

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*Friday, September 09, 2022*

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

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

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I have received communication from Mr. Rushton Paray MP, Member for Mayaro and Ms. Khadijah Ameen MP, Member for St. Augustine who have requested leave of absence from today's sitting of the House. The leave which the Members seek is granted.

TRIBUTES**(Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)**

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, as you may be aware, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II passed away on Thursday, September 8th, 2022. Her Majesty also served as the Head of the Commonwealth of which Trinidad and Tobago is a Member State. I now invite hon. Members to pay their respective tributes to Her Majesty.

The Minister of Finance and Acting Prime Minister (Hon. Colm Imbert):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. [*Desk thumping*] I am authorized by the Cabinet to make the following statement on the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, we join with the rest of the world in mourning the death of Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and extend our sincerest condolences to King Charles III and her family, as well to the people of the United Kingdom who, for more than two generations, have known only one sovereign, their beloved Queen. She was their one constant in a rapidly evolving world and many have not known a world without her. Although the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Rowley, is not physically

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present with us, today we speak with one voice in the language of grief and loss as we reflect on the contribution made by her Majesty the Queen.

Queen Elizabeth II dominated the politics of the world for more than 70 years. Her leadership provided the platform for the creation of the modern Britain. She has overseen the instillation of 15 British Prime Ministers, beginning with the indomitable Sir Winston Churchill and ending with the most recent Prime Minister Elizabeth Truss, who she appointed just two days before her demise. With the onerous responsibility to rule both realm and country thrust upon her by the sudden death of her father King George VI in 1952, Queen Elizabeth II has navigated some of the last and this century's most challenging moments and was forever the advocate for a strong United Kingdom.

Through the many tumultuous situations of the last decades, some even touching her own family, Queen Elizabeth II was always the epitome of grace and an enduring calm that earned her many plaudits and admirers. Even as her age advanced and her health declined, she remained Britain's most popular monarch and her commitment to country shone even more proudly in the manner in which she handled the confluence of former Prime Minister Boris Johnson's ascension to No. 10 Downing Street, Britain's exit from the European Union, and the ramification of the global pandemic, all occurring in close proximity to each other.

As the longest serving and most travelled British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II visited Trinidad and Tobago on no less than three occasions, in 1966, in 1985 and was this country's special guest when we hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 2009. As a Member of the Cabinet at that time, I recall her visit here as one that brought great joy to many as for us too this was the only monarch we have known. She was also an ardent admirer of our steel band and insisted that the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra play at her

recently concluded Jubilee celebrations. Indeed, their rendition of Dancing Queen was a most fitting tribute to a monarch who has celebrated the culture of every Commonwealth nation. The pictures of her smiling and clapping throughout their performance were enough to warm the hearts of the steel band's fiercest critics. Sadly, that smile interrupted by death will be no more.

If indeed the idea is not to live forever but to create something that will live forever, Queen Elizabeth II created a model of leadership that is more than worthy of our emulation. Her quiet diplomacy has facilitated the strengthening of democracy across many continents even as many nations like Trinidad and Tobago have left the United Kingdom.

I have directed that condolence books be opened here in the Rotunda of the Parliament where our own Head of State and first Prime Minister Dr. Eric Williams laid in State and at the offices of the Ministry of Foreign and Caricom Affairs. At the appropriate time, we will advise on the other ways, if necessary, Trinidad and Tobago will mourn the passing of her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Madam Speaker, I thank you.

Madam Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC (*Siparia*): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Today our world has awakened to a global community mourning the loss of a soul of immaculate kindness, strength and courage which enriched so many for decades. Today I join all Members of our Parliament and citizens of Trinidad and Tobago in offering sincere condolences on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. There is no doubt that our world has lost a figure who has represented determination and dedication to purpose for 70 years. Her words long remembered when she was just 25 years old, she said—before she was 25 years old, she said:

“I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall

be devoted to your service...”

While these were her words as a young princess in 1947, they became the life story of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as she became the longest-serving monarch of the United Kingdom.

Today, while our Commonwealth and world is saddened by Her Majesty’s passing, we must remember her words that and I quote:

“Grief is the price we pay for love.”

And it was the love of Her Majesty for the Commonwealth which enriched the lives of so many. Her life was an inspiring one as she demonstrated that neither youth nor gender would prevent her from undertaking a role with such great responsibilities. Indeed, she took up the role as monarch when she was just 25 years old. Today, as women across the globe traverse the halls of power in every field, we can all say that Queen Elizabeth II stood as one of the early pioneers to inspire young girls across the globe to believe that not only could women equal men at the helm but they can lead them. Her Majesty’s role in the enrichment, in the upliftment and encouragement of women across the globe went beyond the execution of her duties but became part of a public mantra as she told the world and I quote:

“...it has been women who have breathed gentleness and care into the harsh progress of mankind.”

Her Majesty’s many acts of goodwill throughout our Commonwealth, her words of wisdom throughout our global community and, most of all, the way she managed the tribulations that faced her life, her family, and country were shining examples of courage which offered strength to many. Today, right here in our very own Parliament, we often utilize the term “Commonwealth” from Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to the Commonwealth Games. The Commonwealth of

Nations has its roots in the very determined approach of Her Majesty for a better future for humanity.

I had the distinct honour and privilege to serve as the first woman Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth as the first female Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and then I had the esteemed pleasure of meeting Her Majesty in person on the Commonwealth stage to work with Her Majesty with respect to the Commonwealth as a whole. I was greatly enlightened by her humour. She had a tremendous sense of humour when you met her personally to speak with her. She also had great humility but even more so, I was enriched by her desire to see a better world.

At the 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Australia when I passed over duties as Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth to another female leader, then Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard, we were most impressed by Her Majesty's tremendous support for that year's theme, "Women as Agents of Change", as Her Majesty made the determined call for all leaders across the globe to unlock the true potential of our societies by ensuring women and girls were allowed to play their full part in national development.

Her Majesty lived a life of service to the British people and to the Commonwealth to the very end as we saw this week she appointed the 15th Prime Minister of her reign. From Sir Winston Churchill to Elizabeth Truss, Her Majesty has never abandoned her duty to her subjects. In 2020, whilst the world battled the most uncertain times of modern day history, the COVID pandemic, Her Majesty told us and I quote:

"We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return."

Queen Elizabeth II was more than just a Head of State. She was a calm, reassuring

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voice of hope that stood with the world in tough times. For her years of love, kindness and dedication to the Commonwealth, we will always be grateful.

Today, on behalf of Opposition Members of Parliament and the Members of the United National Congress, I offer our sincere condolences to the Royal family and to the British people in this time of mourning. However, we must all find strength again in the words of Her Majesty and I quote:

“...the courageous do not lie down and accept defeat; instead, they are all the more determined to struggle for a better future.”

Together as a Commonwealth, we must move forward stronger and united by the loving memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for a better future. Today, we say thank you, Your Majesty. May you rest in peace. Thank you all.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I also wish to pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, whose 70-year reign is characterized by unwavering dedication and service to her people. While many commentaries may focus on the tenure of the Queen’s reign, one which is unsurpassed by many other British monarchs, I wish to highlight the tenor of her reign.

As a woman in her position which has long been dominated by men in a world which is still patriarchal, less so now than when she first inherited the crown, Her Majesty the Queen became a symbol for women in leadership. The restraints on her role, which demanded abstinence from political commentary, and any perceptions of political bias, however, did not prevent her from making statements in support of women’s equality and bolstering these statements by her actions. Who can forget when Her Majesty chauffeured another monarch on her Scottish estate or her statement in 2011 at the Commonwealth Summit in Australia encouraging societies to find ways to allow girls and women to play their full part?

During my childhood, I knew Her Majesty as the Queen and the Head of

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State of Trinidad and Tobago. I recall my excitement when the Queen visited our shores in 1966, being among the gleeful school children assembled along the streets of Port of Spain proudly waving our national flag in welcoming her. Although we are an independent Republic, the Queen's life shall remain woven into the history of Trinidad and Tobago as she was our last British monarch before we became a Republic in 1976. The acquisition of Republican status however did not end the affinity and respect between Her Majesty and the people of Trinidad and Tobago as she visited these shores on subsequent occasions.

The Royal family, the United Kingdom, and the Commonwealth underwent constant changes and experienced significant challenges during her reign and Her Majesty The Queen presided over them all epitomizing duty, stability, wisdom and grace. I admire Her Majesty. In times of war, the Queen served alongside her people and in times of the uncertainty of change, she stood firmly and supportively with her people.

Her Majesty The Queen has fulfilled her promise to the people of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth when she vowed that her whole life, whether long or short, shall be devoted to their service. This is a promise that all the leaders of our beloved twin-island Republic, present, aspiring and future, including myself, should aspire to fulfil for the people of Trinidad and Tobago. I dare to add that The Queen fulfilled the role with great humility and I cannot help but note with stylish elegance. Her legacy for me evidences that concomitant with privilege is service, duty, humility, responsibility and restraint.

I therefore take this opportunity to express my deepest condolences to the Royal family, the people of the United Kingdom, and the family of the Commonwealth of Nations during this time of mourning and I pray that the Almighty grants them peace and consolation during this time of their bereavement.

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I now ask that we stand and observe a minute of silence as a mark of respect.

The House of Representatives stood.

May her soul rest in peace.

PAPERS LAID

1. Freedom of Information (Exemption) Order, 2022. [*The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Reginald Armour SC)*]
2. Tax Information Exchange Agreements (United States of America) Act, Guidelines 2021. [*The Minister of Finance and Acting Prime Minister (Hon. Colm Imbert)*]
3. Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Securities and Exchange Commission for the year ended September 30, 2021. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
4. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
5. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago for the year ended September 30, 2017. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
6. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2011. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
7. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2012. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

8. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority for the year ended July 31, 2011. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
9. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Penal/Debe Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2015. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
10. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Penal/Debe Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2016. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
11. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Finance to the Fifth Report of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee on the examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the National Schools Dietary Services Limited (NSDSL) for the financial years 2016 to 2019 and follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the Auditor General on a Special Audit of the School Nutrition Programme managed by NSDSL. [*The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis)*]
12. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Education to the Fifth Report of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee on the examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the National Schools Dietary Services Limited (NSDSL) for the financial years 2016 to 2019 and follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations in the Report of the Auditor General on a Special Audit of the School Nutrition Programme managed by NSDSL. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
13. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of National Security to the Fifth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions

and Statutory Authorities (including the THA) on an Inquiry into the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]

14. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Health to the Second Report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality & Diversity on the Human Rights of Socially Displaced Persons in Trinidad and Tobago with Specific Focus on their Treatment and Relocation from Port of Spain Public Spaces. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
15. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Trade and Industry to the Fourth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Fair Trading Commission (TTFTC) for the financial years 2014 to 2018. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
16. Response of the Office of the Prime Minister to the Fifth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on the examination of the Realignment of Ministries and Departments. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
17. Response of the Service Commissions Department to the Fifth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on the examination of the Realignment of Ministries & Departments. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
18. Annual Report of the Environmental Management Authority for the year 2021. [*The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Penelope Beckles)*]
19. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago for the year ended September 30, 2018. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

20. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Consolidated Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation for the year ended December 31, 2021. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
21. Audited Financial Statements of the National Investment Fund Holding Company Limited as at December 21, 2021. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
Papers 3 to 10, 19 and 20 to be referred to the Public Accounts Committee and Paper 21 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.
22. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Finance to the Second Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration on an examination of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic and the State's capacity to provide support to persons who became unemployed as a result of the pandemic. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
23. 11th Annual Report of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board for the fiscal period October 2020 to September 2021. [*The Minister of National Security (Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds)*]
24. Annual Report of the Teaching Service Commission for the year 2021. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
25. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Public Administration to the Fifth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on the examination of the Realignment of Ministries and Departments. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
26. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs to the Second Report of the Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs on an Inquiry into the Status of the CSME in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]

27. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to the Sixth Report of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee on the examination of the Audited Accounts, Balance Sheets and other Financial Statements of the East Port of Spain Development Company Limited (EPOSDCL) for the financial years 2012 and 2013. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORTS
(Presentation)**

Finance and Legal Affairs

Mr. Keith Scotland (*Port of Spain South*): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the:

Third Report of the Joint Select Committee on Finance and Legal Affairs on an inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on the Micro and Small Enterprises Sector, Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

Shipping Bill, 2020

The Minister of Public Utilities (Hon. Marvin Gonzales): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the:

Report of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Shipping Bill, 2020, Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

Representation of the People (Amendment) (No.2) Bill, 2020

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the:

Report of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Representation of the People (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2020, Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

Finance and Legal Affairs

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Mr. Keith Scotland (*Port of Spain South*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the:

Fourth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Finance and Legal Affairs on an inquiry into the efficiency and effectiveness of the Central Statistical Office (CSO), Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

**Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities
(including the THA)**

Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Ayanna Webster-Roy):

Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the:

Sixth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities (including the THA) on an Inquiry into the operational efficiency of the Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation (TTPOST) and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on service delivery, Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

Social Services and Public Administration

Mr. Esmond Forde (*Tunapuna*): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present the:

Third Report of the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration on an inquiry into the Impact of Work-from-Home and Alternative Work Arrangements, Policies and Initiatives on Public Sector Productivity and Service Delivery, Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

Fisheries Management (No.2) Bill

The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Brian Manning): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have the honour to present the:

Report of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Fisheries Management (No.2) Bill, 2020, Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE REPORT

(Presentation)

East Port of Spain Development Company Limited

Mr. Keith Scotland (*Port of Spain South*): Again, thank you, Madam Speaker. I have the honour to present:

Sixth Report of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee on an examination of the Audited Accounts, Balance Sheets and other Financial Statements of the East Port of Spain Development Company Limited for the financial years 2012 and 2013, Second Session (2021/2022), Twelfth Parliament.

URGENT QUESTIONS

Commission of Enquiry into Paria Diving Tragedy (Provision of Essential Resources)

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (*Couva South*): Thank you Madam Speaker. To the Acting Prime Minister: In light of the recent statement made by the Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry into the Paria diving tragedy concerning the absence of basic resources, infrastructure, and human resource personnel necessary to conduct the enquiry, will the Prime Minister inform the House what urgent measures, if any, will be taken to address the provision of these essential resources?

Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Symon de Nobriga): Thank you Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in response to the Member's question, let me first assure the Members of this House that the insinuation at the base of the question is false. There was not an absence of resources, Madam Speaker. The chairman, however, did highlight a need for additional resources to

ensure optimal operations at the commission of enquiry's offices.

And in light of that, I have been informed that stationery has been delivered, the provision of Internet services has been sought, the insulation of work stations has begun, the on-boarding of personnel continues, with additional staff expected to start next week. And once all documents have been received for the rest, they will also be on-boarded and, of course, Member, this is being done as quickly as possible.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Speaker, could the Minister give this country an undertaking that there will be no further delays to the commencement of this commission of enquiry—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Indarsingh:—based on the incompetence of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Hon. S. de Nobriga: Madam Speaker, I can assure the Members of this House that this Government will continue to do everything that is in their remit to ensure that the commission of enquiry is resourced and the commission will conduct its business as they see fit.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, are you in a position, taking into consideration that, according to the *Trinidad and Tobago Gazette*, that commissions of enquiry fall under the Office of the Prime Minister, why did the Attorney General inform the country that the resourcing of this said commission of enquiry was the responsibility of the Office of Her Excellency the President of Trinidad and Tobago?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: I rule that question out of order in accordance with the Standing Orders. Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. Minister, in light of your response, are you therefore suggesting that Mr. Jerome Lynch, King's Counsel was wrong and in error to raise such issues as a lack of resources to the commission?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. S. de Nobriga: I am not questioning Mr. Lynch's comments. I am saying that the basis of the Member's question is false.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Madam Speaker, the question has already been answered. Thank you. Therefore, I withdraw.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Question No. 189 to the Minister of Finance.

Madam Speaker: Minister of Finance.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Madam Speaker, this is one of the questions that we will not be answering.

Madam Speaker: So, might I, at this stage, call on the leader and ask the leader to indicate what the position is.

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, there are 14 questions for oral response. We will be answering 13. We will not be answering question 189 at this time. There are six questions for written response, we will be answering five. We will not be in a position to answer question No. 221. Thank

you very kindly.

Madam Speaker: Okay, so hon. Members, by letter dated September 07, 2022, and in accordance with Standing Order 29(14), the Member for Moruga/Tableland has requested that the House of Representatives question No. 209 listed on today's Order Paper be withdrawn. So, madam leader, I guess that is how you have got 14. So question 209 is withdrawn.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Fifth Company Baptist School (Reopening of)

The following question stood on the Order Paper in the name of Ms.

Michelle Benjamin (Moruga/Tableland):

- 209.** Will the hon. Minister of Education state when the Fifth Company Baptist School will be reopened?

Question, by leave, withdrawn.

Madam Speaker: Question 219.

Parcels of Land – Housing and Urban Development (Details of)

- 219. Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (Couva South):** Will the hon. Minister of Housing and Urban Development advise whether three parcels of land belonging to the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) located at Southern Main Road, Couva and one at Ibis Avenue, Couva have been formally and lawfully leased or sold to any member of the current Cabinet?

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation (HDC) has conducted a search of its internal records and can confirm that no parcel of its lands along the Southern Main Road, Couva or at Ibis Avenue, Couva, was formally or lawfully leased or

sold to any member of the current Cabinet.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Speaker, could the Minister inform this House whether any director of Rivulet Investment, Klydon Enterprises and Pical Services have been the beneficiaries of leases from the Housing Development Corporation?

Madam Speaker: Member, again I rule that question out of order as a supplemental question in accordance with the Standing Orders. Member for Couva South.

TSTT
(Retrenchment of Staff)

220. Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (Couva South): Given the work currently being done by the Cabinet Sub Committee on the majority owned Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT), will the hon. Minister of Public Utilities inform this House whether TSTT has retrenched any of its managerial and security staff?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Public Utilities.

The Minister of Public Utilities (Hon. Marvin Gonzales): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the mandate of the Cabinet-appointed sub-committee on TSTT is to review the operations of TSTT with a view to determining the Government's future role in the company and to determine the viability of the company in today's rapidly-changing technological world. In this regard, it should be noted that the sub-committee and the Government have no role in the restructuring of the company. This is solely a matter for the board and the executive management of the company.

Madam Speaker, with respect to the current restructuring exercise, TSTT has advised and has published in the media that on the 31st May, 2022 the company served retrenchment notices on 27 members of staff represented by the Estate

Police Association and 65 staff belonging to the management cohort of TSTT.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Minister, taking into consideration the information that you have just provided to this House, are you in a position to inform this House whether all liabilities that are owed to these retrenched workers, inclusive of severance payments, allowances, the salary payments and outstanding salary negotiations have been fully settled?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Hon. M. Gonzales: Madam Speaker, I do not have that information to provide to the Member at this point in time.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Minister, are you in a position to inform this House whether any of these retrenched managers at TSTT applied for the position of Senior Manager of Environmental, Social and Reputation Management at TSTT?

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva South, I would not allow that as a supplemental question, based on the original question, the other supplemental question, and the answers given.

Madam Speaker: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Can the Minister confirm whether or not, after hundreds of TSTT workers have been retrenched, whether the manager that my colleague from Couva South mentioned is earning approximately \$75,000 per month?

Hon. Member: What?

Madam Speaker: Member for Barataria/San Juan, I rule that question out of order, in light of the Standing Orders. Member for Couva North.

Patrons Tennis Academy

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(Alternative Accommodation)

225. Mr. Ravi Ratiram (*Couva North*): Given the hon. Minister's overall responsibility for sport, will the hon. Minister of Sport and Community Development indicate what arrangements have been put in place to find alternative accommodation for Patrons Tennis Academy, the country's leading tennis academy that trains over 200 youth?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Sport and Community Development.

The Minister of Sport and Community Development (Hon. Shamfa Cudjoe):

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, prior to receiving this question from the Member for Couva North, the Ministry of Sport and Community Development had not received any communication from the Patrons Tennis Academy of its need for accommodation. It should be noted that this is a private club. The Sport Division of the Ministry of Sport and Community Development has since made contact with the Patrons Tennis Academy and the Academy has advised that it is unable to continue conducting its activities at the Trinidad Country Club because the venue had been sold to a private entity and works are carded to reconfigure the layout of the entire facility.

The Patrons Tennis Academy has since been utilizing the public tennis court at Nelson Mandela Park and the tennis courts located at the St. James Police Barracks. The Academy has further indicated its intention to submit a request for assistance in securing a facility for the Academy's use some time in the future. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, taking into consideration the response from the hon. Minister, can the Minister advise, based on the club using Mandela, what support is presently or has been provided to

this club that produces over 200 graduates on an annual basis?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Hon. S. Cudjoe: Madam Speaker, the English language is very clear. The Ministry responds to a request. The tennis club has stated that it intends to submit a request for assistance in securing facility for their use in the future. We await their request. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva North.

**Waterloo ECCE Centre
(Opening of)**

226. Mr. Ravi Ratiram (*Couva North*): Will the hon. Minister of Education advise when the Waterloo ECCE Centre will be opened?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Education.

The Minister of Education (Hon. Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly): Madam Speaker, the Waterloo ECCE Centre is expected to be completed in Phase 3 of the Ministry's priority school construction and outfitting programme. Phase 2 is expected to commence in 2023, and all efforts would be made to ensure that Phase 3 can also commence in that fiscal or the subsequent fiscal.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Minister, given your response to the Waterloo ECCE Centre and the two in Naparima that are incomplete and abandoned, could you give reasons why the Government is de-emphasizing early childhood care and education?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima, having regard to the question posed, the answer given, I rule that that question is out of order. Member for Couva North.

**Southern Main Road, McBean
(Paving Works)**

227. Mr. Ravi Ratiram (*Couva North*): Will the hon. Minister of Works and Transport advise when paving works will commence on the old Southern Main Road, Mc Bean?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Works and Transport.

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the old Southern Main Road extends to approximately five kilometres. Road rehabilitation work along the old Southern Main Road is programmed in two phases for spot-patching work. Contracts for both phases were awarded.

The first phase comprised a section of the old Southern Main Road from Beaucarro Junction to St. Mary's Junction, between the 2.6 kilometre mark to the 5 kilometre mark, and is scheduled to commence in the second week of September 2022.

The second phase will address the section from the Southern Main Road, from Beaucarro Junction to the UNIPET gas station between the zero kilometre mark to the 2.6 kilometre mark. It is anticipated that this phase will commence in the beginning of October 2022.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Madam Speaker, given the dilapidated state of roads throughout Trinidad and Tobago, is the Minister satisfied that he is accomplishing his remit that is expected of him by the citizens and taxpayers of Trinidad and Tobago?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima, I rule that question out of order, having regard to the Standing Orders. Member for Chaguanas East.

**Chaguanas Traffic Alleviation Project
(Commencement of)**

231. Ms. Vandana Mohit (*Chaguanas East*): Will the hon. Minister of Works and Transport state when phases four (4) and five (5) of the Chaguanas Traffic Alleviation Project are scheduled to commence?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Works and Transport.

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan):

Madam Speaker, Phase 4 is scheduled to commence in the upcoming fiscal year. This will entail the construction of a lay-by on the Mulchan Seuchan Road to allow access onto the northbound lane of the Uriah Butler Highway. Thank you.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, Phase 4 consists, on the Ministry of Works and Transport website, of an overpass at Brentwood, and Phase 5, an overpass at Soogrim west. Can the Minister enlighten on these two overpasses, as it relates to the Chaguanas traffic alleviation project?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, again I think—okay, let me not quote my colleague a little while ago. Phase 4 has several aspects to it. The question was, when will Phase 4 start? Phase 4 will be started in segments as early as the next financial year, with the first phase being the lay-by to access the northbound lane of the highway. It is the start of Phase 4.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas East.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, given the continuous loss of man-hours and unproductive time due to the traffic woes faced by the residents in the Chaguanas region, and, by extension, the population traversing the area, can the Minister indicate whether there will be any temporary measures to alleviate the present traffic chaos on a short-term basis, as he intends to begin Phase 4 of this traffic alleviation project?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Thank you again. Madam Speaker, traffic management in Trinidad and Tobago is reviewed on a monthly basis in all areas. So, from time to time, the Traffic Management Unit at the Ministry of Works and Transport will be revisiting the traffic plans in Chaguanas and all other areas in Trinidad and Tobago and wherever upgrades can be made, it will be made.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas East.

**S-Bend Project Chaguanas
(Details of)**

232. Ms. Vandana Mohit (*Chaguanas East*): Will the hon. Minister of Works and Transport provide a status of the S-Bend project at Endeavour Road, Chaguanas?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Works and Transport.

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan): Thank you again, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in October 2020, a contract was awarded under the PURE Unit for the completion of the S-Bend Project at Endeavour Road, Chaguanas. WASA was informed that their lines would need to be relocated, prior to the commencement of the project. WASA has had some challenges in carrying out this exercise and, to date, the lines have not been moved. As a result, the project was subsequently cancelled. This project is scheduled to be re-tendered and commenced as soon as WASA completes its relocation exercise. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas East.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, given the continuous flooding faced by residents and those traversing the area—the Minister mentioned that this project would be re-tendered very soon. Minister, can you indicate what is the current collaboration between the Minister of Public Utilities and yourself as it relates to a resolution to these issues faced when it comes to WASA at this

particular location?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. R. Sinanan: Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Works and Transport and the authorities at WASA communicate on a daily basis on several projects. In terms of this project, we have written to WASA indicating our ability to go forward with this project. Unfortunately, at this time, we have to wait for the lines to be relocated, and I am sure WASA will give it priority based on the workload that they have.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas East.

African Snails Outbreak (Details of)

233. Ms. Vandana Mohit (*Chaguanas East*): Will the hon. Minister of Agriculture Land and Fisheries advise what strategies have been adopted to combat the outbreak of African Snails nationwide?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (Sen. The Hon. Avinash Singh): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am pleased to report on this question on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries previously had a decentralized management programme geared towards the containment and reduction of the giant African snail population in existing infestation zones and mitigation of the spread. This is executed by the Giant African Snail Task Force. Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has moved from an eradication mode to a management approach since giant African snails have spread across the country and populations exceed the geographical coverage capabilities of this task force unit.

This management approach has taken the form of an advisory service

disseminating information to the public on how to deal with the giant African snail issues and home remedies. Facts sheets, posters, media releases, Facebook and YouTube videos have been in circulation advising the public and farmers on how to manage the giant African snail.

In light of the recent increases in population size of the giant African snails, the Giant African Snail Task Force has been reconstituted with personnel from both the public and private sector. The committee has initiated work to develop plans to address the spread of the giant African snails in a more direct way.

It must be noted, Madam Speaker, in 2020 the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board advised that the active ingredient Thiodicarb in liquid formulation was not registered for use in control of the snails and should be removed as a recommendation by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. However, the research division of the Ministry is currently reviewing this pesticide and its effectiveness in treating with adult, juvenile, as well as the eggs, and has shown significant increases in success in other areas across the world. Accordingly, a request has made to the board to review baits with the active ingredient Thiodicarb and the intent is to utilize this bait with the active ingredient to control the giant African snail population. Also, alternative plans are also being developed for the implementation within the coming weeks.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries continues to monitor the spread of this invasive species and will provide the support to those affected in the coming weeks. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas East.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, given the frustration and medical risk faced by citizens across the country, can the Minister indicate, or is the Minister able to advise the House on an estimated figure of losses arising

from damages and destruction by the African snails across the country?

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas East, I would not allow that as a supplemental question, in accordance with the Standing Orders. Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, hearing the response of the Minister where they have basically admitted failure in moving from eradicating the giant African snail to a management approach, can the Minister advise this House and the country what sort of losses that our nation's farmers and our country's food security is going to experience from moving away from the eradication approach to the management of the giant African snails?

Madam Speaker: I rule that question out of order in accordance with the Standing Orders. Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, to the hon. Minister: given that the presence of the African snails has been listed as a crisis for quite a while now, for several years, can the Minister advise when exactly was this task force reconstituted?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Madam Speaker, this task force was always at the Ministry located at the head office. We have recently had a meeting just about a week or two and we have incorporated some public sector personnel in this committee to assist us in dealing with the African snail. It must be noted, Madam Speaker, that this African snail issue is one of the world's most destructive pests. And with the recent increase in rainfall here in Trinidad and Tobago, it is the actual ambient conditions for the spread and multiplication. So the Ministry has taken note of that, and in bringing on this public sector approach, as well bringing persons, volunteers from the private and public sector, we intend to come up with

strategies and continue the work that we have been doing because it is really—I want to sympathize with the farmers—an issue that we have to deal with. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Member for Chaguanas East.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Speaker. To the Minister: given the fact that officials at the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries are on some form of education campaign advising for use of bait, can you indicate when would the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries be engaging in procuring of bait to assist with this widespread issue?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: In my response, Madam Speaker, I mentioned in 2020 the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Board advised on the active ingredient Thiodicarb. This is one of the most effective baits in the control of the giant African snail and we have written to the board to have that programme be incorporated in the Ministry's programme of dealing with the giant African snail. We are currently awaiting a response. And subsequent to that, that programme will be rolled out in terms of adding this success story from around the world to our local situation.

Madam Speaker: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you. Madam Speaker, several questions have been asked to date on this issue. Once more the Minister has indicated that the task force, his word was “re-constituted”, but he is advising that the task force existed for quite a while and they are still forming plans.

Madam Speaker: Member, could you ask your question please?

Mr. Tancoo: Sure, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: You have 15 seconds to ask a questions.

Mr. Tancoo: Madam Speaker, the question is: On what date, Madam Speaker, and a specific date? Can the Minister advise on what date individuals in this country would be able to access the bait and the measures to which he specifically responded to, to which he specifically said was being made available?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

2.30 p.m.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I have indicated again for the third time, Madam Speaker, the most successful bait that we have in the system is thiodicarb. And again, I say that this pesticide was taken to the board for review, and we are currently reviewing the success at our local research division in the Ministry, and as soon as we get clearance from the Pesticide and Toxic Chemicals Board, this bait will be incorporated in our programme.

And I have also stated, Madam Speaker, that the reconstituting of the board, the management committee, the Giant African Snail Task Force, this is the first time we have taken it one step further in incorporating persons from the private sector also to volunteer, because the Giant African Snail Task Force was always an element of the Ministry. This is the first time we have reconstituted with members of the public and private sector to assist.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Landslips Along Sahai Trace

(Repair Works not yet Commenced)

234. Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*) asked the hon. Minister of Rural Development and Local Government:

Given that the Minister indicated on March 04, 2022, that works were anticipated to commence within two to three months, will the Minister

state why repair works have not yet commenced on the landslips along Sahai Trace?

The Minister of Rural Development and Local Government (Hon. Faris Al-Rawi): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I thank the Member for the question. Madam Speaker, the Ministry remains committed to treating with issues of landslips across the country. With respect to these two specific landslips along Sahai Trace at Lp. No. 50 and Lp. No. 54, I can confirm that both were referred to the Rural Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago for execution. The Rural Development Company conducted the necessary site visits, scoping and costing in February 2022. That is before the question in March.

The Ministry subsequently granted approval to commence the tendering processes on the 22nd of March. The RDC began its official tendering process for these projects on the 20th of April, 2022 for the landslip at Lp. No. 50, and on the 22nd of April, 2022 for landslip at Lp. No. 54, which were followed by evaluations on the 18th of May, 2022, and the 23rd of May, 2022 respectively.

Contracts were in fact awarded for both projects on the 5th of July, 2022. Written notice was issued to residents in the community and signboards were erected on both sites on the 20th of July, 2022. It is important to note that both of these contracts are design/build contracts. Indeed both contracts are collectively valued at over \$5.5 million roughly. Preliminary works have begun. Geotechnical and topographic testing to obtain information on the physical properties of soil, earthworks, and foundations for the proposed retaining wall structures were conducted and concluded on the 20th of July, 2022.

The contractor was in the process of finalizing designs and did submit the designs back to the RDC. The designs were found to be in need of improvement and the contractor is due to submit those designs in the course of the week coming.

All things being equal, it is expected that the following Monday, that is Monday following next Monday, they should be able to commence the project.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you very much. Minister, could you explain to the citizens of Trinidad, why work in San Fernando West, and I speak specifically of Cipero Street, Lady Hailes Avenue, et cetera, why work seems to be operating with speed and efficiency and effectiveness and when it comes to San Fernando East—

Madam Speaker: Member, Member—

Mr. Charles:—and Naparima we get obfuscations—

Madam Speaker: Member, Member. I think you are seasoned enough to understand the Standing Orders as they relate to supplemental questions. I feel satisfied with your experience, your command of language, your heightened understanding that that question does not comply with the Standing Orders. You have another question?

Mr. Charles: I could rephrase it.

Madam Speaker: Do you have another question?

Mr. Charles: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Please.

Mr. Charles: Why does it take so long, Minister, for works like these to develop? Dates are given; days are given and not adhered to; three months?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: Madam Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for such an intelligent question. Had the hon. Member bothered to encourage participants in his own political party to attend the local government reform sessions—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. F. Al-Rawi:—the hon. Member, would have been regaled. The hon. Member

would have been regaled with the fact that the mission of local government reform is to improve the processes by which contracts are considered and developed. And Madam Speaker, in example to that, I can say for instance, certain projects, some of which the hon. Member mentioned a short while ago, had the benefit of being processed in a proper fashion. And part and parcel of local government reform involves process reorganization. It took us many years as a country to be able to perform that. But Madam Speaker, I do not expect any better questioning from my honorable colleague opposite if he will not even attend the sessions—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. F. Al-Rawi:—or encourage the Members of the Opposition to come and participate in improving processes for the benefit of the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: I dare say, Madam Speaker, that if we continue to adopt an approach such as that articulated by my friend opposite, we will get nowhere very quickly.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Is it correct that councillors in the San Fernando City Corporation are saying that you are favouring San Fernando West—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles:—and you are responsible for “dat”. And “dat” is not acceptable.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Member, Member, remember this is questions. I am sure you will have opportunities to make statements, but this is questions. Okay? Member for Naparima. Member for Naparima.

Praedial Larceny Unit

UNREVISED

(Plans to Improve Performance)

235. Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*) asked the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries:

Will the Minister state whether there are any immediate plans to improve the performance of the Praedial Larceny Unit?

Madam Speaker: Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (Sen. The Hon. Avinash Singh): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Again, I answer this on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. Madam Speaker, the Praedial Larceny Squad came into being in 2013 from the previous Ranger Squad. Within recent months the squad has been facing some challenges which have been impacting on its performance. In efforts to treat with these issues the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries met with the executive of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the officers from the squad in April of this year. This meeting allowed officers the opportunity to present the challenges impacting their performance and duties. Some of the major challenges identified then included accommodation and transportation. The north and north-east stations required relocation as the accommodation was inadequate.

Accordingly, the Ministry identified a section of the research compound in Farm Road St. Joseph to house the north and north-east stations of the squad in the short-term. Refurbishment works were completed within the third week of August and the officers took occupation on August 28th, 2022. It is anticipated that this will greatly assist in the productivity of the officers for these two stations. The other stations are now being assessed to determine any infrastructural improvements that may be required to ensure the officers are properly accommodated at the stations.

In terms of transportation, the Ministry is in the process of procuring five vehicles and has been able to begin repair works on two non-functional vehicles for the praedial larceny squad. These are expected to be completed within the month of September, and it is anticipated that these will improve the ability of the officers in their controlling of patrols.

Madam Speaker, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries remains committed to working closely with the praedial larceny squad. And again, it is going to be an all-of-government and national security approach strategies that are currently being considered in this regard. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Madam Speaker, the Praedial Larceny Unit located in Craignish that serves an area—a radius of 20 miles, has no working vehicles. And I am asking you, could you give Trinidad and Tobago a date, a date when at least one vehicle would be made available to that unit?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: As I have indicated, Madam Speaker, the two non-functional vehicles are in the process of being repaired. This is going to take place in the month of September.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Would the Minister state whether those two non-functional vehicles are for throughout Trinidad and Tobago? Or are they for the Craignish unit?

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Madam Speaker, they form part of the complement of the praedial larceny squad, and, as I have indicated, we are in the process of procuring five additional vehicles that will be used throughout the Praedial

Larceny Squad

Madam Speaker: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, is the Minister satisfied that the challenges identified by the Praedial Larceny Squad with regard to resources generally, and accommodation, including human resources and transportation, is purely the fault and the liability of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's failure—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Tancoo:—over the last seven years?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Madam Speaker, what I will say to that is that a building cannot fall into disrepair in one day or two days, Madam Speaker, and we are in the process of— As I have indicated in my previous response, we are in the process of treating with the challenges of the praedial larceny squad. We have relocated two of the offices and we are in the process of refurbishing the other offices at the different locations, Madam Speaker.

I know it is a very sensitive issue and I could tell you from speaking to the farmers it is very challenging. And that is why I have indicated it is going to be an all-of-government approach in dealing with praedial larceny issues in this country. I give the population that assurance, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, to the hon. Minister, the Minister indicated that the two issues addressing by the Ministry are accommodation and transportation. But, for the last two years the Leader of the Opposition, and myself, and other Members on this side, have clearly indicated the human resource challenges that the praedial larceny unit faces. And that unit is

being paid out of the Short-Term Employment Vote. Can the hon. Minister advise when it is that the praedial larceny unit will be given the necessary human resource personnel—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Ratiram:—to efficiently execute their responsibility?

Madam Speaker: Minister.

Sen. The Hon. A. Singh: Madam Speaker, the current complement of the Praedial Larceny Squad contains 37 constables, one assistant superintendent, one superintendent. The original establishment, Madam Speaker, 84 constables, 14 corporals, five sergeants, two inspectors. As we speak, we are in the current process of reviewing this mandate with the Permanent Secretary, because these officers are contract employees on short-term, and these challenges are really because of some of the HR issues that we are currently dealing with. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Supplemental?

Madam Speaker: 236.

Mr. Charles: Madam, 236, I had written the House on the 29th of August indicating that I wanted that question withdrawn. I got an acknowledgement so I am now asking that—

Madam Speaker: Oh, so, thank you for the reminder.

The following question stood on the Order Paper in the name of Mr. Rodney Charles (Naparima):

**Jagdeo Initiative
(Status of)**

236. Will the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries advise on the status of the Jagdeo Initiative?

Question, by leave, withdrawn.

Madam Speaker: Therefore, we go on to question 242. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Dr. Ragbir: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, question No. 242 to the Minister of Health is no longer relevant because the vaccines have expired. So I humbly withdraw that particular question.

The following question stood on the Order Paper in the name of Dr. Rai Ragbir (Cumuto/Manzanilla):

**Pfizer Covid-19 Vaccines
(Details of)**

242. Will the hon. Minister of Health indicate:

- a) When will the Ministry's Pfizer Covid-19 vaccines expire; and
- b) How many donated doses currently remain?

Question, by leave, withdrawn.

Dr. Ragbir: But I am asking if I may be allowed to ask the hon. Minister of Health about the Pfizer vaccine return to Trinidad? Could I be?

Madam Speaker: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla, these are questions that are posed on notice, and therefore if you have withdrawn question No. 242, I can not just allow a questions to originate from out of nowhere. Leader of the House.

STANDING ORDER 79(3)

Continuation of Bills in the Third Session

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 79(3) I beg to move that the Third Session of the Twelfth Parliament, that the proceedings on the following Bills be resumed—that is, in the Third Session of the Twelfth Parliament.

1. The Miscellaneous Provisions (Testing and Identification) Bill, 2022.
2. The Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2022.
3. The Miscellaneous Provisions (Establishment of the Borough of Diego Martin and the Borough of Siparia) Bill, 2021.
4. The Representation of the People (Amdt.) (No. 2) Bill, 2020.
5. The Constitution (Amdt.) (Tobago Self-Government) Bill, 2020.
6. The Tobago Island Government Bill, 2021.

Thank you, Madam Speaker

Question put and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn sine die.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 2.45 p.m.