



SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
ORDER PAPER

TWENTY-FIRST SITTING, SECOND SESSION (2021/2022)

TWELFTH PARLIAMENT

TUESDAY MARCH 22, 2022 AT 1:30 P.M.

1. PRAYERS
2. OATH OR AFFIRMATION
3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT
4. BILLS BROUGHT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
5. PETITIONS
6. PAPERS
 - (i) The Second Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago for the year ended December 31, 2005.
(By the Minister of Finance)
 - (ii) The Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Proceeds of Crime Act, Chap. 11:27 Seized Assets Fund Account for the years ended September 30, 2017 to September 30, 2021.
(By the Minister of Finance)
 - (iii) The Report on the Management of the Seized Assets Fund for the financial years ended September 30, 2017 to September 30, 2021.
(By the Minister of Finance)
 - (iv) The Annual Report of the Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation for the period October 01, 2011 to September 30, 2012.
(By the Minister of Public Utilities)
7. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES
8. URGENT QUESTIONS
9. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER APPEAR IN THE APPENDIX

Questions for Oral Answer

Question No. 63 to the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries

(By Senator Wade Mark)

In light of the recent Ryder Scott audit which revealed a decline in recoverable gas in Trinidad and Tobago, can the Minister indicate what implications this will have on the future of the gas industry?

Question No. 64 to the Minister of National Security

(By Senator Wade Mark)

In light of the December 14, 2021 statement by the Minister in which he advised that the TTravel Pass system is being reviewed, can the Minister indicate what specific changes will be implemented?

Question No. 68 to the Minister of Public Utilities

(By Senator Wade Mark)

In light of January 2022 protests staged by residents of Mt. Hololo, Cascade over the lack of a reliable water supply during the past six months, can the Minister advise as to what measures are being taken to ensure the resumption of a reliable water supply to the community?

Question No. 107 to the Minister of Finance

(By Senator Charrise Seepersad)

Regarding the 2021 NIB Report, where a 10.4% increase in NIS contributors, a 3.74% decrease in contribution income and a steady increase in beneficiaries lead to the NIB's need to withdraw over \$1Bn from its investments to pay benefits to citizens in 2021, can the Minister provide a status report on:

- (i) what is being done to ensure that NIS contributions are paid in accordance with the law; and
- (ii) what is being done to boost the NIB's investment portfolio income?

Question No. 108 to the Minister of Finance

(By Senator Charrise Seepersad)

In light of concerns raised in the 2021 NIB Report that the NIB may be forced to liquidate assets in the near future should the increasing disparity between contribution income and benefit expenditure continue, can the Minister advise as to what measures are being put in place to address this situation in the short to medium-term?

Question No. 109 to the Minister of Finance

(By Senator Charrise Seepersad)

Given the ongoing public discourse on the increase of the retirement age from 60 to 65 and the NIB's continued advocacy for said increase so as to reduce its benefit expenditure and given that retirement pensions, retirement grants, survivors' benefits and invalidity benefits accounted for 95% of said expenditure in 2021, can the Minister advise as to:

- (i) whether the Government still intends to increase the retirement age; and
- (ii) if the answer to (i) is in the affirmative, how does the Government plan to execute said increase?

Question No. 112 to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

(By Senator Paul Richards)

Given the Government's commitment to diversification, can the Minister advise whether the Government intends to implement strategies to enhance this country's 'Orange Economy', particularly with regard to the following:

- (i) economic incentives to bolster growth of the cultural event/activity industry;
- (ii) updated usage policies for all national and community cultural centres; and
- (iii) development strategies for cultural infrastructure?

Question No. 113 to the Minister of Education

(By Senator Paul Richards)

Regarding the Government's commitment to diversification and the Ministry's role in effecting same, can the Minister advise whether the Government intends to:

- (i) include cultural heritage studies in the school curriculum at the Primary, Secondary and undergraduate certificate levels; and
- (ii) provide incentives for students pursuing cultural studies at the aforementioned levels of education?

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Motions:

- (i) **WHEREAS** availability of foreign exchange is important for investment and competitiveness in the private sector and the persistently tight foreign exchange environment can hinder prospects for diversification and economic recovery aspired to in the Government's fiscal strategy;

AND WHEREAS there has been improved sales and purchases of foreign exchange by authorized dealers recorded thus far in 2022 due to higher energy prices;

AND WHEREAS it is recognized that micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and the wider population continue to experience the negative effects from the difficulty in accessing foreign exchange, notwithstanding interventions by the Central Bank and the Government to ease tight foreign exchange market conditions;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate call on the Government to table in Parliament, within six (6) months, a comprehensive policy framework that will guide key stakeholders, including MSMEs, the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago and Commercial Banks on how the Government intends to navigate the tightness in the foreign exchange market to overcome downside risks in the medium and long-term.

(By Senator Amrita Deonarine)

- (ii) **WHEREAS** the Commissions of Enquiry Act, Chapter 19:01 provides for the establishment of Commissions to manage the conduct of enquiries into public officers, departments and matters of public welfare;

AND WHEREAS Commissions of Enquiry are recognized as an important tool for social investigation in contemporary society, an effective mechanism for delivering into and ameliorating matters of public concern;

AND WHEREAS successive Government administrations have failed to adequately address public concerns which have arisen from time to time on whether the Commissions of Enquiry in Trinidad and Tobago have been effectively and efficiently carrying out their mandate;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate call on the Government to review the Commissions of Enquiry Act, Chap. 19:01 and the public inquiry process in Trinidad and Tobago.

(By Senator Anthony Vieira)

- (iii) **WHEREAS** in 2001 the States of the Caribbean Community established by agreement (by treaty) the Caribbean Court of Justice (“the Court”), convinced that the Court would have a determinative role in the development of Caribbean jurisdiction steeped in the ethos of the region;

AND WHEREAS Trinidad and Tobago, having ratified without reservation the agreement establishing the Court, is bound under treaty to refer its appeals to the Court in lieu of continuing to have them heard by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council;

AND WHEREAS the unique and varied legal matters which arise in the Caribbean are far removed and foreign to the society, culture and habits of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, as sentiment echoed by Privy Council judges and senior British legal figures;

AND WHEREAS almost all Commonwealth States outside the Caribbean as well as four CARICOM states, have since delinked from the Privy Council, recognizing that it goes against the sovereignty of independent nations, and is therefore politically unacceptable, to have such a foreign tribunal permanently entrenched in their Constitutions as their final appellate Court;

AND WHEREAS this is an appropriate time for Trinidad and Tobago to accede to the Court in its appellate jurisdiction, so that the Country’s civil, criminal and constitutional appeals can be heard by the Court, which will also serve this Country’s democratic and developmental objectives regarding affordability, relevance and increased access to justice;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate agree that the Caribbean Court of Justice be recognized as the final Court of Appeal for Trinidad and Tobago and that the appropriate amendments be made to alter the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago so as to entrench the court as its final court of appeal.

(By Senator Anthony Vieira)

- (iv) **WHEREAS** on April 24, 2018 the Senate unanimously passed a resolution calling on the Government “... to introduce legislation on parliamentary autonomy during the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament and have same referred to a Joint Select Committee of Parliament for consideration and report before the end of the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament”;

AND WHEREAS on February 12, 2019, in the Senate, the Attorney General committed to making best efforts to have legislation on Parliamentary Autonomy introduced in the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament;

AND WHEREAS to date the Government has not presented to Parliament a legislative framework on Parliamentary Autonomy;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate call on the Government to reaffirm its commitment to introduce a legislative framework on Parliamentary Autonomy;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate call on the Government to introduce in Parliament, within three (3) months, a Bill on Parliamentary Autonomy and have same referred to a Joint Select Committee of Parliament for consideration and report.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

- (v) **WHEREAS** it is provided by section 1(2) of the Data Protection Act 2011 that the Act shall come into operation on such day as is fixed by the President by Proclamation;

AND WHEREAS Part 1 and sections 7 to 18, 22, 23, 25(1), 26 and 28 of the Act were operationalised on January 06, 2012 and section 42(a) and (b) were operationalised on August 20, 2021;

AND WHEREAS there are other sections of the Act that offer the necessary checks and balances in safeguarding the personal data/information of every citizen;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate call on the Government to immediately proclaim the remaining sections of the Data Protection Act and in the process ensure the necessary checks and balances aimed at safeguarding citizens' fundamental right to privacy.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

- (vi) **WHEREAS** the Senate, as a House of Parliament, ought to afford Members such freedom of debate so as to allow full, frank and meaningful discussion within the constraints of the Standing Orders and well established parliamentary practice;

AND WHEREAS the position and authority of the President of the Senate ought not to be used in a partisan manner to prevent and or stymie criticism of the Government;

AND WHEREAS the Senate President is the servant of the Senate and not of the Government and as such ought to be impartial at all times;

AND WHEREAS the President of the Senate by her rulings has demonstrated her bias in favor of the PNM Government and her lack of understanding of the nature and role of the Office of President of the Senate;

AND WHEREAS by her actions the Senate President has stifled the freedom of debate guaranteed by the Constitution and thus brought this Senate into disrepute;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate declare that it has lost confidence in the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Christine Kangaloo.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Bills Second Reading:

- (i) **The debate on the Second reading of the following Bill which was adjourned on Tuesday January 18, 2022 will be resumed:**

A Bill entitled, 'An Act to repeal the Livestock and Livestock Products Board Act, Chap. 67:05'.

(By the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries)

Keiba Jacob Mottley
Clerk of the Senate (Ag.)

**Senate Secretariat
Office of the Parliament
The Parliamentary Complex
The Red House
Abercromby Street
PORT OF SPAIN**

March 17, 2022

ORDER PAPER TUESDAY MARCH 22, 2022
QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

Question No. 117 to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

(By Senator Paul Richards)

Regarding the National Carnival Commission's "A Taste of Carnival 2022" events, can the Minister provide:

- (i) the final breakdown of how the \$15 million allocation for these events was spent;
- (ii) the number of persons who logged onto the online portals to the various shows;
- (iii) the number of tickets sold for the events; and
- (iv) the amount of revenue derived from these events?

(Answer due by 08.04.2022)

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TWELFTH PARLIAMENT, SECOND SESSION (2021/2022)**

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NOTICE OF URGENT QUESTIONS

The under-mentioned Questions which have been accepted by the President in accordance with Standing Order 25 are hereby forwarded for the attention of the Ministers concerned.

1. **TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH**
(By Senator Wade Mark)
Given the recent deaths of four citizens by suicide, can the Minister outline what preventative measures are being taken to identify early warning signs as well as to avoid such deaths?
2. **TO THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES**
(By Senator Dr. Maria Dillon-Remy)
Given the report of deaths of animals in Barrackpore from rabies, can the Minister indicate what measures are being taken to prevent further spread to other regions of Trinidad and Tobago?
3. **TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH**
(Senator Jayanti Lutchmedial)
Can the Minister indicate when will Public Healthcare Institutions procure the essential chemotherapy drug Xeloda?
4. **TO THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY**
(Senator Jayanti Lutchmedial)
Can the Minister update this House on the current status of efforts to recapture the five (5) prisoners who escaped from the Golden Grove prison on March 20th 2022?

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