

*Leave of Absence**Friday, September 04, 2009***HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES***Friday, September 04, 2009*

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 from today's sitting of the House: Mr. Chandresh Sharma, Member for Fyzabad and Mr. Kelvin Ramnath, Member for Couva South. The leave which these Members seek is granted.

**SPEAKERS OF THE SENATE AND THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS, CANADA
(INDEPENDENCE GREETINGS)**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have received a letter from the Speaker of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Commons in Canada, dated August 31, 2009, addressed both to Sen. the Hon. Danny Montano and myself. It reads as follows:

“As you and the people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago celebrate your National Day, we are pleased to convey the congratulations and best wishes of the Parliament of Canada.

The Senate and the House of Commons place great significance on the value of parliamentary diplomacy and we appreciate the close relationship of our two countries in this regard. We look forward to further opportunities to strengthen the bonds between our institutions.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration and continued good wishes for prosperity and happiness on this special day.

Yours sincerely

/s/ Noel A. Kinsella

Speaker of the Senate

/s/ Peter Milliken

Speaker of the

House of Commons”

**COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES
(DR. TIM GOPEESINGH)**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, a matter of privilege was raised by the Member for St. Joseph and Minister of Public

Committee of Privileges
[MR. SPEAKER]

Friday September 04, 2009

Administration, Hon. Kennedy Swaratsingh, with respect to statements by the Member for Caroni East, the hon. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh, during the debate on the Emergency Ambulance Services and Emergency Medical Personnel Bill on Friday, July 17, 2009. I reserved my ruling on the matter then, which I will now give.

The Minister contended that the Member for Caroni East had committed a contempt of the House on three grounds; firstly that he made statements in which he wilfully attempted to mislead the House. Secondly, that the Member was reckless and intentionally abused the freedom of speech. Thirdly, the Member's failure to apologize for his recklessness in the face of irrefutable evidence that his statement was incorrect has brought this House into odium and ridicule.

In identifying the contempt, we are guided by the teachings of Erskine May, at page 128 of his 23rd Edition of *May's Parliamentary Practice* which states:

“...any Act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House...in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any...officer of such House in the discharge of his duty, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly, to produce such results, may be treated as a contempt even though there is no precedent of the offence.”

The making of a deliberately misleading statement is indeed a contempt of this House. On page 132 of the same text, May confirms that such action can be treated as a contempt. As I have indicated to this House on a previous occasion, the charge of knowingly presenting false information to the Parliament is a serious one. McGee, in his text on *Parliamentary Practice* in New Zealand, 3rd Edition, explains that the charge of misleading the House can consist of conveying information to the House that is inaccurate in a material particular and which the person in so doing knew or ought to have known at the time was inaccurate.

In making his case, the Minister provided a proper and generally accepted definition of the term used by the Member for Caroni East. The Minister also drew reference to the professional and educational qualifications of the Member and intimated that the Member ought to have known better. I have read the speech of the hon. Member for Caroni East on the day in question and I have noted that he indicated to the House that his statements were based on information received by him. His exact words were "I was told". A Member cannot escape the responsibility of a statement he makes in Parliament by putting it in someone else's mouth.

McGee tells us that there are three elements which have to be satisfied and established when alleging that a Member has committed this particular contempt:

- (i) the statement must in fact be misleading;
- (ii) the Member knew (or ought to have known) that it was incorrect at the time of making the statement; and
- (iii) the Member meant to mislead.

All three elements must be established.

The standard of proof in such cases must be of a high order. Recklessness in the use of words in debate, though reprehensible, falls short of the standard required. The misleading of the House must not be concerned with a matter of such little or of no consequence that is too trivial to warrant the House dealing with it.

It is understandable that during debate there will be occasions when statements made in the House may be based on wrong information, which at the time the Member making the statement believed to be the truth. In such cases, the central ingredient of deliberateness is not present. Instances of misleading are more probable when the Member is formally informing the House of matters of which he has personal knowledge or deemed to be in a position to have such knowledge.

Where a Member is accused of a breach of privilege by misleading the House, this misleading must be deliberate. There must be intent to mislead and the facts before the Speaker must lead to that possibility. The Speaker must consider the evidence and decide whether the facts alleged indicate, not a remote possibility, but a reasonable possibility.

On the second ground, the Member of Parliament for St. Joseph raises the question of recklessness and abuse of the privilege of freedom of speech. Again, on previous occasions I have elucidated on the question of the abuse of this first and most important privilege of the Parliament.

Legislatures which have evolved from the Westminster model have inherited the right of absolute freedom of speech, with regard to parliamentary proceedings, as enshrined in Article 9 of the 1688 Bill of Rights. The article states that:

“the freedom of speech, and debate or proceedings in Parliament, ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament.”

Our Republican Constitution in section 55 codifies this right in our jurisdiction.

Freedom of speech is essential to the effective working of the House. The freedom to make an allegation which a Member genuinely believes at the time to be true, or at least thinks is worthy of investigation, is a fundamental part of this privilege. A Member does not have to present evidence that will stand up in a court of law, since there will be no freedom if everything had to be proved true before it was uttered.

In the converse, the privilege of free speech carries with it the obligation to use it responsibly. It is the responsibility of all Members to treat the privilege of free speech in this House with the greatest respect and to use it only in serving the interest of the public, since it has been conferred on Parliament in the public interest.

In debate in the House, particularly on sensitive issues, Members must always bear in mind the possible effects of their statements and aim to be prudent in their choice of words. It is the duty of each Member of Parliament to refrain from any course of action prejudicial to the freedom of speech which he enjoys. It is also inconsistent with the dignity of the House, with the duty of a Member to his constituents and with the maintenance of the privilege of freedom of speech, for any Member of the House to abuse this privilege of freedom of speech.

Freedom of speech is by far the most important valuable and essential privilege Members enjoy. Provided their statements accord with the rules and practices of the House, Members are able to express themselves as they judge fit. It is however, incumbent upon Members not to abuse the privilege. The House itself, by its rules of debate and disciplinary powers, has the ability to deal with abuse.

Speaker Ellis of New South Wales states:

“It is the right of every Member to say what he likes under privilege in Parliament, subject only to observance of the forms and practice of the House itself. He does so at his own risk in incurring the displeasure of the public and possibly the censure of the House itself. The right of free speech is something that the Speaker is bound to safeguard and protect, and just as it is the right of all Members to use, equally it is the right that Members should not abuse. Any abuse of the right of free speech in Parliament is a reflection upon the hon. Member concerned.”

The hon. Member for Caroni East is a prominent and distinguished member of the medical profession and is held in high esteem by some if not most of his colleagues. He must have practised at the Port of Spain General Hospital; he has also had the distinct honour to be a lecturer and teacher of medical students and young interns. He would be familiar with the operations of the Port of Spain General Hospital as a result of his stint as chairman of the North West Regional Health

Authority and in several other capacities. I am therefore constrained to believe that he knew or ought to have known that his statement about ethnic cleansing at the Port of Spain General Hospital was obviously extreme and unfortunate. This is not to say that problems or deficiencies at the Port of Spain General Hospital or even elsewhere do not exist and warrant the attention to the House; but this must be done by the proper procedure. I am sure that there are, but "ethnic cleansing"!

I have examined the *Hansard* record of the Member's contribution. He stated, inter alia:

“I am raising a very important point. I am being told—some may not like it and I do not know whether it is true—that there has been an issue of ethnic cleansing at the Port of Spain General Hospital as far as the doctors are concerned. I understand that most of the East Indian doctors have had to leave the Port of Spain General Hospital. I understand that the Port of Spain General Hospital is a virtual African hospital now. I am being told.”

I had earlier stated that a Member cannot escape responsibility for what he says in Parliament by attributing it to someone else. At no time since making the statement about "ethnic cleansing" has the hon. Member withdrawn this expression. He never sought to clarify what he said or to substitute another expression to convey any other meaning or interpretation of what he said. I am therefore left to conclude that he intended to use the expression "ethnic cleansing" to convey what it is ordinarily meant and understood by the majority of people in Trinidad and Tobago to mean.

I now turn to the third ground that the Member failed to apologize for his recklessness, that in the face of refuted statements, he has brought this House into odium and ridicule and has lowered its dignity. For the benefit of newer Members of this House and in this category I include the hon. Member for Caroni East, it is, verily, in keeping with the highest of parliamentary convention and tradition and certainly with the practice of this House for a Member who subsequently realizes that a statement he made in the House has turned out not to be true, to proffer an apology to the House for his misleading statement. Indeed, it is the decent and honourable thing to do and, most certainly, such action lifts the dignity of this House and the public's perception of all honourable Members.

1.45 p.m.

Apologizing to the House in the face of irrefutable evidence that an incorrect and inappropriate statement has been uttered also enhances the credibility of the Member. I advise Members that credibility is a form of immeasurable wealth

Committee of Privileges
[MR. SPEAKER]

Friday September 04, 2009

which no sensible Member will choose to squander. Only in Jamaica, last year a Member apologized for misleading the House due to "a understanding on his part" and in Canada in 2007, a Member of the House of Commons told the House that an earlier comment made by him was not accurate, and that he regretted any confusion that may have resulted. While regrettable, as it clearly is in this case, the failure of a Member to offer an apology to the House when one is deserving, does not constitute a breach of privilege or a contempt. In this regard, the public and other observers, both local, regional and international, will judge such a Member accordingly.

I once again urge Members to be responsible in the use of words they utter in the heat of the debate and to exercise moderation in the way you utilize this right of free speech in the Chamber. Joseph Redlich once said freedom of speech was never a fight for an absolute right to unbridled oratory. Always remember that good temper and moderation are the characteristics of parliamentary language.

On the totality of what has transpired from the time the statement was made in this honourable House to the time the Privilege Motion was raised by the hon. Member for St. Joseph, I am of the view that all three elements as outlined by McGee and earlier referred to have been satisfied and that prima facie, the first two grounds raised by the hon. Member for St. Joseph have been met. I, therefore, rule that this matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges for its mature deliberation and report.

PAPERS LAID

1. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Mayor's Fund of the Chaguanas Borough Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2006. [*The Minister of Finance (Hon. Karen Nunez-Tesheira)*]
2. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Mayor's Fund of the Chaguanas Borough Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2007. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]
3. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Chairman's Fund of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2004. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]
4. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Chairman's Fund of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2005. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]

Papers 1 to 4 to be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

Papers Laid

Friday, September 04, 2009

5. The audited financial statements of Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial year ended March 31, 2009. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]

To be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.

6. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Arima Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2001. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]

To be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

7. The annual audited financial statements of Trinidad Nitrogen Company Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2008. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]
8. The annual audited financial statements of Export-Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2008. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]

Papers 7 and 8 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.

9. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Penal/Debe Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2004. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]

To be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

10. The audited financial statements of the Tourism Development Company Limited (TDC) for the financial year ended September 30, 2007. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]
11. The audited financial statements of Tourism Development Company Limited (TDC) for the financial year ended September 30, 2008. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]
12. The audited financial statements of Government Information Services Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2008. [Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira]

Papers 10 to 12 be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.

13. The Administrative Report of the San Fernando City Corporation for the period 2005 to 2006. [*The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert)*]
14. The Administrative Report of the San Fernando City Corporation for the period 2006 to 2007. [Hon. C. Imbert]

15. The Administrative Report of the San Fernando City Corporation for the period 2007 to 2008. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
16. The Civil Aviation [(No. 1) General Application and Personnel Licensing] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
17. The Civil Aviation [(No. 2) Operations] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
18. The Civil Aviation [(No.3) Air Operator Certification and Administration] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
19. The Civil Aviation [(No. 5) Airworthiness] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
20. The Civil Aviation [(No. 6) Approved Maintenance Organization] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
21. The Civil Aviation [(No. 7) Instruments and Equipment] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
22. The Civil Aviation [(No. 9) Aviation Training Organization] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
23. The Civil Aviation [(No. 10) Foreign Operator] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
24. The Civil Aviation [(No. 15) Air Navigation Services] (Amendment) Regulations, 2009. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
25. The Administrative Report of the Ministry of National Security for the fiscal years 2005—2008. [*The Minister in the Ministry of National Security (Hon. Donna Cox)*]
26. The Administrative Report of the Ministry of Social Development for fiscal year 2004 to 2005. [*The Minister of Social Development (Hon. Dr. Amery Browne)*]
27. The Administrative Report of the Ministry of Social Development for fiscal year 2005 to 2006. [*Hon. Dr. A. Browne*]
28. Report on the Exercise of the Functions and Powers of Ministry of Health for the period October 2006 to September 2007. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
29. Report on the Exercise of the Functions and Powers of Ministry of Health for the period October 2007 to September 2008. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

Papers Laid

Friday, September 04, 2009

30. The audited financial statements of Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2004. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]
31. The audited financial statements of Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2005. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]
32. The audited financial statements of Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2006. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]
33. The audited financial statements of Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2007. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]
34. The annual audited financial statements of National Enterprises Limited for the financial year ended March 31, 2009. [*Hon. K. Nunez-Tesheira*]

Papers 30 to 34 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.

35. A Green Paper on the Draft National Policy on Gender and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. [*The Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs (Hon. Marlene Mc Donald)*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, the Government is in a position to answer five questions today as follows: Nos. 3, 90, 96, 97 and 98 and I would ask for a deferral of two weeks for the other questions.

The following questions stood on the Order Paper:

Johns Hopkins University/Hospital (Terms and Conditions of Arrangement)

8. Could the hon. Minister of Health state:
 - (a) whether there is any formal arrangement between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago/Ministry of Health and the Johns Hopkins University/Hospital for the provision of services to the people of Trinidad and Tobago; and
 - (b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, could the Minister state the terms and conditions of the arrangement? [*Dr. H. Rafeeq*]

Registered Private Hospitals
(Details of)

- 25.** Could the hon. Minister of Health state:
- (a) how many private hospitals are registered under each of the six (6) classes of private hospitals according to the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago, Chap. 29:03, section 8;
 - (b) the date the licence was issued for each; and
 - (c) what was the last date an inspector or inspection team inspected the hospital as required according to sections 18 and 19 of Chap. 29:03 of the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago? [*Dr. T. Gopeesingh*]

Summit of The Americas
(Details of)

- 58.** Could the hon. Minister of Finance state:
- (a) The budgeted cost for the Summit of The Americas?
 - (b) Whether there were any cost overruns? and
 - (c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, how much did the overruns amount to and the area where they occurred? [*Mr. V. Bharath*]

Pre-Summit Preparations
(Details of)

- 64.** With respect to the pre-summit preparations, could the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance please advise:
- A. the number of personnel who were hired;
 - (i) to clean the area along the route travelled by the summit participants; and
 - (ii) to paint the curb walls and road barriers along the route; and
 - B. whether this work was done by existing CEPEP and URP workers? [*Mr. J. Warner*]

Solicitor General
(Details of Appointment)

- 67.** With respect to the appointment of a Solicitor General, could the hon. Attorney General state:
- (a) the date on which the post became vacant;
 - (b) since the post became vacant, the number of times the Prime Minister objected to the appointment of persons recommended to fill the post;
 - (c) the names of the persons to whom he objected; and
 - (d) the reasons for his objection in each case? [*Dr. H. Rafeeq*]

Chief Parliamentary Counsel
(Details of Appointment)

- 68.** With respect to the appointment of a Chief Parliamentary Counsel, could the hon. Attorney General state:
- (a) the date on which the post became vacant;
 - (b) since the post became vacant, the number of times the Prime Minister objected to the appointment of the persons recommended to fill the post;
 - (c) the names of the persons to whom he objected; and
 - (d) the reasons for his objection in each case? [*Dr. H. Rafeeq*]

Director of Public Prosecutions
(Details of Appointment)

- 69.** With respect to the appointment of a Director of Public Prosecutions, could the hon. Attorney General state:
- (a) the date on which the post became vacant;
 - (b) since the post became vacant, the number of times the Prime Minister objected to the appointment of the persons recommended to fill the post;
 - (c) the names of the persons to whom he objected; and
 - (d) the reasons for his objection in each case? [*Dr. H. Rafeeq*]

**Desalination Plant
(La Lune, Moruga)**

100. With respect to the desalination at La Lune/Morgua:

- (a) could the hon. Minister of Public Utilities state the period the plant has been out of service?
- (b) whether the shutdown of the plant resulted from the non-payment to the contractor and/or contractors associated with the plant; and
- (c) the total cost incurred, including the cost of truck borne water as a result of the said shutdown? [*Mr. S. Panday*]

Questions, by leave, deferred.

**Brian Lara Sporting Complex
(Tarouba)**

3. Dr. Hamza Rafeeq (*Caroni Central*) asked the hon. Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs:

With respect to the Brian Lara Sporting Complex in Tarouba, could the Minister state:

- (a) the projected cost of the entire project;
- (b) the amount of money that has already been spent on the project;
- (c) the expected date of completion of the entire project; and
- (d) the projected annual cost of maintenance of the Complex after completion of construction?

The Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs (Hon. Gary Hunt): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to bring clarity to the nomenclature associated with the sporting infrastructure currently being put in place at Tarouba, San Fernando. The terms Brian Lara Cricket Stadium, the Brian Lara Cricket Academy and the Brian Lara Sporting Complex have, in the past, been used interchangeably in the public forum and are often misunderstood to mean the same. They are in fact different infrastructural elements, all contained in the Tarouba Sporting Complex.

The Tarouba Sporting Complex which, at times, is incorrectly referred to as the Brain Lara Sporting Complex, is located on a greenfield site. By definition, a greenfield site implies that no infrastructure and utilities are located at this site.

The Tarouba Sporting Complex is located in an area of 281 acres and forms part of a larger estate that consists of an area of approximately 627 acres. In order to accommodate any edifice, basic infrastructure and utilities had to be installed that would serve the entire 627 acres. Infrastructure development included civil works, roads and drainage. Utilities infrastructure development included services for electricity, natural gas supplies, water supply and storage, sewerage and communication technology.

The 627 acres at Tarouba are now ready for development and would accommodate the Tarouba Sporting Complex and an energy and technology park. The Tarouba Sporting Complex will cater for the high performance and elite sporting development needs nationally, with the possibility to attract revenue opportunities regionally and internationally. The proposed Tarouba Sporting Complex will include:

- (i) the Brain Lara Cricket Academy;
- (ii) the Brain Lara Cricket Stadium;
- (iii) an elite centre of excellence for sport science, sport medicine, biomechanics labs, testing and conditioning;
- (iv) an aquatic centre;
- (v) a cycling velodrome;
- (vi) a centre for field-house sports, for example: basketball, volleyball, netball and badminton;
- (vii) a boxing and martial arts centre;
- (viii) a centre for field sports, for example: football, rugby and hockey;
- (ix) a running track and field;
- (x) a gymnastic centre;
- (xi) a tennis centre;
- (xii) an administration centre; and
- (xiii) hotel accommodation.

Mr. Speaker, as part of the country's development the rationalization of infrastructure and structured sustainable development is being promoted with the implementation of plans for this site. It would reflect the development and sporting goals of the Government for the people of this country in a diversified

and industrialized economy. The Brian Lara Cricketing Academy is but one of the components of the conceptual master plan for the 281-acre Tarouba Sporting Complex and is envisaged to be housed within the Brian Lara Cricket Stadium. This academy will be a finishing school for high performance and elite cricketers and will consist of the following units:

- player development;
- education and training;
- an information and resource centre; and
- administration and curator development.

The academy will conduct national programmes for male and female cricketers and will co-ordinate and implement specialized programmes for the sport of cricket. It will be a hybrid to the planned high-performance centre in the areas of sport science and sport medicine. It is envisaged that the academy will ultimately be a centre for the hosting of Caribbean national teams for specialist and advisory training and services. When fully operational, the Brian Lara Cricketing Academy will make a significant positive contribution towards the development of the game of cricket nationally and regionally.

2.00 p.m.

The Brian Lara Cricket Stadium represents the first phase of development of the Tarouba Sporting Complex. The stadium includes:

- capacity seating for 15,000;
- majority covered seating;
- 79 metre radius or 19,610 square metres playing field, encompassing six pitches on the main field;
- four outdoor practice pitches;
- state-of-the-art sport lighting;
- electronic scoreboard;
- canopy;
- official and team locker rooms;
- facilities and operational equipment which form part of over 43,560 square feet of covered floor space;

- club lounge;
- two car parks located in the north and south to accommodate a total of 1,760 cars;
- facilities for concessionaires and retail spaces;
- 12 suites;
- President's Box;
- three-storey state-of-the-art media broadcast and press facilities; and
- cricket academy for elite development.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the foregoing, it is not feasible to give a projected cost for the entire sporting complex and all the planned infrastructure as the user briefs for all sporting infrastructure are not yet complete.

UDeCott has advised that the sums expended on the development of the entire 627 acre site which will accommodate the Brian Lara Cricket Stadium and other planned infrastructure are as follows:

- (a) site works, drainage, roads and utilities—\$108,697,537 plus VAT;
- (b) stadium structure—\$419,536,989 VAT exclusive;
- (c) project design, project management, construction management, consultants, OSHA, security and site office—\$103,687,327.

It is not feasible to give the completion date of the entire sporting complex. It is not feasible to give a projected maintenance cost of the entire sporting complex as the user brief for each component of the planned complex is not yet complete.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. Bharath: Mr. Speaker, just for clarification. Did I hear the Minister say that he is unable to tell this honourable House what is the projected cost of the project as well as not being able to tell us when the project is likely to be completed?

Hon. G. Hunt: Mr. Speaker, the question I answered was on the entire sporting complex. I went to pains to explain in the preceding paragraphs the difference between a complex, a stadium and an academy. Which one are you referring to?

Mr. Bharath: Are you saying that you do not know how much the entire project is going to cost nor do you know when it is going to be completed? I am just asking.

Hon. G. Hunt: I will repeat the answer to the Brian Lara Sporting Complex Tarouba: "It is not feasible to give a projected cost for the entire sporting complex and all the planned infrastructure as the user briefs for all sporting infrastructure are not yet complete."

Dr. Gopeesingh: Could the Minister clarify our confusion? Is the complex going to be called the Brian Lara Complex or the Tarouba Stadium Complex? Could you clarify that for us? We are hearing that there is a Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Brian Lara Cricket Stadium and then you are saying that there is a Tarouba Stadium. Could you clarify that for us?

Hon. G. Hunt: Mr. Speaker, I answered that in all the foregoing paragraphs leading up to the question. Clearly, the Member was not listening. There is a difference between a stadium, an academy and a complex. As a sports person, I know the Member knows that.

Corinth Hills Housing Development (Status of)

90. Mr. Subhas Panday (*Princes Town North*) asked the hon. Minister of Planning, Housing and the Environment:

- (a) could the Minister state whether persons who were allocated houses by the Housing Development Corporation in the Corinth Hills Housing Development were permitted to occupy them, although there were no toilets and/or sewerage facilities in the said development;
- (b) if so, is the Minister aware that this action by the Housing Development Corporation could result in a serious health hazard to the residents; and
- (c) could the Minister state who made the decision to permit these persons to occupy these houses?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister, I will answer the question. Under the Government's Housing Programme, great care is taken to check units before they are allocated for occupation. Persons who are allocated houses by the Housing Development Corporation in the Corinth Hills Housing Development were permitted to occupy them because they were fully outfitted with the relevant sanitary ware, fittings and fixtures which include toilets.

These units are serviced by a temporary waste-water treatment disposal system that removes effluent on a daily basis from the Corinth Hills Housing

Development. This will continue until a permanent waste-water treatment plant that can treat the waste on site is complete.

Given the fact that a temporary waste-water system is in place, it is not anticipated that there would be any health hazards to the residents in this regard. There is a standard procedure for the allocation of houses and this is applied uniformly.

Mr. S. Panday: Is the hon. Minister aware that up to last week raw human faeces were overflowing from the Corinth Hills Housing Development onto the road and making life miserable for persons living in Victoria Village since there is no sewer system?

Hon. C. Imbert: I am not aware of that.

Criminal Gangs in Trinidad and Tobago (Action Against)

96. Mr. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj (*Tabaquite*) asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

- (a) Could the Minister state whether action has been taken to investigate the criminal gang leaders and the members of the criminal gangs in Trinidad and Tobago in order to bring them to justice; and
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, please state whether any member was prosecuted for criminal offences, giving the verdict in those prosecutions?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security (Hon. Donna Cox): Mr. Speaker, the Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) established by the Ministry of National Security which comprises of police officers and members of the defence force, has and continues to take action to investigate the criminal gang leaders and the members of the criminal gangs in Trinidad and Tobago in order to bring them to justice. As the agency primarily responsible for inhibiting the formation of gangs and curbing gang-related activities, the Inter Agency Task Force has deployed forces into areas known for gang-related activities to undertake intelligence-based operations aimed at reducing and eventually eliminating gang formation and operation in Trinidad and Tobago.

The IATF has been working in collaboration with other agencies of the Ministry of National Security such as the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service and the Special Anti-Crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago (SAUTT) to investigate criminal gangs and gang leaders in Trinidad and Tobago. One such collaboration is the Repeat Offenders Programme Task Force which is responsible for

identifying street gangs, their membership structures and turf. Additionally, the creation and maintenance of a repeat offenders database enable officials to monitor and profile gang members engaged in criminal activity.

At present, several gang leaders and criminal gang members have been prosecuted for criminal offences. Twenty-eight persons were found guilty of various offences. Some of these offences include:

- possession of offensive weapon/firearm and ammunition;
- murder;
- possession of marijuana; and
- robbery with violence.

Hon. Members are advised that one person was found not guilty of murder and another person charged for housebreaking and larceny had his case dismissed. Further, the records of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service have indicated that there are approximately 101 persons with matters currently pending, some of which are:

- possession of an offensive weapon, firearm and ammunition offences;
- narcotic offences;
- murder;
- robbery; and
- use of obscene language.

**Criminal Gang Leaders
(Profits from Crimes)**

97. Mr. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

- (a) Could the Minister state if any investigations were conducted by the State to determine whether any of the criminal gang leaders or their members made financial profits from crimes which they committed;
- (b) If so, whether anyone was prosecuted for money laundering and whether any of them had their assets or any part thereof frozen or confiscated by the State; and
- (c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, please give details of names, dates and value of properties frozen or confiscated by the State?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security (Hon. Donna Cox): Mr. Speaker, hon. Members are advised that the Financial Investigations Unit of the Counter Drug Crime Task Force has conducted a number of investigations of persons identified as gang leaders or members, in order to determine illicit gains from crimes committed. The results of these investigations, however, did not allow for charges to be laid for money laundering.

In light of the answer to (a) and (b), part (c) of the question is not applicable.

**Gasparillo Junction
(Reduction of Traffic Congestion)**

98. Mr. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj asked the hon. Minister of Works and Transport:

Could the Minister state what progress, if any, has been made by his Ministry to eliminate and/or reduce the traffic jams and/or congestion at the Gasparillo Junction?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, thank you. Whereas there is a long-term plan for a new interchange at Gasparillo, it was recognized that until such time this interchange is built, some interim measures need to be considered.

Stakeholders of the Gasparillo community formed a traffic committee over a year ago which included representatives of the Traffic Management Branch of the Ministry of Works and Transport. The main thrust of this committee was to bring forward short and medium-term measures to relieve the traffic congestion in Gasparillo.

Investigations and deliberations were thorough and comprised the process of enquiry, observation, survey and reviews of the general movement of vehicles at various points of traffic congestion.

In April of this year, recommendations for traffic improvements in Gasparillo were prepared and forwarded through the Traffic Management Branch to the Director of Highways for consideration. These recommendations include the following:

- (1) No right turn at the Gasparillo Junction on Bon Aventure Road heading east. Alternative access would be sought through the Reform Connector Road located 400 metres south of the Gasparillo ramp. Relevant signage would be appropriately located on the Solomon Hochoy Highway north and south bound lanes, Bon Aventure Road and the Reform Connector Road, when all these administrative measures are in place. These

measures will alleviate the need to go through Gasparillo Junction to access communities such as Reform, Marabella and its environs.

- (2) Creating an access from the Solomon Hochoy Highway south bound to Charles Street which is a parallel north-south street to the highway. This proposal will alleviate the need to go through Gasparillo Junction to access communities such as Par Force, Morne Roche and Mayo. This will entail infrastructure works and upgrades.

The Ministry of Works and Transport is in the process of doing a cost benefit analysis in order to proceed with this recommendation. This is a medium-term recommendation.

- (3) The use of a tunnel located on Charles Street which traverses underneath the Solomon Hochoy Highway to gain access to the highway, north bound.

This proposal will provide an alternative for access to communities such as Par Force, Morne Roche and Mayo. A cost benefit analysis is being done, taking into account the previous proposal which will also provide an alternative access for these communities. This is a medium term measure.

- (4) The use and structural upgrade of an abandoned Caroni (1975) access road, commonly referred to as Tasker Road to bypass traffic from Gasparillo to Reform via an area referred to as Massy Lands. This will serve as a bypass route for persons seeking to go to Reform and surrounding communities such as Ben Lomond, Williamsville and vice versa. This will entail extensive infrastructure works and again requires a cost benefit analysis. This is also a medium term measure.

- (5) The construction of a lay-by in close proximity to the VOS Government Primary School to facilitate access to the south-bound lane of the Solomon Hochoy Highway. This will require infrastructure work and is a medium term measure.

The Ministry is in the process of seeking to implement all of the short term and medium term measures while we prepare for the construction of the interchange where feasible.

**GOVERNMENT'S REFUSAL TO CONVENE SITTINGS
(PRIVATE MEMBERS' DAY)**

Dr. Hamza Rafeeq (*Caroni Central*): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 27(2) of the House of Representatives, I hereby seek your leave to

raise a matter of privilege of the House, namely, the refusal of the Government to convene sittings of the House, on the fourth Friday for several months, thus denying the Opposition its rights to have its Private Members' Day. [*Desk thumping*]

Standing Order 21(2) of the House of Representatives states:

“Subject to the provisions of those Standing Orders, Government Business shall have precedence on every day except the fourth Friday in each month when Private Member's Business shall have precedence.”

2.15 p.m.

Standing Order 9(1) of the House states inter alia:

“Subject to paragraph (2) of this Standing Order, the House shall meet on Fridays, and every adjournment of the House shall be to the next Friday unless the House, upon a motion moved by a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, otherwise decides.”

The effect of this Standing Order 21(2) is that Government Business is discussed every Friday, except the fourth Friday of each month. In addition Government by agreement of the House can convene sittings of the House on any day of the week in addition to Friday.

Pursuant to this, sittings of the House have been convened on several occasions on Mondays and Wednesdays. This arrangement virtually gives the Government almost unlimited time to discuss Government Business. On the contrary, the Opposition is only allowed one Friday in each month when its business takes precedence.

Motions filed by the Opposition for debate are designed to elicit responses from the Government and to highlight matters of national importance. Debate on Private Members' days is an important tool given to the Opposition to have Government account to the Parliament and the national community on matters of national concern.

In June 2009, at the conclusion of the sitting on Wednesday, June 24, 2009 sittings of the House were adjourned to July 03, 2009 on a motion moved by the Leader of Government Business in the House, the Member for Diego Martin North/East. This effectively bypassed the sitting on June 26, 2009 which would have been Private Members' Day. This was brought to the attention of the Leader of Government Business by the Opposition Chief Whip, the Member for Caroni Central, but was ignored.

Private Members' Day
[DR.RAFEEQ]

Friday September 04, 2009

In July 2009, at the conclusion of the sitting on Wednesday, July 22, 2009 sittings of the House were adjourned to a date to be fixed by a motion moved by the Leader of Government Business. This again, bypassed the sitting on Friday, July 24, 2009 which would have been Private Members' Day. This was again brought to the attention of the Leader of Government Business, but was ignored.

In August 2009, instead of convening sittings of the House on the fourth Friday, in order to give the Opposition its Private Members' Day, no sittings were held. Instead, sittings resumed on the first Friday in September—September 04, today—again, denying the Opposition its right to a Private Members' Day in August.

Mr. Speaker, this action of the Government to deny the Opposition the right to debate matters on Private Members' Day for three consecutive months constitutes an abuse of power and has served to bring this House into disrepute. In the circumstances, I hereby submit that the matter qualifies as a matter of privilege and humbly request that it be referred to the Committee of Privileges of the House for its consideration.

Mr. Speaker: This is indeed a very important issue raised by the Opposition. They have got just one day in a month to conduct their affairs. Whilst the period to which you referred included the summer period, yet still I find it is important enough for the Committee to look at it and to make sure that the Committee can come up with a statement that would alleviate the fact or the tendency for Government, either wilfully or by omission, to not give the Opposition its day. The Opposition only has one day in the month to conduct its affairs, and it is just that they have that day. So, this matter will be referred to the Committee of Privileges. [*Desk thumping*]

REMOVAL OF THE PRESIDENT FROM OFFICE

Dr. Hamza Rafeeq (*Caroni Central*): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Whereas the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Act No. 4 of 1976, provides in section 35 that:

“The President may be removed from office under section 36 where—

- (a) he wilfully violates any provision of the Constitution;
- (b) he behaves in such a way as to bring his office into hatred, ridicule or contempt;
- (c) he behaves in a way that endangers the security of the State; or
- (d) because of physical or mental incapacity, he is unable to perform the functions of his office.”

Private Member's Day

Friday, September 04, 2009

And whereas section 36 of the Constitution provides inter alia that:

“The President shall be removed from office where—

- (a) a motion that his removal from office should be investigated by a tribunal is proposed in the House of Representatives;
- (b) the motion states with full particulars the grounds on which his removal from office is proposed, and is signed by not less than one-third of the total membership of the House of Representatives; and
- (c) the motion is adopted by the vote of not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the Senate and the House of Representatives assembled together;”

And whereas the President acting in accordance with the provisions of section 138 of the Constitution and section 4(5) of the Integrity in Public Life Act, No. 83 of 2000, appointed on May 01, 2009, five persons as members of the Integrity Commission, namely Father Henry Charles, as Chairman; Mr Jeffrey McFarlane as Deputy Chairman; Justice Zainool Hosein; Ms. Gladys Gaffoor and Ms. Lylla Rose Bada as members of the Integrity Commission.

And whereas:

- (a) Mr. Justice Zainool Hosein was invited by the President on Tuesday April 28, 2009, to serve as Deputy Chairman of the Commission subject to confirmation;
- (b) The President informed Justice Zainool Hosein on Thursday, April 30, 2009, that his appointment as Deputy Chairman of the Commission was confirmed and that he would be sworn in on Friday, May 01, 2009 at the President's House;
- (c) On Friday, May 01, 2009, Mr. Justice Zainool Hosein, in response to the invitation, attended the swearing in ceremony at the President's House, to be sworn in as Deputy Chairman of the Commission, but in breach of the promise and/or undertaking held out to Justice Hosein by the President, another person, Mr. Jeffrey McFarlane was sworn in as Deputy Chairman;
- (d) Justice Hosein by letter dated May 02, 2009, resigned as a member of the Commission on the ground that he was misled, embarrassed and hurt as a consequence of the President's breach of promise and misrepresentations.

Removal of the President from Office
[DR. RAFEEQ]

Friday September 04, 2009

And whereas the President appointed Father Henry Charles as Chairman of the Commission, notwithstanding the fact that the President knew or ought to have known and/or was informed by Father Charles, of allegations made against him—that is Father Charles—that he, Father Charles, had plagiarized the works of Richard Nisbett and that of Darrin Belousek.

And whereas the President knew or ought to have known that:

- (a) Section 4(5) of the Integrity in Public Life Act provides that a person in public life or a person performing public function shall not be qualified to hold public office as a Member of the Integrity Commission;
- (b) Mr. Jeffrey McFarlane was at all material times the Executive Director of the National Insurance Board and as such, he was a person in public life and he was a person performing public function; and
- (c) Allegations were made against Father Henry Charles that he had plagiarized or purported to plagiarize the works of two persons, namely Richard E. Nisbett and Darrin Belousek.

Whereas notwithstanding (a), (b) and (c) herein, the President in wilful and/or reckless disregard, and/or neglect, and/or contempt for the Constitution and the law, appointed Father Henry Charles and Mr. Jeffrey McFarlane as Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Commission, respectively. *And whereas* criticisms of the act of the President have been expressed by persons from all sections of our Republic, and calls were also made for the removal and/or resignation of the President.

And whereas the President purported to give to the public an explanation of his acts, but the purported explanation did not answer the concerns expressed by the population.

And whereas by his said acts, the President has willfully violated the Constitution and the law of the land and behaved in such a way as to bring his office into hatred, ridicule or contempt, within the meaning of section 35(a) and (b) of the Constitution.

Be it resolved that a tribunal be appointed in accordance with section 36 of the Constitution to investigate the removal of the President from office.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by 14 Members of the Opposition. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, this is indeed a novel item under our Constitution. Obviously, I would have to study the constitutional provisions as to the procedure to be followed, relating to this Motion, and I will report to the House in due course.

DEFINITE URGENT MATTER

(LEAVE)

Lack of Regular Supply of Water

Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar (*Siparia*): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Please allow me to move a matter on behalf of my constituents. It is to request this honourable House to be adjourned at today's sitting, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the lack of a regular supply of water for residents of Scotts Road, Penal; Mendez Trace, Mendez Village, Siparia; Accord Village, Rock Road, Penal; Dill Mohammed Trace, Rock Road, Penal; Moolchan Trace, Rock Road, Penal; Goodman Trace, Rock Road, Penal; Seemungal Trace, Rock Road, Penal; along the 5 mile mark to the 8 mile mark of the Penal Rock Road; all the branch traces thereof along this Penal Rock Road; Gonzales Branch Trace, Penal; DeGannes Village, Siparia; Satnarine Trace, Penal; Clarke Road, Penal; Hyda Trace, Old Clarke Road, Penal; Debe Road, Rock Road, Penal and Lattice Road, Penal.

The matter is definite as it pertains specifically to the basic needs of residents from the above listed areas in the constituency of Siparia.

The matter is urgent because these residents have been without a pipe borne supply of water for the past weeks, but the situation has now become unbearable.

The matter is of public importance because unless immediately resolved, it can have a deleterious effect on the health, safety and overall standard of living of these residents, and may result in disease outbreak and the loss of human life.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, regrettably this matter does not qualify under this Standing Order, but it is obvious that it affects a fair number of our citizens. I suggest that you liaise with the Minister of Public Utilities and seek some assistance for these citizens. Proceed.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Green Paper on Draft National Policy on Gender and Development

The Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs (Hon. Marlene Mc Donald): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to lay

Statement by Minister
[HON. M. MC DONALD]

Friday September 04, 2009

the Draft National Policy on Gender and Development for Trinidad and Tobago, as a Green Paper in Parliament for public comment.

Let me start by indicating to this honourable House and, by extension, the national community, that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to ensuring that Trinidad and Tobago becomes a society in which women and men contribute to, and benefit from, equitable access to and control of resources.

For us, gender issues are cross-cutting and cross-sectoral. They challenge the private and personal lives of individuals. However, they are also public policy issues. Gender issues affect every aspect of our lives on a daily basis, and the document which is being laid today in this honourable House will seek to address the many deeply-entrenched areas of gender inequality which exist in our society.

In fact, when as a Government, we took the decision to strive towards developed country status by 2020, a new economic and human resource development agenda was a key aspect of that plan. That was based on the notion of economic dynamism, full employment, great social cohesion and fairness. Investing in our men and women and improving our economic performance was seen as key in promoting sustainable development.

As a Government, we are therefore called upon to take strategic action in many critical areas of concern if our development, goals are to be achieved and sustained. Based on our research, we have identified several areas of concern as most critical and in urgent need of attention: the areas of education and human capital development, health and well-being, macro-economy and trade, agriculture and natural resource development, un-wage economic activities, domestic and family life, masculinity and manhood, leadership and governance, labour and employment, and special interest groups, for example, the aged, the youth and the disabled. These areas cross a wide spectrum of society and impact in some way on our lives on a daily basis.

In this regard, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, in 2002, agreed to the development of a national policy on gender and development. The expectation was that the national policy on gender and development would provide a framework for gender mainstreaming in all activities of Government and civil society, thereby promoting the full and equal participation of women and men in the development process. The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, the national focal point for gender and development was the implementing agency.

2.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, a policy defines the underlying philosophy and approach that guide the practice of an organization, institution, or in this case a nation. Initiatives to advance gender equality in Trinidad and Tobago have had an active history of over three decades. However, the ministry's initiative to articulate its policy related to gender development and to make it available for public scrutiny to afford stakeholders the opportunity to measure best practices is indeed an historic one; historic, as this is the first time in our history that any government has been able to advance a policy of this nature so close to finalization.

Trinidad and Tobago was the first Caricom nation to engage in this process and the first to finish a draft document. Trinidad and Tobago is therefore seen as a leader within the region with regard to its work in the area of gender and development. The project to develop a national policy on gender and development was initiated by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs in partnership with the United Nations Development Fund, the Canadian High Commission Fund, Caricom Fund for Gender Equality and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. An advisory committee representing members of these partnering agencies and the Gender Affairs Division of the ministry was formed, and the consultant for the project was the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.

The consultant's report entitled *A Draft National Gender Policy; an Action Plan for Trinidad and Tobago* was submitted to the ministry in 2004. That document commonly referred to as *The Gender Policy* was reviewed by the committee to ensure its conformity with overarching national policy framework and its consistency with national and international commitments.

The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, in seeking to implement a bottom-up approach to the project, embarked on an active communication strategy for public education and sensitization using various media. This initiative was seen as particularly important based on the impact that members of society had on the success of the process and the understanding and buy in that is necessary to advance a policy of this nature. Therefore, every attempt was made to allow for the full participation of our citizens in this process.

Mr. Speaker, full participation and consultation at every level was the fundamental approach utilized to arrive at this draft document. This entailed the hosting of a national consultation with over 400 stakeholders representing a wide

cross section of the population. A series of seven regional consultations and 10 interest group consultations were also conducted in Trinidad. Tobago was included in the consultative process and an island-wide consultation was attended by over 250 participants. Six interest group consultations were held in Tobago. For this policy to work effectively it is critical that Ministers and Permanent Secretaries at the various ministries understand what is being attempted. To this end meetings were held with Permanent Secretaries to understand their concerns and to explore possible approaches for developing and implementing this sectoral policy. Seven major sectoral studies were also commissioned. The thematic areas for the studies were: Education, health, law and the Judiciary, agriculture and natural resource development, labour, economy and social and community development. In addition a national round table was held for senior public officers to review gender gaps in each sector and possible strategies to address them. This was truly a consultative process.

The document being laid today has undergone several review exercises. These were undertaken to ensure that the draft document makes a direct link between gender equality policy measures and national development initiatives. As a result, the document has been oriented to the Vision 2020 National Policy Framework. The revised document in keeping with its original philosophy and intent is now entitled the National Policy on Gender and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The original policy document is now set out in four volumes as follows:

- Part I The National Policy on Gender and the Development of Trinidad and Tobago;
- Part II The action plan and indicators matrix;
- Part III The situational analysis; and
- Part IV The formulation process.

A policy on gender and development is indeed timely.

Mr. Speaker, in light of Government's Vision 2020 National Policy Framework establishing this country's intention to achieve developed country status by the year 2020, it is also instructive, recognizing the importance of gender equality in the achievement of the United Nations' millennium development goals, and specifically, goal number (3) that calls on all nations to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The draft National Policy on Gender and Development of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago provides a framework for including gender perspective in all

activities of government and civil society. It embraces the fact that men and women, boys and girls are impacted differently in every sphere of national life. The policy essentially identifies the framework and key sectoral measures require closing gender gaps and promoting gender equity within various sectors. For example, in the area of macroeconomy and trade, among the policy measures proposed in the draft document is the examination, the potential differential impact of trade and industrial development strategies on men and women's accessibility and participation in sustainable, secure employment and wage equity.

In terms of labour and employment one of the proposed policy measures is the promotion of gender sensitive institutional arrangements which facilitate the balancing of men's and women's gender roles and responsibility, such as increased access to quality child care facilities, including work-based models where suitable, homework centres, recreation and extracurricular training facilities for children on a cost sharing basis and subsidized for those from lower income families. This is directly linked to the Government's thrust of providing well-designed community facilities and caring for our nation's children, all in keeping with our goal of being a nurturing and caring society.

Time will not permit me to identify measures in each sector, but I must, however, highlight just a few. In the troubling area of gender-based violence we have recognized that though the programmes and projects, which are being undertaken by both the Government and NGOs, are quite useful, one of the challenges we constantly face is that of insensitive or unco-ordinated responses. Among the policy measures proposed is the establishment of functional collaborating protocols among service providers dealing with gender-based violence and strengthening their response time.

In the area of health and well-being it is proposed that we engage in the promotion of improved male health-seeking behaviours through an increase in the number of men's clinics in an effort to decrease the impact of diseases in men and their families.

Mr. Speaker, there are policy measures proposed under all the themes which I previously mentioned. We are aware that health, education, employment, family, the provision of basic amenities, opportunities in education and training and fair recourse to justice are some of the key areas which impact differently upon men and women and in which their roles and expectations are often divergent. Men and women may require different services in these sectors and the ways in which they make use of them may differ.

The proposed policy measures advanced in this document, therefore, demonstrate options for a systemized approach to gender awareness so as to accommodate and support these differences on a path to effective and socio-economic and sustainable development. The changes must be evident in all sectors and levels of the society by both sexes and in all class and age groups, as well as within government and private sphere. The need for a policy of this nature is premised on the realization that worldwide development strategies are clearly more equitable when they consider different needs, constraints, opportunities and priorities of men and women, boys and girls, and that such inclusive strategies are far more effective and sustainable.

The draft policy document on gender and development being laid before this honourable House will be made available to the public through the print media and the document in its entirety will be made available on the Government's portal, which is ttconnect.gov.tt. Hard copies will be made available at the ministry's head office. In Tobago copies can also be accessed from the Department of Health and Social Services. Additionally, as was done with the concept paper we are also currently preparing the document in Braille.

I cannot close without publicly thanking all agencies, groups and individuals, some of whom are no longer with us, who have contributed with their ideas and their resources over the years in the preparation of this draft policy document. Thus far, it has indeed been a national effort. The public is now invited to fully embrace this opportunity to submit comments on this Green Paper. This is indeed a forum for you to contribute to national development with your views, however divergent or complementary they may be.

Government is seeking your advice as we move forward to building the society in which men and women, boys and girls can contribute to and benefit from equal access to and control of our national resources.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you [*Desk thumping*]

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Monday, September 07, 2009, which is budget day, at 2.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: By agreement the matters listed on the adjournment have been deferred.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 2.43 p.m.