudre.

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**Mr Lisette:** I do understand that there is an enquiry going on as regards to the visits not made but where stipends or allowances were requested. In view of this, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to know from the Commissioner for Health, what mechanism has been set up at the level of his Commission to ensure that no such abuse is made in the future?

**Mr Volbert:** Comme j'ai dit dans ma réponse, on est en train de faire une enquête et à la lumière de l'enquête on va prendre des décisions.

*(Interruptions)*

A la lumière de l'enquête on va prendre des décisions par rapport à...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Chairperson:** Time is over.

**GRAND FORMULA – PRIVATE SECONDARY EDUCATION  
AUTHORITY/GRANT-AIDED COLLEGES/RODRIGUES**

**(No. B/80) Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K. (Minority Leader)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner Whether, in regard to the comprehensive grant formula established by the Private Secondary Education Authority in favour of grant-aided colleges in Rodrigues, he will obtain information to state and table on:

- (a) the amount of money claimed and obtained by the different colleges under the respective grant elements for the years 2023 and 2024;
- (b) the difficulties faced by the colleges with respect to the comprehensive grant formula 2024-2026;
- (c) if all colleges in Rodrigues are complying with the current requirements thereof, and
- (d) any action taken by his Commission in connection thereto?

*(Withdrawn)*

**RECENT RECRUITMENT – TRAINEE PRISONS OFFICERS**

**(No. B/82) Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K. (Minority Leader)** asked the Commissioner for Prisons and Reforms Institutions and Others whether, in regard to the recent recruitment of Trainee Prisons Officers, he will provide information to the House on if

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there is a training period prior to their substantive appointment as Prisons Officers and, in the affirmative, to outline the details thereof?

*(Withdrawn)*

**BUDGET SPEECH 2023-2024 - “RÉUSSIR L'ÈRE NUMÉRIQUE : LE SECTEUR DES TECHNOLOGIES DE L'INFORMATION ET DE LA COMMUNICATION (TIC)”/PRINCIPLE MEASURES – ACTION PLAN**

**(No. B/90) Mrs R.M.F. Gaspard Pierre Louis, C.S.K. (Minority Leader)** asked the Commissioner for Information Technology and Telecommunications and Others whether in line with the Budget Speech 2023-2024, under the chapter “Réussir l'ère Numérique: le Secteur des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (TIC)”, he will outline the principle measures of the action plan for the sector?

*(Withdrawn)*

**SPORTS IN RODRIGUES – POLICIES & ACTIVITES/PROMOTION OF SWIMMING**

**(No. B/91) Mr J. P. Spéville (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Youth & Sports and Others whether, in regard 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 swimming?

*(Withdrawn)*

**UNAVAILABILITY – CT SCAN/QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL**

**(No. B/93) Ms K. Roussety (Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the unavailability of CT Scan services at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) since when these services are not available and the reasons thereof;
- (b) if any breakdown occurred and, in the affirmative, to give details, and
- (c) if any enquiry has been carried out in relation thereto giving the outcome thereof, if any?

*(Withdrawn)*



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**REGISTRATION/DAY-CARE CENTRE – TRAINING OF CAREGIVERS**

(No. B/95) Ms M. N. Raffaut (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Women's Affairs and Others whether, in regard to the registration of day-care centre and the training of caregivers, she will inform the House where matters stand and to table the number of:

- (a) applicants;
- (b) day-care centres already registered;
- (c) pending applications and reasons thereof, and
- (d) new applications?

*(Withdrawn)*

**PROJECT – 'TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT'**

(No. B/96) Mrs M.A.L. Allas (Fifth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Fisheries and Others whether, in regard to the project 'Technical Assistance on Fisheries Management' provided through Food and Agriculture Organisation's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), he will:

- (a) give details on the impact and outcome thereof, and
- (b) inform the House on activities to be organised for achieving the different outputs?

*(Withdrawn)*

**STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONERS**

**SENSITIZATION CAMPAIGN/NON-COMMUNICABLE & SEXUALLY  
TRANSMITTED DISEASES/10 AUGUST 2024**

**The Commissioner for Health and Others (Mr Volbert):** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the House about the organisation of a mega sensitization screening and vocational day which will be held on 10 August 2024 from 09.00 hours up to 16.00 hours at Mourouk public beach involving the participation of several stakeholders in collaboration with the Commission for Women and the Commission for Youth and Sports. The activity is controlled by the UNFPA.

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This mega activity will be a first of its kind in Rodrigues where several services will be provided on the same day. The aims of this activity are listed below:

- (i) To sensitize people on the importance of a healthy lifestyle choices in order to prevent diseases by the NCD Promotion Unit;
- (ii) To raise awareness about living a society where there is no equality and discrimination especially against people living with disabilities by the Disability Unit/Empowerment Unit;
- (iii) To sensitize the people on the risk of sexually transmissible diseases by the Rodrigues AIDS Unit;
- (iv) To raise awareness on elderly abuse and services available to protect the elderly in Rodrigues by the Mauritius Police Force;
- (v) To promote the importance of exercises for a healthy mind and body, followed by a Zumba demonstration by Mr Moreno Spéville.

During the day, different recreational activities will be organised and categorised for everyone according to the AID group and their mobility. All participants will be provided with a lunch pack consisting of a sandwich, a bottle of water and a juice. Transport facilities will also be provided to participants from their residence to Mourouk and back. An organising committee has been set up comprising of all the involved stakeholders to facilitate the smooth running of all activities. On that day, several stalls will be installed at different places to better counselled, sensitised the different groups and also to carry out screening sessions for both communicable and non-communicable diseases during the day. There will also be counselling by Police officers from the Anti-Drugs Smuggling Unit (ADSU) on the impact and dangers of drugs and other substances abuse. Thank you.

## **OBITUARY**

**The Chief Commissioner:** M. le président, permettez-moi, nous avons appris le départ prématuré de la Minority Leader de la Chambre aujourd'hui et, nous avons aussi appris que c'est dû au décès de son grand-père, M. André Casimir, centenaire, qui plus est, que je connais personnellement. J'ai rendu visite la dernière fois. Donc, nous tenons à présenter nos plus vives sympathies à la Minority Leader et sa famille bien sûr, le départ de leur grand-père, oncle ou bien famille proche. Merci.

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**Mr Lisette:** I do associate with the Chief Commissioner also to show, our sympathises to the Minority Leader and her family and, of course, view the fact that we are losing one centenarians, I think that we are at the same time losing a library for Rodrigues. Thank you very much.

**Mr Chairperson:** I associate myself to Members on both sides of the House to convey our sincere condolences to the family of the Minority Leader.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**The Chief Commissioner:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that the House be now adjourned to Tuesday 03 September 2024 at 10.30 a.m.

*The Commissioner for Health and Others, rose and seconded.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**PUMPING STATIONS - MOUROUK & RIVIERE COCO**

**(No. B/77) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the pumping stations at Mourouk and Rivière Coco, he will inform the House as to:

- (a) the actual pumping capacity of each station per day, and
- (b) if there is any pump which is not operational at each respective station, and if yes,
  - (i) since when;
  - (ii) if any tenders were launched for the replacement thereof and, if so, to state the number of bidders together with their respective bids value, the name of the successful bidder and the conditions attached to the awarded contract, if any?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a), Mourouk Pumping station has two pumps operational. One pump has a pumping capacity of 58 m<sup>3</sup> per hour whereas the other has a capacity of 22-60 m<sup>3</sup> per hour. One additional pump has already been procured to be installed so that three pumps will operate alternately, thereby maximising their useful economic lives. The two pumps are actually pumping 900m<sup>3</sup> per day due to a decrease in

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surface water. Water production and transfer are not affected by non-installation of the additional pump and will not be affected even after installation of the new pump since the three will operate alternately. (two pumping, one stand-by).

As regards Rivière Coco pumping station, there are two water pumps in operation. Each has a pumping capacity of 45 m<sup>3</sup> per hour. The volume of water pumped depend on the number of hours of pumping and the volume of water produced. 600–700 m<sup>3</sup> is being transferred every day to Papayes Reservoir and Rivière Coco main Reservoir.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (b) and (b) (i), as regards Mourouk pumping station, both pumps are functioning. The additional pump will enable to have three pumps working alternately to maximise their useful lives.

For Rivière Coco pumping station, there were two pumps, at time of taking over by RPUC last year. One of these pumps was on breakdown and has been repaired last year. The two pumps are currently working alternately at Rivière Coco pumping station. The RPUC will proceed with the installation of the second new pump of capacity 15-66 m<sup>3</sup> per hour to have three working alternately. It is expected that the volume of water transferred to Papaye reservoir will increase depending on the volume received from Anse Raffin pumping station.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, (b) (ii), the supplier of the water pumps was proceeding with its installation at Mourouk during early 2023. It was noted that there was a need to replace the manifold and other accessories since they would not be able to sustain the water pressure.

Accordingly, tenders were launched on 14 June 2023 for the replacement of pumping station manifold complete with main gate/valve, surge tank, outlet of reservoir to pump, flowmeters, fitting and accessories and minor civil works. The closing date for the submission of bids was 17 July 2023. 19 potential suppliers were invited to submit their bids through e-procurement platform. Two bids were received as follows:

- Bluezone Ltd: Rs6,598,000 Excl VAT
- Chemco Ltd: Rs3,800,000 Excl VAT

Following evaluation by a technical committee, the contract was awarded lowest evaluated substantially responsive bidder, namely Chemco Ltd on 20 November 2023.

The conditions attached to the contract are as follows:

- (a) Performance Security in the form of Bank Guarantee representing 10% of the contract price.

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- (b) Insurance policy and programme of works within seven days of award.
- (c) Retention money 10% of the final contract value.
- (d) Liquidated Damages of 0.2% of the contract price per day up to a maximum of 5% of the contract value.
- (e) The letter of award and the invitation for bid shall constitute a binding agreement between the supplier and the public body.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, there have been major delays in the execution of the works due to piracy at sea and difficulties in obtaining shipment of critical parts. The supplier has now indicated that it will begin intervention on 10 August 2024, to be completed within five weeks. The company has been requested to submit new Performance Security and Insurance policy, prior to proceeding with the works since the initial one have expired.

**ENFORCEMENT – RRA (PROHIBITION OF USE OF PLASTIC BAGS)  
REGULATIONS 2014**

**(No. B/78) Mr J. R. Ramdally (First Local Region Member for Saint Gabriel)** asked the Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the enforcement of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2014, he will, for the benefit of the House, state the:

- (a) number of contraventions issued since January 2022 to date;
- (b) number of applications made for exemption therefrom highlighting the local products concerned, and
- (c) validity period of any exemption granted thereunder?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that, from January 2022 to date, five contraventions have been established under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Prohibition of Use of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2014.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Regulation provides that *any person, may for the purpose of packing local products, apply to the Departmental Head for an authorization to use or import an approved pocket-type plastic bag*. In that respect, my Commission has received nine applications for exemption to use plastic bags as follows: -

- Four applications for packaging of seafood;
- Two applications for pastry and bakery;

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- One application for local foodstuffs;
- One application for ‘picsidou’, and
- One application for packaging of saffron.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the House that since the tenure of office of this present government, no exemption certificate has been issued to any applicant for the use of plastic bags in Rodrigues. Furthermore, it has been noticed that the application form for exemption does not mentioned any given period of time for importation of plastic bags. My Commission is reviewing the application form to cater for this loophole for proper monitoring.

**RODRIGUES COMMITTEE FOR ELDERLY**

**(No. B/79) Mr L. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member for Grande Montagne)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the Rodrigues Committee for the Elderly, he will, for the benefit of the House state:

- (a) the current composition thereof, indicating in each case the date of appointment for the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Members together with their respective capacity;
- (b) the fees/allowances payable thereto and other benefits drawn, and
- (c) table a list of fees/allowances payable to different members thereof to date?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Protection of the Elderly Persons Act 2005 makes the provision for the setting up of a Rodrigues Committee for the Elderly which shall provide an administrative framework for the protection and assistance to the elderly persons.

As regards to part (a) of the question, the House is informed that as per Act No. 16 of 2005 proclaimed on the 1 September 2006, the composition of the said Committee is to be chaired by the Commissioner responsible for senior citizens and the Vice-Chairperson being the Departmental Head of the Commission responsible for senior citizens. The Act further makes mention of the members to form part of said Committee. I wish to inform the House that the members of the Committee have been appointed in December 2022.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, for part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House, as per Section (6) and Subsection (j) of the Act 16 of 2005 of the Protection of the Elderly Persons Act 2005 that Every member shall be paid such allowance as the Chief Commissioner for

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Rodrigues may determine. Consequently, the quantum of fees and allowances to be paid to the Chairperson, Members and Secretary of the Rodrigues Committee for the Elderly have been approved on 12 December 2022.

As regards to part (c), I am tabling a list of fees payable to different members of the committee

**EXTENSION/ELECTRICITY NETWORK – MORCELLEMENTS/MTE CABRIS  
EST/MONTAGNE LONGUE & MOUROUK**

**(No. B/81) Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether his Commission has received any request for the extension of electricity network in the '*morcellements*' of Mte Cabris Est/Montagne Longue and Mourouk following new constructions and, if so, when, indicating if the Central Electricity Board (CEB) has been requested to carry out a survey as to the works implied and, if in the affirmative to state:

- (a) the cost implications, and
- (b) when works are expected to start?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a), I am informed that a survey has already been carried out by the Central Electricity Board for the extension of electricity networks in the '*morcellements*' of Mt Cabris Est (Plateau Fatac Parcelling) and Mourouk and their cost implications for the payment of a non-refundable capital contribution inclusive of processing fees of Rs2,000 per plot are:

- (i) Rs2,044,064 for the Extension of CEB Network to supply Morecellement at Mourouk (94 plots), and
- (ii) Rs1,409,053 for Extension of CEB Network to Supply Montagne Cabris Est (Plateau Fatac Parcelling) (38 plots).

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (b) I am informed by the Central Electricity Board (CEB) that the claims are valid for a period of three months only. Therefore, a revision fee of Rs3,000 is applicable for each claim. The works shall start after receipt of the revised amount claimed for each Morcellement and depending on number of projects already at implementation stage. After receipt of payment, the CEB will provide an implementation schedule for both sites.

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I am further informed that necessary actions have already been initiated at level of my Commission for payment of the above claims due to the CEB. Unfortunately, payment could not be effected during the last financial year due to financial constraints. Upon payment in due course, the CEB will be requested to start the works accordingly for the benefit of the two communities.

**NEW HAEMODIALYSIS UNIT – QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL**

**(No. B/83) Mr J. R. Ramdally (First Local Region Member for Saint Gabriel)** asked the Commissioner for Health and Others whether, in regard to the New Haemodialysis Unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, he will inform the House on the:

- (a) total number of patients benefitting therefrom, the number of sessions per day together with the number of patients per session;
- (b) total number of machines thereat specifying the number which are in good working condition together with the required number of sessions per patient per week, and
- (c) facilities provided to those patients attending the different sessions?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the number of patients benefitting from the new Haemodialysis Unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital is 49, there are three sessions per day, the number of patients per session is ten for the first and second session. An average of four patients for third session depending on number of visiting patients from Mauritius.

As regards to part (b), I am informed that there are 16 Haemodialysis machines, 12 of which are in good working conditions, where one is reserved for patients with transmissible diseases and four are out of order. The required number of sessions per patient per week is three.

For part (c.) of the question, I am informed that the facilities provided to patients attending the different sessions are as follows:

- Transport facilities from and to the place of residence, tea and bread during each haemodialysis session, lunch for first session patients, medical review in the Haemodialysis Unit instead of queuing in Medical Out Patient Department and Nephrologist visit intra-dialysis every three months.

**COMMITTEES & BOARDS – COMMISSION FOR YOUTH AND SPORTS & ORS**



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**(No. B/84) Mr J. P. Spéville (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Commissioner for Youth & Sports and Others whether, in regard to the committees and boards set up by his Commission, he will state and table:

- (a) the list of the different committees together with the composition of each one thereof, respectively, and
- (b) details of their responsibilities and remuneration rate?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, since my taking of office in March 2022, after having taken stock of the areas under my responsibility and its related tasks and expectation, I have decided with the approval of my Colleagues of the Executive Council to set up or revamp several boards and committees under my Commission's aegis. These boards and committees provide a valuable helping hand and support in achieving this regional government's policies.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the committees and boards are mainly under the Arts and Culture and Sports sectors respectively.

With respect to the Sports sector, three committees/boards are operational namely: -

- (i) High Level Sports Committee dealing mainly with the close follow up and monitoring of beneficiaries of the Regional Athlete Support Scheme amongst others.
- (ii) Organising Committee for 'Jeux de Rodrigues 2024', and
- (iii) The Rodrigues Sports Company Ltd.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with respect to the Arts and Culture sector, four different committees provide assistance and support to the sector at various levels. The committees are namely: -

- 1) Museum Acquisition Steering Committee in connection with the setting up of the Museum at Baie Lascar;
- 2) Akademi Kreol Rodrigues;
- 3) Conseil Culturel de Rodrigues, and
- 4) The Artist Assistance Scheme Committee.

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The list of the different Committees with the composition, details of their responsibilities and remuneration rate is being tabled.

**LABOUR & INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ISSUES – JANUARY 2024 TO DATE**

(No. B/85) **Mr L. D. Baptiste** (Second Local Region Member for **Grande Montagne**) asked the Commissioner for Labour and Industrial Relations and Others, whether, in regard to the labour and industrial relations issues, from January 2024 to date, he will state on the:

- (a) total number of complaints registered at the Labour Office, the nature thereof, and the total number of employers and workers concerned;
- (b) monthly breakdown of the number of workers who have been laid off or had their contract of employment terminated, and
- (c) number of workers laid off/contract terminated per sector or trade?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, further to the first part of the question, I wish to inform the House that some 368 complaints from 368 workers have been registered at the Labour and Industrial Relations Office, involving some 243 employers for the period January 2024 to date.

I will now enumerate on the nature of the complaints registered along with the respective number of workers and employers concerned thereto as follows: -

<b>Nature of Complaint</b>	<b>No. of complaints registered</b>	<b>No. of Workers</b>	<b>No. of Employers</b>
Termination of Employment	86	86	68
End of Contract	79	79	42
Non-payment of Wages	144	144	94
Reduced Payment of Wages	22	22	22
Gratuity on Retirement	4	4	4
Violence at Work	2	2	2
Miscellaneous	31	31	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>243</b>

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However, concerning the monthly breakdown of the number of workers who have been laid off and/or have had their contract of employment terminated, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have been informed that a total of 165 workers have been laid off for period January to June 2024, comprising some 86 workers for termination of employment and 79 workers for termination of their contract, respectively. They are as follows: -

<b>Month/Year</b>	<b>Termination of Employment</b>	<b>End of Contract</b>	<b>No. of workers</b>
January 2024	18	24	42
February 2024	14	7	21
March 2024	22	6	28
April 2024	12	22	34
May 2024	10	5	15
June 2024	10	15	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>165</b>

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (c) of the question, I have been informed that a total of 165 workers have been laid off or their contract have been terminated per their respective sector, industry or trade for the period January to June 2024 as follows:

<b>Industry (Remuneration Regulations)</b>	<b>Termination of Employment/End of Contract</b>	<b>No. of Workers</b>
Block making, Construction and others	77	77
Catering & tourism	16	16
Cleaning Enterprises	7	7
Distributive Trades	21	21
Domestic workers	4	4
Information Communication Technologies	7	7

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<b>Industry (Remuneration Regulations)</b>	<b>Termination of Employment/End of Contract</b>	<b>No. of Workers</b>
Private security Services	2	2
Public Transport	9	9
Workers' Rights Act	9	9
Others	13	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>165</b>

Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for your kind attention.

**FIRE STATION – MON PLAISIR**

(No. B/86) Ms K. Roussety (Second Local Region Member of Baie Aux Huîtres) asked the Commissioner for Fire Services and Others whether, in regard to the Fire Station at Mon Plaisir, he will, for the benefit of the House, state:

- (a) if the station is fully operational and, in the affirmative, since when, and
- (b) the composition of personnel working therein?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Fire Station at Mon Plaisir is operational since 30 August 2022 for all administrative purposes.

I am informed that for the Fire Station to be fully operational there should have 2 units in operation, that is:

- 1) Fire safety Division
- 2) Fire Operation, Rescue and Accident

As at date, the only operational units at the Fire Station of Mon Plaisir are the Fire Safety Division and the Registry and Administrative Section.

Regarding part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that the composition of the personnel working therein is:

- (i) The Acting Officer in Charge;
- (ii) One Senior Station Fire Officer;
- (iii) Two Station Fire Officers;
- (iv) Four Sub Fire Officers;

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- (v) Four Fire Fighters, and
- (vi) One General Worker.

**ROAD FROM PETITE BUTTE TO POINTE VINGT TOURS**

(No. B/87) **Mr J. P. Spéville (Fourth Island Region Member)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the road from Petite Butte to Pointe Vingt Tours he has been made aware of the bad state thereof and the measures he envisages to take therefor and the time frame set, if any?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that the road from Petite Butte to Pointe Vingt Tours is of length 1.7 km and average width 6 m.

The first 40 m stretch of road at Petite Butte has recently been upgraded with asphaltic concrete and the other section of the road is untarred. The structure is predominantly made of Coral and the access road is in a bad state.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in view of the bad state of the access road, the possibility of upgrading same in due course shall be explored. This has to be done in a way to maintain the authenticity of the region. *Il ne faut pas défigurer cette région M. le président. Donc, il faut bien réfléchir avant de procéder.*

In the short to medium term, my Commission will give consideration to the levelling of the access road as was done in 2022 so as to facilitate access by people and vehicles, particularly for the transport of school children.

**RESURFACING – ROAD AT PETIT GABRIEL**

(No. B/88) **Mr N. Lisette (First Local Region Member for Baie aux Huitres)** asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the resurfacing carried out on the road at Petit Gabriel, he will state:

- (a) the value of the contract awarded;
- (b) when same was completed;
- (c) the specifications with respect to asphalt and bituminous wearing course content as tendered to the contractor, and
- (d) if his Commission has carried out any investigation on the reasons of such a rapid wearing off thereof following recent representations made in regard thereto and, if yes, to give details thereof?

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**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) and (b) of the question, I am informed that works order for the resurfacing of about 1.1 km of road along route de L'Autonomie at Petit Gabriel was issued under the road rates contract for the sum of Rs10, 038,122.30 excluding VAT, and that the resurfacing works were completed on 12 May 2023.

With regard to part (c) of the question, I am hereby tabling the specifications with respect to asphalts and bituminous wearing course content as specified in the contract.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (d) of the question, I am informed that joint tests were carried out between the contractor and the Project Manager prior to taking over of site. The tests carried out revealed that the works complied with the specifications as per the contract requirement.

I am also informed that the maintenance period for the works is 365 days after practical completion date and that during the said period the contractor is required to make good any defects which arise or which are discovered during that period.

During the maintenance period, defects have been observed on the wearing course along stretch of about 350 m. The contractor has been notified through a letter dated 17 May 2024 for any remedial actions.

The contractor informed that they have undertaken a series of investigations to determine the causes of this issue. These investigations are:

- (i) Defection test
- (ii) Bitumen content
- (iii) Grading of aggregates
- (iv) Attempt for Los Angeles abrasion test

The results will be analysed and a proper repair methodology will then be proposed for the repairs.

I am further informed that it is the contractor's obligation to ensure that all defects are corrected to the satisfaction of the employer prior to the issue of the Defects Liability Certificate and release of retention money.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to reassure the House that the matter is being closely monitored at the level of my Commission.

**ISSUE OF PLANTER'S & BREEDER'S CARD – SMALL FARMERS WELFARE  
FUND/RODRIGUES**

**(No. B/89) Mr L. D. Baptiste (Second Local Region Member for Grande Montagne)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to the issue of Planter's and Breeder's Card by the Small Farmers Welfare Fund in Rodrigues, he will obtain information from the relevant organisation and state to the House on the:

- (a) eligibility criteria and the conditions attached thereto;
- (b) support/facilities provided to the farmers and the number of members in Rodrigues who have already benefitted therefrom per category since January 2023, and
- (c) role of his Commission in this process?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Small Farmers Welfare Fund (SFWF) was set up in 2002 under the Small Planters Fund Act of 2002 to take care of the welfare of planters in the state of Mauritius. In 2020, the legislation was amended to broaden the activities of the fund so as to include breeders, agro-processors, beekeepers and agricultural groups business entities in the form of cooperatives, associations, societies and companies.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the activities of SFWF were extended to Rodrigues in 2007 under my initiatives when I was the then Commissioner for Agriculture. Accordingly, an office was dedicated to the fund at the seat of the then Commission for Agriculture with a desk officer to ensure that farmers in Rodrigues benefit from the same facilities as farmers in Mauritius. The collaboration between the SFWF and my Commission has been strengthened through the opening of the Public Relations Unit at Citronelle where there is a desk for the SFWF and dedicated staff.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, following promulgation of the Finance and Miscellaneous bill 2022, it has now become mandatory for any person involved in Agricultural activities to possess a valid farmer's Card from the SFWF to benefit from any government facilities/incentive schemes. To support local farmers following this government decision, my Commission decided to provide them with free subscription to farmer's card for a period of two years. A total of 4,195 farmers have applied for SFWF as detailed hereunder:

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Category	Planter	Breeder/Beekeeper	Agro-processors	Total
Count	2200	1995	15	4195

Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the part (a) of the question, the eligibility criteria by category as published on the SFWF website are: -

1. **Small Planter** – means a planter who is registered with the Fund as a planter
  - (i) growing sugar cane, tea, tobacco or food crops, fruit and ornamental plants, or conducting sheltered farming, on his land or on leased land, on an extent of not less than 10 perches (250 m<sup>2</sup>) but not more than 10 hectares (100,000 m<sup>2</sup>), or
  - (ii) Growing a single crop on his land or on leased land, on an extent of less than 10 perches (250 m<sup>2</sup>), provided that the land is under intensive cultivation.

[S. 2 amended by s. 27 (c) of Act 38 of 2011 w.e.f. 15 December 2011]

2. **Small Breeder** – means a breeder who is registered with the Fund as a breeder raising such number of animals as shown below:

Types of Breeding	Cattle	Fattening Pig	Sow	Goat/ Sheep	Rabbit	Poultry	Honey Bees
No. of heads	1 – 40	1 – 100	1 – 20	1 – 100	1 – 300	25 – 5000	Max 50 beehives

3. **Agro-processing Enterprise** means an enterprise owned by a small farmer or a group of small farmers, which is registered with the Fund as an enterprise conducting agro-processing activities, employing less than 10 persons and having an annual turnover not exceeding Rs10 M.
4. **Cooperative association, society or company** means an organisation that is formed by a group of people whose primary objective is promotion of the economic interests of its members.

For the part (b) of the question, the support Facilities provided to farmers are:



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<b>SN</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount disbursed from/Rs</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Cattle Productivity Incentive Scheme (CPIS)	A Cash grant of Rs15,000 is provided as incentive under the Scheme to small breeders for each calf having reached the age of 3 months (maximum of 40 calves/year).	150,000	Three breeders for 10 calves	142 applications are under process
2	Life Insurance Scheme (LIS)	To provide financial assistance of Rs7,500 in the form of a death grant to the farmer or his/her family in case of the demise of a family member.	15,000	2	
3	Farmers Excellence Award Scheme (FEAS)	The Small Farmers Welfare Fund launched the Farmers Excellence Award Scheme (FEAS) with the aim of recognizing and rewarding farmers' contribution to continuous production of safe food and food security for the country.	29 applications are under process		
4	Educational Achiever Award Scheme (EAAS)	The SFWF is actually operating EAAS on an annual basis where children of farmers who have performed best at the PSAC, NCE, SC and HSC examinations, are provided a one-off grant, on a national or zonal basis as a contribution to their pursuance of further	32 applications are under process		

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<b>SN</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount disbursed from/Rs</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
		secondary and tertiary education.			
5	Subsidy for Agricultural Mechanisation Scheme (SAM)	A subsidy of Rs3,000/arpent is provided to small registered food crop growers on agricultural land mechanization services and other agricultural infrastructure works (e.g drainage works) they have contracted out to private operators.		4 applications are under process	
6	Bio-Farming Subsidy Scheme (BFSS)	<p>The SFWF launched the Bio-Farming Subsidy Scheme (BFSS) in Rodrigues whereby subsidy to the tune of 60% is provided on the purchase of bio inputs (pesticides &amp; fertilisers).</p> <p>The RCA to bear the cost for the 40% contribution on behalf of planters.</p>			The scheme is under finalisation and will be launched end July 2024
7	Accident Insurance Scheme (AIS)	Financial support is provided to small farmers including redundancy allowance, reimbursement of medical expenses and disability compensation in case of injuries caused by accidents.			No application has been received (for the Year 2002 there was 1 beneficiary)

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<b>SN</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount disbursed from/Rs</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
		Temporary Total Disablement of Rs 2500/week for maximum of 20 weeks			
8	Farmers' Protection Scheme (FPS)	Financial support is provided to small registered farmers on crop/animal losses that they may incur due to non-manageable risks including natural calamities for crops/death of animals.	No application has been received		
	Funeral Scheme	Financial support is provided to registered farmers or their relatives on the demise of the farmer or a close relative	No application has been received (for the Year 2023 there was one beneficiary)		

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (c), my Commission works in close collaboration with the SFWF. The role of my Commission are in this partnership is to: -

- (i) take policy decision with respect to members of the SFWF of Rodrigues)
- (ii) inform farmers of the role and facilities being offered to the farmers' communities by SFWF
- (iii) assist farmers to apply for farmers' card and schemes available
- (iv) certify farmer's activities on field for acquisition of the necessary cards is mandatory to utilize any government facility, as stipulated by the Financial Bill 2022.
- (v) liaise with SFWF Head office for follow-up of the application, dispatching of application and planning of activities

**CELEBRATION - UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC SERVICE DAY/BALADIROU  
PUBLIC BEACH - SUNDAY 23 JUNE 2024**

**/UNREVISED/**

**(No. B/92) Dr. H. AGATHE (First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others Chief Commissioner whether, in regard to the celebration of the United Nations Public Service Day at the Baladirou public beach on Sunday 23 June 2024, he will state to the House the purpose thereof, indicating:

- (a) number of civil servants in Rodrigues and the approximate number of public servants who attended same, and
- (b) the total budget spent therefor?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, the United Nations Public Service Day is celebrated on the 23 June every year to recognize the virtue and value of public service to the community, highlight the contribution of public service in the development process, recognize the work of public servants and encourage young people to pursue careers in the public sector.

The theme for this year's celebration was 'Fostering Innovation and Global Challenges; in a Public Sector Perspective'.

To mark the United Nations Public Service Day, My Commission organized a Family Fun Day at the public beach of Baladirou on the 23 June 2024 with the aim to:

- (i) recognize the work of public officers;
- (ii) commemorate the efforts of public servants to the island's development, and
- (iii) showcase the talent of public officers, through the different activities organized;

In a letter dated 20 June 2024, the Island Chief Executive invited all Departmental Heads and their respective staffs to participate in the Family Fun Day. The latter were requested to submit the names and number of staffs at the level of their respective departments who were willing to participate in the activity. Thereafter, a total of 1,300 persons indicated their intention to participate in the Family Fun Day as per Registration Form received from various Commissions.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there is a total of 2,854 civil servants in Rodrigues and approximately 500 civil servants and their families attended the event.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the total budget for the organization of the event amounts to Rs745,283.84.

**/UNREVISED/**

Moreover, action is being initiated to reconstitute the Rodrigues Public Officers Welfare Committee to organise leisure and recreational activities for the benefit of public officers in Rodrigues with a view to encourage exchanges between public officers and to foster team building across the civil service.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the same vein, the Baladirou Residential Youth and Training Centre is at the disposal of public officers for the organization of welfare and team building activities.

**SERVICES PROVIDED – FARMERS & BREEDERS**

**(No. B/94) Dr. H. AGATHE (First Local Region Member of Grande Montagne)** asked the Commissioner for Agriculture and Others whether, in regard to services being provided by his Commission to farmers and breeders, he will, for the benefit of the House, state the:

- (a) policy on extension services;
- (b) number of regional centers providing same and their respective coverage area?

**Reply:** Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a), the mission of my Commission is to strengthen and modernise the agricultural and agri-business sectors of the island and provide an enabling environment that focuses on adequate service delivery to the farmers' community and maximizing utilization of our agricultural land resources to achieve food security, create jobs, generating wealth and combat poverty.

The Extension Service of my Commission plays an important role in achieving the above objectives as the officers working in that service are in direct contact with the farmers' community and provide feedback to management. Extension is a mean of developing and conveying training to farmers the information they need to increase their own productivity and that of their farming enterprise through improvement of their techniques as well as their efficiency. It is an essential feature for progressive agricultural and democratic development, in countries with rural economies such as Rodrigues.

For the part (b) of the question, the Extension Services have been organized according to the electoral regions in order to provide proximity services to the farmers' community; with main office at the Headquarter of my Commission at Citronelle. Each two electoral regions are under the responsibility of a Technical Officer and there are three Agricultural Stations and I will now give details thereof: -

**/UNREVISED/**

<b>Agricultural Zone</b>	<b>Office Location</b>	<b>Electoral Region</b>
1	Trefles (Temporarily closed for refurbishment – to be relocated at Grande Montagne (ex CLAC)	5 &6
2	Port Sud Est and Oyster Bay	3 & 4
3	La Ferme	1 & 2

**/UNREVISED/**

**ORGANIGRAM EXTENSION UNIT**

