

*Leave of Absence**Friday, July 25, 2014***HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES***Friday, July 25, 2014*

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**[MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, I have received the following communication. The hon. Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan, Member of Parliament for San Fernando West, is out of the country and has asked to be excused from the sittings of the House during the period July 19 to the 25, 2014; and the hon. Colm Imbert, Member of Parliament for Diego Martin North/East, is also out of the country and has asked to be excused from sittings of this House during the period July 25 to August 04, 2014. The leave which the Members seek is granted.

We have with us today, hon. Members, four students of the St. Francois Girls' College, who are participating in the World of Work internship programme of the Office of the Parliament and we want to welcome them today. [*Desk thumping*]

**PAPERS LAID**

1. Annual Audited Financial Statement of Trinidad Nitrogen Company Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2013. [*Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Economy (Hon. Rudranath Indarsingh)*]
  2. Annual Audited Financial Statement of National Information and Communication Technology Company Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2013. [*Hon. R. Indarsingh*]
  3. Annual Audited Financial Statement of Vehicle Management Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2012. [*Hon. R. Indarsingh*]
- Papers Nos. 1 to 3 referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.*
4. 2013 Annual Report of Taurus Services Limited. [*Hon. R. Indarsingh*]
  5. 2013 Annual Report of First Citizens Trustee Services Limited. [*Hon. R. Indarsingh*]
  6. 2013 Annual Report of First Citizens Brokerage and Advisory Services Limited. [*Hon. R. Indarsingh*]

7. 2013 Annual Report of First Citizens Asset Management Limited. [*Hon. R. Indarsingh*]
8. 2013 Annual Report of First Investment Services Limited. [*Hon. R. Indarsingh*]
9. Annual Administrative Report of the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation for the period October 01, 2012 to September 30, 2013. [*Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal)*]
10. Annual Administrative Report of the Export-Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (EXIMBANK) for the fiscal year 2012. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
11. Annual Administrative Report of Trinidad and Tobago Entertainment Company Limited for the fiscal year 2009/2010. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
12. Annual Administrative Report of Trinidad and Tobago Entertainment Company Limited for the fiscal year 2010/2011. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
13. Annual Administrative Report of Trinidad and Tobago Entertainment Company Limited for the fiscal year 2012/2013. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
14. Annual Administrative Report of the former Ministry of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs for the fiscal year October 2011 to September 2012. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
15. Annual Administrative Report of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) of Trinidad and Tobago for the fiscal year ended September 2010. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
16. Annual Administrative Report of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) of Trinidad and Tobago for the fiscal year ended September 2011. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
17. Annual Administrative Report of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) of Trinidad and Tobago for the fiscal year ended September 2012. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]

18. Annual Administrative Report of the Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board of Trinidad and Tobago for the fiscal year October 01, 2010 to September 30, 2011. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
19. Annual Administrative Report of the Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board of Trinidad and Tobago for the fiscal year October 01, 2011 to September 30, 2012. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
20. Annual Administrative Report of the Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board of Trinidad and Tobago for the fiscal year October 01, 2012 to September 30, 2013. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
21. Annual Administrative Report of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) for the year 2010. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
22. Annual Administrative Report of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) for the year 2011. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]
23. Administrative Report of the Ministry of Justice for the fiscal year 2012. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Legislative Proposal**

**Draft Houses of Parliament Service Authority Bill, 2014  
(Presentation)**

**The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal):** Madam Deputy Speaker, I wish to present the following report:

The Report of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Legislative Proposal entitled “The Draft Houses of Parliament Service Authority Bill, 2014”.

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal):** Madam Deputy Speaker, may I indicate that the Government would seek a one-week deferral for question Nos. 148 and 170, and the Government is in a position to answer all other questions on the Order Paper.

*The following questions stood on the Order Paper:*

**NIBTT/NIPDEC Purchase of Properties  
(Details of)**

- 148.** With respect to the property located at the corner of Cadiz Road and Queen's Park East currently occupied by the Apsara and Tamnah Thai Restaurants, could the hon. Minister of Finance and the Economy state:
- A. Whether the NIBTT or NIPDEC has purchased, or has agreed to purchase this property and for what purpose?
  - B. If the answer to part A is in the affirmative:
    - i. What was the agreed purchase price?
    - ii. Whether an independent valuation was obtained by either NIBTT or NIPDEC prior to the agreement to purchase;
    - iii. What was the amount of the valuation for the property and who conducted the valuation;
    - iv. What is the land area of the property and what is the floor area of the building on the property? [*Mr. C. Imbert*]

**Maloney Recreation Ground  
(Details of)**

- 170.** With respect to works conducted at the Maloney Recreation Ground (also known as the Clayton Ince Recreation Ground) during the period 2012 to 2013 could the hon. Minister of Local Government state:
- a) the type and scope of works done;
  - b) the start and end date for the project; and
  - c) the amount paid to the contractor for the work? [*Miss A. Hospedales*]

*Questions, by leave, deferred.*

**Central Bank Employees  
(Details of)**

- 165. Miss Marlene Mc Donald** (*Port of Spain South*) on behalf of Mr. Colm Imbert (*Diego Martin North/East*) asked the hon. Minister of Finance and the Economy:

Could the Minister state:

- a) the number of employees on payroll at the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago as at July 13, 2012;

- b) the number of employees on payroll at the Central Bank as at May 31, 2014; and
- c) how many new employees were hired by the Central Bank between July 13, 2012 and May 31, 2014?

**The Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Economy (Hon. Rudranath Indarsingh):** Madam Deputy Speaker, the Central Bank's manpower amounted to 491 persons as at September 30, 2012.

With respect to part (b), the Central Bank's manpower numbered 558 persons as at September 30, 2013.

With respect to part (c), the number of new employees hired by the Central Bank amounted to 67 persons between September 30, 2012 and September 30, 2013.

**Diego Martin Health Centre  
(Construction of)**

**174. Dr. Amery Browne** (*Diego Martin Central*) asked the hon. Minister of Health:

With respect to the construction of a new Diego Martin Health Centre, could the Minister state:

- a) the reasons for the delay;
- b) the starting date for construction;
- c) the projected cost; and
- d) the proposed location?

**The Minister of Health (Hon. Dr. Fuad Khan):** Madam Deputy Speaker, the question asked about the new Diego Martin Health Centre: the reasons for the delay, the start date for the construction; the projected cost and the proposed location.

Madam Deputy Speaker, may I say that this morning we were fortunate to turn the sod for the Carenage Health Centre and, in that sod-turning ceremony the Member for Diego Martin West was very present, the Leader of the Opposition, and we outlined the method of approach to the building of the health facility. And in it some information came during the speeches, the reasons for the delay of the Carenage health facility. And I am using the Carenage health facility to sort of compare it to the Diego Martin health facility.

What came from those speeches this morning, by the Member for Diego Martin West, he showed that Carenage health office was on the cards for approximately close to about 10 years, and it went through five Ministers of Health, and we were lucky in the People's Partnership, we were able to now do the sod-turning ceremony and we are moving forward with the Carenage Health Centre.

So, you see, Madam Deputy Speaker, there are many reasons for delay. In the case of the Carenage Health Centre, the delay was the land itself—moving some people from acquired land to another site. The other delay of that centre was the procurement process, user brief, et cetera, and each Minister of Health for the last 10 years could not develop a process to, one, move the occupants off the land and relocate them, and in the case of the Julien family from Carenage Health Centre, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development was able to assist the Minister of Health, and we did get them some housing to move to.

So, taking that into consideration, the Diego Martin Health Centre, I have been working on that Diego Martin Health Centre since I started the portfolio of Minister of Health. What has been happening, apparently nothing was done whatsoever on acquiring the land for that health centre.

There are three parcels of land, we are going forward in moving to—first we had to acquire the land and do it in a proper, legal manner. We are now in the process of getting the three lots of land transferred to the Ministry of Health so we could start the process of moving forward on that health centre.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, be that as it may, the start date of the construction cannot be given because we do not have the land yet fully, legally in the Ministry of Health. So, I cannot give you the start date for the project.

The projected cost: the Carenage Health Centre is a state-of-the-art health centre. Initially the user brief had very, very little facilities and systems in place. We have gone ahead and we have put what we call an accident and emergency system, digital X-ray systems, we have put systems for wellness centres, gyms, and about, I think, 40-something rooms for the housing of patients in the case of accident and emergency, and that was about \$79 million.

Now, the projected cost of the Diego Martin Health Centre is approximately \$180 million. So, that would be a much bigger centre with more state-of-the-art facilities, and hopefully, an accident and emergency area where we could house patients instantly.

The proposed location is going to be on the Wendy Fitzwilliam Boulevard, where the land is available. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

**Children's Authority  
(Details of)**

**175. Dr. Amery Browne** (*Diego Martin Central*) asked the hon. Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development:

Could the Minister state:

- a) what action was taken by the Children's Authority in each reported case of child neglect and endangerment that came to the public's attention in 2014;
- b) the proposed date for the full proclamation of the Children Act, 2012?

**The Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development (Hon. Clifton De Coteau):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. In response to the question posed by the Member for Diego Martin Central, I wish to inform the honourable House that over the period January 01, 2014 to June 30, 2014, the Children's Authority informed the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development, that it received 68 calls on issues relating to neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and truancy.

The authority, however, at this time has set up a system to receive calls and to facilitate the reporting and referral of calls that come to its attention. These reports and referrals have been made to the police, the National Family Services, Child Guidance Clinic, Rape Crisis Centre, the Social Welfare Division of the Ministry of the People and Social Development, the Victim and Witness Support Unit of the police service, Students Support Services Division of the Ministry of Education and the Family Court. The authority has informed that it has been following up on these cases.

**1.45 p.m.**

It should be noted that because the Children's Authority Act is not fully proclaimed, the Children's Authority does not have the power to take the lead on cases of child neglect and endangerment. The Children's Authority was established in 2009 with a partial proclamation of the Children's Authority Act in 2008. The partial proclamation facilitated the appointment of the board in 2009 which has been working assiduously to establish the authority.

As such, the National Family Services Division of the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development is legally responsible for children in need of care and protection and intervenes in matters that come to their attention by providing

various services including counselling. The NFS has been in the forefront in providing support to children and families. From January 2014 to June 25, 2014, cases of child neglect and endangerment were addressed. The Children's Authority has been focusing its efforts on recruiting staff and establishing the administrative and physical infrastructure for start-up operations in September 2014. The Children's Authority has reported that by the end of 2014, they would have had 57 members of staff on board.

Part (b) of the question: in 2000, several statutes were enacted in order to establish a new child protection system. These include:

- The Children's Authority Act, 2000
- The Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act, 2000
- The Adoption of Children Act, 2000
- The Children (Amdt.) Act, 2000

Subsequent to the enactment of these statutes, a policy decision was taken to repeal and replace the existing 1925 Children Act. This led to the enactment of the Children Act 2012 which will, upon proclamation, repeal the amending statute, the Children (Amdt.) Act and the existing Children Act.

The interdependence of the three statutes has implications for their proclamation or full proclamation, as the case may be. Thus, the operation of the Children Act, 2012 is dependent on the Children's Authority being fully operational. It should be noted that the Children Act, 2012 cannot be fully proclaimed unless the Children's Authority is fully operationalized. The Government, through the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development, the Children's Authority and the Child Protection Task Force set up by the hon. Prime Minister, has been working tirelessly to ensure that the authority becomes fully operationalized by September 30, 2014. The following initiatives have been undertaken to achieve this goal:

The licensing of community residences: an important aspect of the Children's Authority mandate is the licensing of community residences. All community residences are required to apply to the authority for a licence to operate and must comply with the standards developed by the authority: These standards include safety, quality of care and accommodation, among others. The Children's Authority conducted a gap analysis on these residences and the data revealed that



many of the community residences would not meet the standards if they do not engage in physical upgrade of their properties, as well as receive financial assistance to properly provide for the children in their care.

Consequently, approval has been granted for the provision of financial assistance to community residences in the form of a one-off grant to undertake the physical upgrade of their residences to facilitate their compliance with the enforcement of standards and administration of a licensing system by the Children's Authority. Additionally, approval was sought towards proposal for the provision of a subvention—financial assistance that is—by Government for the upkeep and maintenance of the children assigned to community residences. The Children's Authority has so far identified 11 community residences that have met standards set and can be licensed.

Also, the establishment of assessment centres. The assessment centre at Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex will become operational from September 2014. Two other assessment centres—one in Chaguanas and the other in Manahambre Road, Ste Madeleine—will become operational in the first quarter of 2015.

Subsidiary legislation: the Ministry received approval for the policy on standards, regulations and rules for community residences; policy and standards, regulations and rules for foster care and policy directions for the development of regulations for the Children's Authority Act, Chap. 46:10, which would inform the preparation/drafting of subsidiary legislation necessary for the care and protection of children.

Recruitment of staff at the Children's Authority: the recruitment process is still ongoing. As I said earlier, to date, 57 of the 97 professional staff have been recruited by the authority. It should be noted that the terms and conditions of many of the positions have been approved by the Chief Personnel Officer. I thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

**Dr. Browne:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Go right ahead.

**Dr. Browne:** I thank the Minister for his answer. With respect to the applications for licences of community residences, can the Minister indicate whether the St Michael's School for Boys Home has applied for such a licence? If so, when and what was the outcome of that application?

**Hon. C. De Coteau:** My computer structure cannot really—I cannot draw it to see whether they did or not.

**Number of Persons Arrested  
(Import/Export of Cocaine)**

**176. Dr. Amery Browne** (*Diego Martin Central*) asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

Could the Minister state:

For the period 2010 to date, how many persons were arrested and charged in Trinidad and Tobago with offences related to the importation, trafficking, distribution and/or export of cocaine?

**The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Gary Griffith):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. In answer to the question, hon. Members, information received from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service indicates that for the period January 2010 to date, a total of 1,187 persons were arrested and charged in Trinidad and Tobago with offences related to the importation, trafficking and distribution and/or export of cocaine. Of this total, 1,094 persons, or 97 per cent, were charged for possession of cocaine for trafficking; 30 persons were charged for trafficking cocaine; 59 persons were charged with exporting cocaine and four persons were charged with the importation of cocaine.

The total weight of the cocaine seized in relation to these arrests was 3,593.27 kilograms which amount to the street value of TT \$1,600 million. Madam Deputy Speaker, thank you.

**Dr. Browne:** Supplemental. Thank you, hon. Minister. Out of those 1,187 cases, how many could be considered related to drug barons or heads of cocaine organizations?

**Sen. The Hon. G. Griffith:** Madam Deputy Speaker, well, obviously, I will not be able to answer that. This has to do with persons being arrested. What I can provide you is the breakdown of all the persons from each year, those who were involved in the importation, the possession for trafficking, the trafficking and export for every year, as well as the persons charged based on—by police district. Also, I can provide you with the nationality. We have the breakdown of Trinidadians, 911; Jamaicans, 28; Tobagonians, 12; Canada, 12; United States, 9; Venezuela, 6; Great Britain, 9; and going along that line.

I can also inform you that, apart from what was seized in Trinidad and Tobago, there is also through the Transnational Organized Crime Unit and based on our working relationship now with our international agencies, I could just

name quickly—we have had over US \$400 million in cocaine seized by working with our international agencies such as the Spanish federal police, the French customs and the United Kingdom.

**Dr. Browne:** Further supplemental. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I thank the Minister for his response. Well, the Minister might be aware that sometimes the health sector and law enforcement would intersect. Is the Minister in a position to provide the House with any update with respect to the so-called cocaine surgery that occurred at the St. Augustine Private Hospital?

**Sen. The Hon. G. Griffith:** Madam Deputy Speaker, that matter was under the purview of the Commissioner of Police. That matter was under investigation, in fact—and I have not yet received a report and update from the Commissioner of Police at this time on that matter.

#### **Homework Centres (Construction of)**

**179. Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh** (*Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West*) asked the hon. Minister of Education:

Could the Minister state when homework centres will be constructed at:

- a) Harpe Place, Teshea Terrace, East Dry River;
- b) In the Blanca, Upper Cascade Main Road, Cascade;
- c) McKai Lands, Belmont?

**The Minister of Education (Hon. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh):** Madam Deputy Speaker, currently, there are 12 approved After-School Study Centres being conducted by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry plans to establish shortly another 40 of these After-School Study Centres by the commencement of this academic year 2014—2015. The 12 approved centres are as follows:

- Companions of the Transfigured Christ in Port of Spain;
- Family Resource Empowerment Network in Morvant;
- Millennium Community Outreach in Belmont;
- Ganesh Vydia Centre in Tamana;
- Human Development Foundation in Chase Village;
- Human Development Foundation in Point Fortin, Siparia;

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- Mothers' Union, Christian Care for Families in San Fernando;
- SAD for Toco;
- St. George's Academy Limited in San Fernando;
- YMCA in Port of Spain;
- You Make Me Smile Organization in Petit Valley, Diego Martin; and
- MPTA, Chaguanas, La Horquetta and Macaulay.

Three of these centres are temporarily closed but will be reopened for September. Resolution is in progress so that all these centres can be functioning adequately by September 2014.

A further 10 communities were identified for After-School Study Centres build-out based on the Ministry of National Security, Citizen Security Programme, CSP, together with the Ministry of Education. These correlate with some degree of academic underachievement of its students in some of these areas, namely Enterprise in Chaguanas, Embacadere in San Fernando, La Romaine, Mon Repos, Quash Trace in Sangre Grande, Samaroo Village in Mootoo Lands, Farm Road in St. Joseph, Gonzales in Belmont, Morvant and Sogren Trace, Laventille. While these areas were identified in partnership with the Citizen Security Programme—that is, of the Ministry of National Security as well—other potential areas in need of an ASSC are not excluded from the consideration.

Please know that as at April 2014, CSP was no longer partnering with the Ministry of Education to support or fund the ASSCs. As a result, the Ministry of Education took up the mantle, and altered its approach slightly to one more focused on utilizing public schools to house the ASSCs. There have been thousands of requests coming from parents for homework centres all throughout the country, and the Ministry of Education is now engaged in discussions and consultations with the wider stakeholders to determine the way forward, whether we should use the schools and have one or two classrooms per school on evenings after three o'clock, monitored and facilitated by very experienced teachers and former principals, et cetera. Those discussions are underway and we hope that we would be able to make a significant impact on the homework centres before school reopens by September.

Each ASSC will be operated by a coordinator and up to two facilitators and two assistant facilitators, and depending on their space and the size and the number of students, the support staff—that is, the facilitators and assistant

facilitators—will vary. We have an ideal ratio now about one to seven: one facilitator, or an assistant, to seven students. Currently, advertisements are being undertaken for continued staffing of the ASSC centres that are planned for September 2014. In addition, identification of specific schools in the areas are being confirmed.

In relation to Harpe Place, Teshea Terrace and East Dry River—which you asked for—and in the Blanca, Upper Cascade Main Road in Cascade and McKai Lands in Belmont, these areas are being currently considered—actively considered—in the new buildout plan. Existing After-School Study Centres provide coverage for students that reside in these areas, specifically the following: Companions of the Transfigured Christ in Port of Spain and Millennium Community Outreach in Belmont.

It should also be noted that while not directly targeted, the Laventille and Belmont buildout targets would, nevertheless, also be positioned to support the questioned communities. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

**2.00 p.m.**

**Miss Mc Donald:** Supplemental, Madam Deputy Speaker. Despite all the information that the Minister has submitted here, the Minister stated these areas listed A, B, and C are being considered, could you state definitively whether you have any intention—your Ministry has any intention—of constructing homework centres in these areas?

**Hon. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** I cannot answer that, Member of Parliament. We have intentions of, of course, getting homework centres started and they will, of course, be looking for physical infrastructure sites, while we advertise for personnel to supervise these sites.

The question of construction will obviously involve the ownership of the land, where the land is situated and, so I will be very prepared to work with you if you can help us identify some of the sites. We would be always willing, for the benefit of our students, to accommodate and particularly students who may need after-school supervision. We will be very happy if you can work with us and the Ministry of Education would be very willing to work with you on it.

**Community Centres  
(Rehabilitation/Construction of)**

**180. Miss Marlene Mc Donald** (*Port of Spain South*) on behalf of Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh (*Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West*) asked the hon. Minister of Community Development:

Could the Minister indicate when will the Community Centres in the Blanca, Upper Cascade Main Road and McKai Lands, Belmont be rehabilitated/constructed?

**The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal):** Madam Deputy Speaker, the hon. Member for Mayaro is on his way to the House. Could we proceed and return to that question?

**Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West  
(Rehabilitation of Roads)**

**181. Miss Marlene Mc Donald** (*Port of Spain South*) on behalf of Miss P. Mc Intosh, (*Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West*) asked the hon. Minister of Works and Infrastructure:

Could the Minister state when will the following roads in the constituency of Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West be rehabilitated:

- a) Augustine Lane, Belmont;
- b) Albert Lane, Belmont; and
- c) St. Francois Valley Road, Belmont?

**The Minister of Works (Hon. Dr. Surujrattan Rambachan):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The question asked whether the Minister could state when the following roads in the constituency of Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West would be rehabilitated and lists Augustine Lane in Belmont, Albert Lane in Belmont and St. Francois Valley Road in Belmont. With regard to Augustine Lane and Albert Lane in Belmont, both of these roads do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Highways Division of the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure. In fact, they fall under the jurisdiction of the Port of Spain City Corporation of the Ministry of Local Government, which is responsible for these roads.

With respect to the St. Francois Valley Road, Belmont, this also does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Highways Division. In fact, the San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation is responsible for this road.

Having said that, I have asked my people at the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure to look into the matters regarding these three roads and to give me a report on this as soon as possible.

**Drainage System for Diego Martin  
(Details of)**

**177. Dr. Amery Browne** (*Diego Martin Central*) asked the hon. Minister of the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources:

Could the Minister:

- a) indicate what steps have been taken to implement a drainage system or comprehensive flood mitigation plan for Diego Martin and the western peninsula;
- b) state the projected completion date for the above exercise; and
- c) outline the procurement process for the above exercise?

**The Minister of State in the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (Hon. Ramona Ramdial):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Part (a) to question No. 177: in an effort to mitigate or alleviate flooding in Diego Martin and environs, the Drainage Division has developed a five-year mitigation programme. This five-year flood mitigation programme, which commenced in January 2013, is expected to be completed in December, 2017.

Critical areas prone to severe flooding on an annual basis have been identified for attention. The scope of works includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- widening, dredging and desilting of selected watercourses;
- cleaning of underground drains;
- walling and paving in identified high-risk or vulnerable areas;
- re-alignment and stabilization of slopes;
- dredging of estuaries and construction of siltation basins;
- construction of detention and retention structures.

The programme has been disaggregated into the following:

- short-term projects;

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- medium-term projects; and
- long-term projects.

Part (b) to question No. 177: in the short term, a planned programme was completed. These works commenced in January 2013, and will continue both in the routine and periodic maintenance. These works involve desilting, clearing and removal of debris and obstacles from watercourses on a regular basis, approximately every six months or as the need arises. For that short-term works, we have done works over the last three months in the following areas:

- Petit Valley Ravine, from Ravine Road to the outfall;
- Blue Basin Ravine in the vicinity of Water Wheel;
- Savannah Trace Ravine inclusive of Bagatelle Ravine;
- Simeon Ravine from Morne Coco Road to outfall, inclusive of Diego Martin River;
- Upper La Seiva Ravine, two tributaries;
- Majouba Main Drain;
- Morne Coco Ravine;
- Diego Martin River;
- Debe Ravine, upper reach;
- Powder Magazine Main Drain;
- Covigne Ravine, upper reach;
- La Horquette Ravine, Western Main Road to outfall; and
- Perseverance Silt Trap, Grapefruit Crescent.

In the medium term our planned programme is approximately 80 per cent completed. These works commenced in March 2013, and are expected to be completed in 2015. These works involve walling and paving works on some watercourses, and some rehabilitation works have also been undertaken in order to protect both residential and commercial properties from flood damage.

The medium-term mitigation plan has been carried out on watercourses under this programme. In addition, some rehabilitation works have also been undertaken in order to protect both residential and commercial properties.



Following is a list of projects that have been completed as well as those ongoing. Works commenced in January 2013, and are expected to be completed by September 2014.

- Upper Diego Martin River, 100 per cent completed and that was the construction of a 110-metre wall.
- Diego Martin River, rehabilitation of 25m x 4m invert paving on the Diego Martin River of the Sierra Leone River and Strathayes Ave, Diego Martin. That was 100 per cent completed.

Again, along the Diego Martin watercourse:

- Construction of 30 metres of invert paving and 125 linear metres of block work wall of the TSTT station, 100 per cent completed.

I continue with respect to the medium-term works.

- Rich Plain Ravine, Diego Martin, construction of 60m of retaining walling 4m high on Rich Plain Ravine, Hassanali Street, 100 per cent completed;
- In the Rich Plain Ravine, Diego Martin we constructed a 100 metre long box drain and concrete wall, 3.5 metres high, upstream off Farm Road, 100 per cent completed;
- Covigne Ravine, construction of 60m x 3m of walling; Covigne Ravine, Covigne Road, Diego Martin, 100 per cent completed;
- Blue Basin Ravine, construction of 40 metres of walling at No. 1 Waterwheel Road, 100 per cent completed;
- Scorpion Ravine, Carenage, construction of 20 metres long x 3.6 metres high of retaining wall on the Scorpion Ravine, Scorpion Alley, 100 per cent completed;
- Scorpion Ravine, Carenage, construction of a wall 125 metres long x 3.5 metres high, 100 per cent completed;
- La Estancia Ravine tributaries to Diego River, we did desilting works, construction of two reinforced concrete silt traps; construction of reinforced concrete catch pit; construction of reinforced masonry box drains; and construction of reinforced masonry perimeter wall, 40 per cent completed;

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- La Puerta River, construction of 100 metres long x 4 metres high reinforced concrete wall, 100 per cent completed;
- School Street Ravine, St. Peter's Gardens, Carenage, construction of 100 metres long x 4 metres high reinforced concrete wall, 75 per cent completed;
- Camacho Drain, La Puerta, Diego Martin, construction of 110 metres long, 4 metres high reinforced concrete wall, 100 per cent completed;
- Andalusia Ravine, Maraval, construction of a 90 metres long x 4 metres high reinforced concrete wall, upper reach, 100 per cent completed; and construction of a 110 metre long x 4 metre high reinforced concrete wall, lower reach near the outfall to Maraval River, 100 per cent completed;
- Construction of a silt trap downstream of Water Hole Main Drain, Cocorite. We constructed the silt trap and it comprises a construction of a reinforced concrete retaining wall, 50 metres long by 4 metres high; construction of a rubble masonry baffle wall, 6 metres long by 4 metres high, erection of a chain link fence 50 metres long by 2 metres high; and installation of a steel fabricated trash rack 1.2 metres in diameter on face of existing culvert, 5 per cent completed.

La Horquette River, Carenage, construction of 60 linear metres of retaining walling, 100 per cent completed; construction of 100 linear metres of walling, upper reach, 100 per cent completed; rehabilitation of two bridges, 100 per cent completed; construction of 50 linear metres walling, lower reach, 100 per cent completed.

Madam Deputy Speaker, with respect to our long-term projects in this area, it is again a long-term planned programme which is scheduled to commence next fiscal 2014/2015. The approximate date of commencement is October 2014 and the project is expected to be completed in December 2017. It is proposed to undertake water management studies in three river basins within the north-west peninsula; Diego Martin, Maraval and La Horquette and Chaguaramas catchments.

The benefits to be derived would impact greatly on flood alleviation. Subsequent to these studies, both hard and soft projects would be implemented. It is proposed to conduct all the river basin studies simultaneously at an estimated cost of \$30 million.

Additionally, routine and periodic maintenance works are deemed necessary for the Diego Martin area. These works have been scheduled and are ongoing.

These works are monitored from the Diego Martin sub-office at Crystal Stream.

The works are usually done via in-house labour, equipment from a bonded list of contractors from Central Tenders Board, and contracts issued under the Divisional Tenders Committee. The contractors are selected from a list of approved contractors within the Drainage Division.

Madam Deputy Speaker, part (c) to question No. 177, the procurement process for the different phases of the flood mitigation programme for Diego Martin and environs are as follows:

1. Short-term projects: some of these projects were tendered via the Divisional Tenders Committee. Works were done using one of the following three methods:
  - i. in-house labour;
  - ii. equipment from a bonded list of contractors from Central Tenders Board; and
  - iii. contracts issued under the Divisional Tenders Committee. The contractors are selected from a list of approved contractors within the Drainage Division.
2. Medium-term projects: projects under this phase were tendered both by the Divisional Tenders Committee and the National Infrastructure Development Company. These works were tendered by a selective tendering process via NIDCO's own selective tendering process.
3. Long-term projects (studies and projects): projects under this phase will be tendered via the National Infrastructure Development Company. These projects involve a number of consultancies for the planned programme of works for the area. These consultancies would be advertised in the daily newspapers and will be done by open tendering process.

Madam Deputy Speaker, additional information to part (c) of the question, the long-term mitigation plan: under this programme it is proposed to undertake water management studies in three river basins within the north-west peninsula: Diego Martin, Maraval and La Horquette and Chaguaramas catchments. The benefits to be derived would impact greatly on flood alleviation. Subsequent to these studies, both hard and soft projects would be implemented. It is proposed to conduct all the river basin studies simultaneously at an estimated cost of \$30 million.

*Oral Answers to Questions*  
[HON. R. RAMDIAL]

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A draft Note to Cabinet has been forwarded to the office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources. Once Cabinet approval is received, the programme of works would be procured via NIDCO.

Time line: procurement: October 2014—December 2014; studies: January 2015—June 2016; and procurement and construction of projects: July 2016.

I thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**2.15 p.m.**

**Dr. Browne:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. [*Crosstalk*]

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Order! Order! Member for Diego Martin Central, you may continue.

**Dr. Browne:** May I? Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I thank the Member for the response; but the Member would be aware that the rainy season is upon us and I am asking if she can indicate what percentage of watercourses have thus far been desilted and cleared in the Diego Martin area?

**Hon. R. Ramdial:** Madam Deputy Speaker, that answer is included in part (a) of 177. And, of course, the scope of works include, but is not limited to the following: widening, dredging and desilting of selected watercourses and this short-term planned programme was completed. These works commenced in January 2013 and will continue both in the routine and periodic maintenance. These works involve desilting, clearing and removal of debris and obstacles from watercourses, on a regular basis, approximately every six months or as the need arises.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I highlighted at least 25 areas in Diego Martin that we are in the process of completing. [*Desk thumping*]

**Dr. Browne:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, supplemental. Can the Member indicate what percentage of watercourses have thus far been desilted and cleared? Simple English.

**Hon. R. Ramdial:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I would identify the watercourses and these watercourses, 100 per cent of the works, have been completed: Petit Valley Ravine, Blue Basin Ravine, Savannah Trace Ravine, Simeon Ravine, Upper La Seiva Ravine, Majuba Main Drain, Morne Coco Ravine, Diego Martin River, Debe Ravine Upper Reach, Powder Magazine Main Drain, Covigne Ravine Upper Reach, La Horquette Ravine, Western Main Road to the outfall and Perseverance Silt Trap, Grapefruit Crescent; all 100 per cent completed. [*Desk thumping*]

**EXPIRATION OF QUESTION TIME**

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Questions Nos. 180 and 178 will be postponed in accordance with the Standing Order 19(7) to the next sitting of the House.

*The following questions stood on the Order Paper:*

**Community Centres  
(Rehabilitation/Construction of)**

- 180.** Could the hon. Minister of Community Development indicate when will the Community Centres in the Blanca, Upper Cascade Main Road and McKai Lands, Belmont be rehabilitated/constructed? [*Mrs. P. Mc Intosh*]

**Completion Dates for Housing Projects  
(Details of)**

- 178.** A. Could the hon. Minister of Housing and Urban Development please state the projected completion dates for housing projects at:
- (a) Victoria Keys
  - (b) Chaconia Crescent
  - (c) Vieux Fort
- B. Could the Minister indicate the reasons for the delay in the delivery of each of these projects? [*Dr. A. Browne*]

*Question time having expired, questions 180 and 178 were not dealt with.*

**DEFINITE URGENT MATTER  
(LEAVE)**

**Health Care for Seriously Injured Senior Citizens  
(Government's Failure to Provide)**

**Dr. Amery Browne** (*Diego Martin Central*): Madam Deputy Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 12 of the House of Representatives, I hereby seek your leave to move the adjournment of the House at today's sitting for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the failure of this Government to provide proper health care for seriously injured senior citizens.

The matter is definite as there has been an alarming epidemic of neglect within the health sector which falls under the purview and the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. In this particular case, a vibrant 91-year-old resident of Diego

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Martin slipped in her yard on the afternoon of Tuesday, July 22, 2014 and broke her femur, which is the large bone in her upper thigh—her left femur.

This 91-year-old was taken to the accident and emergency facility at the St. James Complex where she was placed on a trolley, X-rayed and because of a lack of bed space at the Port of Spain General Hospital, remained overnight on that trolley at the St. James facility from 3.00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 22, 2014, until the following afternoon.

Subsequent to a visit from her Member of Parliament at the St. James Accident and Emergency facility, and an irate call to the Minister of Health, after 24 hours on that trolley, she was transferred to the Port of Spain General Hospital with an assurance of priority treatment befitting her age and the seriousness of her injury.

On arrival at the Port of Spain General Hospital, at approximately 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 23, her family was told that she would have surgery on her thigh the following morning and as such must not eat or drink anything overnight.

The 91-year-old lady was subsequently kept overnight on another trolley in the Casualty Department at the Port of Spain General Hospital, in considerable pain. The following morning her family was told that she could not have the operation because there was no bed to transfer her to, after the proposed surgery.

The matter is urgent because it took two nights on a trolley at our health institutions for this 91-year-old lady to be placed on a bed in a ward after sustaining a serious and potentially life-threatening injury. Up to today, her surgery still has not been performed and her family is being told that it may be done on Thursday, July 31, 2014. In the interim, she remains at risk for a number of serious orthopaedic and systemic complications.

This matter is of public importance because it exemplifies the ongoing abysmal state of our public health sector. It demonstrates how, despite the best intentions of caring staff at St. James and at the Port of Spain health facility, our citizens continue to fall victim to a health system which appears designed to frustrate and endanger, as opposed to heal and comfort.

This issue should be urgently debated by this Parliament and the Ministry of Health must be condemned for its lack of appropriate action in the case of this 91-year-old and in many other cases. I thank you.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, after careful consideration on this submission, I advise that the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central pursue this

matter under Standing Order 11(1). I am of the view that it does not qualify under Standing Order 12.

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

**St. Michael's School for Boys  
(Measures taken by Ministry)**

**The Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development (Hon. Clifton De Coteau):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Hon. Members, I thank you for this opportunity to make an official statement regarding the latest measures undertaken by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development in relation to the situation at the St. Michael's School for Boys.

The Ministry and the Boards of Management of the St. Michael's School for Boys and St. Mary's Children's Home met on Wednesday, July 23, 2014 and planned the way forward in light of recent issues highlighted in the preliminary report dealing with the Brandon Hargreaves matter.

The meeting focused on:

- (1) improving the governance arrangements and specific reporting relationships; and
- (2) strengthening the partnership between the Ministry and the Boards of Management.

The discussions yielded much in terms of moving forward and the following were mutually agreed upon:

- The Board of Management of St. Michael's School for Boys agreed to revisit its current business plan to make a determination on service delivery areas where they could make the best contribution.
- The engagement of an independent auditing firm to conduct a management audit at St. Michael's as a matter of priority and urgency.
- A professional analysis is being conducted on the files of all residents at St. Michael's, which would be used by suitably qualified consultants, social workers and psychologists, paid for by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development, to build individual care and rehabilitation plans for each resident.
- The existing government and management structures need to be transformed. Also, the importance of a Memorandum of Understanding

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[HON. C. DE COTEAU]

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between the Ministry and Board of Management was re-emphasized by the Ministry to clarify reporting relationships and accountability apparatus for management efficacy.

- In the interim, given the fact that the July/August period is vacation time for schoolchildren, those who have customary home leave privileges will depart accordingly and the remainder of the children will be taken on a retreat to be managed by a team of qualified experts to treat with the issues of healing and restoring confidence. This is to be under the guidance of the board of the school and the Ministry.
- The preceding measures are being adopted during this transition period until the Children Act of 2012 and the Children's Community Residences, Foster Homes and Nurseries Act are proclaimed and the full proclamation of the Children's Authority Act in September 2014. Subsequently, the Children's Authority will function as a regulatory body. In that capacity, they will assess all children who are currently in homes to determine the suitability of their placement and where placement is unsuitable, a recommendation would be made to the court for an appropriate order in respect of the child.

The Minister informed the board of St. Michael's that the report was referred by the Ministry to the Statutory Authorities Service Commission, which has responsibility for recruitment and disciplining of staff, to take any appropriate action as necessary.

A monitoring committee chaired by the Director of National Family Services, who functions as the Inspector of Industrial Schools and Orphanages, will continue with the implementation of the modernization programmes at the orphanages, to facilitate licensure of these facilities until the Children's Authority is operational.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want this august House and, indeed, the national community to know that this matter is being dealt with thoroughly and as expeditiously as possible, giving recognition to the fact that different institutions have a role to play in the resolution and way forward. The Statutory Authorities Commission, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Commissioner of Police, all have different roles to play and as such one must tread appropriately in this matter.

As the line Minister, with the help of my Minister of State, my Permanent Secretary and Deputy Permanent Secretary, we have done what is possible within



our remit by holding the meeting with the board of management and charting the way forward as outlined previously. The national community will be given periodic updates as they become available.

I want you all to rest assured that this matter is not being dealt with in any stealthy or surreptitious manner, but openly and as transparently as possible.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

### **Schools' Infrastructure (Repairs and Maintenance)**

**The Minister of Education (Hon. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, hon. Members. I am appreciative of being given the opportunity to address this House and, through the House, the nation as a whole on the continued issue of the schools' infrastructure and its concomitant and resulting necessity for repairs and maintenance and, of course, construction of new schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago. This issue of infrastructure has been, of course, necessarily occupying the attention of educators, parents, guardians, the national population, of course, school supervisors, principals, teachers and, most important, our students.

The Ministry of Education's policies, programmes, objectives and goals on infrastructure development and improvement have been clearly enunciated in our vision, mission statement and strategic plan of the Ministry, the *Strategic Plan 2011—2015*, in keeping with our promises of the People's Partnership manifesto and with particular reference to four of the seven fundamental pillars, which this whole aspect of the Government has been moving along with, namely, human capital development, information and communications technology, reduction of poverty and prevention of crime. This whole issue of infrastructure, of course, impacts upon all of these areas as one of the areas in education.

As we all know, the Ministry of Education, in our new re-engineering and paradigm shift, has been functioning as a high-performing and dynamic organization leading a quality education system that is responsive to the diverse needs of the 21st Century learners, to contribute to the education and versatility of holistically developed children who are able to satisfy the human capital needs and, of course, the sustainable development of our society.

### **2.30 p.m.**

We have pegged our education thrust in relation to our mission, and that is to educate and develop children who are able to fulfil their fullest potential, who are growing healthy and normally, who are academically balanced, who are well

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adjusted socially and culturally, and emotionally grow up to be emotionally mature and happy. So, in that aspect, the Ministry of Education continues to be responsive to the diverse needs of the 21st Century learners, our nearly quarter million students in our pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary levels of education; that is not tertiary. In our pre-primary levels, we have approximately 38,000 students; in our primary, approximately 126,000 and in our secondary, approximately 96,000 students.

The Ministry's policy of ensuring the school's teaching and learning environment—its buildings, its surroundings must be aesthetically pleasing, clean, structurally sound, safe and meeting occupational safety standards—have always been of paramount importance to the Ministry. It is unfortunate for me to say that we inherited a marked school infrastructure weakness, and I would say widespread decay where now approximately 80 per cent of our schools are greater than 50 years of age.

We have approximately 810 schools which we take care off from a Government's perspective—so 80 per cent of this is approximately 640 of our schools, I am being advised, are more than 50 years of age and within that, approximately 50 of these schools are more than 100 years old. It has been, therefore, not surprising that the Ministry had to work urgently, effectively and efficiently with a strong, dedicated, high-performance team of the Educational Facilities Company Limited in minor and, in a number of cases, significantly major maintenance and repair programmes throughout our last four years.

Madam Deputy Speaker, during the period June 2010 to present, this book [*Book in hand*] contains all the infrastructure projects that have been undertaken by the Ministry of Education with the Educational Facilities Company Limited. We performed 4,095 repair and maintenance projects up to June 30 this year at a cost of \$575,813,407.16. Madam Deputy Speaker, it is important for us to understand where all this infrastructure work has taken place with the repair and maintenance programme—throughout all our 39 constituencies of Trinidad, and in each one of these constituencies we have the number of projects that have been undertaken in all the schools in these various areas.

Many times it has been said, and this Government has been accused of not taking all the country into consideration. But may I indicate to hon. Members that within this education portfolio of infrastructure improvement, the 12 constituencies that are being managed by Opposition Members of Parliament, we have spent over \$160 million in repair and maintenance of the schools within these constituencies.

May I be permitted, Madam Deputy Speaker, just to give some illustration of some of the expenditure? In Arima, \$14 million; Arouca/Maloney, \$9 million; Baratania/San Juan, \$10 million; Caroni Central \$5 million; Caroni East, \$13 million; Chaguanas East, \$4 million; Chaguanas West, \$18 million; Couva North, \$21 million; Couva South, \$19 million; Cumuto/Manzanilla, \$17 million; D'Abadie/O'Meara, \$6 million; Diego Martin Central, \$9 million; Diego Martin North/East, \$4 million; Diego Martin West, \$5 million; Fyzabad, \$21 million; La Brea, \$16 million; La Horquetta/Talparo, \$5 million; Laventille East/Morvant, \$4.5 million; Laventille West, \$27 million; Lopinot/Bon Air West, \$7 million; Mayaro, \$30 million; Moruga/Tableland, \$11 million; Naparima, \$10 million; Oropouche East, \$21 million; Oropouche West, \$19 million; Point Fortin, \$14 million; Pointe-a-Pierre, \$10 million; Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West, \$17.8 million; Port of Spain South, \$23.6 million; Princes Town, \$22.6 million; San Fernando East, \$6.9 million; San Fernando West, \$35 million; Siparia, \$18 million; St. Ann's East, \$8 million; St. Augustine, \$13 million; St. Joseph, \$12 million; Tabaquite, \$9 million; Toco/Sangre Grande, \$34 million; and Tunapuna, \$10 million.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, a total of approximately \$575 million—4,095 repair and maintenance projects were completed over the last four years, ending up to June 2010. Madam Deputy Speaker, we had to do this—put all of this information together—so that we do not go about repeating having to do more and more projects for some of the schools. So we have what has been done in the schools and where we are in terms of future dilapidation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in fiscal year June 2012/2013 of last year, and our academic year July/August programme, close to 190 repairs and maintenance projects were undertaken and completed. Some schools had to remain closed for about a week or two weeks after because of the mammoth undertaking in the major infrastructural works. As the national community knows, every opportunity with time that we have to perform these jobs—during the two weeks of Christmas and the two weeks of Easter and the eight weeks during July/August—major repairs are undertaken during these periods, whether it is roofing, whether it is ceiling, electrical, sewer, toilets, water, structural, pigeon and bat infestation, furniture, air-conditioning, et cetera [*Laughter*] the EFCL deals with approximately five or six schools per day for repairs and maintenance on a regular basis. All of these pose a difficulty for continuation of classes at our schools. [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Deputy Speaker, our policy of education revolves around the education programme for the 476 primary schools, 350 of which are managed by

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18 denominational boards, and about 120 are managed by the Government, of these primary schools. Out of the 134 secondary schools, approximately 43 of these are managed by the denominational boards and the other 91 are managed by the Government, and out of the 200 Early Childhood Care and Education Centres, 71—Madam Deputy Speaker, could I have some—[*Crosstalk*]

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Allow the Member to speak in silence.

**Hon. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Have some manners. “Manners maketh man.” [Crosstalk]

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** “All yuh fraid this LifeSport.”

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Member, Member for St. Joseph, please. I want to ask you to allow the Member to speak in silence. Member, you may continue.

**Hon. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Madam Deputy Speaker, out of the 200-plus Early Childhood Care and Education centres, approximately 71 are managed by Servol, and Servol is paid by the Ministry of Education approximately \$26 million, I am advised, on an annual basis, to manage these ECCE centres.

All the infrastructural work at our schools are managed by the Government, the taxpayers. The boards will do some work in the schools, and a lot of the boards do major works themselves, but most of it is being done by the Ministry of Education—of course, by the Education Facilities Company Limited.

Madam Deputy Speaker, so in keeping with our promise to improve the infrastructure in our schools, this July/August vacation period, a number of principals within the denominational boards submitted their requests to the boards for repairs and maintenance to their schools, and through their boards to the Ministry of Education and the EFCL. The government schools submitted their requests through their principals and their school supervisors to the EFCL and to the Ministry of Education.

Long before this July/August, the scope of works were being undertaken by EFCL to determine the width and the depths and the nature of the repairs and maintenance work which had to be undertaken during this July/August period. The scope of works were then given to quantity surveyors, two independent quantity surveyors, who would then cost the work that was needed and, therefore, following that the tendering process would have been undertaken to undertake these works during the eight-week period.

When we first started, we started with 225 projects in our schools and within the last two weeks, we have had to reach—from requests coming in again, 249 projects are being undertaken in this holiday period, Madam Deputy Speaker [*Desk thumping*] and each one of the districts in Trinidad and Tobago with their schools are represented here. They are on this sheet, Madam Deputy Speaker, within the district. [*Sheet in hand*] [*Crosstalk*] I could pass it. It is the denominational boards, the constituency, the school name, the estimated cost and the contractors. Madam Deputy Speaker, 249 repair and maintenance jobs are being undertaken during this July/August vacation period.

Now, it is not just a matter of repairing and maintenance. MTS, which is one of the companies belonging to the State, in all our 90-plus Government secondary schools, MTS provides a cadre of maintenance supervisors and support teams to undertake repairs within the secondary schools to a significant level, but beyond a certain capacity they cannot do it because it entails further additional major jobs, and this is where the Educational Facilities Company Limited comes in.

Because of the ageing of the school population and the daily breakdown of schools' infrastructure, for one reason or the other, construction of new schools had been undertaken when we started in June 2010, and over the last four years, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Ministry of Education, through the Educational Facilities Company Limited, had undertaken and constructed 73 new schools throughout Trinidad and Tobago: 53 Early Childhood Care and Education centres, 16 primary schools and four secondary schools.

At the moment, we are now constructing another 13 primary schools which are about to be finished. Contracts have been awarded and have started for another 16—so that is 13 and 16—29 are being constructed and under way, plus the 16 finished already, so that in a number of months from now, we would have approximately 45 primary new schools constructed.

#### **2.45 p.m.**

We have 26 more early childhood education centres to be constructed under the IDB Phase 2 Programme, a programme which undergoes serious rigidity in terms of tendering and allocation of funding through the IDB, and we are also starting another 29 outside of the IDB. As far as secondary schools are concerned, as I said, we completed four. We have eight more being constructed at the moment, and we hope to complete these before the end of this—hopefully, by December/January and, probably, one month later. There are 15 additional

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secondary school blocks which need laboratories, science laboratories and auditoriums or additional blocks; one of these, for example, is the Arima Central Secondary School.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, in case if there are nonbelievers in terms of what we have constructed, may I just indicate that these are some of the photographs [*Desk thumping*] of the schools that we have constructed. It is so many of these, Madam Deputy Speaker, they could not fit on eight pages of our supplement, and it is there for our colleagues to see as a nation. We continue to pledge our total, undivided work, and working—[*Interruption*—yes, undivided work from the Ministry of Education and EFCL, to continue to improve our infrastructure which had been left long in dilapidation, and for which the students had been suffering for a long time.

We are bringing some degree of comfort and aesthetics to the surroundings of our schools so that our students can continue to learn and be taught in ambient surroundings for their learning. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

### **LifeSport Programme**

**The Prime Minister (Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Madam Deputy Speaker, in May of this year, 2014, a newspaper publication brought to light allegations of wrongdoing and misuse of resources in the LifeSport Programme. Based on the very real possibility of there being irregularities, I immediately instructed that the programme be transferred to the Ministry of National Security and that the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, through its Central Audit Committee, conduct a full audit.

A thorough and focused audit has now been completed and I have received same from the hon. Minister of Finance and the Economy. This is a copy of that report. Because this programme was intended to positively impact some of our most vulnerable younger citizens, I believe it is appropriate that the report of the Central Audit Unit on the LifeSport Programme be made public by being tabled here in the House of Representatives.

A brief history of the programme is important. Cabinet, in August 2011, agreed to the implementation of the LifeSport Programme by the Ministry of Sport through the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago. The programme was launched in June 2012 and started in August 2012. This year, up to the time of the audit, I was told that the programme is being conducted in 43 centres throughout Trinidad and Tobago for young men between the ages of 16 and 25.

The review, as contained in the report, has revealed a number of discrepancies which include the following: procurement breaches, a deviation from the mandates of Cabinet, the involvement of some persons in criminal activities, fraud by suppliers, theft of equipment, breaches of the Proceeds of Crime Act, and poor control and monitoring by officers of the Ministry. The audit committee has also raised questions regarding possible complicity by officers of the Ministry, given the widespread nature of the breaches.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what was shocking and disappointing is the fact that given the usually stringent nature of the bureaucratic processes in obtaining approvals for projects, implementing programmes and monitoring progress, no action was taken to halt or prevent what the audit committee found.

This programme was conceptualized and formulated as part of a comprehensive programme to try to roll back the tide against criminals and criminality in our country. It was specifically focused on saving the lives of young men who needed to be protected from the criminals, who routinely preyed on them, and helping to shape positive futures for these young people. We see our young men as future fathers, future role models, future professionals, who need care, attention and opportunities.

The criminals see them as pawns and as persons who could front crime and violence. To the criminal elements, these young men are a means to an end and are, in their view, expendable. This is where I must express my personal deep disappointment and dismay that a programme that was intended to save lives, to build lives, was used by a group of people for fraud and personal gain. This group of people who derailed the good intentions of the programme has, in effect, given their support to criminality in some cases, rather than to our young people.

Madam Deputy Speaker, for those who really sought to improve their lives and positively benefit from this programme, I am sorry that this had to happen; however, I say, we should not totally despair. Because of the actions of a few, this programme will have to be halted, but through other working programmes we will reach out to our most vulnerable. We will help you and we will provide opportunities you need to build your lives.

Further, I have accepted the recommendations of the audit committee and, in that regard, I have instructed the hon. Attorney General to turn the report over to the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Commissioner of Police to investigate, detain and prosecute those guilty to the fullest extent of the law. Given the fact that the Central Audit Committee has raised the possibility of complicity by

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Ministry officials, I am instructed that the report be sent to the Integrity Commission and to the Head of the Public Service for further investigation, consideration and action, where necessary.

Citizens of our country can rest assured that as we move forward, implementing programmes meant to positively impact our communities, we will not tolerate wrongdoing, we will not tolerate corruption, and we will not tolerate the abuse of programmes, meant to save our people, for selfish personal gains. In fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, if there is one very important message coming out of this audit report is the urgent need for procurement laws to become fully operationalized. As you know, Madam Deputy Speaker, such legislation we have brought to this Parliament, it was passed in the Senate and it is now before this honourable Chamber of the Lower House. That procurement law is of vital importance and we have been at the forefront in pushing for such legislation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, issues such as these convincingly drive home the point of what is important and how important procurement laws are to each and every person, every family and every community in our country. To summarize, the report of the Central Audit Committee, this report will be forwarded to the Commissioner of Police, the Director of Public Prosecutions, and also to the Integrity Commission and the Head of the Public Service.

Further, the LifeSport Programme will be immediately terminated and, yet further, we will look to the recommendations contained in that LifeSport report, the audit report. As I have said before, we look to ways to assist vulnerable persons with our other social programmes and new ones, if necessary. While we continue to champion the new procurement regime, our country can rest assured that at every turn I have stood firm that progress in our country must be on the line by integrity and benefit for our population. Any person or any group who seeks to subvert the law and the public benefit will pay the full price of the law.

I thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*] In closing, I wish to lay this report on the table of this honourable House. Copies are available to Members via the rotunda application, and I am told that arrangements have been made for electronic copies to be made available to the media. I thank you, again. [*Desk thumping*]



**LIFESPORT PROGRAMME  
(CENSURE OF MINISTER OF SPORT)**

[Second Day]

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [June 27, 2014]:*

*Be it resolved* that this Honourable House censure the Minister of Sport for facilitating through the LifeSport Programme the funding of criminals and criminal enterprise. [Mr. C. Imbert]

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr. Jack Warner** (*Chaguanas West*): Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I would have thought that the statement by the hon. Prime Minister, a few minutes ago, would have been enough censure for any Minister anywhere in the world, except this one. In anywhere in the world, except this one, such a statement would have been enough, and this Motion itself would not have been necessary, except in this country, this Government. [*Desk thumping*]

If I talk bad, Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to make and give notice here about this Motion. This Motion was adjourned in this House on June 27, 2014, at 4.00 p.m.—4.00 p.m. on Private Members' Day, and it was adjourned just as I was about to rise to make my contribution. Then the sitting itself was adjourned at 4.29 p.m., Private Members' Day, like today, there were statements and speeches, and so on. If there is one day in the month for Private Members, it is the last Friday, [*Desk thumping*] and that last Friday, the Members on the Opposition are given two and a half hours, two and a half hours per month to speak on their own agenda, and even that they do not have because the Leader of Government Business could rise and end it.

One would have thought that in a true democracy that adjournment would have been done by the Chief Whip, that we would have, of course, gone to 7.45 p.m., let us say, and the Chief Whip would have said, "Yes, we finish", but you come here on Private Members' Day, and what happened today? It is normal. Madam Deputy Speaker, before I talk on this Motion, I want to tell you that there are 10 Private Motions on the Order Paper—10. Five of those Motions were started and five have not yet begun. Motion No. 6 has to do with traffic woes facing hundreds of thousands of our citizens, not yet started, but we could hear about a school in Toco that needs five pounds of nails and we could hear about a school in Carenage that needs 100 blocks.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Motion No. 7 has to do with matters affecting the justice system in this country, not yet started; No. 8 has to do with national debt

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and the performance of the economy, not yet started; No. 9 has to do with the malfunctioning of the State social assistance programmes which are costing taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars, not yet started; No. 10 has to do with serious matters of the environment, not yet started, and we come here to hear how many pounds of nails went in a school in Carenage.

**3.00 p.m.**

Motion No. 5 has to do with a state contract with a blacklisted Canadian company. The contract has been halted, but the Motion itself is not yet completed. It was adjourned on Friday, September 27, 2013—10 months ago, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The Motion today which we are beginning—therefore, I am saying to you, is a Motion on Private Members' Day, but I gave you the background to tell you how Private Members' Day is becoming a farce, more and more. The only saving grace is that the public is aware. Ten months ago for a Motion, nothing has been done.

Motion No. 4 has to do with the plight of citizens of Point Fortin and the need for a hospital; it was adjourned on Friday, November 29, 2013. Seven months ago adjourned, not a drum has been heard since then. And the list goes on and on.

Therefore, let us come back to this Motion before us this afternoon, and in a real sense this Motion at this point is just academic. But though it is academic, we on this side shall do our part, shall play our role, because whatever is happening, what is said or not said on this side is already predetermined. We could speak until the cows come home tomorrow, it makes no difference, but we shall do what is right for this country. We shall do what is right, because we on this side know that "time longer than twine".

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Motion that we have before us ends by saying that the Minister should be censured. There were several "whereas", but there is one here that particularly concerns me, and it says:

"Whereas the Auditor General has reported serious financial irregularities in the accounts of the Ministry of Sport and/or the Life Sport Programme in the financial years 2012 and 2013:"

That was one of the reasons given why the Minister should be censured. It pains me to stay here on this side and talk about having a Minister censured for financial irregularities, especially the Minister of Sport.

Do you know why, Madam Deputy Speaker? It was we who talk, you talk, who sing, morning, noon and night about Calder Hart and Ken Julien, about

Uthara Rao. There was no debate to take place in this Parliament if those names were not mentioned, and today, at every corner, we have a Calder Hart. Today, in every Ministry, you have a Uthara Rao—today, and those were the things that when we were there, we said we were against. How did we come this far? How did we come this far? The answer is simple, greed—greed—and we shall pay a price for that, whether we sit on that side or this side.

What pains me though is the silence, the monumental silence of those who pose as paragons of virtue, and they sit here and they sit in the Cabinet and see what is going on, and they have read what is done. They listened to the last ministerial statement and “dey eh say boo”, because they cannot let go their perks. They cannot let go their perks, but whether they let them go now or next 10 months, they have to let them go, as night follows day. [*Desk thumping*] It is best they let them go now by doing what is right, and stand up and say, “This is wrong”, that “the stench is too much”. How did we come this far?

But since the report has gone to the DPP, the Commissioner of Police, to the PSC, to I do not know who again, Mandrake and so on, [*Laughter*] let me help them, the Integrity Commission. Let me help them in their enquiry, by giving them some issues and some cases to consider. Let me make their work easier for them this afternoon.

You know, the LifeSport Programme came out as big business for some, from \$6 million to \$300 million, plenty money. For the year ended September 2013, total expenses were \$150.5 million, for that year 2013. Up to May 2014—this year—two months ago, they have spent \$136.1 million, with four months to go. This financial haemorrhage called LifeSport has spent \$136 million. Let me give this House some areas where this money has gone, for the *Hansard*.

In 2013, they spent on official entertainment—and, by the way, all these documents I have here, which I am using this afternoon, every single one was given to me by officials from the Ministry of Sport—every single one. They gave that to me telling me, of course, to talk out. They even urged that the Ministry should be moved and put under another Ministry. They gave this to me, because they do not know where to go. So listen, listen to what we have. I now start.

Official entertainment 2013, \$304,342, but in 2014, with four months to go still, \$1.5 million—official entertainment. What is that? “Why they doh buy dey own whiskey, import when they travel and put in dey house.” From \$300,000 to \$1.5 million, 500 per cent, and people “eh say boo”, and men sit in a Cabinet and take that.

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Madam Deputy Speaker, do you know why they do that? Because the fact is, for them wrongdoing has become so common that this is “no big ting”. The fact that ministerial wrongdoing is so commonplace, is so brazen, that no one even imagines that this would have come this far. *[Interruption]*

**Dr. Moonilal:** Madam Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 36(5). You can say that differently.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Member, I want to ask you to stick with the Motion that is before you, and to focus and concentrate on the Motion itself. You may continue.

**Mr. J. Warner:** Well I thought I was doing that, but apparently not.

So I will say again, in the LifeSport Programme—since you say I am not dealing with the Motion—2013, they spent \$304,000. In the LifeSport Programme 2014, with four months to go, they spent \$1.5 million. If I am not talking about LifeSport, I do not know what I am talking about.

This same LifeSport Programme, for conferences and seminars 2013, they spent \$18,000; 2014, with four months to go, \$299,000. I want to keep repeating it over and over, since people might forget what I am talking about, and I do not want another Motion again. So this LifeSport Programme, on books and periodicals, \$14,000, 2013; 2014, \$133,000, with four months to go.

But the cake is, the cream, the crème de la crème of expenditure, 2013, they spent on technology and videotaping, \$51,600, 2013. In the LifeSport Programme—I want to help the Integrity Commission and the Commissioner of Police and the DPP, and so on. I want to help them—technology and videotaping, they spent \$51,600; 2014, with four months to go, they spent \$8.4 million, videotaping. Not even Rock Hudson’s movie cost that. Videotaping—and the list goes on and on.

There are companies here. I have copies of invoices for companies here. There are two companies that are given money annually to supervise the LifeSport Programme. One company is called Glenroy and Associates; they are paid \$250,000 per year; no tax, no VAT. I want to say it slowly: no tax, no VAT.

Another company, Quantum Possibilities Limited—they had to supervise the LifeSport Programme per year. They are paid \$250,000—no tax, no VAT, signed and approved here, and the list goes on and on. This is what we have here, and this is just the tip of the iceberg.

These documents I have here represent less than 8 per cent of what I have; I put that in the *Hansard*. So if the Commissioner wants help, he could come to me. It represents less than 8 per cent of what I have.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I did not think I would have to come here to talk about these kinds of things, against a Government of which I was a Member, especially a Member who I had at the highest esteem. I used to be there—I used to be there.

Suddenly, some companies are going from rags to riches, and their rates are very high—very high. Many of these businesses are young businesses; some of them are barely one year old. Some of them have been formed only because of LifeSport. Some of them have been formed only because of the laptop computers. That is how the company was formed; you would see just now—no addresses, no telephone numbers, no fax number. You will see it in a few minutes—and all of them fudging invoices from the same computer.

When the Prime Minister spoke just now, she glossed over the issues; I could put teeth on them now. Some of these are small businesses, individuals and partnerships. Many of these companies are unregistered. How can a Ministry, a Minister, a Permanent Secretary, deal with a company that is not registered? Nowhere in the world this happens. [*Interruption*]

**Mr. Roberts:** Madam Deputy Speaker, 36(5), the hon. Member knows Ministers do not deal with companies, procurement in any form or fashion, so please, stay calm. [*Crosstalk*]

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Overruled; you may continue, Member.

**Mr. J. Warner:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will do my best not to personalize this, but I hope I am not tempted to do so.

Some friends and family of officials in the LifeSport Programme and senior government officials, went away with millions. I have the records; I have the accounts. Let me take one company, for example, a company called Axios Advertising Company. Let me deal with that one. Let me show you what happens, Members. Axios Advertising Consultants Limited is a company owned by Michael Kerr, otherwise known as “Mikey K”. [*Interruption*]

**Miss Cox:** He was involved in that too?

**Mr. J. Warner:** Wait, listen good, “yuh eh hear nutten yet”. As Mikey K—this company has a letterhead saying, 142 Munroe Road, Cunupia, as its headquarters. The same company has as its address: 44 Second Street, San Juan.

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For three months they paid this company \$92,000 a month; they paid Mikey K, who is an announcer at the government radio station, GISL. They paid Mikey K who have CEPEP contracts. They paid Mikey K whose wife also has CEPEP contracts. They paid Mikey K whose girlfriend also has CEPEP contracts, and they paid Mikey K—on top of all of that—\$92,000 a month.

**Hon. Member:** For what?

**Mr. J. Warner:** I will tell you for what.

**Miss Cox:** “Dai’s why dey mashing us up on de radio.”

**Mr. J. Warner:** That is correct. Hear what for: for three months, taxpayers’ money—and what I say here, I could say outside on any platform. Hear what Mikey K got this money for: produce public education materials for distribution via the media, \$10,500; develop and edit materials and articles for publication in the daily newspaper, \$15,500; conduct talk shows pertaining to the LifeSport Programme, \$14,500; produce reports on feedback from the public and stakeholders regarding the LifeSport Programme, \$14,000; visit LifeSport centres and identify and report on positive developments—let me say it slowly—*[Laughter]* visit LifeSport centres and identify and report on positive developments, \$16,500. And everybody here, for the month their salary is \$14,000, and I must take that. I must take that, Prime Minister. And you know why it hurts me?—I put them there. They could say what they want, and this is why, for me, it is painful; it is painful.

**3.15 p.m.**

On talk show he says, hear what he says, “and other related duties and activities”, on the radio talk show 91.1, \$10,500. So they paid him to talk for them, to go on the talk shows. Total, \$92,000 per month, no VAT, no tax.

And, Madam Deputy Speaker, you know, I want to tell you, Madam Deputy Speaker, about when, you know, any company—this is for the Ministry of Finance and the Economy—about VAT. What it says about VAT? It says, individuals or businesses that sell goods or services worth TT \$200,000 or more in a 12-month period must register for VAT; must register for VAT. Individuals and businesses must also register, if they forecast sales of TT \$200,000 or more in a 12-month period. This is a three-month period, Madam Deputy Speaker, a three-month period, \$276,000 to “lick up” on the radio and so on, and to be sent text from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure to tell you who to “lick up” and who not to “lick up”. This is what we paid for.

Madam Deputy Speaker, another company, another overnight millionaire. Let us take a fella called—let us take one called DC Tent Rentals. DC Tent Rentals is a company belonging to Davoughn Cummings.

**Hon. Member:** Not Donna Cox? [*Laughter*]

**Mr. J. Warner:** It cannot be Donna Cox. Donna Cox, you “aint” so lucky. Davoughn Cummings. To go fast, Madam Deputy Speaker, to go fast, he is charging them for toilets, for portable toilets, for port-a-cool units and hand sinks, he is charging them \$105,000 a month. When you check with the authorized and registered tent rentals—up to last night we were checking with them—this same thing would have cost them \$18,000. Look it here. And this company is not registered, it is a sole trader. Everything is over billed, over billing on everything; everybody eating, Madam Deputy Speaker.

How about another company called Rishazz Marketing. Rishazz Marketing, they got one-month’s work; poor soul. They got one-month’s work, but for the one-month’s work they got, they were paid \$48,500, no VAT, no income tax. What did they do for this money, Madam Deputy Speaker? What did they do for \$48,500? Hear what they did: local community advertising, \$13,200; publish positive achievements of participants, \$14,450; site visits to various centres, \$10,200, and data collection, \$10,650. Eating from the trough; no problem, no problem at all. Because you see the fact is, monkey see, monkey do. If you are in a sea of corruption, you do not of course feel it. Mc Kain Enterprises, Mc Kain Enterprises for videotaping services of 10 LifeSport centres from May 12 to May 23, 10—10—cost \$70,000; these are companies. And that, Madam Deputy Speaker, is the tip of the iceberg; tip of the iceberg.

I come to one that is even sweeter, a company called Going All Out Event Planners. [*Crosstalk*] Going all Out Event Planners. I will say it slowly again, Going All Out Event Planners. They say they do video and consultancy—another video. And they charged for three months \$286,000, no VAT shown on the invoice. Their letterhead is PO Box 1439 Port of Spain, but also they have another letterhead, No. 1B Mucurapo Road, Port of Spain. Madam Deputy Speaker, the company registry shows that this company, Going All Out Event Planners, that their address is No. 4 Victoria Gardens South, Diego Martin, and that they were registered on November 30, 2013. Between then and now, I will show you how in six months they got \$2 million. I will show you how. [*Crosstalk*] Registered in 2013—look it here, look it here. I did not sleep for the past few days, “ah” working. [*Laughter*] Look it here—three different addresses, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Miss Cox:** “All yuh” have a conscience? [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. J. Warner:** Conscience? Madam Deputy Speaker, this entity is not a company, but a business. Madam Deputy Speaker, the principals of this company are Susanna Hadad and Perry Jerome; body-building people. [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Deputy Speaker, the invoices here—the invoices I have here show that they collected this money for consultancy: \$28,000, \$28,000, \$28,000, \$28,000 and so on, and then the last one, \$90,000. Two at \$90,000, and the balance at \$28,700. In three months, you know, amounted to \$286,300. “Doh” forget this name, I am coming back to it. It is called Going All Out Event Planners. I am coming back to this.

Madam Deputy Speaker, another company, a new company to benefit from this overnight success, is one called Dust Bin Divers Maintenance Crew Limited, [*Laughter*] Dust Bin Divers Maintenance Crew Limited. [*Crosstalk*] This company [*Crosstalk*] was registered on May 01, 2013. Madam Deputy Speaker, listen good. This company’s letterhead also has a PO Box address, it is the same address as Going All Out Event Planners, PO Box 1439 Port of Spain; the same address. And also they have the same online address, 4 Victoria Gardens South, Diego Martin. So therefore, Dust Bin Divers Maintenance Crew Limited is a sister company, if not the same, as Going All Out Event Planners.

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, the principals of this company are also Susanna Hadad and Perry Jerome; the same partners of Going Out. And what did that get, Madam Deputy Speaker? What this company get? Let me talk slowly for the record, eh. Dust Bin Divers invoiced LifeSport \$155,182.50 for reimbursement of transportation fees for one day. [*Crosstalk*] for one day; that day is May 26. It said it took participants to the Ato Boldon Stadium. [*Crosstalk*]

**Miss Cox:** They fly by Caribbean Airlines?

**Mr. J. Warner:** No bill, no accounting, no evidence, one day, one day, Madam Deputy Speaker. And I tell you again, do not forget that Dust Bin Divers is the same thing as Going All Out, partners. Because I will tell you something, you have two more coming, and all are the same thing.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this same Dust Bin Divers Crew, besides doing transportation, they are also doing electrical work for the LifeSport Programme—Susanna Hadad and Perry Jerome, the same company. And, Madam Deputy Speaker, they were given a contract for \$369,000 to refurbish, upgrade and service electricals at 16 LifeSport centres. So, this company had to service,



upgrade and refurbish electricals at Belmont, St. Paul, John John, Angostura, Carenage, Cocorite, Bagatelle, Maraval, Morvant, Mt. D’or, Peytonville, Malabar, Pinto, Valencia, Sangre Grande and Mayaro. This Diego Martin company you know, had to go Mayaro—and the MP for Mayaro stands in his shoes and he “aint” even wondering—to service electricals [*Crosstalk*] one company, one company had 16 centres. One company has 16 centres.

Madam Deputy Speaker, all the 16 invoices have the same—they are in batches of four—and all of them are carbon copies, and the scope of works for the electricals in Mayaro is the same as in Belmont, as in St. Paul, as in John John, as in Bagatelle, as in Morvant, as in Mt. D’or. The same scope of works. [*Crosstalk*] Look it here. Look it here. [*Member extends document*] Look it here. I will tell you something, if you believe that is not cause for shame, Member for Tunapuna, I do not know what is. [*Desk thumping*] I do not know what is. I used to look at you and say, “there is hope”. This cannot be correct.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I eh finish yet. This “cyar” finish; no. You have another company called Hard Hat Construction, [*Crosstalk*] Hard Hat.

**Hon. Member:** Where they get all these names from?

**Mr. J. Warner:** And this company had been given 12 centres to upgrade, and they were paid \$197,000. The cheques for all this work were made out to one man, Anthony Hadad—Hadad.

Madam Deputy Speaker, after you leave Hard Hat Company, and you believe you finish, you find another sister company called Raising the Bar General Contractors, and they have the same PO Box address as all of these—1439—the same fax number, the same telephone number.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this company got 12 centres at a cost of \$197,000. [*Crosstalk*] And this company had centres to do and fix. This Diego Martin company—six centres in Moruga, in Tabaquite, in Enterprise, in Pleasantville, in La Brea, in Fanny Village, in Sobo, Santa Flora, because you see, they have nobody there to do that.

**Hon. Member:** What is the name of the company?

**Mr. J. Warner:** The company’s name is Raising the Bar; Raising the Bar. They did work, of course, also in Marac, and Penal, and Fyzabad and Morne Diablo. You see, Madam Deputy Speaker, LifeSport Programme could not find any plumbers in Moruga. They could not find any plumbers in La Brea, but worst yet of all, they could not even find plumbers in Penal—[*Interruption*]

**Hon. Member:** No.

**Mr. J. Warner:**—the Prime Minister’s constituency? The Member for Oropouche East, Oropouche West, they could not find plumbers there? They have to leave Diego Martin to go down to fix—

Madam Deputy Speaker, these three companies, Hard Hat, Dust Bin Divers and Raising the Bar, got 40 out the 56 packages to do plumbing work in the programme. Madam Deputy Speaker, out of a total of \$961,000 for plumbing works, these three companies got \$764,000. And you tell me this is fair, this is right? This cannot be. This cannot be. And I tell you, God knows—God moves in mysterious ways, because I will tell you something. I now know why he put me here. I know why he put me here. I could not stomach it, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**3.30 p.m.**

Madam Deputy Speaker, [*Interruption*] “I eh even reach halfway yet. I eh reach half way yet”.

Let us go to janitorial and clean-up. For one month—I wonder if I could get some smelling salts, boy. I want some smelling salts because I want to faint. This “eh” easy, you know.

**Miss Mc Donald:** I only have Limacol.

**Mr. J. Warner:** Hold it for me, “ah coming”. [*Laughter*] Madam Deputy Speaker, for janitorial and clean-up, one month cost \$1.757 million.

**Hon. Member:** What!

**Mr. J. Warner:** Look it here! Look it here! Madam Deputy Speaker, there are 11 cleaning outfits or companies, all their invoices are the same, FUDGED. All the scope of works are the same. Same scope of works. In fact, I will give you a few. Just a few examples: they have a company called Farm Business Solutions, Egypt Village, Point Fortin, they got three centres, La Romaine, Morvant and Laventille. They left Egypt Village, Point Fortin to go Morvant and Laventille, and to clean that for one day they got \$135,000.

**Miss Mc Donald:** What!

**Mr. J. Warner:** To clean the centre for one day is \$45,000. [*Interruption*] To clean it for one day is \$45,000.

Listen to this one, 21st Construction, Victory Street, Arima. This company was formed on July 03, 2013, they got three centres to clean: Bagatelle, Cedros, Los Bajos; one day, \$135,000.

**Mrs. Gopee-Scoon:** What!

**Mr. J. Warner:** “I eh finish yet”, I have two more to give you, listen good, they have a company called Cardian Construction and Property Management, this company is in Scarborough, Tobago. This company was given three centres to clean in Carapo, Pinto Road and La Horquetta.

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** From Tobago?

**Mr. J. Warner:** From Tobago, they jump on the plane, come to Carapo and Pinto and La Horquetta, they clean there and went back to Tobago, \$135,000.

**Miss Mc Donald:** Oh, it was worth it.

**Mr. J. Warner:** And the company owner, Anthony Hadad. *[Interruption]*

This is sickening, but I will tell you something; I have all the invoices here. I have all the invoices here. All of them here, they are all here. Right? Anybody could see them at the tea break or even after. I have them here.

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** To cut?

**Mr. J. Warner:** Let us go to field maintenance upgrade. *[Interruption]*

Madam Deputy Speaker, for field maintenance, to cut 26 fields, in one month, \$1.9 million. *[Interruption]* Again, the scope of works in all the fields is identical. What is even worse—

**Miss Cox:** All is the same size?

**Mr. J. Warner:**—the size of—but, you bright, you know, girl. You bright. *[Laughter]* The size of the ground, all of them is the same thing. All the grounds are 700 square metres. Every single ground. *[Laughter]*

**Hon. Member:** They are not bright.

**Mr. J. Warner:** Bright, when you are stealing you cannot be bright. All are the same size, all, of course, have the same scopes of work, but worse yet, they cannot even be creative, the same bald patches of grass they have on all the grounds so it must be a twin. *[Laughter and desk thumping]*

It is unbelievable. It is unbelievable. The same bald patch of grass is on each of the 26 grounds, no different. God knows why he has me here. God knows why he has me here. There is no way I could have taken that, and I said to myself, something has to be wrong. But, let me give you some of the companies: a company called, A Reliable Team of Professionals, ARTOP, they are from

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Edinburgh 500, they got three grounds, Morne Diablo, Siparia and Fullaton, \$312,800—I coming to you—Reno Energy Limited, 27 De Verteuil Street, Chaguanas. I do not know them at all. Reno, R-e-n-o, please bear that name in mind, I am coming back to that just now. Reno from Chaguanas got four grounds. They got grounds to cut in Samaroo Village, Arima; Carapo, Arima; down by you in Point Fortin [*Interruption*] Yes, they leave Chaguanas to go there, and in Morvant.

What is nice is that SOS—and I want you to bear this name also—(West Indies) Limited—

**Hon. Member:** SIS.

**Mr. J. Warner:** It is close to SIS, I thought so too. But how come SIS not in this? His hands full? [*Laughter*] SOS (West Indies) Limited, 27 De Verteuil Street, Chaguanas, they got four grounds to cut. Where are the grounds? Mt. D’or, La Horquetta, Maraval and Moruga.

If I was the MP for Moruga/Tableland, I would have been cussing still. To take a man from Chaguanas to come to Moruga to cut my ground and give him \$312,800. [*Interruption*] That is correct. These are the very same grounds—you are quite right again, Member for Laventille East/Morvant—which the regional corporations also cut. The very same grounds. These are the very same grounds which the regional corporations are responsible for. So, sometimes when they go, if they go at all, and the ground is cut, they are paid, they pay it.

Come to SOS now, SOS (West Indies) Limited, I told you not to forget the name, eh, and Reno Energy Limited. SOS got four grounds to maintain and upgrade for \$312,800 and Reno got four for the same price, \$625,600. SOS’ address on the letterhead is PO Box 303, Chaguanas, but checks at the Companies Registry shows that the company is registered at 27 De Verteuil Street, Chaguanas. But Reno’s letterhead is also 27 De Verteuil Street, Chaguanas. So, SOS and Reno are, again, one and the same, interlocking relationships. And when you look at the principals of the two companies they are the same. The fax numbers on both invoices 665-8517, the fax number is the same. Over time, the principals: James Dedier, Charmaine Dedier, Shea Dedier, Russel Dedier, Brian Audain, attorney Ken Wright and Ainsley Aaron, the same. In Reno now, they have James Dedier, Finbar Pierre, Shea Dedier, Alicia Le Gendre and Joanna Le Gendre. Now, the fact is, Finbar Pierre, his address is 20 Victory Street, Arima, but would you believe that this company has Finbar Pierre, and Finbar Pierre is a police officer.

**Hon. Member:** “Oooh.”

**Dr. Douglas:** That is not true, I know a Finbar Pierre.

**Mr. J. Warner:** All I have here is what, of course, he has on his declaration and signed by him, and it is here, you could come and see it. This is no old talk, you know. This is no old talk.

Look it here, look it here, signed by him.

**Hon. Member:** What is the address?

**Mr. J. Warner:** #20 Victory Street, Arima. [*Interruption*]

**Hon. Member:** There may be another Finbar Pierre.

**Mr. J. Warner:** Well, all right. Madam Deputy Speaker, Joanna Le Gendre, who is a signatory of Reno Energy, also has been given a catering contract for Chrissie Terrace, Enterprise, to provide 65 breakfasts—“breakfasses”—and 65 lunches. [*Laughter*]

Madam Deputy Speaker, to provide that for five months, she is paid lunches at the rate of \$45 per lunch and breakfast \$25, but the School Feeding Programme, a lunch is \$9 and a breakfast is \$6.68, and it is only recently because of the fact that they have got a Minister of Education.

For the LifeSport Programme, per month, by way of lunches for 39 centres, per month \$3.2 million.

**Miss Mc Donald:** “Oh good!”

**Mr. J. Warner:** Look the caterers here. I have the caterers here, you know. Anybody could come and see, I have the list here. I have the list here, I have the contract here.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Member, have your seat, please. Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member for Chaguanas West has expired.

*Motion made:* That the Member’s speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Mr. N. Hypolite*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Mr. J. Warner:** I thank you, Member for Laventille West. Thank you very much, Members, and I want to say again, all the caterers are here, how much they received, when, how, for what, why, and so on. It is here. These documents were given to me by the Ministry of Sport’s officers there. I did not go for them. They

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came to me. In one case a lady gave me her laptop. She said to empty it and, of course, and store the information. I did not go to her, she came to me. It is here. [Interruption]

A company called Embass Landscaping, they got a contract for \$272,000, but it is a one-off contract. But they hired this company called Embass Landscaping and they had one called Roamfort. So, r-o-a-m-f-o-r-t got four recreation grounds to cut and maintain and Embass Landscaping got four janitorial contracts at around \$18,000 a month.

These two companies, Roamfort Enterprises and Embass Landscaping have the same registered address, 12 Riverside Avenue Extension, Balmain, Couva. Both of them have the same directors. All four of them are soldiers in the defence force. [Interruption] All of them. The names are here, all of them, and members outside cannot get jobs, members outside, they are scraping, they cannot make ends meet. Why is it—even when they are so corrupt—it has to be kept in the hands of only a few? Why only a chosen few have to eat? Why is it all of us do not rise? All of us could only rise if you spread the wealth around. [Desk thumping]

**Miss Cox:** All for soldiers?

**Mr. J. Warner:** All for soldiers—what are the names? But I will give it to you. “Me eh have nutten to”—Andy Berahazer, Anthony Superville, Kevin Nurse and Bernard Hernandez; soldiers.

A club called Malabar Football Club is playing in the zone. In football, you have zonal football, you have super league, and you have professional league; Malabar is in the zone, but Malabar is the favourite club of the Minister. I have no problem with that, but do what is right. So, he gives Malabar \$60,000 a month and he gives the clubs in the league—seven of them—\$50,000 a month, professional league, and then Malabar writes and say they want \$80,000 a month,

Without due diligence the Minister tells Anthony Creed—Mr. Anthony Creed, SPORTT recommended policy, also for “Guaya”, Point Fortin Civic Centre and Central Football Club and signs approved. Is that how money is done? They do not even have to justify it; signs approved. “Listen nah man”, money for this Government means nothing.

**3.45 p.m.**

Madam Deputy Speaker, I come to the LifeSport scholarship. The facts are as follows, and I want to say here on the *Hansard* that when the Minister said that 25

persons are on scholarships in the States, to this House, he was not telling us the facts; he was not telling us the truth. And I say to this here to correct it—that is not so.

**Mr. Roberts:** Madam Deputy Speaker, 36(5), at no point in time would I ever come to this House and not speak the truth. The information I gave at the time was the information that I had. If there are any changes then that is one thing, but he cannot impute improper motive. Let him continue to have fun.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Member for Chaguanas West, yes, definitely you are bordering on imputing improper motives. I want you to stay clear from improper motives, and I also want to ask you to continue.

**Mr. J. Warner:** Madam Deputy Speaker, when the Minister came to tell us that 25 persons were on scholarships in the US and was waving the flag and so on—tell us so, and was regaling himself, and there was thumping on the desk at these US scholarships, information he had was incorrect. There were no 25 persons who got any scholarships to go anywhere. And therefore, if you could take back your thump when you were thumping the desk, take it back, because nobody, no scholarships went anywhere. What are the facts, Madam Deputy Speaker? According to Pastor Seaton, from the Christian Victory Academy in New York, none of the students has received visas as yet. [*Laughter*] None.

Secondly, the sum of TT \$325,000 was placed in a local account to facilitate acquiring visas for the 25 persons. But the money that was needed was US \$325,000. So they put the money in the bank. The Ministry is now seeking to process four students to attend Christian Victory Academy, and these children are between the ages of 15 and 16; upon completion they receive a high school diploma.

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, some questions arise. I asked myself, how could my Minister of Education allow his students to be selected in the most—and the person who is doing it, of course, has absolutely no competence whatsoever. How can the Minister of Education or the Cabinet or both, could ever have approved to take students out of the schools, if they did that, to go to get a high school diploma in the States? Are you saying our education system here is inferior? And worse yet, Member for Caroni East, they take people from East Mucurapo, El Dorado West, Tranquility, Mucurapo West, Barrackpore East, Diego Martin Secondary, Morvant/Laventille and so on, these are the people whose names they had, to go away.

In one case Minister, two persons from one house, Josiah Latren, and Samantha Latren, Raenique Primus, Renaldo Primus. Who did the selection? You

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know who did it? I will tell you, a fella called Allister Ramdoo. Who is Allister Ramdoo? What commitment he had to take your students and to tell them that a US high school diploma is better than yours? How could he have done this? Worse yet, this is the same Ramdoo who asked the Pastor to give him a letter to say that he is owing rent so as to be paid by the LifeSport Programme. He asked the Pastor to lie, and the Pastor did it. And this same Ramdoo—[*Interruption*]

**Hon. Member:** He did or he did not?

**Mr. J. Warner:** He did, D-I-D. And this same Ramdoo is taking our students, and I must sit here and listen to the incorrect information the Minister is regaling this House with, 25 students, and people [*Mr. Warner thumps desk*] take it back, take it back, it is wrong. Our students here—and worse yet, our education system here, diploma here is much higher than theirs.

**Hon. Member:** Correct.

**Mr. J. Warner:** Deception at the highest. Madam Deputy Speaker, I will read what the Minister said, the Minister of Sport said, that he will resign if the LifeSport Programme proves that payment to criminal elements, or words to that effect. I want to tell the Minister that the audit is not designed to do that. The audit cannot tell him—all this dramatizing and so on, cannot tell him if criminals are being paid or not. What you have to have is a criminal investigation to tell you that. What you have to have, of course, is the Commissioner of Police to tell you that.

The audit, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Ministry of Finance and the Economy plans to conduct a comprehensive audit of the payment system of the LifeSport Programme. Do not come and fool people and say, if they find anybody paying criminals. How can they do that? Their role is to conduct a comprehensive audit of the payment system, and what I have done here today is a mere 8 per cent of the papers I have so far that says enough. And therefore you cannot do that as such.

Madam Deputy Speaker, you know, I know the person who will talk after me will tell you about FIFA and CONCACAF, and who again—Bin Hammam, that is okay, if that could help the country, well go ahead. I am talking about here and now and what they have done. [*Desk thumping*] I am talking about what they have failed to do. I am talking about the hopes and aspirations which we gave the people when I was there.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Sport ever follows what Obama is doing in the States. It is “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative. President



Obama launched “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative, he launched it. What is this? I will read it into the record. This of course is a report that came from the US on July 21, 2014 at 10.37 a.m. By Trymaine Lee.

“President Barack Obama announced the expansion of My Brother’s Keeper Monday afternoon...”

The Prime Minister ever went to your thing? The Prime Minister ever went to your business to announce anything? The little black boys you are boasting about up in Carapo, did she ever go up to talk to them? But:

“President Barack Obama announced the expansion of My Brother’s Keeper Monday afternoon and reaffirmed his ongoing commitment to bolstering the lives of young minority men and boys.

My Brother’s Keeper is Obama’s signature effort to help remedy the dismal outcomes suffered disproportionately by young men and boys of color...”

The same black boys he is talking about.

“On Monday, Obama announced an expansion of the initiative that includes commitments by 60 of America’s largest school districts and a host of new foundations and agencies as well as major corporations, including the NBA and its players and retired players...AT&T and the Emerson Collective...The new commitments total about \$104 million and include aggressive mentorship and recruitment campaigns targeted at minority males.

The goals of My Brother’s Keeper are broadly to help young men of color...”

The same little black boys he is talking about, but I do not know little black boys alone have problems. All people have problems.

You observe in everything I have said and so far have done, nothing so far for Chaguanas West. Everybody is behaving like the Minister of Works and Infrastructure, nothing for Chaguanas West, right? But again, I told “them guys” in Chaguanas West, nothing lasts forever, right?

“The goals of My Brother’s Keeper are broadly to help young men of color at critical moments of their lives, including early literacy, high school and in the teens...”

Hear what Obama is saying, I quote him, Obama is speaking:

“We want fewer young men in jail, we want more of them in college...We want fewer young men on the streets, we want more of them in the boardrooms. We want everybody to have a chance to succeed in America.”

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LifeSport Programme could do that?

LifeSport Programme, Madam Deputy Speaker, right, has reached the stage where it was of course giving NLCB, National Lotteries Control Board, serious trouble, because people were saying do not play lotto, play LifeSport. [*Laughter*] So NLCB was getting serious trouble, right? Obama said—this, Madam Deputy Speaker, was launched with \$200 million. What Obama did, Madam Deputy Speaker, he called on the private sector to come and help.

He called on the rich corporations to come and help. He called on the NBA people to come and help. He did not call, of course, on past criminals, and men who, of course, have been dodging jail for years. He said, of course, I want these guys who would come and help to be role models, and he did it and it is now growing by leaps and bounds. But if you cannot do this, at least do what the Oklahoma public schools are doing, do what they are doing. And these people—hear, they have spent \$2 million in their programme, we spent \$300 million. So therefore, the question therefore is, should the Minister be censured?

Madam Deputy Speaker, if ever a case has called for censure this one has. [*Desk thumping*] But I am not optimistic that would take place, because the fact is, in this Government you have some people who are luckier than others, right? And in this particular case, I guess this Minister is luckier than the last two who had to leave. But the fact is people are asking what you want.

Madam Deputy Speaker, before I conclude, I am asking the Prime Minister not to give those documents to Tom, Dick and Harry, I am asking her to ask for a forensic audit, ask for a forensic audit to be conducted in the LifeSport Programme. That would tell us where the money has gone. That would tell us if the criminals have gotten the money. That would tell us if they have taken the money to buy guns and ammunition. Nothing else will tell us that. I am asking for a criminal investigation because at the end of the day this is not the Government's money, it is taxpayers', and what we see here has nothing but a cesspool of scandal.

The Prime Minister has flushed her legacy down the drain based on the LifeSport Programme. [*Desk thumping*] And I do not know if it can be recovered in 10 months, but the fact is, I am saying what has happened here will never be forgotten. Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

**The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal):** Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I rise this afternoon to contribute on this Motion brought in the name of the Member for Diego Martin

North/East dealing with a very important matter that has occupied the attention of the public and Members of this House over the past several months.

Before I deal with the matter, for the record, I just needed to respond very briefly to a couple issues raised by the Member for Chaguanas West concerning the Parliament and the procedure we follow. And to remind the Member and hon. Members generally that it has been a practice in the Parliament on Private Members' Day for the business to conclude at 4.30 p.m. That has been a practice for several years. It did not start in 2010 or in 2014.

**4.00 p.m.**

The other practice, just to clarify, is that Private Members, including the Member for Chaguanas West, have an opportunity to file Motion to debate on Private Members' Day and there are several Motions on the agenda deemed "Private Business". The Member was quite right when he pointed out that there were 10 matters for Private Business. Incidentally, not one filed by the Member for Chaguanas West, but filed by other Members of the Opposition, and on Private Members' Day the Members of the Opposition decide which Motion they would like to debate. It is not the Government that decides this.

So if one Motion is not exhausted, or not started for that matter, it is really a matter for the Opposition to determine. And there is a Motion, in particular, No. 7, that has not started yet. But this is a matter that is determined by the Opposition, not the Government. So I think it is unfair to blame the Government that Motions have not started or have not been exhausted. That is just for correction.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to, again, reinforce the events of this day. It is an historic day. The Member for Chaguanas West is correct, it is an historic day. The Prime Minister came to this House a couple hours ago—mere couple hours ago—laid a report in this House and indicated that that report has been sent forthwith to the Commissioner of Police, the DPP, the Integrity Commission, the Head of the Public Service and the media. Madam Deputy Speaker, I will just ask Members: when was the last time any Government received a report on any wrongdoing and sent it forthwith to the Commissioner of Police, the DPP, [*Desk thumping*] the Integrity Commission, the Head of the Public Service?

Several years ago, there was a report on CEPEP, multimillion-dollar fraud allegations, theft. Did the former Government send that report to the DPP?

**Hon. Member:** No.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** No! They hid it. Even as a Member of Parliament you could not get a copy to read it. You had to depend—if it was leaked to the press, to read it. Madam Deputy Speaker, they had at one time under the NHA—now HDC—a corruption scandal where people were getting contracts to paint. The former Minister Danny Montano made reference to it. And they were painting under the names of contractors named Venus Williams, Jennifer Lopez and so on. These were the contractors. When that report was made, nobody saw the report. Was it sent to the police? Was it sent to the Integrity Commission? No!

Today, this Prime Minister comes to the House and comes to the country and says, “Let the chips fall where they may”. [*Desk thumping*] And if it is a contractor “Up to the Bar”, or “Full Events”, or whatever—“Dustbin Terrier” or whoever, if that is the contractor, then the police will deal with that. That is the courage of the Prime Minister, the hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar. [*Desk thumping*] That is the courage! That is the courage! And that is what she has done today. This is why it is an historic day.

I want to tell the Member for Chaguanas West to be very careful—be very careful. All I could do is warn. The Member came to the House—I have a copy of this report which I have been able to peruse, and in some cases, to read areas, and if it is that the information that was released by the Member for Chaguanas West today is not in this report, I will personally send a copy of his *Hansard* to the police, and the police will visit him concerning the information that he has brought to the House, if it is not here. And I can tell you, information that the Member has raised is not in this report.

So there is a second audit report, and the Member for Chaguanas West is in possession of an audit report that he wrote himself, from Ruth Marchan. [*Desk thumping*] And I want to tell you that this report says that that person could not be found to give information or evidence for this report. [*Desk thumping*] So the Member for Chaguanas West, inadvertently or not, has now become a party to this report, [*Desk thumping*] and the DPP and the police would be interested in that information. When they were searching for her, she was in a safe house by the Member for Chaguanas West. He is on public record in the newspaper as saying that. This person was in a safe house; could not be found to give information to the special audit committee, but information came out today in this Parliament from the Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Roberts:** “He livin wit she! He livin wit she!”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to ask the Member—this is now available to all MPs—tell us whether or not you are also connected to companies listed here in the LifeSport. [*Desk thumping*] Tell us whether or not there are companies connected to you that are listed here, whether as caterers, as refurbishment, as maintenance contractors. I will not read the names of contractors. It is now public. But the Member for Chaguanas West needs to look at this and indicate whether or not he, or his family members, are connected to companies listed here, providing services. I will not read them. This is now a public document.

You see, today, something else happened. When we were coming to the Parliament, as is the custom, we enquired from those opposite who will speak on the Bill, as we indicate for us who will speak on this Bill. We were told that the Member for St. Joseph was going to speak, and, indeed, we verily believed that because he speaks on everything, and, Madam Deputy Speaker, he was there with his lead pencil marking down—writing down things, so we thought he was speaking. We did not know they cut a deal with the Member for Chaguanas West that he would speak on behalf of the PNM. [*Desk thumping*] So that the Member for Chaguanas—[*Interruption*]

**Miss Mc Donald:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise—

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** What is your Standing Order?

**Miss Mc Donald:** I rise on 36(5).

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Member for Oropouche East, the Member claims that you are on—35(6). Member, I want to ask you to stay with the Motion before us and to focus on that.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Having come to the House to hear the Member for St. Joseph, as we were informed, we heard the Member for Chaguanas West. Those are the facts. I say no more on that.

So that the Member for St. Joseph did not speak. The Member for Chaguanas West spoke, and all my friends opposite, when he was speaking, were going, “Ooooh! Aaaaah!” You know? First time—[*Crosstalk*] I did not know—they found their fists, beating the table. But I want to tell my friend from Chaguanas West, when he ends up in the courthouse on a next matter for defamation, none of them will be in the courthouse going, “Ooooh, Aaaaah”, and beating the table. Because in the papers today, I could not help but note, Madam Deputy Speaker—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Warner:** Madam Deputy Speaker, 36(5).

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Overruled, Member. You may continue.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Madam Deputy Speaker, page 11 of the *Guardian*—and in the *Express* and *Newsday* today—and I am reading the headline, no disrespect meant: “Jack to pay \$200,000.” Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, there is a pattern in this country—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Roberts:** “Leh Ruth Marchan pay it.”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** It is the front page of the *Newsday*. What is said there?

**Dr. Griffith:** “Jack to pay \$.2 million.”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Point two million dollars, Jack to pay. But that is the headline, no disrespect.

You see, when you go in the public domain and you call everybody corrupt—a young man in this case: he take money; he was corruptly receiving money to vote for the UNC; he is a “tief”; he is a this, he is a that, but when Justice Vasheist Kokaram looking for you to explain yourself, you run from the courthouse, and then have \$.2 million to spend. But that, my friend—they will not support my friend. When they ask him, “Give us all this paper we holdin’ up and showin—look it here! Look it here! Look it here! When you go in the courthouse, you cyar tell de Judge, look it here. Look it here. Look it here.” Because that is a separate matter.

So I warn my friend, when you have this type of information and you make allegations like this against people, I really do hope you have, “Look it here”, and you “doh” have to go in the courthouse and find yourself in a position where a next headline is you owe somebody \$.2 million for defamation. And to say God put you there. God did not put you there. Your misdeeds put you there. Do not blame God. [*Desk thumping*] God never put you there!

The Member for Chaguanas West came to the Cabinet for \$9 million to bail out a fire truck—\$9 million! When we told him, “You cannot do that”, he say, “Okay, ah go come back wit ah lesser figure”. And then \$6 million gone! And today, comes to this House, as a paragon of virtue—[*Interruption*]

**Hon. Member:** Holier than thou.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Holier than thou, and seeking to reprimand the Member for D’Abadie/O’Meara. This matter is in the hands of the police. The police will take action. And that forensic investigation you ask for, the police will

investigate fraud, and all those names, they will come out. But you play holier than thou. I am not here to talk about FIFA and Bin Hammam and “Hamma” and these people. “I eh bodderin wit dat again.” I think the whole country knows of those issues.

**Hon. Member:** The world knows about it.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** The world knows of it. I am here to focus on our LifeSport matter. Madam Deputy Speaker, he speaks about reform. Today, we got a copy of the new Standing Orders. Look at this, man, [*Holds up new Standing Orders*] new Standing Orders, 2014. I never thought in my parliamentary life I would see something like this. [*Desk thumping*] First ever amendment to the Standing Orders since 1962. This Government presides over parliamentary reform as never before.

This is a Prime Minister who, in a few short weeks, will have to stand in this Parliament and answer questions posed by the Leader of the Opposition, like in the British Westminster Parliament, and she is prepared for that. But that is what accountability and transparency is. [*Desk thumping*] So when the Prime Minister stands here, because of this reform, you will then ask about the—“wha is de dustbin contractor name? Outta de dustbin?”

**Mr. Roberts:** Some Dustbin Diver.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Dustbin Diver. You will ask all your questions about above the bar and below the bar and so on. You can ask that. We are setting up committees to monitor almost every area of Government—we are setting up for this Parliament. That is what reform is about.

So to say that this Government promised this and did not deliver, that is what new governance is about. This is approved. You are expected to read this so that in the next session, the Fifth Session of the Tenth Parliament—[*Crosstalk*]

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Members, please.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:**—we will uphold this.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Fifty-two years ago.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Fifty-two years ago! Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate that there is another angle that the Member did not, for obvious reasons, address. If what the Member is saying is true—and we do not have the evidence because we have not had the opportunity to survey his materials; we

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have the audit report that has been just laid today; Members would not have studied it in time. But if what the Member is saying is true, it also speaks of some breakdown in the accountability system among public officers.

In our Ministry, if there is a lunch you pay for and you go back with a bill for \$500, the accounting department “does sen’ a note”: “Could you explain who went to the lunch? What they had to eat? Who was present at the table? Why you order three soups instead of two?” You have to explain that to the accounting department in my Ministry—in all Ministries. You remember when a former Minister went and took expenses from Government, to buy what?

**Mr. Roberts:** Wig.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Well, “geh ah better way tuh say dat, nuh”. A hairdo.

**Mr. Roberts:** Weave.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Hairdo, a lamp. Something else, I forget. The accounting department raised that. The Ministry itself raised that matter. In a Ministry of Government it is not permitted. When we have to spend money—the PS is always in my office indicating, “Minister, our expenditure here and there; this can be done; this cannot be done, we have to ensure”—[*Interruption*]

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** They are responsible for the voucher.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** They are responsible. So today, this is also an indictment on the public officers who may have presided over this—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Roberts:** “One home by he.”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** One what?

**Mr. Roberts:** “One home by he.”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** “I doh know bout dat.”

**Mr. Roberts:** “One home sleepin by he.”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** “Well, ah doh know about dat eider.”

**Mr. Roberts:** “Buh he say so—

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Madam Deputy Speaker, so that there are issues, and that is why today the Prime Minister indicated to the House that the report was also sent to the Head of the Public Service because if what we are hearing is true, if what you read is true, then this speaks to a serious breakdown in the



accountability system, monitoring of the Ministry of Government. So that it is not something to take lightly, and that information could have been part of this report if that person had made herself available to the special audit committee, so that that information could have been in the report.

**4.15 p.m.**

Madam Deputy Speaker, that information I have not heard and I have not read, assuming it is true. But you see, a few weeks ago, the Member for Chaguanas West also did something here and I have to come back to it. The Member for Chaguanas West came to the House and said it had a company in Chaguanas, a banker from First Citizens Bank, building house. Now, when I heard that I jumped. House? I went outside and say, “Listen, find this company.” He called the name, NUWAC—Banker. I went outside and say, “Send me immediately information on this company.” When I took the company records, the directorships and so on, there is no banker listed as a director or an owner of the company.

Now, when you come to Parliament to use parliamentary privilege to go and bring people’s name into bacchanal and scandal and corruption, you hurt people. Faaq Mohammed was lucky in that those statements were made outside of Parliament. So he quickly moved to the courthouse to protect his reputation as a young man and as a councillor, but there are people whose names are called here, they will not have the protection because of the privilege that Members enjoy. It is very hard for them to go to the court on this matter, but the Member for Chaguanas West was caught out—to use a cricketing and not a football term—by Faaq Mohammed. It is left to be seen how many more defamation matters will be raised in light of these statements. Plenty more. In fact, I understand there are other matters involving other Members of Government. The Member for Tabaquite, his good friend from Tabaquite, they are also in the court over certain matters.

You see, Madam Deputy Speaker, when I rose earlier to point out to the Member 36(5), the Member said, “Well, I am speaking on the Motion. What is that 36(5)?” But that is the same type of recklessness that gets you in trouble, where you do not understand rules and you have no respect for rules. There are rules of the House. This is not a Motion that you can just bring everybody into it and say what you want about any and everybody. This is not a Motion like this. And every time the Member gets up to speak, you know, come with this thing again: “Members of Government silent, enjoying perks, enjoying this, and the time will come to go”.

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I want to tell you something. The time will come for everybody to go, including you. Nobody is here permanently. Everybody will one day go. “Remember I does get up sometime and talk about when they dead? One day somebody will talk bout all ah we.” That is the nature of the business. So to come every month, well “yuh goin now, yuh goin then, yuh goin then”, we will all go. But you think people here work day and night, and like if we chase down perks. The Member is very fortunate he can accept \$1 as his salary.

In fact, having read things about this Member I am surprised you accept \$1. I am surprised that you will still accept \$1. Will not tell us about the pension he gets from FIFA every month. That matter has been sorted out.

**Mr. Warner:** 36(5). I get no pension from FIFA.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I withdraw that.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Okay, the Member has withdrawn.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** I withdraw that. I do not want to engage the Member in that, but having read in the newspapers I am shocked that this Member will still collect \$1. But there—and not everybody is fortunate like the Member for Chaguanas West. We cannot give up our salary, give up our allowances, give up everything.

**Hon. Member:** You have baby to mind. [*Laughter*]

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I have “lil” baby to mind. I cannot give up salary at a time like this. You know, I have to buy to milk.

But the Member comes and throws this every week that perks and so on, as if to suggest that Members here on this side are holding on to office and grabbing on to office and we will never let go. Members on this side work very hard. We have produced a document here for this Parliament and the country, our achievement book to March 31, 2014. No Government has done this before. I notice none of them opposite does read it eh. “It doh have enough pictures so they cyar look through it like ah album”, but they will not read it and they will not tell us if something is right or wrong, Madam Deputy Speaker. We have produced our achievements. Members of this Government work very hard to get achievement.

Today, I am proud. In Mayaro we are building a fire station that Eric Williams promised. [*Desk thumping*] When you pass on the highway you see the children’s hospital, the aquatic centre, the oncology centre, [*Desk thumping*] but all of that means nothing to those opposite. It means nothing. We are opening police stations, next is Maloney. We are going La Brea.

Madam Deputy Speaker, may I announce in a few short weeks we will invite the Member for Point Fortin to join us to turn the sod for the Point Fortin hospital [*Desk thumping*] which they promised—I do not know when they promised. Arima, we will turn the sod for the Arima hospital. The oncology centre which they promised—“I doh know how much donkey years now”—is under construction. The Minister of Health, Fuad Khan—[*Interruption*]

**Dr. Griffith:** The site for Grande hospital.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** The what?

**Dr. Griffith:** The site for Grande hospital.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** The site for Grande hospital. We are now doing a housing in Sangre Grande, in rural areas. I mean, listen, every single Minister has produced, but every Government faces this challenge. You know, their Government also faced the challenge.

The LifeSport Programme was a programme that had noble intentions, established to work in at-risk communities with the youth and particularly persons who were prone to get themselves into trouble, or those who have been in trouble, came back out of the prison and are looking for some employment and active—it was a noble intention. So when I hear Members opposite tell me the coordinator had a criminal record, who do you think the coordinator would be? Selwyn Ryan? The coordinator would be a university lecturer? So if the coordinator had some brush with the law before, these are the people who you were to reform and give employment to.

The LifeSport had a noble intention, but we have heard reports—the Prime Minister commissioned a report. The report speaks to certain wrongdoings. This has to be tested. The police has to look at it and that has happened. But every Government, whether it is through your URP, your CEPEP, your HDC, attempts to deal with young people in high-risk areas. They did it before, and the next administration of the People’s Partnership will still have that problem to address.

In fact, in the Selwyn Ryan report that deals with youth at risk, they recommend programmes like the LifeSport. They did not recommend the management of the LifeSport, given the experiences, but programmes like these every Government has to embark upon. Some work, some do not work. We are forgetting in national security—we have the MILAT, MYPART programmes—[*Interruption*]

**Hon. Member:** HYPE.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** The what? The HYPE programme—[*Interruption*]

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Civilian Conservation.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:**—the Civilian Conservation Corps—you have not heard much about them—[*Interruption*]

**Hon. Member:** It started under the PNM.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:**—programmes that the PNM started—[*Interruption*]

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** And we continued.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:**—and we continued them. These are programmes that really attempt to deal with youth at risk, and in a society if you do not deal with youth at risk and those communities, you are in trouble, Madam Deputy Speaker. In our housing policy now, we are devising strategies of dealing with youth at risk in the so-called hot spots and in those areas where urban housing is also associated with urban crime. We are developing strategies to deal with that. So while, yes, there are problems with the LifeSport Programme—its administration, procurement and so on—it is reported here. The Member has raised some issues. That does not mean that programmes like these should not be created, and Government should not be bold enough to embark upon programmes.

In fact, the gentleman from Chaguanas West, when he served in the administration—[*Interruption*]

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** The Member.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:**—the Member, I think, was an inspiration behind the Hoop of Life Programme, and the Members of the Opposition and others condemned the Member for Chaguanas West then. They did not pound the table and go “hohohoo”, “hahahaha”. They condemned him then for the Hoop of Life Programme which was meant to stimulate basketball activities among the basketballers, athletes and so on, in depressed communities. Today, places like Marabella—you forget we went Marabella to look at basketball, and if you see, Madam Deputy Speaker, how many people came out to this—the community—how many young men are involved in this. They practised hard. They came for donations for their uniform, merino and so on, that they used. And I am happy in La Romaine and such places, in our constituency, the Hoop of Life has been such a success.

When we brought the basketball player, Shaquille O’Neal I think it was, to Trinidad, the Member for Chagauans West involved at the time, they wanted to

kill “we”. Wasting money. Today it is a success. It saved lives and, Madam Deputy Speaker, they raised all kinds of issues with the money we paid for basketball players and so on, but it has worked and every administration has to tackle this problem. So the Hoop for Life was a success. What other programme? We have other programmes. When my friend was in national security he had programmes at the savannah, spending money for family activity.

I remember the Member used to talk to us and he would say, “A day goes by, no murder, no murder.” They had programmes at the Queen’s Park Savannah I believe, spending money. Nobody did not say, “Well, why you spending so much money?” But, Madam Deputy Speaker, a development strategy for countries like ours must include programmes and policies that deal with youth at risk. Members opposite will one day I hope, before the next election—because they have not in four years—they will have to tell us what policies they are advancing. In four years they have not come to the country with a coherent and comprehensive policy package to deal with the ills facing this country—Members of the Opposition. They condemn every week, they criticize, they jump up, they get on, they slam the table when the Member for Chaguanas West is talking, but ask them what is their policy. How will they treat with the problem? They do not know. What is their vision?

**Mr. Baksh:** 2030.

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** They move from 2020 to 2030. By next week it might be 2040. That is their vision, and then they recycle their politicians. Persons who were there before, who were dismissed from Cabinet—dismissed—they recycle them as the new team and bring back questionable persons, one formerly from Caroni. We will have a lot to say about the gentleman. We will have a lot to say about him.

**Miss Mc Donald:** “Dat bothering yuh?”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** What bothers us is hypocrisy. That is what bothers us, and we will have a lot to say about him.

I do not want to call his name, but you are familiar with it. He wants to be in Mayaro I think. He has ambitions. “He smart, he say dey tell him run as ah independent, but he say he eh doing dat. Dat stupid.” He wants to just use them to see if he could get into office.

**Mr. Peters:** “Tell dem I am Rambaciyat.”

**Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I cannot repeat what the Member for Mayaro says. I cannot repeat that, but I want to tell him that he will

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have an opportunity to state his new sobriquet. [*Laughter*] It has moved from Gypsy to something else, and he will have an opportunity to state that on the platform when that character who is now—you know, who for four years in the newspaper, pretending to be independent and this voice of reason and this thing, and then “jump up on de platform waving flag”. But we will wait for them. We will wait for them, Madam Deputy Speaker.

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate that 4.30 p.m. is upon us and as is the practice, we will not continue beyond 4.30 p.m. I will continue on another occasion. I have much more to say. But, may I in closing, again, reiterate that this matter of the LifeSport Programme came to the fore several months ago, when in the newspaper there were several articles speaking to irregularities and so on. The Prime Minister undertook to direct the Minister of Finance and the Economy to cause an investigation into this matter. Today, the report has been completed. The Prime Minister received this report just this week. Within hours, the Prime Minister has brought the report to the table for all Members to look at. [*Desk thumping*]

The Prime Minister has sent the report to the Commissioner of Police and the DPP, the Integrity Commission and the Head of the Public Service, and I indicated why earlier. That, Madam Deputy Speaker, is indeed part of the new governance we speak of. Every administration will be faced with problems in one programme or another. You think you will have an administration coming in this country and they will survive after five years and not one programme or one Ministry will have issues of procurement, of irregularity? You think any administration would be like that? Absolutely none!

It is not that they happened. It is what happens when they come to the fore, and if you want to be developed-country status and a mature democracy, then you must show the strength of your courage by taking matters, placing it in the hands of independent authorities, law enforcement authorities and saying, as the Member for Siparia said today—the Prime Minister—that whoever is guilty should face the full brunt of the law. [*Desk thumping*] Whoever is guilty.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I will pause for now and continue on the next occasion. [*Desk thumping*]

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, it is an appropriate time for some refreshments. This House is now suspended to 5.00 p.m.

**4.30 p.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

*Adjournment*

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**5.00 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal):** Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Monday, July 28, 2014 at 1.30 p.m., and to serve notice on that day that we intend to complete debate on the Planning and Facilitation of Development Bill and also to consider several amendments brought from the other place on several pieces of legislation, including the Miscellaneous Provisions (Administration of Justice) Bill, 2014, the prisons legislation, the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amdt.) Bill, 2014, amendments. So that the Senate amendments all from the other place, we will deal with it on Monday at 1.30 p.m. and conclude debate on the Planning and Facilitation of Development Bill. I beg to move.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, before I put the question before the House, there are several matters that qualify to be raised on the Motion for the Adjournment filed by the Member for Port of Spain South and there are five others filed by the Member for Diego Martin North/East. However, we are dealing, at this point in time, with those Motions, and I call on the Member for Diego Martin Central.

#### **Mosquito-borne Infections (Steps Taken by the Ministry of Health)**

**Dr. Amery Browne (Diego Martin Central):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and to be clear, I am dealing with one of those Motions which I, myself, filed. This is a matter on the Motion for the Adjournment focused on the need for an improved national response to emerging vector-borne diseases. The rainy season is upon us in Trinidad and Tobago and our citizens are facing some very harsh consequences, sometimes consequences of their own behaviour.

I want to start by indicating what this presentation is not. This is not a guise for creating panic or chaos in the population of Trinidad and Tobago or the conveying of any false perceptions of the current chikungunya epidemic. That is not what this Motion is about because we on this side believe in responsible presentations in the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. We got, in the last term, prior to 2010, a number of demonstrations and examples of the opposite type of presentation, and the nation would recall, with some horror, some presentations that were made in this Lower House on dengue that were highly politicized and designed to create terror in the population. That is not going to happen today. So I

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just want to start with what it is not. What this Motion is though, is an opportunity for the Minister of Health to inform the nation on a number of steps that the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders would be taking to help reduce the threat, particularly of mosquito-borne infections and other vector-borne diseases in this country.

I want to begin by informing this House, for those who do not know, that the people of Diego Martin, as we speak, are currently under siege by hordes of mosquitoes and I will go further than that to say, the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Many parts of this country and constituencies on all sides of the geographic spectrum are currently under siege by hordes of mosquitoes, some of which are quite dangerous to health.

There are many areas of this country where persons have become quite frantic and have been calling their MPs; I am sure they called the Minister of Health, they called their local government bodies, all and sundry parties. And usually the call is of the same nature, "We want spraying, we want spraying, we want spraying". There has been some spraying going on but I have formed the opinion it is not being done in a strategic manner and it is not being done in a systematic manner, and we will talk a little bit more about that.

This is serious business because over the last decade, we heard a lot about weapons of mass destruction on the international stage. But in this country, we have some very tiny weapons of mass destruction and many of us citizens are harbouring those weapons in our own homes and yards. The mosquito has often been underestimated in this country, and you might ask the question: Who is to blame? There is no single person or entity that should be singled out for blame. We are all to blame in Trinidad and Tobago for this ongoing scourge of mosquitoes.

Let me remind the House that this society has dealt, in the past, with yellow fever, before the 1970s, with malaria. Of course, with dengue which is an ongoing endemic infection which means it is here on an annual basis, continuous basis, and now we are dealing with a few cases of chikungunya and who knows what is next. What is the next emerging infection? We also have to mention West Nile virus as well, as the Minister would well know. Who knows what is next? We have yet to really see a comprehensive national effort to rid Trinidad and Tobago of the mosquito. It might seem like a very ambitious mission but I believe that is a mission that we should all embark upon with immediate effect. A national mission to rid Trinidad and Tobago of the mosquito.



What have we seen? We have seen a number of advertisements. There is one on the radio with granny and so on and—a number of public advertisements, so clearly some money is being spent in trying to communicate to the public. Many observers, though, have commented that much of this advertising is not really in the form of behaviour change communication designed to literally trigger changes in behaviour. Some of it is more public information which is necessary, but which should not be expected to automatically lead to behaviour change. So that is a science in itself and that is an area that I would encourage much greater focus on behaviour change communication.

We have seen sporadic spraying as well, and I have mentioned that, that the population has been disappointed by the frequency and consistency and the lack of strategic nature of some of that spraying. But some of that disappointment has to go back to the population itself because we as citizens have been doing a very, very poor job in maintaining our domestic landscapes and environments free of larvae and mosquitoes.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have also seen some inspection of premises but this has not been systemic, this has not been systematic and there appears to be very little teeth behind those inspections, and I will speak a little bit more about that. Because our public health inspectors complain perennially that the Public Health Ordinance is outdated, that the fines are too small, and the laws tend to be quite cumbersome. The Minister must be aware of this because I know they have been in communication with him. And some of these relevant laws are difficult to enforce. What that means is that there is a sense of complacency, people are sitting back out there in the communities, because they are not really feeling the brunt of the law when they transgress, as citizens are transgressing frequently in allowing their environments to harbour these weapons of mass destruction—tiny weapons of mass destruction.

There is the Litter Act; there is the Yellow Fever Act from back in 1944; there is the Public Health Ordinance from 1935, I think it was amended in the 1970s. A lot of very old legislation and if you look at the age of the laws, it might tell you the society's priorities. Is this something that we as a country are taking seriously enough? This is serious business. The Prime Minister had dengue some time ago, I had dengue twice already and who knows, her next exposure, my next exposure, any citizen's next exposure, might be our last, it could be fatal, and then there are these other infections and there are new emerging infections coming all the time.

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Madam Deputy Speaker, there is a basic principle in life: if there is no consequence, it is difficult to achieve change. I am encouraging the Minister of Health to also focus on improving the sense of consequence and that involves some legislative work, and I do have some recommendations in that regard. We do need some laws with teeth that are enforceable and that bring serious consequences on any entity—any household, or organization or entity that is found to be harbouring mosquitoes and the conditions that are ripe for larvae and the breeding of mosquitoes.

Madam Deputy Speaker, even some simple house plants. I do not know if Members are familiar with the bromeliad, which is a very common and beautiful plant that is found in many homes in Diego Martin, is ideal for harbouring mosquitoes. Very quickly, I visited a home just yesterday in my constituency, and the lady of the house was very proud. She said, “I keep my environment clean and I empty out my bromeliads several times a week”. I said, “Well, let us just check”. I walked up to the plants, they are on a rack in pots, and when you look down into the little cusp between the leaves, full of mosquito larvae, and that just tells you what is going on out there.

So, these few understaffed, under-resourced public health inspectors without legislation that really has teeth and consequence, I think we are going to struggle with achieving that behaviour change which is essential. So I am saying that there is some work to be done in that regard.

Citizens also seem to underestimate the life cycle of mosquitoes. Sometimes less than a week from egg to a full-blown adult which flies directly into the house. Persons have maid’s quarters or outhouses or toilets that are not used sometimes, and when you look into the bowl, in the toilet bowl, full of mosquito larvae, and so many other structures that we underestimate that can harbour the two types of mosquitoes that are known to transmit chikungunya and the other mosquitoes. I would not spend too much time on the clinical presentation because as I said, this is not considered a fatal disease, this is not going to kill you, but there are some long-term consequences, possible debilitation. It is not something we should take casually.

I know the Minister has indicated we may have just had about three cases, but if you look up the Caribbean, the French territories and other smaller islands, you would see where they have gone from a handful of cases to over 1,000 in a matter of weeks. I do not know what makes us that much different from them, it just says the potential is there. This is not a case of holding any individual accountable for

that potential, but the society itself, we all have roles and responsibilities, and I am inviting the Minister of Health to take ownership and charge of this particular national response.

I heard pronouncements made in the media a couple of months ago that I was disappointed by, when the Minister said, “We are ready for chikungunya”. Mr. Minister, I disagree, we were not ready; we are not ready. I do not know if maybe you would have wanted to have nuanced those words because it can have the effect of creating a sense of complacency. Because if we are ready, then we do not need to get ready, and my sense is that we still need to get ready. We always would need to get ready, when you are dealing with something as elusive, as evasive and as pervasive as the mosquito. So we need a very high-level national response. There is no room for complacency and, as I said, it is easy for cases to mushroom.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have a few recommendations because we do not want to be accused of just talk without some ideas or suggestions or recommendations. I will go through them very quickly because I do not think—I may only have about five minutes remaining—[*Crosstalk*] Maybe one. [*Laughter*] The first is a proper behaviour change communication campaign which I mentioned before which really should involve more of the social media. Again, granny on the radio and those other things are fine but it would need to be much more science-influenced and inclusive of community groups and social media.

Number two: leadership. I know the Minister of Health has other responsibilities and many distractions on his plate but the fact of the matter is I am imploring the Minister of Health to take full charge on this issue, to speak about it consistently and constantly at every single forum including right here in Parliament. We should have had at least a ministerial statement. We have statements on all kinds of foolishness sometimes. This is essential, but today is an opportunity, so maybe—I know he will take that opportunity. Establish a dialogue with the population and show that we are serious in reducing or eliminating the mosquito threat.

### **5.15 p.m.**

Very quickly, Madam Deputy Speaker, in wrapping up: Establish a mosquito reduction task force that goes beyond the insect vector control or any loose arrangements that might exist, that includes the insect vector control, local government bodies, municipal corporations, county medical officers of health, the public health inspectors and other stakeholders, including civil society groups,

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because they have to be part of this national response and aggressive thrust with this additional mission. Regularly review strategic information, mosquito maps and plan the spraying and targeted behaviour change activities in accordance with the patterns, not just of disease, but also of the vector itself, and ensure that that is done. Evidence informs action.

Just two more, Madam Deputy Speaker. Immediately review all the relevant legislation. I gave a few examples related to the breeding and harbouring of mosquitoes. That is very, very important, because someone can have a pristine property and take all effort and right next door, there is a neighbour who does not care, who is sloppy, who is facing no consequence and it is just a few feet away and death could visit upon them. Finally, we need to start making some examples. People need to be charged when they are flouting the law in this manner and the public needs to be informed and sensitized about those charges and the examples that are made. Just like littering, we need to start making examples when persons are creating such a danger with these weapons of mass destruction.

Then, I think with this approach, people would begin to take it more seriously because it is serious. I want to encourage the Minister of Health to spare no effort to accelerate those efforts he has been making. Chikungunya may not be fatal but it is quite serious, and we do not know what is next. It is time for a sustained national response to mosquitoes and other vectors. We cannot just do the same things over and over.

Finally, I just want to invite the Minister to use his 15 minutes to tell us what he has been doing. I know some efforts are being made, but it is—I am not seeking to create a forum for boasting or anyone resting on their laurels because the hordes of mosquitoes in Diego Martin and elsewhere tell us that there is no room for boasting on this. A lot more effort has to be made.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**The Minister of Health (Hon. Dr. Fuad Khan):** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I want to thank the Member of Parliament for Diego Martin Central for bringing this topic to the forefront. After listening to what he has contributed, it came up to the realization that Trinidad and Tobago started their development in 2010. You see, before 2010, there were no mosquitoes, there was no dengue, there was no nothing, and now in 2010, it seems to have gotten that.

You see, Madam Deputy Speaker, listening to the Member of Parliament for Diego Martin Central—and he said he is not going political but I am resting on my laurels, I have no leadership and that type of thing. What I am saying is the

people of Trinidad and Tobago should understand that insect vector and vector-borne diseases, mosquito-borne diseases have been present in this country since the 1950s. The public has been made increasingly aware of these diseases through various health promotion programmes and collaborative efforts from different Ministries, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Health. In 1965 and 1966, malaria was eradicated by the almost complete elimination of the anopheles mosquito through the global efforts of PAHO, WHO and vigilant surveillance by the Ministry of Health to prevent its resurgence.

I remember, prior to 2010, when dengue was a problem in this country and the then Minister of Health, through his Chief Medical Officer, indicated that dengue was under control and there was no problem. We have been doing, in the Ministry of Health, far from that. We have been in the forefront of trying to deal with the problem of insect vector and mosquito-borne diseases.

We, in 2011, started a programme of cleanliness and indicated to the population there are certain ways to prevent the spread of the aedes aegypti mosquito and those mosquitoes that cause dengue and chikungunya. What we have done, Madam Deputy Speaker, is indicated to the population that the breeding grounds—and the Member for Diego Martin Central is quite right—of the mosquito is the most important part to hit. Prevention is better than the actual cure or the treatment of those disorders.

We have looked and we have indicated to the insect vector department that we have to start a whole policy and plan, together with local government and we have done that because there was a meeting with the hon. Minister of Local Government, Miss Marlene Coudray, and myself, in Normandie, with all the stakeholders, approximately six weeks ago, putting together a plan of action. We are utilizing health and local government throughout the corporations to go on a drive, not only to clean the surroundings and looking at empty lots and abandoned lots, et cetera, but anywhere that a mosquito could breed in the actual stagnant water. A mosquito could breed in stagnant water, a mosquito could breed in cups. It could breed in anything, bottles that you throw away, in drains that are not moving.

So it is a combined effort of local government and the Ministry of Health. However, the Member is quite right. There needs legislation for looking after the abandoned lots and empty lots, and the Minister of Local Government has indicated that she will definitely look at that to see if she can bring something to

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deal with that problem. However, in her stint as the Mayor of San Fernando and the CEO, she has found certain areas that we can use in the legislation to deal with these errant owners.

I want to talk a little bit about spraying. Spraying insecticides is not effective because when you look at the actual volume of spraying going into the atmosphere, the rate of dissipation, which is movement of that chemical out of that surroundings, is as what we say, directly proportional to the breeze that is blowing. Now, you could ask for spraying and within two to three hours the spraying is gone. So those mosquitoes themselves just have to move up with the breeze and come back to the same area or hide under the culverts of the drains. So, when someone asks for spraying, we do spray because they need spraying and they expect spraying, of these chemicals. And we send out the spraying machines, but the most important part of this whole exercise, and the Member is right, the public health inspectors have to visit houses as they did in the older times, where they went to the houses and signed off for completeness of visiting and putting granules, et cetera, in those houses.

We are looking at a national plan of, one, cleaning up the area. We are utilizing local government as health and public inspector and also internal house residual spraying. The internal house residual spraying—we are hoping to introduce in those strategic areas that have a high volume of mosquitoes, especially that of the *aedes aegyptii*—would be the insect vector personnel going into houses and asking people up front, to cover their food, move their dogs out, move their birds, et cetera, and you do in-house spraying. That lasts for approximately three months and mosquitoes internally do not exist.

Together with the residents themselves, seeing after their surroundings, making sure that there is no stagnant water, no breeding grounds for mosquitoes and once again the Member is quite right. I have been saying it on the air for the last six weeks; unfortunately I may have been speaking on a radio station that he does not listen to. What we are saying is that your neighbour's house, a mosquito can fly approximately two house lengths, as much as three house lengths. So, if your house is clean, but your drains in front are not clean, or the houses next door they are not clean, then you run the risk of mosquitoes from that house coming, as they say, sucking the blood in your house and you run the risk of your children, yourself, et cetera having the dengue as well as chikungunya.

So, it is imperative on people looking and having a community area, community clean-up, looking to see can they work together with the neighbours and the drains in front. I know local government will do it and they have been

doing it. But sometimes it is necessary to take actions in your own hands because it is you who are going to suffer if the mosquito is breeding.

We are also looking at a system where we can spray but spray under culverts and drains at approximately 5.30/6.00 in the evening when the mosquitoes come out. What the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Local Government are doing, they are working on a plan as we speak. We may not call it a national plan, but it is a plan and it has been successful in decreasing the amount of people that are contracting the chikungunya virus. If the population works together with us, I believe that that amount, the numbers will not be as high as we think.

We have started a campaign called the “Don't Get Bite” campaign. It sends key messages out. It is a behaviour change, as well as an educational movement of both systems. What it indicates to people is that we are looking at what is called source reduction measures, such as:

- covering your containers of stored water with mesh or properly fitted lids;
- remove any receptacles that can collect water, such as discarded styrotex cups, plates, empty food tins, tyres, crumpled polythene areas, potted plants and their saucers;
- scrub the inner surface of floral vases where mosquito eggs may attach, it is particularly important;
- seal opened and exposed brick holes in exterior walls and fences;
- clear guttering to allow for the free flow of roof water;
- dismantle bulky waste before discarding such as fridges, stoves, washing machines and other household machines appliances which we see all over the place; and
- clean and clear overgrown bushes in vacant lots.
- for personal protection apply mosquito repellents, containing the active ingredient DAAT.
- install mesh screens for windows and doors if you can. Wear light-coloured clothes, long-sleeved clothes in the evening and use mosquito nets and bed nets.

I said that spraying of mosquitoes, et cetera, is not as effective as people would like you to believe. What is effective is that of prevention; prevention of moving the breeding grounds out.

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We are also looking at a national system of, the possibility of aerial spraying and the possibility of the introduction of what we call the genetic modified male mosquito. Most of the mosquitoes that bite individuals and transmit dengue and chikungunya, that mosquito is usually the female mosquito. Utilizing the genetically-modified male mosquito, no eggs would be hatched and if no eggs are hatched, soon afterwards we may be able to decrease the population of the larvae and mosquitoes.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, I understand that, as the Member said, that Diego Martin Central, Diego Martin has a lot of mosquitoes and one would have thought that after the local government election, the PNM, who won that seat, would have been able to clean the drains around that area. They have the corporation. So, obviously, they are not doing a good job. So, once again, we did not have that problem prior to the local government election.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, thank you very much.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*House adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 5.28 p.m.*