Questions for Oral Answer

Question No. 80 to the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries
(By Senator Wade Mark)
Given the livestock feed shortage, the decline in production and the rising costs of labour affecting livestock farmers, what specific measures are being considered to address said challenges facing the industry?

Question No. 81 to the Minister of Education
(By Senator Wade Mark)
Can the Minister indicate when will depression rating scales be introduced to the Ministry’s online learning programme to facilitate early identification of children who may be experiencing depression?

Question No. 82 to the Attorney General
(By Senator Wade Mark)
In light of reports that there are no systems in place to receive payments of the $1000 fine for failing to wear a face mask in a vehicle, vessel or in public, can the Attorney General indicate when will the appropriate systems be put in place?
Motions:

(i) The debate on the following Motion which was in progress when the Senate adjourned on Tuesday February 23, 2021 will be resumed:

WHEREAS the Senate is asked to address amongst other things, complex legislation which necessitates focused deliberations;

AND WHEREAS the current global pandemic has impacted all aspects of life in Trinidad and Tobago, including the Parliament. As such, on August 29, 2020, the Senate agreed that the “time limit for Speeches in Debates be limited to 30 minutes for the mover/Member wrapping-up and the first speaker on the Opposition and Independent Benches, and 20 minutes for all other speakers”;

AND WHEREAS citizens are being encouraged to adapt to the ‘new normal’ while observing COVID-19 safety protocols;

AND WHEREAS the business of the Parliament should similarly adapt to the ‘new normal’ by allowing for the full time for Speeches in Debates;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate revert to the speaking time as set out in the Standing Orders with immediate effect.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

(ii) WHEREAS the Commissions of Enquiry Act, Chap. 19:01 provides for the establishment of commissions to manage the conduct of enquiries into public officers, departments and matters of public welfare;

AND WHEREAS Commissions of Enquiry are recognized as an important tool for social investigation in contemporary society, an effective mechanism for delivering truth, justice and social or organizational reform, and a device for inquiring into and ameliorating matters of public concern;

AND WHEREAS successive Government administrations have failed to adequately address public concerns which have arisen from time to time on whether the Commissions of Enquiry in Trinidad and Tobago have been effectively and efficiently carrying out their mandate;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate call on the Government to review the Commissions of Enquiry Act, Chap. 19:01 and the public inquiry process in Trinidad and Tobago.

(By Senator Anthony Vieira)
(iii) **WHEREAS** it is recognized that rising levels of domestic and foreign debt may negatively impact this country’s socio-economic development;

**AND WHEREAS** it is recognized that because of Government’s policies, the working population has been experiencing the effects of these rising debt levels;

**AND WHEREAS** international credit rating agencies have cautioned about Trinidad and Tobago’s future borrowings, given the economic constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Government reconsider its borrowing policy in light of this country’s rising Debt-to-GDP ratio and the possible negative impact of same on the country’s socio-economic development;

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Senate call on the Government to outline specific plans and programmes in respect of fulfilling its debt servicing obligations, in light of the economic constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

(iv) **WHEREAS** the statistics on violent crimes against women and girls have been widely reported by the TTPS from late 2020 to present;

**AND WHEREAS** said reports have garnered nationwide focus and given rise to several accounts of similar experiences by women, whose cases have not been followed-up and solved by Police;

**AND WHEREAS** the public has consistently called for the passage of legislation and improvements to the service delivery of public agencies in relation to, *inter alia*, non-lethal weapons, transportation and judicial process, to support the protection of women and girls against violent crimes;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that this Senate call on the Government to critically assess the deficiencies in the current systems to deal with the incidence of violent crimes against women and girls;

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Government present to the Parliament, within three (3) months, a legislative agenda and policy implementation plan to more effectively address the rising incidence of violence against women and girls.

(By Senator Paul Richards)

(v) **WHEREAS** availability of foreign exchange is important for investment and competitiveness in the private sector and a shortage of foreign exchange can hamper prospects for diversification and economic recovery aspired to in the fiscal strategy outlined in Budget 2020/2021;

**AND WHEREAS** the revenue received from foreign energy companies has been on the decline since 2015 and is now exacerbated by the negative socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;

**AND WHEREAS** it is recognised that micro, small and medium-sized businesses and the wider population continue to experience the negative effects of decreasing levels of foreign exchange in Trinidad and Tobago;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that this Senate call on the Government to table, within three (3) months, a comprehensive strategy to address the negative socio-economic impacts being experienced by micro, small and medium sized businesses and the wider public owing to ongoing shortages in foreign exchange in this country.

(By Senator Amrita Deonarine)

(vi) **WHEREAS** the Senate, as a House of Parliament, ought to afford Members such freedom of debate so as to allow full, frank and meaningful discussion within the constraints of the Standing Orders and well established parliamentary practice;
AND WHEREAS the position and authority of the President of the Senate ought not to be used in a partisan manner to prevent and or stymie criticism of the Government;

AND WHEREAS the Senate President is the servant of the Senate and not of the Government and as such ought to be impartial and unbiased at all times;

AND WHEREAS the President of the Senate by her rulings has demonstrated her bias in favor of the PNM Government and her lack of understanding of the nature and role of the Office of President of the Senate;

AND WHEREAS by her actions the Senate President has stifled the freedom of debate guaranteed by the Constitution and thus brought this Senate into disrepute;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate declare that it has lost confidence in the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Christine Kangaloo.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Motions:

WHEREAS it is provided by section 4 of the Quarantine Act, Chap. 28:05 (hereinafter referred to as “the Act”) that the Minister of Health may make Regulations, with respect to the whole or any part of Trinidad and Tobago, including the ports and coastal waters thereof, for preventing:

(a) danger to public health from ships or aircraft or persons or things therein, arriving at any place; and
(b) the spread of infection by means of any ship or aircraft about to leave any place, or by means of any person or thing;

AND WHEREAS it is provided by the said section 4 of the Act, that Regulations made under this section shall be subject to affirmative resolution of Parliament;

AND WHEREAS the Minister has on the 4th day of February, 2021 made the Quarantine (Maritime) (Amendment) Regulations, 2021 (hereinafter called “the Regulations”);

AND WHEREAS the Regulations were laid in the House of Representatives on the 5th day of February, 2021;

AND WHEREAS it is expedient to approve the Regulations;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Quarantine (Maritime) (Amendment) Regulations, 2021 be approved.

(By the Minister of Health)

Bills Second Reading:

(i) A Bill entitled, ‘An Act to give effect to the Economic Partnership Agreement between CARIFORUM States (the Caribbean Community and the Dominican Republic) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; to effect consequential amendments to the Customs Act, Chap. 78:01 and for related matters’.

(By the Minister of Trade and Industry)

(ii) A Bill entitled, ‘An Act to amend the Special Reserve Police Act, Chap. 15:03 and the Police Complaints Authority Act, Chap. 15:05’.

(By the Attorney General)
(iii) A Bill entitled, ‘An Act to amend the Electronic Payments into and out of Court Act, 2018’.
(By the Attorney General)

(By the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries)

(By the Minister of Labour)

Brian Caesar
Clerk of the Senate (Ag.)

Senate Secretariat
Office of the Parliament
The Parliamentary Complex
The Red House
Abercromby Street
PORT OF SPAIN

March 18, 2021
ORDER PAPER – TUESDAY MARCH 23, 2021

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

Question No. 92 to the Attorney General
(By Senator Wade Mark)
As regard the British company known as Edmonds Marshall McMohan (EMM), can the Attorney General provide the Senate with the following information:
(i) the date on which the company was contracted by the Government and/or the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service;
(ii) the sum paid thus far to the company; and
(iii) the amount owed to the company?
(Answer due by 20.03.2021)

Question No. 114 to the Minister of Finance
(By Senator Wade Mark)
Having regard to contractors who have been paid through financial institutions involved in factoring services during the period 2016 to 2020, can the Minister provide the following:
(i) the names of each financial institution employing the factoring services method;
(ii) the respective debt incurred by each financial institution; and
(iii) a detailed breakdown of the amount of outstanding Government debt owed to the various contractors?
(Answer due by 06.04.2021)

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March 18, 2021
NOTICE OF URGENT QUESTIONS

The under-mentioned Questions which have been accepted by the President in accordance with Standing Order 25 are hereby forwarded for the attention of the Ministers concerned.

1. **TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH**  
   (By Senator Wade Mark)  
   Given contradictory statements by Government and the Ansa Mc Al Group as to a proposal for the purchase/supply of 351,000.00 doses of Pfizer vaccines, can the Minister indicate whether Ansa Mc Al requested payment in USD and a 2021 tax write-off, for said purchase?

2. **TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH**  
   (By Senator Jayanti Lutchmedial)  
   Can the Minister indicate the nature of any arrangement discussed with business organizations in Trinidad and Tobago to assist the Government in procuring COVID-19 vaccines?

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March 23, 2021