



REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Debates of the House of Representatives

1st Session – 11th Parliament (Rep.) – Volume 2 – Number 12

**OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)**

THE HONOURABLE BRIDGID ANNISETTE-GEORGE
SPEAKER

THE HONOURABLE ESMOND FORDE
DEPUTY SPEAKER

Friday 13th November, 2015

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: JACQUI SAMPSON-MEIGUEL

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Leave of Absence

Friday, November 13, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 13, 2015

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, Dr. Fuad Khan, MP, Member for Barataria/San Juan, has asked to be excused from today's sitting of the House. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie, MP, Member for Caroni Central, has asked to be excused from sittings of the House during the period November 15th to 21st, 2015. The leave which the Members seek is granted.

PETITION

Attorney-at-Law Kent Samlal
(Standing Order 21 House of Representatives)

Mr. Ganga Singh (*Chaguanas West*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. [*Desk thumping*] Madam Speaker, I ask that the petition be read and that the petitioner be allowed to proceed.

Question put and agreed to.

Petition being read. [Interruption]

Mr. Al-Rawi: Madam Speaker, 48(2).

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Member, in terms that these matters are sub judice?

Mr. Al-Rawi: Yes, Ma'am.

Madam Speaker: I think I would want to suggest that the Petition be first read before I entertain that point which you wish to make.

Petition continued.

Question put and agreed to: That the petitioner be granted leave to proceed.

PAPERS LAID

1. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Institute of Higher Education (Research, Science and Technology) for the year ended December 31, 2004. [*The Minister of Finance (Hon. Colm Imbert)*]

2. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Institute of Higher Education (Research, Science and Technology) for the year ended December 31, 2005. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
3. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Institute of Higher Education (Research, Science and Technology) for the year ended December 31, 2006. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
4. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Institute of Higher Education (Research, Science and Technology) for the year ended December 31, 2007. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
5. Second Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Siparia Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2002. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
6. Second Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Siparia Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2003. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
7. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Siparia Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2004. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
8. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Siparia Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2005. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
9. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Siparia Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2006. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
10. Second Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Tobago House of Assembly for the year ended September 30, 2007. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
11. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Land Settlement Agency for the nine month period ended September 30, 2004. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

12. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Land Settlement Agency for the year ended September 30, 2005. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
13. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Land Settlement Agency for the year ended September 30, 2006. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
14. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Land Settlement Agency for the year ended September 30, 2007. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
15. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1988. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
16. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1989. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
17. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1990. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
18. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1991. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
19. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1992. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
20. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1993. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
21. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1994. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
22. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1995. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

23. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1996. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
24. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1997. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
25. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the nine month period ended September 30, 1998. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
26. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 1999. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
27. Third Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 2000. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
28. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 2001. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
29. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 2002. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
30. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 2003. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
31. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 2004. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
32. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 2005. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
33. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Sangre Grande Civic Centre for the year ended September 30, 2006. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

34. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Institute of Marine Affairs for the year ended September 30, 2005. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
35. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Institute of Marine Affairs for the year ended September 30, 2006. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
36. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Institute of Marine Affairs for the year ended September 30, 2007. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
37. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Lotteries Control Board for the year ended September 30, 2010. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
38. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Lotteries Control Board for the year ended September 30, 2011. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
39. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Lotteries Control Board for the year ended September 30, 2012. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
40. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Agricultural Development Bank of Trinidad and Tobago for the year ended September 30, 2012. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
41. Audited Financial Statements of the Deposit Insurance Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
42. Report of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago on Insurance and Pensions for the year ended December 31, 2013. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
43. Report of the Auditor General on the Consolidated Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation for the year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

Papers 1 to 43 to be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

44. Annual Audited Financial Statement of the CEPEP Company Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2012. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
45. Audited Financial Statements of Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2013. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

Papers Laid

Friday, November 13, 2015

46. Annual Audited Financial Statements of Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited for the year ended March 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
47. Consolidated Audited Financial Statements of First Citizens Holdings Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
48. Unconsolidated Audited Financial Statements of First Citizens Holdings Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

1.45 p.m.

49. Audited Financial Statements of Export-Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
50. Annual Audited Financial Statements of National Information and Communication Company Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
51. Annual Audited Financial Statements of Trinidad Nitrogen Company Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
52. Audited Financial Statements of Taurus Services Limited for the financial year ended September 30, 2013. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
53. Annual Audited Financial Statements of the Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago for the year September 30, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
54. Annual Audited Financial Statements of Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited for the year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
55. Annual Audited Financial Statements of Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
56. Annual Audited Financial Statements of the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
57. Annual Financial Statements of the National Maintenance Training and Security Company Limited for the year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

Papers 44 to 57 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.

58. Annual Administrative Report of the First Citizens Securities Trading Limited for 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
59. Annual Administrative Report of the First Citizens Trustee Services Limited for 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
60. Annual Administrative Report of the Trinidad and Tobago International Financial Centre Management Company Limited as at June 30, 2015. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
61. Annual Report for the Heritage and Stabilisation Fund 2014. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
62. Annual Administrative Report of the Betting Levy Board for the year July 01, 2011 to June 30, 2012. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]
63. Annual Administrative Report of the National Training Agency for fiscal year 2012/2013. [*The Minister of Education (Hon. Anthony Garcia)*]
64. Annual Administrative Report of the National Energy Skills Centre for the period October 2012 to September 2013. [*Hon. A. Garcia*]
65. Annual Administrative Report of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago for the fiscal year 2013/2014. [*Hon. A. Garcia*]
66. Annual Administrative Report of the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme for the fiscal year 2013/2014. [*Hon. A. Garcia*]
67. Annual Report of the MIC Institute of Technology Limited for the period October 01, 2013 to September 30, 2014. [*Hon. A. Garcia*]
68. Annual Administrative Report of the University of Trinidad and Tobago for the period October 01, 2013 to September 30, 2014. [*Hon. A. Garcia*]
69. Annual Administrative Report of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus for fiscal year 2013/2014. [*Hon. A. Garcia*]
70. Annual Report of the Ministry of Public Administration for the financial year 2013-2014. [*The Minister of Public Administration (Hon. Randall Mitchell)*]
71. Annual Administrative Report of the Government Human Resource Services Company Limited for the year October 01, 2013 to September 30, 2014. [*Hon. R. Mitchell*]
72. Administrative Report of the Port of Spain Corporation for the period 2009-2010. [*The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis)*]

73. Administrative Report of the Port of Spain Corporation for the period 2010-2011. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
74. Administrative Report of the Port of Spain Corporation for the period 2011-2012. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
75. Annual Administrative Report of the Community Improvement Services Limited for the year 2013/2014. [*The Minister of Community Development, Culture and the Arts (Hon. Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly)*]
76. Annual Administrative Report of the National Maintenance Training and Security Company Limited for the year ended December 31, 2014. [*The Minister of Public Utilities (Hon. Brig. Gen. Ancil Antoine)*]
77. Annual Administrative Report of the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission for the year ended September 30, 2013. [*Hon. Brig. Gen. A. Antoine*]
78. Annual Administrative Report of the Ministry of Public Utilities for fiscal 2014. [*Hon. Brig. Gen. A. Antoine*]
79. Annual Administrative Report of the Caribbean New Media Group for the fiscal year 2011. [*The Minister of Communications (Hon. Maxie Cuffie)*]
80. Annual Administrative Report of the Caribbean New Media Group for the fiscal year 2012. [*Hon. M. Cuffie*]
81. Annual Administrative Report of the exportTT Limited for the fiscal year 2013/2014. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
82. Annual Administrative Report of the Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited for the year ended December 31, 2014. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
83. Annual Administrative Report of the Boiler Examiners Board for the period October 2013 to September 2014. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
84. Annual Administrative Report of the Minimum Wages Board for the period October 2013 to September 2014. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
85. Annual Administrative Report of the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development for the year October 01, 2011 to September 30, 2012. [*The Minister of Social Development and Family Services (Hon. Cherry-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn)*]

86. Annual Administrative Report of the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development for the year October 01, 2012 to September 30, 2013. [*Hon. C. Crichlow-Cockburn*]
87. Annual Administrative Report of the Counter Trafficking Unit, Ministry of National Security for the year 2014. [*The Minister of National Security (Hon. Maj. Gen. Edmund Dillon)*]
88. Annual Administrative Report of the Office of the Prime Minister for the period October 2012 to September 2013. [*The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley)*]
89. Annual Administrative Report of the Statutory Authorities Service Commission for the year ended 2014. [*The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Esmond Forde)*]
90. One Hundred and First Report of the Salaries Review Commission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the determination of salary and other terms and conditions of service for the offices of Supervisor and Deputy Supervisor of Insolvency. [*Mr. E. Forde*]
91. Civil Aviation [(No. 18.) State Aircraft Registration and Marketings] Regulations, 2015. [*The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds)*]
92. Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation (Vesting) (Amendment to the First Schedule) (No. 3) Order, 2015. [*The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Marlene Mc Donald)*]

URGENT QUESTIONS

Local Contractors (Moneys owed)

Dr. Surujrattan Rambachan (*Tabaquite*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Is the Minister aware that over \$200 million is owed to local contractors by OAS as a result of OAS Construtora not receiving funding from the National Infrastructure Development Company Limited (NIDCO)?

The Minister of Finance (Hon. Colm Imbert): Madam Speaker, it has recently come to my attention that a certificate in the sum of \$102 million—not \$200 million—has been made in favour of OAS. The Government is carefully considering this payment certificate as well as all other matters of a contractual nature regarding that particular highway contract.

Madam Speaker: Member for Fyzabad.

**Mount Hope Women's Hospital
(Maternal and Perinatal Mortality Rates)**

Dr. Lackram Bodoë (Fyzabad): In view of the recent deaths of a mother—
[*Interruption*]

Dr. Rambachan: I was getting up on a supplemental.

Madam Speaker: But Member, I recognized the Member for Fyzabad. Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. L. Bodoë: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In view of the recent deaths of a mother and her baby and one other baby at the Mount Hope Women's Hospital, can the Minister indicate what concrete measures are being taken by the Government to reduce the maternal and perinatal mortality rates in our nation?

The Minister of Health (Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, Member of Parliament for Fyzabad for bringing a very timely question. Madam Speaker, I would like to place the answer in context. One of the markers for a country attaining First World standard is a maternal mortality rate of less than 50 deaths per 100,000 live births.

For contextual purposes, between 1990 and 2013 the United States' maternal mortality rose from 12 to 28 per 100,000; in Barbados, it declined from 120 to 52; and in Trinidad and Tobago from 1990 to 2013 it declined from 89 to just 85. So we have made no appreciable progress in maternal mortality from 1990 to 2013.

Madam Speaker, what are some of the factors? Our factors matched those of the recent WHO report, which speaks about pre-existing medical conditions. One in four mothers presenting with obesity, diabetes, hypotension, lack of midwives and lack of health care professionals, and mainly lack of clear policies, protocols and guidelines to deal with all categories of maternal cases especially high risk.

2.00 p.m.

Locally, Madam Speaker, we have had a series of problems; the key one being lack of succession planning at our public institutions. For example, at Mount Hope, the gap between consultants and the other professionals goes like this, you have 20 doctors responsible for maternity cases at Mount Hope. Three of those doctors have over 10 years' experience; seven, between five to 10 years' experience only; and 10, less than five years' experience. In that particular field, it is felt that a doctor needs at least 10 to 15 years' experience.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Member, may I just remind you of Standing Order 27(1)(e).

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Yes, thank you. And I am coming to the measures, but I can only talk about the measures in the context of what problems we face. And so what are the measures?

Madam Speaker: Member, I am sorry. Your time is up. You have two minutes, in accordance with the Standing Order, to answer the question.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Supplemental.

Madam Speaker: Yes, hon. Member for Caroni Central.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Could the Member for St. Joseph indicate his source for making that statement of one in four? What is the source of that?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: WHO report and reports on statistics coming out of the Mount Hope Hospital.

Dr. Gopeesingh: What year WHO?

Mr. Imbert: One supplemental.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, I know.

Madam Speaker: Two.

Dr. Gopeesingh: The other supplemental, Madam Speaker. The measures asked about in this question, are you going to wait until the team that has been appointed to look into the health care areas complete their work or you are going to institute measures before?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Thank you. We are instituting measures starting as early as next week Wednesday. We are having a meeting being chaired by Dr. Adesh Sirjusingh, who is part of our review team, set up by the Prime Minister, where all stakeholders are being invited to a meeting next week Wednesday to come up to deal with all the recommendations coming out of all the reports dealing with baby Cottle, Ramsumair and all the other reports and you have 76 recommendations that we have to deal with, very few which have been implemented over the past five years and this administration will be implementing those as of next week Wednesday. [*Desk thumping*]

**Munroe Road Hindu School
(Delivery of)**

Mr. Ganga Singh (*Chaguanas West*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Could the Minister of Education state the reasons for the delay in the delivery of the new Munroe Road Hindu School and provide a date when the school will be opened?

The Minister of Education (Hon. Anthony Garcia): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Munroe Road Vedic Primary School was closed since Monday 28th September, 2015.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Munroe Road Hindu School.

Hon. A. Garcia: Munroe Vedic Primary School.

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, that is the next question.

Hon. A. Garcia: Which is the question you are asking?

Miss Ramdial: Question 3.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Munroe Road Hindu School.

Hon. A. Garcia: Madam Speaker, the Munroe Road Hindu School is awaiting approval from the Ministry of Works and Transport and the regional corporation. Approvals have already been obtained from WASA, from the fire service, from the Town and Country department and from the Electrical Inspectorate Division. The contractor is in the process of acquiring the two outstanding statutory approvals before the school can be occupied.

It should be noted that the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha Board of Education has locked out the staff and students from the old school compound where they occupied previously. The Ministry of Education is currently exploring alternative venues for relocation of the school, pending receipt of the outstanding approvals.

Mr. Singh: Supplemental. Could the hon. Minister indicate what kind of time frame, because you have 300 students without classes at the moment, over the last month?

Hon. A. Garcia: Madam Speaker, that issue is one of concern to us in the Ministry of Education and we are awaiting the approvals, as I stated before, from the Ministry of Works and Transport and from the regional corporation. As soon as we get these approvals then we make all the necessary arrangements to have the school reopened.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Hon. Minister, could you indicate whether approvals are necessary for an alternative venue?

Hon. A. Garcia: Yes, approvals are necessary. Remember we are dealing with children. We would not want to put them in a building that is injurious or hazardous to their health and safety.

**Montrose Vedic Primary School
(Spraying and Sanitizing of)**

Mr. Ganga Singh (*Chaguana West*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. To the hon. Minister of Education, with regard to the Montrose Vedic Primary School, could the Minister state the reasons for the delay in spraying and sanitizing the school to eliminate pests, and indicate when the school will be reopened?

The Minister of Education (Hon. Anthony Garcia): Madam Speaker, again I share the concern of the Member. The Montrose Vedic Primary School was closed since Monday 28th September, 2015, because of problems associated with fleas and mites. The school was sprayed and classes resumed on Monday 12th October, however the problem persisted.

Following meetings with stakeholders, a decision was made to carry out the following works:

- (1) air quality testing of the school compound;—and this was a pre-test.
- (2) sanitizing of all furniture and classrooms;
- (3) painting of the classrooms and air quality testing of the school compound as a post-test.

CARIRI has been engaged to carry out the air quality testing. CARIRI has indicated that the equipment required to do this job is expected in the country today, Friday 13th November. Once the pretest is carried out, the sanitization will commence and it will take approximately five days. Once the sanitization has been completed, it is expected that the school will resume on 23rd November, 2015.

In the interim, the Ministry explored the option of relocation of the school to an alternative venue, including transport. Couva West Secondary School was identified and can accommodate the entire school. However, the parents have refused this option so far.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Supplemental. Could the hon. Minister indicate the time frame for the testing by the testing agency for completion before you do the sanitization?

Hon. A. Garcia: Madam Speaker, I think I was clear in stating that CARIRI has informed us that this exercise will take approximately five days and as soon as this post-testing has been completed, the sanitization will take place and the school would be expected to be reopened by 23rd November. Thank you.

Miss Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Minister, are you aware that the relocation to Couva West is extremely far from the original location, that is why the parents are disagreeing to move? However, there were plans for relocation on identified lands within the borough of Chaguanas, are you going to follow through with those relocation plans?

Hon. A. Garcia: Madam Speaker, it is always a concern of ours when students are deprived of their education and in the initial stages we thought that relocating the students to the school in Couva would have offered the students the opportunity of an education. The parents are the ones who have refused this offer. I am not aware of any alternative site. The school supervisors are on the field trying to solve this problem.

In the interim, our students are being deprived of an education, not because of the Ministry of Education but simply because the parents have refused the offer at Couva West Secondary School.

**Education Facilities Company Limited
(Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer)**

Mr. Ganga Singh (*Chaguanas West*): To the hon. Minister of Education. Could the Minister state whether the positions of Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer at the Education Facilities Company Limited (EFCL) are currently vacant?

The Minister of Education (Hon. Anthony Garcia): Madam Speaker, the simple answer to that question is no. Thank you.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Would the hon. Minister indicate whether Attorney-at-Law, John Jeremie is involved in this matter at EFCL related to the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Executive Officer, and if he is involved what are his fees for becoming involved in that matter?

Madam Speaker: Hon. Member for Caroni East, I would not allow that question as a supplemental question following from the question that was asked.

Mr. Singh: Could the hon. Minister of Education indicate whether the incumbent or the previous incumbent, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer, were removed from office?

Hon. A. Garcia: Madam Speaker, a new board of the EFCL has been put in place and in fact members of the board were given their letters of appointment on Monday 9th. I have been in constant contact with the chairman of the board and I have arranged a meeting with the entire board on Monday 16th November, at my office at 3.00 p.m. At that meeting we will be discussing the way forward and what we can do to ensure that the EFCL operates in the manner in which it is supposed to operate. [*Desk thumping*]

**Prison Officers
(Safety of)**

Mr. Prakash Ramadhar (*St. Augustine*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. To the Minister of National Security, in light of the continued attacks on prison officers, can the Minister indicate what steps have been taken or continued to ensure the better safety and well-being of prison officers and their families?

The Minister of National Security (Hon. Major General Edmund Dillon): Madam Speaker, steps that have been taken to ensure the better safety and well-being of prison officers and their families include:

1. A meeting was held with the Commissioner of Prisons and his executives.
2. A meeting was held with the Prison Officers' Association during which we explored options to treat with the safety and security of the prison officers.

That conversation continues, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Ramadhar: Supplemental, thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Hon. Minister, have you considered the creation of a specialized investigative unit to deal with attacks on officers of the State or, indeed, not just attacks but those who may create dangers to them, pre-emptively?

Madam Speaker: Hon. Member for St. Augustine, I would not allow that question as a supplemental. If you look at your question, it refers to prison officers.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Could the hon. Minister of National Security indicate that the options that they have been discussing, whether there is the question of early implementation of any of these options to assist in this problem?

Hon. Maj. Gen. E. Dillon: Madam Speaker, as mentioned before, we continue to explore the options and it is only after the exploration of those options then we can know the timeliness of implementation.

Madam Speaker: Members, I would wish to advise that there were certain questions which were sent as urgent questions which were not allowed. Those Members can hold discussions with the Clerk of the House, with respect to how those questions can be redirected.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Caribbean Financial Action Task Force

The Attorney General (Hon. Faris Al-Rawi): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have been authorized by Cabinet to make the following statement.

Trinidad and Tobago is a founding member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, otherwise known as CFATF, and thus has an international obligation to pursue the FATF 40 Recommendations. These are the international gold standard for effective national Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism regimes and compliance, which is mandatory for any country participating in the global economy.

The tool used to verify compliance with the FATF recommendations is the mutual evaluation, which involves a team of regional experts in the legal, financial and law enforcement fields examining the AML/CFT regime of the country.

In 2005, our country underwent the Third Round Mutual Evaluation, focusing on legislative and other legally-binding measures. We were rated non-compliant with 20 of the 40 Recommendations and Eight Special Recommendations on combating terrorist financing.

2.15 p.m.

We were thus placed into the CFATF follow-up process and required to report at every biannual plenary meeting on the progress made to rectify the outstanding deficiencies. Our country also underwent enhanced monitoring by the International Cooperation Review Group of the Americas (ICRG), as it is called, an unprecedented two-tiered monitoring.

Between October 2009 and February 2010, four key legislative countermeasures were enacted to bring our system into compliance with the then FATF recommendations. Notwithstanding these accomplishments, in February 2010, FATF grey-listed Trinidad and Tobago. Our Government's commitment to bring the country into compliance was however recognized, as the FATF statement acknowledged that our country then, had demonstrated progress in improving its AML/CFT regime and should continue to work on implementing its action plan to address the deficiencies identified in February 2010.

Trinidad and Tobago was ultimately removed from the monitoring process of FATF/ICRG initiative in October 2012, but remained in the CFATF follow-up process. Trinidad and Tobago did not do all that was required to exit the Third Round by the November 2014 Plenary as scheduled. It was however agreed at the Plenary that the outstanding Third Round deficiencies would be merged into the Fourth Round Assessment, and thus reporting under the Third Round Mutual Evaluation Report came to an end.

The Fourth Round applies the Revised FATF 40 Standards and now focuses on both Technical Compliance and Effectiveness. Our Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation began with us completing an extensive questionnaire in June 2014, as part of a desk-based review, and incorporated an on-site examination assessment in January 2015. We agreed to this timeline in 2012, so there was adequate time to ensure we made substantial progress before the evaluation.

Trinidad and Tobago must now seek adjustments to the ratings and observations of assessors as appropriate. The evaluation will culminate with the Report being discussed and finalized, at the XLII Plenary this month, at which meeting we will also ascend to the Chair of CFATF. That is, Trinidad and Tobago will become the Chair of CFATF. FATF and all CFATF Members are invited to comment on the Report. Through a process of fine-tuning, less than 10 key issues in the report will be identified for discussion at CFATF Working Group on FATF issues. From this will flow a set of proposals for key issues, which will be presented to the Plenary for discussion.

On November 22, 2015 there will be a meeting including representatives of Trinidad and Tobago, the assessors and reviewers in order to attempt to resolve any outstanding issues. Any resulting changes will be presented to the Compilation of Comments for Plenary document. The report will thereafter be considered by the plenary, when ratings will be finalized with a determination subsequently being made as to what is to be taken in respect of Trinidad and Tobago.

No one should have expected Trinidad and Tobago to be cut any slack by its contemporaries in the mutual evaluation. There are already calls for further downgrades of some of the ratings given to our country. In respect of Immediate Outcome 1, which is Risk, Policy and Coordination, the United States has recommended that we be downgraded from moderate to low. Gaps in the transparency of beneficial ownership of legal persons, and regulation of the non-profit organization sector, are also high on the list of concerns of the Americans.

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[HON. F. AL-RAWI]

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With respect to Recommendation 29 – Financial Intelligence Units, Canada has recommended that we be downgraded from largely compliant to partially compliant based on the hiring system in respect of the FIU. Canada has also made similar recommendations in respect of Recommendation 27, that is the Powers of Supervisors, and 34, the Guidance and Feedback. In its submission Canada also highlighted that several immediate outcomes point to a substantial lack of effectiveness due to deficiencies with the sanctions regime.

The Government will, of course, strongly defend the national position. The Inter-Ministerial Committee will continue to work with the National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Unit called NAMLC, to select the strongest team to represent the country in the evaluation review. We have identified several statements and conclusions in the report that we view as inaccurate, and which should consequently be reviewed and amended.

Trinidad and Tobago now finds itself on the brink of what is known as enhanced follow-up. This will require more regular reporting than ordinary biennial reporting, with the exact frequency being determined by the plenary in May 2016. The plenary could also adopt other measures ranging from a letter sent from the CFATF Chairman—which incidentally will be the Trinidad and Tobago Attorney General—to Trinidad and Tobago, drawing attention to the lack of compliance with FATF Standards, to suspension of membership in CFATF, to termination of membership.

Any level of sanctions can have wide-ranging negative impacts on our country and our citizens. The comments already received from the United States and Canada do not bode well for our position. The international investment marketplace is increasingly using Mutual Evaluations and Follow-up Reports, and data on AML/CFT compliance, to place and maintain foreign direct investments. Conversely, we may encounter challenges to capital investment abroad by Government wholly or majority owned entities. Multinational financial institutions may also reconsider their tenability in a country with weak ratings, to avoid being tainted through association and possible declines in share pricing.

The ease of doing business in Trinidad and Tobago can be hampered. Financial institutions and intermediaries may be called upon to perform enhanced customer due diligence. International business transactions may be slower and more costly for local businesses and manufactures. Trinidad and Tobago may become more vulnerable in respect of its citizens exposure. We are now faced with prioritizing a large portion of time and resources of the Executive, Legislature, technocrats and the business sector, to being removed from enhanced follow-up. These are resources which could otherwise be spent on expanding business opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago.

Both the Mutual Evaluation Exercise and our own National Risk Assessment highlight important technical and effectiveness steps which we can take. The assessors have thus far assigned us a rating of Non-Compliant in two recommendations, that is Recommendations 7 and 8; Partially Compliant in 14: Recommendations 6, 22, 23, 28 and Recommendation 26; and moderate to low in all 11 Immediate Outcomes, with low levels in effectiveness in such areas as money laundering, investigations and prosecution.

This Government will correct the legislative deficiencies. A complete assessment of legislative requirements will be completed shortly, but include key amendments to address difficulties under the Proceeds of Crime Act; freezing of assets under the Anti-Terrorism Act; amendments to the Financial Intelligence Unit, to allow for greater autonomy and strengthened powers to that regulator, and the mutual assistance in criminal matters.

The development of regimes to govern non-profit organizations and to address proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, remain high on the agenda; so too regimes governing Non-Conviction Based Asset Forfeiture, control delivery and Transparency and Beneficial Ownership of legal arrangements such as trusts.

Greater emphasis will have to be placed on effectiveness mechanisms, Madam Speaker. High priority must be given to investigation and prosecution of AML/CFT offences. This would require us to ensure that institutions such as the Financial Investigations Branch and the DPP are adequately staffed, trained and experienced personnel in operation, so that there is effective communication and information sharing among the intelligence community, law enforcement investigators and prosecutors.

These steps which should have been accomplished, had the last Government done what it should have done, will have to be accomplished by this Government. The momentum which we gained in 2010 will have to be regained and sustained. This Government fully acknowledges its responsibility to the people of our country, and to the international community to achieve effective systems to address the threat of money laundering, the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As the incoming Chair of the CFATF and the host nation of the Secretariat, we have an even higher duty in this regard.

I thank you, Madam Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Speaker: The Attorney General. [*Desk thumping*]

Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015

The Attorney General (Hon. Faris Al-Rawi): [*Desk thumping*] Much obliged. Madam Speaker, I rise to present a statement authorized by the Cabinet. Crime is the number one issue plaguing our beloved twin-island State of Trinidad and Tobago. Changes in Government have tended to retard the progress of the reduction of crime as far too often incoming Governments have found it difficult to gain the necessary momentum and follow through to overcome this burning issue. Failure to plan, failure to deliver and failure to achieve are experiences that Trinidad and Tobago simply cannot afford to endure any longer.

As an Opposition in the period 2010 to 2015, the People's National Movement engaged in active support of the vast majority of legislative proposals brought by the then PP administration. Full support was given to legislation properly aimed at extinguishing crime and criminality.

Detection and conviction rates plummeted in Trinidad and Tobago in the period 2010 to 2015. This phenomenon was as a direct result of the paucity of witnesses to crimes. Far too often this nation is riddled with very public allegation resembling certainty of crime, corruption, murder and mayhem. Everyone suspects who is guilty, but no one steps forward to testify to guilt-bearing evidence. The reason is clear. The fear of victimization and reprisal for honest exposure is not only perceived, but real. Witness protection is a mere platitude in reality. Corruption occurs blatantly in public institutions and state enterprises, and yet, not a trace can be found with one to testify by a single, living soul brought forward. Who should step forward as a witness? Why should someone step forward as a witness? What protection is there if one steps forward as a witness? What mechanisms and institutions exist to insulate those brave enough to step forward or those just plain fed up with dishonesty, greed and criminality?

As an Opposition then, we had proposed moving immediately to legislative reform, to ease the speedy appointment of a Commissioner of Police. We had proposed the conduct of a manpower audit of the TTPS; the establishment of an enlarged municipal police; the giving of more teeth to the Police Complaints Authority.

In the 2015 manifesto, now Government Policy, which is now underfoot, we undertook to:

- a. Introduce, as a priority, whistle-blower protection legislation, to allow exposure of corrupt activities through the Integrity Commission.

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We undertook to:

- b. Review and to improve the Public Procurement Act, in order to remove loopholes, limitations and weaknesses that currently exist there.

We undertook to:

- c. Enact and implement appropriate campaign finance legislation, drawing upon experience of models successfully in use in developed countries such as the UK, and the USA.

We undertook to:

- d. Ensure and support an efficient and legitimate criminal justice system towards prevention of crime.

We undertook to:

- e. Address prison legislation and penal reform.
- f. Review and amend local government legislation.
- g. Enact legislation that promotes the rehabilitation of young offenders.

The Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs has reviewed 111 items of primary legislative proposal since coming into office, and 38 items of subsidiary legislative proposal. Government Ministries are mandated to return to the AGLA with immediacy. The Ministry of the Attorney General shall be publishing—I repeat—publishing its Legislative Agenda in a matter of weeks, after the current review is completed, so that the nation can have a clear line of sight of the work to be undertaken.

The intensity of the aforementioned notwithstanding, the Ministry of the Attorney General is able to state today that we have produced two critical Bills for immediate national scrutiny through the operation of the Joint Select Committee process of the Eleventh Parliament. These Bills are: Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015 and the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amdt.) Bill, 2015.

2.30 p.m.

We are at present dealing with the legislative mechanisms to cause the appointment of a Commissioner of Police and we expect this to be completed no later than the end of November, 2015.

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The Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amdt.) Bill, 2015 and the certainty of the appointment of a Commissioner of Police to manage the investigative arms of the State, all closely articulate with this Government's stated commitment to rid our country of crime. The legislative reforms articulate very closely with campaign finance reform, amendments to the revenue management of Trinidad and Tobago, local government reform and improvements to the criminal justice system, all of which are actively afoot.

In light of our country's downgrade by international agencies under the PP Government, the nation's fall in positive rankings against corruption indices, this Government has maintained its focus in prioritizing the introduction of the Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015, as it represents the making of legislation which will protect those who may know, those who may have seen, those who may have heard and, of course, those who may be too afraid to disclose information of scandalous and deliberate acts of corruption all too often hidden behind closed doors.

Madam Speaker, this Government firmly believes that corruption is a transgression, a crime which has not just been swept under the proverbial rug, but which has been almost inherent in our society. The cutting of the thorns is where Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015 comes in. Madam Speaker, we believe that there are many decent and God-fearing people who are willing to testify as to crime and criminality within the public and private sectors provided that they are clothed with adequate protection.

Madam Speaker, the Government has scrutinized several models of legislation from jurisdictions including the United Kingdom, Canada, the USA, Malta, Jamaica and Malaysia. We focused on the merit to be found in three pieces of legislation namely that from Malta, the Protection of the Whistleblower Act, 2013; Jamaica, the Protected Disclosures Act, 2011 and Malaysia, the Whistleblower Protection Act, 2010. The Bill to be introduced in this House is a hybrid of the Malaysian, Jamaican and Maltese models.

Madam Speaker, the objectives of the proposed Bill include the desire to combat corruption and other wrongdoings while we encourage and facilitate disclosures of improper conduct in the public and private sector; protect persons making those disclosures from detrimental action; regulate the receiving investigation and otherwise dealing with disclosures of improper conduct and to provide for other measures connected.

Madam Speaker, the dominant feature of the proposed Bill is the protection and immunity from civil and criminal suit for those so named whistle-blowers who may want to disclose forms of improper conduct within their places of employment, be it in the public or private sector. The Bill will allow whistle-blowers to be protected from detrimental action, facilitating protection from victimization, harassment, suspension, adverse reference, injury loss or damage to employment, family life, career, profession, trade or business all broadly defined in the Bill.

Reasonable though not accurate belief on the part of the whistle-blower is required. Malicious or fraudulent action on the part of the whistle-blower is condemned and criminalized. The proposed Bill is strict as to the observance of secrecy and confidentiality with respect to disclosures made. Madam Speaker, this Government believes that the Bill will seek to encourage whistle-blowers who commit crimes to come forward by encouraging a system of mitigation and reward. Breaches of the proposed Bill are proposed to attract serious criminal and civil sanctions.

Madam Speaker, the proposed Bill has been drafted in such a way as to address the climate of alleged corruption and the need to encourage transparency within the aim of protection. Madam Speaker, this Government believes that consultation, discussion and transparency are fundamental building blocks in the legislative process. We believe that the proposed Bill should be subjected to parliamentary scrutiny and the widest possible consultation, and it is in this regard that this Government proposes that pursuant to Standing Order 64(1)(c) that the proposed Bill will be referred to a joint select committee of the Parliament.

I thank you, Madam Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act

The Minister of Finance (Hon. Colm Imbert): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am authorized by the Cabinet to make this statement on the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act. It is a matter of record that Parliament went through elaborate exercises to debate procurement reform in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2014.

On several occasions over the 2010 to 2014 period, the previous administration promised to move expeditiously to enact public procurement legislation but failed to do so. Indeed, by the time the previous Government demitted office, after five years of talk and after numerous scandals regarding public procurement under their tenure, the new procurement system was not

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[HON. C. IMBERT]

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operational. As promised, Madam Speaker, we intend to move swiftly to correct this deficiency by setting a tight timeframe for amendments to the legislation. It should be noted that during the committee stage of the debate in 2014, despite requesting and receiving input from the Opposition, the previous Government rejected all of the amendments to the Bill that were proposed by the Opposition through the Member of Parliament for Diego Martin North/East.

The amendments proposed by the Opposition included provisions to allow the Parliament to intervene if the procurement regulator acted irrationally or capriciously or whimsically obstructed the country's development programme or engaged in misconduct. The amendments provided for a resolution of Parliament which would quite naturally follow an extensive debate to allow the appointment by the President of a tribunal comprised of sitting or retired judges to enquire into the conduct of the regulator and to determine whether he should be removed from office. Madam Speaker, this is a standard feature of procurement legislation in all progressive countries, and if accepted it would have given the Parliament the ability to protect the country against an errant regulator.

In addition, the amendments provided for the automatic referral to the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, of reports made by the regulator on awards of contracts in the public sector and other matters of a contractual nature, which would have allowed bipartisan and public scrutiny of the findings and recommendations of the regulator on the use of taxpayers' money.

Further, the amendments provided for the establishment of a high-level review board comprised of experts including a retired judge and industry professionals whose responsibility would have been to review orders and decisions made by the regulator within prescribed time periods, thus allowing aggrieved persons redress within a short space of time. Again, this is a feature of similar legislation in all progressive countries in the world, and it also makes practical business common sense to allow an intermediate and speedy avenue for redress for aggrieved persons who wish to challenge a decision by the regulator regarding public procurement or disposal of public property, rather than send them immediately into litigation and exposing them to the vagaries and expense of the court system.

Finally and very importantly, the question of the disposal of State lands such as the disposal of the valuable and contentious Invader's Bay property was brushed aside by the previous Government and omitted from the ambit of the Act. Fortunately, the election of September 07, 2015 has resulted in a change of Government. The new PNM administration is now in a position to address all of these issues and to ensure that we in Trinidad and Tobago have practical and effective procurement legislation.

As promised in our 2015 election manifesto, a Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amdt.) Bill has been drafted and will be sent to a joint select committee momentarily with a mandate to report back to Parliament in the shortest possible time. The committee will be requested to examine the policy and merits of the amendment Bill and to also examine the current procedures for the appointment of the procurement regulator to see if these procedures make sense and are in the best interest of Trinidad and Tobago.

I thank you, Madam Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Tewarie: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Finance under 24(4).

Madam Speaker: You are allowed one question. Hon. Member for Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: The question is very simple, Madam Speaker. What is the real intent of the Government in referring this matter to another joint select committee when the Bill has already been partially proclaimed following passage by both Houses of Parliament after a comprehensive report by a joint select committee which addressed this matter for three years? [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, this administration is all about good governance. [*Desk thumping*] We proposed amendments in 2014 and they were rejected out of hand by him, by that hon. Member. We intend to deal with this by sending this to a joint select committee to look at the precise amendments that were submitted to this Parliament.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Member, your time has expired. [*Desk thumping*]

**PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC PROPERTY (AMDT.) BILL,
2015**

Bill to amend the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act, 2015 [*The Minister of Finance*]; read the first time.

The Minister of Finance (Hon. Colm Imbert): Madam Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 64(1)(c), I beg to move that the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amdt.) Bill, 2015 be referred to a joint select committee to be established for its consideration and report, the committee to report to Parliament within two months.

Question put and agreed to.

Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015
[HON. MAJ. GEN. E. DILLON]

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WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION BILL, 2015

Bill to combat corruption and other wrongdoings by encouraging and facilitating disclosures of improper conduct in the public and private sector, to protect persons making those disclosures from detrimental action, to regulate the receiving, investigating or otherwise dealing with disclosures of improper conduct and to provide for other matters connected therewith [*The Minister of National Security*]; read the first time.

The Minister of National Security (Hon. Major General Edmund Dillon): Madam Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 64(1)(c), I beg to move that the Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015 be referred to a joint select committee to be established for its consideration and report.

Question put and agreed to.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, the procedure for the establishment of this committee and also for the committee to be established for the consideration of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amdt.) Bill, 2015, shall take place later in the proceedings.

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(APPOINTMENT OF)**

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve with an equal number from the Senate on the Public Accounts Committee:

Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	Member
Miss Marlene Mc Donald	Member
Mr. Randall Mitchell	Member
Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie	Member

Question put and agreed to.

2.45 p.m.

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE
(APPOINTMENT OF)**

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

PA(E)C (Appointment of)

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That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee:

Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds	Member
Mrs. Cherry-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn	Member
Miss Shamfa Cudjoe	Member
Dr. Tim Gopeesingh	Member

Question put and agreed to.

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEES
(APPOINTMENT OF)**

Public Administration and Appropriations Committee

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following five Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Public Administration and Appropriations:

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	Chairman
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	Member
Miss Nicole Olivierre	Member
Mr. Maxie Cuffie	Member
Dr. Lackram Bodoë	Member

Madam Speaker, I would like to indicate that the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee, abbreviated PAAC, which will report to the Parliament on budgetary expenditure of government agencies has a specific role, and that role, Madam Speaker, is to ensure that expenditure is embarked upon in accordance with parliamentary approval and to keep the Parliament informed of how the budget allocation is being implemented. This Committee will therefore perform an important role in exercising a check over government expenditure. Madam Speaker, I thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

JSC (Appointment of)

Friday, November 13, 2015

Parliamentary Broadcasting Committee

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Broadcasting:

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	Chairman
Mr. Darryl Smith	Member
Miss Shamfa Cudjoe	Member
Mr. Barry Padarath	Member

Question put and agreed to.

Committee on Government Assurances

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Government Assurances:

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	Vice-Chairman
Mr. Adrian Leonce	Member
Mr. Anthony Garcia	Member
Dr. Surujrattan Rambachan	Member

Madam Speaker, often, whilst replying to questions in the House or during debate, Ministers at times gave assurances or undertakings either to consider a matter to take some action or to furnish the House or a Member with further information at a later time. This newly established Committee on Government Assurances shall be tasked with scrutinizing the assurances, promises and undertakings given by Ministers from time to time on the floor of the House, and reporting to Parliament on the extent to which such assurances, promises and undertakings have been implemented.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

JSC (Appointment of)

Friday, November 13, 2015

Committee on National Security

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on National Security:

Miss Nicole Olivierre	Member
Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds	Member
Mr. Faris Al-Rawi	Member
Mr. Prakash Ramadhar	Member

Question put and agreed to.

Committee on Energy Affairs

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Energy Affairs:

Major General Edmund Dillon	Member
Mr. Colm Imbert	Member
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	Member
Mr. David Lee	Member

Question put and agreed to.

Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs:

Miss Marlene Mc Donald	Member
Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh	Member
Miss Shamfa Cudjoe	Member
Mr. Rodney Charles	Member

Question put and agreed to.

JSC (Appointment of)

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**Committee on Human Rights, Diversity, the Environment
and Sustainable Development**

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Diversity, the Environment and Sustainable Development:

Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly	Member
Mrs. Glenda Jennings-Smith	Member
Mr. Randall Mitchell	Member
Mrs. Vidia Gayadeen-Gopeesingh	Member

Question put and agreed to.

**DEPARTMENTAL JOINT SELECT COMMITTEES
(APPOINTMENT OF)**

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the section 66A Departmental Committees established by the Constitution, have been established in the following areas:

1. Finance and Legal Affairs;
2. Land and Physical Infrastructure;
3. Social Services and Public Administration;
4. Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities; and
5. State Enterprises.

Madam Speaker, these Joint Select Committees have been realigned according to omnibus subject matters, signifying what we choose to call in the Parliament a path-breaking adjustment to the business approach of the parliamentary committee system. With a clear shift of emphasis, committees will now focus on specific issues within their business areas but can of course continue to examine matters as may be deemed fit in relation to specific Ministries and agencies which may fall under their general purview, thereby enhancing Government accountability. Given the many demands on the Parliament's time, these committees will allow for more thorough investigation of matters, thus strengthening the parliamentary process as they undertake important functions which cannot be performed in the debating Chambers.

Madam Speaker, I am advised that your office has caused to be circulated a guide to the business areas of these omnibus committees and that a committees workshop is being organized for members of these committees.

Finance and Legal Affairs

In this regard, Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Finance and Legal Affairs:

Mr. Randall Mitchell	Member
Miss Marlene Mc Donald	Member
Dr. Lovell Francis	Member
Mr. Prakash Ramadhar	Member

Question put and agreed to.

3.00 p.m.

Land and Physical Infrastructure

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Land and Physical Infrastructure:

Mr. Darryl Smith	Member
Mrs. Glenda Jennings-Smith	Member
Dr. Lovell Francis	Member
Mr. Rushton Paray	Member

Question put and agreed to.

Social Services and Public Administration

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Social Services and Public Administration:

Departmental JSCs (Appointment of)
[HON. C. ROBINSON-REGIS]

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Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh	Member
Miss Shamfa Cudjoe	Member
Brig. Gen. Ancil Antoine	Member
Mrs. Christine Newallo-Hosein	Member

Question put and agreed to.

Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very much. Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities:

Mr. Stuart Young	Member
Mr. Darryl Smith	Member
Mr. Faris Al-Rawi	Member
Mrs. Ramona Ramdial	Member

Question put and agreed to.

State Enterprises

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the following four Members be appointed to serve, with an equal number from the Senate, on the Joint Select Committee on State Enterprises:

Brig. Gen. Ancil Antoine	Member
Mr. Adrian Leonce	Member
Mrs. Cherry-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn	Member
Mr. Fazal Karim	Member

Question put and agreed to.

Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amdt.) Bill

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly, Madam Speaker. I beg to move the following Motion:

That for the purposes of section 64(1)(c), this House appoints four Members to sit, with an equal number from the Senate, on a Joint Select Committee to consider and report on a Bill entitled the “Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property (Amdt.) Bill, 2015”; and that this Committee be mandated to report within eight weeks, that is to say, on or before January 22, 2016; and provided it receives the concurrence of the Senate, that the following four Members be appointed to serve on the Committee:

Mr. Colm Imbert	Member
Mrs. Cherry-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn	Member
Mr. Adrian Leonce	Member

And one Member from the Opposition. We did not know with whom to consult as the Chief Whip. [*Laughter and crosstalk*]

Mr. Ganga Singh (*Chaguanas West*): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The hon. Leader of Government Business knows that we are engaging in full collaboration, and at the appropriate time—because it was only brought to our notice a few minutes ago that we needed to make a recommendation. We will caucus on it and indicate to the honourable House.

Question put and agreed to.

Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very kindly. Madam Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion:

That for the purposes of section 64(1)(c), this House appoints four Members to sit, with an equal number from the Senate, on a Joint Select Committee to consider and report on a Bill entitled the “Whistleblower Protection Bill, 2015”; that this Committee be mandated to report within eight weeks, that is to say, January 22, 2016; and provided it receives the concurrence of the Senate, that the following four Members be appointed to serve on the Committee: Mr. Stuart Young, Mr. Faris Al-Rawi, Major General Edmund Dillon, and the Opposition, after having their caucus—however large or however small—will determine the fourth Member.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjournment

Friday, November 13, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to a date to be fixed, and that we will return on such date once it is fixed.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 3.10 p.m.