

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

IN THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WHICH OPENED
ON JANUARY 13, 1992

SESSION 1994 - 1995

VOLUME 42

SENATE

Monday, October 17, 1994

10.00 a.m.

The Senate having assembled, and it being the first meeting of the Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Clerk of the Senate read the following Proclamation:

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
No. 16 of 1994.

By His Excellency Noor Mohamed Hassanali,
President and Commander-in-Chief of the
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

NOOR HASSANALI
President

A PROCLAMATION

Whereas it is provided by subsection (1) of section 67 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, that each session of Parliament shall be held at such place within Trinidad and Tobago and shall commence at such time as the President may by proclamation appoint:

Now, therefore, I, NOOR MOHAMED HASSANALI, President as aforesaid, do hereby appoint the Red House, Port of Spain, as the place at which the Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament shall be held at 10.00 a.m on Monday the 17th day of October, 1994, as the time at which the said Session shall commence.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the
President of the Republic of Trinidad and
Tobago at the Office of the President, St.
Ann's, this 10th day of October, 1994.

Sen. Carol Mahadeo (Welcome)

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PRAYERS

[MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

**SEN. CAROL MAHADEO
(Welcome)**

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, before making the announcement, I should like to extend a very warm welcome to Sen. Carol Mahadeo, who has returned after undergoing surgery three months ago.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, His Excellency the President desires to address both Houses of Parliament. The sitting is accordingly suspended to allow Senators to proceed to the Parliament Chamber to attend the address by His Excellency the President.

10.05 a.m: *Sitting suspended.*

10.06 a.m: *The Senate joined Members of the House of Representatives in the other place.*

10.28 a.m: *His Excellency the President, accompanied by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, arrived in the Chamber.*

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

His Excellency's speech was as follows:

Mr. President of the Senate, Madam Speaker, hon. Members of Parliament, I greet you with my prayer that God's peace be with us all now and always.

I convey our grateful thanks to the representatives of religious faiths for their invocations for the welfare of the people of our country.

Hon. Members, for the greater part of this century the international community has been increasingly concerned over the degradation of the environment in the civilized world. I should like to share some thoughts on the subject—the environment.

As hon. Members are aware, over the past several years developed countries have, by means of loans, been funding capital intensive projects undertaken by some developing countries. Such funding has, for good reason, been subject to the condition that implementation of environmental strategies be included in the projects being undertaken. Long-term economic prosperity ought to be in

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harmony with, and not at the expense of, the naturally provided infrastructure. Thus, capital importing countries like Trinidad and Tobago have, to the extent indicated, been constrained, hopefully, to the benefit of their respective economies, to improve environmental management policies.

Hon. Members, man was created to love and to serve his Creator. I consider the earth, with all that was created between earth and sky, to be the Creator's gift to mankind. One perceives in that creation unity of purpose and design in the widest diversity of nature.

Man in his state of purity is the Creator's vicegerent on earth. The gift is for the use and benefit of mankind. This gift we must manage wisely, as would become a vicegerent. We must enjoy it accordingly. However, we being mere mortals, this gift is also a gift upon trust for the use and benefit of successive generations.

The environment now also includes everything that has been produced or caused by the activities of man or by the effect of the elements and the passage of time.

It was Mahatma Gandhi who once said, "There is a sufficiency in the world for man's needs but not for man's greed." However, we must protect and conserve, taking the utmost care not to disturb ecological balance. Hon. Members, I wonder: Is the apprehended danger of global warming a matter of mere academic interest, or in the alternative, will it remain one?

The 1982 United Nations Convention on the subject "The Law of the Sea and Related Issues" which, incidentally, comes into force next month, deals with the protection and preservation of the environment in respect of the territorial sea, the exclusive economic zone and the international seabed area. Under its terms, deep seabed mining may take place only after an environmental impact assessment is made; and all actions are to be avoided which are likely to disturb the ecological balance of the earth's ecosystem.

One was not surprised to read last Thursday, under caption "The Sea is no longer a Dumping Ground", a news report that at a recent London Convention the view was endorsed that certain substances should not be dumped at sea if it is not known whether they will put the marine environment at risk.

Hon. Members, the slogan "one earth—one family" would seem, then, to remind us that wise use management of the environment is the responsibility, after all, of all human beings. What then, of our own environment and the discharge of our related responsibilities?

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Notwithstanding our existing laws on the subject and the continuing efforts of government agencies and non-governmental organizations and also the laws which we are presently expecting, we yet continue to hope for improved environmental performance standards throughout our country

Legislation is concerned, among other things, with wise use management policies and strategies and with securing the co-ordinated contributions of scientists, administrators, engineers, economists and other experts.

Hon. Members, whether we consider our country a developed or a developing country, for improvement of our environmental performance standards we need, in addition to laws, an on-going process of education—in the home, in the school and in the community at large.

Of course, one is aware that curricula in both our primary and secondary schools do provide exposure to a study of the environment. One is also pleased to note that for some time now our country has been experiencing, through the electronic and print media and otherwise the educational benefit of a number of instructive publications on the subject, environment.

Whatever our wise use management plans, strategies or policies, successful implementation depends, ultimately, upon individual members of society appreciating and faithfully discharging their respective responsibilities.

Our beloved country is under development pressure to meet the needs and aspirations of the population. Notwithstanding the advances in science and technology, our growing population necessitates, in respect of our environment, the exercise of an increasing measure of commitment and of prudent and disciplined behaviour to ensure the well-being of individual citizens as well as that of society as a whole.

We must strive to prevent, or to reduce to a minimum, the incidence of pollution and other ills which tend to follow advances in science and technology

We must recognize, of course, the extent to which by our own misconduct, or our ignorance, we contribute to any such incidence.

The responsibility of hon. Members as national leaders is not confined to performance in Parliament, I respectfully submit. Outside of Parliament hon. Members have the like responsibilities relating to environment as fellow citizens do. Every loyal citizen is, to the extent of his capacity, impliedly or expressly, committed to its protection and conservation.

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Let us also remember and remind ourselves constantly of one of the oldest of slogans—but still applicable: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." I doubt whether any one of us in this room did not know of or hear that as a child in school or at home, or in both places. Yet we need to end any habit of carelessly discarding things like cigarette butts or candy wrappers, and the like. We must responsibly exercise the necessary care in providing for the disposal of waste, especially toxic waste and such substances; and not excluding those which we call disposable. We must never litter either our own or someone else's private property or any public place; and we must willingly comply with conservation, anti-litter, and anti-pollution laws.

We must develop or beautify, as the case may be, our natural resources—our parks and beaches, our ponds, our wetlands, our swamps, our forests, hills and valleys. We must take care of our coastal waters. We must take pride in, and care for, our wildlife population. We must care for our old but cherished properties—houses and other buildings or structures of historic or other special interest.

Hon. Members, we want to protect and conserve our environment, but we want to balance this with economic development that is sustainable.

What is sustainable development? In the 1987 Report of the Bruntland Committee of the "World Commission on Environment and Development—our Common Future", as it was entitled, there are two definitions of sustainable development. One is: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." The other is: "a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investment, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs".

Hon. Members, people, of course, are a component of the environment. Education and experience supported by relevant laws, and, very important, their due enforcement will help us to appreciate the importance of the environment and our related responsibilities. We need improved attitudes and habits. We must persevere with patience, but with resolve, relying on education programmes and leadership by example to establish acceptable national environmental performance standards.

Wise use management plans and policies for the protection, conservation and development of our natural resources are matters, undeniably, of national concern. I trust, therefore, that in addressing them, hon. Members will feel impelled to strive conscientiously for consensus and thus, hopefully, earn the

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support and co-operation of the national community. I, accordingly, appeal to hon. Members.

Mr. President of the Senate, Madam Speaker and hon. Members, I wish you all an enjoyable and successful session of Parliament.

May God bless us all. May God bless our Nation.

I thank you.

11.02 a.m.: *Joint Sitting adjourned.*

11.03 a.m.: *Sitting of the Senate resumed.*

PAPERS LAID

1. Address by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the opening of the 1994/1995 session of Parliament on Monday, October 17, 1994. [*The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith)*]

To be printed as a Senate Paper.
2. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts and Financial Statements of the National Settlements Programme for the year ended December 31, 1991 as required by Loan Contract 584/OC-TT between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Inter-American Development Bank. [*Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith*]
3. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of Caroni (1975) Limited for the year ended December 31, 1988. [*Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith*]
4. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of Caroni (1975) Limited for the year ended December 31, 1989. [*Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith*]
5. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of Caroni (1975) Limited for the year ended December 31, 1990. [*Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith*]
6. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts and Financial Statements of the Global Pre-Investment Programme and the Technical Co-operation Agreement for the year ended December 31, 1993 as required by Loan Contract 550/OC-TT and the Non-Reimbursable Technical Co-operation

- Agreement ATN/SF-3159-TT respectively between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Inter-American Development Bank. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
7. The Privileges and Immunities (Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency) Order, 1994. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 8. The Defence (Rates of Pay and Allowances) (Amdt.) Regulations, 1994. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 9. Audited Financial Statements and Report by the auditors of the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission for the year ended December 31, 1993. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 10. Twenty-ninth Report of the Salaries Review Commission—Review of the Terms and Conditions of Service of the Inspector of Police Services. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 11. Thirtieth Report of the Salaries Review Commission—Review of the Terms and Conditions of Service of the Special Adviser to the Prime Minister on crime. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 12. Thirty-first Report of the Salaries Review Commission—Review of the Terms and Conditions of Service of Chairman, Police Complaints Authority. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 13. Thirty-second Report of the Salaries Review Commission—Review of the Terms and Conditions of Service of the Secretary, National Security Council, Secretariat. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 14. Loan Agreement (Water Sector Institutional Strengthening Project between Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development). *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*
 15. The Trade Marks (Amdt.) Rules, 1994. *[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*

CENTRAL BANK (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Central Bank Act, Chap. 79:02 and the Financial Institution Act, No. 18 of 1993 *[The Minister of Planning and Development]*; read the first time.

Central Bank (Amdt.) Bill

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*Motion made, That the next stage be taken at the next sitting of the Senate.
[Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*

Question put and agreed to.

*Motion made, That the Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday, October 25, 1994
at 1.30 p.m. [Sen. Dr. The Hon. L. Saith]*

Question put and agreed to.

Senate adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 11.08 a.m.