



SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

ORDER PAPER

SIXTEENTH SITTING, FIFTH SESSION (2019/2020)

ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 05, 2020 AT 1:30 P.M.

1. PRAYERS
2. OATH OR AFFIRMATION
3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT
4. BILLS BROUGHT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
5. PETITIONS
6. PAPERS
 - (i) The Annual Report of the Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago (FIUTI) for the year ended September 30, 2019.
(By the Minister of Finance)
7. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES
8. URGENT QUESTIONS
9. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER APPEAR IN THE APPENDIX

Questions for Oral Answer

Question No. 32 to the Attorney General

(By Senator Wade Mark)

Given the decision by the European Union to continue the blacklisting of this country, can the Minister state what steps are being taken by Government to address this issue?

Question No. 33 to the Minister of Works and Transport

(By Senator Wade Mark)

In light of reports that the construction of the proposed Toco Port will negatively impact the Grande L'Anse coral reef in Toco, can the Minister advise as to what measures will be taken to protect the reef?

Question No. 34 to the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries

(By Senator Wade Mark)

In light of the energy agreement between Shell Trinidad and Tobago Limited and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, can the Minister indicate the following:

- (i) which terms of the new production contract have been improved;
- (ii) how much enhanced revenue is the country expected to realize and over what period; and
- (iii) what are the new works and/or expenditure commitments?

Question No. 65 to the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries

(By Senator Taharqa Obika)

In the aftermath of the closure of Petrotrin, can the Minister advise as to the findings of the latest actuarial report or the findings of the Fund Manager on the Pension Fund for ex-Petrotrin Staff?

Question No. 66 to the Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development

(By Senator Taharqa Obika)

Given the announcement in the 2019/2020 Budget that an Authority for financial cooperatives will be established, can the Minister indicate what human resourcing arrangements will be made for Cooperative Development Officers currently working at the Cooperative Development Division of the Ministry?

Question No. 81 to the Minister of Works and Transport

(By Senator Taharqa Obika)

Having regard to the road paving works done in Sangre Grande before December 02, 2019 and the rapid deterioration of the said roads in the two weeks subsequent, can the Minister advise as to the following:

- (i) whether there are clause(s) in the paving contracts that provide a defect liability period; and
- (ii) if the answer to (i) is in the affirmative, does the Ministry intend to trigger the provision of said clause?

- 10. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE
- 11. STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS OR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES
- 12. PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS
- 13. INTRODUCTION OF BILLS
- 14. MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE SENATE AND MOVED BY A MINISTER
- 15. PUBLIC BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Motions:

- (i) **WHEREAS** it is provided by section 3(1) of the Development Loans Act that the Government is authorized, for the purpose of –
 - (a) financing general development in Trinidad and Tobago;
 - (b) repayment of borrowings effected for such general development; or
 - (c) repayment of borrowings effected for general development–
 - i. by a statutory authority within the meaning of the Statutory Authorities Act;
 - ii. by an enterprise that is controlled by or on behalf of the State; or
 - iii. by the University of the West Indies,

to borrow from time to time money externally or internally in a sum or sums not exceeding in the aggregate forty five thousand million dollars in the currency of Trinidad and Tobago:

AND WHEREAS it is also provided in the said section 3(1), that thereafter such sum in such currency may from time to time be specified by Resolution passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives:

AND WHEREAS it is necessary for the Government to borrow further sums of money for the purposes stated in the said section:

BE IT RESOLVED that for the purposes stated in the said section, the Government is hereby authorized to borrow money externally or internally in a further sum or in further sums not exceeding in the aggregate ten thousand million dollars in the currency of Trinidad and Tobago.

(By the Minister of Finance)

Bills Second Reading:

- (i) A Bill entitled, 'An act to amend the Insurance Act, 2018'.
(By the Minister of Finance)
- (ii) A Bill entitled, 'An Act to repeal the Livestock and Livestock Products Board Act, Chap. 67:05'.
(By the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries)
- (iii) A Bill entitled, 'An Act to amend the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act, Chap. 48:50'.
(By the Attorney General)
- (iv) A Bill entitled, 'An Act to amend the Animals (Diseases and Importation) Act, Chap. 67:02'.
(By the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries)
- (v) A Bill entitled, 'An Act to amend the Copyright Act, Chap.82:80, to give effect to the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled and to the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances'.
(By the Attorney General)
- (vi) A Bill entitled, 'An Act to establish a Council for Urban and Regional Planners and to provide for the regulation of the urban and regional planning profession and other matters incidental thereto'.
(By the Minister of Planning and Development)
- (vii) A Bill entitled, 'An Act to combat corruption and other wrongdoings by encouraging and facilitating disclosures of improper conduct in the public and private sector, to protect persons making those disclosures from detrimental action, to regulate the receiving, investigating or otherwise dealing with disclosures of improper conduct and to provide for other matters connected therewith'.
(By the Attorney General)
- (viii) A Bill entitled, 'An Act to establish the Trinidad and Tobago Revenue Authority and for related matters'.
(By the Minister of Finance)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Motions:

- (i) **The debate on the following Motion which was in progress when the Senate adjourned on Tuesday February 04, 2020 will be resumed:**

WHEREAS it is the Government's responsibility to ensure public safety and security of the citizenry;

AND WHEREAS thousands of citizens and businesses have been negatively affected by the high levels of crime in Trinidad and Tobago;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate condemn the Government for its failure to effectively deal with the unacceptable and serious crime situation affecting law-abiding citizens.

(By Senator Saddam Hosein)

- (ii) **The debate on the following Motion which was in progress when the Senate adjourned on Tuesday November 26, 2019 will be resumed:**

WHEREAS in August 2019 the Government of the Republic in Trinidad and Tobago concluded a TT\$580 million contract, originally estimated at TT\$460 million, with the Australian shipbuilding company, Austal Ltd for the purchase of two Cape Class Patrol Boats for use by the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard;

AND WHEREAS there appears to be ambiguity concerning the price paid in 2019 when compared to similar vessels purchased in 2015;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate call on the Government to table, within fourteen days, the contract entered into with Austal for the procurement of the two Cape Class Patrol Boats.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

- (iii) **WHEREAS** following a year of negotiations, the Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation (HDC) and China Gezhouba International Engineering Company Ltd (CGGC) signed a TT \$485 million contract in May 2019 for the construction of 5,000 apartment units at specific sites across Trinidad and Tobago;

AND WHEREAS in September 2019 it was announced that the contract was cancelled;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate condemn the Government for its ineffectiveness in its negotiations with CGGC and in its failure to conduct due diligence prior to signing the contract;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government take the appropriate action to hold the responsible person(s) to account.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

- (iv) **WHEREAS** the Government has, by virtue of a lease agreement, assigned interest in excess of one thousand acres to the owner of General Earth Movers Limited / Marilissa Farms Limited for the use of a livestock station;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate call on the Government to take steps to ensure that the rich aggregate on the said acreage of the leased lands is protected;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Senate call on the Government to table, within fourteen days, the lease agreement between Marilissa Farms Limited / General Earth Movers Limited and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

- (v) **WHEREAS** section 6(2) of the Education Act Chap. 39:01 provides that the Ministry of Education should provide special schools suitable to the requirements of students with physical and learning disabilities;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry has not provided students with disabilities, additional learning needs and/or challenging behaviours with the requisite support networks, and equal opportunities needed to achieve their full potential;

AND WHEREAS the lack of adequate funding, policies and specialist staff is reflected in the poor performance of students;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate call on the Government to commit to the allocation of adequate funding, reform of the appropriate legislation and revision of policies designed to ensure that all children with special needs are provided with equal educational opportunities to other students;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Ministry of Education immediately initiate and implement a comprehensive strategy to assist all children with disabilities, additional learning needs and/or challenging behaviours.

(By Senator Paul Richards)

- (vi) **WHEREAS** the Criminal Justice System continues to be faced with inefficiencies notwithstanding the numerous legislative measures taken by the Government;

AND WHEREAS citizens continue to be adversely affected by the slow pace of the Criminal Justice System;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate condemns the Government for its inability to adequately address the said inefficiencies in the Criminal Justice System in Trinidad and Tobago.

(By Senator Sean Sobers)

- (vii) **WHEREAS** citizens nationwide are consistently plagued by flooding;

AND WHEREAS under this administration the country has suffered the worst flooding in decades;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate condemn the Government for its failure to take action including infrastructure maintenance and development in a manner to prevent perennial flooding.

(By Senator Saddam Hosein)

- (viii) **WHEREAS** it is the responsibility of the Government to address economic activity, economic diversification, skills acquisition, planning and industrial growth in every major sector of the economy;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate take note of the Government's failure to address issues of, job creation and high levels of retrenchment in Trinidad and Tobago.

(By Senator Taharqa Obika)

- (ix) **WHEREAS** the Government in adopting the 2015 Manifesto of the People's National Movement as its official policy framework confirmed its commitment to establishing an Economic Development Board, budgetary reform for Parliament, housing reform, establishment of new business clusters and broad economic stability with investor confidence;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate take note of the Government's failure to deliver on these key promises over the last four (4) years.

(By Senator Taharqa Obika)

(x) **WHEREAS** the Government has announced that sixteen thousand Venezuelan immigrants have registered for temporary residence status in Trinidad and Tobago;

AND WHEREAS the Government has not put in place adequate infrastructure and appropriate systems to facilitate access by the Venezuelan immigrants to essential humanitarian services such as temporary housing, health and education;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate call on the Government to establish and outline appropriate measures to assist registered Venezuelan immigrants in accessing essential humanitarian services.

(By Senator Sean Sobers)

(xi) **WHEREAS** the four (4) constitutionally entrenched Service Commissions namely the Public Service Commission, the Police Service Commission, the Teaching Service Commission and the Judicial and Legal Service Commission have been charged with the responsibility for the appointment, promotion, transfer and discipline within the Public Service;

AND WHEREAS the Service Commissions were also established to insulate persons holding or acting in public office from political influence, patronage and discrimination;

AND WHEREAS reported deficiencies within these Service Commissions have negatively impacted the Public Service including the extended delay within the systems of appointment, promotion and disciplinary control of public officials;

AND WHEREAS no definitive action has been taken by Governments to restructure the systems and operations of Service Commissions to better regulate the functions of the Public Service and improve service delivery to citizens;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate call on the Government to review the Trinidad and Tobago Constitution and the enshrined Service Commissions and to table in Parliament, within a reasonable time, a clear plan for the update of the Constitution and reform of the Commissions.

(By Senator Anthony Vieira)

Brian Caesar
Clerk of the Senate (Ag.)

Senate Secretariat
Office of the Parliament
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Cabildo Building
St. Vincent Street
PORT OF SPAIN

February 04, 2020

ORDER PAPER – WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 05, 2020

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

Question No. 100 to the Minister of Housing and Urban Development

(By Senator Saddam Hosein)

As regard the construction of housing units for the period September 2015 to January 31, 2020, can the Minister indicate the following:

- (i) the number of housing units under construction as at January 31, 2020;
- (ii) the number of housing units allocated and distributed;
- (iii) the location of each site in relation to (i) and (ii) above; and
- (iv) the projected date of completion with respect to (i) above?

(Answer due by 27.02.2020)

Question No. 105 to the Prime Minister

(By Senator Saddam Hosein)

Having regard to the refurbishment and restoration of The Red House, President's House, White Hall, Stollmeyer's Castle and Mille Fleurs, can the Prime Minister provide the following:

- (i) a detailed breakdown of the budgeted cost of each project;
- (ii) the actual expenditure for each project;
- (iii) the scope of works for each project and any variations;
- (iv) the contractor(s) and sub-contractors hired and the amounts paid to each; and
- (v) the number of persons employed on each of the projects?

(Answer due by 27.02.2020)

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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 EDUCATION**

(By Senator Taharqa Obika)

Given protests by students of the Point Fortin East Secondary School to highlight infrastructural and administrative issues affecting examination preparations at the school, can the Minister indicate what urgent action is being pursued to address said issues?

2. **TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION**

(By Senator Wade Mark)

Further to protests by the parents of Poole RC Primary School to highlight the absence of transportation arrangements for their children who were relocated to another school, what immediate action is being taken to resolve this situation?

3. **TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH**

(By Senator Hazel Thompson-Ahye)

Given reports that there are 21 confirmed cases of the Coronavirus in Hong Kong, including three that were transmitted locally, and students have been returning to this country from Hong Kong, is the Ministry considering imposing a quarantine on those students?

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