SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

ORDER PAPER

NINTH SITTING, FOURTH SESSION (2023/2024)
TWELFTH PARLIAMENT
TUESDAY DECEMBER 19, 2023 AT 10:00 A.M.

1. PRAYERS

2. OATH OR AFFIRMATION

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT

4. BILLS BROUGHT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

       (By the Minister of Finance who will move that the next stage of the Bill be taken
       later in the proceedings)

5. PETITIONS

6. PAPERS

   (i) The Trinidad and Tobago Revenue Authority (Extension of Period) (No. 2) Order, 2023.
       (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 San Fernando City Corporation for the financial year ended September 30,
        2009.
        (By the Minister of Finance)

         of Trinidad and Tobago.
         (By the Vice-President)

   (iv) The Delegation Report on the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Gender Equality and
        Sustainable Development & Exchange among Caribbean Women’s Parliamentary Caucuses,
        Gros Islet, Saint Lucia from October 31 to November 02, 2023.
        (By Senator Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing)

7. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

   (i) The Tenth 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 Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate, Third Session
       (By Senator the Hon. Renuka Sagram Singh-Sooklal)
Questions for Oral Answer

*Question No. 10 to the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries*
(By Senator Wade Mark)
In light of the incident at the NiQuan Plant on June 15, 2023 which resulted in the death of an employee of Massy Energy Engineered Solutions Limited (MEES) and the subsequent Root Cause Analysis (RCA) report on said incident, submitted to both the Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA) and the Ministry, can the Minister provide the following:

(i) when will the RCA report on said incident be laid in Parliament;
(ii) the names of the leading independent professionals from the downstream gas industry who conducted the RCA;
(iii) a list of recommendations arising out of the RCA?

*Question No. 11 to the Minister of National Security*
(By Senator Wade Mark)
As regard the status of the automated immigration kiosks that were installed at the Piarco International Airport, can the Minister advise as to the following:

(i) which Government agency is responsible for the operation and maintenance of said kiosks;
(ii) what is the quantum of money spent on the kiosks as at August 31, 2023;
(iii) what are the reason(s) for the failure to operationalize the kiosks;
(iv) what is the timeline for the operationalization of the kiosks; and
(v) whether the Government intends to increase the number of kiosks in the short-term?

*Question No. 12 to the Minister of National Security*
(By Senator Wade Mark)
In light of the concerns expressed by the US Government over alleged “extra judicial killings” being committed by members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service which could hinder this country’s eligibility for US national security assistance, can the Minister advise as to the steps being taken to address this situation?

*Question No. 40 to the Minister of Finance*
(By Senator Damian Lyder)
Given the Minister’s statement during May 2023, that $3 billion worth in bonds would be made available to settle outstanding VAT refund debt along with $1 to $2 billion in cash from the consolidated fund, can the Minister indicate the following:

(i) the value of bonds issued under this scheme; and
(ii) the total figure of VAT refunds settled with cash in fiscal 2022/2023?

10. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

* Questions Nos. 10, 11 and 12 were postponed for one week on 12.12.2023 due to the absence of the Senator in whose name the Questions were filed.
11. STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS OR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES

12. PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

13. INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

*(The President of the Senate will put the question that the Bill be read a First time)*

14. MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE SENATE AND MOVED BY A MINISTER

15. PUBLIC BUSINESS

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

Motions:

(i) WHERE AS it is provided by section 9 of the Beekeeping and Bee Products Act, Chap. 67:53 (hereinafter referred to as “the Act”) that the Minister may make Regulations, *inter alia*, restricting and regulating the importation or exportation of bees, bee products and bee supplies into or out of Trinidad and Tobago;

AND WHEREAS it is also provided by section 9 of the Act that Regulations made under that section shall be subject to affirmative resolution of Parliament;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has on the 24th day of November, 2023 made the Beekeeping and Bee Products (Amendment) Regulations, 2023;

AND WHEREAS it is expedient that the Beekeeping and Bee Products (Amendment) Regulations, 2023 now be affirmed;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Beekeeping and Bee Products (Amendment) Regulations, 2023 be approved.
*(By the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries)*

Bills Second Reading:

(i) A Bill entitled, ‘An Act to provide for the Country-by-Country Reporting (CBCR) by Multinational entities relative to the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting Inclusive Framework and to provide for matters related thereto’.
*(By the Minister of Finance)*

(ii) A Bill entitled, ‘An Act to establish the Private Security Service Authority and to regulate the private security industry and for other related matters’.
*(By the Minister of National Security)*

(iii) A Bill entitled, ‘An Act to amend the Supplemental Police Act, Chap. 15:02’.
*(By the Minister of National Security)*

**PRIVATE MEMBERS’ BUSINESS**
Motions:

(i) The debate on the following Motion which was in progress when the Senate adjourned on Tuesday November 28, 2023 will be resumed:

WHEREAS the United States Government has granted a licence allowing Trinidad and Tobago to develop the Dragon Gas Field in Venezuela;

AND WHEREAS it will cost some US$100M to build a 17-kilometre pipeline from the Dragon Gas Field in Venezuelan waters to the Hibiscus Platform in Trinidad and Tobago waters;

AND WHEREAS there are many other issues that remain outstanding in order to bring gas from the Dragon Gas Field to this country’s shores;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate call on the Government to provide a detailed account of its approach to this project involving entities such as Shell, the National Gas Company, Venezuela and the US Government;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government provide this Senate with quarterly reports on this critically significant project.

(By Senator Wade Mark)

(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 recognised as an important tool for social investigation in contemporary society, an effective mechanism for delving 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 with a view to effecting comprehensive reform of the Act and thereby improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the public inquiry process.

(By Senator Anthony Vieira, SC)

(iii) WHEREAS the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Chap. 1:01 entrenches the principle of the Separation of Powers between the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary, which ensures the protection of citizens and a system of checks and balances in the exercise of power;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution provides protection to all constitutionally enshrined offices and institutions;

AND WHEREAS the actions of the Government in its engagement with constitutionally enshrined offices and institutions have caused public unease and concerns;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Senate calls on the Government to reaffirm its commitment to the principles and the practice of democracy in Trinidad and Tobago.

(Senator Jayanti Lutchmedial)

(iv) WHEREAS the Steelpan was inspired into creation in Trinidad and Tobago, which was recognised in the United Nations General Assembly’s proclamation of August 11th as World Steelpan Day;
AND WHEREAS through the inventiveness, dedication and intelligence of generations of citizens, the Steelpan now stands as a powerful symbol of cultural identity and a source of national pride for citizens resident within and outside of Trinidad and Tobago, and occupies a distinctive place among the musical instruments of the world;

AND WHEREAS citizens widely revere the Steelpan as the national musical instrument of Trinidad and Tobago yet the recognition of the Steelpan as the national musical instrument of Trinidad and Tobago has not been codified in law;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Steelpan be declared the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a Joint Select Committee of Parliament be established to determine the best mechanism for giving meaningful effect to the declaration of the Steelpan as the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago.

(By Senator Sunity Maharaj)

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

December 14, 2023
APPENDIX

ORDER PAPER TUESDAY DECEMBER 19, 2023

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

*Question No. 52 to the Minister of Public Administration
(By Senator Wade Mark)
With respect to the buildings and office spaces rented/leased by the State as at September 30, 2023, can the Minister provide the following:

(i) the addresses and locations of the buildings and office spaces that were/are being rented/leased;
(ii) the names and addresses of the owners of the buildings or office spaces;
(iii) the purpose for which the buildings or office spaces were/are being rented;
(iv) the cost per month to rent/lease each building or office space;
(v) the date on which each rental/lease agreement was entered into;
(vi) the period of each rental/lease agreement;
(vii) whether said properties are vacant, fully-occupied, partially-occupied or unoccupied; and
(viii) what are Government’s plans to reduce its property rental costs in the immediate future?

(Answer due by 02.12.2023)

Question No. 54 to the Minister of Digital Transformation
(By Senator Dr. Paul Richards)
Can the Minister provide a status update on the digital transformation of Ministries, Departments, and State agencies, including the following:

(i) the percentage completion of the digital transformation process;
(ii) details on the main areas of completion in various Ministries, Departments, and State agencies;
(iii) the major phases of digital transformation that remain incomplete; and
(iv) projected timelines for completion of the phases identified at (iii)?

(Answer due by 04.01.2024)

Question No. 56 to the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries
(By Senator Wade Mark)
With reference to the $TT 17B in additional energy revenue stemming from negotiations referenced by the Minister at a sitting of the Senate on November 24th 2023, can the Minister provide the following information:

(i) when was this $TT 17B received and under which head is this information listed in the Estimates of Revenue;
(ii) what Companies paid this $TT 17B;
(iii) what contracts were re-negotiated by the Government to effect this additional income;

* Question No. 52 was deferred for two weeks on 12.12.2023.
(iv) with reference to (c) when were these contracts renegotiated and what companies were involved in these negotiations; and

(v) the names of persons who represented the Government of Trinidad and Tobago or its agencies in these negotiations?

(Answer due by 04.01.2024)

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NOTICE OF URGENT QUESTIONS

The under-mentioned Question which has been accepted by the President in accordance with Standing Order 25 is hereby forwarded for the attention of the Minister concerned.

1. TO THE MINISTER OF FINANCE
   (By Senator Wade Mark)
   Given extended delays in clearing goods at the ports due to staff shortages and operational changes, what measures are being taken by the Customs and Excise Division to allow citizens to clear their goods in time for Christmas?

Keiba Jacob Mottley
Clerk of the Senate (Ag.)