

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*Wednesday, June 18, 2008*

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have received communication from the following Members requesting leave of absence: The hon. Karen Nunez-Tesheira, Member of Parliament for D'Abadie/Omeara, for the period June 14—24, 2008; the hon. Anthony Roberts, Member of Parliament for St. Ann's East, from today's sitting of the House; the hon. Vasant Bharath, Member of Parliament for St. Augustine, from today's sitting of the House; the hon. Nizam Baksh, Member of Parliament for Naparima, from today's sitting of the House and the hon. Christine Kangaloo, Member of Parliament for Pointe-a-Pierre, from today's sitting of the House. The leave which these Members seek is granted.

PAPERS LAID

1. The annual audited financial statements of the Vehicle Maintenance Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2006. [*The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert)*]
To be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.
2. The annual administrative report of the Siparia Regional Corporation for the period October 2006 to September 2007. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
3. The Regional Health Authorities (Conduct) Regulations, 2008. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
4. The Notification of His Excellency, the Acting President, in respect of the nomination of Mr. Stephen Williams for appointment to the Office of Commissioner of Police. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, we do have four written replies available for Members today, but, unfortunately, we do not have replies to the three questions on the Order Paper and I would ask for a two-week deferral of these three questions.

Mr. Maharaj SC: Mr. Speaker, I am very sorry to have returned to the House to be greeted with the same story from the Leader of Government Business. I

really thought that based on what he had indicated to the House that he would have put his house in order. It seems quite clear that he has not been able to do that. But there is an important principle and I know that the Speaker does not have the power to compel, but I think that the time has come for the Government to be put on a strict footing to have these questions answered.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, I do share your concerns. It is a matter we attempted to address in the Standing Orders in the Eighth Parliament and, perhaps, we can probably get down to looking at those Standing Orders sooner rather than later.

Again, hon. Leader of the House, I would ask you to appeal to your colleagues to have these questions answered promptly.

Dr. Rafeeq: Mr. Speaker, can I just ask one issue? Today is an odd day that we are sitting—today is Wednesday. Instead of a two-week deferral, can we ask for a one-week deferral so we will get it next week Friday, so that it would come back on the regular sitting? Because, given two weeks from today, that will mean two and a half weeks rather than two weeks.

Mr. Speaker: No. He said two weeks.

The following questions stood on the Order Paper in the name of Dr. Hamza Rafeeq (Caroni Central):

Removal of Subsidy on Gasoline and Other Fuels

(Status of)

- 146.** Could the hon. Minister of Finance state:
- (a) Whether the Government intends to remove the subsidy on gasoline and other fuels in Trinidad and Tobago; and
 - (b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative when would the subsidy be removed and what would be the new price of gasoline and other fuels to the motorist?

Housing Construction in Carlsen Field

(Details of)

- 147.** Could the hon. Minister of Planning, Housing and the Environment state:
- (a) How many houses the Government intends to construct in Carlsen Field; and
 - (b) the expected date of completion of construction of the housing units stated in (a)?

Housing Construction in Edinburgh 500

(Details of)

- 148.** Could the hon. Minister of Planning, Housing and the Environment state:
With respect to the high rise housing complexes being constructed in the Edinburgh 500 area in Chaguanas, could the Minister state:
- (a) whether the necessary approvals were obtained from the Chaguanas Borough Corporation;
 - (b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, what were the dates of such approvals;
 - (c) what is the cost of construction of the housing units; and
 - (d) at what price will these units be sold or rented?

Questions, by leave, deferred.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The following question was asked by Dr. Roodal Moonilal (Oropouche East);

Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited

(Details of)

- 116.** With respect to the Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited (PSAEL), could the hon. Minister of Local Government state:
- (a) the number and types of projects undertaken by the company between January 01, 2007 and December 31, 2007;
 - (b) the total expenditure on each of these projects;
 - (c) the names of all the contractors employed to undertake these said projects; and
 - (d) what new projects are being proposed specifically for the Penal/Debe area and when they are scheduled to commence?

The following questions were asked by Mr. Winston Peters (Mayaro):

Community Improvement Services Limited

(Details of)

- 131.** With respect to the Community Improvement Services Limited, could the hon. Minister of Local Government state:
- (a) what is the mandate and specific geographical area of operation of this entity;

- (b) what is the total expenditure incurred to date, the type of projects undertaken, the areas in which they were implemented and the status of these works;
- (c) the names of contractors employed, the services they provided and at what cost; and
- (d) what new projects are proposed, the areas in which they are to be undertaken, the total budget for these works and projected commencement and completion dates?

**East Port of Spain Development Company
(Details of)**

- 133.** With respect to the East Port of Spain Development Company Limited, could the Minister of Local Government state:
- (a) what is its mandate, functions and specific geographic area of operation;
 - (b) what is the total expenditure incurred to date, the types of projects undertaken, the areas in which they were implemented and the status of these works; and
 - (c) what new projects are being proposed, the area in which they are to be implemented and the projected commencement and completion dates

The following question was asked by Mr. Subhas Panday (Princes Town North):

**Local Government Reform
(Recommendations for)**

- 142.** Could the Hon. Minister of Local Government list the recommendations for Local Government reform received from members of the public at the public consultations held?

Vide end of sitting for written replies.

**DEFINITE URGENT MATTERS
(LEAVE)**

Unavailability of Tuberculin

Dr. Tim Gopeesingh (*Caroni East*): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 12 of the House of Representatives, I hereby seek your leave to move the adjournment of this honourable House for the purpose of discussing a definite

matter of urgent public importance, namely, the absence and unavailability of Tuberculin at the central stores of the Ministry of Health, the health centres and major health institutions throughout the country.

The matter is definite as it pertains to the unavailability of this pharmaceutical/drug necessary for determining whether patients throughout the country are susceptible to or do have tuberculosis.

The matter is urgent because of the inability to determine the absence of diagnosis of tuberculosis in suspected patients throughout the country and this will result in dissemination of tuberculosis infection in the communities by nosocomial infection by these undiagnosed patients, and which can also result in deaths of these patients with tuberculosis who require confirmatory diagnosis before treatment.

The matter is of public importance because of the present and impending disastrous risk of widespread dissemination of tuberculosis to the national community through nosocomial infection, resulting in death.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, this Motion as moved by the hon. Member for Caroni East does not qualify under this Standing Order.

Crime (Government's Inability to Deal With)

Mr. Subhas Panday (*Princes Town North*): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 12 of the House of Representatives, I seek your leave to move the adjournment of this honourable House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the Government's inability to deal with crimes, especially gun-related offences and in particular, the slaughtering of Army Corporal Ancil Wallace.

The matter is definite because it relates to that particular murder of Army Corporal Ancil Wallace.

The matter is urgent because it relates to the slaughtering of a serving member of the army, and it is of public importance because of the manner in which Army Corporal Ancil Wallace was murdered and the dangerous consequences which could arise as a result of the subsequent apparent revenge, deadly tactics and military justice employed by the armed service.

Mr. Speaker: Again, hon. Members, this matter does not qualify under this particular Standing Order.

Mr. S. Panday: Mr. Speaker, on the last occasion, you had asked the Leader of Government Business in the House to continue with the debate on crime. Could the Speaker kindly remind him again, please?

ACCREDITATION COUNCIL OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago, Chap. 39:06 [*The Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education*]; read the first time.

IMMIGRATION (ADVANCE PASSENGER INFORMATION) BILL

Senate Amendments

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion standing in the name of the Minister of National Security:

Be it resolved that the Senate amendments to the Immigration (Advance Passenger Information) Bill, 2008, listed in Appendix III, be considered.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 3.

Senate amendments read as follows:

- (i) In subclause (1), delete the word “provide” and substitute the word “transmit”.
- (ii) In subclause (2), delete the word “an” and substitute the word “a summary”.
- (iii) In subclause (3), delete the full stop and insert thereafter the following words:

“, where the vessel is –

- (a) a military vessel; or
- (b) on official state business.”

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House of Representatives doth agree with the Senate in the said amendment to clause 3.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

**CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY RESIDENCES, FOSTER HOMES AND NURSERIES
(AMDT.) BILL**

Order for second reading read.

The Minister of Social Development (Hon. Dr. Amery Browne): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move,

That a Bill to amend the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act, 2000, be now read a second time.

It is my privilege to once again address this honourable House as the Government of Trinidad and Tobago puts forward for debate the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill which is yet another crucial Bill in the overall package of children's legislation. The hon. Members of this House would have recalled at the last sitting of the House on Friday, June 13, the Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill, 2008 was debated and successfully passed.

With the passage of that Bill and the passage in the near future of other anxiously awaited pieces of child-related legislation, there must be some degree of relief to the many citizens who care deeply for the well-being of our nation's children. Our society now has some additional evidence of the commitment of many Members of this honourable House who were present to ensure that meaningful and sustained progress is made towards the care and protection of children in Trinidad and Tobago, despite disagreements over the past several years on the need for amendments and the duration of time that has elapsed.

On the last occasion, I invited Members of this honourable House to treat with the issue of children as a national issue as opposed to a political football; and society will judge all our responses on that occasion. But we did get the votes of Members opposite who were present and those votes were critical. While there was some heavy partisan crossfire, especially by the hon. Member for Oropouche West, we do understand—and I certainly understand, and once again congratulate that Member on her maiden effort on June 13.

Mr. Ramnath: Tell the Member for Tunapuna that. She is rude and out of place.

Mr. Speaker: Order!

1.45 p.m.

Hon. Dr. A. Browne: Mr. Speaker, once again, I look forward to the meaningful and constructive comments and contributions of all Members of this

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House, as we begin debate on this important Bill, the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill.

There is no cause which merits a greater priority than the protection and development of our children on whom the survival, stability and achievements of all nations, indeed of all human civilization depend. These are words taken from the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children way back in 1990.

As the Government of Trinidad and Tobago seeks to strengthen the legislation governing the safety and care of children in Trinidad and Tobago, we must be ever mindful of these sentiments. As I did in presenting the Children's Authority Bill, I once again pause to recognize the sterling contributions of the Member for Tabaquite [*Desk thumping*] and other Members of this honourable House who have contributed to bringing us to this critical juncture. In more recent times, our nation's new Attorney General has proven that she is indeed, a general in every sense of the word and has been a critical partner in finalizing the product of hard work and the product of collaborators from a wide range of sectors.

At least of these collaborations has been the hard working Permanent Secretary and technical staff of the Ministry of Social Development, members of the legal fraternity and the sector of the non-government organizations (NGOs) across our country. Despite the adoption of the millennium declaration in 2000 and the millennium development goals which map out an agenda for a better future for the people of the world including children, millions of children all over this planet are still not benefiting from any attempt to provide them with a better world in which to live. Many remain abandoned, uneducated, poorly nourished, impoverished, neglected or abused.

This Government firmly believes that Trinidad and Tobago has to become a shining example of a country where no child whether they reside with their families; live in community residences or are placed in foster care, no child has a broken spirit, is emotionally or physically harmed or is disadvantaged. We acknowledge that there is a gap between that vision of complete protection for childhood and the reality of our society today. I am sure that you will agree that the home, the dwelling in which we reside with our families, should provide an environment of safety, love and care for our children.

As we are now painfully aware, in some cases the home is becoming a battleground from which our children are emerging as unfortunate casualties. Under such circumstances, children deemed to be at risk are confronted with the unavoidable option of removal from the home for what we hope to be temporary

placement into community residences for children or into foster care. It is the belief of this Government that these community residences should and must provide a level of care, comfort and guidance comparable to that of an individual's biological family. It is therefore incumbent on the State to provide effective oversight of these community residences to ensure the safety of our nation's children.

This Government has taken a clear step to improve our delivery of social services by working to develop a more strategic partnership with NGOs and other civil society organizations that operate community residences and provide services to children, particularly those at risk. Here the Government will assume the role of facilitator and financier and non-governmental organizations, the role of service delivery partner.

This new vision for government/NGO partnership forms part of the Government's overall policy framework for partnership with the NGOs sector. It is a vision based on the principles of commercial contract which will see the Government decentralizing the delivery of services, particularly social services and contracting NGOs and other service delivery partners to provide these services. The very nature of this new vision is in essence one of greater accountability for all. A system will be established to ensure that the service standards are achieved and maintained throughout the contract period.

This is what the people want and this is what our citizens demand; quality service where and when they require it. This new approach to government/NGO partnership will also address the many concerns we hear from non-governmental and civil society organizations regarding the challenges that they have had in the past, in securing subventions and implementing effective programmes. It must be a win-win situation where the ultimate beneficiaries are the citizens and children of our country.

At present, the State works in partnership with a wide range of non-governmental and faith-based bodies to provide a safe haven for our children at risk. Currently, the Government provides financial assistance through annual subventions at a cost of over \$53 million per annum in support of these organizations that offer care for our vulnerable children.

It is therefore in keeping with the Government's new policy framework for partnerships with the NGO sector, that the State provide effective oversight of these community residences to ensure the safety of our nation's children.

As we move one stage closer to the appropriate care and protection that our nation's children need, permit me to inform this honourable House that within the

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National Family Services Division of the Ministry of Social Development, a foster care unit has been operationalized. Since approval by Cabinet for the continuation and expansion of the Foster Care Programme, over \$1.4 million has been spent on this particular initiative to provide temporary care and protection for children at risk. With the passage of the children's package of legislation, it is expected that this service would be further enhanced to suit the diverse requirements of children in need of specialized care. We cannot forget those infants who for various reasons must be left in the care of persons other than their parents or immediate family.

It is the view of this Government that any facility purporting to offer child care services to pre-schoolers must also comply with approved standards of quality and care. I do not think that that can be disputed. It is imperative that formalized systems to license, monitor and evaluate the operations of children's homes and nurseries across the country come into effect as soon as possible. That is why we are here today.

In joining with the international community by signing and ratifying international conventions and declarations to support the promotion and respect of the rights of children, this country is called upon to account on our progress in child's rights. Consequently, this country's administrative support system and legislation toward the protection of children must reflect an understanding and acceptance of our responsibility towards the next generation. If we fail to provide in the best interest of the children, we inadvertently threaten the well-being of our future generations and of course, the achievement of Vision 2020.

The Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill targets three major areas which fall under the general control of the Children's Authority. The Act of 2000 introduced the licensing of community residences which would include children's homes and rehabilitation centres which were previously called orphanages and industrial schools. It also makes provision for the formal introduction of foster care and the licensing of nurseries. At present, there is no formal method for the licensing and monitoring of such institutions. Several of the homes have operated as private organizations and institutions offering their services to the State. We believe that once the State or courts continue to refer children to these homes, the State has a responsibility to ensure that they comply with the necessary guidelines and appropriate and relevant standards. Additionally, it has been noted this country does not have a system of formalized foster care and there is no regulation of nursery care services at this time.

A review of the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act, 2000 conducted by the Family Court Committee identified a number of deficiencies in the legislation, including the following:

The Act did not indicate clearly whether the licence was granted to the residence or to the person running the residence. This meant that it was not clear as to who should be held responsible or accountable in the event of the breach of any standard of care. Who would be responsible for obtaining the licence and complying with the requirement of the licence? How then could the Children's Authority investigate claims and take corrective action in the best interest of the child?

The new Bill seeks to clarify and rectify this omission by providing for licences to be issued to the operator of the children's community residences. It must also be noted that this new Bill also makes specific provision pertaining to the role and responsibility, duty and function of managers of community residences.

The Act did not properly take into account the development in administrative law which requires public authorities to give reasons for administrative decisions. This is very much a democratic society and in the pursuit of transparency, accountability and fairness, this new Bill will seek to strengthen the legal framework within which community residences, foster homes and nurseries would operate by now providing for reasons to be given by the authority for refusing to grant a licence. We see this as a very important change. This will ensure that the principles of natural justice are observed by this public authority as well as all other public authorities in our nation.

With respect to the issue of foster care which is Part IV of the Act, it was felt that the definition of "foster care" did not sufficiently take into account the reality that many foster children do not have a suitable family structure to which to return. In the circumstances, it was suggested that provision should be made for situations where fostering may be a long-term option. In keeping with the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child an attempt is made to provide for children in foster care to belong to the family.

It was also suggested that there was a critical need to clarify the respective roles of the ministry and the authority with respect to foster care. These changes have been made.

The Family Court Committee also proposed changes to Part V of the Act which dealt with nurseries. One of the main issues identified was that the

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definition of the term “nursery” lacked clarity and would create difficulties in actual practice. This particular clarification will make the legislation more user-friendly.

This particular Bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on September 10, 2007 and lapsed upon the dissolution of the Eighth Parliament on September 28, 2007.

The Bill seeks to amend the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act, 2000. I now propose to go through the Bill clause by clause.

Clauses 1 and 2 of the Bill provide the short title and interpretation provisions.

Clause 3 of the Bill amends the long title of the Act as recognized during the last debate by Members opposite, by deleting the word, “homes” and substituting the word “care”.

Clause 4 of the Bill amends section 1 of the Act in keeping with the change made to the long title of the Act.

Clause 5 of the Bill amends section 2 of the Act by providing a number of new definitions.

2.00 p.m.

“‘community register’ means the register of children in the care of a community residence kept in accordance with section 22;

‘Manager’ means a person who operates a community residence in accordance with the provisions of section 21;

‘nursery licence’ means a licence issued under section 44;

‘relative’ has the meaning assigned to it under the Children's Authority Act”—again an example of the Bills speaking to each other much more closely. Also—

“in the definition of ‘Children's Home’, deleting the words ‘Children's Act’ and substituting the...words ‘Children Act’;

by deleting the definition of ‘community residence’ and substituting the following new definition:

‘community residence’ means a Children's home or rehabilitation centre and includes Industrial Schools and Orphanages referred to in the Children Act;”

The definitions for “Community Service” and for “Detention Order” have been deleted. There is an editorial amendment with regard to the definition of “Register of residences”.

In the definition of “rehabilitation centre”, there was the deletion of the words “industrial school as defined to” and substitution of the words “Industrial Schools as defined”.

Clause 6 amends the title of Part II of the Act to read “Licensees of Community Residences” in place of “Licensing of Community Residences”.

Clause 7 of the Bill amends section 3 of the Act, which deals with the requirement for homes to be licensed. It should be noted that these amendments are in keeping with the need to clarify that what we are licensing are the operators of the particular community residence, not the residence itself. Previously, it was not clear whether the building or the person who operated the residence was required to be licensed.

Clause 8 amends section 4 of the Act as follows:

“...by deleting the words ‘All existing community residences shall within three months upon’ and substituting the...words ‘All managers of existing community residences shall within three months upon the’;”

There are editorial amendments in subsection (2) and the insertion after it of a new subsection (3), “Where the Authority refuses to grant a licence it shall, upon request by the applicant, give its reasons for refusal in writing”; another important amendment.

The effect of these amendments is to make it mandatory that operators apply for a residence licence and also that the Children's Authority respond to an application within six months of its receipt and give reasons for refusal to grant a licence in writing when requested to do so.

Clause 9 of the Bill amends section 5 of the Act by making it mandatory for persons operating or intending to operate to apply for a residence licence. It also provides that the Authority must issue a licence where it is satisfied that the residence has met the necessary statutory requirements.

Clause 10 makes some minor changes to section 6 of the Act, which provides requirements to be met before a licence can be granted. Clause 11 also sees an editorial amendment.

Clause 12 of the Bill amends section 9(1)(b) of the Act by deleting the words “the person to whom a Residence Licence is granted under section 5 (hereinafter referred to as the ‘licensee’)” and replacing them with the words “the licensee”.

Clause 13 of the Bill introduces a new section 11A of the Act, which makes it mandatory for the authority to give 14 days’ notice of the revocation of a licence,

stating the reasons for the revocation and, where relevant, the corrective measures to be undertaken by the operator and the time frame with which to achieve these measures. Where no corrective action is taken by the operator, the revocation shall take immediate effect.

Clause 14 of the Bill sees an editorial amendment and clause 15 deletes the words "youthful offender or" from section 13 of the Act.

Clause 16 of the Bill amends section 14 of the Act in order to bring it in conformity with the Civil Proceedings Rules of Trinidad and Tobago. As a result, the words "originating summons" are replaced by the words "Fixed Date Claim" and the words "Judge in Chambers" are deleted and the word "Judge" substituted.

Clause 17 of the Bill amends section 15 of the Act in an editorial fashion. Clause 18 of the Bill amends section 16 of the Act by deleting the words "final decision" and replacing them with the words "issuance, revocation or surrender of such residence licence".

Clause 19 of the Bill amends section 17 of the Act in a number of ways which can be described as editorial in fashion and by inserting, after subsection (1), a new subsection:

"(2) Subsection (1) shall not apply where such person has submitted an application for a residence licence to the Authority pursuant to section 5 and has not received notice of the refusal of such applicant."

This is in the interest of fairness.

Clause 20 of the Bill amends section 18 of the Act by including the words "of residences" after the word "Register".

Clause 21 of the Bill amends section 19 of the Act by replacing the word "withdrawal" with the word "revocation" and again by deleting the words "youthful offender or" in subsection (2).

Clause 22 of the Bill amends section 20 of the Act which deals with certification by the manager.

Clause 23 of the Bill sees a number of editorial amendments as does clause 24.

Clause 25 of the Bill amends section 25 of the Act in order to provide a period of 60 days for existing residences to provide relevant information to the Children's Authority.

Clause 26 of the Bill amends section 27(2) of the Act by providing that a warrant to enter a community residence will be issued by the court and not the authority.

Clause 27 of the Bill deletes section 28 of the Act and replaces it with a new section which provides for the establishment of a foster care system in Trinidad and Tobago which will be managed by the Children's Authority.

Clause 28 of the Bill amends section 29 of the Act which deals with the procedure for application by foster parents.

Clause 29 of the Bill amends section 30 of the Act. There is an editorial amendment to section 30(1); a renumbering; a deletion of the word "Minister", substituting this with the word "Authority"; and the insertion of a number of new subsections:

- “(2) Approved foster parents shall be subject to annual reviews by the Authority”—I saw this as very important—
- “(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), the Authority may at any time cancel the registration of an approved foster parent.
- (4) The Authority shall give written notification of the cancellation of registration to foster parent.”

Mr. Speaker, clause 30 of the Bill amends section 31 of the Act in order to provide for training for foster parents and for members of their household as follows:

- “31. Where an applicant is suitably trained to be made a foster parent, the Authority shall cause the applicant and members of his household to be trained in the roles, functions and duties involved in foster care.”

Clause 31 of the Bill amends section 32(3) of the Act by increasing the penalty for neglecting to look after the health, education and welfare of a foster child; increases the penalty from \$500 to \$10,000 and 12 months imprisonment.

Clause 32 of the Bill amends section 33 of the Act, which deals with the refusal by a foster parent to permit entry to an authorized officer under the Act.

Clause 33 of the Bill amends section 34 of the Act which deals with persons prohibited from receiving foster care.

Clause 34 of the Bill amends section 35 of the Act which deals with the removal of children kept in unsuitable premises or by unsuitable persons.

Clause 35 of the Bill amends section 37 of the Act which deals with the prohibition of advertisements offering to undertake care of children.

Clause 36 of the Bill amends section 41 of the Act which deals with exemption and clause 37 of the Bill amends section 42 of the Act and provides for a new definition for the terms “nursery” and “licensee”.

Clause 38 of the Bill amends section 43 of the Act which deals with existing nurseries.

Clause 39 of the Bill amends section 44 of the Act which deals with the application procedure for a nursery licence.

Clause 40 of the Bill makes a number of amendments to section 45 of the Act, which can be described as minor. There is the deletion of paragraph (a) and the substitution of a new paragraph:

“(a) made adequate arrangements of the health care, safety, security, well-being and suitable feeding of children received in the nursery;”

There is the deletion of the word “premises”, the substitution of the word “nursery” and a number of other editorial amendments.

Clause 41 of the Bill deletes section 47 of the Act and substitutes an entirely new provision, which makes it an offence to operate a nursery without a licence or to fail to comply with the requirements of a licence.

There is also a new provision in subsection (2) which states that this section does not apply where an application for a licence was made to the authority and notice of its refusal has not been received by the operator.

Clause 43 of the Bill amends section 48 of the Act which deals with a change of residence for the nursery. It also amends section 49 of the Act which deals with the issue of the revocation of a nursery licence.

Clause 44 of the Bill amends section 50 of the Act by deleting subsections (2) and (3) and substituting a new subsection (2):

“Every such notice shall state the grounds on which the Authority intends to revoke the nursery licence and where corrective measures are possible, shall require that they be taken within such time as the Authority shall specify in the Notice.”—and a new subsection (3)—

“Where no corrective measures are possible, the notice shall revoke the licence with immediate effect.”

Clause 45 of the Bill amends section 51 in subsection (1) by an editorial amendment; subsection (2) by deleting paragraph (c) and substituting a new paragraph:

“(c) may direct the Authority to withdraw such notice and the Authority shall comply with any direction given to it by the Minister under this subsection.”

There is the deletion of the words “Judge in Chambers” and substitution of the word “Judge” in subsection (3), as well as an editorial amendment.

Clause 46 of the Bill amends section 53 of the Act, which gives the Children's Authority the power to make regulations with the Minister's approval. [*Interruption*] I know you love the sound of my voice. I will not deny you the pleasure.

Subsection (2) now provides that regulations made under the Act shall be subject to negative resolution of Parliament.

Clause 47 of the Bill makes several changes to section 54 of the Act which deals with a consequential amendment to the Children Act, Chap. 46:01.

I would seek to remind Members of this House that these Bills have been long awaited by advocates and members of the public. We should treat them with the seriousness they deserve.

2.15 p.m.

For the sake of the children of this nation, hon. Member for Couva South, this Government will continue to partner and collaborate with civil society organizations, as we take clear measures to ensure their well-being.

I must let this honourable House know just how encouraged I was when, earlier today, the Ministry of Social Development held the second in a series of stakeholder engagement forum on the finalized package of children legislation; this time with a wide cross-section of the NGO sector. It is clear to me, based on the many positive and constructive comments, that we were able to receive that the NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago are ready, willing and able to partner with the Government in the continued provision towards the care and protection of our nation's children. They are actually meeting right now and they see the bigger picture. They understand the true essence of the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill.

Our Government will continue to work closely with that sector and all other sectors in our beloved country that have a stake in our nation's most valuable asset; our children and the future generation.

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[HON. DR. A. BROWNE]

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I leave you with the words of an old proverb. The Member for Chaguanas West does enjoy proverbs. If you want to go fast, go alone. It might have particular relevance at this time. If you want to go further, go together. With the support of all the hon. Members of this House, let us move forward together, to safeguard the best interest of our youngest citizens and to create a country and a world fit for children.

I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Mr. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj SC (*Tabaquite*): Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure and honour to join this debate on this important measure, but I am very sorry that, notwithstanding what the hon. Minister has stated, no real reason has been given by the Government for taking seven years to make whatever amendments the Government considered necessary to this measure. I do not think there is any dispute between the Government and the Opposition that this Bill and the measures which are contained therein have been and are necessary for the welfare of children. I think we agreed on that.

I heard the Minister saying: for the sake of the children. It is very unfortunate, however, I am not blaming the hon. Minister, he has only been here a few months—that the Government sat down on this measure, which was for the sake of the children to give them better lives, prevent them from the risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and to prevent them from the harm which has been inflicted on thousands of them by the non-proclamation of this measure. I think that at least the Government ought to give the population an explanation as to why its priority was not in the right direction.

This is a Government which was very quickly deciding to acquire an airplane for the Prime Minister and within hours money was paid. This is a Government which, within months, has built a new residence for the Prime Minister. This is a Government which, within months, has built big hotels and buildings. How is it that the Minister can get up here today and say all these nice words about the Bill? Yes, it was needed to safeguard, protect and prevent the children from harm.

It is important for Vision 2020, but in truth and in fact, when anyone looks at these two Bills, the one you have and one which was passed in 2000, and the way the Government operates, it is the same people in the legal department where both were prepared. The Ministers do not draft the Bill. The technical people in the Ministry would look at the Bill and the measures and see whether they are acceptable. This Bill was subject to a Joint Select Committee of Parliament in which the Government and the Opposition participated and agreed with them.

It was a Bill which was—to say the least, if I give the Government the benefit of all the doubt—workable. If the Bill was proclaimed, we would have had the measure in place and children's lives would have been saved. I think the Government owes an apology to the children and people of this nation. I hope that before this debate finishes, the Government would give that apology because a lot of children—

I would try to put in perspective the policy of the UNC administration and why it decided to enact these measures. I was the Attorney General at the time and at some stage I was the Minister of Legal Affairs. There was need for urgent law reform in order to put a proper legal framework in place to protect children. The existing law, at the time, did not do that sufficiently. Although it was recognized by the Parliament in 2000, that the existing law in 2000 did not provide protection and safeguard for children, this Government allowed that existing situation to continue from 2001—2008, seven years.

Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to read from the *Hansard* of December 03, 1999 when I occupied the Office of Attorney General in dealing with these pieces of legislation? I said at the time that, among other things:

“There are no regulations to regulate nurseries for children and the temporary care of children by persons other than their families.

The existing pieces of children's legislation are antiquated and are based on the English law of the time. As a consequence of these outdated laws which deal with our children, and the absence of other laws to deal with other social issues, we experience problems which include, among other things, the growing number of street children; the alleged abuse and neglect of children in children's homes and the unsuitable and unworkable adoption process for children. The difficulty experienced by families with respect to the resolution of disputes in the existing formal and adversarial system tend to promote tension instead of effecting reconciliation and resolution; the absence of a legal framework to facilitate children who require temporary care with families other than their own; and the absence of a legal framework with respect to counselling, mediation and advice; and options available to families as part of the court process so that families and children can be saved from the tiring effects of the court process; the increasing number of socially displaced persons in our streets; and the ill-treatment of the elderly in the homes for the aged...

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of the Attorney General appointed a committee in August, 1998 to examine and review existing laws relating to children and to prepare a comprehensive package of legislation to meet the present social needs.”

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It was in that context that the package of legislation known as the children's package of legislation was introduced.

Yes, last week we dealt with the Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill. I congratulate the Member for Oropouche West. I was not here, but I understand she made a very sterling contribution, her maiden speech. If I may take up from what she said, the Children's Authority Act, as the Government has agreed, was the statutory guardian of children, because there was a lacuna/vacuum. There was no proactive institution of the State to take children from suffering from having the risk of abuse and harm. It was intended that the Children's Authority would, in effect, do that. Without that authority for the last seven years, one can understand, one does not have to be an Einstein, what the continuing lacuna has done for the rights of children. You have to accept the fact that whatever may be the problem, it is important for the Government to take responsibility and to be accountable.

It is in that context that a little later in my contribution I would deal with the trend in which the Government frustrates the legislative will. The Parliament passes this piece of legislation and it then goes to the Executive to be implemented. The Executive either does not implement it, or it takes years to implement it. The question which arises is that the remedies and benefits of the legislation are now denied the people for whom Parliament gave those benefits.

Under section 54 of the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago, we in this Parliament pass law for the peace, order and good government of Trinidad and Tobago. It is the duty of the Government to obey the law which is passed and to respect the will of the Parliament. When a government does not do that, serious constitutional issues arise, that is whether the Government is undermining the Constitution or subverting the rule of law. If the body to pass laws for the good governance, order and peace of the country does not act or takes too long to act, it frustrates the law and the will of the Parliament. What happens is that the Government is really undermining the rule of law.

If you take the Constitution of this country and read it, you would see on the first page that there is a preamble to the Constitution which gives the conditions, grounds or foundations upon which the Constitution was enacted. That is the supreme law of Trinidad and Tobago. One of the foundations is that the rule of law exists. One of the meanings of the rule of law is that government is not above the law. The Government must obey the law. It is in that context there is a serious obligation on the Government, when it is faced with a situation like this, to explain to the Parliament. By explaining here, you are not really explaining only

to us; you are explaining to the people. The people are entitled to that explanation and I would tell you the reason.

We operate in a Constitution in which not everything is spelt out. The Constitution is based on the doctrine of responsible government. If you look at section 75 of the Constitution, you would see that the Ministers and Cabinet are collectively responsible to Parliament. Collective responsibility includes individual responsibility. The Government is voted in for five years or whatever period of time, on the basis that it operates in accordance with the rule of law. The conventions and spirit of the Constitution require the Government to adhere to those principles. That is why the Government is required, in the parliamentary system in which we operate, to make an effort. It has a duty to account and give reasons.

2.30 p.m.

It is not good for you, hon. Minister—I do not mean it in a personal way, I mean it as representative of the Government—as in this matter, to say, well, an important measure was to provide reasons and to make an amendment to provide the reasons for a licence being revoked and not granted or whatever it is, and for the Minister not to give the reason in Parliament why this measure took so long. You would not be able to convince any right-thinking person in this country that it could take seven years—

Hon. Member: Eight years.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: Eight years—to amend the amendments you talked about. The technical people in the legal department worked with me as an Attorney General; they are competent people; they are world-rated; they have international recognition; they are drafts persons of high intellectual calibre and what you are doing is insulting them. You are insulting the public officers to say that it will take seven years to make these amendments. Seven years! You are insulting the public officers in the Ministry of Social Development, whatever ministry, to say that they took seven years to conceptualize these amendments. This is a joke! And what you are doing is, you are playing political football with the children. [*Desk thumping*]

No, you have to level with them, because I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, as an Attorney General and a Member of Parliament now, I would invite some of you to go to the homes and talk to the parents of children who have either been kidnapped, murdered or abused and you will see the suffering, not only in their faces but in their everyday life. The mother of Sean Luke, I visited her home and

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she told me, "Mr. Maharaj, you cannot imagine, the Government cannot imagine, the Opposition cannot imagine what I have to live with every day. Whenever I see a child I remember my son and I believe that the Government and the politicians are responsible." So, when you, hon. Minister, get up in this House and you admit that this legislation is to protect children; to safeguard children; to keep them from harm; to keep them from rift and they are listening to you, could they really see any passion, any will—power of the Government to have done this for seven years? No, no, no, no, no.

I think I need to put this measure in place. I want to give the chronology a bit so that those who have to do research in the future and those who have to look at this matter will be able to say what legacy this Government has left in respect of the rights of children and whether this Government has caused or contributed to some of them not being with us in the world today.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation which is before this honourable House was part of a package of legislation, which consisted of the Adoption of Children Bill, the Children (Amdt.) Bill, the Miscellaneous Provisions (Children) Bill, the Children's Authority Bill and this Bill, which were laid as the children's package and on November 19, 1999, the House of Representatives started debating these measures and what happened is that the PNM Opposition at that time requested that the Bills be sent to a joint select committee and it was agreed by the Government.

I served as chairman of that committee—and I would not give the names of the members of that committee—both in the House and Senate. And what happened, the committee was assisted as a matter of record by the Law Commission and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel Department and the Report of the Joint Select Committee was adopted by the House of Representatives on September 27, 2000, and the legislative package was passed. Then it was passed in the Senate on October 03, 2000.

So, we have both Government and Opposition, as we will do today, we will support this measure; we will support it. You do not have to worry about that at all. If you had brought it in 2002, although I was not here, I am sure it would have been supported, because this really, apart from it, was conceptualized by the UNC administration; it is in the interest of the country and I would expect that the Government—and you would expect the Opposition to have supported it. But what happened is that after it was passed in 2000, the Bills did not see the light of day, nothing happened and when we next heard of it after the Government was changed on September 10, 2007, just a few days before the Parliament was

dissolved to have general election on November 05—am I correct about that date? That is an historic date, anyhow—on September 10, the Children (Amdt.) Bill, the Adoption of Children (Amdt.) Bill, the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill and the Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill were laid in the Parliament. Well obviously, no one would have expected those Bills to have been passed by September 28, because the Parliament was dissolved on September 28.

So, what conclusion would the mother of Sean Luke come to and the mothers of children who are listening today, to the contribution of the hon. Minister? Would it not be reasonable for them to say that those Bills were only introduced as a public relations gimmick in order to satisfy the governing party for a general election? What other reason could they come to that from 2001—2007, Government took no steps in the Parliament? Are you really telling this honourable House, hon. Minister, that from 2001—2007, it took those distinguished persons, who are drafts persons in the Ministry of the Attorney General, to draft these amendments for these measures? You cannot be seriously saying that. No, I know that, because there will be a limit. You could not be seriously saying that.

So, Mr. Speaker, at the time when I looked at it as a Minister, I saw that there was urgent need and the Government has agreed to provide effective mechanisms to safeguard children from irreversible long term effects of abuse, neglect and maltreatment. And that is what these measures were to do and to provide a mechanism for them to be rescued and to be saved.

What has happened is that in 2000, we have provided that legal framework to protect children from maltreatment; we provided the legal framework to prevent impairment of the children's health and in order to prevent impairment to their development; we provided the legal framework to ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and we provided the legal framework and mechanism for children to stay safe, healthy and their well-being to be safeguarded and protected. But what happened? That mechanism and those measures were frustrated by the Government of the day for seven years.

Those were mechanisms that would alert the institutions of potential indicators of abuse and neglect of children. Those mechanisms would alert the institutions to the risks that individual abusers or potential abusers may have posed to children. Those mechanisms would provide for there to be analysis of information, for the information to be shared and for an assessment to be made of the child's needs and circumstances. Those legal mechanisms and legal framework

would provide the mechanisms for action to be taken of what is needed to promote the child's welfare. The measures—the Minister has not mentioned it, but you cannot mention everything—provided for there to be partnership, collaboration and cooperation with the parents and members of the family in making decisions for the children or for the child.

So that what we have here is a very serious matter and I just want to reemphasize it, because we have denied children—and I am saying we—for seven years. We have denied those who were at risk of physical abuse and who may as a result have been physically abused. We have denied them protection, those who were at risk of sexual abuse and who may have continued to have sexual abuse inflicted upon them. We have denied them of remedy of children who may have been neglected by their parents or families; who have been badly treated; who were suffering emotional abuse; children who suffered abuse because of their disabilities and they could not assist themselves and those who collectively or individually had their health impaired and their development adversely affected. That is the injustice which we have done by not carrying out this law.

It is only—and I do not want to comment on it too much because it is still awaiting a decision, but it is a matter of record that for seven years also, the people of this country were denied an Equal Opportunity Act. So, you have a pattern in which you have an Act passed; the Act provides remedies for people's injustices; for them to get justice; the Government takes the position that the Act is unconstitutional; it does not go to court to have it declared unconstitutional; it takes the position on its own; the Parliament passed it, but the law is unconstitutional and not implemented.

Three years later, when physically challenged persons asked for the protection of the law, the Government takes the position that it was not carrying out the law, because it is unconstitutional. Time, money and resources had to be spent to go quite to London for the Privy Council to rule that the law was constitutional. And now time, energy and moneys have to be spent in order for those thousands of persons who had a remedy and under the law, the Equal Opportunity Act, the actions are statute-banned. So, by not carrying out the law, people's rights were extinguished. They cannot get a remedy again and the State is saying they were not denied the protection of the law and not entitled to compensation.

That brings me to this important issue and that is where the Government fails to obey and implement either the laws passed by Parliament or the will of the Parliament as expressed in a law to be proclaimed. What that does, it denies not the Opposition, it denies the people of the country the remedies and benefits given

to them by that law. I have tried to get, because there is a pattern of what is happening. Let us take some examples—I got some of them here, Mr. Speaker—of laws, which have been passed since 2000, which have given benefits to people, but the Government has not carried out the law, that is to say, from the time of the UNC to the time now of this Government after six and a half to seven years.

2.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, there is a law called the Land Adjudication Act, No. 14 of 2000. This Land Adjudication Act spent a lot of time in this Parliament, debating this law—Mr. Speaker, you may remember this also—and this would have provided an easy mechanism for land disputes and for deeds to be sorted out. Lawyers would make a lot less money today because a lot of these matters which go to court would not go to court so people would save their moneys and not spend them on lawyers. Legal fees are very high these days.

Here you have a Land Adjudication Act passed in 2000 on November 15, in the House and in the Senate on April 04, but nothing has happened. The law has not been carried into effect, so thousands of persons who could get relief under the Land Adjudication Act, who have land disputes, getting problem with their deeds, et cetera, you had in these measures duties on the State to take steps to ensure that boundary disputes and lines of property are sorted out for people to get their deeds.

Then you had another one, the Registration of Titles to Land Act, it was a package too. Registration of Titles to Land Act which provided a machinery for people to get their deeds—[*Inaudible*] Sorry?

Dr. Browne: Another one of yours?

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: Well, I would not say it is mine. [*Laughter*] As a matter of fact I know when the Opposition took Government they took the position that every law passed by that Attorney General had to be reviewed.

From 1996 to 2000, 243 pieces of legislation were passed and it was a massive law reform in every area—if I may say so—and the Cabinet of the UNC gave full support for that massive law reform measure. In 2002 to 2006, the same five-year period the PNM administration passed 112 laws. There are still many areas of law reform to be done. So, I am not saying it is mine; at the time when I was there. But let us come to it, let us zeroing , the Registration of Titles to Land Act—Minister you do not know, because I do not know if you go to the ground, and if you talk to ordinary people. I do not know. If you do not I could invite you

to Tabaquite. I will take you around. I will make some people cook for you and give you soup. Do you know where Tabaquite is?

Dr. Browne: Why Tabaquite?

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: Why Tabaquite? Well, we would go to Chaguanas West. Where do you want to go? I will take you anywhere you want to go. *[Interruption]* You do not want to go to Chaguanas West, all right, okay.

The Registration of Titles to Land Act, but that is not all. Then there is a Land Tribunal Act that provided that all land disputes would be solved by a tribunal and people would not have to go to court, et cetera. So this package of land legislation would have provided relief to a lot of people in Trinidad and Tobago. That is only three pieces of legislation. But we have another piece and I did not hear you talk about it since you were talking about social; you give me all the things about the ministry, what the ministry is doing. Do you know of a Homes for Older Persons Act that was passed in 2000.

Hon. Member: By whom?

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: No. Whoever passed it, I am not concerned about that, but it was passed in 2000. It was also passed *[Interruption]* as part of the children package. Then you had the Socially Displaced Persons Act.

You have legislation here in which this Socially Displaced Persons Act would have provided relief to a lot of people who are socially displaced. Now that is seven years, Mr. Minister! The Homes for Older Persons Act, is also the licensing of homes for older people for providing relief for them in ensuring that they are not at risk, et cetera. So, the children who need protection, take seven years, it will take 14 years for the older persons? But I would really like you to tell us why these pieces of legislation cannot be implemented. I am sure you could talk to your colleagues, you could find out why it is they cannot be implemented. Remember you all are doing things fast you know. You all could fire your colleague very quickly, and I saw where the colleague said that there was no "wajang" behaviour, you all got rid of him very quickly, so you all act very fast.

Hon. Member: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: Well, for many reasons. *[Laughter]*

So, Mr. Speaker, what I have noticed, however, and I hope I am wrong, but I checked it and I got it checked this morning. Although the Minister of National Security is saying that DNA tests are being done in respect of cases, the DNA Act

has not yet been proclaimed. The DNA Act has not yet been proclaimed according to the records! Now the Witness Protection Programme—we had a Justice Protection Act, No. 78 of 2000 in which that had dealt with the whole question of witness protection, but that also has not been proclaimed, has not been implemented. So what is happening with this Government? What are you all doing? What work is this Government doing?

Mr. Ramnath: Preventing football from taking place in the stadium.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: And there is the question of crime in which the Criminal Injuries Compensation (Amdt.) Bill of 2007—

Mr. Ramnath: Do not give them “no” bail.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC:—that was supposed to amend the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, but the Act also is not working. The public is not benefiting from it.

Mr. Speaker, there are many others, but there is a last one that I want to talk about. There was an Act passed, the Offences Against the Person (Amdt.) (No. 2) Act. That categorized murder. A lot of time was spent in this Parliament debating that, categorized murder, because you had the problem with the death penalty, et cetera. Not proclaimed! So, there is a pattern in this Government in not following the will of the Parliament.

I just want the Minister to know that I do not want you to think that what I said about the rationale for the policy in having those measures enacted was just either made up or taken from some Act. As a matter of fact before the Bills were drafted there was a lot of study done by the ministry, both the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Legal Affairs, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs as to why it was important to protect children; why it was important for the country to protect children.

There is an article which I have read, it was published in 2003, but it supports the rationale. It was published in the *Guardian* on May 13, 2003 by Dr. David E. Bratt, “Scars that don’t heal”, and then it talked about:

“Dad slits son's throat — put on bond”.

And it talked about that being common in Trinidad:

“Child abuse is rampant in T&T. It is so common that it is often not seen and has become part of our daily behaviour.”

Then it quotes what a social worker, Gregory Sloane-Seale says:

“A lot of people do things that totally degrade children on a daily basis but in their mind have no concept that what they are doing is degrading or abusive. You see it everyday on the street, children are always being disrespectful and mistreated.

The reason for this blindness is that many adult Trinidadians themselves have been abused as children and have yet to come to terms with their feelings regarding the insult to their minds or bodies. This attitude is not a problem of poor people, as many would wish, but is seen in every segment of society.

People who have attained the so-called highest positions that our society offers have been abused as children. And cannot forget it. And cannot bring themselves to do anything about it because it would mean confronting the people who abused them and who are the very people who were supposed to love and care for them.”

It goes on, and I will read the end of it:

“The aftermath of child abuse can manifest itself at any age in a variety of ways; depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, aggression, hyperactivity, substance abuse, etc.”

And then it says:

“Adequate nurturing and the absence of early severe stress permits the brains of children to develop in a manner that is less aggressive and more emotionally stable.

Society reaps what it sows in the way it nurtures its children.”

So the non-implementation of this Act did not only mean that you may have prevented persons from being physically abused, emotionally abused or sexually abused; but when that occurs it has a permanent effect on the lives of children who then become adults and they have to live in the society, and deviant behaviour results from some of that. You can have situations where serious criminal conduct can result from that kind of exposure. Therefore, irreparable damage and injury are done to children who have been exposed to these risks and these harms.

It really impacts also upon the crime situation and we are seeing in the country the kinds of offences being committed against children. We are seeing children committing kidnapping, we are seeing children being kidnapped. I take the fact

that it does not mean to say that the Government is directly responsible for a murder, but obviously if the Government does not put the necessary measures in place or it does not provide mechanisms to prevent the risk and harm of children, then it takes the political responsibility for being the cause and being responsible.

Mr. Speaker, this pattern of not obeying the law, I just want to share one area that maybe, I hope, will help the Government and help the people of Trinidad and Tobago. A lot of criminal offences which have been committed against children over the last few years may never be solved and the culprits may never be prosecuted. The reason is not only that they may not be detected, the reason is that even if they have been detected what has happened may have polluted the prosecution process and would not be able to get the prosecution off the ground.

I had the pleasure and also the misfortune to hear some matters from some members of the police service and what I understand is this, that because there are really two police services in Trinidad and Tobago; the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service the other one under Brigadier Joseph—

Mr. Ramnath: Patrick Manning, SAUTT.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: SAUTT—what has happened is that a lot of the serious offences including murder, kidnapping, rape and incest have been investigated by officers of SAUTT, but these officers are not authorized officers under the law to give evidence in court on their investigations. Under the Police Service Act, only the members of the police service under the command of the Commissioner of Police can investigate crime and give evidence of their investigations in court. I am told that because of this thousands—they told me thousands but even if it is not thousands, let us say hundreds, that a large number—of investigations are in limbo, which would therefore mean that a lot of people who have committed murders, committed rapes, incest, offences against children may never be prosecuted. I hope that they are wrong, but I would urge the Government that if that is the situation they should take urgent action to find a way to get whatever legal advice they want from London, Trinidad, wherever they want to get it from—

Hon. Member: From Mr. Cassel.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: —Mr. Cassel, whoever it is, but to try to find a way, because if I were the Attorney General and that had happened, obviously, I would move every stone in order to ensure that there was a way in which, notwithstanding those errors, that the prosecution could go on.

And if that happens, it will even be a more decisive blow against the Government. That is to say, if these people cannot be prosecuted, it would be

even a more decisive blow against the Government in its ability to deal with the crime problem.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, when you consider the number of offences—and I will just mention four areas—in which the crimes have not been detected and now you consider that even if they have been detected or even if they have been partially detected, that if some of these police officers who gave this information is correct and that these people may not be able to be prosecuted, one sees the seriousness of the situation, because according to the statistics which I read in this House sometime ago, from 2002—2007, 503 out of 1,810 murders were detected; 645 out of 1,300 kidnappings were detected; 2,999 rapes and sexual offences and incest out of 4,271 have been detected; and we are not talking about 2008.

Mr. Speaker, children are involved, the future of children are involved because when these crimes are committed against them and the law is impotent and cannot deal with the criminals, then society losses confidence in the legal system and in the justice system. I would urge the Government to conduct an urgent investigation into this matter to see whether what has been stated is correct, and if it is correct, for them to take immediate action in order to deal with the situation.

I have decided today also, to share some of my experience in respect of the kidnapping problem in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member for Tabaquite has expired.

Motion made, That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Dr. H. Rafeeq*]

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC: Mr. Speaker, I thank hon. Members for the privilege of speaking for a few more minutes. The kidnapping problem in Trinidad and Tobago has become very serious. As a matter of fact, while I was away, I had some time to do some further research, and when you compare what is happening here, the kind of kidnappings, and what is happening in other countries of South America, if nothing is done about it, we would not be able to curtail this problem. It is clear that there are kidnapping companies in Trinidad and Tobago which is a money-making exercise. They are running a business and it is being done in a way in which for whatever reasons, the Government and police seem impotent to deal with it.

I went to a funeral yesterday, not someone who was murdered, but when I came out of the home, I thought I was in a different country because I saw about 50 bodyguards for persons who went to the funeral. I thought I was in a South American country, Italy or so where they have all these kidnappings. I went home last night and I decided to share something and I have to be very careful how I share it because I do not want to violate any secrecy when I occupied office.

Mr. Speaker, when I served as Attorney General, we had a situation in which there was a certain person who was wanted, but the person was in Trinidad and Tobago going to all of the functions, even attending police functions and for some reason he could not be found, he could not be arrested, he could not be detained and what I did is that—we tried everything. I had all the meetings that were required. The National Security Council had all the meetings, whatever it is—I took up the phone and I phoned a certain Attorney General of a certain country and I explained to that Attorney General what this Attorney General was facing. That Attorney General provided immediately, within hours, two officers and technology, in which if that person phones, you would be able to see where that person is in Trinidad on a screen.

So what then happened—and I was privileged to be present when this was being done, because the person was telephoning persons including police officers, and it showed on the screen what part of Trinidad and Tobago that phone call was from and when the next call was made it also showed on that screen—was that with the Commissioner of Police and the action being taken, they zeroed in on the person, but for some reason the person was still allowed to escape in Chaguanas. A lot of police, but the person was still allowed to escape—and I said allowed to escape. Within the next few days, he was arrested and he was detained and justice was done.

I say this, because I have made some enquiries and I have been told—and probably the Government can clear this up—that the Government acquired appropriate equipment from Israel and that equipment, included equipment which can show where the person—like if someone is kidnapping and the kidnapper is speaking to the family, that call, it can be worked where you can see where that call is coming from, so that the police would be able to zero in on the kidnapper. I am told that although that equipment is here, the Government has not released the funds and the expertise for that equipment to work.

Mr. Speaker, that is why sometime ago—if there is one thing that I did when I was an Attorney General, I became very familiar with some of this technology—I said and I maintain it up to today, that if I were the Attorney General of Trinidad

and Tobago at this time or a Minister of National Security—and I stay away from saying any other position—I would have been able to cause a kidnapper to be caught in the act of kidnapping. Because with the technology that is available today, there is no reason why kidnap victims and their families have to negotiate with kidnapers and pay heavy ransom, and the State and the Government sits back as if it is totally impotent to deal with it. I say this not to get any kudos for myself; I say this in the national community because I think I owe it to the national community, in that what is happening is that more and more people are suffering from crime. They have been the victims and unless something happens in this country, there will be total anarchy and a breakdown of law and order.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to make this a crime debate, but I thought I should say this. What we have, however, in Trinidad and Tobago, in closing, I think that we can safely say that as a nation, we have failed our children miserably. The nation's schools are in a mess; education system has collapsed; and that is why it is very important to have the Children's Authority in this children legislation enforced. That would at least provide some measure to alleviate the problem.

We are already experiencing a culture of death in Trinidad and Tobago and not even the children are being spared. The recent incident of baby Hope would cause us to wonder what is happening and I really want to ask the question, how many more must die for us to do something about it? I am only hoping that something happens. I hope that something will happen that the Government would wake up, they will see some sign and they would do something, but I do not think that I am speaking out of tune with the public opinion. It is as if the Government cannot do, is not doing, and would not be able to do anything about the crime problem and saving the children.

My friend, the hon. Minister, gave a quotation that if you act fastly what will happen, but I just—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Browne: Fast.

Mr. R. L Maharaj SC: If you act fast, what would happen. All I can say is if the Government acts slow and dead slow, a lot more people would die and a lot more children will die.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Development (Hon. Alicia Hospedales): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this debate on the Bill to amend the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act, 2000.

Mr. Speaker, a wise man before he builds a house, always considers the cost. It is one thing for the Members on the opposite side, especially the Member for Tabaquite to boast of their contribution to the legislation, but it is another thing for us to have implemented legislation that was ineffective, riddled with deficiencies and that certainly would have created more operational problems for the authorities, institutions or individuals it sought to regulate. These deficiencies have already been highlighted by my colleague, the Member for Deigo Martin Central, so I will not rehash them.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation that is before us today, was not reviewed in isolation, but rather with the contribution of many individuals, as well as with the collaboration of many stakeholders for the information of the Members on the other side. The Member for Tabaquite talked about public relations gimmick, when he and other Members of his team insensibly called the names of the children who suffered abuse, as a means of gaining attention, and yes, without the permission of the families.

One thing I have learnt in social work is that we need to be sensitive to the needs of others, who would have experienced traumatic incidents. It is their public relations gimmick that results in the continued reliving of the moments by family members of these affected children. Is this sensitive? Do these Members really demonstrate care?

The Member for Tabaquite should know that the race is not for the swift, but for those who endure to the end. He made a comparison between the number of Bills passed in their time to over 200-plus and compared the Bills that were passed on our side to be over 100-plus, but my mother always told me: "If you can't do something well, don't do it at all." [*Desk thumping*] These are the same words I echo to the Members on the other side, because their track record shows that everything they did was not done well. Mr. Speaker, hurry birds "doh" ever build good nest. Surely, we see the evidence today because they sit on the other side.

Again, we are fully aware of the effects of child abuse, and as a result, we are taking the necessary steps to ensure that this type of abuse ceases in our society.

3.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, for the information of the Member for Tabaquite, it is always very important that you check the credibility of the sources that provide you with information, and then practise this very important principle: Speak what you know and testify when you have seen.

For the information of Members on the other side, the future of the children of Trinidad and Tobago is in good hands. This Government acknowledges that children have rights and essential development needs that should be met, regardless of where they live, what socio-economic background they come from, their age, gender, religion or race. As a Government we, therefore, seek to safeguard children's rights, help to meet their basic needs and expand their opportunities so they could reach their full potential.

We believe that these fundamental rights should be protected to ensure that children in institutions or foster care and those who are sent to nurseries are shielded from harm. We acknowledge that many of these homes, indeed, engage in good child care practices, but the quality of care, however, is dependent on a number of variables that converge. This means that a number of homes offer different levels of care that often raise questions in our minds about the acceptability of care provided. It is for this reason that we are seeking, through this piece of legislation, to ensure that children in residential care, foster homes and nurseries are protected, and monitoring mechanisms effectively regulate the provision of services to these children.

It is the Government's desire, through this piece of legislation, to improve the standards of care, safeguard children, improve their life chances and opportunities and contribute to the improved level of professionalism and status of caregivers. It is, therefore, important for us to set standards for these children's residences, foster caregivers and nurseries.

As a government, it is our responsibility to ensure that these institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care and protection of children, conform to the standards established, particularly in the areas of safety, health, nutrition, the number of suitability of staff, as well as the provision of competent supervision.

Setting standards for residential homes, foster homes and nurseries does not mean that all these homes should do the same things the same way, but, rather, it means that caregivers should have a standardized level of skill, knowledge and qualities that are identified as necessary for dealing with the issues and challenges presented by the children in their care. The objective of standardization lies in ensuring that child care practices and procedures acknowledge the rights of the child, and is also necessary to make certain that protection is given against abuse and that the relevant support is given to those who have already been abused.

This Government intends to take all necessary steps to ensure that the relevant legislation is passed, the relevant administrative as well as social and educational measures are established and strengthened to protect the child from all forms of

physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of any person who has the care of that child.

Mr. Speaker, we intend to have the same standardization established across all homes, although, as I indicated earlier, we know there may be differences in the way it is implemented. With this in mind, we have identified a number of protective measures. For the information of Members on the other side, these measures include the establishment of the Children's Authority to monitor community residences, foster homes and nurseries and conduct periodic reviews to determine their compliance with the requirements. The Authority also has the power to issue, suspend and revoke licences of the community residences and nurseries, as provided for under this present piece of legislation before us today.

Mr. Speaker, additionally, we have sought to strengthen institutions by ensuring that additional counsellors at four major children's homes, thus promoting improved care and counselling for children and their significant others.

Another component to improve the outcomes for children in children's residences, fosters homes and nurseries, has been the establishment of a comprehensive training programme for caregivers which has been facilitated by staff members of the National Family Services Division of the Ministry of Social Development, as well as training and retraining for foster parents which will begin before the end of this year, once the Children's Authority is established. We believe that through training and education, these caregivers and fosters parents would be empowered to take action to remove obstacles to progress. The training is intended to provide an increased opportunity for them to develop set values and high standards of practice as they come to the recognition that they are accountable for their own child care practices. Additionally, their own actions will be based on informed assessment about the children in their care, rather than following routines or doing what seems best or appropriate in a given situation.

Mr. Speaker, these measures are necessary because we have recognized that if they are not taken, children would be exposed to consistent maltreatment at the hands of their caregivers in residences, foster homes and nurseries. Again, the licence for children's homes and nurseries and registration for foster parents can and will be revoked by the Children's Authority, once there is failure to comply with the relevant standards, as well as corrective measures will be taken where possible. The parties concerned will, indeed, be informed of the grounds on which the revocation took place.

Despite what Members of the Opposition say, in the absence of legislation, the National Family Services Division has been responsible for the monitoring of children's homes. This division has been able to successfully remove children, for the information of Members on the other side, from two homes where they were being physically or sexually abused and where the management failed to provide adequate health care, safety and security and an adequate diet for them. This responsibility would now be assigned or placed on the Children's Authority, upon its establishment.

This is a sign of a government that has, indeed, demonstrated and continues to demonstrate that we care. This PNM Government intends to fulfil our mandate to nurturing a caring society; one way we can ensure that our goal is realized is by investing in our children today. We see them as a valuable asset to the continued development of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Speaker, Trinidad and Tobago is set to accomplish great things under the leadership of this present Government, and the development of our children will flourish as we establish the necessary protective measures.

For the information of Members on the other side, we deliver because we care. One may ask how this is demonstrated; this Government has sought to provide assistance through subventions to a number of children's homes from the period 1991—1993 and 2002 to the present. For the information of this honourable House, based on credible documentation, only one new subvention was authorized to assist with the recurrent expenditure of a children's home under the UNC government.

This approval was made in the year 1998. For a five-year period, they only authorized one new subvention to give support to children's homes, and those Members claim to care. Good, sound advice for those Members, would be to stop the flattery. I am not sure if Members on the other side are aware but, again, for their information, over \$56 million has been paid in subventions during the period 2005—2007 to assist with the management and day-to-day care and operations of the homes that receive funding from this Government. *[Interruption]*

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Would the hon. Minister give way? To how many homes was that \$56 million given?

Hon. A. Hospedales: For the information of the Member for Siparia, these were 13 homes.

For the same period, over \$33 million has been paid to two industrial homes. What baffles me is Members on the other side's continuous fabricated representation to the children of Trinidad and Tobago. What did they do to provide assistance to

the non-governmental organizations (NGOs)? Do not forget for one moment that they only approved one new subvention during their term in office; how pathetic.

I know Members on the opposite side would not openly admit it, but deep in their hearts they say that the only government that truly cares about the people and children of Trinidad and Tobago is the PNM Government. [*Desk thumping*] It is this PNM Government that cares about the people of Trinidad and Tobago. It is this Government that is concerned with the needs and development of all children who represent our future work force, future leaders and members who would contribute to the continuance of this human race. We echo the words of Herbert Hoover, the 31st US President who said:

"Children are our most valuable natural resources."

Because we care about the safety and well-being of all children, we expanded the foster care programme in 2004. This resulted in an increase in the number of children being placed in foster homes, from 13 in 2002 to 42 at present. Our vision is that this number would increase to 2000 with the establishment of the Children's Authority.

Barber and Delfabro, in a study of children in foster care, revealed that the benefits to foster care for children are security, freedom from harm, improved psychosocial functioning during their time in care, decline in their emotional distress and hyperactivity, as well as improvement in the child's behaviour at home and at school. Under the foster care arrangement children are also able to maintain contact with their family members. We recognize the benefits of the foster care programme to the children and, by extension, to the society. As a result, support for the expansion of this programme has been demonstrated by increases in the amount of money allocated to it.

The amount of money released to the foster care programme, to date, rose from \$275,000 in 2004, to over \$1.4 million at present. This sum is expected to increase with the projected increase in the number of children who would be assigned to the foster care programme. The question, again, that I would like to ask Members on the other side is: What did you do for the advancement of the foster care programme in this country? I am sure the statistics would be very daunting. You really cared?

This Government has decided that there is need to deepen and strengthen the partnerships with the non-governmental sector; as a result, all our policies and guidelines relevant to the sector are now under review. This Government is seeking to forge a strategic partnership with the non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations so that its development goals, as they relate

Children's Foster Homes (Amdt.) Bill
[HON. A. HOSPEDALES]

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

to service delivery, could be pursued more vigorously and be achieved with the effective support of all its social partners. As indicated by my colleague, the Member for Diego Martin Central, today was our second stakeholder conference with members of the non-governmental organization (NGO) community, as well as civil society organizations.

3.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the partnership would be a strategic one in that it will be developed in a manner that conscientiously takes advantage of the unique capabilities of the non-governmental sector and would be developed within a framework that is people centred.

A non-governmental organization unit will be established in the Ministry of Social Development to coordinate the matters pertaining to the contracting of organizations that would deliver services and programmes to the ministry's clientele. Added to this framework to guide the relationship between the Government and the NGOs for the delivery of social services has also been the result of consideration that as much as 60 per cent of the organization's annual operating expenditure will be provided through subventions.

Mr. Speaker, again it is our desire that young children in remand also receive the best possible care and protection. To this end, the Government's efforts to ensure that they are cared for in a safe environment have led to the commencement of construction for a boys' as well as a girls remand facility in East Trinidad. These institutions will be monitored to ensure that children who remain in those facilities will be protected.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation before the House today, gives the Children's Authority the power that is needed to ensure that the children who are over the age of 16 are placed in hostels and transitional homes and to provide proper monitoring and regularization of these homes. This is necessary to cater to the needs of children leaving institutions especially for those who do not have adequate social support.

Mr. Speaker, effective implementation of the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act should improve the well-being of children in children's homes, foster care and nurseries who are in need of care and protection and it should therefore reduce the incidence of abuse. I am in full agreement and support of this Bill and believe that we have set the stage for major transformation in this nation with respect to the way our children are treated.

I thank you.

Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar (*Siparia*): Mr. Speaker, I really do not want to get into a left and right and they and us with the hon. Member, so apart from one comment, I will move on to this very important Bill. It is to say that the boast of the PNM and all the great things—great is the PNM and so forth and comparing it to UNC's time in office. When the Government cannot even protect the children's exam papers, how can they protect the children? [*Desk thumping*]

So I leave the hon. Member, I always say she is young, bright and enthusiastic. I will not go into any attacks against her because I would really like to get into the Bill. My colleague, the Member for Tabaquite has given an overview of the legislation, the intent behind it and work that has been done. I would endorse those comments and go to the Bill that is before us today. So seeing that in context of what has happened in seeking to protect children in this country, I want to take some time to deal with specific aspects of this amending Bill that is before the House.

In doing so, I want to look at three main areas: the institutional care in this country, the legal drafting in this Bill that has taken all these years to come, and certainly I want to look at the provision resources for children. If I may quote from an article in the *Newsday* of June 05, 2008 the headline says: "Laws alone will not protect children". So whilst we have the difficulties that the hon. Member for Tabaquite has mentioned—and which this entire House and the country knows about—the failure to implement the legislation that went in tandem with the failure on the part of the authorities to take steps that were necessary outside the legislation to give protection to children, those are some of the areas I would want to look at.

Mr. Speaker, in an article that was published in 1999, the same Dr. Bratt of whom my colleague spoke opened an article by saying that this does not seem to be a good time to be a child in Trinidad. He was referring then to the rampant epidemic of child abuse, he was appealing to the instinctive anger that many adults felt towards the disease, and issued a public plea to stop defending and proliferating the associated activities with respect to children.

Mr. Speaker, we pass forward from 1999 to today, eight years later we are eight years into the new century, the third millennium of mankind and the media in this information age is feeding us with visuals by the electronic and print media all these images of children who we would remember, but for all the wrong reasons and some of those names have been mentioned by the Member for Tabaquite and the Member for Oropouche West. We will remember these children for the wrong reasons because they are the ones who have been brutalized and traumatized.

That having happened between then and now, from 2000 when this law was passed and today, the question really in dealing with this Bill is whether the existing children's homes are in a position to qualify for the licence that this Act, when enacted, the authority will be able to grant? What has been done in the seven years since these Acts were passed to assist in making the homes ready?

The hon. Member spoke about 13 homes and I am very surprised that neither of the Ministers in that ministry saw it fit to refer to a document: A study of Children's Homes in Trinidad and Tobago which was commissioned by the Ministry of Social Development and authored by Adele Jones and Michele Sogren from the Social Work Unit, Department of Behavioural Sciences of the University of the West Indies in April 2005. This document was in the possession of the ministry since April 2005 and it did a comprehensive survey of all the children's homes in Trinidad and Tobago, and at that time there were 44 homes. That is why I asked the hon. Member when the Member boasted of giving help to 13, what has happened to the others?

The Minister again boasted that the family services were able to move children from a home because they were not getting proper care and it did not have facilities and it is all to do with the resources that are being provided to homes. So here we are in the study of 2005—I do not know if the Minister is aware of the study, but this is in 2005 where there were 44 homes existing. Some of them had been there before, but at the time of the study commissioned by the ministry there were 44 homes.

In this study as well, the problems which these homes were having were identified and they gave recommendations as to the way forward. I do not understand why when we are dealing with a Bill on Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries, but most certainly the Community Residences, no mention is made of this. Instead the Minister spent his time picking up the Explanatory Note of the Bill, which every Member of Parliament has, and just read it through.

Tell us you know how many homes there are. You know how many children are in the homes, tell us if that is so or not. Tell us what has changed from the study to now; tell us what the situation is today. I do not see how you can come without dealing with this because you commissioned it, which was a good thing because you must have research and empirical data before you can plan and go forward, but the Minister ignores this completely, so I will have to spend a little time looking at this and pointing to what the situation is now. We know what it was in 2000, that is why we took the steps to pass legislation then. They have not

passed it. Okay, we have dealt with that and as the Member for Tabaquite says, you have to say sorry, you have to apologize for that. Let us put that behind us, we are here today, tell us what you have done. You did not do the legislation, what have you done to help protect the children?

Here is the study and I am asking what have you done during the six or seven years to make these homes ready to be able to access a licence? Because when this Act becomes law and it is proclaimed, these homes have three months within which to apply for a licence and the criteria they must fill is that they must be qualified in certain ways, they must have the physical infrastructure and other criteria or else they will not get a licence. And if they do not get a licence, this law says they have to shut down. They cannot operate without a licence.

So in the meantime while you were fixing these so-called deficiencies, operational legislation riddled with deficiencies, operational problems, while all that was being drafted—and my colleague, the Member for Tabaquite dealt with that thoroughly, I do not need to go into that drafting. I also had some experiences in the Ministry of the Attorney General, short it may have been, but I was there and I know what the drafting is about. I understand that legal officers are there who do the drafting and they are good officers.

So let us put those deficiencies aside. Okay, you were busy seeing about the drafting and it took seven years. What about assisting these homes to make them ready that the day this law comes into force, every single document coming from the Ministry of Social Development, your National Plan of Action, your studies, the MIC3—where is it? You mentioned the Multiple Indicator Clusters Survey 3 as being completed and I have tried everywhere including your ministry to get a copy without success. I will be very happy if you will allow me to have a copy of that because that too is going to give us the situational analysis of what it is. *[Interruption]*

I did not ask you, Sir, I tried your ministry. I went on your website, I saw a number and it said contact the ministry at this number. I did not think I had to personally ask you, but if that is now necessary, a member of the public will now have to ask the Minister personally to get this document. This is a public document; it is done together with the national agencies. Every one of those documents has been telling you that you must put the legislation in place, so you knew that, and you were busy drafting it so you could not put legislation in place, but in the meantime how were you helping these homes to become compliant and to be ready on the day that it is proclaimed?

A further question would be what did you do over the past six years in the absence of the legislation to protect children? What did you do over the past six years to improve the quality of care of children in these community residences and homes?

Mr. Speaker, I believe we can find a clue to the Government's answer in clause 32 of the amending Bill which reads:

“The Act is amended in section 33—

(a)...(1) by inserting...the words where a foster child is being kept.”

It is a simple typo, Mr. Speaker, “where a foster child is being kept”. So after six and a half years or seven years of drafting to cure the Government's self-styled deficiencies in this legislation, they cannot get it right up to today. Instead we get “foster child” being kept somewhere. After six years in which Government had to put infrastructure in place, they have failed to do that; instead we get “foster child” six and a half or seven years later. After seven years, they have failed the children of this nation in every arena of governance and the life of every citizen, including the children, has deteriorated under their watch. So this is not just the UNC saying that, if you look at every major international index—and I spoke on some of them the other night—Trinidad and Tobago has fallen in the rankings from 2000/2001 to the present day.

3.45 p.m.

They have fallen on the Human Development Indices; they have fallen on the Business Indices—

Mr. Warner: Corruption.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: No. That one is a little different. I am talking about their fall in ranking. They have fallen on the Governance; they have fallen on the Humanity Development Indices; they have fallen on the Business Indices; they have fallen on the Governance Indicators and the only one you have risen on is on the Corruption Index.

Mr. Imbert: Not true.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Not true? Well, I did not plan to do that, but I will give them to you because I do have them. I will put it on the record, because I have these here. These studies are done every year and put out by the international agencies.

The Humanity Development Index put out by the UNDP every year, in 2001, Trinidad and Tobago was ranked at 49, under the UNC. When we get to 2007/2008,

Trinidad and Tobago under the PNM of six-and-a-half years has dropped in its position to 59. Because it is a bigger number does not mean that you are better off. If you are number one, you are up there. We have fallen in the ranking. What is interesting is that our Caricom partners are better off than us. Barbados is at 31; The Bahamas is at 49; we are at 59. This is the HDI 2007/2008.

Dr. Browne: Where were they before?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: It does not matter where they were, the point is at present, they are better off on these indices than we are. That is the point, and you can pick them up in the UNDP HDI Reports. The Member for Diego Martin North/East could bleat all he wants: "not true; not true", these are public documents available on the World Wide Web for any person to access at any point in time.

There is another one, the Human Poverty Index. In this also we have fallen. In 2001, we are at 5; at 2007/2008 we have gone to 12. Again, Barbados is at number one; St. Lucia is even better than us, at 8. These are the nations we run around giving money to; we are feeling sorry for them. We have a Caricom Special Fund and a Caricom Special Petroleum Fund. We saw some increases recently in the Parliament with the supplementary appropriation. So they are taking our money and they are performing better than we are and we have far more money than they have, but we are not doing anything better.

The World Bank puts out the Business Indicators. One of these is known as the "Doing Business Indicator". In this, we were at 55 in 2005. This indicator was not there for the 2000 period. But just to show from 2005 to 2008, instead of getting better, we have deteriorated. We have gone to 67. "Starting a Business", we have fallen; "Ease of Getting Credit", we have fallen.

The World Economic Forum puts out a global competitiveness report. There are two indices that they measure. One is known as the Growth Competitiveness Index (GCI) and the other is known as the Business Competitive Index (BCI). On this also, Trinidad and Tobago has gone to a worse position. In 2001/2002 on the GCI, we ranked 38; by 2007/2008, we have gone to 84. We have slipped as way down as 84 on the GCI. On the Business Competitiveness Index, in 2001/2002 we have gone from 34 to the latest report from the World Bank for 2007/2008, to 74. This is not the UNC saying it. We know it and every citizen in this land knows that the quality of life has deteriorated. We feel it and we experience it. But here are international indicators; this is empirical evidence that the country has fallen in almost every regard.

So we can go on to the other indices; the other one I want to give. The Governance Indicators, as I say, I do not want to spend too much time in going through every one of these. The only one that we increased in was the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). In 2001, we were at 31; in 2007, which is the latest report, we have gone to 79. The country has become more corrupt in the six-year period under the PNM.

There is a second corruption index. That first one I mentioned—the CPI—comes from Transparency International. The second one comes from the World Bank and the World Bank also did the “Control of Corruption Indicator” and this measures the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain. Again, in 2000, we had a ranking—this was not a ranking but this measure placed us at a comfortable 62.1. By 2006, it had gone to 54.9.

As I talk about this corruption, we spent time in this House here on UDeCott, about dealing with a motion for a joint select committee on UDeCott and big announcements and pronouncements about corruption at UDeCott. Where is the commission of enquiry that was promised? All the big, big frenzy, and whatever, that went on; fanfare and whatever: “We are going to set up a commission of enquiry”; where is it? How many weeks later? Where is the commission of enquiry? Everybody forgot about it? Nobody is even asking about it any more. Where is the commission of enquiry that in our *Hansard* record the hon. Prime Minister stands up here and says: “I am going to set up a commission of enquiry?” And up to today, as usual, they cannot keep their word.

So, on all these indices, I am saying we have fallen. I come back to the children, because the Minister, in a statement in this House, was very proud of the fact that certain health initiatives had been taken. On January 07 of this year, in the Minister's statement, the hon. Minister said:

“Health initiatives present another area where strides have been made in improving the status and well-being of the nation's children. Comprehensive antenatal services are now established throughout the country and have served to improve maternal and child health.”

The empirical evidence does not support that statement. In other words, nothing is further from the truth, and if I you were to quote the hon. Member for Arouca/Maloney, “that is a false lie”. That was the term she used on the last occasion. Because if we take the reports that come out of UNICEF—every year UNICEF puts out these documents: “The State of the World's Children.” This is the latest report, the 2008 report. It is an international organization especially for children.

In this 2008 report, I looked at it; I saw the indicators and I went back and checked from previous years to this one. So we have, what in this document is the under-five mortality rate, because the hon. Member is saying health initiatives improved; child health; antenatal services, and so on, and here we are, where the under-five mortality rate provided by UNICEF, in 1999, this country had a ranking of 149; by the time we get down to 2008 in this document, it is now 75. We have gone as low as 75 in our rank!

Again, as I say, St. Kitts is better than we are; Dominica is better off than we are, at 128; Bahamas at 130; St. Lucia, 130; Barbados, 138; Antigua, 143. Look at these countries: St. Kitts, Dominica, and we, in Trinidad and Tobago, at 75 in 2008. [*Interruption*] Whether they have 2000 people or not, let us understand how this works. The under-five mortality rate is measured by births per thousand. It is the percentage of persons who give birth to these children—under-five mortality rate. It is not done in absolute numbers; it is done per thousand. So it does not matter whether the country has 5,000, 10,000 or 10 million. The way it is calculated is across the board and it is the same.

So when we come to the rate of progress—and this is a very frightening one—that is to say, how much we have improved in terms of taking care of our young babies, listen to this from this same document at Table 10. In Trinidad and Tobago the under-five mortality rate is given and you have in The Bahamas, 1990, it was 49; by 2006, their rate had gone down to 29. So they had improved their position. Barbados in 1990, 54; by 2006, went down to 17. They had improved their position. Grenada, of all people—I could not believe this, so I kept looking, three times, to make sure I was not reading the fine print wrong—in 1990, 37; 2006, they had gone down to 20. When we come to Trinidad and Tobago—

Dr. Browne: How is that related?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: How is it related? It is related to young children who would be placed in these residences; who may go into a nursery. The Minister does not understand how this is related to community residences?

Mr. Warner: Are you surprised?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: The Minister should be reading “The State of the World’s Children” and looking at Trinidad and Tobago; looking at every one of these to see what it is saying to us. You boasted in this Parliament about improved health initiatives, improving things for children, and here is the hard evidence telling you that is not so! And you are asking what this has to do with community

residences? Who are you putting in the community residences? Children! That is what you are doing there. Who will be in these nurseries? In your Bill you have said there will be children under six in the nurseries. So these are the people you are talking about, the under-five mortality rate. So it is the care that we must give to them and that has not happened.

I come back to Rate of Progress. The Minister stopped me just when I got to Trinidad and Tobago, so I must get back to Trinidad and Tobago to see where we are. I have said The Bahamas has improved its position; Barbados has improved its position from 1990 to 2006; Grenada has improved from 1990 to 2006; Trinidad and Tobago in 1990, the rate was 34, and now in 2006, we are 38. It is not that it is a great difference, the point is, we have made no improvement. In fact, we have gotten worse and we boast about the billions spent.

So there is a disconnect of the money being spent in this country and the outcomes in terms of human development for the people of the nation. There is a serious disconnect and unless we can find out why that is so, and unless we can plan for that not to be so, then all the money in the world is not going to improve the quality of life of the majority of people in this country. That is what these indices are showing when we come to the HDIs. So you have money and growth, but it is not sustainable growth and it is not growth that touches and impacts upon the welfare and the quality of life for people of the country, and that has repercussions for the children of this country.

So when we look at the infant mortality rate which is under one, again, in 1990, it was 30; in 2006 it was 33. So we are getting worse! Why is this happening? How much is being spent in health care?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Three billion dollars per year.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Three billion dollars per year in health care, and then we are saying we are taking steps to deal with children.

So I am saying the empirical evidence is not in our favour for improvement in every arena that we look at. So here we are today, debating this Bill to amend the Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act, and that must be read, obviously, in tandem with the Children's Authority Act. I heard the hon. Member say the Bills "speak to each other". That is a nice expression. I would like to think that in speaking to each other they work in tandem; they go hand in hand. You cannot read one without reading the other.

So, the population we are dealing with are children under 18. That is the Convention on the Rights of a Child's definition, and within the package of

legislation it was meant that we should amend all our laws to bring them in conformity with that. Of course, that has not happened either. Maybe they would bring the next Bill in that package which would seek to amend other pieces of legislation, so that whenever we talk about a child, we mean the same thing, because right now in the legislation of this country you have differing legal interpretations as to who a child is. For this legislation now, we have fixed it as under 18.

We have about 437,000 children under 18 years. That is about one-third of the population. It is a massive number of people. What are we doing for them?

4.00 p.m.

I come back to the Bill. All of it is related. I bring back to your attention the study of children's homes in Trinidad and Tobago. The truth is that when we see the track record of implementation, I do not expect this legislation to be implemented in the short-term. We will see within the structure of it why it is so. The Government has only given lip service to the protection of children from the period 2002—2008. In the Government's document of the Ministry of Social Development which I thought the hon. Minister would have brought for us, the National Plan of Action for Children 2006—2010— Minister I am sure that you have seen this one—I thought that the Minister would have said that here is a section on children in institutions at risk. Children are being abused; children in institutions are being neglected; sexual exploitation of children; children in conflict with the law and child labour, all these are in this National Plan of Action for Children.

I suspect that the Minister did not raise this, perhaps, because they have failed to implement their plan of action so that they would want to keep this document secret. It took us much work to get a copy of this document. Eventually, we were lucky to get it. That is another thing. We must have information.

This is a public document paid for with taxpayers' money. This is the committee that the Government set up to deal with this package of legislation. In this National Plan of Action, page 63 deals with children in institutions. It says:

Homes are not in a state of readiness for the implementation of the Children's Authority Act, 2007. Although a significant number of homes are developed, there are constraints that will prevent them from meeting new requirements. Introducing regulations is a positive step...Homes are not in a state of readiness for implementation of the Act. Training and development needs in staff and children's homes must be addressed by Government for implementation of the legislation to be effective. Levels of training and staff

are militated against optimum care for children. There continues to be reports of abuse of children within institutions... Training of caregivers and managers of children's homes has been conducted. This has not achieved the required minimum level of training of staff.

All this is in their document. We come to the challenges and needs done by Jones and Sogren. I will read the status of these homes as at 2005 when this study was done and repeated in the National Plan of Action, put out in 2006, by the ministry quoting Jones and Sogren. These are the needs and challenges which remain to today. This is why I ask: What have you done in the six or seven years to assist these homes to get ready to comply with the new legislation? Nothing because they remain not ready for the new legislation. In this study by Jones and Sogren at page 10 we get what has been done as the executive summary and thereafter on page 16, Challenges and Needs.

"...The challenges in general arose as consequences of problematic behaviour among staff and managers, deficiencies in meeting the needs of the children and the inadequacies of the remuneration agreements.

The issues concerning recruitment practices, level of staff preparedness for child-care and the attitudes and interactional skills of staff were presented overwhelmingly as significant challenges to the homes' effective functioning. It was reported that having large numbers of untrained and inexperienced carers usually resulted in inconsistencies in management, disciplinary and interactional practices which were observed to provide 'a natural breeding ground for disciplinary problems...' These unhealthy conditions were further nurtured by reports of a high incidence of verbal and physical abuse by a number of carers towards children and the inappropriate interactional styles of carers with the children...

The inadequacies in staff qualifications and aptitude bear directly on the capability of the homes to meet the needs of the children who, by and large, have experienced varying degrees of trauma and so would invariably present with special needs or challenging behaviour."

It continues on page 17 with the needs for in-house professional counselling; support and counselling services; assisted living facilities for care leavers; ongoing training and development; fair and attractive wages and compensation packages; support care for carers and other staff; increases in staff complements to facilitate a healthier child staff ratio; establishment of monitoring and evaluating State authority to ensure consistency; regularized and more adequate state of funding; simpler cost-free process for accessing children's legal documents.

In this regard, I know that on many occasions the other side has mentioned the free birth certificate. I am very happy that we were also part of that project. It began when I was the Minister of Legal Affairs to computerize the ministry to have those documents and the Registrar General's Department put online and accessible to everyone. You have gone forward with that. I have no problem. I am happy for those who could access a free birth certificate. I will tell you that when I needed to get one, you had to go at 2.00 a.m. to the office in San Fernando to wait to get one of these birth certificates. [*Interruption*]. You had to send someone at 2.00 a.m. I sent someone. Regular persons line up from 2.00 a.m. While it is a good thing, perhaps, you may want the Ministry of Legal Affairs to look at some ways of making it more accessible. It is a good idea but it is not accessible to most people.

I am talking about the needs and programmes in the study. When you go to the National Plan of Action you will see that they are way behind in the deadlines. If you look at pages 146 and 147, by 2007, 100 per cent of the package of children legislation proclaimed and implemented but 2007 has come and gone and that deadline has not been met. In the Plan of Action we see by 2007 resources available; 2007 legislation reviewed and it continues. The entire deadlines are not being kept by the ministry or the other institutions. Those are children and care. One of the basic reasons for care has to do with poverty and unemployment.

Because of time constraints, before I go there I want to move on to some issues with the Bill itself. The Bill seeks to amend Act 65, of 2000 which is the original Act. When we go to Act 65 of 2000 on its face it carries a preamble, a declaration pursuant to section 13(1) of the Constitution. The original Act was passed with a co-institutional amendment and as required by section 13(1) where you are in breach of any of the human rights provisions, on the face of the Act the preamble must expressly declare that it is inconsistent with the Constitution and thereafter, you must get a three-fifths majority in order to pass the legislation. That was the original Act. My question is: Why is it that in this amending Bill we do not have similar provisions? Why are we now going to pass the amendment to the original Act by a simple majority? You have not put in the section 13 declaration and therefore it means that you would not be seeking the three-fifths majority.

I suggest respectfully that you must pass this amending Bill with the same formula and the three-fifths majority. If a law amends a previous law, and there is nothing in the amendment that is unconstitutional, you could go ahead. You do not have to do it. It is my respectful view in looking at it that there are provisions

in the amendment—you cannot pass one amendment with a constitutional majority and the rest of it by a simple. I made a note of it and I would give you an example. Section 4 of the Constitution gives us the right to enjoyment of property. You are now putting into law a licensed requirement. It is well known in constitutional law that a licensed requirement is known as a prior restraint on your enjoyment of property. You now have to do something.

While I could have opened a nursery before, I was enjoying my property as a nursery or community residence, I now have to get a licence. There are cases in the newspaper where you have to get a licence to buy newspaper print. Constitutional cases tell you that is unconstitutional. You can pass it as exceptional legislation, but you must do it in the right manner which is the section 13(1) declaration plus the three-fifths majority.

You may say to me that in the Act of 2000 you already had a licensed requirement. Do you know what you have now done? You have changed the word, “may” to “shall”.

Let me give you an example. You have said in clause 9 which is amending clause 5 of the Act, it now makes it mandatory to apply for a licence to operate a community residence. You must get a licence. Whereas before it was discretionary, you did not breach my property rights. The “shall” is mandatory.

Clause 39 seeks to amend section 44(1) of the parent Act to make it mandatory by deleting “may” and putting “shall” to apply for a licence to operate a nursery. You had a discretion, “may” and now you have gone into a mandatory provision of “shall”.

It is my respectful view—I would be guided by the drafters and we could deal with it in committee—that these matters would be breaching the section in terms of the enjoyment of property. Section 13(1) declaration must be on the face of it as an amendment and thereafter a three-fifths majority. It is a constitutional issue that I have raised with you.

I have to raise a drafting matter that has to do with regulations. Clause 46(b) seeks to amend section 53(2) of the Act to make the regulations subject to negative resolution rather than affirmative. In the parent Act we were saying whatever regulations you are making here, they must be made subject to affirmative resolution. What does that mean? It must be debated in Parliament. It must come to Parliament. When it is negative resolution, it is laid and we may or may not pick it up. Sixty days later it becomes law and somebody suddenly realizes that we did not come to Parliament to negative it. It was not a debate.

In terms of openness, transparency and the importance of this legislation—and you would be setting up in the regulations to deal with these homes, that this should remain as in the parent Act subject to the affirmative resolution of Parliament—let Parliament be mandated. It could come here, affirmative and we can say yes or we may be able to change it. I think that is important. I ask you not to amend that. I do not think that is improving the Act. Put it back to affirmative resolution.

Status of the regulations. Why have we not seen these regulations? We harp back on the seven years. What is the status of these regulations? Where are these regulations? Have they been drafted? Are they in any form of readiness? I remember doing some laws that we felt were very important. It dealt with the appointment of the Commissioner of Police and we brought the regulations at the same time as the Bill because we wanted to expedite it and you would know the provisions with the regulations. Where are the regulations? When are we going to get them? I think that we should have had them at the same time with this Bill. The Act cannot be implemented. It would be totally useless without the subsidiary regulations. It will not work.

In that regard, my colleague for Tabaquite mentioned several Acts which have been on the books, not proclaimed in some cases, not implemented and no regulations. There is one that I want to talk about today, because tomorrow is Labour Day.

4.15 p.m.

I remember in this House when I said that the regulations under the Occupational Safety and Health Act had not been made, the hon. Minister said, "No. Please check your notes." I did not say anything, but I gave him the benefit of the doubt. I checked it and it has not been done. It is very important because that piece of legislation has a long history.

The Act that is there now is Act No. 1 of 2004. It means that it was enacted in 2004. Even when that happened, it was not proclaimed until 2006. From then to now—this is 2008; four years later—you do not have the regulations and the Act cannot be implemented. As we celebrate Labour Day tomorrow, I have the false lie that came from the Minister that the OSH regulations had been laid and they have not been laid. Everyone sitting in this House would know that. I will tell you why. Section 99 of Act No. 1 of 2004 says that very clearly. That is why it is very important to have parliamentary oversight of regulations—

“(1) The Minister may make regulations for the purposes of promoting the safety, health and welfare of employees and generally for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act.”

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And thereafter it says, in 99(3):

“Regulations made under this section shall be subject to negative resolution of Parliament.”

From 2004 to now, I do not recall any regulations being laid and if they have been laid I would ask the Minister to say when and provide a copy. Other than that, he must apologize for misleading the Parliament on the occasion we were dealing with the International Child Abduction Bill. In that debate, I talked about regulations again and asked where the regulations were—they took years—and gave the example of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. When I did that, the Minister said, "Oh, no. Check your records". It has not been laid. Tomorrow, as we celebrate Labour Day, that Occupational Safety and Health Act will still not be implemented for the benefit of workers and the Government has no excuse.

In 1997, the then Minister Partap was dealing with that law and laid regulations in anticipation. We had laid several Bills and, in addition, the regulations. That, too, they probably need to amend. They will say it is deficient. Where are the regulations for OSHA from 1997 to now? In similar fashion, I am saying that this legislation will be of no use without the regulations.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

Motion made, That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [Mr. R. L. Maharaj SC]

Question put and agreed to.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Another matter that is cause for concern in this Bill is the definition of the word "court". The Children Authority Bill, which was passed last week, says that "court" means the Family Court established under the Family Court Act, 1999. That is what the original parent Act said. Why? We were bringing a Family Court Bill, laid in the Parliament around the same time as the package and, therefore, all of them would have worked in concert.

Thereafter, by Act No. 38 of 2003, this Government moved an amendment. Early they were looking at the package and they brought a three-line amendment to read: "Court" means the court with jurisdiction for family matters. So now, whenever in this Bill we read the word "court", we do not have a definition in that Bill and we need to go back to the Children's Authority and get the definition of the word "court" which means having jurisdiction for family matters.

I have a serious difficulty with some of the comments made by the hon. Minister and with synergizing this with the legislation and its provisions in the Act with respect to the court and with respect to the provisions in the Act itself.

Under Act 60 of 2000, which is the Judicial Review Act, it makes it clear that an application for judicial review must be made to a judge of the Supreme Court. We all know that the Children's Authority is a public body and is subject to judicial review. Any aggrieved party can file for judicial review of their decisions. If they do certain things under this Act, an aggrieved party can file for judicial review.

To whom are we filing this application? There is the Act telling us we must file to a judge of the Supreme Court. Here is the Children's Authority Act, as amended last week, saying that judicial review applications of the authority must be brought to the Family Court. Which Family Court? *[Interruption]* It does not matter who voted, the point is that it will not work.

Which Family Court are you referring to? It has to be a court with jurisdiction in family matters until such time that you bring the Bill and we pass it. Are you referring to the two pilot Family Courts in St. George West? If I am in Penal, Toco or Cedros, I must come to Port of Spain to the pilot Family Court to file an application? I do not believe that could have been the intention. Therefore, I need for you, in this amendment, to tell me which is the Family Court to which I must apply for judicial review if I am aggrieved by a decision of the Children's Authority. Is it the pilot court or some other court?

As we talk about Family Court, that court is operating totally illegally, from my information. With respect to its jurisdiction, it is exceeding its jurisdiction in that it is doing domestic violence matters. We spoke about this two years ago and they continue to do it. It has no jurisdiction to do such matters. The Family Proceedings Bill was passed here and it does not include domestic violence matters. They do not want those kinds of people up there. That is a real fancy court. There are four magistrates and they do three cases for the month. They are exceeding their jurisdiction; they are operating illegally. How can they be adjudicating matters of law when they are operating illegally?

More frightening, when we talk about children, I have been reliably informed that they have been sending children between the ages of 16 and 18 to the women's prison because they do not have space in the children's homes. They deem them adults and send them. You are sending children to the women's prison and this country has billions of dollars. Millions of dollars are being spent by the

minute and the day and we are sending little girls—and it is illegal because the law provides for these children whom they term “beyond control” and you need to put them somewhere. *[Interruption]*

That is why you should have done it several years ago. The Children's Authority will not help that. What will help is that you must provide the homes. It is not the Children's Authority. You need the homes so that when the order is made in the court there is a home to which to send them. Now the law provides only two homes—St. Jude's and St. Michael's. When they are filled, they send them to jail—the girls to the women's prison and the boys to YTC—where they do not belong, for “beyond control” offences. You need to check out, hon. Minister, if it is the truth. I have been reliably informed that this has been happening over and over simply because there are not enough spaces in the homes.

While you are checking that Family Court, please check whether you can have a manager of that court getting two three-year contracts when, in the law, you cannot have a contract for more than five years. Check that out, too! They are operating illegally. This manager, I am told, scored low in the ranking, but was given the job because she was a friend of the previous manager and administrator of the court.

This person operates as a law unto herself I am told. She sits on interviewing panels to interview people. She hires them and she recommends them for firing. She hires, she disciplines and fires; all in one person. That cannot be real. This is a court. How can that be happening?

In the last few minutes before the break, I want to say, when we look at the resources provided—I said there were three areas: institutional care, the legal issues and resources—it is true that the Ministry of Social Development receives massive amounts of money every year, but when you look at the development programme of the Ministry, we see that only 20 per cent of the projects are implemented. In other words, 80 per cent of the projects in the programme are not implemented.

I will give examples. You had all these lovely things to do. When Justice Barnes recommended that you have a unified social service, the Minister said it was not feasible; that we are going to decentralize. Yet, for all the decentralized units, you have not spent a cent on them, for example, the establishment of a social service centre in Rio Claro. How much did you spend? Zero. Establishment of a social service centre in Point Fortin was allocated \$1 million in 2007. How much spent? Zero. Reconstruction of St. Dominique's home, 34 per cent spent. That was good.

Institutional strengthening of social services, 2.3 per cent implementation. Every one of these we are looking at and it is zero.

Support for the mediation services was allocated \$2 million in 2007. How much was spent? Zero. You can boast of savings, but you are not implementing the programmes. When you add the total development programme expenditure not spent, it was 79 per cent. You have the total development programme allocation for 2007, \$45 million, and the amount not spent down to 79 per cent. So you are not implementing those programmes.

You have the establishment of the social services centre in Rio Claro, Point Fortin and Couva. Are you going to start those? You get the money, but at the end of the year you vire the supplementary appropriation because you have not been spending. The same has happened when you talk about staffing. You see, this national plan talks about staffing throughout, but when you look at budget estimates, there are vacant posts and in every one of them zero expenditure. A total of \$3 million was allocated for vacant posts and zero was spent. You are not giving the staffing and every study is saying you need to increase the staffing.

In February of this year, I talked about the ratio of social workers under the same Child Abduction Bill. With the National Family Service, I have been told, it is 12 social service workers. Tell me if it is true or not true.

4.30 p.m.

Before we go, I have just one last point on it. The establishment, under the budget estimates, has not changed. In 2001, under family services it was 23 and in 2008, it is still 23. Probation services was 42 in 2000 and in 2008 it is still 42. Social Welfare Division—*[Interruption]* No, your contracted position spent is zero. I would bring those estimates after the tea break.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the sitting of the House is suspended for tea and will be resumed at 5.00 p.m.

4.31 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

5.00 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

[MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: When we took the break, I was talking about the fact that in spite of all the studies that have been put forward, staffing was a very important issue for social services delivery. This is with respect to every arena in social services. In fact, the National Plan of Action talks about the need to

increase staffing at every level. I pointed out that when we look at the budgetary estimates which give us the establishment of the Ministry, nothing has changed, in terms of increasing the numbers on the establishment since 2000. It remains identical to what it was in 2000.

When I made that comment, the Minister across the floor mentioned contract positions. Also, when I looked into the estimates, which I had done previously, I saw where moneys for contracted positions had also not been utilized. Therefore, those contracted positions were not filled and, therefore, the Ministry, in a sense, lapsed in not taking steps to bring more staff on board and, indeed to fill the establishment that was there.

I want to turn now to the definition of “nursery” that is in the amended Bill and the parent Act. This is one of the areas that this Bill seeks to deal with. Section 42(3)(a) is being amended by clause 37(b) to read:

“‘nursery’ includes ‘daycare’ and means any premises used for the care of children under the age of six years for material reward and for periods which exceed one hour...”

Here it is that the nurseries are to be for children under the age of six. The National Plan of Action lists that there are 821 privately-owned and managed early childhood centres and 106 Government-assisted public centres, catering for 33,401 children.

I want to know what is the synergy, the Minister’s word, with respect to nurseries, as defined in this Act and the early childhood care and education centres, because they are dealing with the same cohort of children? The ECCEC deals with children below the age of five. This Act is now asking for nurseries to deal with children under six years old. It seems to me that is a recipe for chaos, because you would have some networking and overlapping of responsibilities.

The early childhood care and education centres are under the Minister of Education and the nurseries would come under the Minister with responsibility for the Children’s Authority. The Minister is not here, but I would have liked—the junior Minister is here—some clarification as to how these two operate together, separately or otherwise. For the early childhood centers you also have a whole system for the standardization of those centres. In fact, there are policy documents as well as draft legislation for standardizing the ECCECs, regulating and monitoring those. Which one is it and how is it going to operate? I think thought has to be given for bringing the ECCECs under this legislation, as they are already caught by the definition of “nursery”. How is it going to work? There will be conflict, as I see it, between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development.

I go further. Children in this country begin primary school at age five, why are we keeping in this law that nurseries would be for children under the age of six? Why do we not put it under the age of five, so that you do not have the conflict at the primary school level as well? I would ask for the Government to consider amending this definition by deleting children under six, to read children under five, so that we do not have the problem with the primary school population? With the early childhood centres, I would need from the Government some kind of explanation as to how the two will work. Given my own experience in Government, that would be a recipe for conflict and chaos.

As we come to that, the National Plan of Action says that there are 9,342 children who are unable to access an early childhood care and education place. They cannot go to pre-school. They cannot get a space because there are no spaces. There have been multiple promises by this Government and the Prime Minister every year, about the number of childhood centres that would be constructed. There are 9,342 children who cannot access—half of the cohort of children, 50 per cent of the children of that age group—get a place in a pre-school. That is the situation today.

Every year the Government has been promising to build more centres. In 2003/2004, the Prime Minister in his budget presentation promised 50 and none was built. In 2004/2005, in the budget presentation, the Prime Minister promised 43, none was built; 2005/2006, the Prime Minister promised 150, with 600 by 2010; not one was built. In 2006/2007, the Prime Minister promised 150, with 600 by 2010; none was built. In 2007/2008, which is the last budget, the Prime Minister promised 33 to be built. That was August of last year.

In an oral answer to a question in the Senate in May 2007, the then Minister of Education, Sen. The Hon. Hazel Manning, had this to say:

“No early childhood centres were completed during the period January 01, 2002 to December 31, 2006.”

The sum of 9,342 children cannot get an early childhood place, but not a single pre-school was built from the time the PNM came into office in 2001 to December 31, 2006. What happened thereafter? Maybe the Minister of Education could tell us that maybe there were 16 or 17. They took six and one-half years to build 16 centres. If they are to build the 600 that are being promised, that would be the rate of three per year. How many years would it take, if you keep that rate of implementation? It would be over 200 years. This is a serious matter where we do not have enough spaces to cater for our children.

Some of the reasons that were given for the non-proclamation of this legislation had to do with the fact that they said it was deficient and ineffective. "It was riddled with deficiencies." That is what the junior Minister said. There were operational problems. Basically, there were problems with it. My colleague has already dealt with that and I think the Member for Oropouche West, on the last day, also dealt with the failure to bring this legislation in a more expeditious time.

However, when I was dealing with the International Child Abduction Bill, I remember quoting from reports of the United Nations Children Convention on the Rights of the Child. The reason given for the non-implementation of the legislation to the United Nations world forum was that that they had not completed the infrastructure for the operationalization of these statutes that had not been put in place. We are six and one-half or seven years late and that infrastructure is still not in place. If you look at the estimates for the Ministry of Social Development, you would see that in 2006, the sum of \$500,000 was allocated for the establishment of the Children's Authority. Not a cent was spent, meaning nothing was done to establish it. In 2007, again another \$500,000 was allocated to the Ministry for the establishment of the Children's Authority under the development programme. Not a cent was spent, therefore no steps were taken. That was for 2007.

For the 2008 budget read last year, \$1 million was allocated. Is it that we are now going to be putting those steps? Again, that is another reason for saying that we are not going to be able to implement this thing in the short term. I know the Minister is very anxious and very concerned about getting it done, but I see these constraints if you have not taken previous steps. If you have, please tell us what steps and what you have done to get these homes in a condition to be ready.

5.10 p.m.

What have you done that they are now ready because we have the study saying that they are not ready. What have you done in terms of the establishment of the Children's Authority? You had two years of budgetary allocations, you did not utilize it, so you have not put those steps in place. I would ask the hon. Minister to look at that.

Just as I close, another reason that the Government gave for not implementing the legislation had to do with what they call, no consultation, and I think the Member for Tabaquite may well remember the extensive consultations that were held and the joint select committee that operated and so on, but I go further. In a press release issued by Women Working for Social Progress, dated June 11, 2008

and the heading is, "No Public Discussion of Redrafted Children's Legislation." So, they stood there and accused us of not having consultation and that being one of the reasons for not proclaiming the legislation, and here it is seven years later, the Women Working for Social Progress says, no consultation. I quote:

"The long-suspended children's legislation will now be laid in Parliament without, it seems, any feedback from the general public on its final shape. This is a case of reacting in haste to crisis, rather than addressing manifest problems in a timely manner, with the necessary deliberation, planning and preparation..."

We have been told all along that the legislation was delayed because of the redrafting to be done. What, then, are the changes that have been made in the long awaited period? Why were these not released for public discussion?

It remains unclear whether there have, in fact, been amendments to the last-published version of the Bill. Enquiries made by our organization have not yielded any answers. This failure to communicate raises concerns about the right to information. Add to this the suppression of the report on Amy Anamunthodo.

It is reported that the (presumably revamped) legislation was recently discussed at a meeting of stakeholders. Who are these privileged stakeholders?"

Everybody in the public sector. What about the private sector? *[Interruption]*
You will reply.

"Everybody in Trinidad and Tobago is a stakeholder in the quest to protect our children."

This is from Working Women for Social Progress; these are not my words, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am quoting from their press release this month. It goes on:

"There are other questions regarding process in the setting up of the Children's Authority.

Committees have been formed to carry out this work.

- Who are the members of these committees?
- By what criteria were they chosen?
- What are the special aptitudes they display regarding the welfare of children?

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- What training is planned for them?
- What funds have been allocated...?
- Where are the buildings that will house the functions of the Children's Authority?
- What inter-agency collaboration is being developed?

In the long waiting period, what substantive groundwork has been done towards realisation of the Children's Authority?"

And I just said that budgetary allocations were made in 2005, 2006 and 2007, not a cent of which was utilized. None of this has been done; the groundwork. It continues—

Mr. Imbert: Would the Member give way? Thank you very much. I thank the Member for giving way. If the legal personnel tells us that we should go ahead with a special majority, can we count on the UNC to give us that majority?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: The Chief Whip said that we—We want this legislation since 2000. [*Desk thumping*] We have wanted this since 2000. We want it, but you will get the special majority with the amendments that I am asking for, because there are others. In your absence, I asked about changing the age from six years to five years, so we do not have a conflict with the primary school. You are agreeing because you do not have Members. Your bench does have enough Members. Your Members are not even coming to Parliament; they have no interest in what you are doing or in the children's business. So, I am saying:

“Had successive governments followed through with strengthening the legislative framework to protect children, we would have begun to lay the foundation for a safer and more peaceful society than we now live in. Today's criminal offender is yesterday's mishandled child.

The bills are being tabled now only because the tally of child murders has come to a head. Putting legislation through Parliament is one thing. How many more children will have to be murdered to get us to the stage of actual implementation?"

This is Working Women for Social Progress; this is their press release.

So, in closing, I have tried to raise in my contribution, matters relating to institutional care and the problems and difficulties there within institutional care. [*Crosstalk*] You know, I think I am having some competition for voice space.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, please, we are all listening to the contribution of the—

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Well, not all, they were talking.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Well, I certainly think we should all be listening to the contribution of the Member of Parliament for Siparia.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: It is always very nice to have a woman sitting in the Chair. [*Desk thumping*] Very nice. I thank you very much for your protection.

Mr. Ramnath: A very dignified lady.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: A very dignified lady, certainly. In the few minutes I have left, I am saying we need to look at the institutional care; resources to be given to those children in institutional care. I talked about the legal issues; I raised about four or five of them, which we can take further in the committee stage. I have talked about resources that are going through the Ministry but not reaching. I started off by saying, and I want to repeat that, that there is definitely a disconnect between the amount of resources being pumped into projects and into all kinds of endeavours, and the output, the production that comes from those inputs. So whilst the money is chasing and being chased into projects, all very well sounding, at the end of the day the empirical data internationally, not from the UNC, but from international agencies, is showing that the quality of life is not increasing; it is not getting better, but it is deteriorating.

What is the consequence of all this, as I close? What are the consequences? What are the consequences? What are the consequences? It seems to me the statements have already been made about failed state status and it seems that under this Government, under the PNM, under the leadership of Mr. Manning, we are on the doorstep of failed state status, because in every indicator of human development we have fallen and fallen way behind in every one of those indicators from the year 2000 and 2001 till the present.

So, I end, as I started, Madam Deputy Speaker, that in the length of time that it took to bring all this legislation, all the changes they wanted to make, at the end of the day we have reached with it; what they talked about placing the child in “foster chills”; we are in “foster chills” as the—That is the end result of seven years of drafting, “foster chills”.

We give our support to this legislation; our concern is there for the children; it has always been, that is why the UNC passed that legislation in the year 2000; we are committed to it and we are committed to working with you. If you want us to

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help, we are willing to help, to make sure that it is implemented in the shortest possible space of time.

I thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mrs. Indra Sinanan Ojah-Maharaj (*Toco/Sangre Grande*): Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you this afternoon for the opportunity to contribute to this debate on this vital piece of legislation.

The Bill before us is crucial and timely and it pertains to the welfare of the children of our nation, but it must be considered in the wider context. It must be taken as part of the package of Bills that this Government is bringing to the Parliament that are aimed at securing and protecting the well-being of our innocent and precious young ones. It must also be considered as a key aspect of the Government's policy approach to protecting and preserving family life.

These Bills are designed to enhance, defend and safeguard family life. It is against that background that I am happy to offer my support, not only as a legislator today, but also as a mother, a daughter and a sister. Since all 41 Members of Parliament are committed, I expect that there would be bipartisan support for the entire package of legislation. The Opposition has a moral responsibility to stand up for family life by strongly supporting and advocating these Bills.

These Bills tidy up and make some important housekeeping changes and this is to that which was before the Parliament some time ago. In a narrow context, these Bills will make provisions for the monitoring, licensing and regulation of children's homes. But the legislation alone is not only about children's homes; rehab centres, foster homes and nurseries.

This Bill, just like the one that was debated in this House last Friday, is about the wider society of Trinidad and Tobago. I will explain why, Madam Deputy Speaker. International studies show that most abused and neglected children never come to the attention of government authorities. This is particularly true of neglected and sexually abused children, who may show no physical signs of harm. In the case of sexual abuse, secrecy and intense feeling of shame may prevent children and adults who are aware of the abuse from seeking help. Therefore, official government statistics do not indicate actual rates of child abuse. This is so in all parts of the world. Before abused children can be cared for at foster homes, they must be identified and taken from the place where they are being abused. The Children's Authority will play a crucial role here, but there is a critical responsibility from civil society in protecting and safeguarding our abused and neglected children.

I want to call upon everyone to become his brother's keeper; to be a concerned and vigilant neighbour and friend. This legislation could only have the desired teeth if we all look out for one another and become our own social worker as we safeguard the interests of our children.

This legislation should give the society an extra drive to take special care in the welfare of the next-door child, especially if that child does not live in the best of social circumstances. With this Bill and the one that was before us last Friday, concerned nationals now have greater opportunities and responsibilities to protect the well-being of children who may be at risk.

I want to urge the labour movement to use their platforms tomorrow, to call upon their members to play a proactive role on behalf of our young ones who may be suffering abuse and neglect. The labour movement must continue to do so as part of their agenda for social progress.

I am placing great emphasis on the role of the wider community, because of what has been uncovered by international researchers and as my colleague from Siparia was quoting on some Caribbean island, I would take you to Dr. Jim Hopper, who has a PhD in Clinical Psychology and is an instructor at Harvard's Medical School.

5.25 p.m.

Dr. Hopper says, and I quote:

“Official Government statistics are only the tip of the iceberg...Government statistics are generally based on cases reported to social service agencies and to child protection workers.”

That is why, to use the words of the former American First Lady Nancy Reagan, “it takes a village to raise a child”. If it takes a village to raise a child, then we all have a greater responsibility to the entire nation of Trinidad and Tobago for our children.

I want to quote another international authority on the subject, Dr. David Pressnel, of Temple University Children's Medical Centre of Philadelphia, and I quote:

“Reports of child abuse are increasing as the medical profession gains experience in recognizing the signs and symptoms of physical abuse.”

Dr. Pressnel makes a pointed observation and that is:

“In the United States, where there is tight legislation”—it is well-known that—“thousands die each year from abuse, both physical and sexual.”

In other words, laws are not enough to stop and prevent the battered child syndrome. Laws such as the one we are debating today are critical to the protection and preservation of children's welfare. They provide legal underpinning, but laws alone would not put an end to the epidemic of the betrayal of the trust and the breach of good faith.

It takes a village to raise a child, and this has never been more urgent or more critical. In the United States, one out of three females and one out of five males are victims of sex abuse before they reach age 18. These are official statistics in a country of tight legislation: 30 per cent of female rape victims in the US are assaulted before they reach age 11; 32 per cent are raped between ages 11 and 17; between 21 and 49 per cent suffer post-victim effect.

The nightmare of sexual exploitation is worsening across the country. The raw truth is that the authorities are limited in controlling this disturbing state of affairs. Here again, families, friends, neighbours and associates have a crucial responsibility. As far as possible, they must put their foot down on Internet and cable television. There are no laws with respect to Internet and cable television and this brings about a greater need for community oversight and social responsibility on morals and values.

The Opposition could only find fault, but this Government is doing its part—

Mr. Ramnath: You were going good until now, stick to your script, you were doing a good job.

Ms. I. Sinanan Ojah-Maharaj:—to uphold and strengthen family life as the bedrock of this society. The police service is becoming even more valuable of an agency on behalf of the family. The community policing system is being reformed, and so far five model stations have been established. These stations are West End in Diego Martin, Morvant, Arouca, Chaguanas and San Fernando. Police officers are being specially trained to integrate into the communities in which they serve and to be sensitive to the needs of those residents.

In fact, these are intelligence-led officers. What it means, is that if, for example, there are cases of children being abused or neglected and deserve to be placed at foster homes, these officials can intervene. These stations are being specially upgraded and are being given skilled staff and other applicable resources. There is no doubt that this concept would be expanded and that our children would benefit. This is the only Government with a vision and commitment to introduce such a community service. But more is being done. A National Family Policy is being devised and the Ministry of Social Development is playing a lead role with respect to outreach social welfare programmes.

In fact, the entire social welfare system is being reformed. A monitoring and evaluation policy is being set up in the social sector. The social services delivery system is being expanded and social policies are being developed as a guide to programme development. There is to be a National Plan of Action for Children. This is the first Government with the foresight and the deep concern to implement such a plan. A National Policy on Ageing, a National Parenting Programme are also being designed.

All of these indicate the development of a caring society, in which emphasis is being placed on reducing poverty, achieving full employment, emphasizing wellness, proper lifestyles and creating sustainable communities. In other words, we are blessed with a Government that does not see economic development as the only signpost for the well-being of the citizens of our nation. There is a people-centred approach to human development and this approach places high values on the family unit. It emphasizes the principles of dignity, equity, equality, participation and empowerment.

I am proud that this is the blueprint of this Government, and it has for Trinidad and Tobago a vision. In all of this the protection and upkeep of our innocent children is a cornerstone of the Government's policies and action plan. There is the establishment of, yes, hundreds of early childhood care centres, did you hear that?—hundreds of early childhood care centres, which apart from providing an early start to formal education, would serve as a nursery to our children.

I again want to call upon parents to fulfil their solemn responsibility to their children. I want to reinforce the point by quoting from a recent letter in the Press by one, A. Sankar, Mr. or Mrs. Sankar writes, and I quote:

“Many of our adults believe it is their right to pass the responsibility of parenting to someone else while they maintain a free, single and disengaged lifestyle.”

The letter writer goes on:

“Demons come not only in the form of would-be predators and murderers. They appear as parents who encourage adolescents to drink alcohol, drive down the shoulder of the highway with children in the front seat and instruct young ones to throw litter freely into the environment. We know of parents who find”—time and find it quite often with their toddlers to say and use words like—“‘dutty wine’ and sing ‘rum till I die’.”

I think I have made the point effectively. The Opposition will ask what is the Government doing in all of this? Well, the Government has been doing many things, including strengthening the various school institutions. Local school boards are

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being enhanced and the system of school-based management is being given more authority. A School Intervention Strategies Unit is addressing school indiscipline through a number of measures, including training in conflict resolution and in anger and stress management. Homework centres are being set up, and I want to urge the hon. Minister of Education to expand this creative concept.

There are several other measures that are aimed at developing the potential of our young human capital. A number of these programmes are being administered by the Student Support Services Division. I am happy to see more and more social workers being assigned to the education system, including primary schools. I am sure that this will make a greater efficiency with respect to the working of the legislation before us today.

It is evident that the Government is playing a critical leadership role on behalf of the family, and especially the children. But I also want to take a minute to pay tribute to the NGO and CBO movement, that make a quiet but extremely valuable contribution to social stability in our country. We are fortunate to have a Government that wholeheartedly supports and endorses their initiative. But these committed people toil so quietly and diligently that they deserve the deep appreciation of everyone in our nation. I came out of the NGO movement, and I have a great sense of understanding and admiration for the work of these people. Trinidad and Tobago is a better place because of the NGO and CBO movement.

As I end, I have no doubt that this legislation and the one that was debated last Friday would make a significant difference in confronting the nightmare of child abuse and neglect. I want to commend everyone involved in the presentation of this Bill. Permit me to also commend the hon. Minister of Social Development for implementing the recommendations of the Justice Monica Barnes report. I am sure that this would address the inefficiencies in the system and eliminate the gaps in the process.

The integrated approach to protecting vulnerable children is a most positive step in the social service sector. It is in that context that I am proud to lend my support to the legislation before us today. I confidently expect the support of all Members of this honourable House today because child abuse should disturb us all and because it takes a village to raise a child. It also takes a caring and sensitive Government to protect the lives and the future of our precious children.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you very much.

5.40 pm

Mr. Chandresh Sharma (Fyzabad): Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is really nice to see you in that Chair. I wish I can come on more Fridays and see you there, but I do not mind Wednesdays if somebody else is there.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as I listened to my good friend, the Member for Toco/Sangre Grande, it sounded like a confession. A set of this and that and says very little, but I really do not want to go there. On the eve of Labour Day, I would have expected the Government Ministers speaking, to sound a little bit more intelligent, a little bit more caring and to treat with the issues at hand.

Here we are talking about the lives of our children, and the kids in this country are suffering under the PNM watch. In fact, if you quickly reflect the last few days in this country, you would have seen a number of homes broken by agents of the Government, where kids are thrown out on the streets. They have no food and their medication is destroyed in the process. Where is the care that this Government demonstrates? Government is talking about setting up of homes, but here you are destroying the homes that poor families are building all over the country and you are not providing them with goods and services. Many, many schools are without basic things.

Today, in the year 2008 with \$40 billion being spent on an annual budget, many schools have to close because of a lack of drinking water. Can you imagine that, Madam Deputy Speaker? So this Government really has no care. This Government is really about itself fulling its pocket and that of its friends because there is nothing that this Government has done. Seven years later they are bringing a Bill, and when you reflect what has obtained in the last seven years, so many kids' lives have been destroyed; brutal rapes; murders; homes destroyed; schools are without adequate facilities; and many of the kindergarten schools I raised on the last occasion are not receiving the meals promised. What is this Government's concern really about? What have they come to this House to tell us?

Madam Deputy Speaker, when you look at some of the questions answered in the Parliament today, it would have helped to identify that the country is in crisis and our kids really have no future under this PNM. I refer you to question No. 142 answered in the House today, and it relates to what the local government reform is expected from the national community. Hear what the national community is saying: "They want to see a better distribution of water, lights and environmental

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clean up." So what is the Government doing? They want to see more facilities in place for the youths. The national community is saying this to the Government: "They have this." This is what the Minister should get up and say. These are the things we are responding to. Who are they trying to fool? Who are they trying to fool, pretending that they are doing this and doing that and they are doing absolutely nothing?

Madam Deputy Speaker, are you aware in the history of Trinidad and Tobago, the worst period is under a PNM administration, more so, the current administration? There is so much pain in the community, so much suffering, a lack of this, a lack of that. Many mothers are unable to buy food, many kids are unable to receive their medication of the health facilities, so who is the Government fooling with this Bill today? And they feel proud; we are doing this, and we are doing that and you are doing absolutely nothing, except for yourselves. Really, you have become a total waste in this country. Total waste, makes you wonder.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to refer you to another question answered in today's Parliament. One of the biggest sins in this country is the levels of discrimination and racism that is State sponsored and who suffers, the children of our country across the board. So when the Minister gets up to speak, you have to start sounding real. You have to reach out to the homes; the kids; the young men, they look up to you; and you have to demonstrate that you really mean what you are saying. It is comic relief in the Parliament all the time from the Government.

A question was asked about Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited—most Members might have this in front of them, look at it and see where the projects are, in all PNM areas. Even when it obtains in a constituency held by an Opposition member, look at the geography of the project, it is where the PNM gets the votes, whether in Fyzabad, Siparia or elsewhere. This love of racism and discrimination has to stop. If you look at the projects in the constituency of the Prime Minister, everything is Simpson Brown, everything in Cocoyea, \$9 million. *[Interruption]* Say that again.

Mr. Abdul-Hamid: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. C. Sharma: A brilliant contribution from the Member for Chaguanas East, useless as usual. When you look at it across the board—this one concerns my constituency by the way, in Palo Seco—this Government has no care about Trinidad and Tobago. This Government is about fulling their pockets and getting their friends rich. They intend to remain in Government by adopting all the corrupt measures and come to pretend in this House today, on the eve of Labour

Day, we are doing something for the kids. You are doing absolutely nothing. There is no history of the care and no history of love. You have become a government of hate and you cannot be trusted.

My good friend from Laventille West, I know you would not go there. He is saying that things are happening in Fyzabad and that is exactly the point I made. They choose in Fyzabad, the areas from which the PNM obtain its few votes and that obtains in all UNC constituencies. In fact, they will not deal with a single project recommended by the Member of Parliament. Not a single project, not in a single Ministry. Not a single project, but that can only be for a time; you cannot fool the people anymore. People are getting fed up. Are you aware of how fed up people are? Are you aware that parents sitting in their homes, they labour night and day and they cannot buy food today under the PNM? They cannot afford simple little luxury for their kids. X-number of children wrote the SEA examinations and they are going home until September when school reopens. A number have nowhere to go. All these fancy things, the statistics presented by the Member for Toco/Sangre Grande, totally useless. What is the purpose of going on American statistics? How does that add value? Tell us what is happening in Trinidad. No recreation grounds for our kids to go and play—*[Interruption]*

Hon. Minister: Same point in Siparia.

Hon. Member: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. C. Sharma: Exactly, and if it is happening in Siparia, in Fyzabad and in Princes Town—in fact, I am seeing a new trend that obtains in no other country in the world. I saw what the PNM calls a shadow Minister. The Member of Parliament is able to say what projects are going to take place in the constituency held by the Member for Princes Town North in this House. Can you imagine that?

Mr. S. Panday: He is using State resources.

Mr. C. Sharma: That is how the PNM operated, you should be glad. So, the PNM controls the purse and they feel the money belongs to them. How it is that the Member for Princes Town North, the hon. Subhas Panday cannot get these projects, but the shadow Minister can say, "I have received 4,569 applications for housing and I am going to treat with it. I am going to tell you where recreation grounds are going to go." What is that? Is that representation? What are you trying to do to the sitting Member for Princes Town North? Deny him his rights to make representation and that is obtained across the board here.

Whenever a Member of the Opposition has to make a request, it has to be as if he is begging a favour. In fact, some Minister across there will tell you, "I will do

you a favour.” We come here for no favours, [*Desk thumping*] we are equal in this Parliament.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have a fear. My fear is that the country is going to rise up. They cannot take this for long. The pains the PNM put the children of this nation through. Do you know how difficult it is for a mother and a father to tell their children we are unable to get you basic things? “Mummy, why there is no street light here?” You have to wait on the PNM when they choose to do it. “Mummy, why there is no pipeborne water today?” “Mummy, I am sorry I have to come back from school, there was no water.” Why? What is this Government really doing? Can this Government identify anything that they have done to add value to the lives of the kids of our country?

Madam Deputy Speaker, application for residence licence, why is the Government insisting on putting the kids in a home? Why not help develop the homes? For instance, parents across the country have applied for this home repair grant—I think it is \$10,000 or \$15,000—there is no system, so the kids have to leave and go to some other relatives while the house is leaking. Do you know what is the system? You are a PNM party member. In fact, very interesting, the Member for Toco/Sangre Grande said something, she said she came from the NGO. That is a very good statement. Do you know what that means? The PNM invades all the NGOs and they pick people like the Member for Toco/ Sangre Grande. That is how they select candidates. There is no process. I am telling you, that is how it is done. So once a group is supporting the PNM, they are in business. The Member said that the NGOs get financial help. Do you know how they get help? All PNM party groups that are hidden in village councils, some CBOs and some NGOs are the ones getting money.

I am involved in a number of groups and we do a lot of work. They get very little funding, 90 per cent zero, but a PNM member can tell any group how much they are getting. We saw that with the former member—I cannot remember which seat she held—Camille Robinson-Regis. What seat was that?

Hon. Member: Arouca South.

Mr. C. Sharma: Many, many instances. This has to come to a stop. It is the last thing I am going to do. I am going to make sure that does not obtain anymore. It cannot be. I can understand why my goodly friend, the Member for Chaguanas East had to identify elsewhere in an earlier manifestation, that level of frustration.

This Bill is really useless in the context of the discussions today. What else would this PNM do? How low would they stoop? It is unfair to some of the

Members. When I look at my good friend, the Member for Princes Town South/Tableland, almost a movie star appearance, has he really discovered what he has found himself in? My good friend from Point Fortin, are you really aware what you have found yourself in, people in Point Fortin are having so much difficulties. Why is teenage pregnancy the highest under the PNM? How all the social ills manifest themselves 1000 per cent more under the PNM? How is that? Murders, do you not ask yourself the questions? Divorces, how does it obtain so high under the PNM? How all the social ills seem to flourish under the PNM? There must be something. There must be something you are doing wrong. Are you treating with the devil? There must be something, it cannot be natural. It cannot be that you come into government six months and every institution in this country has collapsed. WASA cannot deliver water; every other night T&TEC lights are going off; food prices are going up everyday; buildings are collapsing around us—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Ramnath: They leak the CAPE and CXC exams.

Mr. C. Sharma: Examination leaks, oh God, you name it. You must be dealing with something evil, it cannot be natural. We take an oath of office. We try to promote the sports and you see what the Member for Tunapuna and the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs is doing, but I am sure that is another story that could be dealt with another day, but our young people have nowhere to go. I heard the most foolish statement from the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs about some football game; let everybody come in the stadium. What foolishness is that? So 100,000 people end up there with 20,000 seating. Does the Government have intelligence? How did they become Ministers? All common sense, but that is not even common sense. Minister, when you make a statement, the nation is listening to you. Do not confirm how foolish you are in the national community. You have to make sure the statements are calculated and it has meaning. Do not do it on the spur of the moment to capture a few marks.

Madam Deputy Speaker, questions in the Parliament—we have brought it from the British system—is really intended to help check and balance of Government and this Government has a history of hiding answers. They hide under everything. Anything you ask is suddenly secret. When the UNC was in Government we answered all the questions, providing names, dollar value, what was done and what was not done. Under the PNM everything that is interfering with the constitutional right of the citizen, taxpayers' money is being spent. Big moneys are being paid to their friends under the guise of consultants. Everything is foreign used: foreign used consultants; foreign used blimps; foreign used ambulance; you name it.

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Question No. 131 with respect to the Community Improvement Services Limited, could the Minister state—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member, I have allowed you a considerable amount of latitude—

Mr. Ramnath: Get to the point.

Madam Deputy Speaker:—but you must get to the point [*Desk thumping and Laughter*] if I can borrow the words of the hon. Member for Couva South, so could you please, come back to the Bill.

Mr. C. Sharma: Madam Deputy Speaker, I was making the point with question No. 131, when it asked about the Community Improvement Services Limited, and the question that is being asked is to identify the services that benefit the children of the nation.

5.55 p.m.

Madam Deputy Speaker, again, the answer is very disturbing. It is demonstrating, without a shadow of a doubt, how our kids are being robbed by this Government, when you look at where the moneys are being spent.

All the construction of sidewalks and drains in the PNM areas have a value of \$11,243,000-plus, and the kids in Fyzabad, Princes Town and Oropouche are unable to get a simple play park for their schools. In fact, not a single school in this country, under the last six or seven years of the PNM's watch, has obtained a single play park. Not a single school under this PNM's watch has obtained a single play park.

We raised, on the last occasion, that kids in the elementary schools, in particular, were unable to access the computers because the PNM would not connect the lines neither would they put in the Internet services. In the PNM schools it is different though; the PNM members are seeing it differently.

I know when the Government is under attack it must be defended by many, but that does not shift the point which I wish to make. Under the current Ministers, very little value is added to the lives of our kids. Bringing this Bill today really says very little. [*Interruption*] I think I have made the point—before that note comes to me. [*Laughter*] It is a good time to take my seat.

I hope to see all of you tomorrow. The tradition of the Parliament is that the sitting Member of Parliament, who happens to be me, would host you all tomorrow. I intend to do that for another 20 years. Member for Point Fortin, I am

looking forward to you, in particular, coming, and the Member for Arouca/Maloney. I know the Deputy Speaker will be there. [*Crosstalk*] [*Laughter*]

To the hon. Minister, my good friend from Diego Martin Central, one thing you must know, as a young minister who seems to have a future in politics, let me remind you to make sure that you are representing the State here. Do not come and hoodwink us with this nonsense you presented. Be real; let the kids know that hope is available. Last week you paid tribute to Hope, who died, and you told the others that hope was available. What you said to us today was cosmetic; we have heard that so often from the PNM. We want to see real issues, real answers.

Thank you.

The Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs (Hon. Gary Hunt): Madam Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in this august House to make my maiden contribution to this debate today.

Mr. Panday: "You are a maiden?" [*Laughter*] [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. G. Hunt: Before I proceed, may I beg your indulgence to allow me to thank the people of the constituency of Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West for electing me to represent their interests in this distinguished House of Representatives, in this blessed and beautiful Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

I am also very honoured and proud to be afforded this opportunity by the PNM. This is a political party, when one takes a glance at our Benches, one sees a picture painted that is a true representation of harmony in diversity; one sees balance. The Taoists refer to this as Tao te ching. In other words, the PNM is a political party of rainbow persons from all walks of life, of varied blends championing the cause of advancement of all the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Sadly, the other side cannot say the same of themselves. [*Crosstalk*]

I am also very thankful to my parents for their love and care, without them I would not be in this place standing before you. My teachers also contributed, in large measure, to the moulding of my character, and I am also thankful to them. All of these circumstances were by the grace of Almighty God, who I recognize as having dominion over all. I am thankful to Almighty God for his love and grace. We all exist, and without his love and grace we would cease to exist.

I lend my support to this important Bill that seeks to make provisions for monitoring, licensing and regulating community residences, foster homes and nurseries in Trinidad and Tobago. In other words, the Government is seeking to ensure that a large number of this country's children, whether they attend nurseries, reside in

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orphanages or approved foster homes, or whether they are incarcerated, are properly looked after.

I wish to specifically focus on the latter category of children who come under the purview of this Bill. These are the children who, for one reason or the other, may have gone astray and had to be incarcerated. This Bill envisages the creation of the kind of atmosphere that is conducive to the rehabilitation of these unfortunate children, ensuring that nothing is done that would rob them of the opportunity to be reabsorbed in the society, ready able and willing to become positive and productive human beings who could make a sustained and mutually beneficial contribution to their country's development.

We in the Government are concerned, not only with the rehabilitation of these unfortunate incarcerated children, but with the fact that they could reach the stage that they have to be incarcerated.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

In the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, we are trying to help our young persons see sport and other healthy youth development activities as positive alternatives to drug abuse—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Ramnath: Careful with your use of words; Sprangalang is listening to you.

Hon. G. Hunt:—gang membership and violence, while helping them to develop their anger management capabilities. Indeed, sport can and already is a powerful tool in the rehabilitation of those who are already incarcerated. For our young people to pursue healthy activities like sport, as an alternative to antisocial behaviour, it would go a long way to that objective if they are able to see sport as an avenue through which they could improve their quality of life.

They must see the administration of sport as being fair and just. They must see their sporting heroes, the persons who they may wish to emulate, being treated fairly and justly. Many of those sporting heroes, our footballers, cricketers, track and field athletes, swimmers, boxers and netballers, have come from poor homes, but with the help of the facilities that this Government continues to increasingly provide for our young people, the opportunities that are given them, many of them have been able to leap over the hurdles of poverty and make it to the world stage in triumph.

The success of these young men and women, indeed, the mere dedication they show in their sport of choice, can serve as a beacon for those following in their

footsteps. Their successes could serve to reduce the numbers of our young people who would face incarceration for youth crime and would, therefore, come under one aspect of this Bill.

Within recent times, our most visible, most celebrated sporting heroes was that group of young men who, through their own determined and unselfish efforts, made Trinidad and Tobago and the rest of the Caribbean proud by taking their country to the 2006 Football World Cup in Germany. [*Crosstalk*] The very fact in making it to this enormous world stage as the smallest nation ever to be represented at the World Cup was a historic event of staggering proportions. We were all bursting with pride and patriotism.

You could well imagine the pride and joy felt by the hundreds and thousands of young persons throughout the length and breadth of this country, whether they might have been in situations of incarceration or not. But lo and behold, in the midst of all the euphoria, there appeared on the horizon a menacing, ominous dark cloud that threatened to rain on our parade of national pride in our Soca Warriors.

Their employers, the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation, personified by its self-styled special advisor, who now occupies a seat opposite, the not so inimitable, the hon. Member for Chaguanas West.

Hon. Member: "Who write dat for you?" You cannot pronounce the words!

Hon. G. Hunt: He decided to renege on an agreement made with the now hapless Soca Warriors, youngsters, who like many of the incarcerated youth who come under the purview of this Bill, had, by and large, come from poor homes all over Trinidad and Tobago. [*Crosstalk*] The agreement that the hon. Member for Chaguanas West decided not to honour, not to pay these men, [*Crosstalk*] was one that would give these hard working footballers a 50 per cent share in the profits accruing from their efforts; a 50 per cent share in the millions and millions of dollars. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: I hope you know what you are doing. You are straying a bit from the Bill, but you are certainly giving the Member for Chaguanas West all the ammunition to reply to you. [*Crosstalk*] May I suggest to you that you come back to the Bill before us.

Hon. G. Hunt: Mr. Speaker, we are merely drawing a reference to some of these young people—[*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Member: Irrelevance!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Hon. G. Hunt:—who fall under this Bill, to see how their psyche is affected. [Interruption] They would have to end up in a foster home. [Laughter]

How great must have been the disappointment, not only to the Soca Warriors, but to those children, those youngsters who are protected under the provisions of this Bill. How let down they must have felt seeing big men sitting up there in their towers of ivory and gold, sipping their Johnny Walker Blues and conspiring to deny these hard working young footballers their just dues. [Crosstalk] How much more difficult the efforts of our Government to present sport as an alternative to antisocial behaviour had become. [Crosstalk] Yes, it was very discouraging to our children coming up.

How many young men and women reading about the duplicity of the hon. Member for Chaguanas West and his TTFB would now be all the more convinced that double standards and selfishness are really the order of the day for the older heads in society, the so-called exemplars? Mr. Speaker, it is this kind of double dealing that makes the task of those who would be entrusted under the provisions of this Bill to rehabilitate our incarcerated and misguided youngsters all the more difficult, if not impossible. Those who should be part of the solution are, therefore, contributing to the gravity of the problem. One minute the hon. Member for Chaguanas West agreed to pay the hard working footballers the entirely justifiable 50 per cent of their earnings—[Interruption]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Minister, I think I have got to stop you, because you are really being irrelevant. Unless you could relate it to what is before us in terms of the Bill, then you are straying. This is not something between you and the Member for Chaguanas West. This is not the place for that. [Desk thumping] [Crosstalk] Order, please!

Hon. G. Hunt: The thing about this is that with behaviour like this before them, the children would end up in a home. [Crosstalk] They have poor examples to follow. Fortunately, on this side of the House, our record is much different. Our record in government has to do with setting the right examples for our children, so they would not end up in a foster home.

Hon. Members: No!

Hon. G. Hunt: It has to do with integrity and morality in public affairs. Our record has nothing to do with the double dealing or self-seeking to deprive our young sportsmen and women of their well-earned reward, but it is par of the course for this goodly gentleman.

Mr. Ramnath: I came here to behave myself! [*Crosstalk*] [*Laughter*]

Hon. G. Hunt: In running that course, we always need to set examples for our youth, especially our children.

Mr. S. Panday: "Talk on de Bill!"

Hon. G. Hunt: Some persons, with their behaviour—[*Interruption*] It is about example. We have to develop a world fit for children. Some persons on the other side are anti-everything. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Ramnath: Focus on the Bill!

Hon. G. Hunt: Anti-playing games in Trinidad and Tobago; anti-paying the Soca Warriors their 50 per cent. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. S. Panday: You are talking like a seamstress!

Mr. Speaker: I am warning you for the last time; if you continue in that vein, I will have to ask you to take your seat. It is going to be that drastic.

6.10 p.m.

Hon. G. Hunt: Mr. Speaker, I apologize. Coming back to the Bill, you see on this side, there is no list of foster homes that are on a blacklist. All our foster homes are going to be covered. You see we do not have a blacklist, 16 players equivalent. We have no blacklist with homes, do we? We are going to look after the children of our nation, we are developing and honing a way to establish something that would be sustainable which was started by the Member for Tabaquite. We are going to put it in place.

We do not have to show red cards to our children. In fact, some Members on the other side with their behaviour deserve a pack of red cards. We do not have to do that, we are forging a place for the children of our nation. We were not referenced in books. The children of our society today are very intelligent; they surf the Internet and they go to sites like transparencyinsport.org, they read books and we want to create the right situation for them.

The thing is, one goes to Amazon.com and picks up books like this (raises a book) prepared by Mr. Andrew Jennings, it is called *Foul*. These are not the type of examples we want to set. With the establishment of this Bill, we are setting the way; we are clearing a path for our children to look after them in many varied ways. We do not read the newspapers and say you have failed us. I was shocked to see the duplicity in one of these—calling for transparency in election spending. I know it is straying from the Bill a bit but we are looking at examples that adults

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are supposed to set for our children. I am appalled with such behaviour as the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs. You see, without this type of Bill we will not be able to produce sportsmen and women of whom we would be proud. We will put them on a blacklist, our Government will never do such a deed and to think that to deprive these children in foster homes looking at our Soca Warriors live in Trinidad and Tobago, this Government will never perform such a heinous, insensible—it is insensitive and evil to deny the population the right of their heroes.

Mr. Speaker, so many children look up to our sporting heroes and it is really a sorry state. With regard to this Bill, I will urge the Members opposite to support it in its entirety, and I am sure the Member for Chaguanas West will do so as well.

So in closing, I thank you for your indulgence and your guidance on my maiden speech.

Thank you very much.

Mr. S. Panday: Shame, shame.

Mr. Speaker: Order please, Member for Princes Town North. Hon. Member, let me congratulate you on your maiden contribution. I really did wish that you would have been a little more relevant, but nevertheless, it is your maiden contribution and I wish to congratulate you and look forward to many other relevant contributions coming from you.

Mr. Jack Warner (*Chaguanas West*): Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that I have some serious frustrations from being in this House. I have serious frustrations most times based on the quality of the contribution I get from the other side and sometimes I sit and swivel in my chair and ask myself: What have I gotten into?

I am concerned by the fact that when I came into politics, I came in the belief that we would have won and having won that we would have been able to improve the lives of our people and particularly our children so that even foster homes and children residences would have been a thing of the past.

Mr. Speaker, when I came into politics in this noble party, I came to win in the hope that once we win, we would have been able to improve family lives, make the nuclear family something of substance once again and, therefore, let there be caring in the family and children could have been saved.

Mr. Speaker, when I came into politics, I came here believing we would have won and in doing so, I thought by winning, we would have left a legacy for our children which we began to do in our first term in office by giving free education

for all, by building secondary schools where none existed before, by building roads and bridges where there was none before, and by making our children happy again.

When I came into politics, I came because I felt we would have won and continued the work we did for our children in the first term. I did not count on the destruction of the third party and today we are here. I come here Friday after Friday most times as a frustrated person, but today has been my most frustrating day of all. When I listen to the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West, the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, and I listen to his maiden speech I ask myself: How much lower can we go?

Mr. Speaker, it pained me when you had to correct a Minister three times in his maiden speech. That is unprecedented. I cringed and I understand why a Minister could say open the gates and go in free for football. I understand the level of mentality now. Mr. Speaker, if ever there was "happy hour" in a Parliament, we just had it. I could not believe, and I sat there and cringed because I say, in many ways the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs has the destiny of our children in his hands. It is his ministry and he has to work in conjunction with his colleague the Member for Diego Martin Central—poor soul—to help to uplift the lives of our young people to give them a sense of hope, but they cannot get hope from the hopeless. What we saw today was a most pathetic display of hopelessness in an effort to try to make me look bad.

Mr. Speaker, I have gone to 167 countries and I am looking good in 166. The only country where an attempt to make me look bad is made is the one where I was born. So what! At the end of the day, I was not born to do work in this country. I work in this country to improve the lives of our children.

Mr. Speaker, I was a teacher for 30 years teaching children. I began from the primary school, the Exchange Roman Catholic School opposite Holy Faith Convent in Couva. I taught Standards 1, 2 and 5 and in Standard 5, I found a bright "fella" named Kenneth Valley and I sent him to do Lower Part 1 and Lower Part 2 and he ended up here a couple years ago.

I taught children and when I left there I went to training college to learn how to work with children, how to teach them to better their lives. While I was at training college, I joined the Special Reserve Police Service so I could be a policeman to work the beat, and help to teach children how to improve their lives.

I then went to university, I got two degrees. I went to Polytechnic for 23 years teaching sixth form students, 18 years and under. I taught Joseph Ross at Polytechnic,

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that is why he is here now. Children are important and, therefore, if you teach children properly, the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Bill would be irrelevant. Therefore, I am saying at all levels children have always been my strong focal point. [*Desk thumping*] I did not have to become a Minister to gallery about children you know, that is not important. [*Interruption*] I am not a Minister nor are you. Are you a Minister? I would ask Emile Elias. At the end of the day I am saying that it is unfortunate that you bring all these extraneous matters to a serious Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I really did not want to go down to the level of the last speaker, but I crave your indulgence to give me just two or three minutes to respond to a few remarks he made because the national community is listening and, therefore, they must be informed of some of the remarks he made, which of course, demand a response from me if only for the record. I will do so as succinctly as possible because I know that after the last contribution we are all very tired, and I can understand that.

You know at the end of the day I was trying to listen to my colleague, the Member for Toco/Sangre Grande who spoke of being a mother and a daughter and that gave her some experience on how to interpret and appreciate the Children's Authority Act. She said that it helped her to understand it and I want to tell her that one does not have to be a mother and a daughter to understand the plight of children because all around you there is suffering in the land and the Member for Tabaquite and the Member for Siparia were able to articulate on this quite well.

After that, I listened to the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West and he begins to give us a history of the PNM and how great thou art. What is sad here is that people go to the United States of America, spend six months and return to Trinidad talking "Yankee" as if they spent their lifetime there. The same people go to Carrera and spend six years and their language does not change. In terms of the last Speaker, he is talking about the PNM as if he discovered the word PNM, as if he invented the institution and I was thinking that he is not a PNM you know, he is a PINO (PNM In Name Only) and, therefore, I will dismiss that about the great PNM and so forth and I will tell you why shortly.

The point is—and I will, of course, try my utmost to keep it at a very high level—at the end of the day, sport is a vehicle which should be used to give our children a sense of hope, sport is the vehicle which we should use for our nation's flag to be flown.

Our nation's flag can never be flown on the field of war; our nation's flag can only be flown on the field of sport and more so, football. Therefore we use—
[*Interruption*]

6.25 p.m.

Mr. Maharaj SC: He is responding to you.

Mr. J. Warner: He would not understand. That is why we are where we are in sport today, but I will come back to him just now.

Sport, therefore, must work in conjunction with social development so our children's lives can be transformed; our children and their parents can appreciate, of course, what life is all about. Sport and more so, football, teaches our children how to win and how to lose. Sport teaches them a sense of discipline. In the case of football, which I will come to just now again, it is the only sport that takes someone from the cradle to the grave. In your mother's womb, the very first movement you make is a kick. The doctor says—not Dr. Browne, Dr. Gopeesingh—how do you feel? You say, "I got a kick here and a kick there." The first is a kick—football.

When the child is born and it gets a slap, the child kicks out and cries—football. The child grows up, walking to school and the child kicks a pan, a bottle or a stone and the child plays football along the way. When you become a full man and you die, you kick the bucket. So from the cradle to the grave, football has value. And for a Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs to come and trivialize on the value of sport and more so, football, and talk about double standards and, of course, about Chaguanas West and about transparency, you cannot be serious. You have to take your vocation seriously.

I heard him say several things. I cannot go into all today, but one thing he said was the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs helped children. He said so! And I asked myself, how? A young girl, Gaitria Seetahal, has been selected to represent this country for West Indies cricket. She is touring England and Ireland next week. She comes from a poor family. She has performed very well. She represented this country's senior women's cricket team. Has the Government helped her? Has the ministry helped her? No! The Member of Parliament did that. How do they help the children?

Brazil Secondary School had to go on a tour. The children sold their sugar cake and nuts and so on, but they want help. This is Brazil, not Brazil down Rio, Sao Paulo; Brazil at the back of Arima; Talparo by my colleague from La

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Horquetta/Talparo, Mr. Joseph. They want help. They begged the Minister of Education to help them. She refused! Bermudez Biscuit helped them. I went to them and asked: "Do you have enough help?" They said: "Yes, Mr. Warner." I said: "If you want help, I am here to help you." What help did the Ministry give the children? I ask you, how?

He said many of our sporting heroes have come from poor homes. The Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs does not know what a poor home is. If he sees one he does not know it. Last week Friday he had to go for dinner at an Italian restaurant on Ariapita Avenue, he sent his escort in front to check out his table and to see that everything was okay, so when he comes from his car, he would be ushered inside. What does he know about poor homes?

[*Mr. Hunt stands*].

I am not giving way.

Mr. Hunt: He is misleading the House.

Hon. Members: Sit down!

Mr. Warner: Two weeks ago, Mr. Ramesh Maharaj and I were in Laventille giving out some football equipment to some young ten-year-olds in Laventille at different streets and so on—young children on a basketball court. We went there to give them equipment. As I was saying yesterday, people asked us: "Do you have security to go to Laventille?" We said to them: "Yes". "What do you have to go in Laventille?" "We have security in the car trunk." "What do you have?" "Fifty footballs and 50 boots." We went there; young children; if you see the joy on their faces.

Last week we were in Diego Martin, Covigne Road—young children, poor—giving out equipment. What does he know about a place called Lackhap? Has he been there? Has he gone to Diego Martin? Has he gone to Santa Cruz in Jaggan Village? He does not know!

Mr. Maharaj SC: Or Tabaquite?

Mr. J. Warner: I am leaving that for last. Does he know Carie Road in Tabaquite? He does not know! Has he ever seen the ground there? He has not! I know about poverty and that is why I could appreciate the suffering of the children today. [*Desk thumping*]

Let me just take two moments on the last speaker. The last speaker talked about double standards. I will talk here slower than I have ever spoken in my life

because I want what I am saying now to be properly recorded. The Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs appointed his best friend, a fellow called Darren Millien, as chairman of the Sports Company. In an email on May 23, Darren Millien is writing the Sports Company's directors and I quote:

"23 May 2008 16:50

My apologies, I was also told that...Futsal..."

Futsal is indoor football and Futsal is one of the sports of the TTFE, like women's league; Futsal; you have under-17; under 20. So he is saying to them:

"I was told that...Futsal has indicated that their check can be made to the Southern Football Association as the Minister does not want any check made payable to the TTFE."

That was Darren Millien. And the response he receives on Wednesday, May 28 at 16:23 says—now, the Southern Football Association is a branch of the TTFE. The parent body is the TTFE, but the Minister said do not do anything with them; give them no money; no cheque; give it to the SFA. So listen good. The guy that is responding to Darren Millien says:

"The suggestions to pay to South Football Association (means that we are) still paying to TTFE."

since the SFA is a regional body. Listen to Mr. Millien's reply, who, of course, is his best friend and runs the Sports Company. By the way, Darren Millien, I should add, is also managing director of One 2 One Limited at No. 4 Murray Street, Woodbrook. So Darren Millien is talking for the Minister and he says:

"The SFA is an affiliate member of the TTFE with a separate bank account and constitution and can therefore receive checks that would not necessarily end up into the coffers of the TTFE."

No money for them! Squeeze them! They must die because Jack Warner is their special adviser. Kill me, but do not kill the federation and the sport.

But that is not all. The Minister has spent \$37,649,360.15 on jobs all over the country except Tabaquite, Chaguanas, Siparia—this whole row; nothing on this side or the back; nothing here. Nothing at all on this side! But more about that at another time. He says all of these are completed. I sent my photographer—you know I have investigators all over the place, from Malaysia to Trinidad and Tobago—to see these completed projects. Completed: \$2.9 million; \$2.8 million; \$2.6 million; \$3.3 million, and all the guys are all PNM guys: Hugh Hackett,

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James Dedier, and so on. I have pictures of jobs that said: "Completed", and are not even half completed. Who has double standards? If I have double standards with my money, it is okay, but when it is double standards with taxpayers' money, it is even worse.

He goes further: Jogging track and lighting, he has it, of course, for Maloney, Lopinot, Crown Street, Arima, Mathura, and so on: \$9.8 million. Completion dates are given here. Nothing completed! When I come back here on this, it will be a warm, hot summer, because what I am telling you here is the tip of the iceberg. So do not talk to me about double standards.

I am saying there are other times for that. My concern today is about our children. Football in this country is like a tree and by the actions of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs we are cutting down the tree, in fact, the only tree that can give this country shade. I ask myself: Is it football alone? Because there are other sports that will help children as well: Basketball; boxing; athletics; cricket, these are sports that will help the children to improve, but the Minister is fighting a war with boxing. He called Melsoir Taylor, who could be his grandfather, spineless. He is fighting a war with basketball; he is fighting a war with athletics; fighting a war with football and the one common thread in all these sports are poor, black, dispossessed people behind the bridge whom the Minister resents. He does not even touch them. He has to wash his hands afterwards, and he is our Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs.

I want to make the point very quickly that—

Mr. Hunt: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Hon. Member: Boy, sit down nuh!

Mr. Hunt: The Member for Chaguanas West is imputing—

Dr. Moonilal: What number?

Mr. Hunt: Standing Order 36(5). The Member for Chaguanas West is imputing improper motives. I would ask the Member to retract.

Mr. S. Panday: Sit down, man!

Mr. Speaker: No. Listen, the Member is not imputing any improper motives. I warned you when you were going on with your speech that you are opening this debate to an extent that you probably would regret and that is what it is. All the Member for Chaguanas is doing is responding to your contribution. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. J. Warner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You see, it takes two to communicate, you know; one to speak the truth and the other to listen. I am speaking the truth. I would not take more than five minutes of your time today because I believe that I have made the case quite clearly. But the point is, one must never deprive our young children of hope. As a Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, you must use Sport and Youth Affairs to give our young people a sense of hope; you must give them, as it were, some reason for living; you must show that their characters can speak for themselves.

6.40 p.m.

We cannot run our affairs on lies. There is no way a lie can fix the truth. This is why I speak this evening. I will end in two seconds. I was reading a book written by Barbara Ann Kipfer, *8,789 Words of Wisdom*. If I were sure that it would have been well read, I would have lent it to the other side. In this book, page 17 states:

“A jackass can kick a barn door down, but it takes a carpenter to build one.”

Mr. Speaker, in sport and for the young people, I am the carpenter.

Thank you. [*Desk thumping and Laughter*]

The Minister of Social Development (Hon. Dr. Amery Browne): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to wrap up this exciting debate on the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill, 2008. I began this debate humbly by asking distinguished Members present to treat the issue of children and the protection of their rights and welfare as a national issue, as opposed to a political football. Little did I know that those words will have significant irony given what was to come. Unfortunately, political football it did turn out to be and what has happened has happened.

Some Members have yielded to the temptation to look exclusively at the past and not look forward to the future for our children. We have to recognize that the presentation of these two critical Bills at this time signifies a high level of commitment by the Government. I have already congratulated Members opposite for supporting the Children's Authority Bill. Once again, I state that as Minister of Social Development and a representative of the Government, we look forward to their support on the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill, despite the back and forth that has occurred.

I do not want to go through word by word each contribution of the Members opposite. There are a few things that I request your permission on which to

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comment. I was very attentive to the distinguished contribution of the hon. Member for Tabaquite, but he too, yielded to the temptation to remain fixed in the review mirror. He took us on a long journey through his not insignificant contributions to the origin of these Bills on the children's package. I am afraid he did not take us forward into the future. The point was well made. He had a significant role as the then attorney general. I thought at one stage that the emphasis was that it was one person that originated these Bills, but he went on to acknowledge that there were many other contributions including our distinguished public servants. I acknowledge the fact that there was much collaboration along the way.

The fact that these two Bills were laid several weeks before the recent monstrous acts against a particular child and pundits were saying that the Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill and the other Bills were not being debated before 2009, when here we are, signals real commitment to moving forward as opposed to backward. I will always encourage that particular focus from Members when referring and addressing the important issue of children and their welfare.

While we recognize that we are politicians and we are here in a political capacity, we were elected as politicians, I strongly feel that some issues must be treated as national issues. There are more Bills to come relating to children. Maybe, we have gotten rid of some of the passion and addressed the history. I do not want to anticipate but I hope that as we move forward to a brighter future in a country fit for children, more of us would resist the temptation to get too much into the back and forth.

As the Member for Tabaquite said, the children are listening and looking on. If I could borrow one point from the distinguished Member from Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West, it is the importance of setting a good example.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the expression is "the distinguished Member for" and not "from".

Hon. Dr. A. Browne: Mr. Speaker, the distinguished Member from, for. *[Interruption]* Thank you. I appreciate your intervention. That was probably the most valuable thing that you have said for the evening. The distinguished Member from Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West—

Hon. Members: Oh gosh.

Hon. Dr. A. Browne: He distracted me. It is about setting the right example for our young people. We will not twist on semantics. I have always paid earnest

attention to Couva South when he is making his contributions. I would appreciate just the same respect.

I was addressing the issue and agreeing with Tabaquite that the children are listening and looking on. We must always maintain the highest standards in this House when addressing one another and the issue of the welfare of our children.

The other point coming out from the contribution of the Member for Tabaquite is that good work is easy to recognize and we do not always have to blow our trumpets in order for that good work to be recognized.

I am afraid that the Member for Tabaquite failed to acknowledge a number of major amendments that were made to the pieces of children legislation that have been coming before this honourable House. There was a failure of all Members on the opposite side to acknowledge that the International Child Abduction Bill which was passed both in the Lower House and the other place is a brand new piece of legislation. There was almost the assumption that we were dealing with the same series of Bills that were dealt with before. That was certainly one significant change.

The Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill was passed with the support of the Opposition. Again there were major and significant amendments—despite what Oropouche West may have said in her contribution—that took what was an unworkable and inoperable piece of legislation and has made it workable and operable. It is very difficult to proposition that these Bills are the same or are in no way significantly different or more advanced than the original package of legislation. Much was made about the similarity and some of the grammatical and editorial corrections, but these were inevitable in addition to the significant amendments that have been made.

With regard to the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries (Amdt.) Bill, the original Bill was unworkable from the basic premise of which party was being licensed. I addressed that at the beginning of my contribution. These significant factors were in no way addressed by any Member opposite. Again, there was the attempt to portray this Bill as in all respects identical to the original Bill. That was not by no means so.

Give credit where credit is due. We should not pretend in front of our children that important changes have not been made. I will avoid saying anything confrontational at this stage seeing that we are looking forward to support from the Opposition.

There is one point that disturbs me. A number of Members on this side have cautioned against the wanton and flagrant calling of children's and families' names who have been traumatized in the past, without the permission of these families. *[Interruption]* That does not mean that they should be bandied about in a political forum. We are fortunate on this side and maybe on that side as well to have persons with strong social work background. I know that the Member for Siparia prides herself on being quite a bit of a social activist.

I am not here to tell distinguished Members opposite what to say. I am just a newbie as Chaguanas West would say. It is just a note of caution. It is something to think about in the future. That is my humble submission. It may open fresh wounds for some of those families in a political dialogue. They may not take too kindly to that type of wanton name calling. There is freedom of speech and maybe even moreso in this House.

The Member for Siparia in her usual fashion gave a very enlightening contribution. I thought that at the beginning there was an attempt to set the record straight in terms of her contribution as attorney general at the time for a brief period. I thought that I heard that but I would not dwell on those points because I do not think that anyone is here to fight for glory or anything else.

The Member for Siparia spent quite a bit of time that I will characterize as cherry-picking through a number of reports, pulling some statistics as she is entitled to do, but to what end? There seemed to be a concerted effort to spray the population with a very negative picture of Trinidad and Tobago. I do not think that that effort is limited to one Member. We have seen that approach being used time and time again. I do not know if it is a characteristic of the Opposition party.

This attempt to spray the population with negativity and we are the worst country in the world. I wonder. Are we the worst country in the world? We have the highest poverty in the world. Do we really have the highest poverty in the world? Can we honestly portray that image? Our children have such a bleak future. I do not believe that our children have a bleak future. A quick survey across the nation would tell us that the vast majority of children can look forward to an extremely and wonderfully bright future with a very high quality education system. We have children who are healthy, happy, well-nourished, living with loving families and looking forward to coming into a world of work with the lowest unemployment rate in the history of this country and the English speaking Caribbean. Those are facts. That is the reality.

While we acknowledge and if we put the debate in a realistic frame, that there are some children in difficulty; in vulnerable circumstances, Member for Fyzabad

and you may be aware of some of them, let us not portray to the population that the majority of our children are in distress, because that is not the case. Children today are in a better position as compared with children of yesterday. I know Chaguanas West may have had a very wonderful upbringing. There are children who are happy in all generations. I do not want the picture to remain that the children of today are in complete distress. That is not a realistic picture while there are those who are in vulnerable circumstances.

I truly feel that our children are growing up in the land of opportunity. While these Bills attempt to address important gaps that need to be addressed urgently and that is acknowledged and why we are here today, I want that signal. As the Member for Tabaquite has said the children are listening. I do not want them to continue to absorb a completely negative picture of the country in which they live and they should be so proud.

6.55 p.m.

If, as the Member for Tabaquite has said, the children are listening, I do not want them to absorb a completely negative picture of the country in which they live and of which they should be proud. That is why we are all here today looking at this important Bill. Mr. Speaker, our joint efforts bring us to a key point in the journey to safety for our nation's children and we have already recognized the efforts of many persons who have brought us to this point.

One of the final points I would like to make is that the journey does not end here. We recognize this as a significant point in our progress. We all have a role to play in moving forward and in creating a country and society that can be described as fit for our nation's children. The Government has a role to play; the Opposition, the police service and sport—you are right—have a role to play. The Minister has a role to play and he is playing that role. Our social workers have a role to play. Our parents and family members have a role to play. Neighbours, activists, religious leaders, the media, civil society and the children themselves have a very important role to play.

I was very heartened to be approached by 21 young girls from Holy Faith Convent in Point Fortin, who have come forward saying that they want to work with me and society to create this world fit for children. They want to serve as champion activists reaching out to other children and educating them about their rights. That was such an encouraging intervention that I am sure that when we go to Oropouche East and some other areas, there will be school children who want to serve as champions.

It is one thing for someone like me to stand and talk about children's rights—and Members opposite have made contributions—but it is a completely different impact when young people themselves rise to the fore and educate one another about their rights. *[Interruption]* That is what these Bills are about.

Mr. Speaker: Order, Member for Fyzabad!

Hon. A. Browne: These Bills, with the acknowledged origin, send a signal to society and maybe even to ourselves that this is the time for children. We are about creating a country fit for children. We are not there as yet; we have some work to do and the legislation has to come to the fore. That is what we are doing now.

Those children were not asking for our permission—they certainly were not asking for my permission; they were saying that they would demonstrate their commitment and that is what I feel we need a lot more of in this country to create that world fit for children.

I am not going to dwell on the Member for Fyzabad who has migrated to the east. There is just one more point I would like to make. *[Interruption]* Member for Chaguanas West, we listened to your treaties on football for a long time respectfully.

Mr. Speaker: This Minister is entitled to 75 minutes to reply. The Standing Orders so provide. He is just about winding up, so be patient.

Hon. A. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I submit it is a fair point if Members would give their kind indulgence. There were many references to kids from Couva, Fyzabad and Chaguanas. The origin of that word comes from the latchkey syndrome in the United States. This is a term that is strongly discouraged by the social activists. The children are listening. I hope no kids are listening—just for the future. We are here to encourage and educate one another. I have listened to you and that is one of the things I would encourage you to change.

Not dwelling on any acrimony, I see Members are so sensitive about basic social principles. I admire the Member for Fyzabad. I am not too sure why, but I would not want him to react in a sensitive manner.

There was nothing else really to respond to. Member for Chaguanas West, I took your direction when you indicated that you were responding to submissions made. I will not trouble you too much. Once again, I will not go to that level. I know he is anxious for that, but that will not occur.

Just to conclude, there are significant amendments that have brought us to this point with regard to the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and

Nurseries Bill. The original Act did not clearly indicate whether the licence was granted to the residence or to the person running it. That would have created significant difficulties. The original Act did not properly take into account the development in administrative law, which requires public authorities to give reasons for administrative decisions. Again, in a highly democratic society, that would not have been acceptable. With respect to foster care, it was felt that the definition ignored the current reality of many of our nation's children.

I started by asking that we treat this as a national issue and I am sure that is exactly where it would remain. Mr. Speaker, I crave the support of all Members of this honourable House and the wider society for this very important Bill.

I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.

House in committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 6.

Question proposed, That clause 6 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. S. Panday: Mr. Speaker, section 6 was deleted. Subsequent to that, in the Act, we continue with the same numbering. What happens is that there will be 5 and you go to 7. It would appear that all the numbers have to move forward.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: The section is not deleted.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that for referential purposes, we cannot do that at this stage because there are references to various sections within the Bill. That will be dealt with by the Law Commission when they do the editorial corrections.

Mr. S. Panday: Later when you move to the amendments you have circulated, you are amending sections 32 and 46(b). We should change that now and move it to 31 and 45(b).

Mr. Imbert: That may appear anomalous and out of sequence, but there are references to particular clauses by number within the Bill, so we have to leave it and when the Law Commission looks at it, they will make the necessary editorial changes.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 6 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 7 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 8 and 9.

Question proposed, That clauses 8 and 9 stand part of the Bill.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I want to look at both clauses 8 and 9 to explain. Clause 8 attempts to amend section 4. If we insert the amendment, we are putting in the words "all managers of existing community residences shall within three months apply for a licence". When we come to clause 9, it refers to section 5, so we are looking at section 5. Section 5 says: "A person operating or intending to operate a community residence shall make an application for a residence licence". So who is making the application? In one section, it refers to the manager and in the next it refers to the person attending.

Mr. Imbert: We need to make it consistent.

Mr. Chairman: What is the amendment you are proposing?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: The draftsman can tell me. It should be "manager".

Mr. Imbert: Change "person" to "manager".

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: This will then be in clause 9. You will have to insert a (b) or (c).

Mr. Imbert: Delete the word "person" and replace it with the word "manager". Because the Bill amends section 1, we have to do it a little differently. It will be 9(a)(i) in subsection (1)(i).

7.10 p.m.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: The Act is amended in section 5(1) by deleting the word "person" and inserting thereof "manager". What is now (a) becomes (ii).

Mr. Imbert: We would have (i) and (ii). (ii) is what is now (a) and (i) would be subsection (1). This is by deleting the word "person" and substituting the word "manager".

Sen. Anisette-George: The way I understood it was that section 4 dealt with homes that already pre-date the Act. That is why you are talking about a manager.

Mr. Chairman: You want to go back to clause 4?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: No, we would stay where we are for the moment, Sir. With respect, I thought of that but when I looked at it again, when you go to clause 5, it is a person operating. That is also an existing home. It has to be a manager. Clause 5 has “operating or intending to operate”. In any event, you have changed the words. Wherever you had the words “operators and persons”, you have been using the word “manager”. A lot of your amendments have been with respect to substituting “manager”.

Mr. Imbert: Okay.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: You should just leave clause 4 for the existing ones and take out the “person operating” and just have “intending”. I think that may be more appropriate. What we want to do now is:

“The Act is amended in section 5—(a)(i) by deleting the words ‘operating or...’”

The person is intending to operate. It would be correct, because you may not have a manager as yet. You intend to operate. We are deleting the words “operating or”, and (ii) would remain as we had it.

Mr. Imbert: It would be what the old (a) was.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: That is right.

Mr. Chairman: Anything else?

Mr. Maharaj SC: Under clause 8(c):

“(3) Where the Authority refuses to grant a licence it shall, upon request by the applicant, give its reasons for refusal in writing.”

I want to point out, for the consideration, that the Government is creating a precedent and that in any public authority, the Judicial Review Act applies and there is really no need for this amendment. What will happen is what can happen, from every similar act, any public authority after this—it would seem to me that there is no need for (c).

Mr. Imbert: We agree. He is right.

Mr. Maharaj SC: I would put a note that when you consider the Children's Authority Act, the point the Member for Siparia made is that—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Imbert: We have passed that Act already.

Mr. Maharaj SC: If you put Family Court, the Judicial Review Act talks about an application for JR to the High Court. The Family Court could be an

arrangement with the Chief Justice assigning any judicial review to this act to a Family Court. I think it should remain as High Court.

Sen. Annisette-George: It is just that with the judicial review, what we have found is the latest trend is to put it to the court that it deals with that kind of matter. That is why we have changed. We have had that sort of discussion among ourselves. That is why we put the Family Court.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Since it does not exist at the moment, if you put the court with jurisdiction for family matters, that will cover it and whenever that court is established, you would be able to operate in the future.

Sen. Annisette-George: That is accepted.

Mr. Imbert: For the time being, until the Family Court is established.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: If the High Court—this is not under—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: We have not reached there.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: We are okay with clause 8.

Mr. Chairman: Clause 9 is amended by creating a (i) and (a) is now a (ii).

Question put and agreed to.

Clauses 8 and 9, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 10 to 15 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 16.

Question proposed, That clause 16 stand part of the Bill.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Clause 16 amendment speaks of taking applications:

“...substituting the words ‘Fixed Date Claim’; and

(ii) deleting the words ‘Judge in Chambers’ and substituting the word ‘Judge’.”

This is okay. This is where, perhaps, we can put it on the record, so that you would consider it for the Senate, when you go to look at what I have raised in the debate, with respect to the whole issue of the Family Court. There is nowhere within this, where we can deal with it. We have to deal with the Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill. But, any public authority under the JR Act, can do judicial review. That Act mandates under the Supreme Court— The more important point is what is the Family Court. It does not exist, in my respectful view, at this point in time.

Mr. Maharaj SC: I want to add that I do not know what is the rationale for moving “Judge in Chambers”. If you are dealing with children and you do a judicial review in open court, everything can be published. If you convert it to a fixed date claim form, everything can be published. One of the reasons it was done with a judge in chambers is that it is in camera and the press cannot publish anything. Therefore, one of the matters which you can consider—you probably do not have to make a decision now because you still have to go to the Senate— It would seem to me that there would be matters which, if you allow the media to publish about some of these children, would defeat the whole purpose. Because where there is an accused by a father or parent—I think you should reconsider this.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: These are not JRs; these are appeals against the decision. The Chief Whip is correct; you would be putting out their business. It is to be considered.

Sen. Annisette-George: What happened is that this was done in anticipation of the Family Court Bill coming and there not being a judge in chambers. Also, in that Bill, there would be provisions that anything governing children would be done in camera and, therefore, this is what has happened. It was a whole package, the Family Court Bill being included. All of this was done in anticipation of everything coming to light together.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: How soon do you expect the Family Court Bill to come to Parliament?

Sen. Annisette-George: Very soon.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: That would be good.

Mr. Maharaj SC: What we should do is consider whether the better formula would not be to ensure you put “in camera” in this measure and whenever that comes then you would deal with the amendment. It is going to be chaotic.

Sen. Annisette-George: I accept the point that out of an abundance of caution and if we put it in there is no harm done.

Mr. Maharaj SC: Consider it and give the draft person some more time.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 16 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 17 to 31 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 32.

Question proposed, That clause 32 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that clause 32 be amended as circulated. Apparently it was a communication mix up. The gazetted Bill has child in it; it does not have "chills". That was a little mix up.

Delete the word "chills" and substitute the word "child".

Mr. Chairman: The gazetted Bill is the correct Bill?

Mr. Imbert: Yes.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 32, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 33 to 36 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 37.

Question proposed, That clause 37 stand part of the Bill.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: In clause 37(b) on page 9 there is definition of "nursery". During the debate, I had made the case for deleting "six" and changing it to "five". I was saying that the children who go into the primary school system start from five. Let us separate the nursery from the primary school system to avoid the overlapping and conflicts that would arise. I do not know if there was any special reason for having six years, but it seems to me that nursery school children are under five and from five, you go into the primary school.

7.25 p.m.

Mrs. Annisette-George: Under the Education Act, a nursery infant is defined as children five and under. We use six and under here because of the compulsory age and therefore what we have done, is proposed an amendment to include a new section 52(A), which may have been passed to you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: We have not gotten it yet, but just continue your point.

Mrs. Annisette-George: Section 52(A), which would say:

"This part shall not apply to public schools under the Education Act."

Because we felt that public schools under the Education Act, which will govern all public schools, whether it is an infant department, that will take care of

children under five and also take care of the children five and over, would be governed by the Education Act and the prescriptions under the Education Act. Therefore, we took them completely out of this.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: With due respect, this is reforming legislation, to comply with the CRC, where a child is given a specific definition, where throughout our legislation we should move all pieces of legislation in the same direction. I am of the view, with greatest of respect, that we should do it here; that this person should be five and the amendment be made to the Education Act.

You have another one that you are going to bring in, where you are amending—it is one of the packages, I think it is the Miscellaneous Provisions (Children) Bill that has been enacted. It deals with all the plethora of legislation where child, children and so on are mentioned. So, we can clean that up there so you do not want to come back to this. I am really strongly of the view that the primary school starts at five and your argument about public versus private will not hold for a while, because at the moment, the early childhood centres—I gave the numbers; you have the numbers that are Government; you have those that are Government assisted, where would they fall? Would it be public? Would it be private? So, you have private with some assistance from Government, they should all come under one umbrella as nurseries, under the age of five.

If you do not want to do it now, I ask you to consider it, you will be in the Senate. You see, if we are saying we are streamlining, that is what this whole package of legislation was about, to streamline all of our references in our legislative framework when we come to dealing with children. I am of the strong view that we should do it here, and when we bring the ones for our Miscellaneous Provisions (Children), we can deal with what you are telling me about the Education Act there. Because you are not going to proclaim this today; you are not going to do it right away; you have time to put in the regulations, to put in your structures.

Mrs. Annisette-George: Okay, we will give consideration to it and do it in the Senate if necessary.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Sure.

Mr. Imbert: Just bear in mind, Member for Siparia, that if we do not exempt public schools within the meaning of the Education Act then we will have to licence public schools.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Those are all the arguments I raised in the debate. I said you are going to get this overlapping; there will be conflict of responsibilities when we are dealing with nurseries as they are defined here. That was my point in

the debate. If we define a nursery as a place for reward; keeping these children for day care for removal under the age of six, right away you have all these schools out there that are for reward, privately, and the ones that are registered as well.

Mr. Imbert: I accept what you are saying with respect to the age and the Attorney General has given an undertaking to look at that.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Well, look at both of them.

Mrs. Annisette-George: Under the Education Act, a public school is also an assisted school and that is why we put this to exclude all of them, so that there would be no licensing for public schools under the Education Act, which will both be Government owned and assisted schools.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: What about those where the Government gives subventions to or, with this legislation, you would be giving to these schools some kind of moneys? There are early childhood centres now where children are going and Government is giving some funding but they are raising funds too. Are they public? Are they private?

Mrs. Annisette-George: Once you are private and therefore there is a reward you are going to be required to be licenced, because then you are private and you are not within the Education Act.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Your definition of public is no reward. Is that what you are saying?

Mrs. Annisette-George: No, our definition of public is either you are Government owned or Government assisted.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: We will use Government assisted in one sense; there is Government assistance in another sense, but you are still taking for reward.

Miss Le Gendre: Sorry, Member for Siparia, not anymore. The new ECC system has changed, so no fee is charged because Government is now taking up all of the expenses.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Is that the new ones? Is that all the existing 800 or whatever they are?

Miss Le Gendre: Yes, they are still being turned over.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: But there is no law; that is not in the legislative framework. That may be a policy decision on your part, but we are dealing with

the legislative framework here and there is no legislation that says what you are saying; that a person cannot open a school and charge for it; that is what this one is saying, that you will be—

Miss Le Gendre: No, there are primary schools that may do that, but the ones we are talking about, the Government schools are not—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I am still asking you to sit and look at it carefully. I am not convinced, with due respect—I mean I am not saying that I know all of it—by the arguments thus far, and I am asking you to please look at it in the Senate.

Mr. Imbert: Member for Siparia, certainly we will look at all of that and we will make appropriate amendments in the Senate because the majority is required there as well.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I am seeing you all—I am seeing it.

Mr. Imbert: We understand, but I personally do not see why you would have an issue exempting public schools within the meaning of the Education Act.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I am sorry? No, it is not with the public; I do not have a problem with the public schools.

Mr. Imbert: So that we want to introduce a further amendment later on to exempt public schools under the Education Act from this legislation.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: What makes it a public school under the Education Act that will not be caught within this definition of nursery? That is my difficulty here now, that within this definition of nursery I am seeing some of those schools being caught. I am asking the draftsmen to look at it. Let us move on, please. Look at it; you have time before you get to the Senate.

Mr. Imbert: Sure, no problem.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 37 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 38 to 45 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 46.

Question proposed, That clause 46 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. Chairman: Clause 46(b) will be amended as circulated:

Delete the word “negative” and substitute the word “affirmative”.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: If I may. In clause 46, we have asked for this in this Bill and I am very happy you acceded to this request. However, in the Children's Authority Bill, which will go before the Senate, you have also done the same thing. You have taken out the affirmative resolution and you have put it for us to negative. So, I am respectfully asking now that we have done it with this one when you get up there that you also amend and leave it as it was in the original Act to go by way of affirmative resolution.

Mr. Imbert: No problem. Mr. Chairman, before we do that, the Attorney General is advising me that she would like to put in the exemption for public schools under the Education Act. Now, the draftsman is advising me that this should really be numbered as clause 46 and what is 46 should be numbered as 47.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: So it is a new section? I am sorry, I am not hearing you.

Mr. Imbert: Rather than approving clause 46 as it now stands, we want to renumber that clause to make it 47. Clause 46 in the Bill will now be renumbered as clause 47 and we want to insert a new clause 46. Section 52(A), of the Act shall not apply to public schools under the Education Act. Insert the following new section 52(A):

“This Part shall not apply to public schools under the Education Act.”

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: That is not making sense.

Mr. Imbert: Okay, let us get the parent Act.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: If it is with respect to the nurseries, that is not Part V, that is Part IV. Oh, yes, Part V. Part V shall not apply to public schools under the Education Act.

Mr. Imbert: Within Part V we are putting in a new section, which would read as follows, 52(A):

“This Part shall not apply to public schools under the Education Act.”

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I am saying we have not considered that because it was not before us. Based on what we discussed I will respectfully ask you to take it up in the Senate by which time our representatives there would have our take on it, because you may have to come back here with some amendments. I mean we have to vote on it too; we have a three-fifths today.

Mrs. Annette-George: All right, we will take it in the Senate.

Mr. Imbert: The Attorney General is in the Senate, that matter could be addressed there.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: This will have our views by then on it.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 46, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 47 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Preamble.

Clerk: "WHEREAS it is enacted by section 13(1) of the Constitution that an Act of Parliament to which that section applies may expressly declare that it shall have effect even though inconsistent with sections 4 and 5 of the Constitution, and if any Act does so declare it shall have effect accordingly:

AND WHEREAS it is provided in subsection (2) of the said section 13, that an Act of parliament to which that section applies is one of the Bill for which has been passed by both Houses of Parliament and at the final vote thereon in each House has been supported by the votes of not less than three-fifths of all the members of the House:

AND WHEREAS it is necessary and expedient that this Act shall have effect even though inconsistent with sections 4 and 5 of the Constitution."

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Can I say something on the preamble? First of all, we raised this issue; you have taken it on board; I accept and it is certainly because we want the legislation to work. We do not want to go out there and somebody challenges it and says it is not constitutional, so, we take this on board. But just one word in it, if I may. You say I am cherry-picking, but there is one word that does not have to be here; just a little grammar. In the second "whereas", where it reads: "An Act to which this section applies is one of the Bill"; the word "of" should not be there and if you look at clause 13(2) of the Constitution, it says clearly:

"An Act to which this section applies is one the Bill for which..."

The word "of" should not be there.

Mr. Imbert: It did not make sense to me.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Seven years to do that. [*Laughter*] I had to get my last word in.

Mr. Chairman: Are you picking off the word "of"?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Delete the word "of". I am picking off the word "of".

Mr. Imbert: And the Law Commission would fix it anywhere.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the question is that the Preamble be inserted into the Bill with the amendment in the second recital, third line by deletion of the word "of".

Question put and agreed to

Preamble added to the Bill.

Question put and agreed to, That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House.

House resumed.

Bill reported with amendment.

Question put, That the Bill be now read the third time.

7.40 p.m.

The House voted: Ayes 32

AYES

Imbert, Hon. C.

Gopee-Scoon, Hon. P.

Abdul-Hamid, Hon. M.

Dumas, Hon. R.

Ross, Hon. J.

Taylor, Hon. P.

Swaratsingh, Hon. K.

Parsanlal, Hon. N.

Beckles, Miss P.

Mc Donald, Hon. M.

Hunt, Hon. G.
Le Gendre, Hon. E.
Browne, Hon. Dr. A.
Callender, Hon. S.
Jeffrey, Hon. F.
Hospedales, Hon. A.
Joseph, R.
Hypolite, N.
Regrello, J.
Rowley, Dr. K.
Sinanan Ojah-Maharaj, Mrs. I.
Maharaj, SC R.L.
Warner, J.
Persad-Bissessar, Mrs. K.
Ramnath, K.
Moonilal, Dr. R.
Gopeesingh, Dr. T.
Panday, S.
Panday, Miss M.
Sharma, C.
Rafeeq, Dr. H.
Partap, H.

Question agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Friday, June 27, 2008 at 1.30 p.m., which is Private Members' Day.

Mr. Maharaj SC: On that date, Mr. Speaker, we shall resume the debate on the High Food Prices.

Mr. Speaker: Before I put the question on the adjournment, we have three matters to be raised. See if I am correct here, Caroni East, Member for Siparia and Member for Oropouche East, all right, and we are going to do it in the order I have just called. Hon. Members, we do have three Motions on the Adjournment—

Hon. Member: One hour each.

Mr. Speaker: No, it is 15 minutes each. I now call on the hon. Member for Caroni East.

**Urgent Life-Saving Renal Dialysis
(Government's Failure to Provide)**

Sen. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh (*Caroni East*): Mr. Speaker, the matter that I wrote for on the adjournment since May 20, was the Failure of the Government to provide urgent life-saving renal dialysis to hundreds of patients with end stage renal failure—

Mr. Speaker: One minute, before you proceed, hon. Member, we will take the Procedural Motion now.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 10(10)—

Mr. Maharaj SC: Standing Order 21 [*Inaudible*]

Hon. C. Imbert: I do not. [*Laughter*] I wish you could have let it lapsed—I beg to move that the House continue its business, reluctantly, until the conclusion of the three matters on the adjournment.

Question put and agreed to.

**Urgent Life-Saving Renal Dialysis
(Government's Failure to Provide)**

Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Motion, basically is the failure of the Government to provide urgent life-saving renal dialysis to hundreds of patients with end stage renal failure.

This was supposed to have been debated about two weeks ago but the hon. Minister of Health appealed to the Chief Whip and myself that two weeks ago he

could not have done it and then last week he could not have done it, but I am happy that he is here today to be able to respond to it.

It is in the context that in Trinidad and Tobago the incidence of renal failure is about 300 per one million population. In developed countries it is about 200 so we have a high incidence of hypertension and diabetes. So over the last seven years we would have had almost 2,100 patients requiring dialysis at sometime or the other, so therefore now we find that there is an unacceptable level of care as far as this is concerned.

If I refer to the Minister of Health's response on Friday, March 07, 2008 in this House on the question of the Renal Dialysis Centres, in his contribution he indicated that at Port of Spain Hospital, Eric Williams Medical Complex and San Fernando General Hospital they are treating 112 patients utilizing 20 machines and the maximum number that they can treat is 116. He also indicated that at 11 private clinics, there are 49 machines and 177 patients are treated and they can handle 322 patients. So in total in Trinidad and Tobago, 289 patients are being managed both in the private institutions and the public institutions, and that is utilizing a number of 11 private clinics in Trinidad which have 49 machines.

This means that if we have, let us say 300 patients receiving dialysis out of approximately 2,000, it means that 1,700 patients are left to die, or are dying, or will die as a result of incompetence and negligence by this Government. The Minister admitted in his response on March 07—and I want to quote what was in the 2003 budget statement by the Hon. Prime Minister:

“...we will install approximately 20 dialysis machines in the major Government treatment centres and expand the capacity for cancer treatment with the establishment of a National Oncology Centre for cancer patients”—he said—

We are revisiting the National Health Insurance system to ensure that the poor and terminally ill are not excluded from access to life saving health care in the face of escalating medical costs.”

I am asking, are these end stage renal failure patients not terminally ill? Do they not require access to life saving health care when almost 1,800 of them are left to die? The Prime Minister also said:

“We are equipping the health facilities with appropriate health technology including haemo dialysis and mammography machines in light of the prevalence of such chronic conditions as kidney failure and breast cancer and their are ranking among the top causes of mortality in the population.”

In 2005 again, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Prime Minister in his budget statement said:

“In order to increase accessibility of renal dialysis centres to the general population, we will be providing before January 01, 2005, two renal dialysis treatment centres, one in the North and one in the South, each providing treatment for 200 persons. This will be supplemented by a renal transplant surgery programme...”

This has all been glib and lip service to something as important as the management of patients with end stage renal failure. While this is going on, as far as the kidney patients are concerned, we have a situation in the health sector that is compounding this situation. We have not had the six district health facilities as the Government promised, they have not built any more health centres to any major extent. The Scarborough Hospital is in a quagmire, no Point Fortin Hospital is being built, no cancer centre, no National Health Insurance System is coming in, no improvements at the hospital, massive corruption in the surgical waiting list is continuing, 23 babies died from enterobacter poisoning, rats and roaches in the kitchens at the San Fernando General Hospital, the laboratory workers are falling through the floors, fire at St. Ann's Hospital—

Mr. Speaker: I am hearing you, but you really should be talking about renal dialysis.

Dr. T. Gopeesingh: I am putting this in the context of what is happening at all the major institutions and renal dialysis is being done at these institutions when these institutions are crumbling. So, in the context of what is supposed to be done, nothing can be done based on what is happening either in the primary health care centres, the secondary health care centres which are the hospitals and therefore are unable to provide the dialysis.

The hopelessness and anger that is experienced by citizens of Trinidad and Tobago is so real and serious, I just want to read an article written as early as January 15, in the *Trinidad Guardian*, “Dialysis patients wait in agony” and this is what the article said by Anika Gumbs-Sandiford:

“A retired nurse was amongst several patients who were forced to wait for treatment for more than seven hours yesterday at the dialysis unit at the San Fernando General Hospital. The unit was shut down on Friday after 19 catheter lines got contaminated. Uncertain about their next move, patients said around 9.00 a.m. a nurse informed them that the unit was still closed and the doctors were in a meeting discussing the matter.”

So, that is at the San Fernando General Hospital where there are only 11 machines which had to be shut down because of a bacteria, enterobacter and methicillin sensitive staph aureus bacteria that is infecting the machines. If you have 11 machines at \$120,000 for one machine and you have in the Ministry of Health PricewaterhouseCoopers is being paid \$19 million for a restructuring of the office of the Ministry of Health—\$19 million PricewaterhouseCoopers has been paid already for restructuring at the Ministry of Health—and workers are leaving the Ministry of Health because of this mess that is going on and the Minister of Health is trying to get contract workers to go in the Ministry of Health, while a machine costing \$120,000 for one cannot be bought.

If we buy 100 dialysis machines, it is only costing \$12 million. But you have \$19 million for that, you have corruption in the surgical waiting list where you had a theologian running the surgical waiting list, his name is Washington and the people who have to be paid are still quarrelling with you. So, when you have people being frustrated—a patient called Cindy Johnson, age 50, said:

“She left her Biche home at 4.00 a.m. to arrive at the hospital. It is only when I reached here I was told that I had to wait. I am feeling very cold and weak, but what can I do, I have to wait for treatment.”

This is the pain and suffering of the people. One out of the 2,000 people echoing cries for treatment of the dialysis. The 1,700 cannot cry, they do not have the strength, they have end stage renal failure, they are dying and because they are so poor they cannot afford the treatment. It costs \$800 a treatment privately, twice a week, \$1,600, four weeks \$64,000, 12 months \$72,000 or \$75,000. How can a poor patient pay \$75,000 for renal dialysis?

Hon. Member: That is right.

Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Is it not the duty and the responsibility of the Government to have this dialysis provided for all the patients? [*Interruption*] When they have so much money and they are bringing the budget from \$42 billion to \$45 billion, and now \$50 billion. Because the Minister of Finance said recently they have to plough in another \$4.2 billion to take up for the RBTT shares that are going to be sold in the market and therefore, the liquidity will have to be absorbed.

Since in 2004, dialysis machines at port, coming soon for renal centres. Where are they? Thirteen fall sick at hospital, bacteria on equipment blamed. You mean to say that this Government cannot buy 12 new machines for San Fernando General Hospital? They cannot buy 100 more renal dialysis. Any one of us here today could end up with renal failure and if we do not provide \$70,000 or \$75,000 a year, we are dead.

7.55 p.m.

You said in your response, world-wide it is 200 per 1 million population, and Trinidad has a high incidence of diabetes and hypertension than the rest of the world.

Hon. Narace: Three hundred per million— [*Inaudible*]

Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Three hundred per million—for 1.3 million, it is at least 350 patients per year requiring dialysis. For seven years under their regime, we will have an accumulation of almost 2,150 patients and only 300 are receiving treatment, therefore, 1,800 people over a seven-year period would have been left to die or are dying and cannot get any treatment and many of whom would have been dead already.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to understand what is happening when this Government cannot provide a type of treatment anywhere in the health service and every aspect of medical care impacts upon the other. You have no neurosurgeon at the San Fernando General Hospital. You had 45 patients waiting in accident and emergency at the San Fernando General Hospital for more than 24 hours last week Friday, waiting for a bed, some of whom would have had renal failure and could get in for their treatment. Doctors have been forced out of the public hospitals. Doctors are leaving by the droves, and the hon. Minister stated that there are 220 vacancies for doctors in Trinidad and Tobago out of approximately 700 or 900 doctors, but 171 senior doctors are missing in Trinidad. There are vacancies for 171 senior doctors, registrars and consultants. So therefore, we do not have the doctors to be able to give these patients with renal failure, their care.

We have 1,252 nurses short out of 3,700 nurses, so out of every three nurses required in Trinidad and Tobago one is missing. So one-third, 33 per cent of the nurses missing, more than a quarter or half of the senior doctors are missing from the institutions. How can they provide the care for patients? And patients with renal failure is just one aspect of the deteriorating health care situation in Trinidad and Tobago. Here it is, the Minister said they have a 100-day plan, but we do not know where the 100 days was; what it was. It was the Minister going around the world in 100 days.

Dr. Moonilal: He is Marco Polo.

Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Mr. Speaker, we want to hear what this Government is doing about these patients who are not receiving the care that they are supposed to receive.

In closing, I want to tell this country that what the Minister has promised as far as the glucometers for the diabetic patients, he has put a bogie into it by saying that they have to get a computerized birth certificate. Now who can get a computerized birth certificate? My wife has been trying for three months to get a computerized birth certificate for herself. She gave the Registrar General an old birth certificate and still cannot get a computerized birth certificate, and she is an attorney. How is the average population going to get a computerized birth certificate to receive their glucometers for their treatment? If patients do not have proper medical care for their diabetes, they will end up with heart and renal failure.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for allowing me this opportunity. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Health (Sen. The Hon. Jerry Narace): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My very good friend, the hon. Member for Caroni East did in fact go around the world in less than 100 minutes. I am really not sure what he was trying to say, he spoke about so many different things.

First of all, just let me tell you about your mathematics, that the incidences in measurement of population statistics are not necessarily cumulative. So when you accumulate them, it is not necessarily correct. But that is another matter.

Mr. Speaker, this Government, gave an account that there are currently 116 patients that require treatment at the Haemodialysis Unit at the San Fernando General Hospital. These patients receive their treatment as follows:

- 26 patients are fully dialyzed at the unit at the San Fernando General Hospital whereby each person receives an average of three sessions per week;
- 90 patients are partially dialyzed for at least one session at the San Fernando General Hospital; and
- the remaining sessions are facilitated by private institutions through arrangements by the RHAs, and further financial assistance through the medical aid committee in the Ministry of Health.

Mr. Speaker, it is material to note that during the closure of the unit, we made arrangements for all of the people who require dialysis, to get dialysis. Many of these people said they would wait to come back to the San Fernando General Hospital, the very hospital that my friend is trying to—we made arrangements for them.

The Member for Caroni East, who was the Minister of Health as chairman of the RHA, I want to let him know that in the last few months, we opened the Oxford Street Health Centre; we turned the sod for the Morvant Health Centre; and we gave the mobilization instructions for the Scarborough Hospital. I want to correct one thing. The \$19 million that you claimed PWC collected, that is not true. I am also advised—I just want to correct some of these wrong statements—by the chairman of the South West Regional Health Authority, that they have a neurosurgeon at the San Fernando General Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, we undertook a survey three years ago, which was conducted by the renal support group of Trinidad and Tobago, detailing the number of units that patients attending private and public clinics in the country used. That survey reviewed that there were 11 private clinics, with 49 dialysis machines in use and 17 machines on standby, and they were treating 177 patients when the maximum number of patients they could have handled was 322.

As far as the public sector was concerned, the survey showed that the combined related services of the Port of Spain General Hospital, the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, the San Fernando General Hospital and the Tobago Regional Health Authority were treating 112 patients, when their maximum number of patients could be 116 and they were utilizing 20 dialysis machines with one on standby. Clearly, there was a need at the time to increase the number of machines in the public sector.

In addition, it was accepted that each patient with end-stage renal failure requires three treatments per week and given the cost per treatment at privately owned centres operating in our country, and based on cost figures five years ago, a patient would have an annual expense of \$187,200 in a worst case scenario, and \$85,800 in the best case. I do not need to tell this honourable House that those figures are well above the average income of a family in Trinidad and Tobago. The Ministry of Health has developed various initiatives in the last four years to improve the capacity in the provision of the haemodialysis treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform this honourable House that the current state of affairs in Trinidad and Tobago, as it relates to providing renal dialysis to patients is as follows:

- We have increased the number of dialysis machines over the last four years from a total of 21 to a total of 36 in our major public health institutions.

- The number of machines increased at the San Fernando General Hospital from three in the mid-80s and early 1990 period—when the UNC was there—to eight in 2004, to 12 in 2007.

Dr. Gopeesingh: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. The Hon J. Narace: Wait, I am coming to that.

- At the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex an increase from six in 2006 to 14 in 2007, and in Tobago an increase from three in 2002 to six in 2007. [*Desk thumping*]
- In addition, while the Port of Spain General Hospital currently has four dialysis machines in operation, there are plans to increase that number to a total of 24 machines in the next few years.
- The Eastern Regional Health Authority has also indicated its intention to offer treatment at the Sangre Grande Hospital by the end of July this year.

This would reduce the burden of existing haemodialysis treatment centres while improving the health status of individuals across the country.

Mr. Speaker, only on Monday, we called in all the private institutions. We had a meeting with them and we sought to partner so that we could create greater capacity, so that people can get this service. We have also increased—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Gopeesingh: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. The Hon. J. Narace: Let me finish—significantly, the number of sessions from one to three in most of our major treatment centres, including introducing weekend clinics to reduce the waiting list and expand treatment to as many patients as possible. We have entered into partnership agreements with the John Hayes Memorial Kidney Foundation, the Seventh-Day Adventist Hospital, the Maj Terrence Dialysis Centre and other private health care institutions to provide dialysis services to citizens of Trinidad and Tobago who are in need of such care. During the period 2006 to present, 81 patients have benefited from this initiative.

Mr. Speaker, he would have you believe that we are doing nothing. The end result of that action is that 577 patients are now being dialyzed, whereas just one year ago the number was 436; a 32 per cent increase in just one year. [*Desk thumping*] And if you compare it with when my good friend was the chairman at the North West Regional Health Authority, you would see that it is a far superior performance.

Life-Saving Renal Dialysis
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Further, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in its resolve to bring relief to the growing number of our citizens who are experiencing end-stage renal failure and consequently requiring dialysis, recognizes that the construction of two renal dialysis centres remain a top priority. The construction of those centres has always been part of the longer term goal of the Government. That is the one of which you spoke. Towards this end, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has authorized the NCRHA to proceed with arrangements for the development and management of the two renal dialysis centres in Trinidad.

The NCRHA has indicated that the expressions of interest should be completed—in fact, it is going to be completed tomorrow. The issue of the request for proposal is expected to be completed somewhere around the end of June and the submission of proposals by August, somewhere around the end of August; the valuation of proposals somewhere just after that; and the award of the contract is expected by the end of September.

Mr. Speaker, I came here earlier to this Parliament and I said that we would mobilize the Scarborough Hospital and we have done that; we would open the Oxford Street Health Centre; we have done that; we would turn the sod for the Morvant Health Centre; we have done that, and I am telling you we are also going to do this. Do you know why, Mr. Speaker? Because this Government truly cares about the people and this Government is committed to delivering on our promises. [Interruption]

Dr. Gopeesingh: [Inaudible]

Sen. The Hon. J. Narace: No, no, no, it is not just about that and I am going to go on telling you that it is going to be a build/operate/transfer and all of that, but I would not give you all that information because you have had sufficient.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what we have done in this term—and my predecessor, let me congratulate him because he started that project. The national organ transplant unit was developed with the intention to relieve patients from requiring urgent life-saving renal dialysis. We are doing a number of things, and do you know what I am going to use this opportunity to do? I am going to use this opportunity to tell people who we are giving the glucometers, exactly how quickly they can get their electronic birth certificates because that is a matter that you are trying to—glucometers, glucose monitoring systems, whatever you want to call it. Let me say that we are about preventive medicine. The idea is to prevent people from needing dialysis in the first place.

8.10 p.m.

We are teaching persons how to improve their lifestyles and manage their diabetes. Diabetes is one of the major causes of end stage renal failure; therefore, diabetes is really the enemy we must attack. [*Crosstalk*] We have introduced a number of initiatives; most important of which is free glucose monitoring systems and diabetic strips; 10,000, in the first instance, and we are going for another 15,000, a total of 25,000. [*Desk thumping*] The UNC never even contemplated that; so it is unfair to say that a government which is demonstrating—[*Crosstalk*] [*Interruption*]

Let me tell you what I am going to use those three minutes to do. I am going to use those three minutes to tell people that the unique identifier number in the computer-generated birth certificate is a critical precursor to the big NHS system that we are about to bring. When you think that persons do not have birth certificates—over 800,000 persons who currently do not possess a computer-generated birth certificate could apply to any of the Registrar General Offices located at San Fernando, Port of Spain and Tobago. [*Crosstalk*] These offices offer same-day service for all persons who were born after 1934. I am advised that there are two other sub-offices located in St. James and Princes Town; however, these offices offer a seven-day service. So you could get your birth certificate in one day, if you were born after 1934. If you were born before 1934, it takes a little more time, about seven days. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Sen. The Hon. J. Narace: Application forms are available online, at all TTPost offices and can be mailed to one of the five offices. For persons born before 1934, the processing time is two weeks, if the applicant attends in person; the process time would be longer, if the application is mailed.

Out of all this, the only benefit we could get is to tell the national community: Get your certificate, get your glucose monitoring systems, and manage your diabetes. We are going to teach them through our wellness and promotional programmes and a healthy living how they could live a better life. At the end of the day, we would not have all of them on dialysis, but they would live longer, happier and more productive lives under this caring Government.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

**Water Trucking Service
(Government's Non-Provision of Funding)**

Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar (*Siparia*): Mr. Speaker, the matter on this Motion for the Adjournment which I have raised, has to do with Government's

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non-provision of funding for the extension of the water trucking service to residents of the Penal/Debe region. That region has about 22,000 households, as per the 2000 census; there may be more, but certainly there are, at least, about 22,000 households. Of these, 1,386 has absolutely no pipe borne service, so there is no water that comes to them through the regular Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) lines.

In addition, there are a number of other households that do have a pipe borne service, but they receive only an occasional supply of water, sometimes once in every two or three weeks.

Mr. Ramnath: In Trinidad?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Yes; this is in the Penal/Debe Corporation area. This results in the need for truck borne services. [*Crosstalk*] There are 44 areas that the corporation has identified for servicing. This listing was sent to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government dated January 07, 2008, giving these areas, which are various roads and traces where there is no pipe borne supply or where, if there is, the water comes once every two to three weeks.

The corporation has taken the measure and has resorted to cleaning springs in the area; the situation is that bad. So in 2008, with a budget of \$50 billion, our residents are using spring water. This dry season has been extremely extended, so that the moneys indicative for allocation there, I am advised by the corporation, were used up by April 04. So we have a situation where the springs are without water, the rivers are without water and people are without water. The corporation wrote to the hon. Minister requesting that an extension for the water trucking services be provided; the sum was \$1.9 million, if I am not mistaken. This would service the constituencies of Siparia, some of Oropouche East and West. We are talking about three constituencies, a lot of people. I mentioned the households, but we need to multiply that. We are talking about a lot of people who would be affected.

I am really using this opportunity, on behalf of my constituents, and certainly on behalf of the residents of the Penal/Debe region, to seek from the Minister what we should do in the absence of a water supply from rain, river, pond, spring and WASA, if relief can be given to the residents in this area.

I thank you. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Hazel Manning): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address this honourable House on a matter raised on the adjournment of the House, relating to Government's non-provision of funding for extension of the water trucking service to residents of the Penal/Debe region.

I cannot understand why this hon. Member for Siparia would want to raise this matter for Penal/Debe. The Ministry of Local Government, according to Part VII, section 232 of the Municipal Corporations Act, No. 21 of 1990, is responsible for:

“the distribution of truck-borne water subject to the provisions of Water and Sewerage Act.” [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Sen. The Hon. H. Manning: This means that the municipal corporations are responsible for the distribution of a truck borne supply of water only to households not served by a pipe borne supply. It is a responsibility that this Government takes seriously. Traditionally, truck borne water is distributed to extreme rural communities and the demand for this service is usually higher in the dry season, as was said by the hon. Member from Siparia. Thus, each municipal corporation community is provided an annual allocation for truck borne water distribution. This allocation is normally very high.

There is also an allocation for truck borne water distribution from the Ministry of Local Government head office, which is used to supplement the allocations given by the municipal corporations, if indeed, in the event of an extended dry season, as this one was. This is a second allocation and it increases the amount of funding and the amount of water distributed.

We have provided, on the one hand, the corporation with water, and on the second hand, the Ministry of Local Government gives additional funding to the corporation. [*Crosstalk*]

I understand that they do not have water, from what you have said, but I really want you to understand why they do not have.

In the recent past, when there had been a heightened demand for truck borne water, owing to the prolonged dry season, the Ministry of Local Government partnered with the then Ministry of Public Utilities, through the National Social Development Programme (NSDP) to extend the truck borne water distribution. This is the third amount of water they are getting, Mr. Speaker. [*Crosstalk*] This is the third initiative, again taking care of contingencies. We care; three times, three approaches to ensure that Penal/Debe got water. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Sen. The Hon. H. Manning: I am going to tell you why they do not have.

The Minister of Local Government wishes to inform this honourable House that the Government is very surprised that this matter has been brought to this honourable House for debate. We have been providing funding for water distribution. We are forced to ask, therefore: "Where de money gone?"

Hon. Member: "Dey spend out de money!"

Sen. The Hon. H. Manning: I wish to inform this honourable House that for fiscal year 2008 the Ministry of Local Government received a total of \$10,610,000 for truck borne water distribution; \$3 million of which was allocated to head office. Out of this allocation, the Penal/Debe Regional Corporation received \$1 million for truck borne water distribution. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Members: Ooh! How much for a truck borne supply of water?

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Sen. The Hon. H. Manning: The Penal/Debe Corporation received one tenth of the total amount of truck borne water that was distributed. This figure represents twice the allocation that the Penal/Debe Corporation received in the year 2007, when they received \$500,000, and four times the allocation they received in 2006, when they received \$250,000. This Government has taken cognizance of the changing weather patterns and has been increasing allocation of truck borne water distributed to all 14 municipalities that require it.

Further, out of the Ministry's allocation of \$3 million, I approved a virement of \$1 million, one third of the entire head office's allocation for the Penal/Debe Corporation for use for the truck borne distribution.

Hon. Member: What!

Sen. The Hon. H. Manning: A black hole, it is just disappearing. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Sen. the Hon. H. Manning: For fiscal year 2008, the Penal/Debe Regional Corporation received \$4 million, 40 per cent of the entire allocation. I want to repeat it: 40 per cent.

Mr. Imbert: Forty per cent of the national allocation?

Hon. Member: "What allyuh doing with de money?"

Sen. The Hon. H. Manning: Where is the money going? [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, it is getting a little late and we would be winding up shortly. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Ramnath: You should look in that direction also! [*Laughter*]

Hon. H. Manning: Mr. Speaker, we are now researching who owns the water trucks. [*Desk thumping*] We are concerned on this side. Where is the money going? Hence, I am surprised that the hon. Member would come here to put this particular Motion on the Adjournment and bring this debate to the attention of this honourable House. [*Crosstalk*]

As I mentioned earlier, the Ministry of Local Government is responsible for truck borne water distribution only to households without a pipe borne supply. Notwithstanding this, the Ministry of Local Government, being very, very caring, this Government being caring, and always mindful of providing needed services to all its burgesses, has for many years implemented a small, but a useful programme, of the laying of water mains in conjunction with the Self-Help Commission in many municipalities, to bring relief to many burgesses.

The Government has recognized, however, that for a nation on its way to developed country status, a more comprehensive approach is needed to address the previously empty promise of water for all which never materialized. Remember that, Mr. Speaker? [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Hon. H. Manning: It was the UNC in the year 2000 that perpetuated a most heinous fraud on this country with an advertising campaign based on an empty and false promise that they would provide water for all. [*Crosstalk*]

8.25 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, they advertised that with the construction of a single desalination plant producing an additional 20 million gallons of water per day, the entire country, including Penal/Debe, would have water for 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Mr. Speaker, beyond our current production, we need to produce an additional 200 million gallons of water. We need to upgrade our pipeline infrastructure, a major investment; we need to manage our demand by metering; and we need a comprehensive plan, not a single project. The UNC misled this country and that has contributed to doubt and cynicism. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Imbert: What did they do with the money?

Sen. The Hon. H. Manning: This Government will deliver a comprehensive programme for infrastructure development to ensure a dramatic improvement in water supply to our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, this caring Government, through the implementation of the Water and Sewerage Authority's Waste Water Master Plan, will build a modernized infrastructure for the delivery of a 24-hour water supply to domestic and industrial customers by the year 2015.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Member: Shame! Shame!

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sure that Members would want to hear the presentation of the hon. Member for Oropouche East. So, I now call upon him.

Distribution of Houses (Penal/Debe and Oropouche East Region)

Dr. Roodal Moonilal (*Oropouche East*): Mr. Speaker, let me bring some calmness to the proceedings, since I am going to address a matter that is by no means controversial; the matter of housing and the allocation of homes.

Mr. Speaker, the matter to be raised on the motion for the adjournment is the allocation process being utilized by the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) to distribute housing units in the Penal/Debe and Oropouche East region. I am sure I am going to get the attention of all Members on this matter.

On February 15, 2005, I was invited by the former Minister of Housing, the Member for Diego Martin West, to turn the sod to begin construction on housing sites at the Wellington Road location and at the Golconda location. I accepted the invitation to attend that function, although at the time the UNC took the position that we were not going to support the Government on certain matters and we were not going to give our vote to the Government, because we believed that the Government was, indeed, illegal, and their policies did not reflect the aspirations for equality and justice in the society. [*Desk thumping*]

On that day, February 15, 2005, I received an assurance from the Minister of Housing—the Member for Diego Martin North/East who, himself, acted as Brutus to get him out—on behalf of the Government that the people of Penal/Debe and the people from the Oropouche constituency who had applied and would have qualified would get some preference for housing in the locality.

More than that, the Government gave an assurance that Members of Parliament who recommended needy and underprivileged persons for housing, once they are qualified, they would also get preference for housing in the locality. That was an assurance we got from the Government and the former Minister of Housing.

Notwithstanding their own internal politics where they have conspired to throw out the Member for Diego Martin West from the Cabinet and, eventually, from the PNM, recently I was driving along the roads in Oropouche East, as I do so often in my constituency, and I saw in the housing settlement in Golconda curtains going up, lights coming on and people on the move. I have no idea when those housing units were distributed, who they were distributed to and on what basis.

The Minister of Planning, Housing and the Environment, Sen. The Hon. Dr. Emily Gaynor Dick-Forde, in an article in the *Guardian* newspaper dated Friday, January 18, 2008 is quoted as saying that the HDC started clean-up in the allocation process. The Minister indicated in this article that there were problems with the allocation process. That was the explanation she gave of course, as to why houses were being built and not being distributed. She said that there was a problem with the distribution and the allocation process.

This is a Government that would invite Opposition Members to come when there is a bridge to open; they would invite Opposition Members to come when they are opening a road; and they would invite Opposition Members to come when they are opening a community centre—the Member for Diego Martin North/East constructed a wall at Goocharan Trace and he had to cut a ribbon to open the wall—but they would not invite Opposition Members to attend any ceremony where they are distributing keys or envelopes—whether the envelopes are empty or not, we do not know—but they would not invite Members of Parliament in the Opposition to those ceremonies, because if we go there, we would be interested in knowing who is getting a house.

There was a time when this Government in previous incarnations would argue that people from Penal/Debe—opposition territories in Central Trinidad and so on—were not getting houses because they were not applying for houses. Today, every single Member in the Opposition has been diligent in supporting and recommending our constituents to apply to the HDC or NHA for houses and they have applied.

Many of them have gone to the Home Mortgage Bank and so forth and fulfilled all the requirements. They have returned to us and said that they have

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satisfied the requirements and they have determined how much money they can pay since they are qualified and so forth. Their applications were accepted, but they cannot get houses in these areas.

Mr. Sharma: It shows discrimination and racism.

Dr. R. Moonilal: They come now and tell us that it is a lottery system, and it is not on the basis of race. The hon. Prime Minister went further than a lottery. The Prime Minister said in an article in November 2007 entitled “PM houses for everyone” that it has nothing to do with race, it is all about one's salary. He said salary and the Minister and others said that it has to do with a lottery system. I want to know who is pulling this lottery. Is it Malcolm X or Marcus Garvey? Why do you not put Mahatma Gandhi to pull one or two as well? This thing is ridiculous!

The Prime Minister is not here, but I want to tell the Prime Minister, as a man of God, that this nonsense has to stop. I mean, this is looking bad. You are giving out all these houses and the Opposition Members are not involved. They are not inviting us. When we ask questions about this in Parliament, we are told that we cannot get the names of persons who get houses and so forth because that is private. They promised us in the sod-turning ceremony that they would get houses and they did not get any.

Mr. Speaker, there is another issue that I want to put on record, because the former Minister of Housing said in this House among the Members of Parliament that the Member for Oropouche had been sending him letters upon letters and he had a big file with my letters recommending my constituents. I also recommended persons from outside of Oropouche.

Incidentally, I am living in San Fernando East, and I recommended persons as well from San Fernando East who I know personally for many years and who are needy and deserving. I have no difficulty recommending persons who are needy from San Fernando East—3910 polling division in Ste. Madeleine. You know, it is very interesting, because those persons would get back to me and say, thank you, they got through and they got a unit in Tarouba and so forth and thank you for the letter or recommendation, but nobody from Oropouche East would return and say that they got a unit, and thank you for the recommendation.

I want to call upon this Minister to tell us what the criterion is. How are you giving people houses? Is it on the basis of race or is it not? If it is not, then demonstrate that. The burden of proof is upon you to demonstrate that you are not giving houses on the basis of racism. [*Desk thumping*] I am making that

allegation. You have to tell us that it is not so and demonstrate it; not like the Minister who told us that everybody got money for water. People do not have water! Demonstrate it and show us who have applied and make the process transparent.

When persons like us raise these issues, they would say that we are perpetuating racism and so forth, but it is the people who speak about these issues openly. All of them would tell you that they are supporting Barack Obama. It is people who speak about these issues and encourage you to confront these issues. They are the liberators and it is they who liberate a society and emancipate a society. You must always remember that.

The burden is upon the Minister to demonstrate that they are distributing houses in the Penal/Debe and Oropouche East areas without reference to the discrimination of racism and nepotism. That is their burden. You see, they would do that.

Today, in my constituency, the Land Settlement Agency demolished 10 very modest and small squatting homes. Tonight, there are infant children who do not have a tent over their heads. I am asking the Minister to consider—*[Interruption]*—the police were there. You cannot find a policeman if there is a murder. If someone is murdered, the police would reach in time for the funeral. Eventually, they would reach by the Bandera.

I am calling upon the Minister to assist the persons in Picton whose homes have been demolished, just as they assisted persons in San Fernando East by relocating them to the Tarouba Gardens. I am calling on the Minister to make a statement and to assist those persons tonight—parents, mothers, fathers and infant children who are without a roof. Because of this caring Government, they are without a roof tonight. I call upon you to assist as you have done elsewhere and to declare your position clearly as it relates to distributing these houses.

I am not prepared to accept that the Government made a commitment to the people of Penal/Debe, and you are opening housing estates and distributing units. Recently, they gave out units in Union Hall. That is in the constituency of Oropouche East, and the Member of Parliament for Oropouche East had to read this in the newspaper. Incidentally, you could see the name in the newspaper of the person who got the key, but if you ask a question you cannot get his name in Parliament, because that would be privacy, but it was in the newspaper.

Mr. Speaker, this was in Union Hall, in the constituency of Oropouche East, and the Member of Parliament knew nothing about it. They did not invite us,

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because they did not want us to see who they were giving the houses to and on what grounds, because clearly we are known to our constituents. If our constituents are receiving units and the system is fair and just and treats citizens on the basis of equality, then there is nothing to hide and there is nothing to be skeptical about. Why do you not think about other options? In a country like this, nothing gets people more angry than this housing policy issue. Nothing!

Hon. Member: Crime!

Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, in England and in other places, local government bodies play a role in the distribution of housing units. Why do they not encourage local government bodies that are close to the citizenry to make recommendations and to distribute homes and allocate units? Why do they do it in a secret room somewhere? Why do they do it in a windowless office at the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment and they claim that there is a draw?

8.40 p.m.

Unlike lottery and lotto, do you invite witnesses to come and see where this random thing is coming out? How often? Who is pulling these chits here to get these housing units? That is the central issue I want to raise this evening. I am here this evening to listen to the Minister's response and I want to assure the Minister and the Government that this matter will not stop here. I intend to take up this matter, not only in Trinidad and Tobago but in the international community, particularly with the organizations that support your housing policy and fund housing.

Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Planning, Housing and the Environment (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Emily Gaynor Dick-Forde): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. Member for Oropouche East for raising this issue because it gives us an opportunity, as a Government, to speak again on our housing policy. It is, actually, one of our most powerful programmes and far from people being angry, they actually are quite pleased with the programme. What we are trying to do with the allocation system is actually make it more efficient. Even the quote that the Member made from the newspaper confirms that it is about making the system more efficient and nothing to do with corruption that he is trying to allege.

I want to address first, the basis for the Member's Motion. The Member is saying that the former Minister made a promise to him, and I have a letter here that the hon. Member sent to me, which he also sent to the newspapers immediately after. Not only did he send it to me, but in here he is claiming that

the former Minister publicly—and that has been denied outright by the Minister. The Minister has denied that that was done.

I want to speak to a number of the issues raised and then I am going to take my time to explain the allocation process to you. One of issues that I want to discuss is that we are not speaking—every time I come to this House I have to keep saying the same thing. We do not keep records on our database by constituency. It is by region and Oropouche East falls in the Penal/Debe Regional Corporation, so that is the area that we are going to focus on. In that area, the total number of applicants is 4,968 on our database, of 22,000, which the hon. Member for Siparia told us, that there are 22,000 households. There are 4,968 applicants on our database.

The number of persons choosing this area as their first choice is 953 which is 19 per cent. The numbers choosing it as their second and third choice, only 403, which is 8 per cent. So of these 22,000 households and of the 4,968 persons who have applied, only 27 per cent wants to remain in that area. Three thousand, six hundred and twelve—73 per cent of them—want to go elsewhere. So that there is no big issue that there is a whole set of people in this area who want to remain in the area.

Additionally, what I am hearing from the hon. Member is sounding like power-sharing. We are in power and he is saying that he has a promise that when he makes all these recommendations—he spoke about 200 in the letter here, I think. He sent 200. What happens to our allocation system? Let me give you some information. The Housing Application Fulfillment System is seeking to bring order and discipline to the housing programme. We built over 27,000 houses compared to 486 by the UNC. [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Gopeesingh: You had \$3 billion to build those houses.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. E. Gaynor Dick-Forde: You all built 486 houses; we built over—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: One minute, please. The Minister has just about under 10 minutes again. Let us hear her, please.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. E. Gaynor Dick-Forde: Four hundred and eighty-six houses versus over 27,000. When you accelerate your housing programme, your system for allocation needs to come up to scratch, because the focus was really on housing development, and when I came in, I would have found a well-developed system for the production of units, but we needed to work on the allocation

system. So my comment had more to do with the efficiency of the system to deliver. He said it. He said there were undistributed houses; that was the reason. So we are cleaning up the allocation system for that purpose.

Now housing developments in the Penal/Debe region have been constructed under a number of processes. We have the joint venture and the infill programme. Now, the joint venture is where the Housing Development Corporation would enlist the help of contractors to do a number of things.

Mr. Ramnath: We are talking about allocation.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. E. Gaynor Dick-Forde: You need to know how many houses we have down there too.

Mr. Ramnath: Waste of time!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Sen. The Hon. Dr. E. Gaynor Dick-Forde: So we have a joint venture system. Now, the joint venture is where the contractors work with the HDC. They either bring land and the design and do the construction or they just come and do the construction on the identification of land from the HDC. Under the infill programme, there was this system that the UNC had, called “Land for the Landless” and people got land but could not build houses for themselves, and a lot of the land was just all over the country, unoccupied.

So with the accelerated programme, what the HDC did was actually begin to build houses on those empty lots. So people were not getting houses under the UNC; they were getting land which they could not afford to build on. So the infill programme came. The HDC’s housing estate in the Penal/Debe region, we have in total just over 1,000 units, and the allocation process for the units in Penal/Debe and in any part of the country, is the same.

The policy is this: 75 per cent through the computerized random draw; 10 per cent for the protective services, which is also random; 10 per cent on the recommendation of the Minister—not of the MP for different areas—with responsibility for Housing; to deal with emergencies, 10 per cent; 5 per cent for senior citizens. [*Interruption*] The portfolio distributor is who is important. So applicants qualify as beneficiaries under the allocation policy by satisfying a number of criteria: They must be citizens of Trinidad and Tobago; they must be first-time homeowners; be 20 years old and over and not own any property in the country and satisfy the minimum conditions for mortgage financing.

So having qualified, we then do a random draw and this random draw is witnessed by persons. Normally we would take people from the public. That is

what it was in the past. But we are actually moving to another level where we are going to have a public draw, a televised one. Now, allocations are improving, because, remember from 400 houses to 27,000 houses, you need a different system. So you have to remember that.

I want to address, briefly, some of the issues raised by the hon. Member for Oropouche East. This issue of race, I find it quite frightening. I came to this House and it seems like it is one of the few words that people know, from the Opposition—race. I do not know where they got it from. This thing about the allocation on the basis of race that he mentioned came out of nowhere. All of what he said, he did not justify it; he just came out of the clear blue sky that we are allocating on the basis of race. He made no basis for the allegation.

The Land Settlements Agency demolition: LSA assured me that they gave the people on the land 30 days' warning, then 15 days' warning, then seven days' warning. They were properly warned, according to the 1998 Act. In 1998, they would have passed that Act. The function of the Land Settlements Agency is to contain squatting. When people go and put themselves in situations like that and build up communities that actually put themselves in danger, it is the Government who will then be blamed for things.

It is irresponsible for Members of Parliament to encourage people to break the law. That is what it is. [*Desk thumping*] You are encouraging people to break the law and the Land Settlements Agency is carrying out its function under the law, and all of the notices that they were required to get, they were given. Responsible parents of those little children you are talking about should not put their own children in jeopardy.

I will close by saying, our allocation policy is available for anyone to scrutinize and look at. We are not in power-sharing; we run the Government; we have the ability to do it. [*Desk thumping*] As I have just been instructed, we are in charge. Members of Parliament can send emergency cases to the Minister. We deal with all emergency cases. I make a point of doing that. Some of them, I visit myself; others, we send people. We send out social welfare people to go and visit. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Sen. The Hon. Dr. E. Gaynor Dick-Forde: So if you have 200 emergency cases in Oropouche East, then there is an emergency problem in Oropouche East.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Hon. Members, before I put the Motion on the Adjournment, may I take this opportunity to remind all Members—I am reminding

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you, here; you can remind other Members who are not here—of the post-election seminar that is coming up. The first day would be on Tuesday, June 24, 2008 and the second day would be Wednesday, June 25, commencing at 9 a.m. on each day. The sessions would close at about 4.00 p.m. We have a very tight schedule. You all have, I think, the programmes and—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Members, I am on my feet. Have some manners, please! I am urging all of you to attend, because I am dead sure that everyone, with a few exceptions, needs the benefit of this post-election seminar.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 8.52 p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The following question was asked by Dr. Roodal Moonilal (OropoucheEast);

Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited (Details of)

- 116.** With respect to the Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited (PSAEL), could the hon. Minister of Local Government state:
- (e) the number and types of projects undertaken by the company between January 01, 2007 and December 31, 2007;
 - (f) the total expenditure on each of these projects;
 - (g) the names of all the contractors employed to undertake these said projects; and
 - (h) what new projects are being proposed specifically for the Penal/Debe area and when they are scheduled to commence?

The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Hazel Manning): The answer to question No. 116 is as follows:

- (a)–(c) The attached Appendix I lists Two Hundred and Twenty (220) projects which were undertaken by the PSAEL for the period January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007.
- (d) The list of new projects is currently being finalized and therefore no firm decisions have been taken.

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PALO SECO AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES LIMITED
MINISTRY OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY UPGRADE PROJECT
PAYMENTS RECEIVED JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2007

MOP CHQ #	PAYMENT RECEIVED
I00000029/30	\$ 7,129,766.18
I00000036	\$ 813,532.43
I00000039/40	\$ 603,092.95
I00000037/38	\$ 106,246.90
I00000055	\$ 1,044,305.07
I00000056	\$ 410,736.65
I00000057	\$ 215,014.78
I00000058	\$ 4,000,476.33
I00000065/66	\$ 2,224,928.46
I00000067/68	\$ 3,851,981.52
I00000081/82	\$ 6,856,458.73
I00000083/84	\$12,752,362.38
I00000096	\$ 3,960,539.04
I00000092/93/94	\$10,474,873.46
I00000087/88	\$11,487,005.69
I00000103/104	\$ 2,467,069.28
I00000118	\$ 3,877,327.34
I00000105/106	\$ 1,230,076.12
I00000111/112	\$ 3,054,139.26
I00000045/46	\$ 2,642,869.60
TOTAL	\$79,202,802.16

**PALO SECO AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES LIMITED
MINISTRY OF PLANNING COMMUNITY UPGRADE PROJECTS**

Phase 1

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2005/06/637	Mayaro	(Drain 150' x 2')	Arthur Mc Knight & Sons Contracting	\$51,558.75	\$3,866.91	\$8,313.85	\$63,739.50
2005/06/638	Mayaro	(Drains 440' x 2')	Francis Bobb General Contractors	\$200,542.50	\$15,040.69	\$32,337.48	\$247,920.67
2005/06/639	Mayaro	(Drains 330' x 2', 6 driveways and 3 walkways)	J Ramgoolam Enterprises Limited	\$90,000.00	\$6,750.00	\$14,512.50	\$111,262.50
2005/06/640	Mayaro	(Drains 350' x 2, 4 driveways and 1 walkway')	S Baksh General Contractor	\$150,750.00	\$11,306.25	\$24,308.44	\$186,364.69
2005/06/641	Mayaro	Construction of Box Drain 350' x 2'	J Ramgoolam Enterprises Limited	\$92,250.00	\$6,918.75	\$14,875.31	\$114,044.06
2005/06/642	Mayaro	(Drain 330' x 2' & 1 Driveway) Cleaning of existing drain 100' x 12'.	Arthur Mc Knight & Sons Contracting	\$116,340.00	\$8,725.50	\$18,759.83	\$143,825.33
2005/06/643	Mayaro	(Drain 350' x 2', 7 driveways & 2 walkways.	Five Star General Company Limited	\$165,000.00	\$12,375.00	\$26,606.25	\$203,981.25

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2005/06/644	Princes Town	Construction of Reinforced Concrete Footpath, Area 1 -	J & J Construction	\$163,020.00	\$12,226.50	\$26,286.98	\$201,533.48
2005/06/645	Princes Town	470' from LP#11 (Footpath 470'x4.5', 16" slipper drain alongside foothpath)	Renovators And Fabricators of Cocoyea	\$91,275.00	\$6,845.63	\$14,718.09	\$112,838.72
2005/06/646	Princes Town	1010' from LP#11 (Footpath 470'x4.5', 16" slipper drain alongside foothpath)	Mattzack Company Limited	\$138,562.50	\$10,392.19	\$22,343.20	\$171,297.89
2005/06/647	Princes Town	Construction of Walkways & Driveways(510'x2' wide)	J & J Construction	\$142,500.00	\$10,687.50	\$22,978.13	\$176,165.63
2005/06/648	Princes Town	Road 11,149'x19' wide	Raghunath Singh & Co. Ltd	\$1,955,424.90	\$146,656.87	\$315,312.27	\$2,417,394.03
2005/06/649	Princes Town	(1300' x 14')	Faith Construction 2000 Limited	\$255,657.64	\$19,174.32	\$41,224.79	\$316,056.76
2005/06/650	Siparia	Road Repairs to roadway 1121 feet x 12 feet wide	Raghunath Singh & Co. Ltd		\$	\$	\$

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2005/06/651	Siparia	Road Repairs to roadway 1460 feet x 15 feet wide	Raghunath Singh & Co. Ltd	\$655,215.00	\$49,141.13	\$105,653.42	\$810,009.54
2005/06/652	Siparia	Construction of box drain 1031 feet long and 15 inches wide	KBK's Transport & General Contracting Ltd	\$422,379.48	\$31,678.46	\$68,108.69	\$522,166.63
2005/06/653	Siparia	Construction of box drain 412 feet long and 15 inches wide	KBK's Transport & General Contracting Ltd	\$220,154.65	\$16,511.60	\$35,499.94	\$272,166.19
2005/06/654	Siparia	(1460'x 15' with turning point at end of Road)	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$701,862.50	\$52,639.69	\$113,175.33	\$867,677.52
2005/06/655	Siparia	Road Repairs to roadway 1100 feet x 20 feet wide	Raghunath Singh & Co. Ltd	\$1,029,517.50	\$77,213.81	\$166,009.70	\$1,272,741.01
2005/06/656	Siparia	Road Repairs to roadway 555 feet x 20 feet wide	Raghunath Singh & Co. Ltd	\$751,946.25	\$56,395.97	\$121,251.33	\$929,593.55
2005/06/657	Point Fortin	(771' box drains to meet 280' drain on Hollywood Extension Road)	Raymac Civil Engineering Gen Con. Co. Ltd	\$94,658.62	\$7,099.40	\$15,263.70	\$117,021.72

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2005/06/658	Point Fortin	(6564' Drains)	Hall & Jerry Construction Limited	\$438,750.00	\$32,906.25	\$70,748.44	\$542,404.69
2005/06/659	Fyzabad	(kerb from LP #548 - 565' Road 928' x 12')	North South Services	\$294,489.00	\$22,086.68	\$47,486.35	\$364,062.03
2005/06/660	La Brea	(820' x 2')	S.M.H. General Construction Limited	\$357,000.00	\$26,775.00	\$57,566.25	\$ 441,341.25
2005/06/661	La Brea	820' x 2' inclusive of driveways	F.K.K. Enterprises	\$162,750.00	\$12,206.25	\$26,243.44	\$201,199.69
2005/06/662	La Brea	(1297' x 12')	Makesi Enterprises Limited	\$563,276.25	\$42,245.72	\$90,828.30	\$696,350.26
2005/06/663	La Brea	(1328' x 12')	F.K.K. Enterprises	\$172,500.00	\$12,937.50	\$27,815.63	\$213,253.13
2006/07/146	Fyzabad	a. Excavation of depressions and potholes in roadway. b. Re-grading of roadway and removal of all loose materials from site.	ALI MEAH-JOHN LIMITED	\$234,370.00	\$17,577.75	\$37,792.16	\$289,739.91

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
		c. Pothole repairs d. Resurfacing of entire roadway using hot mix as per specifications and drawings. Approx. 500 ft.					
2006/07/147	Fyzabad	a. Excavation of depressions and potholes in roadway. b. Re-grading of roadway and removal of all loose materials from site. c. Pothole repairs as per specifications. d. Resurfacing of entire roadway using hot mix as per specifications and drawings. Approx. 850 ft.	ALI MEAH-JOHN LIMITED	\$379,980.00	\$28,498.50	\$61,271.78	\$469,750.28
2006/07/148	Fyzabad	a. Excavation of depressions and potholes in roadway. b. Re-grading of roadway and removal of all loose materials from site.	ALI MEAH-JOHN LIMITED	\$528,200.00	\$39,615.00	\$85,172.25	\$652,987.25

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
		c. Pothole repairs d. Resurfacing of entire roadway using hot mix as per specifications and drawings. Approx. 1200 ft.					
2006/07/149	Fyzabad	a. Repairs to existing kerb and slipper drains (KS). Approx. 1,050 ft. b. Construction of slipper drains. Approx. 1,050 ft. c. Repairs to existing Surface Drain. Approx. 100 ft. d. Reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls, sidewalks and curb ramps (DR/W. WAY). Approx. 9 No. e. Remodeling and/or reconstruction of road crossing channels (RD CRSG CHNL). Approx. 2 No. 15 ft. Wide	BRYCO GENERAL CONTRACTING SERVICES	\$236,750.00	\$17,756.25	\$38,175.94	\$292,682.19

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
		f. Construction of Box Drains. Approx. 160 ft. g. Installation of Pre-cast Inverts. Approx. 30 ft					
2006/07/150	Fyzabad	Excavation of Depression and Potholes in roadway, Regrading of roadway and removal of all loose materials from site, Pothole repairs as per specs, Resurfacing of entire roadway as per specs 4300.	DANNY'S ENTERPRISES	\$1,426,500.00	\$106,987.50	\$230,023.13	\$1,763,510.63
2006/07/151	Fyzabad	a. Excavation of depressions and potholes in roadway. b. Re-grading of roadway and removal of all loose materials from site. c. Pothole repairs as per specifications.	DANNY'S ENTERPRISES	\$355,700.00	\$26,677.50	\$57,356.63	\$439,734.13

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
		d. Resurfacing of entire roadway using hot mix as per specifications and drawings. Approx. 800 ft					
2006/07/152	Siparia	Construction of Box drain one hundred feet (100ft.) long and twenty inches (20") wide.	DYER'S ENTERPRISES	\$60,000.00	\$4,500.00	\$9,675.00	\$74,175.00
2006/07/153	Siparia	The proposed drain is one hundred and twenty feet (120ft.) long and four feet wide	DYER'S ENTERPRISES	\$200,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$32,250.00	\$247,250.00
2006/07/154	Fyzabad	a. Construction of kerb and slipper drains (KS). Approx. 400 ft. b. Reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls, sidewalks and curb ramps (DR/W. WAY). Approx. 10 No.	E'N'D ENTERPRISES LIMITED	\$386,500.00	\$28,987.50	\$62,323.13	\$477,810.63

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
		<p>c. Remodeling and/or reconstruction of road crossing channels (RD CRSG CHNL). Approx. 2 No. 15 ft. Wide</p> <p>d. Removal of existing inverts and replacing with new Box Drains. Approx. 1,000 ft.</p>					
2006/07/155	Fyzabad	<p>a. Construction of kerb and slipper drains (KS). Approx. 1,500 ft.</p> <p>b. Repairs to existing Surface Drain. Approx. 100 ft.</p> <p>c. Reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls, sidewalks and curb ramps (DR/W. WAY). Approx. 5 No.</p>	FKK ENTERPRISES	\$312,500.00	\$23,437.50	\$50,390.63	\$386,328.13

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CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
		<p>d. Remodeling and/or reconstruction of road crossing channels (RD CRSG CHNL). Approx. 1 No. 15 ft. Wide</p> <p>e. Construction of Box Drains. Approx. 200 ft.</p> <p>f. Installation of Pre-cast Inverts. Approx. 100 ft.</p>					
2006/07/156	Fyzabad	<p>a. Construction of kerb and slipper drains (KS). Approx. 2,400 ft.</p> <p>b. Reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls, sidewalks and curb ramps (DR/W. WAY). Approx. 12 No.</p> <p>c. Remodeling and/or reconstruction of road crossing channels (RD CRSG CHNL). Approx. 2 No. 15 ft. Wide</p>	GAP ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES LIMITED	\$299,970.79	\$22,497.81	\$48,370.29	\$370,838.89

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2006/07/157	Fyzabad	<p>a. Repairs to existing kerb and slipper drains (KS). Approx. 340 ft.</p> <p>b. Construction of kerb and slipper drains (KS). Approx. 1,250 ft.</p> <p>c. Repairs to existing Surface Drain. Approx. 100 ft.</p> <p>d. Reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls, sidewalks and curb ramps (DR/W. WAY). Approx. 7 No.</p> <p>e. Remodeling and/or reconstruction of road crossing channels (RD CRSG CHNL). Approx. 2 No. 15 ft. Wide</p> <p>f. Construction of Box Drains. Approx. 100 ft.</p> <p>g. Installation of Pre-cast Inverts. Approx. 12 ft.</p>	GAP ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES LIMITED	\$205,478.03	\$15,410.85	\$33,133.33	\$254,022.21

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2006/07/158	Fyzabad	Construction of Box Drains. Approx. 3,000 ft. Including Removal of existing inverts, reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls and curb ramps, reconstruction of road crossing channels.	KEDAR ENTERPRISES	\$228,940.52	\$17,170.54	\$36,916.66	\$283,027.72
2006/07/159	Siparia	Construction of box drain Sixty feet (60ft.) long and twenty-four inches (24") wide.	JUMECT SERVICES LIMITED	\$99,000.00	\$7,425.00	\$15,963.75	\$122,388.75
2006/07/160	Fyzabad	Construction of Box Drains. Approx. 3,000 ft. Including Removal of existing inverts, reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls and curb ramps, reconstruction of road crossing channels.	PANTIN & CHARLES CONSTRUCTION	\$172,880.40	\$12,966.03	\$27,876.96	\$213,723.39

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2006/07/161	Fyzabad	<p>a. Reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls, sidewalks and curb ramps (DR/W. WAY). Approx. 10 No.</p> <p>b. Remodeling and/or reconstruction of road crossing channels (RD CRSG CHNL). Approx. 1 No. 15 ft. Wide</p> <p>c. Removal of existing inverts and replacing with new Box Drains. Approx. 1,800 ft.</p>	THOMAS RAPHAEL & ASSOCIATES CONS. LTD	\$493,400.00	\$37,005.00	\$79,560.75	\$609,965.75
2006/07/162	Fyzabad	<p>a. Construction of kerb and slipper drains (KS). Approx. 850 ft.</p> <p>b. Reconstruction of driveway aprons, curb walls, sidewalks and curb ramps (DR/W. WAY). Approx. 10 No.</p>	THOMAS RAPHAEL & ASSOCIATES CONS. LTD	\$192,700.00	\$14,452.50	\$31,072.88	\$238,225.38

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
		c. Remodeling and/or reconstruction of road crossing channels (RD CRSG CHNL). Approx. 1 No. 15 ft. Wide					
2006/07/163	Fyzabad	a. Excavation of depressions and potholes in roadway. b. Re-grading of roadway and removal of all loose materials from site. c. Pothole repairs as per specifications. d. Resurfacing of entire roadway using hot mix as per specifications and drawings. Approx. 3,500 ft.	TN RAMNATH	\$1,375,825.00	\$103,186.88	\$221,851.78	\$1,700,863.66
2006/07/164	Siparia	Construction of curb and slipper drain system two hundred and fifty feet (250ft.) long, and box drain six hundred and fifty feet (650ft.) long,	TRAMWAY MARKETING LIMITED	\$377,000.00	\$28,275.00	\$60,791.25	\$466,066.25

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2006/07/165	Siparia	Construction of Box drain approximately one hundred and fifty feet (150ft.) long and twenty inches (20") wide.	WADCO TRANSPORT & CONTRACTING SER.	\$88,660.00	\$6,649.50	\$14,296.43	\$109,605.93
2006/07/166	Princes Town	The footpath to be constructed is 461'-0" long and 4'-6" wide. The work also includes the construction of a 12" wide slipper drain at the side of the footpath nearest the road	MATTZACK COMPANY LIMITED	\$140,000.00	\$10,500.00	\$22,575.00	\$173,075.00
2006/07/167	Princes Town	Construction of drain is approximately 220 ft & 4'-6" WIDE SIDEWALK over the old and new drain for a distance of 265 ft. Construct a 1'-0" wide slipper drain to be along the full length of the sidewalk.	A E RASOLI MAINTENANCE SERVICES	\$139,028.00	\$10,427.10	\$22,418.27	\$171,873.37

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2006/07/168	Princes Town	The Construction Of A 2'-0" Wide , Three Hundred And Thirty Feet Long Box Drain	JH REVIERO GENERAL CONTRACTORS	\$122,900.00	\$9,217.50	\$19,817.63	\$151,935.13
2006/07/169	Princes Town	Construct a 2'-0" wide, 447'-0" long box drain Construct driveways and walkways to provide access to residences where applicable.	PLANT ENGINEERING & MAINTENANCE SERVICES LIMITED	\$121,950.00	\$9,146.25	\$19,664.44	\$150,760.69
2006/07/170	Princes Town	-Construct a 4'-6" WIDE SIDEWALK over the existing box drain for a distance of 380 ft. Construct a 1'-0" wide slipper drain along the full length of the sidewalk	J H REVIERO GENERAL CONTRACTORS	\$94,200.00	\$7,065.00	\$15,189.75	\$116,454.75
2006/07/171	Princes Town	The roadway is approximately THREE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND TEN FEET (3710) long and nineteen feet (19'-0") wide.	T&H CONSTRUCTION COMPANY	\$1,216,000.00	\$91,200.00	\$196,080.00	\$1,503,280.00

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2006/07/173	Mayaro	380 ft. of drains twenty-four inches (24") wide, and an earthen swale drain approximately forty (40'-0") and twenty-four inches (24") wide.	BAKSH CONSTRUCTION SERVICES	\$207,500.00	\$15,562.50	\$33,459.38	\$256,521.88
2006/07/175	Mayaro	290 ft. of drains twenty-four inches (24") wide, one catch pit and two driveways	AG MAHABIR MAINTENANCE COMPANY LTD	\$120,650.00	\$9,048.75	\$19,454.81	\$149,153.56
2006/07/176	Mayaro	210 ft. of drains twenty-four inches (24") wide, one catch pit and a RCCP crossing and 100'-0" of drains thirty-six inches (36") wide	ARTHUR Mc KNIGHTS & SONS CONTRACTING COMPANY	\$153,985.00	\$11,548.88	\$24,830.08	\$190,363.96
2006/07/177	Mayaro	415 ft. of drains twenty-four inches (24") wide, with eighty feet (80'-0") covered	WORLDWIDE CONTRACTING SERVICES	\$181,500.00	\$13,612.50	\$29,266.88	\$224,379.38
2006/07/178	Mayaro	225 ft. of drains twenty-four inches (24") wide and one catch pit.	WORLDWIDE CONTRACTING SERVICES	\$112,300.00	\$8,422.50	\$18,108.38	\$138,830.88

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
2006/07/181	Point Fortin	Roadway is approximately 1487 ft long and 16 ft 9 in wide.	SYNE'S CONTRACTING & INDUSTRIES LTD	\$619,400.00	\$46,455.00	\$99,878.25	\$765,733.25
2006/07/182	Point Fortin	Box drains (approx. 1426 ft) on the perimeter. Car park is approximately 1254 sq ft.	ANTHONY MITCHELL	\$196,854.05	\$14,764.05	\$31,742.72	\$243,360.82
2006/07/183	La Brea	942 ft. Of Road	TIME ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE	\$434,000.00	\$32,550.00	\$69,982.50	\$536,532.50
2006/07/184	Princes Town	Footpath 470'x4.5', 16" slipper drain alongside footpath	G NOEL & SONS	\$122,500.00	\$9,187.50	\$19,753.13	\$151,440.63
	Mayaro		LOVELL SWEENEY ELECTRICAL LTD	\$8,126.70	\$609.50	\$1,310.43	\$10,046.63
PHASE ONE TOTAL				\$21,122,629.03	\$1,584,197.18	\$3,406,023.93	\$26,112,850.14

PALO SECO AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES LIMITED
MINISTRY OF PLANNING COMMUNITY UPGRADE PROJECTS

Phase 2

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/250	Rio Claro	Drain ConstructionDades Trace, Area 1	480 ft of Box Drains, 330 ft. of Curb & Slipper Drains, 9 Driveways & 4 walkways	Norway Services	\$211,960.00	\$15,897.00	\$34,178.55	\$262,035.55
C2006/07/251	Rio Claro	Drain ConstructionDades Trace, Area 2	660 ft of box drains, 2 driveways	Renovators and Fabricators of Cocoyea	\$239,632.04	\$17,972.40	\$38,640.67	\$296,245.10
C2006/07/253	Rio Claro	Drain ConstructionDades Trace, Area 4	580 ft. of box drains, 12 driveways & 1 walkway	Cummings & Associates Company Limited	\$250,000.00	\$18,750.00	\$40,312.50	\$309,062.50
C2006/07/254	Rio Claro	Drain ConstructionDades Trace, Area 5	470 ft of box drains, 1 driveway & 2 walkways	Cesar's Contracting Company Limited	\$201,376.00	\$15,103.20	\$32,471.88	\$248,951.08
C2006/07/255	Rio Claro	Drain ConstructionDades Trace, Area 6	320 ft of box drain, 300 ft of curb & slipper drains, 2 driveways & 1 walkway	Arthur McKnight & Sons Contracting	\$164,122.95	\$12,309.22	\$26,464.83	\$202,897.00

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/256	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Trace, Area 7	400 ft of box drain, 11 driveways, 4 walkways, 2 outfalls, 1 catchpit	Arthur McKnight & Sons Contracting	\$220,186.74	\$16,514.01	\$35,505.11	\$272,205.86
C2006/07/257	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Settlement Trace, Area 2	350 ft. of box drains, 3 driveways & 1 walkway	OM General Contracting	\$116,666.67	\$8,750.00	\$18,812.50	\$144,229.18
C2006/07/258	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Settlement Trace, Area 4	670 ft of box drains, 7 driveways, 4 walkways, 1 outfall	Naz Mohammed General Contractors Limited	\$287,270.00	\$21,545.25	\$46,322.29	\$355,137.54
C2007/07/259	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 2, Area 1	428 ft. of box drains, 4 driveways, 3 walkways	AR General Construction Company Limited	\$165,203.07	\$12,390.23	\$26,638.99	\$204,232.29
C2006/07/260	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 2, Area 2	200 ft box drains, 150 ft. curb & slipper drain	Triump Construction & Maintenance Co. Ltd	\$120,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$19,350.00	\$148,350.00

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/260	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 2, Area 2	200 ft box drains, 150 ft. curb & slipper drain	Triump Construction & Maintenance Co. Ltd	\$120,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$19,350.00	\$148,350.00
C2006/07/261	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 2, Area 3	330 ft of box drain, 1 driveway	Star's Services Co.	\$116,459.60	\$8,734.47	\$18,779.11	\$143,973.18
C2006/07/262	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 2, Area 4	490 ft. box drains	Star's Services Co.	\$160,488.69	\$12,036.65	\$25,878.80	\$198,404.14
C2006/07/263	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 2, Area 5	480 ft of box drain, 1 driveway, 2 walkways	J. B. Contracting Company Limited	\$177,657.40	\$13,324.31	\$28,647.26	\$219,628.96
C2006/07/264	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 1 Area 1	400 ft of box drain, 2 driveways, 1 walkway	OM General Contracting	\$133,333.33	\$10,000.00	\$21,500.00	\$164,833.32
C2006/07/265	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 1 Area 2	750 ft. of box drain, 3 driveways, 1 walkway, 1 outfall	Carl King & Company Limited	\$247,990.60	\$18,599.30	\$39,988.48	\$306,578.38

*Written Answers To Questions**Wednesday, June 18, 2008*

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/266	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 1, Area 3	500 ft box drain, 4 driveways, 1 walkway, 2 outfall	Ramdeo's Construction & Contracting Services	\$174,642.00	\$13,098.15	\$28,161.02	\$215,901.17
C2006/07/267	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 1, Area 4	690 ft of box drain, 4 driveways, 3 catchpits	WorldWide Contracting Services	\$213,969.00	\$16,047.68	\$34,502.50	\$264,519.18
C2006/07/268	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 1, Area 5	540 ft. of box drain, 1 driveway, 2 walkways	Phillips General Contracting Limited	\$169,386.30	\$12,703.97	\$27,313.54	\$209,403.81
C2006/07/269	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Palm Green Drive	250 ft box drains, 1 driveway, 1 walkway	Carl King & Company Limited	\$88,940.00	\$6,670.50	\$14,341.58	\$109,952.08
C2006/07/270	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 3, Area 1	280 ft of box drains, 2 driveways, 1 walkway	Phillips General Contracting Limited	\$101,073.00	\$7,580.48	\$16,298.02	\$124,951.50
C2006/07/271	Rio Claro	Drain Construction Dades Extension 3, Area 2	500 ft box drain, 3 driveways, 1 walkway, 1 outfall	WorldWide Contracting Services	\$163,200.00	\$12,240.00	\$26,316.00	\$201,756.00

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/272	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 5	Box Drains 539 ft, 2 Driveways, 1 Walkway from LP#15 - LP#19	Raymac Civil Engineering Gen. Contractors Co Ltd	\$159,797.82	\$11,984.84	\$25,767.40	\$197,550.05
C2006/07/273	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 6	Box Drain 506 ft, 3 Driveways, from LP#19 - LP#22	Raymac Civil Engineering Gen. Contractors Co Ltd	\$161,135.70	\$12,085.18	\$25,983.13	\$199,204.01
C2006/07/274	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 7	Box Drains 503, 4 Driveways from LP#22- LP#25	M & J Equipment Services	\$169,816.30	\$12,736.22	\$27,382.88	\$209,935.40
C2006/07/275	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 8	Box Drains 621 ft, 2 Driveways from LP#25 - LP#27	M & J Equipment Services	\$190,104.50	\$14,257.84	\$30,654.35	\$235,016.69
C2006/07/277	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 10	Box Drain 516 ft, 1 Driveway, 1 Walkway from Bridge - LP#38	S & G Fabricating, Welding & General Contractors	\$188,340.00	\$14,125.50	\$30,369.83	\$232,835.33

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/278	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 11	Box Drain 526 ft. 5 Driveways, 1 Walkways from LP#38 - LP#35	S & G Fabricating, Welding & General Contractors	\$199,620.00	\$14,971.50	\$32,188.73	\$246,780.23
C2006/07/276	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 9	Box Drain 619 ft., 4 Driveways from LP#27 - LP#29+ RD/C	Francis Bobb General Contractors	\$199,953.54	\$14,996.52	\$32,242.51	\$247,192.56
C2006/07/279	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 12	Box Drains 621 ft, 3 Driveways from LP#35 - LP#32	Francis Bobb General Contractors	\$200,654.77	\$15,049.11	\$32,355.58	\$248,059.46
C2006/07/280	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 13	Box Drain 490 ft, 3 Driveways from LP#32 - LP#29	Olab Construction	\$200,579.00	\$15,043.43	\$32,343.36	\$247,965.79
C2006/07/281	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 2 A	Box Drain 380 ft. from S1 - Opp. LP#6	Olab Construction	\$177,015.00	\$13,276.13	\$28,543.67	\$218,834.79

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/282	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 3	Box Drain 400 ft from OPP LP#6 - 60'/LP#4	R. Seegobin Contractors Limited	\$171,000.00	\$12,825.00	\$27,573.75	\$211,398.75
C2006/07/283	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction, Sancho Road, St. Julien Village Section 4	Box Drain 400 ft from LP#9 - D/Way #273	R. Seegobin Contractors Limited	\$162,000.00	\$12,150.00	\$26,122.50	\$200,272.50
C2006/07/284	Princes Town	Curb and Slipper Construction, St. George Road Area 1	Construction of 458 feet of Drain from Main Junction to LP #4	Paras Singh General Contractors Limited	\$54,871.00	\$4,115.33	\$8,847.95	\$67,834.27
C2006/07/285	Princes Town	Curb and Slipper Construction, St. George Road Area 2	Construction of 668 feet of Drain from LP #4 - LP #10	Paras Singh General Contractors Limited	\$81,172.00	\$6,087.90	\$13,088.99	\$100,348.89
C2006/07/286	Princes Town	Curb and Slipper Construction, St. George Road Area 3	Construction of 520 feet of Drain from LP#10	Vonique's Place Limited	\$80,143.50	\$6,010.76	\$12,923.14	\$99,077.40

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/287	Princes Town	Box Drain and Sidewalk Construction St. Julien Area 6	Box Drain & Side walk 500 ft from LP #65 - #68	Tramway Marketing Limited (TML)	\$343,270.24	\$25,745.27	\$55,352.33	\$424,367.83
C2006/07/288	Princes Town	Box Drain and Sidewalk Construction St. Julien Area 7	Box Drain & Side walk 500 ft from LP #68 - Saradjit Trace	Exclusive Metal & Fabricating Designers	\$188,700.00	\$14,152.50	\$30,427.88	\$233,280.38
C2006/07/289	Princes Town	Box Drain and Sidewalk Construction St. Julien Area 8	Sidewalk 500 ft from LP #12 - LP#16	Exclusive Metal & Fabricating Designers	\$133,160.00	\$9,987.00	\$21,472.05	\$164,619.05
C2006/07/290	Princes Town	Box Drain and Sidewalk Construction St. Julien Area 9	Sidewalk 500 ft from LP #17 - LP#22	A Class Landscape & Green House Limited	\$136,000.00	\$10,200.00	\$21,930.00	\$168,130.00
C2006/07/291	Princes Town	Box Drain (Curb and Slipper) Construction Maingot Road, Area 1	Curb & Slipper 467 Ft., 3 driveways Main Junction to LP#3	Sharoz Enterprises Limited	\$56,739.42	\$4,255.46	\$9,149.23	\$70,144.11
C2006/07/292	Princes Town	Box Drain (Curb and Slipper) Construction Maingot Road, Area 3	Curb & Slipper 515 Ft., from House #32 - LP#9	Alireddy General Contracting Services Limited	\$64,915.25	\$4,868.64	\$10,467.58	\$80,251.48

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/293	Princes Town	Box Drain (Curb and Slipper) Construction Maingot Road, Area 4	Curb & Slipper 559 Ft., from LP#9 - LP#12	Teak Springs Enterprises Limited	\$72,695.00	\$5,452.13	\$11,722.07	\$89,869.19
C2006/07/294	Princes Town	Box Drain (Curb and Slipper) Construction Maingot Road, Area 5	Curb & Slipper 586 Ft., from LP#12 - LP#16	Teak Springs Enterprises Limited	\$80,460.00	\$6,034.50	\$12,974.18	\$99,468.68
C2006/07/295	Princes Town	Box Drain (Curb and Slipper) Construction Maingot Road, Area 6	Curb & Slipper 316 Ft., from LP#16 - Bridge	Jumect Services Limited	\$10,800.00	\$810.00	\$1,741.50	\$13,351.50
C2006/07/296	Princes Town	Box Drain (Curb and Slipper) Construction Maingot Road, Area 7	Box Drain 414 ft. END	Alireddy General Contracting services Limited	\$128,145.75	\$9,610.93	\$20,663.50	\$158,420.18
C2006/07/297	Warden Road Point Fortin	Construction of Drains Ablerta Drive Section A	537 ft of curb & slipper, 27 ft of cross swale, 138 swale and 15 box crossing grill.	Road Transport Engineering Limited	\$65,670.00	\$4,925.25	\$10,589.29	\$81,184.54

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/298	Warden Road Point Fortin	Construction of Drains Ablerta Drive Section B	873 ft curb & slipper drains, 75 ft of swale & 99 ft of retaining wall	D.H. Technical Services Limited	\$207,135.00	\$15,535.13	\$33,400.52	\$256,070.64
C2006/07/299	Point Fortin	Construction of Kerb and Slipper Drains and Retaining Walls Moraldo Avenue Section A		Construction Services & Supplies Limited	\$838,280.00	\$62,871.00	\$135,172.65	\$1,036,323.65
C2006/07/300	Warden Road Point Fortin	Construction of Kerb and Slipper Drains and Retaining Walls Moraldo Avenue Section B	533 curb & slipper, 15 ft of cross swale, 36 ft of swale drain & 117 ft of retaining wall	E"N"D Enterprises Company Limited	\$233,000.00	\$17,475.00	\$37,571.25	\$288,046.25
C2006/07/301	Warden Road Point Fortin	Construction of Drains and Retaining Wall, Hollywood	396 ft of box drains, & 60 ft of curb & slipper drains, 54 ft of retaining wall	Roberts General Contractors Limited	\$275,846.00	\$20,688.45	\$44,480.17	\$341,014.62

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/302	Warden Road Point Fortin	Construction of Drains and Retaining Wall, Pipeline Avenue	1125 curb & slipper drains, 387 feet of box drains, 33 ft swale, 30 ft box crossing with grill, 51 ft retaining wall	Due's Construction Enterprise Limited	\$486,556.00	\$36,491.70	\$78,457.16	\$601,504.86
C2006/07/303	Warden Road Point Fortin	Construction of Drains and Culvert , Alberta Drive Part 2 Section A	66 ft of curb & slipper drains, 1 culvert & 198 Gabion baskets	Hiltech Services Limited	\$114,608.00	\$8,595.60	\$18,480.54	\$141,684.14
C2006/07/304	Warden Road Point Fortin	Construction of Drains and Culvert , Alberta Drive Part 2 Section B		J. Meade Enterprises	\$22,357.85	\$1,676.84	\$3,605.20	\$27,639.89
C2006/07/305	Siparia	Pavement Construction Coora Road A Part A	2500 ft. of sidewalk & curb & slipper drain from Coora Branch Road to Quinam Beach Road	Roopy's Contracting Services Limited	\$336,841.50	\$25,263.11	\$54,315.69	\$416,420.30

Written Answers To Questions

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/306	Siparia	Pavement Construction Coora Road Part B	2500 ft. of sidewalk & curb & slipper drain from Quinam Beach Road to LP#25G	Roopy's Contracting Services Limited	\$336,841.50	\$25,263.11	\$54,315.69	\$416,420.30
C2006/07/308	Siparia	Drain Construction Coora Extension #2	100 ft. of box drain & 210 ft. of curb & slipper drain	M & J Equipment Services	\$95,223.00	\$7,141.73	\$15,354.71	\$117,719.43
C2006/07/309	Siparia	Drain Construction Coora Branch Road	350 ft box drain	E"N"D Enterprises Company Limited	\$19,154.60	\$1,436.60	\$3,088.68	\$23,679.87
C2006/07/310	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Drain Construction (Curb and Slipper)Gheerahoo Trace Extension	Construction of 150 ft of Drain	Roosevelt Jerome & Sons Co. Limited	\$125,648.00	\$9,423.60	\$20,260.74	\$155,332.34
C2006/07/311	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Drains Construction Ruby Roberts Trace	Construction of 100 ft of Drain	Due's Construction Enterprise Limited	\$245,000.00	\$18,375.00	\$39,506.25	\$302,881.25
C2006/07/312	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Drain Construction Gowers Well Road	Repairs of 330 ft of Drain	Triump Construction & Maintenance Co. Ltd	\$35,000.00	\$2,625.00	\$5,643.75	\$43,268.75

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/313	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Drain Construction John Jules Trace	Construction of 440 ft of Drain	Jumect Services Limited	\$160,073.00	\$12,005.48	\$25,811.77	\$197,890.25
C2006/07/314	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Pavement Construction Delhi Road	Construction of 1540 ft of Pavement & Drains	Onstar Enterprises Limited	\$340,207.00	\$25,515.53	\$54,858.38	\$420,580.90
C2006/07/315	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Pavement Construction Delhi Road Part B	Construction of 1610 ft of Pavement & Drains	Onstar Enterprises Limited	\$343,985.50	\$25,798.91	\$55,467.66	\$425,252.07
C2006/07/316	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Pavement Construction Delhi Road Part C	Construction of 1990 ft of Pavement & Drains	C1 Construction	\$410,000.00	\$30,750.00	\$66,112.50	\$506,862.50
C2006/07/317	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Pavement Construction Delhi Road Part D	Construction of 1775 ft of Pavement & Drains	C1 Construction	\$289,750.00	\$21,731.25	\$46,722.19	\$358,203.44
C2006/07/318	Delhi Settlement, Fyzabad	Drain Construction Archibald Street Part A	Construction of 110 ft of Drain & 2000 ft of Curb & Slipper Drains	A.G. Mahabir Maintenance Company Ltd.	\$213,059.00	\$15,979.43	\$34,355.76	\$263,394.19

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/320	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Pavement Construction	1468 ft from Sheila Lamorell Drive to Polybend Trace	Rock Construction & Maintenance Services Limited	\$176,412.00	\$13,230.90	\$28,446.44	\$218,089.34
C2006/07/321	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Pavement Construction	850 ft from Polybend Street to LP#181	Hiltech Services Limited	\$185,000.00	\$13,875.00	\$29,831.25	\$228,706.25
C2006/07/322	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Pavement Construction Section 3	1101 ft from LP#181 to Bridge	Kam General Contractors	\$145,558.35	\$10,916.88	\$23,471.28	\$179,946.51
C2006/07/323	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Pavement Construction Section D	1015 ft. from the Bridge to Lorensotte South	Kam General Contractors	\$135,458.07	\$10,159.36	\$21,842.61	\$167,460.04
C2006/07/324	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Drain Construction Johnson Trace	Construction of 300 feet of Box Drain	MV & Associates Limited	\$113,700.00	\$8,527.50	\$18,334.13	\$140,561.63
C2006/07/325	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Road Crossing Thomas Trace & Lorensotte North (East)	Supply, set out and install 3 ft. diam. RC Precast Inverts	Cadwell Contracting Services Limited	\$118,400.00	\$8,880.00	\$19,092.00	\$146,372.00
C2006/07/326	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Road Crossing Thomas Trace & Lorensotte North (West)	Supply, set out and install 3 ft. diam. RC Precast Inverts	J Ramgoolam Enterprises	\$95,000.00	\$7,125.00	\$15,318.75	\$117,443.75

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/326	Rancho Quemado, La Brea	Road Crossing Thomas Trace & Lorensotte North (West)	Supply, set out and install 3 ft. diam. RC Precast Inverts	J Ramgoolam Enterprises	\$95,000.00	\$7,125.00	\$15,318.75	\$117,443.75
C2006/07/329	Princes Town	Box Drain (Curb and Slipper) Construction Maingot Road, Area 2	Curb & Slipper 506 Ft., 3 driveways from LP#3 to House #32	Sharoz Enterprises Limited	\$65,681.54	\$4,926.12	\$10,591.15	\$81,198.80
C2006/07/330	Morne Diablo	Road Repairs	Road Repairs to 1560 ft. of road	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$774,867.50	\$58,115.06	\$124,947.38	\$957,929.95
C2006/07/332	Morne Diablo	Road Repairs	Road Repairs to 3660 ft. of road	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$1,939,549.29	\$145,466.20	\$312,752.32	\$2,397,767.81
C2006/07/319	Fyzabad	Drain Construction Archibald Street Part B	Construction of 110 ft of Drain & 2000 ft of Curb & Slipper Drains	Caton Contracting Services Limited	\$162,550.00	\$12,191.25	\$26,211.19	\$200,952.44
C2006/07/331	Siparia	Road Repairs	Road Repairs to 3660 ft. of road	KBK's Transport & General Contracting Limited	\$2,342,083.34	\$175,656.25	\$377,660.94	\$2,895,400.53

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/331	Siparia	Road Repairs	Road Repairs to 3660 ft. of road	KBK's Transport & General Contracting Limited	\$2,342,083.34	\$175,656.25	\$377,660.94	\$2,895,400.53
C2006/07/383	Oropouche West	Box Drain Construction	The project consists of seven hundred and fifty feet (750ft.) of drainage twenty-four inches (24") wide and two catch pits to incorporate the free flow of water from the adjacent drain and RCCP Provision should be made for the re-construction of all walkways, driveways and any other areas pointed out on site visit.	Chandai Construction Company	\$302,548.90	\$22,691.17	\$48,786.01	\$374,026.08

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/384	Oropouche West	Box Drain Construction	The project consists of six hundred feet (600ft.) of drain work. five hundred and fifty feet (550'-0") of box drains twenty-four inches (24") wide and (4) four catch pits and approximately fifty feet (50'-0") of RCCP	Chandai Construction Company	\$301,697.10	\$22,627.28	\$48,648.66	\$372,973.04
C2006/07/385	Oropouche West	Kerb and Slipper Drains	The project consists of eight hundred feet (800 ft.) of drains. four hundred feet (400) of kerb and slipper drains on each side of road . Provisions should be made for the re-construction of all walkways and driveways	D.H. Technical services Limited	\$123,076.92	\$9,230.77	\$19,846.15	\$152,153.84

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/386	Oropouche West	Construction of Pavement	Twelve hundred feet 1200'-0" of pavement and one hundred feet 100'-0" of box drain, some parts covered, as directed. Provision should be made for the construction of driveways, walkways. The contractor will also include for the removal of the guard rail at bridge and the re installation of a new rail as directed on site.	Terricfix General Contractors	\$188,730.00	\$14,154.75	\$30,432.71	\$233,317.46
C2006/07/388	Oropouche West	Construction of Box Drains	480 ft long x 24" wide With 2 catch pit and 2 drive way.	Roopchan's Enterprises Limited	\$160,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$25,800.00	\$197,800.00
C2006/07/392	Fyzabad	Road Repairs	1860 feet of road repairs	Danny's Enterprises Company Ltd	\$708,819.37	\$53,161.45	\$114,297.12	\$876,277.95

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/393	Fyzabad	Road Repairs	1860 ft of road repairs	Danny's Enterprises Company Ltd	\$124,363.88	\$9,327.29	\$20,053.67	\$153,744.84
C2006/07/394	Fyzabad	Road Repairs	4464 ft of road repairs	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$1,509,259.40	\$113,194.46	\$243,368.08	\$1,865,821.93
C2006/07/395	Fyzabad	Road Repairs	3000 ft & 560 ft of road repairs	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$1,163,024.28	\$87,226.82	\$187,537.67	\$1,437,788.77
C2006/07/396	Fyzabad	Road Repairs	2230 ft of road repairs	Ali-Meah John Limited	\$788,054.60	\$59,104.10	\$127,073.80	\$974,232.50
C2006/07/397	Fyzabad	Road Repairs	2083 ft of road repairs	Danny's Enterprises Company Ltd	\$740,384.26	\$55,528.82	\$119,386.96	\$915,300.04
C2006/07/398	Fyzabad	Road Repairs	470ft road repairs	Ali-Meah John Limited	\$384,312.80	\$28,823.46	\$61,970.44	\$475,106.70
C2006/07/399	La Brea	Road Repairs	4500 ft of road repairs	FKK Enterprises	\$1,891,560.00	\$141,867.00	\$305,014.05	\$2,338,441.05
C2006/07/408	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	517 ft from Rd Corner Lp#53	Conaft Limited	\$168,025.00	\$12,601.88	\$27,094.03	\$207,720.91

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/409	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	445 ft from Rd Corner LP#53	Construction Services & Supplies Limited	\$147,090.60	\$11,031.80	\$23,718.36	\$181,840.75
C2006/07/411	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	640 ft from LP #56 - LP#60	Conaft Limited	\$208,000.00	\$15,600.00	\$33,540.00	\$257,140.00
C2006/07/412	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	480 ft from LP#60 - LP#62	Mahabirsingh Industries Limited	\$25,499.31	\$1,912.45	\$4,111.76	\$31,523.52
C2006/07/413	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	466 ft from LP#62 - LP#66	Mahabirsingh Industries Limited	\$24,852.90	\$1,863.97	\$4,007.53	\$30,724.40
C2006/07/414	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	681 ft from LP#66 - LP#71	BAT Nicks Contracting Services Ltd	\$222,379.60	\$16,678.47	\$35,858.71	\$274,916.78
C2006/07/424	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction	2150 ft (entire of Jagville Ave)	J.B. Contracting Company Limited	\$101,403.75	\$7,605.28	\$16,351.35	\$125,360.39
C2006/07/427	Princes Town	Road Repairs	5767 ft from LP#123 - LP#87	Danny's Enterprises Company Ltd	\$174,103.70	\$13,057.78	\$28,074.22	\$215,235.70
C2006/07/430	Pascal Road, Piparo, Section B	Road Repairs	5267 ft from LP#87 to Stone Road	Danny's Enterprises Company Ltd	\$159,012.17	\$11,925.91	\$25,640.71	\$196,578.79

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2007/07/401	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	544 ft from LP # 10-LP#4	Bryco General Contractors Limited	\$181,338.32	\$13,600.37	\$29,240.80	\$224,179.50
C2007/07/402	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	617 ft from LP#4-LP#8	Road Transport Engineering limited	\$190,523.00	\$14,289.23	\$30,721.83	\$235,534.06
C2007/07/403	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	578 ft from LP#8 - LP#12	Bryco General Contractors Limited	\$125,233.99	\$9,392.55	\$20,193.98	\$154,820.52
C2007/07/404	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	589 ft from LP#12 - LP#16	Sookram & Chanardath General Services Company Limited	\$163,499.00	\$12,262.43	\$26,364.21	\$202,125.64
C2007/07/405	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	565 ft from LP#16 - LP# 19	Sookram & Chanardath General Services Company Limited	\$149,400.00	\$11,205.00	\$24,090.75	\$184,695.75
C2007/07/406	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	475 ft from LP#19 - LP#22	Saint Bernard Construction Ltd	\$185,714.00	\$13,928.55	\$29,946.38	\$229,588.93
C2007/07/407	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	534 ft from LP#22 - LP#24	Saint Bernard Construction Ltd	\$202,075.00	\$15,155.63	\$32,584.59	\$249,815.22

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2007/07/415	Princes Town	Road Repairs	705 ft from St Julien New Pave	J. B Contracting Company Limited	\$38,555.25	\$2,891.64	\$6,217.03	\$47,663.93
C2007/07/416	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	392 ft from Sisters Rd to New Dr	Rock Construction & Maintenance Services Limited	\$119,000.00	\$8,925.00	\$19,188.75	\$147,113.75
C2007/07/417	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	244 ft from New Dr to Standpipe	Rock Construction & Maintenance Services Limited	\$76,500.00	\$5,737.50	\$12,335.63	\$94,573.13
C2007/07/418	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	673 ft from New Dr past LP 58	Plant Engineering & Maintenance Services Limited	\$198,900.00	\$14,917.50	\$32,072.63	\$245,890.13
C2007/07/419	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	541 ft from Bridge to House # 13	Kenneth Poonwassie & Son	\$224,400.00	\$16,830.00	\$36,184.50	\$277,414.50
C2007/07/420	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	457 ft from House #12 to Corner	Kenneth Poonwassie & Son	\$209,800.00	\$15,735.00	\$33,830.25	\$259,365.25

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2007/07/421	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	345 ft from House 44,48 & Post	S.M.H General Construction Limited	\$114,030.00	\$8,552.25	\$18,387.34	\$140,969.59
C2007/07/422	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	476 ft leading to Pavillion	Bally's Contracting Services	\$117,012.90	\$8,775.97	\$18,868.33	\$144,657.20
C2007/07/423	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	421 ft of drain (areas missing parts drain)	Bally's Contracting Services	\$19,277.99	\$1,445.85	\$3,108.58	\$23,832.41
C2007/07/424	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction	2510 ft from St Julien to Sancho	J.B. Contracting Company Limited	\$116,996.40	\$8,774.73	\$18,865.67	\$144,636.80
C2007/07/426	Princes Town	Road Repairs	3088 ft from Downing Trace - LP#54	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$1,029,600.00	\$77,220.00	\$166,023.00	\$1,272,843.00
C2007/07/427	Princes Town	Road Repairs	4660 ft from Sancho Branch Road - Mosque	Danny's Enterprises Company Ltd	\$151,671.72	\$11,375.38	\$24,457.07	\$187,504.17
C2007/07/428	Princes Town	Road Repairs	5175 ft from Naparima Mayaro Road - Maingot Road	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$1,502,100.00	\$112,657.50	\$242,213.63	\$1,856,971.13

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2007/07/432	Princes Town	Road Repairs	5497 ft from St John's Road to LP#2	Faith Construction 2000 Limited	\$1,503,979.20	\$112,798.44	\$242,516.65	\$1,859,294.29
C2007/07/433	Princes Town	Road Repairs	6450 ft from from Hoseinee Trace	Faith Construction 2000 Limited	\$186,666.00	\$13,999.95	\$30,099.89	\$230,765.84
C2007/07/434	Princes Town	Road Repairs		T & H Construction Company Limited	\$879,000.00	\$65,925.00	\$141,738.75	\$1,086,663.75
C2006/07/304	Point Fortin	Construction of drains	180 ft curb & slipper drain, 204 ft of box drain, 48 ft box crossing with grill	E.R & R Carrington Gen'l Contractors	\$22,225.80	\$1,666.94	\$3,583.91	\$27,476.65
C2006/07/429	Princes Town	Road Repairs	2112 ft from LP#54 - Hamilton Trace	Faith Construction 2000 Limited	\$642,048.00	\$48,153.60	\$103,530.24	\$793,731.84
C2006/07/434	Princes Town	Road Repairs	3360 ft. from Pascal Road to LP #9	T & H Construction Company Limited	\$233,400.00	\$17,505.00	\$37,635.75	\$288,540.75

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/475	Princes Town	Box Drain Construction	Along 6th Company Road near LP#36/1A	A Class Landscape & Green House Limited	\$118,250.00	\$8,868.75	\$19,067.81	\$146,186.56
C2006/07/558	Siparia	Drain Construction - Sennon Village extension, Coora, Siparia	400 ft. of box drain and 120 ft. Curb and slipper drains	Quality Contractots International Limited	\$219,000.00	\$16,425.00	\$35,313.75	\$270,738.75
C2006/07/559	Siparia	Pavement Construction-Coora Branch Road, Siparia (Part C)	1800 ft of sidewalk & 1500ft of slipper drains and retaining wall 200ft and installation of 400ft of hand rails from LP 25 to 15	MIE Engineering & Technical Services	\$79,750.24	\$5,981.27	\$12,859.73	\$98,591.23
C2006/07/557	Fyzabad	Road Paving - Ruby Roberts Lane, Fyzabad	900ft of Road Repairs	D Mahadeo & Son Limited	\$43,700.00	\$3,277.50	\$7,046.63	\$54,024.13
	Point Fortin	Road Repairs - Chicken Trace, Warden Road, Point Fortin		Jumect Services Limited	\$63,920.00	\$4,794.00	\$10,307.10	\$79,021.10

Written Answers To Questions

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
	Point Fortin	Road Repairs - Alberta Drive, Warden Road, Point Fortin		KPS Construction Services Limited	\$112,422.00	\$8,431.65	\$18,128.05	\$138,981.70
	Point Fortin	Road Repairs - Pipeline Avenue, Warden Point Fortin		E R & R Carrington General Contractors	\$109,536.00	\$8,215.20	\$17,662.68	\$135,413.88
C2006/07/560	Fyzabad	Drainage Construction at Delhi Road, (Part 1), Fyzabad	972 ft of 18" box drain construction	ADG Limited	\$36,754.52	\$2,756.59	\$5,926.67	\$45,437.78
C2006/07/561	Fyzabad	Drainage Construction at Delhi Road, (Part 2), Fyzabad	405 ft of 2' box drain construction	Fatty's Enterprises Transport & Maintenance	\$20,764.84	\$1,557.36	\$3,348.33	\$25,670.54
C2007/07/562	Fyzabad	Drainage Construction at Delhi Road (Part 3) Fyzabad	683 ft of 2' Bax Drain Construction	KAM General Contractors	\$34,122.54	\$2,559.19	\$5,502.26	\$42,183.99
C2006/07/563	Fyzabad	Drainage Construction at Delhi Road, (Part 4), Fyzabad	200ft of 3' box drain construction	BRYCO General Contractors Ltd	\$14,848.48	\$1,113.64	\$2,394.32	\$18,356.44

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/565	Fyzabad	Drainage Construction at Delhi Road, (Part 5), Fyzabad	150 ft of box drain construction	Yaztel General Contractors Limited	\$40,950.00	\$3,071.25	\$6,603.19	\$50,624.44
C2006/07/566	Fyzabad	Drainage Construction at Delhi Road, (Part 6), Fyzabad	400ft of box drain construction	R Allan Enterprises	\$115,436.00	\$8,657.70	\$18,614.06	\$142,707.76
C2006/07/567	Siparia	Construction of Railings - Coora Branch Road, Siparia	400 ft of railing	A.G. Mahabir Maintenance Company Ltd	\$42,480.00	\$3,186.00	\$6,849.90	\$52,515.90
C2006/07/568	Siparia	Construction of Pavement - Coora Branch Road, Siparia	1800ft of sidewalk and curb & slipper drain	Ramdeo's Construction & Contracting Services	\$64,800.00	\$4,860.00	\$10,449.00	\$80,109.00
C2006/07/569	Mayaro	Drainage Construction - Dades Trace Extension # 6 , Area 9, Rio Claro	Construction of Box Drain 225 ft	D.H. Technical Services Ltd	\$19,550.23	\$1,466.27	\$3,152.47	\$24,168.97
C2006/07/570	Mayaro	Drainage Construction - Dades Trace Extension #1 , Area 7, Rio Claro	Construction of Box Drain 245 ft	GAP Environmental Experts Company Ltd	\$96,251.57	\$7,218.87	\$15,520.57	\$118,991.01

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/571	Mayaro	Drainage Construction - Dades Trace Extension #1 , Area 8, Rio Claro	Construction of Box Drain 230 ft	Hamlet Contracting Services Company Ltd	\$23,767.80	\$1,782.59	\$3,832.56	\$29,382.94
C2006/07/573	Mayaro	Drainage Construction - Dades Trace , Area 8, Rio Claro	Construction of Box Drain 230 ft	L & A Sanitation & Landscaping Services	\$65,380.00	\$4,903.50	\$10,542.53	\$80,826.03
C2006/07/574	Mayaro	Drainage Construction - Dades Trace Extension #1 , Area 9, Rio Claro	Construction of Box Drain 315 ft	L & A Sanitation & Landscaping Services	\$112,140.00	\$8,410.50	\$18,082.58	\$138,633.08
C2006/07/576	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction - LP #68 to LP#18/3, Sixth Company, Princes Town	Road Repairs to 2204 ft	Carib Asphalt Pavers Ltd	\$760,014.00	\$57,001.05	\$122,552.26	\$939,567.31
C2006/07/577	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction - LP#18/3 to Wooden Bridge, Sixth Company, Princes Town	Road Repairs to 1493 ft	Carib Asphalt Pavers Ltd	\$585,175.50	\$43,888.16	\$94,359.55	\$723,423.21

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/578	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction LP# 63/1 to Concrete Bridge, Sixth Company , Princes Town	Road Repairs to 516 ft	Ali - Meah John Ltd	\$184,685.40	\$13,851.41	\$29,780.52	\$228,317.33
C2006/07/579	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction - Fire Hydrant to Pavement, Sixth Company, Prince Town	Road Repairs to 2155 ft	Ali - Meah John Ltd	\$673,646.40	\$50,523.48	\$108,625.48	\$832,795.36
C2006/07/580	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction LP# 54 to Circular Branch Road , Sixth Company , Princes Town		Danny's Enterprises Company Limited	\$212,954.00	\$15,971.55	\$34,338.83	\$263,264.38
C2006/07/581	Princes Town	Road Reconstruction LP# 54 to Circular Branch Road to road mark"C", Sixth Company , Princes Town		Danny's Enterprises Company Limited	\$516,718.80	\$38,753.91	\$83,320.91	\$638,793.62
C2006/07/472	Mayaro	Road Paving Otoire Hill & Savannah Roads	Road Repairs to 910 feet	B & L Support Services Ltd	\$69,350.00	\$5,201.25	\$11,182.69	\$85,733.94

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/471	Princess Town	Construction of Drains 6th Company Road	6 th Company Road, (Near LP #36/6), Princes Town	S.M.H. General Construction Limited	\$47,376.00	\$3,553.20	\$7,639.38	\$58,568.58
C2006/07/469	Princess Town	Construction of Drains 6th Company Road	6 th Company Road, (Near Recreational Ground), Princes Town	OAJ Construction Company Limited	\$216,328.86	\$16,224.66	\$34,883.03	\$267,436.55
C2006/07/474	Princess Town	Construction of Drains 6th Company Road	6 th Company Road, (Near Downing Trace), Princes Town	Carl King & Company Limited	\$184,460.00	\$13,834.50	\$29,744.18	\$228,038.68
C2006/07/473	Princess Town	Construction of Drains 6th Company Road	Along 6 th Company Road into Noche Street, Princes Town	A Class Landscaping & Green House Limited	\$236,313.00	\$17,723.48	\$38,105.47	\$292,141.95
C2006/07/470	Princess Town	Drainage Construction (Box Drain)	St. George Main Road, Area 4, Princes Town (Light Pole #10)	S.M.H. General Construction Limited	\$9,717.20	\$728.79	\$1,566.90	\$12,012.89

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CONTRACT #	AREA	JOB DESCRIPTION	PROJECT DETAILS	CONTRACTOR	PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS	MANAGEMENT FEE	VAT	TOTAL
C2006/07/503	Siparia	Road Paving Coora Hernandez Extension, Siparia	Road Repairs of 2300 ft	Faith Construction 2000 Limited	\$199,583.12	\$14,968.73	\$32,182.78	\$246,734.63
C2006/07/502	Siparia	Road Paving Coora Hernandez, Siparia	Road Repairs of 4000 ft	Faith Construction 2000 Limited	\$395,115.60	\$29,633.67	\$63,712.39	\$488,461.66
C2006/07/623	La Brea	Pavement Construction	500m slipper and 500m sidewalk from Ramdeo's Trace to Ramdass Settlement	Anup Babwah Contractors	\$236,800.00	\$17,760.00	\$38,184.00	\$292,744.00
					\$42,944,349.42	\$3,220,826.21	\$6,924,776.34	\$53,089,951.97

The following questions were asked by Mr. Winston Peters (Mayaro):

**Community Improvement Services Limited
(Details of)**

- 131.** With respect to the Community Improvement Services Limited, could the hon. Minister of Local Government state:
- (e) what is the mandate and specific geographical area of operation of this entity;
 - (f) what is the total expenditure incurred to date, the type of projects undertaken, the areas in which they were implemented and the status of these works;
 - (g) the names of contractors employed, the services they provided and at what cost; and
 - (h) what new projects are proposed, the areas in which they are to be undertaken, the total budget for these works and projected commencement and completion dates?

The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Hazel Manning): The answer to question No. 131 is as follows:

- a) Community Improvement Services Limited's (CISL's) mandate is "...to undertake development activity, particularly in respect of the improvement of secondary road networks and drainage, development of cultural centres, community centres and sporting facilities. Essentially the company would provide services that are designed to maintain all or any of the communities countrywide."

The specific geographical areas of operation assigned to CISL are:

In the North – *The area north of the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway from Valencia in the East to Chaguaramas in the West. Chaguaramas, Port of Spain and Valencia are excluded.*

In the South – *The areas in the suburbs and outskirts of the City of San Fernando including Cocoyea Village, Union Hall Gardens, St. Joseph Village, Palmiste, Rambert Village, Diamond Village, Ste. Madeleine, Marabella, Pointe-a-Pierre and Macaulay.*

Details of the specific communities are at Appendix I.

- b) The total expenditure incurred as at April 30, 2008 is twenty-nine million, eight hundred and eighty-two thousand, five hundred and eighty-nine dollars and sixty-eight cents (\$29,882,589.68).

The types of projects undertaken were as follows:

1. Recreational facilities including bleachers;
2. Jogging track;
3. Bandstand;
4. Rehabilitation of existing curbs and construction of new curbs, slipper and box drains;
5. Retaining walls;
6. Road paving;
7. Installation of street signs;
8. Safety handrails; and
9. Sidewalk pavements.

Development works have been completed in Union Hall Gardens and work is in progress in four (4) other communities, namely:

1. South Cocoyea
2. North Cocoyea
3. Tarouba Village
4. St Joseph Village - Phase 1

See details at Appendix II.

- c) Over sixty (60) contractors were employed. See details at Appendix III.
- d) The list of new projects is currently being finalised and therefore it is not possible to give firm details at this time.

APPENDIX I**COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT SERVICES LIMITED (CISL)****ORIGINAL APPROVED COMMUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT**

1. Tarouba
2. Macaulay
3. Cocoyea North
4. Ste. Madeleine
5. El Socorro South (near Caroni River)
6. Sunshine Avenue/Leasehold/Bagatelle Avenue
7. Blanchisseuse/La Fillette
8. Calvary
9. Samaroo Village
10. Printery Village
11. Cocorite
12. Bagatelle
13. Upper Covigne
14. Scorpio (Carenage)
15. Embacadere (Squatting Area)
16. Rambert Village
17. Palmiste
18. Laventille Road, Febeau Village, San Juan
19. Wharf Trace
20. Bamboo (Upper Farley Street)

APPENDIX II**ADDITIONAL COMMUNITIES APPROVED FOR DEVELOPMENT**

1. Santa Rosa Heights
2. Pinto Road, Arima

3. Bon Air, Arouca
4. Saaman Park, Piarco Old Road
5. Henry Street, Arouca
6. Sunshine Avenue
7. Moreau Road
8. Lopinot/La Pastora
9. Five Rivers, Arouca
10. Arima Old Road, before and after La Florissante
11. Diamond Village
12. Upper Blanca, Cascade
13. Georges Hill, St. Ann's
14. Residential Central District
15. Marabella Residential Community
16. La Romain/Duncan Village
17. Tunapuna East
18. Tunapuna Central
19. Tunapuna West
20. Barton Lane
21. Simeon Road
22. Capildeo Lands
23. River Estate Housing Development
24. Belle View, Long Circular
25. Paramin Village
26. Mausica Village
27. Mausica – Crescent Gardens
28. D'Abadie – Rudolpho Lane
29. D'Abadie – John Lane Extension

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30. Andrews Lane, La Florissante
31. Dinsley
32. Romains Land, Morvant
33. Mon Repos Road, Morvant
34. The Cashew, Morvant
35. Malabar
36. Old Malabar
37. Peytonville
38. Arima
39. Union Hall Gardens
40. St Joseph Village

APPENDIX III

Location: NORTH COCOYEA - PHASE 1

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/01	CPML Contractors Limited	Construction of box drains; driveways; walkways; road works; retaining walls.	\$577,180.79	completed
CISL/PM/02	Douglas Contractor	Construction of box drains; hand rails; culvert; walkways.	\$441,116.82	completed
CISL/PM/03	Pedco Environment Services	Construction of pedestrian sidewalks; sidewalks; retaining wall base; box culvert.	\$308,565.48	completed
CISL/PM/04	Pro Eng Services	Construction of box drains; curb & slipper; driveways; walkway.	\$359,937.82	completed
CISL/PM/05	Envirochem Limited	Construction of boundary drain; box drain; curb & slipper; swale drain.	\$554,880.75	completed

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/05	Envirochem Limited	Construction of boundary drain; box drain; curb & slipper; swale drain.	\$554,880.75	completed
CISL/PM/06	Jumect Services Limited	Construction of sidewalk; curb & slipper.	\$193,939.10	completed
CISL/PM/07	Solex Construction	Construction of box drain covers; picket fence; road works; football fence.	\$362,450.66	completed
CISL/PM/08	Sharoz Enterprises	Construction of box drain; road works; sidewalks.	\$176,806.75	completed

APPENDIX III**Location: NORTH COCOYEA - PHASE 2**

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/12	Francis Bobb Construction	Construction of box drains; driveways; walkways; fence post.	\$773,750.50	completed
CISL/PM/13	Mattzack Company Limited	Construction of box drains; driveways; walkways; swale drain.	\$727,011.25	In progress
CISL/PM/14	Envirochem Limited	Construction of box drain; swale drains; driveways; walkways.	\$624,335.00	In progress
CISL/PM/15	Pro Eng Services	Construction of box drains; boundary drain.	\$369,279.61	completed
CISL/PM/16	Solid Construction	Construction of curb & slipper; box drains.	\$348,130.88	completed

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/17	Jumect Services Limited	Construction of curb & slipper; retaining wall base; concrete reinforce wall.	\$2,414,551.50	In progress
PO #0354	Earth Investigations Systems Limited	Geographical sub-surface investigation	\$58,995.00	
CISL/PM/18	Mattzack Company Limited	Construction of box drains; walkways; driveways curb & slipper.	\$153,956.25	In progress
CISL/PM/19	World Wide Contracting Services Ltd	Construction of box drains; driveways; walkways; curb & slipper.	\$487,050.88	completed
CISL/PM/20	Plant Engineering Company Ltd	Construction of box drain; boundary drain.	\$343,688.21	In progress

APPENDIX III**Location: NORTH COCOYEA PHASE 2**

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/21	L-Tec Systems Ltd	Construction of box drains; walkways; driveways; road works.	\$876,129.80	In progress
CISL/PM/22	SMH Construction	Construction of box drains.	\$307,877.82	completed
CISL/PM/23	Technical & Maintenance Company Ltd.	Construction of box drains; chain link fence.	\$309,372.20	completed

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/24	Caesar Contracting Company Ltd.	Construction of box drains; driveways; walkways.	\$452,159.30	In progress
CISL/PM/25	Aakut - Smes Nu Limited	Construction of box drains; driveways, walkways.	\$202,564.45	completed
CISL/PM/26	Laras Limited	Construction of box drain; retaining wall; road works.	\$130,765.26	completed
CISL/PM/27	Terrific Contracting Ltd	Construction of box drains; driveways, walkways.	\$344,936.75	In progress

Location: Union Hall Gardens

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/32	Construction Services & Supplies Ltd	Construction of curb wall; curb & slipper; interlot drain. Clearing of debris; Road works.	\$665,365.10	completed

APPENDIX III

Location: ST. JOSEPH VILLAGE PHASE 1

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/30	Carl King Company Limited	Construction of box drains; driveways; walkways; curb & slipper.	\$739,047.50	In progress
CISL/PM/31	Carl King Company Limited	Construction of curb & slipper; swale drains; road works.	\$890,118.11	In progress

Location: Tarouba Village Phase 1

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
CISL/PM/37	J.J Malloy Pre-Cast Concrete Products Ltd	Construction of boundary drain; box drains; driveways; walkways; curb & slipper.	\$640,451.05	In progress
CISL/PM/38	C.B.E Trinidad Limited	Construction of box drains; curb & slipper; install bilingual street signs.	\$680,915.00	In progress
TOTAL			\$15,515,319.59	

APPENDIX III**Location: SOUTH COCOYEA**

Contract Numbers	Contractors	Services Provided	Cost	Status
PM002	Winston Aqui	Supply and Installation of Street Signs in South Cocoyea.	\$92,225.00	completed
CISL/PM/09	Caribbean Agri Solutions	Landscaping of Cul-de-Sac.	\$124,954.30	completed
CISL/PM/10	Phoenix Construction	Recreational Park on Nairn Avenue.	\$2,311,572.37	In progress
		Flood Alleviation in South Cocoyea.	\$3,250,000.00	Procurement stage
		West Park Water Sewerage System.	\$5,464,800.00	Procurement stage
TOTAL			\$11,243,551.67	

APPENDIX III

Location: SOUTH COCOYEA

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
Renovators & Fabricators Ltd	Part construction of main drain on Simpson Brown Terrace		\$443,373.00	completed
Pro-Eng Services Limited	Part construction of main drain on Simpson Brown Terrace	\$443,373.00		completed
	Construction of extra driveways 12'x6'x6"	<u>\$21,681.00</u>		\$465,054.00
Kenson Operational Services Ltd	Part construction of main drain on Simpson Brown Terrace	\$443,373.00		completed
	Construction of driveways & walkways; removal and replacement of fences	<u>\$337,478.35</u>		\$780,851.35
Cadville Construction	Drain on Simpson Brown Terrace & Anne Street	\$97,834.00		completed
	Construct of drains.	\$73,195.00		completed
	Removal of oil from work site to waste disposal site.	<u>\$11,000.00</u>		\$182,029.00
St Clair & St Clair Contracting Services	Construction of main drain on Inverness Avenue	\$254,418.83		completed

APPENDIX III

Location: SOUTH COCOYEA

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
	Drain between Inverness Avenue & Best Street	\$73,195.00		completed
	Drain between Inverness Avenue & the church	<u>\$58,556.00</u>		completed
			\$386,169.83	
OAJ Construction Company Limited	Construction of part pavement along Naparima - Mayaro Road		\$656,250.00	completed
Francis Bobb General Contractors	Construction of main drain on Dalkeith Road	\$431,631.62		completed
	Construction of drain between Perth Ave. & Dalkeith Road	\$73,195.00		completed
	Cover drain behind Scott's residence on Dalkeith Road	\$53,225.00		completed
	Construct drain between Perty & Dalkeith Road	\$44,600.00		completed
	Construction of 1'x1'x1'x2' box drain	\$35,485.00		completed
			\$638,136.62	
Mc Donald & Sons General Contractors	Drains between Naparima Mayaro Road & Perth Avenue	\$83,195.00		completed
	Road crossing at Perth Avenue	\$14,000.00		completed

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
	All bridges and walkways on Perth Avenue	\$64,000.00	\$161,195.00	completed
Phoenix Construction & Supplies Limited	Construction of main drain on Edinburgh Crescent	\$671,633.55		completed
	Drains at the back of Scott & Noel Streets	\$43,917.00	\$715,550.55	completed

APPENDIX III**Location: SOUTH COCOYEA**

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
A & N Mechanical Services	Drains between Edinburgh Crescent & Campbell Drive	\$53,917.00		completed
	Construction of drain on Betty Street to meet drains by Williams and Splash.	\$43,917.00		completed
	Construct drain between Simpson Brown Terrace & Jean Street	\$58,556.00	\$156,390.00	completed
Mattzack Company Limited	Construction of main drain on Jean Street	\$513,375.15		completed

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
	Construction of drain between Jean Street & Campbell Drive	\$146,390.00	\$659,765.15	completed
Resource Alliances	Construction of main drain Anne Street		\$425,686.00	completed
Jumect Services Limited	Construction of drain between Betty & Jean Streets	\$156,390.00	\$273,502.00	completed
	Construction of drain between Edinburgh Crescent & Simpson Browne Terrace	\$58,556.00		completed
	Construction of drain along the side of Kenneth Place	\$58,556.00		completed
S.M.H. Construction Limited	Construction of part pavement along Naparima Mayaro Road	\$656,250.00	\$711,250.00	completed
	Construction of additional 100' side walk and slipper drain	\$55,000.00		completed

APPENDIX III

Location: SOUTH COCOYEA

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
Plant Engineering & Maintenance Services Ltd.	Clearing of main drain on Jeffers Lane.		\$124,751.00	completed
J & J Construction Limited	Construction of cul-de-sac	\$173,500.00	\$456,647.17	completed
	Construction of sidewalk	\$191,175.00		completed
	Construction of cul-de-sac	\$91,972.17		completed
Samuel Jones General Contractor	Construct drain at the back of Carter Street		\$156,390.00	completed
Sub Total			\$7,822,020.67	
Project Management Fee (10%)			\$782,202.07	
Sub Total			\$8,604,222.74	
VAT 15%			\$1,290,633.41	
TOTAL			\$9,894,856.15	

APPENDIX III

Location: SOUTH COCOYEA (Additional)

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
Renovators and Fabricators Limited	Construct road crossing at Simpson Brown Terrace & Jean Street	\$75,950.00		completed

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Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
Cadville Construction	Construct road crossing at Simpson Brown Terrace & Scotland Drive	<u>\$79,050.00</u>	\$155,000.00	completed
	Construct box drain on Mc Intosh Street	\$82,368.50		completed
	Part construction of retaining wall	<u>\$12,980.00</u>		completed
St Clair & St Clair Contracting Services	Construction of drain on west side of 29 Naparima Mayaro Road to connect with drain between Dalkeith Road & Perth Avenue	\$46,917.00	\$95,348.50	completed
	Demolition and reconstruction of steps and construction of new driveway at #6 Best Street	\$39,350.00		completed
	Construction of drain between Best Street & Simpson Brown Terrace.	<u>\$60,000.00</u>		completed
			\$146,267.00	

APPENDIX III

Location: SOUTH COCOYEA (Additional)

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
Francis Bobb General Contractors	Construction of drain from South Street to Cul-de-Sac	\$166,400.00		completed
	Removal of dump earth spoils from road on turn-around at South Street	\$17,650.00		completed
	Construction of slipper drain on South Street 161' long	\$37,685.00		completed
			\$221,735.00	
A & N Mechanical Services	Construction of road crossing corner of Simpson Brown Terrace & Kenneth Avenue		\$43,551.15	completed
Mattzack Company Limited	Construction of drain crossing and related works - Betty Street & Simpson Brown Terrace.		\$61,000.00	completed
Jumect Services Limited	Construction of drains from newly built catchment at the back of Betty Street, to the road side drain at the lower end of Betty Street.		\$120,000.00	completed

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
O.A.J. Construction Company Limited	Removal of debris, cut and remove concrete slabs, replace earthen drains and clear adjacent site at the bottom of Simpson Brown Terrace. Clear concrete drain, put in one earthen drain and make site good at Scotland Drive Extension.		\$28,100.00	completed

APPENDIX III**Location: SOUTH COCOYEA (Additional)**

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
S.M.H. General Construction Limited	Cast driveway to lot #30 on junction of Edinburgh Crescent and Naparima Mayaro Road		\$56,000.00	completed
Plant Engineering & Maintenance Services Ltd.	Clearing water course off Nairn Avenue playing field through Pleasantville		\$106,240.00	completed
J & J Construction Limited	Pave box turning point and construct perimeter drains on Best Street and application of hot mix on Naparima Mayaro Road		\$157,500.00	completed

Name of Contractor	Services Provided	Sub Total	Total Cost	Status
KBK's	Asphalt re-paving - Anne Street, George Place & Kenneth Ave.		\$1,362,394.00	completed
Trinity Asphalt Pavers Limited	Asphalt re-paving - Edinburgh Ave., Jean Street, Campbell Drive, Dalkeith Road.		\$1,569,252.00	completed
T.N. Ramnath & Co. Ltd.	Asphalt re-paving - Simpson Brown Terrace, Perth Ave, Inverness Ave., Betty Street	\$1,978,994.00		completed
	Reconstruction of road vergers	\$342,000.00		completed
			\$2,320,994.00	
Faith Construction 2000 Ltd.	Construction of box drain and retaining wall	\$68,000.00		completed
	Construction of chain link wire fencing	\$15,000.00		completed
	Paving of Jean Street	\$175,921.25		completed
	Reconstruction of road verges on both sides of road and paving	\$216,998.10		completed
			\$475,919.35	
Sub Total			\$6,919,301.00	
Project Management Fee (10%)			\$691,930.10	
VAT 15%			\$1,141,684.67	
TOTAL			\$8,752,915.77	

**East Port of Spain Development Company
(Details of)**

- 133.** With respect to the East Port of Spain Development Company Limited, could the Minister of Local Government state:
- (d) what is its mandate, functions and specific geographic area of operation;
 - (e) what is the total expenditure incurred to date, the types of projects undertaken, the areas in which they were implemented and the status of these works; and
 - (f) what new projects are being proposed, the area in which they are to be implemented and the projected commencement and completion dates

The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Hazel Manning): The answer to question No. 133 is as follows:

- (a) The East Port of Spain Development Company Limited (EPOSDC) was mandated by the Cabinet in September 15, 2005 to develop and redevelop a zone in East Port-of-Spain bounded by Charlotte Street, Lady Young Road and the Eastern Main Road and including Morvant, Never Dirty and Caledonia, to improve the economic, social and physical environment of those areas. The boundaries of East Port-of-Spain were subsequently expanded to include the communities of Beetham Estates, Sea Lots and Katanga.
- (b) Expenditure as at May 14th 2008 totalled eleven million, fifty seven thousand, and forty three dollars and ninety eight cents (\$11,057,043.98). (Appendix I) EPOSDC has undertaken the following types of projects:
 - the upgrade of recreation grounds
 - rehabilitation of roadside drains
 - Sports Development Programme
 - environmental enhancement projects.

Projects are being undertaken in a number of communities including:

LOCATION	PROJECT	STATUS
Beetham Gardens	Upgrade of Multi-Purpose Court	on-going
	Rehabilitation of roadside drains	on-going
St. Paul Street, POS East	Upgrade of recreation	on-going
Trou Macaque, Laventille	Upgrade of Morris Marshall Recreation Ground	on-going
Never Dirty	Upgrade of Multi-Purpose Court	on-going

All projects are on-going with the exception of an environmental enhancement programme at Beetham Gardens, which was completed in early 2008.

- (c) EPOSDC has completed a Draft Strategic Development Plan which provides a framework within which economic, social and physical development projects will be identified for implementation throughout nineteen (19) communities of East Port-of-Spain. A series of community and stakeholder consultations is in progress to obtain feedback from the residents and key stakeholders prior to amending the Plan and submitting it for approval by the Cabinet. There are 6 projects scheduled for immediate implementation; these are listed hereunder:

PROJECT	LOCATION	START	END
Upgrade of Laventille Road	Laventille	May 2008	November 2008
Upgrade Beetham Recreation Ground	Beetham, Phase 2	June 2008	November 2008
Upgrade Sorgen Trace Recreation Ground	Sorgen Trace	June 2008	October 2008

PROJECT	LOCATION	START	END
Belmont Valley Road Improvements	Upper Belmont	July 2008	April 2009
St. Francois Valley Road Improvements	Upper Belmont	July 2008	April 2009
Beetham Landscaped Berm	Beetham Gardens	May 2008	January 2009

APPENDIX I

Table Outlining EPOSDC Expenditure for the period May 2006 to April 2008.

PERIOD	RECURRENT	PROJECTS
May 2006 -September 2006	\$ 709,403.00	-
October 2006 – September 2007	\$ 3,203,518.70	\$ 804,294.36
October 2007 – April 2008	\$ 2,831,758.70	\$ 3,508,069.15
Total	\$ 6,744,680.47	\$ 4,312,363.51
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$11,057,043.98	

The following question was asked by Mr. Subhas Panday (Princes Town North):

**Local Government Reform
(Recommendations for)**

- 142.** Could the Hon. Minister of Local Government list the recommendations for Local Government reform received from members of the public at the public consultations held?

The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Hazel Manning): The reply to question No. 142 is as follows:

Recommendations received from members of the public at public consultations held were as follows:

- Protocols to deliver transparency in decision making and awarding of contracts by the Corporation should be developed. The Corporation's revenues

for financing infrastructure and other projects should be retained. This would alleviate problems of funding shortfalls from the Central Government.

- Community members would like to see a greater relationship between the Corporation and the people the Councillors represent.
- More facilities in place for the youths.
- A better distribution of water, lights and environmental clean-up.
- Equity in the manner of responses to villagers' problems.
- Timely implementation of the Reform Plan.
- There is need for a well trained and fully staffed Municipal Police since the Siparia region is so wide.
- Systems to safeguard the environment and laws to protect the environment, particularly from noise pollution, need to be put in place and enforced as a matter of urgency. Well-trained Litter Wardens need to be employed immediately.
- The Licensing Department should cooperate with the Regional Corporations to provide a seamless service to the people.
- People (through their Community Village Councils) should have an input in setting measurable standards for the delivery of services offered by the Municipal Corporations. They should be very involved in this reform initiative.
- A Restoration Clause should be written into law so that firms/contractors who damage public property would be liable and would be required to restore the property to its original state. A good monitoring system to ensure compliance would be necessary.
- Under the aegis of the Siparia Regional Corporation, a Committee should be established to mark all historical sites and so establish a museum of the history and culture of the town of Siparia.
- Adequate pipe-borne water supply, proper drainage, a pre-school and primary school.
- Proper maintenance of the recreation ground.
- Access to the Councillor.
- More focus on self-help groups in the village.

- Regular patrolling of police officers.
- Social issues must stay within the boundaries of the Ministry of Social Development.
- Booklets of the Draft White Paper should have been circulated before the meeting so that it could have been studied.
- Councillors should visit residents often and not only at election times.
- Educational courses and jobs for youths and for older persons who want to further their education.
- A regular police presence in areas to assist in crime prevention.
- The Local Assembly should meet twice a month and at least one town meeting should be held annually in each electoral district of the Corporation.
- A proper operating hospital with a 24-hour service.
- Construction of a fire station and a trade school.
- Regular bus transport.
- Training for teachers.
- More emphasis on the aged in the community.
- Better management of the monies given to the Corporation, so that all in the community would benefit.
- The Local Government Representatives must have regular discussions with the community so that they would be aware of what is taking place in their community.
- Employment for the people in the community to do the work needed as to improve the standard of living.
- Serious people should be placed in the Corporation – people who can get the job done with minimal resources.
- The community should not remain stagnant because the Councillor is a non-performer. People should try and help themselves.

- At the completion of the Local Government Reform process, all promises would be delivered.
- Financial assistance to the various Village Councils since many of them are small and now getting started.
- The power of recall. This is where the vote against a particular Councillor could result in the Councillor being recalled by the community the person represents.
- There is need for greater collaboration between the Local Government body and the various Village Councils and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), so that the basic needs of the people could be met.
- Basic infrastructure for recreation grounds – construction of a pavilion.
- Improvement/implementation in lighting and proper drainage.
- Community centres should be constructed so that “stay-at-home moms” could acquire technical skills at night so that their standard of living could be improved.
- All work such as landslips and box-drains should be done during the dry season.
- The Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) should repair roads as soon as they have completed the necessary rehabilitation work.
- Local tourism should be given greater emphasis.
- The Corporation should be given adequate funding so that work started could be completed and more work initiated.
- A greater say in the choice of people who would represent the residents in the Corporation.
- Better collaboration with Corporations which border each other.
- Councillors should reside in the electoral district which they represent.
- Residents should determine their needs and prioritize projects to be undertaken in their community.
- Community groups that are dormant should be re-energized and youth groups established.

- Implementation of reform measures to prevent it from becoming another “white elephant”.
- The Town and Country Planning Office should be accessible to the public.
- The date for Local Government Elections should be constitutionally scheduled.
- The specific role and function of government offices should be clearly indentified so that duplication of services would be prevented and efficient services provided.
- Notices and invitations to the public for consultations should be done well in advance of scheduled meetings.
- The public must be told the criteria used for funding the various activities/services in the management of the region by the Corporation.
- A system is needed which makes Councillors responsible for the needs of the community.
- Community participation should be increased and more town meetings held.
- Local Government should be authorized to raise funds for special projects in the community.
- Employees recruited for public service should be better qualified and committed.
- Priority must be given to construction, repair and maintenance of pavements and rails.
- Councillors should have ready access to funds to disperse within their districts when the need arises.
- The Councillor should be present at the consultations.
- A system which provides information to the public with respect to a Corporation’s funding, expenditure, accounting practices, should be put in place to prevent mismanagement.
- A system of redress from Telecommunication Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT), Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC), and WASA and should be institutionalized for poor service and injury.
- The Environmental Management Authority (EMA) should be decentralized.

- Residents should be made aware of the approvals for business licence being granted in the area and modernized systems should be used to make approvals.
- The existing system lack professional credibility and needs more spirited administration.