



**REPORT
OF
THE STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**on the Consideration of Proposals for the Supplementation of
Appropriation for the fiscal year 2022**

SECOND SESSION OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT (2021/2022)

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Standing Finance Committee

The Standing Finance Committee was established under House of Representatives Standing Order 82(1) to consider the Estimates and the Appropriation Bill. House of Representatives Standing Order 87(1) also states that, *“The Standing Finance Committee shall consider and report on all proposals for the expenditure from public revenue or other funds which are not included in the Annual Estimates, including proposals for supplementary and unforeseen expenditure.”*

Publication

An electronic copy of this report can be found on the Parliament website using the following link:

http://www.ttparliament.org/committee_business.php?mid=17&id=219&pid=28

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Date Presented in the House of Representatives: May 16, 2022

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THE COMMITTEE

Mandate of the Committee

1. The Standing Finance Committee is established by House of Representatives Standing Order 82(1) of the House of Representatives Standing Orders. It is the duty of the Committee to consider the Estimates and the Appropriation Bill. The Committee is also empowered by House of Representatives Standing Order 87(1) to consider and report on all proposals for expenditure which are not included in the Annual Estimates including proposals for supplementary and unforeseen expenditure.

Membership

2. In accordance with the House of Representatives Standing Order 82(1), this Committee is a Committee of the Whole House of Representatives and is chaired by the Speaker.

Meeting

3. The Committee held a public meeting on Friday May 13, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. The Minutes of the Meeting and the Verbatim Notes are attached at Appendices II and III respectively.

4. The purpose of this meeting was to consider proposals for the supplementation of the appropriation provided in the Appropriation (Financial Year 2022) Act, 2021. The proposal for supplementation and the Schedule relating to the Supplementation of Estimates for fiscal 2022 are at Appendix IV.

Supplementation

5. The Standing Finance Committee noted the supplementation to the Appropriation for fiscal year 2022 in the sum of Three Thousand, and Eighty One Million, Seven Hundred and Three Thousand, Nine Hundred Dollars (\$3,081,703,900) is required to meet expenditure under the following sub-heads:

- (i) Personnel Expenditure - \$51,630,100
- (ii) Goods and Services - \$620,833,580
- (iii) Minor Equipment Purchases - \$4,614,720
- (iv) Current Transfers and Subsidies - \$1,794,160,500
- (v) Current Transfers to Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies - \$505,640,000
- (vi) Development Programme - \$104,825,000

7. The Committee noted that it was necessary to have a Supplementation of Appropriation of resources to fund urgent and critical Recurrent and Capital Expenditure to September 30, 2022 in areas where insufficient or no allocation was provided. The source of these additional funds is the Consolidated Fund.

8. The Standing Finance Committee considered and approved the supplementation to the Appropriation for fiscal year 2022 in the sum of Three Thousand, and Eighty One Million, Seven Hundred and Three Thousand, Nine Hundred Dollars (\$3,081,703,900). The details of Supplementation are provided in Table 1 and Appendix IV.

Table 1

Supplementation by Heads of Expenditure - 2022

Heads of Expenditure	Amount \$
03 Judiciary	30,300,000
04 Industrial Court	7,924,000
05 Parliament	4,114,000
06 Service Commissions	14,419,000
08 Elections and Boundaries Commission	23,525,000
09 Tax Appeal Board	1,869,000
11 Registration, Recognition and Certification Board	2,152,300
12 Public Service Appeal Board	1,005,400
13 Office of the Prime Minister	59,961,300
15 Tobago House of Assembly	60,000,000
16 Central Administrative Services, Tobago	2,648,400
17 Personnel Department	9,728,000
18 Ministry of Finance	225,966,500
22 Ministry of National Security	206,900,000
23 Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs	95,613,000
26 Ministry of Education	300,000,000
28 Ministry of Health	362,887,700
37 Integrity Commission	350,000
39 Ministry of Public Utilities	467,882,000
40 Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries	300,000,000

42 Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government	95,357,000
43 Ministry of Works and Transport	97,033,000
61 Ministry of Housing and Urban Development	103,600,000
67 Ministry of Planning and Development	9,000,000
75 Equal Opportunity Tribunal	2,427,500
77 Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries	120,040,800
78 Ministry of Social Development and Family Services	390,000,000
79 Ministry of Sport and Community Development	67,000,000
80 Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts	20,000,000
TOTAL	<u>3,081,703,900</u>

Recommendations

Supplementation

9. The Committee recommends the Supplementation of Appropriation for fiscal year 2022 in the sum of Three Thousand, and Eighty One Million, Seven Hundred and Three Thousand, Nine Hundred Dollars (\$3,081,703,900).

10. The Committee respectfully submits this Report for the consideration of the House of Representatives.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sgd.
Hon. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George, MP
Chairman

May 13, 2022

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Requests for Additional Information from Ministries/Departments

Head 03 - Judiciary

02/001/16 Contract Employment - \$30,300,000

1. Provide the number of positions filled for the fiscal year 2022 and the respective titles of those positions.
2. Indicate whether the positions filled were in fact vacant; and if so, provide the period during which the positions were vacant.

Head 04 - Industrial Court

02/001/16 Contract Employment -\$681,000

1. Provide the number of employees hired on contract for fiscal year 2022.

002/001/08 Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage - \$759,195

2. Provide the amount of arrears to be paid and indicate the period for which the arrears are owed.
3. Provide the owners, location and terms of conditions of the rental/lease arrangements of the properties being used for this item.

02/001/28 Other Contracted Services - \$316,000

4. Provide a breakdown of the services to be procured with the additional funding under this item.

Head 06 - Service Commissions

02/001/08 - Rent/Lease-Office Accommodation and Storage -\$6,619,000

1. Provide the following:
 - a. The owners of each of the properties under this allocation; and
 - b. The date the lease arrangement was entered into for each of the properties.

02/001/23 Fees - \$1,585,000

2. Provide the breakdown of the specific amounts to be paid to each service provider.

02/001/37 Janitorial Services - \$420,000

02/001/43 - Security Services - \$2,205,000

3. Indicate the names of the owners of the companies providing these janitorial and security services and the dates at which they were first contracted.

Head 08 – Elections and Boundaries Commission

02/001/01 Travelling and Subsistence

1. Provide the number of officers that will receive allowances from this allocation.
2. Provide the reason for the difference in the supplementation allocation provided in the Schedule (\$2,200,000) and in the Proposal/Explanatory Notes (\$1,500,000) for the line item.

02/001/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$2,000,000

3. Provide the number of officers to be engaged on short term contracts in the Registration Pop-Up initiative.
4. Indicate when the initiative will commence.
5. Indicate how the EBC recruits these personnel.
6. Provide the salary that will be paid to the short-term officers.

002 Election Expenses

02/002/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$2,000,000

7. Provide the names of the contractors engaged under this item.

02/001/62 – Promotions, Publicity and Printing - \$1,000,000

02/002/62 – Promotions, Publicity and Printing- \$1,000,000

8. Provide:
 - a. The radio and television stations selected to advertise the Registration Pop-Up initiative, the THA elections and the Local Government Bye Election in Penal/Debe;
 - b. The amount each media house was paid; and
 - c. The details of the process used to select each media house.

Head 13 – Office of the Prime Minister

02/001/65 – Expenses of Cabinet Appointed Bodies - \$5,000,000

1. Provide the breakdown of salaries and gratuities to be paid respectively with this additional allocation.

02/002/16 – Contract Employment - \$2,500,000

2. What is the total number of persons currently employed on contract at the Division?
3. How many contract employees were hired in fiscal year 2022?

02/003/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$500,000

4. What is the total number of short-term officers currently employment at the OPM?
5. How many of these short-term officers were hired during FY 2022?
6. How many persons does the OPM intend to hire via short-term employment using the requested \$500,000 supplementation?
7. What is the short-term employment selection process?

02/003/28 - Other Contracted Services - \$300,000

8. What qualification was required for the position of Social Media Specialist?

04/005/03 - Contribution to Non Profit Institutions (Children's Homes) - \$1,110,600

9. Indicate the names of the unlicensed children's homes and the sums to be received by these homes.

04/007/03 - Children's Authority - \$22,397,000

10. Indicate the current number of vacancies at the Children's Authority.

04/005/03 - Contribution to Non Profit Institutions (Children's Homes) - \$1,110,600

04/005/05 - St. Dominic's Children's Home - \$289,500

04/005/10 - St. Jude's Home for Girls - \$3,000,000

04/007/03 - Children's Authority - \$22,397,000

11. Provide the breakdown of what the spending will entail for each of these items

Head 15 - Tobago House of Assembly

06/001/06 - Tobago House of Assembly - \$60,000,000

1. How many persons did the National Helicopter Services Limited transport between Tobago and Trinidad to date during fiscal year 2022?

Head 17 - Personnel Department

09/005/06/F/002 - Customization and Outfitting of New Office Building at No.3 Alexandra Street, St. Clair - \$500,000

1. Provide the list of service providers for this project for fiscal year 2022.

Head 22 - Ministry of National Security

02/001/13 - Maintenance of Vehicles - \$16,000,000

1. Provide the breakdown of the respective sums to be allocated from this supplementation to the Fire Service, Prison Service and Defence Force.
2. Indicate the specific maintenance works to be conducted under this item.
3. Identify the external service providers to be paid using this allocation.

02/001/43 - Security Services - \$19,000,000

4. Indicate the ministry's total outstanding debt to MTS with respect to prisoner transport services.

04/009/02 - Strategic Services Agency - \$66,000,000

5. Indicate the number of persons currently employed at the SSA.

Head 26 – Ministry of Education

02/001/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$8,275,000

1. Indicate the areas that are being served in term 3 by PTSC school transport.

Head 28 – Ministry of Health

04/009/02 - North West Regional Health Authority - \$20,000,000

04/009/03 - Eastern Regional Health Authority - \$39,300,100

04/009/04 - North Central Regional Health Authority - \$124,914,200

04/009/05 - South West Regional Health Authority - \$90,129,900

1. Indicate the categories of staff, the number and the terms and conditions of new personnel to be recruited during the remainder of fiscal year 2022.

04/011/16 – NIPDEC – TT\$284.19Mn 8 year Fixed Rate Term Loan – Procurement, Storage and Distribution of Pharmaceuticals/Non Pharmaceuticals - \$22,673,500

2. Provide clarification regarding the difference noted between the allocation for this item as recorded in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure for FY 2022 (\$35,524,438) and the sum listed in the Schedule to the Supplementation of Allocations for FY 2022 (\$46,399,358).

Head 39 – Ministry of Public Utilities

02/004/51 – Water and Sewerage Authority - \$328,000,000

1. Indicate when will the Desalcott loan mature.

Head 43 – Ministry of Works and Transport

02/002/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$11,000,000

1. Provide the list of outstanding payments in respect of these projects and the contractors to whom these sums are owed.

02/005/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$9,333,000

2. Indicate the areas in which the clearing and distilling of watercourses will take place.

Head 61 – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

04/009/01 – Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation - \$67,000,000

1. Provide the list of contractors to be paid under this item.

004/08/D/075 – Rehabilitation and Maintenance of HDC Rental Apartments and Housing Units - \$12,300,000

2. Provide the list of contractors and outstanding monies to be paid under this allocation.

004/08/E/241 - Development of Residential Lots - Petrotrin - \$11,000,000

3. Provide the list of contractors providing services under this item.

Head 77 - Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

01/002/01 - Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$1,810,484

01/006/01 - Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$1,280,542

01/010/01 - Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$3,582,774

1. How many vacancies will be filled under this item for the fiscal year 2022?

02/001/01 - Travelling and Subsistence - \$384,000

2. Indicate the total arrears to be paid under this item.

02/001/22 - Short Term Employment - \$3,236,000

3. Indicate the number of short term employees hired in fiscal year 2022.
4. Provide a breakdown of the positions currently filled as well as vacant within the praedial larceny unit.
5. Provide details of the terms of reference of these officers' contractual engagement with the Ministry.

02/001/43 - Security Services - \$10,862,300

6. Provide the complete list of security companies engaged under this item for the fiscal year 2022 and the respective amounts to be paid to each of these companies.

04/005/01 - Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute - \$2,033,000

04/005/02 - Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI) - \$960,000

04/005/04 - Sugar Cane Feeds Centre - \$1,500,000

7. Indicate the number of persons currently employed in each of these units.

04/008/01 - Agricultural Incentive Programme - \$7,723,000

8. Provide the following:
 - a. The breakdown of recipients of funding under this item;
 - b. The purpose for which the funding will be provided; and
 - c. The distribution of the funding by region.

APPENDIX II
Minutes of Meeting

**STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE
SECOND SESSION (2021/2022), TWELFTH PARLIAMENT**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
FRIDAY May 13, 2022 AT 1:30 P.M.**

Members of the Standing Finance Committee

Present

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. | Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George, MP | - | Chairman |
| 2. | Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis, MP | - | Minister of Housing and Urban
Development
<i>(Member for Arouca/Maloney)</i> |
| 3. | Hon. Colm Imbert, MP | - | Minister of Finance
<i>(Member for Diego Martin North/East)</i> |
| 4. | Hon. Stuart Young, MP | - | Minister of Energy & Energy Industries
& Minister in the Office of the Prime
Minister
<i>(Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's
West)</i> |
| 5. | Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds, MP | - | Minister of National Security
<i>(Member for Laventille West)</i> |
| 6. | Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh, MP | - | Minister of Health
<i>(Member for St. Joseph)</i> |
| 7. | Hon. Faris Al-Rawi, MP | - | Minister of Rural Development and
Local Government
<i>(Member for San Fernando West)</i> |
| 8. | Hon. Penelope Beckles, MP | - | Minister of Planning and Development
<i>(Member for Arima)</i> |
| 9. | Hon. Ayanna Webster-Roy, MP | - | Minister in the Office of the Prime
Minister
<i>(Member for Tobago East)</i> |
| 10. | Hon. Shamfa Cudjoe, MP | - | Minister of Sport and Community
Development
<i>(Member for Tobago West)</i> |
| 11. | Hon. Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, MP | - | Minister of Education
<i>(Member for St. Ann's East)</i> |
| 12. | Hon. Marvin Gonzales, MP | - | Minister of Public Utilities
<i>(Member for Lopinot/Bon Air West)</i> |
| 13. | Hon. Foster Cummings, MP | - | Minister of Youth Development and
National Services
<i>(Member for La Horquetta/Talparo)</i> |

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 14. | Hon. Symon De Nobriga, MP | - | Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister
<i>(Member for Diego Martin Central)</i> |
| 15. | Hon. Adrian Leonce, MP | - | Minister in the Ministry of Housing and Development
<i>(Member for Laventille East/Morvant)</i> |
| 16. | Hon. Brian Manning, MP | - | Minister in the Ministry of Finance
<i>(Member for San Fernando East)</i> |
| 17. | Hon. Lisa Morris-Julian, MP | - | Minister in the Ministry of Education
<i>(Member for D'Abadie/O'Meara)</i> |
| 18. | Mr. Keith Scotland, MP | - | Member for Port of Spain South |
| 19. | Mr. Roger Monroe, MP | - | Member for Toco/Sangre Grande |
| 20. | Mr. David Lee, MP | - | Member for Pointe-a-Pierre |
| 21. | Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, SC | - | Leader of the Opposition
<i>(Member for Siparia)</i> |
| 22. | Mr. Rodney Charles, MP | - | Member for Naparima |
| 23. | Ms. Khadijah Ameen, MP | - | Member for St. Augustine |
| 24. | Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh, MP | - | Member for Couva South |
| 25. | Mr. Barry Padarath, MP | - | Member for Princes Town |
| 26. | Dr. Roodal Moonilal, MP | - | Member for Oropouche East |
| 27. | Mr. Saddam Hosein, MP | - | Member for Barataria/San Juan |
| 28. | Mr. Rushton Paray, MP | - | Member for Mayaro |
| 29. | Ms. Michelle Benjamin, MP | - | Member for Moruga/Tableland |
| 30. | Mr. Dinesh Rambally, MP | - | Member for Chaguanas West |
| 31. | Dr. Lackram Bodoie, MP | - | Member for Fyzabad |
| 32. | Mr. Arnold Ram, MP | - | Member for Caroni Central |
| 33. | Dr. Rai Ragbir, MP | - | Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla |
| 34. | Ms. Vandana Mohit, MP | - | Member for Chaguanas East |
| 35. | Mr. Davendranath Tancoo, MP | - | Member for Oropouche West |
| 36. | Ms. Anita Haynes, MP | - | Member for Tabaquite |
| 37. | Mr. Ravi Ratiram, MP | - | Member for Couva North |
| 38. | Dr. Rishad Seecheran, MP | - | Member for Caroni East |

EXCUSED

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---|--|
| 39. | Mr. Esmond Forde, MP | - | Deputy Speaker
<i>(Member for Tunapuna)</i> |
|-----|----------------------|---|--|

ABSENT

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 40. | Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley, MP | - | Prime Minister
<i>(Member for Diego Martin West)</i> |
| 41. | Hon. Stephen Mc Clashie, MP | - | Minister of Labour
<i>(Member for La Brea)</i> |
| 42. | Mr. Kennedy Richards, MP | - | Member for Point Fortin |

ALSO PRESENT

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 1. | Sen. the Hon. Rohan Sinanan | - | Minister of Works and Transport |
| 2. | Sen. the Hon. Donna Cox | - | Minister of Social Development and Family Services |

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|--|
| 3. | Sen. the Hon. Kazim Hosein | Minister of Agriculture Land and Fisheries |
| 4. | Sen. the Hon. Randal Mitchel | Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts |
| 5. | Sen. the Hon. Reginald Amour S.C. | Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs |
| 6. | Sen. the Hon. Allyson West. | Minister of Public Administration |
| 7. | Sen. the Hon. Paula Gopee-Scoon | Minister of Trade and Industry |

Commencement

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.
- 1.2 The Chairman indicated that in accordance with Standing Order 82 (6) and 87, a meeting of the Standing Finance Committee was convened to consider proposals for the Supplementation of Appropriation for the fiscal year 2022.
- 1.3 Members were advised that in accordance with Standing Order 45(1) the speaking time in Standing Finance Committee shall not exceed five (5) minutes on each intervention.
- 1.4 The procedure for the consideration of the Heads of Expenditure was outlined.

PROPOSALS FOR THE SUPPLEMENTATION OF APPROPRIATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2022

Head 03: Judiciary

- 2.1 The Chairman announced Head 03, Judiciary, a supplementation of \$30,300,000.00.
- 2.2 The Attorney General was invited to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five (5) minutes.
- 2.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 03, Judiciary be supplemented by the sum of \$30,300,000.00.
- 2.4 The Members for Barataria/San Juan, Oropouche West, Oropouche East and Chaguanas West sought clarification from the Attorney General. Thereafter the Attorney General and the Minister of Finance provided an explanation for the supplementation.
- 2.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 03, Judiciary be supplemented by the sum of \$30,300,000.00.

Head 04: Industrial Court

- 3.1 The Chairman announced Head 04, Industrial Court, a supplementation of \$7,924,000.00.
- 3.2 The Attorney General was invited to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five (5) minutes.

- 3.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 04, Industrial Court be supplemented by the sum of \$7,924,000.00.
- 3.4 The Members for Couva South, Barataria/San Juan, Pointe-a-Pierre, Oropouche West, Chaguanas West, Siparia, Oropouche East and Naparima sought clarification from the Attorney General. Thereafter the Attorney General, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Housing and Urban Development and Minister of Rural Development and Local Government provided an explanation for the supplementation.
- 3.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 04, Industrial Court be supplemented by the sum of \$7,924,000.00.

Head 05: Parliament

- 4.1 The Chairman announced Head 05, Parliament, a supplementation of \$4,114,000.00.
- 4.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 4.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 05, Parliament be supplemented by the sum of \$4,114,000.00.00.
- 4.4 The question was put and agreed that Head 05, Parliament be supplemented by the sum of \$4,114,000.00.00.

Head 06: Service Commissions

- 5.1 The Chairman announced Head 06, Service Commissions, a supplementation of \$14,419,000.00.
- 5.2 The Minister of Public Administration was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 5.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 06, Service Commissions be supplemented by the sum of \$14,419,000.00.
- 5.4 The Members for Princes Town, Barataria/San Juan, Siparia, Oropouche West and Couva South sought clarification from the Minister. Thereafter the Minister of Public Administration provided an explanation for the supplementation.
- 5.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 06, Service Commissions be supplemented by the sum of \$14,419,000.00.

Head 08: Elections and Boundaries Commission

- 6.1 The Chairman announced Head 08, Elections and Boundaries Commission, a supplementation of \$23,525,000.00
- 6.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.

- 6.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 08, Elections and Boundaries Commission be supplemented by the sum of \$23,525,000.00.
- 6.4 The Members for Siparia, Naparima, Princes Town, Tabaquite, Oropouche West and Barataria/San Juan sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Finance provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 6.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 08, Elections and Boundaries Commission be supplemented by the sum of \$23,525,000.00.

Head 09: Tax Appeal Board

- 7.1 The Chairman announced Head 09, Tax Appeal Board, a supplementation of \$1,869,000.00.
- 7.2 The Attorney General was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 7.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 09, Tax Appeal Board be supplemented by the sum of \$1,869,000.00.
- 7.4 The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre sought clarification from the Attorney General. The Attorney General provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 7.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 09, Tax Appeal Board be supplemented by the sum of \$1,869,000.00.

Head 11: Registration, Recognition and Certification Board

- 8.1 The Chairman announced Head 11, Registration, Recognition and Certification Board, a supplementation of \$2,152,300.00.
- 8.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 8.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 11, Registration, Recognition and Certification Board be supplemented by the sum of \$2,152,300.00.
- 8.4 The Member for Couva South sought clarification from the Minister. Thereafter the Minister of Finance provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 8.5 The Chairman question was put and agreed that Head 11, Registration, Recognition and Certification Board be supplemented by the sum of \$2,152,300.00.

Head 12: Public Service Appeal Board

- 9.1 The Chairman announced Head 12, Public Service Appeal Board, a supplementation of \$1,005,400.00.
- 9.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.

9.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 12, Public Service Appeal Board be supplemented by the sum of \$1,005,400.00.

9.4 The question was put and agreed that Head 12, Public Service Appeal Board be supplemented by the sum of \$1,005,400.00.

Head 13: Office of the Prime Minister

10.1 The Chairman announced Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister, a supplementation of \$59,961,300.00.

10.2 The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.

10.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister be supplemented by the sum of \$59,961,300.00.

10.4 The Members for Siparia, Princes Town, Oropouche East, St. Augustine, Moruga/Tableland, Pointe-a-Pierre, Barataria/San Juan and Naparima sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister provided an explanation for supplementation.

10.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister be supplemented by the sum of \$59,961,300.00.

Head 15: Tobago House of Assembly

11.1 The Chairman announced Head 15, Tobago House of Assembly, a supplementation of \$60,000,000.00.

11.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.

11.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 15, Tobago House of Assembly be supplemented by the sum of \$60,000,000.00.

11.4 The Member for Couva South, Fyzabad and Princes Town sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Finance provided an explanation for supplementation.

11.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 15, Tobago House of Assembly be supplemented by the sum of \$60,000,000.00.

Head 16: Central Administrative Services, Tobago

12.1 The Chairman announced Head 16, Central Administrative Services, Tobago, a supplementation of \$2,648,400.00.

12.2 The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.

- 12.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 16, Central Administrative Services, Tobago be supplemented by the sum of \$2,648,400.00.
- 12.4 The Members for Oropouche West and Tabaquite sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 12.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 16, Central Administrative Services, Tobago be supplemented by the sum of \$2,648,400.00.

Head 17: Personnel Department

- 13.1 The Chairman announced Head 17, Personnel Department, a supplementation of \$9,728,000.00.
- 13.2 The Minister of Public Administration was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 13.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 17, Personnel Department be supplemented by the sum of \$9,728,000.00.
- 13.4 The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, Couva South, Chaguanas West, Naparima, Fyzabad, Couva South, Oropouche West and Barataria/ San Juan sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Public Administration provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 13.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 17, Personnel Department be supplemented by the sum of \$9,728,000.00.

Head 18: Ministry of Finance

- 14.1 The Chairman announced Head 18, Ministry of Finance, a supplementation of \$225,966,500.00.
- 14.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 14.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 18, Ministry of Finance be supplemented by the sum of \$225,966,500.00.
- 14.4 The Members for Mayaro, Oropouche West, Oropouche East, Couva South and Oropouche West sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Finance and the Minister of Trade and Industry provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 14.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 18, Ministry of Finance be supplemented by the sum of \$225,966,500.00.

Head 22: Ministry of National Security

- 15.1 The Chairman announced Head 22, Ministry of National Security, a supplementation of \$206,900,000.00.

- 15.2 The Minister of National Security was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 15.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 22, Ministry of National Security be supplemented by the sum of \$206,900,000.00.
- 15.4 The Members for Naparima, Chaguanas West, Barataria/ San Juan, Couva South, Pointe-a-Pierre, Chaguanas West and St. Augustine sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of National of Security provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 15.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 22, Ministry of National Security be supplemented by the sum of \$206,900,000.00.

Head 78: Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

- 16.1 The Chairman announced Head 78, Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, a supplementation of \$390,000,000.00.
- 16.2 The Minister of Social Development and Family Services was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 16.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 78, Ministry of Social Development and Family Services be supplemented by the sum of \$390,000,000.00.
- 16.4 The Member for Chaguanas East sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Social Development and Family Services provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 16.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 78, Ministry of Social Development and Family Services be supplemented by the sum of \$390,000,000.00.

Head 23: Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs

- 17.1 The Chairman announced Head 23, Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs, a supplementation of \$95,613,000.00.
- 17.2 The Attorney General was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 17.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 23, Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs be supplemented by the sum of \$95,613,000.00.
- 17.4 The Members for Barataria/San Juan and Chaguanas West sought clarification from the Attorney General. The Attorney General and the Minister of Finance provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 17.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 23, Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs be supplemented by the sum of \$95,613,000.00.

Head 26: Ministry of Education

- 18.1 The Chairman announced Head 26, Ministry of Education, a supplementation of \$300,000,000.00.
- 18.2 The Minister of Education was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 18.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 26, Ministry of Education be supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.00.
- 18.4 The Member for Tabaquite, Mayaro, Pointe-a-Pierre and Couva South sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Education provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 18.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 26, Ministry of Education be supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.00.

Head 28: Ministry of Health

- 19.1 The Chairman announced Head 28, Ministry of Health, a supplementation of \$362,887,700.00.
- 19.2 The Minister of Health was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 19.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 28, Ministry of Health be supplemented by the sum of \$362,887,700.00.
- 19.4 The Members for Fyzabad, Cumuto/ Manzanilla, Caroni East and Couva South sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Health provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 19.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 28, Ministry of Health be supplemented by the sum of \$362,887,700.00.

Head 37: Integrity Commission

- 20.1 The Chairman announced Head 37, Integrity Commission, a supplementation of \$350,000.00.
- 20.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 20.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 37, Integrity Commission be supplemented by the sum of \$350,000.00.
- 20.4 The question was put and agreed that Head 37, Integrity Commission be supplemented by the sum of \$350,000.00.

Head 39: Ministry of Public Utilities

- 21.1 The Chairman announced Head 39, Ministry of Public Utilities, a supplementation of \$467,882,000.00.

- 21.2 The Minister of Public Utilities was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 21.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 39, Ministry of Public Utilities be supplemented by the sum of \$467,882,000.00.
- 21.4 The Members for Princes Town, Mayaro, Couva North, Cumuto, Manzanilla, Couva South and Moruga/ Tableland sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Public Utilities provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 21.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 39, Ministry of Public Utilities be supplemented by the sum of \$467,882,000.00.

Head 40: Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries

- 22.1 The Chairman announced Head 40, Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, a supplementation of \$300,000,000.00.
- 22.2 The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 22.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 40, Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries be supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.00.
- 22.4 The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and the Minister of Finance provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 22.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 40, Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries be supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.00.

Head 42: Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

- 23.1 The Chairman announced Head 42, Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, a supplementation of \$95,357,000.00.
- 23.2 The Minister of Rural Development and Local Government was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 23.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 42, Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government be supplemented by the sum of \$95,357,000.00.
- 23.4 The Members for St. Augustine, Couva North, Chaguanas East and Oropouche West sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Rural Development and Local Government provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 23.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 42, Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government be supplemented by the sum of \$95,357,000.00.

Head 43: Ministry of Works and Transport

- 24.1 The Chairman announced Head 43, Ministry of Works and Transport, a supplementation of \$97,033,000.00.
- 24.2 The Minister of Works and Transport was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 24.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 43, Ministry of Works and Transport be supplemented by the sum of \$97,033,000.00.
- 24.4 The Member for Oropouche East sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Works and Transport provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 24.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 43, Ministry of Works and Transport be supplemented by the sum of \$97,033,000.00.

Head 61: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

- 25.1 The Chairman announced Head 61, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, a supplementation of \$103,600,000.00.
- 25.2 The Minister of Housing and Urban Development was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 25.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 61, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development be supplemented by the sum of \$103,600,000.00.
- 25.4 The Members for Oropouche East, Couva South and Barataria/San Juan sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Housing and Urban Development provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 25.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 61, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development be supplemented by the sum of \$103,600,000.00.

Head 67: Ministry of Planning and Development

- 26.1 The Chairman announced Head 67, Ministry of Planning and Development, a supplementation of \$9,000,000.00.
- 26.2 The Minister of Planning and Development was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 26.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 67, Ministry of Planning and Development be supplemented by the sum of \$9,000,000.00.
- 26.4 The Member for Oropouche West, sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Planning and Development provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 26.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 67, Ministry of Planning and Development be supplemented by the sum of \$9,000,000.00.

Head 75: Equal Opportunity Tribunal

- 27.1 The Chairman announced Head 75, Equal Opportunity Tribunal, a supplementation of \$2,427,500.00.
- 27.2 The Minister of Finance was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 27.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 75, Equal Opportunity Tribunal be supplemented by the sum of \$2,427,500.00.
- 27.4 The Member for Barataria/San Juan sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Finance provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 27.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 75, Equal Opportunity Tribunal be supplemented by the sum of \$2,427,500.00.

Head 77: Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

- 28.1 The Chairman announced Head 77, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, a supplementation of \$120,040,800.00.
- 28.2 The Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 28.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 77, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries be supplemented by the sum of \$120,040,800.00.
- 28.4 The Members for Couva North and Chaguanas East sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the Minister of Finance provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 28.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 77, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries be supplemented by the sum of \$120,040,800.00.

Head 79: Ministry of Sport and Community Development

- 29.1 The Chairman announced Head 79, Ministry of Sport and Community Development, a supplementation of \$67,000,000.00.
- 29.2 The Minister of Sport and Community Development was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 29.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 79, Ministry of Sport and Community Development be supplemented by the sum of \$67,000,000.00.
- 29.4 The Member for Caroni Central sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Sport and Community Development provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 29.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 79, Ministry of Sport and Community Development be supplemented by the sum of \$67,000,000.00.

Head 80: Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

- 30.1 The Chairman announced Head 80, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, a supplementation of \$20,000,000.00.
- 30.2 The Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts was invited to make a brief opening statement for less than five (5) minutes.
- 30.3 The Chairman proposed the question that Head 80, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts be supplemented by the sum of \$20,000,000.00.
- 30.4 The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre sought clarification from the Minister. The Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts provided an explanation for supplementation.
- 30.5 The question was put and agreed that Head 80, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts be supplemented by the sum of \$20,000,000.00.

Total Supplementation

- 31.1 The question was put and agreed that the Appropriation for fiscal year 2022 be supplemented by a total of \$3,081,703,900.00

REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 32.1 Requests for additional information to Ministries/Departments are listed in Appendix I of the Report.

OTHER BUSINESS

- 33.1 The Chairman informed Members that the debate for the adoption of the Committee's Report will take place on Monday May 16, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.
- 33.2 The adjournment was taken at 10:27 p.m.

We certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

Friday May 13, 2022

APPENDIX III Verbatim Notes

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HELD ON FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2022 AT 1.30 P.M.

Madam Chairman: Good afternoon. Hon Members, I now call to order this Standing Finance Committee meeting.

Hon. Members, in accordance with Standing Orders 82(6) and 87, this meeting of the Standing Finance Committee is convened to consider proposals for the supplementation of appropriation for fiscal year 2022. Hon. Members, in accordance with Standing Order 45(1), the speaking time in Standing Finance Committee shall not exceed five minutes on each intervention.

The procedure on Standing Finance Committee is as follows:

1. The Head and the amount to be supplemented will be announced;
2. The Minister with responsibility will then be invited to provide an explanation for the supplementation;
3. The Chair will then propose the question that the Head be supplemented;
4. Members then may seek clarification from the Minister;
5. Once this is concluded the Chairman will then put the question that the sum to be supplemented be approved; and
6. The procedure will be repeated for each Head.

Hon. Members, we shall now consider the proposal for supplemental for fiscal year 2022.

Head 03: Judiciary \$30,300,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Attorney General to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Attorney General.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman, Chairperson. As you will appreciate, Madam Chairperson, the Attorney General is the constitutional conduit to the Legislature for the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago. The Government continues to support the Judiciary with advancing its package of reform initiatives to improve the delivery of justice in the Republic. The Judiciary remains committed and agile in managing its operations and now caters for a hybrid system of judicial service delivery, using a mix of in-person and online virtual court hearings. Various users of the court system have indicated an appreciation of the convenience and access provided by the suite of available online services provided by the courts.

While the Judiciary in consideration of the economic climate anticipated that they will have to manage with a lower than usual original allocation in 2022 financial year, an existence –

an assessment, I beg your pardon, of existing financial commitments indicates a requirement for a supplementary allocation in the sum of \$30,300,000. The subject of the supplementary funding for which approval is being sought today caters for a shortfall in the original allocation for the payment of salaries to existing contract officers in the Judiciary, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Attorney General.

Question proposed: That Head 03 be supplemented by the sum of \$30,300,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Attorney General, can you provide to this honourable House information relating to how many contract officers this \$30.3 million will service?

Hon. Armour SC: Yes, I certainly can, Member for Barataria/San Juan, and if you bear with me, you will appreciate that I have to take instructions as the need arises. The total contract number which is filled is 1,281; the number that is vacant is 501, giving a total of 1,782.

Mr. Hosein: Attorney General, is it that the additional supplementation of \$30.3 million will be used to hire additional staff based on the 501 vacant positions?

Hon. Armour SC: The answer to that question is no.

Mr. Hosein: Will it be for the existing 1,281 contract officers?

Hon. Armour SC: Correct.

Mr. Hosein: And this is spread across all – this is only for Trinidad, Judiciary of Trinidad?

Hon. Armour SC: Trinidad and Tobago, the Republic.

Mr. Hosein: You see, AG, the both are divided into two sub Items. There is Judiciary Trinidad and then Judiciary Tobago. So, in the line Items you will see, if go back to the yellow books form the original, there is something called Judiciary Trinidad and then there is something called Judiciary Tobago.

Hon. Armour SC: The request that has been made is for the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago; both island arms of that Republic.

Mr. Hosein: Then we have to look at the accounting practices, because there is a separate line Item for contract officers Tobago.

Madam Chairman: One minute. I recognize the Minister of Finance –

Mr. Imbert: Sure.

Madam Chairman: – who wishes to make an intervention.

Mr. Imbert: Yes, Madam. Madam Chairman, every Member should have received a Schedule, this document, and if one goes to that Schedule, one goes to the first page, under Head 03: Judiciary, Sub-Head 02: Goods and Services; Item 001: Judiciary Trinidad; Sub-Item 16: Contract

Employment. So this Schedule provides the information that you asked for, which you have already received.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: AG, can you tell us when this 501 vacant positions will be filled?

Madam Chairman: Member, that does not arise out of the information that we have had and the questions asked, so far. The supplementation we were told is for the 1,281 filled positions. Okay? I think the AG was clear, it does not apply to the 501 vacant positions. We are just looking at the supplementation. Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam. Hon. AG, can you advise if any of these 1,281 positions were filled this year so that this funding is now going to be applied to those persons employed this year, this fiscal year?

Hon. Armour SC: As persons leave, hon. Member, the positions are filled.

Mr. Tancoo: Understood, AG. My question though is whether or not these positions, whether or not there were any filled positions, any positions filled during fiscal 2022, which may have become vacant for whatever reason, but whether hiring was done in fiscal 2022 for which this money is being allocated?

Hon. Armour SC: The answer to your question is, yes, Member.

Mr. Tancoo: Can you kindly advise the House, Sir, of the number of positions filled and the titles of those positions?

Hon. Armour SC: That information can certainly be provided, Member, but I do not believe that I am able to have that at my fingertips to provide that immediately today.

Mr. Tancoo: Member, may you also be able to advise us if those positions were, in fact, vacant and what period they were vacant for? You indicated in your response, just now, that as the positions become vacant, they become filled, but there are a substantial number of vacant positions in existence by your own admission.

1.40 p.m.

Hon. Armour SC: That too will be provided, Member.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: Thank you, Madam Chairman. In preparation for this meeting I had sought and obtained some additional information which is related to the question asked. The categories of staff include the following: court administrative staff; judicial support staff, inclusive of Family and Children Court; library personnel; staff in planning and research; IT personnel; court transcript personnel; security personnel; records personnel and business operations assistant.

This is just in addition to what you have already asked the Attorney General in terms of categories and numbers, and all that sort of thing.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre. No? Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Hon. Attorney General, just too for a final clarification on this matter of contract positions. According to the document we have in our possession, this \$30.3 million is for 02/ 001/16, in our accounting process it is not a political or constitutional matter. In the accounting process, 001 is Judiciary Trinidad; 002 is Judiciary Tobago; so could we therefore just confirm that this money is for Trinidad Judiciary? It is not a republic issue on constitution, it is the accounting process.

Madam Chairman: Wait. Member for Oropouche East, I believe the intervention by the Minister of Finance would have clarified that question. My recollection is the AG said the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. There was an intervention where the –

Member: *[Interruption]*

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South, may I be permitted? There was an intervention where the Minister of Finance made it clear that from the documents we have, we are looking at Item 001, Judiciary Trinidad. So maybe what was not clear to some of us and what some of us may have wanted to hear was to hear the Attorney General say, “Oh, that is correct”, but I think – Okay? But I am sure maybe you missed that, but that is what happened.

Dr. Moonilal: A follow-up question –

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Dr. Moonilal: May I ask the Attorney General, but the Minister of Finance may intervene if he so wishes, is it that in the Tobago situation there is no need for supplemental funding for contract officers in Tobago? That is all.

Hon. Armour SC: I am instructed, Member, that there is presently no need but we will manage the money. If there is a need we will vire the funds.

Dr. Moonilal: I am sure you will.

Madam Chairman: Okay? Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. AG, in relation to the note that was supplied to the Committee, it says that the contract employment and this allocation facilitates payment of salaries to contract officers to September 2022. Just for clarity, would any of these moneys be paid to cover any outstanding amounts?

Hon. Armour SC: What I understand it, Member, it is for salaries that are coming up to September 2022.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Hon. AG, can you advise whether the supplementary allocation is sufficient to meet the needs of the Judiciary fully into the end of the financial year?

Hon. Armour SC: Member, I am advised that we are doing – the Judiciary is doing the very best that it can. The answer to that question is that it will do its best and if necessary, it will make another appropriation application.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, AG.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 03 supplemented by the sum of \$30,300,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you to the court administrator and your support. Thank you, Attorney General. You all are relieved, and the Minister in the Ministry of the Attorney General.

Head 04: Industrial Court, \$7,924,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Attorney General to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Attorney General.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Madam Chairman, as I have said previously, the Attorney General continues to function as the constitutional conduit for the Judiciary, including the Industrial Court. The Industrial Court is a superior court of record created by an Act of Parliament and we all acknowledge in the history of our knowledge of that court the degree to which it has contributed to stability in Trinidad and Tobago and the Industrial Court in industrial environment.

The Court is committed to maintaining an appropriate balance in the relationship that must continue to exist between employers and employees, and in particular the labour movement, and to that extent applies to this honourable Committee for supplementation with respect to the sum as it has been requested. Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 04 be supplemented by the sum of \$7,924,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Attorney General, based on the fact that sums of \$405,000 and 104,000 have been allocated to T&TEC and TSTT, will the sum allocated for both of these entities be sufficient to cover the expenses until September of 2022?

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you, Member. Will you permit me to take instruction? I am instructed, yes, it will be sufficient.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Yes, Madam Chair, thank you. Item, Fees, I am seeing that there is an additional allocation in the sum of \$790,000 for Fees. AG, can you indicate to this honourable House what

that is for?

Hon. Armour SC: As I was about to say, Member, those fees are in payment of Senior Counsel retained by the Industrial Court in a matter which is currently engaged in the High Court.

Mr. Hosein: All right. Can you inform this honourable House who is that Senior Counsel?

Hon. Armour SC: Well, as been the practice, Member, of the Office of Attorney General and Legal Affairs, to pay respect to the concept of fairness and if an attorney wishes to have his named disclosed, he would first be asked. I was not aware that I was going to be asked to disclose the name. I certainly will ask of that attorney whether he consents and that information in the normal course will be laid in Parliament according to the custom.

Mr. Hosein: AG, respectfully, a predecessor would have laid all of the attorneys that would have been paid for various fiscal years, including some of the matters and the amounts paid to those particular attorneys. So, I am very surprised to now learn that through the new leadership of the Attorney General's Office, that we would not be able to know who the Senior Counsel that is going to be paid \$790,000 of taxpayers' money.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Armour SC: Well, of course, Member, as I have said in other places when I address other persons, I say the fault is all mine. Clearly your misunderstanding of what I said led you into the error of thinking I said, "I could not reveal". I did not say, "I could not reveal", nor did I say anything to suggest that I am departing from the practice of this Ministry. What I said was, "In fairness I would first wish to ask that attorney for his permission", and I said, secondly, "That in due course" –

Member: [*Interruption*]

Hon. Armour SC: Sorry, I believe the Member for Naparima wants to say something.

Madam Chairman: No. No. No. No. One minute. AG, please proceed.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: I regulate this meeting.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Until I recognize somebody, please proceed.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you. And what I was about to say, Member for Oropouche – Member, is that in due course the Attorney General and Legal Affairs Ministry will lay before the Parliament all relevant information, including the names of attorneys who have been paid fees by this Ministry.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: AG, respectfully, this is an exercise that this Parliament undertakes to find out exactly where taxpayers' moneys are being spent and whether or not we are getting value for money. We are now learning that we, at this stage, would not be able to know who the Senior Counsel is. We have the debate coming up on Monday, we have to do our necessary research; that is one. And, two, is it an ordinary practice for the Industrial Court to retain Senior Counsel on ongoing matters?

Madam Chairman: And you are allowed only two.

1:30 p.m.

Hon. Amour SC: The practice of the Industrial Court is for within the discretion of the President of the Court, depending on the complexity of a matter on which the Court's jurisdiction is being challenged, in the President's discretion that President will make a determination to defend the Court by Senior Counsel or otherwise.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to direct, maybe the Minister of Finance could help me here. Under the Schedule that was submitted to all of us, Madam Chair, and I go back to Electricity, line Item 04, Electricity, the estimate for 2022 in our yellow books that we were approved in Parliament, was \$825,000, but that line Item today is \$725,000. So I am seeking clarification from the Minister of Finance why \$825,000 was not listed in the provision for estimates for 2022?

Mr. Imbert: I apologize, Madam Chairman, if you would allow me. I was still thinking about that question about the name of the Senior Counsel, so I did not hear you. So could you repeat?

[*Laughter*]

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Minister of Finance, if could you go to Electricity, 04, in the Schedule that was submitted to all of us, it states \$725,000, but the amount that was approved in our yellow books back in October, was \$825,000. I am seeing throughout all the Schedules some numbers have changed, so maybe by seeking clarification in this line Item you could help us with the rest.

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I cannot remember if the hon. Member was ever a Minister, if he was—[*Interruption*] if he were—

Mr. Lee: I cannot hear, sorry.

Mr. Imbert: If he were—what is all of this noise about? Madam Chair, you are regulating the meeting.

Madam Chairman: All right, just now. I guess everyone is seeking to correct your grammatical error, "if he were".

Mr. Imbert: I do not think so. It was only you, only you. [*Laughter*]

Madam Chairman: Please proceed.

Mr. Imbert: So, if the Member had been a Minister, look at the top. It says, "Provision in the estimates including direct charges, transfers and virements", so during the year this will not be part of this meeting. This is a meeting with respect of supplementation. So this is additional funding, but sometimes we would have a variation of appropriation where you would see all the virements and transfers. So the reason why this number is different is there have been virements and transfers between October 1st and now. So the original provision would be a particular number, but funds are moved about by Permanent Secretaries. So this is the figure as of today, taking into account virements and transfers since October.

Mr. Lee: So at some point in time we would see the notetaking for the virements?

Mr. Imbert: Yes, you would see. Either the closing of accounts, or if we have a variation of appropriation to do. If a Ministry needs money to go from one Ministry to another.

Mr. Lee: Just for clarification, you ended up by Ministry going from one Ministry to another Ministry. Is that required Parliament approval?

Mr. Imbert: Yes, that is a variation of appropriation. So this is a virement and a transfer within the Ministry, so it is within the Head.

Mr. Lee: Agreed.

Mr. Imbert: But when we do the variation you would see all that too.

Mr. Lee: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Arouca/Maloney.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I was just adding to what the Attorney General said in response to the Member for Barataria/San Juan. I am sure the Member would recall that the *Hansard* record will show that even before the former Attorney General, the Member for San Fernando West, indicated fees, he did tell this honourable House that he would have to get the permission of attorneys before their fees were revealed. He made that statement. In addition to that, we had a period of time before he gave that statement regarding fees of attorneys. So I just wanted to remind Members that that is in the public domain. It is in the *Hansard* record. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, thank you. With respect to "Other contract services", could the Attorney General inform this meeting what were the consultancy services that were provided and for what purpose?

Hon. Amour SC: I am advised, Member, that the contractual services referred to there are for

service providers. That is to say, verbatim note takers and other such service providers.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay. And with respect to “Janitorial and security services”, in relation to the increase, the respective increases, could you inform this meeting who are the Industrial Court security and janitorial service providers?

Hon. Amour SC: MTS, Member.

Mr. Indarsingh: And what changes would have occurred at the Court which necessitates this supplementary allocation?

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, if one looks very carefully at this document, what you are going to see in the explanation is—let us go to what was circulated to Members, and I would ask Members opposite quote the Head, Item, Sub-Item, because some persons may not be familiar with all of the text. So if you could—in this particular case, if you had said that it was, for example, Janitorial is 02/001/37, it would help. If you do that, we could get to it very quickly.

What the Budget Division has done is looked at the pattern of expenditure, looked at the pattern of expenditure of the various Heads, the various Ministries and Departments, and done a projection in terms of whether they would need additional funding or not. These supplementary appropriations are based on an anticipation that the Industrial Court will require additional funds for janitorial and security to pay MTS which is the provider.

Mr. Indarsingh: Whilst I am listening to you, Minister of Finance, it does not give me any sense of comfort.

Mr. Imbert: That is all right. You are never comfortable.

Mr. Indarsingh: You have never really given us any sense of comfort.

Mr. Imbert: You are always uncomfortable.

Madam Chairman: Are you finished, Member for Couva South?

Mr. Imbert: Always uncomfortable.

Mr. Indarsingh: No. Thank you, Madam Chair. With respect to Sub-Item 16, Attorney General, Contract Employment, could you advise us what is the total number of persons employed on contract at the Court?

Hon. Amour SC: Thirteen short-term and 14 fixed term/short-term contracts at the Court.

Mr. Indarsingh: And how many were employed for fiscal 2022?

Hon. Amour SC: I will get that information and provide it in due course.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you. Hon. Attorney General, Sub-Item 08, Rent/Lease, Office Accommodation and Storage. I note that there has been an over 200 per cent increase in the

allocations being requested now for this heading. Can you advise why we have such a substantial increase in the requirement for funding for rent please?

Hon. Armour SC: Yes, the answer to that, Member, is that a substantial part of that sum is with respect to arrears and, secondly, there is inadequate space for physical filing of documents at the Court building and, therefore, additional space has to be rented.

Mr. Tancoo: Follow-up, Sir. I note though that in the explanatory notes under that very same heading, 08, there is no indication that this is for arrears. It simply says, "To meet the cost of rental to September 2022". Can you indicate what period these arrears relate to?

2.00 p.m.

Hon. Armour SC: I will get that information and provide it in due course.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you. Hon. Attorney General, Sub-Item 08, Rent/Lease/Office Accommodation of Storage. I note that there has been an over 200 percent increase in the allocations being requested now for this heading. Can you advise why we have such a substantial increase in the requirement for funding for rent, please?

Hon. Armour SC: Yes, the answer to that, Member, is that a substantial part of that sum is with respect to arrears. And secondly, there is inadequate space for physical filing of documents at the court building and therefore additional space has to be rented.

Mr. Tancoo: Follow-up, Sir. I note though in the Explanatory Notes under that very same heading 08, there is no indication that this is for arrears. It simply says:

To meet the cost of rental up to September 2022.

Can you indicate what period these arrears relate to?

Hon. Armour SC: I will get the information for you as to exactly what period, but the record is that it has to do with arrears for storage of located filings. All location filings.

Mr. Tancoo: So, just for clarification, hon. Attorney General, this is not for new premises, this is for existing premises. Premises that existed prior to fiscal 2022.

Hon. Armour SC: It is a Vote that is being requested for additional space and therefore new premises, additional to the Industrial Court building at the corner of St. Vincent and I think it is Sackville Street. Not Sackville, but the lower street.

Mr. Tancoo: Therefore, Attorney General, is it not then for arrears then, it is provision for a new –

Hon. Armour SC: Some of it I said was for arrears. I am not able to give you the specific period, and I will provide that.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, hon. Attorney General.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Madam Chair. Attorney General, returning to Sub-Item 23, Fees, the particular matter engaging the High Courts, can you tell us the name of that matter, when it was commenced and what is the nature of that matter?

Hon. Armour SC: I would be wary to reveal the names of matters without more. Member, there are considerations that impact on matters before the courts, and I would be very wary not to begin to reveal the names of matters and the nature of matters, because I would not wish to compromise anything that is before a judicial sitting.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Attorney General, with respect to the matters, matters engaging the High Court are public matters.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Rambally: And in respect of the nature of the matter, I am simply asking whether it is a judicial review, constitutional motion –

Hon. Armour SC: I understand what you ask, Member, but yes I can confirm that it is a constitutional motion.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Rambally: And Attorney General, you –

Madam Chairman: Could we have some order so I can hear the question.

Mr. Rambally: Attorney General, are you still not in a position, you are wary to provide the name of the matter?

Hon. Armour SC: Well, I did not say I was not in a position. I declined, respectfully, for the reason that I gave.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Hon. Attorney General, this is actually a sum of 790,000 to be added to fees that have been paid already. I really fail to appreciate why it is we would not know the name of the parties to this matter.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, could I get a ruling? My memory of the Standing Orders is that if something is in the public domain you cannot ask it in Parliament.

Member: Exactly.

Mr. Imbert: Go and find out the information yourself. Could I get a ruling on that please?

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, I think that the Minister of Finance is abusing this meeting here.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Indarsingh: This is taxpayers' moneys and the Opposition is empowered to –

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South –

Mr. Young: He should really talk about taxpayers –

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Member: [*Interruption*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes, Ma'am.

Madam Chairman: I hope in going forward you would wait until you are recognized. We have a lot of work to do, let us try and do it in an orderly fashion.

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West, Member for Laventille West, Member for Naparima, I know you all have your lil synergies, I will ask you all if it is necessary, carry it outside and then come back. Okay. All right, so in terms of this, from what I understood the Attorney General to say, is that this matter would be determined later. I do not think I have to rule at this stage. Let us go on to something else. Member for –

Hon. Armour SC: Madam Chair, if you could allow me to correct the record please, because I believe the Member was adding the two sums under 001/23, 370 and 420, to suggest that they both represented legal fees. But that would be incorrect. The legal fees is one figure of 370,000, and the other fee of 420 is monthly management fees to NIPDEC. So it would be incorrect to add the two fees.

Mr. Rambally: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Just a minute please, Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: The notes that have been provided to us from the other side, it says, to facilitate payment of outstand fees to Senior Counsel, 790,000. That is the fee I referred to.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: Excuse me.

Mr. Rambally: Madam Chair, the hon. Attorney General was saying that I referenced two payments. I did not, I said 790,000. I have not gone on to any other thing. I was talking about that matter engaging the Court, which they refused to tell us the name of the parties.

Madam Chairman: All right. I think the matter has been clarified with respect to – it is quite clear, 02/001/23 is fees, 790,000. Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I am on line Item 02/228, Other Contracted Services in the sum of \$316,000. AG, can you give us a breakdown of this expenditure of \$316,000?

Hon. Armour SC: Can you just give me a minute please? The \$316,000 figure is what is needed to go to the end of the financial year, Member.

Mr. Hosein: Can you just give us an indication or a breakdown of those services, AG?

Hon. Armour SC: I would have to provide that in due course, Member. I do not have that at my immediate disposal.

Mr. Hosein: Will that be available before the sitting on Monday?

Hon. Armour SC: It will be.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Madam Chairman, I am looking at line Item 02/001/08, an increase with respect to Accommodation and Storage, Rental Accommodation. Would the hon. Attorney General advise us as to the owners of the property that is being used for rental here?

Hon. Armour SC: Could I ask, through you, Madam Chairman, if the question could be repeated. I did not hear the Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Line Item 02/001/08, where there is a proposed—additional allocation, an increase for rental/lease/office accommodation and storage. Hon. AG, can you tell us who are the owners of the property that we are referring to here for this line Item?

Hon. Armour SC: I do not have that information immediately at hand. I am not able to provide that this afternoon.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Will you give an undertaking to provide it, please?

Hon. Armour SC: Well, I do not want to give an undertaking that I cannot keep, but I will make enquiries.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What!

Members: What! "Naah!"

Member: That is standard practice.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Can I go to the hon. longstanding hon. Minister of Finance, to help us here, please? The experience of the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I do not think I can provide anything more than the —

Member: *[Interruption]*

Mr. Imbert: "Well I cyar talk if dey talking".

Member: *[Interruption]*

Mr. Imbert: See? I do not think I could provide any more information at this time. I will talk to the Attorney General and see what information can be provided. This is not something that the Ministry of Finance would have been involved in.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. [*Inaudible*] –hon. Minister of Finance in his earlier comments in this House about the Standing Orders, and your practice has always been, if you cannot provide the information at this point in time, that you give an undertaking to provide it in time for the debate. That has been the practice of the House.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I referred only to Standing Orders, and no such Standing Order, as the Member has quoted exists. Neither in the mind, in the past, present or future. That does not exist.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: We do have an undertakings committee of the Parliament. **Mr. Imbert:** That does not exist. That does not exist.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: That is the practice of the Parliament. Why are you hiding?

Madam Chairman: All right. Okay. So, Members, we know we have a practice where an undertaking will be given. So while it may not be codified in the Standing Orders, there is a practice. Okay.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam Chairman, to the hon. Attorney General. I want to return to the issue of Fees under Sub-Head 23.

Member: [*Interruption*]

Mr. Tancoo: Allow me, please.

Madam Chairman: All right. Okay.

Mr. Tancoo: Allow me, please.

Madam Chairman: Let us just understand the Table setting so we could proceed. Once we are under the Sub-Head, Members could back and forward. What will not be allowed is now that we are in the Industrial Court, somebody cannot go back to Judiciary. Okay. So, let us have some order, some cooperation, and let us get this job done.

Yes, Member for Oropouche West.

2.10 p.m.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam Chair. Back to 02/001/23 Fees, \$790,000, I understand the Attorney General indicated that he is unable to provide the names without permission. However, can he indicate the number of Senior Counsels for whom this payment will be made and the

number of matters for which this payment will be made?

Hon. Armour SC: My understanding, Member, is that it is one matter and one Senior Counsel.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you, thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Madam Chairman, just to ask an absolute clarification from the Attorney General on a matter before we move – 02/001 –

Madam Chairman: I do not know that clarification could be absolute, you know. Clarification is clarification. Okay? So let us get the clarification you want.

Dr. Moonilal: Madam Chairman, I am so much thankful for that clarification, absolute or not.

Members: [*Laughter*]

Dr. Moonilal: On this matter of the rental, Mr. Attorney General, this figure is quite specific, it is \$759,195. Are you telling us at this time you are asking us to approve this but you do not know the location of this rental property, the owner or terms and conditions of a rental arrangement which effectively appears to be already in process?

Hon. Armour SC: What I said is I would make enquiries, Member.

Dr. Moonilal: So you are effectively saying you do not have the information now and you cannot get it now?

Hon. Armour SC: I do not have the information to provide you with now, but I will make enquiries. And I expect that I make an enquiry of a responsible organization and I will get the answers that are required.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Moonilal: There is no need to –

Madam Chairman: Oh, yes, sorry. Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Chairman. 04/007/40 Gratuities to Contract Officers. The question is, could this not – how many officers are involved?

Hon. Armour SC: – make sure I go to – “aah”, thank you. How many officers are involved is the question?

Mr. Charles: Yes.

Hon. Armour SC: As I understand it, the Industrial Court currently has 14 contracted officers who are entitled to gratuity at the end of their contract. There are six contract officers awaiting their gratuity.

Mr. Charles: And the follow-up question is, could this not have been anticipated when the submissions were made back in September? Because you know that you have six officers, you know they are retiring, you know they are entitled to gratuity but you did not allocate for it.

Hon. Armour SC: The answer to that is that the allocation that was received was simply not enough, so supplementation is now being requested to meet the anticipated commitment. It is not a question of it not having been known.

Mr. Charles: Is it that you made a request to the Minister of Finance at the time knowing the six, knowing that what they are going – and the Minister of Finance did not give it to you or funds were not available?

Hon. Armour SC: A sum was requested and the entire sum was not approved so we are now asking for supplementation.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you. Hon. Attorney General, could you advise if any of those persons for whom we are now owing gratuities for –

Madam Chairman: Are you dealing with 007/40, the same – yes.

Mr. Tancoo: Under the same Sub-Head. I am trying to discern whether or not any of these gratuities that are now coming due were for periods before fiscal 2022?

Hon. Armour SC: The answer to that is, no.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: We are still under Industrial Court, Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I note under line Item: 02/001/37, Government is seeking an increased allocation for janitorial services. Would the hon. Minister be kind enough to share with us to whom these moneys are to be paid, that is, which janitorial services or firms or companies?

Hon. Armour SC: You will see indicated that the maintenance – the MTS is the company to whom these moneys are to be paid for janitorial services.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Is it likewise with the next line Item with respect to security services, 02 –

Madam Chairman: Member, I think –

Hon. Armour SC: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Both were answered.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: The question was asked shortly before you came in.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you so much. Appreciated.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: I believe a question was asked with regard to sub-Item 43 with regard to who the providers are. I am curious to find out from the Attorney General why is there 130 per cent increase between what was allocated and what is being asked for now?

Madam Chairman: I think that question in another form was answered by the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Tancoo: No, no, Madam Chair, currently the estimate for under the budget in October 2021 was \$1.2 million. The Attorney General is now asking for \$1.6 million more which is an increase of 130 per cent above what is already approved by this Parliament in the last year's budget. I am trying to determine why is there this drastic increase in the need for funding for security services?

Mr. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, just for the continuity of record and with the leave of my colleague, the Attorney General, I want to ask all Members to go back to the *Hansard* in the Standing Finance Committee –

Mr. Tancoo: No, no.

Mr. Al-Rawi: – and it will be a matter of record that when I was asked for explanations at the Standing Finance Committee for this financial year I squarely indicated that we would come back at mid-year because there were other matters yet to be calculated and therefore any attempt to say that there are drastic increases must be put in the context of the express reservations given in the Standing Finance Committee for this very appropriation year, Madam Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to put that on record.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, former Attorney General, Member for San Fernando West. Can you then, since you volunteered to interject your presence in this matter, advise whether or not a substantially larger figure was requested and simply not received? Or is it a deliberate under-budgeting that took place during that time?

Mr. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, I certainly can. The record on *Hansard* will demonstrate that in the piloting of the Standing Finance Committee and the interrogation for this financial year an express reservation was stated that there was need to come at mid-year for supplementation including matters such as these.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 04 supplemented by the sum of \$7,924,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you, Attorney General and the Registrar of the Industrial Court and your team. You all are relieved.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Head 05: Office of the Parliament, \$4,114,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I think we all know the role and function of the Election and Boundaries Commission—

Members: Parliament.

Hon. Imbert: Oh, I am so sorry. Well, that is even worse. I think we all know the role and function of the Parliament, we are all here. So with respect to— Madam Chairman, there is a continuous mutter over there.

Madam Chairman: Please proceed.

Hon. Imbert: I will try. So in this supplementation, the Parliament has been given an additional sum of \$4,114,000 and it is specifically to pay gratuities to contract officers who successfully completed their terms of engagement and whose appointments will expire in fiscal 2022. So it is for persons whose contracts will come to an end in fiscal 2022, who would be entitled to gratuity once all the paper work is in order. That is it.

Question proposed: That Head 05 be supplemented by the sum of \$4,114,000.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 05 supplemented by the sum of \$4,114,000.

2.20 p.m.

Head 06: Service Commissions, \$14,419,000.

Madam Chairman: I will invite the Minister of Public Administration to make a brief opening statement of a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. West: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Service Commissions Department is the secretariat for the four constitutionally enshrined Service Commissions. It is charged with providing these commissions with administrative and technical advisory services to enable them to carry out their constitutional functions. As the Service Commissions moves towards future state where operational excellence, service delivery and technical support is second to none. The Department has aligned its strategic focus to the Deloitte and Touche IPAC Institutional Strengthening Report, National Development Strategy, *Vision 2030* and the Roadmap to Recovery Committee Report. The initiatives to enable the realization to future state are currently being implemented.

The Department has been providing support to the Commissions as the Commissions fulfil their mandate. The on-going process of this mandate has seen critical leadership positions in the public service being filled with greater focus on meritocracy. The other functions of the Commissions are being carried out with greater efficiencies as a result of the improvements of the secretariat.

The Department evolution to a paperless organization, it uses data analytics to make decisions and to reengineer its processes/operations will ensure there is better public service.

However, critical to the success of these initiatives is the issue of financial resources. This current request for additional expenditure originated from the shortfall in the 2021/2022 fiscal allocations. The expenditure is required to meet payments in utilities, salaries and allowances, fees and other contract services and gratuity to contract officers.

Madam Chair, I thank you and I am willing to answer any questions that may be forthcoming.

Question proposed: That Head 06 be supplemented by the sum of \$14,419,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Items 04 and 05, Minister, against the backdrop of both these public utilities companies being severely cash-strapped and the challenges they are facing, line Item 04 and line Item 05 are for payments to both TSTT and T&TEC, however, they go as far back as August. So essentially, we are being asked to supplement from August 2021 to September 2022, almost 10 months.

Can the hon. Minister indicate what was the reason for the non-payment of moneys by the Service Commissions Department to T&TEC and TSTT for the period August to November 2021?

Hon. West: Member, simply, the Commission did not have funds in hand to settle those bills which is why it is seeking to address that issue at this point.

Mr. Padarath: Can the Minister indicate whether or not this posed a challenge in terms of the operations of the Service Commissions?

Hon. West: Well at this point, no because both the Electricity Commission and the telephone service provider have been very accommodating and have continued to provide the level of service required by the Commission to do its work.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am at line Item 02/001/23 Fees, an additional allocation of \$1.585 million. As part of that, Minister, I am seeing that \$955,000 will be allocated to the retention of attorneys. Can you in fact tell us who these attorneys are and for what matters these attorneys have been retained for?

Hon. West: Sorry, Member. The Senior Counsel in respect of whom the fees are due was engaged to provide services in respect of the matter involving the Police Service Commission. Can you repeat the other question that you asked, please?

Mr. Hosein: The matter involving the withdrawal of the list by the former Chairman of the Police Service Commission. That matter you are speaking about?

Hon. West: The matter involving the Police Service Commission and the appointment of a

Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Hosein: Can you just disclose for the record who the Senior Counsel is?

Hon. West: Who the attorney is?

Mr. Hosein: Yeah, who is the Senior Counsel in the matter?

Hon. West: Russell Martineau.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Madam, on the same line Item of 23 Fees, can the hon. Minister give us a breakdown of how this allocation will be distributed. We are given the aggregated cumulative total but we do not know how it is to be distributed under the various Items. Secondly or should I wait for the answer, Madam Chair? On the same Item.

Madam Chairman: Yes, please. The Minister may be in a position to answer and we should do one question at a time. You are allowed five minutes on every intervention and you are not limited by interventions. Minister.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thanks.

Madam Chairman: Yes, Minister.

Hon. West: Yes, Chair. I do not have a breakdown of the numbers but I can tell you to whom the payments are being made and for what. We have a payment to Oracle Software for renewal of the e-HR management system. We have, as we indicated, an outstanding payment to Senior Counsel. We have payments for examiners, markers and invigilators for the DPS exercise that was recently concluded and we have a payment outstanding to an investigator appointed for a matter being dealt with by the Police Service Commission.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Yes, please.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much. The Minister has given us some of the names to whom the payments would be made and I thank you for that. Would you be kind enough to provide, if not today, the amounts? You have specified in the note given to us for some, what is the quantum for some of these providers? So perhaps the hon. Minister would be kind enough at a subsequent time to provide the breakdown, disaggregate per these providers. The further question is for what period were those fees incurred.

Hon. West: These were incurred in respect of income year 2022. Fiscal year 2022, sorry.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. What was the reason for the delay in payments for these expenses? Because we see some are going backwards held in 2021. What is the reason for delay in payments?

Hon. West: The Commission did not have sufficient funds in hand to settle all of the amount outstanding so we awaited the mid-year exercise to request the additional funds from the Minister of Finance, which he is now seeking to provide.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Is it true to say that they did not have sufficient funds because the Government did not release sufficient funds to them?

Hon. West: Well, in some cases, we would not have known the extent of the expense until they were incurred; in some cases, we would have known but we would not have been provided sufficient funds at the outset.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Can we kindly ask the hon. Minister what are the scenarios or instances in which the Commission is required to engage persons to conduct interviews and how were those persons selected to conduct the interviews.

Hon. West: Sorry, I heard the first part of the question which is the circumstances.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What are the scenarios or instances in which the Commission is required to engage persons to conduct interviews because we are going to be paying for persons who conducted interviews?

2.30 p.m.

Hon. West: The Commission was involved in a very extended exercise to appoint DPSs, about 30 DPSs to the service. This was an extended exercise and external persons were brought in to assist with the process.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And how were these persons selected to conduct the interviews?

Hon. West: We engaged a consultant for this purpose.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am sorry Ma'am, I am not hearing you.

Hon. West: We engaged a consultant to assist us with the exercise, including the conduct of the interviews.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So were the positions, these posts, were they advertised, that you were seeking persons to conduct interviews, whether through a consultant? Was it advertised, so the public would know that they can have an opportunity?

Hon. West: We went through the proper procurement process. Because this is an unusual exercise with a number of senior officers, a decision was made to engage external persons to assist and we went through the proper procurement process to do that.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Ma'am, I want to shift to another Sub-Item which is 08, under the same Head, which deals with rent, lease, office accommodation and storage. In the note provided by the hon. Minister of Finance to this Committee, the names of the persons or companies owning the properties are listed, so we have, for example, Land Security Limited for head office;

Cipriani Properties Limited for DFL Building, Broadway Properties for two storage units; and Tredco for Pasea office for the period. So my question would be one, please, would you be kind enough to provide the monthly costs for each of these properties?

Hon. West: The monthly rent for each property?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: The ones listed.

Hon. West: I do not have that information. Do I have that information? Okay. Land Securities, the rental is \$582,750; 52-58 Woodford Street –

Mrs. Persad Bissessar SC: [*Inaudible*] – turn up the volume?

Hon. West: Is there a difficulty?

Madam Chairman: We are all required to wear masks. So that the masks, we will have to be tolerant with what the mask does to all our voices. Okay?

Hon. West: They have put this mike, so hopefully that will help. Okay. So I was going through the rental properties and the rent. Land Securities, the rent is \$582,750; 52-58 Woodford Street is \$167,625; 10 Cipriani Boulevard is \$187,324; Broadway Properties, \$10,125; and \$14,292 from October 2019.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I note for one of these properties it dates back to 2018. So this is like way backwards that is outstanding. Would you be kind enough to let us know the reason for the delinquent payment for this Broadway Properties storage units outstanding from 2018, four years?

Hon. West: The Service Commissions originally shared this building with the CPO. When the CPO terminated its – when the need for the CPO to store equipment at this building ceased, the Service Commissions had to bear the full rate of the rent and they did not have allocation at the time to do that, so they are now trying to correct that shortfall.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: May I ask another question please, Ma'am? Would you be kind enough, hon. Minister, for each of these properties, to tell this Parliament who are the owners of each of them?

Hon. West: That information I do not have before me, but can be provided.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sorry?

Hon. West: That is information that I do not have before me in respect of all of them but it can be provided.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Hon. Minister, the owners for each of these and would you be kind enough also to indicate when was the lease initially engaged for each of them? When, the date.

Hon. West: How soon we can do it?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: In providing the names of the owners, would you also be kind enough

to tell us when the lease arrangement was entered into?

Hon. West: Okay. Sure.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: That is it, Ma'am. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: 08. Can the Minister advise if, in the arrears that you just described, because it took a while for Government to pay or to request funding for payment, whether there was any penalty from, on behalf of the property owners, to the Government for failure to meet the arrears?

Hon. West: The landlord has not sought to impose any penalty on the Government for this.

Mr. Tancoo: If I may just belabour the point a bit again. Is it that there is any interest that would have accrued because of the non-payment?

Hon. West: I interpreted penalty to include interest there. No such charge has been imposed.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you very much. Back to 04, Electricity. I note in your response to a question earlier that you indicated that the Commission had no funding for payment for the arrears between August to November 2021, and is also now asking for January to September 2022. However, it suggests then that for December 2021 a payment was made because you have arrears from August to November 2021. No debt for December 2021, but now arrears from January to end of fiscal year. Can the Minister indicate whether payment was made for December 2021 or this was just a typographical?

Hon. West: The allocation that we have sought from the Minister of Finance in this mid-year will allow us to settle all our bills up to the end of September. So there is no typographical.

Mr. Tancoo: To be very clear, Ma'am, in the Explanatory Notes provided by the Minister it says that we are paying arrears for the period August to November 2021 and now asking for additional funding from January. So this means that December 2021 is expressly left out. So is it that—that is why I am asking whether it is a typographical and should have gone from August to September 2022?

Hon. West: It is not typographical. We have either paid the rent, which I cannot confirm at this point or we would have sufficient funds, after receipts of this allocation, to settle the Bill.

Mr. Tancoo: With due respect, Ma'am, I would leave it like that, but that does not clarify the issue.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre? Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. In relation to 02/003/28, Other Contracted Services, could the Minister advise us or the meeting what consultancy firm was used for this exercise, how the firm was selected and has the exercise been completed?

Hon. West: For the DPS, the service provider was TGN. And as I indicated, we went through the

normal procurement procedures. For the service for the Police Assessment Centre, it was done in-house but a consultant was engaged to advise.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, Minister, is it the final or the total cost on this assessment exercise?

Hon. West: It is.

Mr. Indarsingh: It is. Okay, thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam. Madam, line Items 04, 05. To the hon. Minister, in reference to the answer the Minister provided to my question prior, the Minister indicated that she negotiated and spoke to both TSTT and T&TEC. The question to the hon. Minister: Is the Government advising citizens who are seeking deferral to request extensions as well, seeing that that all have not paid for 10 months –

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Padarath: – and many citizens are unable to pay their bills but are getting cut off? So is it this is the Government's policy for ordinary citizens as well?

2.40 p.m.

Hon. West: I can –

Madam Chairman: I will not allow that under this item. Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Madam Chair, same Head, Sub-Item 37 Janitorial Services, with an increase being sought, would the hon. Minister be kind enough to provide the names of the Commission's security service providers? And the very next Item is with security service, both for security and – janitorial and security, the names of the companies contracted to do these services.

Hon. West: They are SSM Cleaning Service, Building and Maintenance Services for janitorial, and for security, it is PRD Security and DFL Building. Those were the two, so it is two each.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. Minister, would you kindly advise who are the owners of these companies?

Hon. West: That information I do not have before me.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Can we get it in due course?

Hon. West: I can request the Service Commissions to provide it.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much. And how were these persons contracted, were these things advertised and when were they contracted?

Hon. West: They would have gone through the normal procurement process.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am sorry?

Hon. West: They would have gone through the normal procurement process as to when —

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What is —

Hon. West: A tendering process.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: A what?

Hon. West: A tendering process.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Was it a selective tendering process, sole selective, selective, or otherwise?

Hon. West: It would not have been selective.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Pardon?

Hon. West: It would not have been a selective process.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And when were they contracted?

Hon. West: We cannot say that at this point.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: — today. Okay.

Hon. West: They have been around for some years.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I look forward to your — when you get the information, please, hon. Minister.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia, are you finished?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes, thank you, Ma'am.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 43 Security Services. Based on your response just now, there is 100 per cent increase between what was requested and approved in the last year's budget and what is being asked for now. So what was approved in the budget plus virements and so on was 1.4 million. An additional 2.2 million is now being asked. Can the Minister indicate what would have caused the request for this additional funding for security?

Hon. West: Both of all the service providers, we have arrears of payments from the prior financial settled, as well as to take us to the end of this fiscal.

Mr. Tancoo: So Ma'am, can you give us a breakdown as to what those arrears were as compared to what was supposed to be assigned and associated with the current fiscal? You indicated the arrears were for previous fiscal.

Hon. West: Okay, so what I can tell you is that the arrears in respect of janitorial, was from July of 2021 at a cost of \$49,300 per month, which is approximately \$100,000. The arrears for security were brought forward from April of 2021 at a cost of about \$240,000.

Mr. Tancoo: That still would not give us \$2.2 million in addition, Ma'am?

Hon. West: No, there is also a shortfall in terms of the rest of this year —

Mr. Tancoo: Current fiscal.

Hon. West: – that is what I indicated – it is both arrears and to take us to September of 2022.

Mr. Tancoo: So Ma'am, these are figures that would have been based on contractual arrangements between the providers and the recipient. Is it that again, what was requested for in the budget was not provided and that is why we have to come to supplementation now?

Hon. West: The Service Commissions would have requested what it required, it would have gotten charged an amount that was short of that, so it is seeking a supplementation.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am at line Item 02/003/28 as at Contracted Services, \$940,500 to meet the consultancy costs associated with the assessment exercise for the recruitment of Deputy Permanent Secretaries. Minister, can you indicate who is the consultant that was retained?

Hon. West: Indicated it was TGM.

Mr. Hosein: TTM?

Hon. West: TGM.

Mr. Hosein: TGM, thanks. Can you give us the date in which they were retained, at the time they were retained?

Hon. West: The date? The exercise has been ongoing for some time so they would have been retained in 2020.

Mr. Hosein: Is the exercise complete now?

Hon. West: It is completed now, yes.

Mr. Hosein: So we have all the positions of the Deputy Permanent Secretaries filled?

Hon. West: We have not yet. We have shortlisted, we have interviewed and a final decision needs to be made as to who will actually be appointed.

Mr. Hosein: You have a deadline or a timeline in which that will be completed?

Hon. West: That we are dependent on the Service Commissions to make a determination on that, that is outside of my control.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you.

Hon. West: But I know they are working assiduously to get it done.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 06 supplemented by the sum of \$14,419,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister and the Director of Personnel Department and your team.

Head 08: Elections and Boundaries Commission, \$23,525,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I think I am on the right Head now. As we all know, the Elections and Boundaries Commission is charged with the conduct of elections in Trinidad and Tobago. In this supplementation the total is \$23,525,000 and it is spread among various Heads of—various Items of Recurrent Expenditure, including a supplementation for Travelling Subsistence; Telephones; Short-Term Employment; Other Contracted Services; Promotions, Publicity and Printing; election expenses of various types and equipment. The details are there.

Question proposed: That Head 08 be supplemented by the sum of \$23,525,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Madam, Head 08: EBC, under Sub-Head 02: Goods and Services; Item 0001: General Admin; Sub-Item 01: Travelling and Subsistence. An increased allocation is being requested to pay subsistence to officers engaged in prep of the annual list of electors as well as registration pop-up initiative. My question please, to the hon. Minister: How many officers will be entitled to receive this travelling and subsistence allowance, there is an additional 2.2 million?

2.50 p.m.

Madam Chairman: Members, if we can just carry down the volume, please.

Hon. Imbert: Okay. We do not have precise numbers, but these are staff within the registration offices across the country.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So, you do not know how many?

Hon. Imbert: We do not have precise numbers at this time.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Would you be kind enough to find out and provide it to the House, please?

Hon. Imbert: I will try my best.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, hon. Minister. This pop-up initiative, we are going to pay people for travelling and subsistence allowance for something termed here “A Pop-Up Initiative”. Do we know what this is, please?

Hon. Imbert: This has arisen from the events of the last couple years where ID cards were not renewed, because of COVID, so the validity was extended from time to time, but the extension has come to an end, and what the EBC is doing, what I am told, is recognizing there will be a significant number of persons who would need to get their cards renewed. They are going into communities and using existing facilities like community centres and so on and doing on-site renewal of ID cards. Rather than people coming in to the registration offices by appointment,

they are augmenting the service, in other words, to expand the capacity of the service to renew ID cards in communities, using facilities like community centres. That is what the “Pop-Up Initiative” is all about.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Is this the same pop-up initiative that failed in the THA elections?

Mr. Young: Which elections?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: THA.

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I am confused. Which pop-up election in which election? What pop-up you are talking about?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Pop-up initiative.

Hon. Imbert: There was no pop-up initiative in the THA election. I do not know what you are talking about. I am not sure you know what you are talking about.

Madam Chairman: Members, Members, let us have some order. Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Sub-Item 28: Other Contracted Services, a net increase of 2 million to meet the cost, we are told, to meet the cost of consultancy services to support the registration of electors. Could you just tell us who are the consultants?

Hon. Imbert: The core function of the Elections and Boundaries Commission is to register electors.

Mr. Charles: Is to?

Hon. Imbert: Register electors.

Mr. Charles: Yes, yes.

Hon. Imbert: And, specifically, with persons who have changed their address. So that the EBC has to go out in the field and determine persons who have moved into areas or moved out of areas, and these funds you will see them in several Heads. You will see them under several Items. These funds are required to support that initiative, that core function of the EBC.

Mr. Charles: Or. So, it is a standardized process that has been used in the past to register people?

Hon. Imbert: From time to time, the EBC would do —

Mr. Charles: Good. So, why do you need a consultant now? What new are they bringing to the table?

Hon. Imbert: Could you tell me which Item you are on?

Mr. Charles: I am on Item 28: Other Contracted Services.

Madam Chairman: He is under 002/20 — 002/20. That is where we are?

Hon. Imbert: Yes. I am told this may be a typographical error. This may be a typographical error.

Mr. Charles: So, could you —

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Minister, kindly advise what is the correct thing, because we are being

asked to approve these things. This is money, taxpayers' moneys.

Hon. Imbert: The word should be "contracted". Member for Siparia, it should be "Contracted Services" instead of "Consultancy Services", Contracted Services, like website services and so on.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I asked you that? I thought it was Naparima.

Hon. Imbert: I have answered you. I said the word should be "Contracted Services".

Mr. Charles: Then, can you give us the names of the contractors?

Hon. Imbert: Yes. Remember this is a supplementation going forward. So, yes, that information can be provided at the appropriate time. Okay? But it is "Contracted Services". Thank you for picking that up.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Madam, line Item 05, if the hon. Minister can explain. In light of the challenges that TSTT is facing, can the Minister indicate why is there a payment that is outstanding from April 2019 to November 2021? Is that a typographical error or is this, in fact, true? For two years it has not been paid.

Hon. Imbert: It is not a typo. I am advised that the Elections and Boundaries Commission did not receive regular invoices from TSTT during that period. There was an issue. I can say for myself, there was an issue with billing at TSTT during that period.

Mr. Padarath: But Minister, would the EBC not find it strange that they are not getting invoices between 2019 and 2021, over two and a half years?

Hon. Imbert: You cannot –

Madam Chairman: You are asking a question? Member for Princes Town, if you could ask that question again, please.

Mr. Padarath: Sure. I am just asking the hon. Minister, in light of the answer that was provided that they were not receiving invoices, did the EBC not follow up with TSTT in light of realizing that they were not receiving bills from them for over two and a half years?

Hon. Imbert: Is that question finished?

Mr. Young: "Who does ask for bills? You does ask for bills?"

Mr. Chairman: Member, Member. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I was very clear. I see Members over on the other side have decided to start to add words and take out words. I said the EBC has advised me it did not receive regular invoices from TSTT. So they got invoices, but they were not received on a regular basis, and when TSTT eventually sorted out whatever billing problem they had, then the invoices came, creating the arrears which is now being supplemented to pay the arrears.

Madam Chairman: Member for Tabaquite.

Ms. Haynes: Thank you, Madam Chair. In response to the Member for Siparia before, the Minister stated that there was no pop-up initiative in the THA election, but Sub-Item 62: Promotions and Publicity, the \$1 million net increase, it speaks to this being part of in respect of the pop-up initiative in the recently concluded THA election. It is Sub-Item 62: Promotions, Publicity and Printing.

Madam Chairman: We are at 002/62. Page 8.

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, it seems there is a problem with the English Language in this place. There is a “;”. Are you not seeing the semicolon? And you know what the meaning of a semicolon is? It means there is a separate item.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Imbert: So what it says, if you look at it very, very, carefully, it says:

To facilitate payments to media houses for advertisements in respect of the registration pop-up initiative; the recently concluded the Tobago House of Assembly, THA election and the Local Government by-elections.

So, there is no relationship between the first item and the second item. That is the meaning of a semicolon.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

3.00 p.m.

Madam Chairman: Let us have a little order, please. Minister of Finance, thanks for the lecture in syntax. Let us have a little order so I could hear. Member for Tabaquite, are you finished?

Ms. Haynes: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Yeah. Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: How much, Madam—and with respect to that Item 62, Promotions, Publicity and Printing, I am reading from the document circulated via the Minister, Ministry of Finance, and I am sorry to say that he is not reading the document properly —

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:—and the semicolon comes after the words, “Pop-Up Initiative”. It says:

This increase is to facilitate—

Member: [*Interruption*]

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:—Please wait.

Mr. Charles: Listen and learn.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Please.

Madam Chairman: All right.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: To facilitate payment –

Madam Chairman: I believe the person I am recognizing now is the Member for Siparia. Please continue.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I read from the Minister's – what you say – from his own document; it says:

To facilitate payment to media houses for advertisements in respect of the registration
Pop-Up Initiative; –

The semicolon comes after the "Pop-Up Initiative", and therefore that is the question that Members are asking you.

Hon. Imbert: I am not going to allow that. This is the English language. It says:

To facilitate payment to media houses for advertisements in respect of the registration
Pop-Up Initiative;

That means that entire sentence stands alone. That is the English language. If the Member for Siparia does not understand the English language, I am sorry.

Madam Chairman: All right. So, can we proceed? Minister of Finance, let us proceed. All right? The Member has sought clarification, has the clarification been given? Let us move on. Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. I am still looking at –

Mr. Hinds: [*Interruption*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Laventille –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Could you please ask Laventille –

Madam Chairman: Member – Member – Member for Laventille West – Member for Laventille West, Member for Couva South –

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes –

Madam Chairman: – Member for St. Augustine, what I want us to understand –

Mr. Indarsingh: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Excuse me?

Mr. Indarsingh: No, I did not hear you.

Madam Chairman: Well, if you listen you will hear.

Mr. Indarsingh: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Member for – Member for Couva South, we are not in a conversation.

Mr. Indarsingh: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South, I am not going to warn you again. Members for

Laventille West, Couva South, St. Augustine, let us proceed on the basis that not everything that happens one has to respond to or else we will get nowhere. All right? I have told you all before – I think some of you all know, those who have study Gandhi:

An eye for an eye will make everybody blind.

All right? I am sure we will have plenty questions to ask that are relevant, let us proceed. Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Madam. The Sub-Item under this same Head of 08, Sub-Item 22: Short-Term Employment, an increase is being sought of \$2 million and we are told by the Minister's document to ensure payment of salaries to officers on a short-term contract engagement in the registration pop-up initiative up to September. My questions are, one, how many officers on short-term contract will be engaged for this registration pop-up initiative? When will that start? How does the EBC recruit these personnel? What is the process? And what is the salary that would be paid to the short-term officers?

Hon. Imbert: That is a barrage of questions, I will try my best to answer them.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance, if you could answer those that you recall and the Member for Siparia will remind us of the others – *[Inaudible]*

Hon. Imbert: There is no way, Madam Chairman, that I can answer those questions at this time. I will try my best to get the information.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And the line Item –

Hon. Imbert: What you have with this “pop-up” thing? It bothering –

Members: *[Crosstalk]*

Madam Chairman: You are finished, Member for Siparia?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: *[Inaudible]*

Madam Chairman: All right. Please proceed.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sub-Item 62: Promotions, Publicity and Printing:

...to pay media houses for ads in respect of the registration pop-up initiative. The recently – yes, semicolon – recently concluded Tobago elections and local government election, Penal/Debe.

Can we ask please through you, Madam, which media houses were selected to advertise this registration pop-up initiative, the THA elections, the LGE by-election? This is an additional million dollars being requested and these have already happened and these are not projected.

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chair, I am advised these advertisements appeared in all the newspapers, selected radio stations, also e-fliers and on television.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Be kind enough to share with us who were the selected stations for

radio?

Hon. Imbert: I will try my best to get the information.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And of course you are saying all media houses, you mean all print press, all electronic press?

Hon. Imbert: I did not say that.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Well, I am asking, Sir.

Hon. Imbert: But I did not say what you said I said.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am asking you. You said all media houses.

Hon. Imbert: I did not. I said on newspapers – newspapers.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. And selected radio.

Hon. Imbert: Selected radio.

Mr. Charles: And TV.

Hon. Imbert: And TV.

Mr. Charles: Synergy?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: You could hold on, please? Would you be kind enough to tell us who were the selected –

Hon. Imbert: I said I would try my best. I already answered that question.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much. Would you be kind enough to tell us how much each media house was paid?

Hon. Imbert: I will try my best to get that information.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Very kind of you. I thank you so much. Would you be kind enough to – how were they selected, that is what you said you would try? And secondly –

Hon. Imbert: No, I did not say that. I said I would get the identity of the selected radio stations and TV for you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: And you asked me how much they were paid and so on. Is there another question?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes. How was each media house selected? What was the process?

Hon. Imbert: I will ask the EBC to provide that information.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Very kind of you, Sir. Thank you. Are we still continuing, Madam, same under EBC? I thank you for the time.

Madam Chairman: We are still under EBC.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. I am looking at Item 12, Materials and Supplies and Additional Supplementary Appropriation of \$3 million and this is to buy materials and supplies to support the registration electors exercise as well as the '22 local government elections. I would

like to know, please, if the Minister would be kind enough to provide a breakdown of the types of materials and supplies to be purchased for this exercise?

Hon. Imbert: – [Inaudible] – I will not be able to get that at this point in time –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Okay –

Hon. Imbert: – because this is looking forward.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Then would the Minister know at this point in time the amounts to be spent at each of these materials and supplies proposed to be spent on each?

Hon. Imbert: This is a supplementation –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes, I know.

Hon. Imbert: – going forward. I explained it is a core function of the Elections and Boundaries Commission to register electors. So if one looked carefully at the *Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure* you will see an Item called, Election Expenses, and within that Item you will see several Sub-Items. What has been done is we have supplemented various Items within that Item, Election Expenses, to give the EBC additional funds to do their core function of registration of electors. The EBC will allocate and spend that money in accordance with its normal procedures. It is a forward-looking supplementation.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I know it is a proposal, Minister, but do you have any idea of what that proposal entails? So we are giving a blanket amount of materials and supplies.

Hon. Imbert: We have simply put the EBC in funds for them to perform one of their core functions.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Do we at this point know who would be supplying these materials?

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I do not know how many times I would have to say this and how many versions of what I just said. It is a forward-looking supplementation. No, at this time one would not know in the future exactly how they would spend every cent of that allocation – [Inaudible] No –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: – [Inaudible] – so we are – [Inaudible] – by guess. We have no estimates from any – how do we arrive at this figure then?

Hon. Imbert: By “vaps”.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam. I want to go back to Travelling and Subsistence, that is 01. In the documentation – in the schedule provided by the Minister, there was a request for \$2.2 million additional appropriation, however in the Explanatory Notes provided by the very same Minister, they only explained 1.5 million. Can the Minister indicate whether this is a typographical or whether that \$700,000 is the difference between what was in the requested – on

the schedule is different to what is in the Explanatory Notes?

3.10 p.m.

Hon. Imbert: I cannot answer that question, unless the Member indicates what page he is referring to. He would need to indicate the page and the Item.

Madam Chairman: Minister, we are at page 6 of this Schedule and we are on page 7 on this one. So, if you look to the bottom of page 7, the Member is Head 08, 02/001/01.

Hon. Imbert: You would have to repeat that for me.

Madam Chairman: Here, page 8, page 7, at the top here of page 8. Could you help him?

Hon. Imbert: We will sort it out. We will get clarity from the Budget Division in due course.

Mr. Tancoo: Given that this is to be approved today for use in the debate on Monday, can the Minister give us a guarantee that he would be able to provide us with that information by Monday, so we could consider it in the debate please?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Tabaquite.

Ms. Haynes: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am on line Item 62, Promotions, Publicity and Printing, EBC. The Minister said that there was no pop-up response, we recall his semicolon –

Madam Chairman: I ask you so that we would be on the same page. There are two 62s, so let me know if you are under 001 or if you are under 002.

Ms. Haynes: 001.

Madam Chairman: 001?

Ms. Haynes: Yes. I just want an opportunity to put into the record a press release from the EBC where it temporarily discontinues its pilot project for the THA elections, speaking of this pop-up initiative for the Tobago House of Assembly elections, and it spoke about meeting with – they invited members of the media and political parties to sessions to highlight, to demonstrate this project, et cetera. So prior to the discontinuation of the project, the question we had was how much of this \$1 million increase was used for the discontinued pop-up initiative in the THA election. So the Minister was inaccurate to say that there was no such initiative.

Hon. Imbert: I am advised that the Member is completely wrong. There was no such thing in the THA election.

Ms. Haynes: What? Well, it is on the EBC's website.

Hon. Imbert: I am advised that that is not true.

Ms. Haynes: Okay. *[Laughter]* Your advice is very wrong.

Hon. Imbert: I am advised that what you are saying is incorrect. The EBC is right here and they are telling me what –

Madam Chairman: Barataria/San Juan – Minister of Finance. Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to go back to 02/001/01, Travelling and Subsistence for the Registration Pop-up Initiative. Can the Minister, through the EBC, indicate to us how many of these pop-up initiatives were done?

Hon. Imbert: Could I just get clarity on the Item, because it is kind of – the question is counterintuitive. Could I get clarity on the Item?

Madam Chairman: Page 7 of this explanation, and page 6 of the Schedule. Item 02, 001/01, Travelling and Subsistence.

Hon. Imbert: The reason why the question was counterintuitive, this is going forward to September 30, 2022. So one cannot ask a question how many has been done, or have been done, when this is to supplement them to September 30, 2022. So the question cannot be answered.

Mr. Hosein: So Minister, are you saying that there were no pop-up initiatives for the fiscal year?

Hon. Imbert: It is an ongoing programme.

Mr. Hosein: How many pop-up initiatives has the EBC undertaken so far?

Hon. Imbert: I am advised they will be coming into your constituency this weekend.

Mr. Hosein: I am aware. So I am asking how many before. How many before San Juan?

Hon. Imbert: Four. I answered. I gave him the answer.

Mr. Hosein: There were four. Which constituencies were those initiatives undertaken in?

Hon. Imbert: They are done according to the registration area which could encompass, and does encompass, a number of different constituencies.

Mr. Hosein: I am asking, those registration areas belong to various constituencies. Can you tell us which constituencies the exercises were undertaken in, the four constituencies?

Hon. Imbert: I answered you. I have said these are done in registration areas which would involve several constituencies.

Mr. Hosein: Which registration areas has the exercise been undertaken in so far?

Hon. Imbert: Arima, Piarco, San Fernando, Penal/Debe, Chaguanas, and we are now moving into – well, not we, because it is not me – the EBC is moving into San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Okay. So you did more than four then? And what is the criteria –

Hon. Imbert: I called four and I said we are moving into San Juan this weekend. That is the fifth one!

Mr. Hosein: What is the criteria? Minister, calm down please. What is the criteria –

Hon. Imbert: I must because you are giving bad information?

Mr. Hosein: Come down from there please. Come down from there. Come down from there please. Come down from there, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: Bad information as usual. Bogus information.

Mr. Hosein: Minister, come down.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Hosein: Come down. Let us get measured and let us answer the question.

Hon. Imbert: You are slighting the Parliament.

Mr. Hosein: It is a simple question. What is the criteria for the EBC selecting these registration areas for the pop-up initiative?

Hon. Imbert: As I indicated earlier, these initiatives are to deal with the backlog of appointments in various registration areas. The decision of the EBC, I am advised, to go into various areas, is based on the waiting time for appointments in the various areas. So the EBC is going into the areas where there is significant demand and a long waiting time. That is the policy they are using to select registration areas for the pop-up initiative.

Mr. Hosein: Madam Chair, I just want to move to another line Item, 03/001/04, Other Minor Equipment. The increase of \$2.3 million. Does this line Item include the cost for the rentals of cellphones in the recently concluded THA election for a pilot project to get real-time data out of polling stations?

Hon. Imbert: No.

Mr. Hosein: So—

Hon. Imbert: No, no means no, it does not mean yes. It means no.

Mr. Hosein: Let me ask you something now. This line Item, does it cover the cost of rental of cellphones for any other initiative by the EBC?

3.20 p.m.

Hon. Imbert: This is for cell phones given to returning officers and an upgrade of the telephone systems in the EBC.

Mr. Hosein: And are these for purchase or rental of the cell phones?

Hon. Imbert: I am not aware that you can rent a cell phone in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Hosein: Well, Minister, let me inform you.

Hon. Imbert: I am not finished speaking. I am not aware you can rent a cell phone in Trinidad and Tobago. This is for purchase of cell phones.

Mr. Hosein: Okay. Well, Minister, just for clarification, Madam Chair. The EBC did in fact indicate through public statement that they rented cell phones in the THA elections.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Indarsingh: He wants to be the Chairman of the PNM and the Chairman of the EBC.

Hon. Imbert: I am advised, Madam Chairman, that is the figment of the Member's imagination. It is simply not true.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Question put.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Can I have— [*Inaudible*] —my colleague.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I thank you, Madam. Sub-Item 22, Short-Term Employment, still under EBC.

Madam Chairman: Member. Members, we have a difficulty hearing with the mask. Some Members have softer voices, so let us cooperate. Member for Siparia, might I ask when you are speaking if you can borrow the mike also from Member for Naparima. That might help.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much, I will try. Short-Term Employment which Sub-Item 22 under the same head of the EBC. How many persons would be employed on a short-term basis to support that registration exercise and review of training prospects prior to local government elections?

Hon. Imbert: The EBC has advised that it is still in the process of finalizing the numbers and therefore the information is not available at this time.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, and I noticed an increase of \$7 million—if we do not know how many persons, how did we arrive at \$7 million increase for Short-Term Employment?

Hon. Imbert: By “vaps”. Madam Chairman, I take strong objection to the Member for Siparia using an answer to a previous question on a previous Item, and then transposing that answer into this.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: No, no, no.

Hon. Imbert: I did not say—

Hon. Member: Answer the question.

Hon. Imbert:—with respect to this matter, I did not say that the numbers were not available. I said it with respect to the previous matter, so please ask on this matter, without any embellishment.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: On Short-Term Employment, Sub-Item 22, how many persons will be employed on a short-term basis for this exercise? This man could jump all over the place.

Hon. Imbert: I heard that. The target they are looking at is 100.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: One hundred persons. So there are two activities being described

here, one is review aspects of training procedures, and I think the second one is support the registration of electors and review the training. Do we have an idea of how many for each activity, you said 100? So 100 people are going to be paid 7 million –

Hon. Imbert: One hundred in total, built up in batches of approximately 30.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Okay. If I understand you correctly because you say we are not hearing you, are you saying we are getting an increase of \$7 million to pay 100 people?

Hon. Imbert: I am told it is approximately 100 people engaged in field work. That is what I am told.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. And how would these people be recruited?

Hon. Imbert: The usual procedures.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Kindly tell us what that may be with respect to the specific Item?

Hon. Imbert: They would put out advertisements and that kind of thing.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: That is \$7 million, you know.

Hon. Imbert: They have compiled inventory of persons who have the experience, who have done this sort of work before. They have a pool and they would pull from the pool.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Minister. It is a pool, but will it be advertised or will we keep using the same ones that we always use? Because if we do not advertise we cannot open up the pool of persons who may have an opportunity to apply and get a job.

Hon. Imbert: It means that they do not normally advertise. There is quite a large pool of people from which they draw.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Can I just suggest, maybe we want to consider and give other people an opportunity too.

Hon. Imbert: Is that a question?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: No, it is a suggestion, with the greatest of respect.

Hon. Imbert: You make suggestions in this Committee?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: With the greatest of respect.

Hon. Imbert: I did not know that. Well, I am certain that the EBC will take your suggestion very seriously. I am sure they will take your suggestion seriously.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia, are you finished?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 08 supplemented by the sum of \$23,525,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Finance, thank you for the team from the

Elections and Boundaries Commission and the Chief Elections Officer.

Head 09: Tax Appeal Board, \$1,869,000.

Madam Chairman: I now invite the Attorney General to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you, Madam Chairman. It is my constitutional privilege once again to be the conduit for the Tax Appeal Board to the Legislature and therefore this standing committee. Madam Chairman, the Tax Appeal Board of Trinidad and Tobago is the superior court of records established by an Act of Parliament.

It exercises jurisdiction throughout the Republic as a superior court of record. It provides impartial adjudication and determines the procedure to be followed in a tax appeal, and issues practice directions from time to time. The Court consists of a chairman as well as normal members, full-time members appointed by the President of the Republic. Such members are appointed based on their knowledge of and experience in law, commerce, finance, industry, accountancy, taxation or the valuation of property. The Court deals with a wide variety of issues and appeal from various administrative bodies in respect of both direct tax, income, corporation, stamp duty, and indirect tax, VAT, as well as anti-dumping appeals and other related matters such as petroleum taxes and appeals pursuant to various piece of legislation such as the Financial Institutions Act and Tourism Development Act. Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 09 be supplemented by the sum of \$1,869,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Attorney General, in Sub-Item 08 Rent/Lease/Office Accommodation/Storage, your question \$1.6 million additional, is it because—is it new rental accommodation for this fiscal year or storage, or is it same rental accommodation?

Hon. Armour SC: It is the same rental accommodation but additional moneys that are required.

Mr. Lee: And was there any rent increase in this fiscal for those properties?

Hon. Armour SC: The original allocation received was for the period 2021 to 2022, which took us up to, well, took the Tax Appeal Board up to its payments to the 31st of December, 2021, and the additional funds which are being required will cover rent from January 2022 to September 2022.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Attorney General, but the question I am going to ask now, why when you were budgeting back in October, the entire allocation for fiscal 2022 was not made in the original budget allocation?

Hon. Armour SC: Request was made but the entire allocation was not approved.

Mr. Lee: Okay, thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 09 supplemented by the sum of \$1,869,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Attorney General. Thank you, Registrar of the Tax Appeal Board.

3.30 p.m.

Head 11: Registration, Recognition and Certification Board, \$2,152,300.

Madam Chairman: I now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: Certainly would be less than five minutes. The Registration, Recognition and Certification Board, its core function is to certify and register trade unions to determine bargaining units, to determine who should be the bargaining agent for workers in a particular organization, which trade union should be recognized as the bargaining agent and so forth.

Question proposed: That Head 11 be supplemented by the sum of \$2,152,300.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, to the Minister. Minister, with respect to 01/001/01, Salaries and Cost of Living. Has there been an increase in the complement of monthly paid staff at the Recognition Board?

Hon. Imbert: No.

Mr. Indarsingh: No. So why is this \$551,600 needed?

Hon. Imbert: Allocation was inadequate.

Mr. Indarsingh: The allocation was inadequate. All right. That is your under budgeting.

Madam Chairman: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Indarsingh: Yeah. Minister, with respect to 02/001/22 Short-Term Employment, could you advise how many short-term employees would be hired with this sum of money?

Hon. Imbert: At this point in time the number is 36 but it may increase during the fiscal.

Mr. Indarsingh: And by how much based on your projection, may?

Hon. Imbert: I cannot give you that information at this time. Right now I can tell you the number is 36.

Mr. Indarsingh: 36. Very well, Minister. With respect to 02/002/28 Other con—not— Oh, sorry I am making an error there; 02/001/28 Other Contracted Services. Could you advise this meeting what consultancy services would be provided through this sum of money?

Hon. Imbert: Now you are falling into the error that I fell into. Contracted Services, not consultancy services.

Mr. Indarsingh: Yeah.

Hon. Imbert: Could you rephrase your question, please. [*Laughs*]

Mr. Indarsingh: Certainly I will. What consultancy services?

Hon. Imbert: [*Laughs*]

Mr. Indarsingh: What contracted consultancy services?

Hon. Imbert: You are adding and embellishing, nobody said that.

Mr. Indarsingh: Read the documents.

Hon. Imbert: The contracted services are maintenance of the website and services for agency shop orders.

Mr. Indarsingh: Agency shop orders?

Hon. Imbert: You should know what that is, right?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes, I am very familiar, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: Well, okay.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much.

Hon. Imbert: Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 11 supplemented by the sum of \$2,152,300.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Finance, and thank you to the representatives from the Registration, Recognition and Certification Board.

Head 12: Public Service Appeal Board, \$1,005,400.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: Oh, I need to do that. All right, no problem. The Public Service Appeal Board is exactly what its name implies. It deals with appeals from the public officers within the public service.

Question proposed: That Head 12 be supplemented by the sum of \$1,005,400.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 12 supplemented by the sum of \$1,005,400.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Finance, and thank you to the representatives from the Public Service Appeal Board.

Head 13: Office of the Prime Minister, \$59,961,300.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Madam Chairman, the Office of the Prime Minister as persons know is the support, administrative support for all that the hon.

Prime Minister does. The current structure of the Office of the Prime Minister in addition to what the hon. Prime Minister does, his responsibilities, et cetera, he has appointed three Ministers in the Office of the Prime Minister. He has two Divisions: the Gender and Children Affairs Division along with National AIDS Coordination Committee which is Minister Webster-Roy and then the Communications Division which is Minister de Nobriga. I provide support for the Prime Minister out of the Office of the Prime Minister as he requires it and wherever he needs me to go. Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 13 be supplemented by the sum of \$59,961,300.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much. This is Head 13?

Madam Chairman: Head 13.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much, Ma'am. Thank you very much, Head 13, I am looking at 02/001, Sub-Item 23, with respect for an increase being asked for of 4.2, just over \$4.2 million with respect to facilitate payments of fees to Commissioners and legal counsellors with respect to the Commissioner of Enquiry about the Point Fortin Highway. My question is please, Madam, through you, what is the total sum of moneys paid to Commissioners and legal counsellors to date?

3.40 p.m.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. As far as I am aware, there has not been a payment to date.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much. Are there any fees outstanding to the commissioners and counsels? None paid but any outstanding?

Hon. Young: So, Madam Chair, what I am aware is that the fees were recently agreed to, the proposal for the fees, there was some negotiation that took place with respect to a reduction of fees that had been agreed, so I am not certain whether they have now put in their invoices for those fees.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. Who are the legal counsels appointed for this COE?

Hon. Young: At the time, it was the current Attorney General who of course has returned his brief, it is Fyard Hosein is the lead counsel, Vanessa Gopaul, Rishi Dass.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Is any money outstanding to the former legal counsel, Mr. Armour?

Hon. Young: As I said, the fees were recently negotiated and agreed so I am not certain whether they have put in their invoices. That applies to both the commissioners as well as counsels to the commission.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much, Minister. I do not know, on this Item. Okay, looking at the next Item, line Item 65, Expenses of Cabinet-appointed Bodies, we are seeking to supplement that Item by the sum of \$5 million to enable the National Security Council to meet salaries and expenses to September 30th this year. How many persons are to be paid with this additional \$5 million?

Hon. Young: Sorry. Madam Chair, Member for Siparia, you are referring to Sub-Item 65. Not so?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes, it says Expenses of Cabinet-appointed—

Hon. Young: It says \$5 million. So how did you reach to the National Security Council there?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: But that is what the explanatory note says—

Hon. Young: The note is saying that?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:—from the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Young: Sorry, just give me one second.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sure.

Hon. Young: We were provided something different here. Yes, so correct, it is to facilitate payment of salaries and for some of the operational expenses of the National Security Council Secretariat. What was the question for, Member for Siparia? Sorry.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I will put it in two parts now that you have the right page. An initial provision was for \$28.2 million and now the additional for supplementation is \$5 million. My questions are as follows. One, have any persons and if so, how many being paid out of that initial 28.2 million allocated and then how many persons are proposed to be paid from this additional 5 million?

Hon. Young: So the answer is yes because we do have a fully functioning National Security Council Secretariat. I believe the additional sums of money are for some gratuity payments that would have become due during that period of time.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: For what, I am sorry, Minister. For what payment?

Hon. Young: Gratuity.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Gratuity.

Hon. Young: As you know, with contract workers, as they come to the end of the contract, there are gratuity payments to be made as well as for the continued payment of their salaries to the end of the fiscal.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Minister, I appreciate your answer but within this document, whenever the moneys are being supplemented and therefore to be allocated, if it is for gratuity we were so advised, this one just says in this explanatory note for salaries and speaks not at all about gratuity. If I am to take your word, how much of it is for salaries and how much of it is for

gratuities?

Hon. Young: I think when they categorize it here as salaries, unfortunately, the salaries would have included that gratuity payment.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: It does not in the rest of the document by the way but can you disaggregate it please then to meet your explanation of salaries, gratuity?

Hon. Young: Yes, that can be looked at.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Okay. Thank you, moving along and still under this Head. The Gender Affairs Division, 002, and I will turn over to my colleague from Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Hon. Minister, in light of line Item 04/005/03 Contributions to Non-Profit Institutions.

Hon. Young: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Padarath: Yes, the question here, hon. Minister, is there is a breakdown of several children homes in terms of the contribution. Can you indicate whether any of the homes here listed are unlicensed?

Madam Chairman: We did not hear you.

Mr. Padarath: Unlicensed. Sorry. If any of those listed here are unlicensed.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Yes, some are unlicensed.

Mr. Padarath: Can the hon. Minister indicate which ones and the sums of money that these unlicensed homes would receive?

Hon. Webster-Roy: I could give you the number of homes that are currently unlicensed but to give you the names right now, I can give you the number.

Mr. Padarath: Sure. If you can share with us the names which are unlicensed.

Hon. Webster-Roy: So 16 are unlicensed and 23 homes are licensed.

Mr. Padarath: And you cannot share with us which ones by name?

Hon. Webster-Roy: I do not have it broken down by name right now.

Mr. Padarath: But the two listed here, hon. Minister, 04/005/05, St Dominic's Children Home.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Those, no. St Dominic's and St Jude's, they receive subvention. You mentioned before 003 which is Contributions to Non-Profit Children's Home right, that is the payment per child system.

Mr. Padarath: Okay.

Hon. Webster-Roy: So that will factor into those homes that are not the State's.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. Minister, line Item 04/007/03, the Children's Authority with a supplementation of \$22,397,000. On the last occasion we had the Standing Finance Committee, you indicated that there were several vacancies in the Children's Authority. On the last occasion,

you told us that what was being supplemented then was to fill these vacancies. Can you tell us how the \$22,397,000 will address the challenges at the Children's Authority?

Hon. Webster-Roy: So, okay. This 22,397,000 would go towards outstanding gratuity commitments, outstanding fees and expenses, outstanding payments of goods and services and other items required, financials required for the Children's Authority. At present, the Children's Authority, they currently have 270 staff on contract and 63 independent service providers and they intend to continue recruiting.

Mr. Padarath: Can you tell us how many vacancies there are?

Hon. Webster-Roy: I do not have the exact figure for the number of vacancies right now.

Mr. Padarath: Will you be able to give us the undertaking to share that before the debate on Monday?

Hon. Webster-Roy: I will try my best.

Madam Chairman: Can I in the meantime take the Member for Oropouche East? I had seen your hand earlier.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just again, a clarification. On the matter of 02/001/23, Minister, this might just be another typographical error that happens all the time. I am reading—to facilitate the payments of outstanding fees owed. You have corrected that I understand. That is not to facilitate the payment of outstanding fees owed but to facilitate payments of fees to come. Is that correct?

Hon. Young: Madam Chair, through you, is the Member referring to under Sub-Head 02 which I thought we left and then 02/001/23?

Madam Chairman: [*Inaudible*] —referring to fees.

Hon. Young: Yes, it is 23, Fees. And what is the question?

Dr. Moonilal: No, I am just asking you to indicate whether with the document we got to us has a typographical error. It says to facilitate the payments of outstanding fees owed to. And today you are just—

Hon. Young: I am not seeing the word "outstanding".

Dr. Moonilal: Oh, sorry.

Hon. Young: I am seeing to facilitate the payments of fees owed from fiscal 2021 and I explained what has happened.

Dr. Moonilal: I am on page 10, Sir.

Madam Chairman: No, no, no. Minister, at page 10, where we start Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister, those are the fees for commissioners and legal counsel.

Hon. Young: Okay, I am now seeing the document, I apologize. We are being handed a whole set

of different –

Dr. Moonilal: [*Inaudible*]

Hon. Young: Correct. So that, as I said, we have recently negotiated the fees with the commissioners and legal counsel. It should be “counsel”, not “counsels”. And I am not certain whether they have sent in their invoices but this is the sum of money that has been allocated towards the payment of those fees.

3.50 p.m.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, again, I do not want to stay forever on this. So the document we got is erroneous. It is not outstanding fees. Because they cannot have put outstanding fees if it is for fees to come. Correct?

Hon. Young: So as I said, and I am repeating, hopefully for the last time, I am not sure whether the commissioners and legal counsel have sent in their invoices as yet.

Dr. Moonilal: Okay. Are you sure whether or not –

Hon. Young: Yes, I see what you are seeing, that the document in front of us talks about outstanding fees, but I have provided you with the explanation as to what I know to be the facts.

Dr. Moonilal: To your knowledge, Minister, has this Commission of Enquiry begun, the commissioners are working, the legal counsels are working?

Mr. Young: My understanding is yes, they are working.

Dr. Moonilal: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes, Ma’am. We are still under the Office of the Prime Minister. I thank you very much. Under Sub-Item 22, Short-Term Employment, we are being asked to allocate a supplemental sum of \$500,000 to pay salaries employed on a short-term basis to September 30, 2022. My question is: What is the total number of persons employed on short-term employment under the division, which would be the same Gender Affairs Division?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: No, that is communications.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Under communications, yes. Sorry. Thank you. I am looking at Sub-Item 22, Minister, and I am asking this additional moneys to pay salaries to persons employed on short-term basis is my question. What is the total number of persons employed on short-term employment in the division?

Mr. de Nobriga: Member, I do not have those numbers in front of me right now. I can get that for you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: You can provide it in time for next week. Thank you. Secondly, how many short-term employees were hired in fiscal 2022?

Mr. de Nobriga: I will have to – [*Inaudible*] – those definite figures as well.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. Thirdly, what short-term positions were created in fiscal 2022?

Mr. de Nobriga: There were no short-term positions created.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: None was created. So what are the existing positions within this short-term positions and what is the designation for your division?

Mr. de Nobriga: I am sorry, you leaned back and I did not hear you clearly. My apologies.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What are the positions within your division, with respect to short-term employment?

Mr. de Nobriga: That this would cover, you mean?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes.

Mr. de Nobriga: So, what this will cover is multiple positions within both our Government Communications Department that would be Corp Comm Officers, BOA Is and IIs. It would also cover positions within our Information Division, positions such as producers, operators, that sort of – people who work in the photography department as well.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So, my question: Are these persons public officers or not?

Mr. de Nobriga: These are contracted officers. This would be contract officers.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Contracted.

Mr. de Nobriga: Short-term would be contract officers, not public officers.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you and how were they contracted? What process was used?

Mr. de Nobriga: No, this is future. This is not – this is to meet –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: This is projected.

Mr. de Nobriga: Yes.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So you were already given 1.3 million to pay short-term. So this additional 500,000 is for projected.

Mr. de Nobriga: Yes, additional till the end of the fiscal.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Did I ask already how many persons are projected?

Mr. de Nobriga: You did not. That would be determined. I do not have the number in front of me but that would have been determined by head of, the Director of Information, the Director of Corporate Commutation, based on of their requirements.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Then we would need to know to properly prepare for the debate. So if you can check with them. Because to arrive at the 500,000 you must have a projection. I want to hire five people. I want to hire 10 people. We do not just pull a cat out of a bag as they say. So I would be grateful if you will provide that information to pay these people their salaries. The

question is: How were they recruited; through advertisement, through handpicking, through sole selective? I think that is an important thing because you are saying this is going forward. These are not for people already in the division under short-term. So you project to hire some more. How many? What process please? And if you cannot do it now we will appreciate if we get the information. Thank you very much.

Moving along under the same Head, Madam, with your permission. Thank you very much. I am looking at Sub-Item 28, Other Contracted Services, an additional 300,000. And this is the cost to engage a Social Media Specialist for upskilling a team of officers with respect to the presentation of Government's vision and accomplishments. Questions, please Ma'am. Is there a person in mind who will be the Social Media Specialist in this division? Has such a person been contracted?

Mr. de Nobriga: That would be –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: To be done. What process will be used for recruitment?

Mr. de Nobriga: It would be open to the public. It would be a public –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Will there be an open advertising tendering process?

Mr. de Nobriga: Yes.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What would be the qualifications you think would be needed for this person as a Social Media Specialist?

Mr. de Nobriga: Again, Member, I would have to give you the – I do not have the JD in front of me but I can provide that.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What is the contract duration proposed to be?

Mr. de Nobriga: This would be for, Member, I believe to the end of the fiscal year.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Well, the person has not been contracted yet?

Hon. Young: Madam Chair, if I may assist here because this had come up recently. This is Item 28, right. To meet the cost of engaging a Social Media Specialist for upskilling the team of officers. So what was determined is that as we move into this world where social media is more and more relevant, the officers who are in post, there is an intention to engage someone to give them social media training and that is what this is. So as you see it is contracted services. It is going to contract persons to give that social media specialist upskilling to the existing officers.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Well, I think I did understand that but I was asking for some further details which the Minister has said he will try to provide.

Moving along, Promotions, Publicity and Printing, Sub--Item 62. We are being asked to approve an additional \$2.8 million for payment to electronic and print media for various ads with respect to the publication of Government's vision and accomplishments. I would be very pleased if you could tell us what is the vision or what are the accomplishments that you –

Hon. Young: I am sure you will see them in the newspapers as they are printed in accordance with this heading.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Okay. May I continue, please? Questions: What company did the division approach to make for various ads with respect to publications of your Government's accomplishments and vision.

Hon. Young: So, unlike what may have happened previously with approaching people like Ross Advertising, et cetera, what we will be doing is going directly to the print media and the television media and contracting directly with them. There is no need for middle man payments here.

4.00 p.m.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: But, but, but hold on please.

Hon. Young: But, but, but what is payment to the electronic and print media. It does not say payment to the middleman with an uplift for electronic and print media.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Then the further question is—the further question will be which electronic and which print and how much per media house?

Hon. Young: That would be determined by the specifics. As far as we are aware, there is like *Newsday*, *Express* not *Sunshine*.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Why not?

Hon. Young: The *Guardian* newspaper—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Why not?

Hon. Young:—TV6, TTT, CNC3, and the proper media, as it is said here, electronic and print media, not the *Voice* and those types of things.

Member: Yeah, not— Kick out PNM.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: May we have some order please. Member for Siparia, are you through?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: No Madam, thank you for the time. What was your method for selecting these media houses?

Hon. Young: They are established media houses,

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What is established?

Hon. Young: As I just said, is like the *Guardian*, the *Express*, the *Newsday*.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: But how do you define “established”?

Hon. Young: How do you define “established”?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: You said you used established media houses. What is your criteria that qualifies someone to be an established media house?

Hon. Young: Hmm, thank God we will figure that part out. [*Laughs*]

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: You would figure that out?

Hon. Young: No, the public servants will figure that out. We in the Government, know what an established house is. If you, as the Leader of the Opposition, have a difficulty with that, I can understand. I can begin to understand.

Ms. Ameen: No, no. Madam Chairman.

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: Okay, so let us have some order. Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: That is not good enough, Minister –

Hon. Young: Not for you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: –but that is your usual way. That is your usual way, you will not answer –

Hon. Young: It is not Ernie Ross.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: –and you would hide behind other things are distractions.

Madam Chairman: So, Member.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What was your method for selecting, you said established? I am asking him to kindly define what he means by “established”? Is Newsauce established?

Hon. Young: Is who? Kick out PNM?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Oh.

Hon. Young: Kick out PNM?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Newsauce?

Hon. Young: No.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia. Member of Siparia, can I invite somebody else at this stage? I will come back to you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: You are still on Item –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Let me just finish that one and then we can move on.

Madam Chairman: I will let you complete 62.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Why? Is it I am annoying somebody? Why are you asking me to give way to someone else?

Madam Chairman: No, the intervention is five minutes and you know I have a list of other people so, what we do is sort of rotate so everybody gets –

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So can I finish with this line Item?

Madam Chairman: Yes, you – that is what I say. You may finish 62.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: And then, yes.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: How long will the ads be placed on the electronic and print media? What period of time?

Hon. Young: As long as is needed, some ads may be one day, some ads may be two days. It really depends.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: No, no, not per ad, the period of time you propose for the ads to run.

Hon. Young: Well, this is from now till the end of the fiscal. The fiscal ends in September.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Has not yet started your vision and your accomplishments, ads.

Hon. Young: I suggest you read the newspapers and watch the television.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: No, no, no. You are being asked –

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Young: And you will see the Government's vision and the Government –

Madam Chairman: So, excuse me, excuse me. Minister, let us try and answer the questions in a way that it achieves the objective and the members of the public who are watching can also benefit, all right. Let us try and keep away from any sort of personal invectives. Okay?

Hon. Young: Niceness is something.

Madam Chairman: Member for St. Augustine,

Ms. Ameen: If you would allow me on Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, Item 005, where you have contributions under Sub-Items 03, 05 and 10. Madam Minister, through the Chair, given the findings of the recent report that only 18 out of 39 children's homes who are receiving funding from the Government are not registered – what percentage of the moneys being allocated here will go towards bringing these institutions up to a standard in order to meet the requirements to get registration?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Thank you, Madam Chair. So under 03, which is contribution to non-profit institutions, children homes, that is primarily – that is the payment per child system and that is where we use money towards the child direct need. So that is the food, clothing, shelter. A small portion of that goes towards assisting in paying for staff and some of the overheads at the facility. The other two, you mentioned St. Dominic's and St. Jude's that is 05 and 10, that is subvention towards those institutions to help them with psychosocial intervention as well as running of the institutions. So in terms of working out a percentage, I cannot work a percentage but I just explained what the money is used for.

Ms. Ameen: Well, any of the money go towards – even if you cannot say the percentage, will any money go towards bringing these homes up to standard to meet the requirements to become registered?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: For the saints, the St. Jude's and St. Dominic's?

Ms. Ameen: For many of them.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Yes – no, I have to explain. For the saints, because that is a subvention some of the money will go towards that. As I would have mentioned under the 003, which is a payment per child system, that is primarily towards the child's needs.

Ms. Ameen: Yes.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: What we did in the past is that we had a grant funding where homes could have applied for assistance, we are considering that again to help to bring them up.

Ms. Ameen: So the answer is none of this money will go towards the children's homes.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: This is primarily for the children's care.

Ms. Ameen: Can I ask, because of the way it is stated here, it is not your fault. It stated in bulk. Can you provide a breakdown for the money allocated here, in terms of what they it will be used for on the 03, 05 and 10?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: I could get the information for you but I am not sure if you will be able to get it for Monday.

Ms. Ameen: All right. Can you also provide that for Sub-Item 03 under 007 –

Mrs. Webster-Roy: That is Children's Authority?

Ms. Ameen: – Children's Authority.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: No problem.

Ms. Ameen: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Minister, going back on to line item 03 Children's Authority. Could you indicate what specific recommendations from the report will this 22,397,000 impact on?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Member for Princes Town, I would – as you are aware, there is a task force that was established to look at the recommendations and to – for us to have an implementation plan. So we would like to have the task force do its work. But outside of that, the Children's Authority would have already through their Board of Management started a restructure of the organizational processes so, that has started. But we are allowing –

Mr. Padarath: Since the coming into the report?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: That would have started just before the report. However, as I would have just mentioned, we are allowing the task force to do their work in terms of the recommendations and helping us develop that implementation plan. So this money is primarily to cover outstanding matters as I had laid out to you before.

Mr. Padarath: So Minister by your own comment just now you are pretty much admitting that the Children's Authority has been understaffed and under-resourced because you are saying that this is for arrears and having the Children's Authority operating that manner where they are constantly in arrears, no wonder they are in the position that they are in today. So pretty much is this an admission that once again, we see the understaffing and under resourcing of the Children's Authority.

With that Madam, I have one additional question, which is, does this cover or is there any intention by the Children's Authority through your office to have any alternative accommodation for children who are in these homes that are unlicensed, and have been identified in the report as havens for rape, abuse, and murder?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: What is the question if there is any?

Mr. Padarath: The question is whether or not there is any intention by the Children's Authority through your office to provide alternative accommodation, whether it is through this 22,397,000 or to come, whether or not there is any alternative accommodation that will be provided through the Children's Authority, through your office for children who are in these homes that have been identified in the report that need to be extracted from that situation? Because the Prime Minister was quoted as saying that they are not shutting down the homes, and while we are not saying to shut down the homes, what we are saying is to provide an alternative accommodation until the homes can become licensed. Is there any plan for this?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: So have we approximately 580 children currently in our homes, right. The philosophy of the Children's Authority and philosophy of this Government is not to put children in institutions. So one of the things that we are trying to improve is our kinship care, that is, identifying suitable family, improving the foster care system as well as adoption. So, it is not the ideal situation to have children placed in institutionalized homes, but to get them in loving, stable family settings. That is our philosophy. That is how we work.

Madam Chairman: Member for Moruga/Tableland.

Ms. Benjamin: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, to further what my colleague asked, I understand what the Minister said that it is not the ideal situation to have the children in homes. But I think for clarity what we are asking, these are victims that crimes will have already been

perpetrated on, would accommodation be made where they could get counselling and be taken out of the current situation?

4.10 p.m.

Hon. Young: First of all, if you have read the report, the report does not identify persons and individuals. So what has happened, on the receipt of the report or on the receipt of any report, not only the Justice Judith Jones' report, but on the receipt of any report of a child being in a position where he or she may be in danger, immediately, the responsible people in the Authority move in and deal with that situation to extract the child—if there are members of staff or any third party—to deal with those members of staff and third parties and remove them from the situation. So to try and create a narrative or paint a picture or even a suggestion that these children are being left there in harm's way, it is simply not so.

Ms. Benjamin: That is in the report.

Hon. Young: Where? Where it says that? What page? [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: Members, Members, we are not debating the report. Can we get on with this?

Ms. Benjamin: Item 09; Sub-Item 12. What assistance did the National AIDS Coordinating Committee provide to the Cyril Ross Home using the 500,000?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: That \$500,000 that is going towards the Cyril Ross Home is to improve programming of psychosocial intervention for the residence as well as to pay support staff up to September 2022.

Ms. Benjamin: Thank you. Madam Chair, if you will allow me to go back to Item 002; Sub-Item 16. There is a significant increase in the allocation being asked for, \$2.5 million and I would like some clarity as to what is the total number of persons employed on contract at the division, and also how many contract employees were hired for this fiscal year 2022.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: I will get the numbers and send it to you.

Ms. Benjamin: Also Minister, if you could also, with regard to if there were any new positions created since we will get the information?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Well, we intend to create a new position and that is a male Programmes Coordinator.

Ms. Benjamin: Okay.

Dr. Ragbir: Thank you, Madam Chair. Question asked and answered.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, under line Item Transfer to State Enterprises, Sub-Item 09: UDeCOTT interest payment on a \$500 million loan. Could you just refresh our memory what that loan is about firstly, the 500 million?

Hon. Young: That is a UDeCOTT government guaranteed loan for 500 million at an interest rate

at 3.78 per cent. It is a seven-year loan taken out in August 2021.

Mr. Lee: And what was the project for that the loan was for?

Hon. Young: UDeCOTT, as you know, falls under the Office of the Prime Minister. UDeCOTT have ongoing projects on that they are managing as well as in charge of. So, it was towards those projects, meaning, it is not for a specific project. It is UDeCOTT's cost, et cetera, for maintaining properties et cetera, et cetera, Government Campus and these types of things.

Mr. Lee: Okay. So, could you give us a breakdown? If you do not have it now, you could –

Hon. Young: A breakdown of?

Mr. Lee: What is the make-up of the 500 million loan?

Hon. Young: It is just a loan for \$500 million for UDeCOTT for UDeCOTT to do its business.

Mr. Lee: Okay. Minister, the interest payment on that loan is paid annually or it is paid quarterly?

Hon. Young: It is – just give me one second. Let me see what they say here. Monthly payments.

Mr. Lee: Monthly payments? Okay. The original budgeted amount was 11 million, Minister, and now you are asking for 5.2 additional, and the question I am asking is: Why the total allocation for the budgeted year for 2022 was not taken into account in the original budget in October?

Hon. Young: So, in putting together the budget, the Budgets Division will know what they are doing and the Budgets Division have provided for these interest payments at this period of time in the mid-year review. I cannot answer why it is that they did not provide for it in the original.

Mr. Lee: Okay. So, I am assuming that UDeCOTT, through the OPM, would have put in the original amount, because the loan is – total interest is 60 million. It is just the allocation that was given from the Ministry of Finance was approximately 11 million, that is why you are now asking for a supplemental Vote for \$500 million.

Hon. Young: Correct, for \$500 million.

Mr. Lee: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West. Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just want to go back to line Item 02/001/23, Fees. Minister, just for clarification, the two commissioners on the Commission of Enquiry, is it that they have a fixed remuneration package?

Hon. Young: No.

Mr. Hosein: So, then how is the Government billed? Through work done by invoices?

Hon. Young: The way it is, is they have projected how the Commission of Enquiry will go. So, for example, a start-up of investigatory work, then procedural hearings, then public hearings, then production of a report, et cetera, and what has been done is negotiate with them fees for every

step of the way and for the hearings to cap the number of – cap the amount of fees that can be incurred, et cetera.

Mr. Hosein: What is the cap, Minister?

Hon. Young: I cannot remember that.

Mr. Hosein: Can you undertake to give us that information?

Hon. Young: I undertake to give consideration, yes.

Mr. Hosein: And Minister, I just want to take you to 02/001/65, Expenses of Cabinet Appointed Bodies. You earlier on said that the additional \$5 million is required for the payment of gratuity for contract officers.

Hon. Young: I said that is part of it. As you would see in the explanation – I am trying to find it here. Right. It is to meet salaries and operational expenses.

Mr. Hosein: Do you have a breakdown of those expenses in which this particular National Security Council Secretariat would have incurred? Because it is a very high figure –

Hon. Young: That is not a very high figure, no.

Mr. Hosein: – of \$5 million for the National Security Council?

Hon. Young: I recall in the period pre-2015, the rental of helicopters being done –

Mr. Hosein: Minister –

Hon. Young: – by the same National Security Council without going to Cabinet –

Mr. Hosein: Minister, Minister –

Hon. Young: – and that was hundreds of millions of dollars –

Mr. Hosein: Minister, there is always a ruling in this House –

Hon. Young: – hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr. Hosein: – that we cannot go back to previous fiscal years.

Hon. Young: So I do not think that \$5 million is a lot.

Mr. Hosein: Madam Chair, can we have a ruling whether the Minister could go back to previous fiscal years?

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East. **Dr. Moonilal:** Thank you very much. Minister, on this matter on page 12; 04/11/09, UDeCOTT. Could you indicate the name of the financial institution that provided the loan facility?

Hon. Young: Ansa Merchant Bank.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you. Could you indicate now or undertake to provide the details of the projects and/or use of the \$500 million loan facility that UDeCOTT would have indicated to the financial institution?

Hon. Young: No. As I said, this is a loan that was taken out. It is a government guaranteed loan

for UDeCOTT. UDeCOTT has expenses that are being incurred on a daily basis as they manage many projects. Some of the projects they are carrying the cost for. So it was just to go into UDeCOTT's expenditure stream for them to continue doing what they are doing. So, it was not an identification of an exact project or projects and stuff like that.

Dr. Moonilal: Could you undertake to provide some detail as to what specifically the \$500 million, half a billion dollars would be used for?

Hon. Young: For UDeCOTT to pay the expenses that they have during the projected period. Yes, we can give consideration and we will look at it to see if UDeCOTT can provide that breakdown.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sub-Item 09. The Minister has indicated, was it Ansa Merchant Bank as being the persons providing the loan. Was there any agency who brokered that loan? Agency?

Mr. Imbert: No.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: No. No FCB?

Mr. Imbert: No.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: NCB Global.

Mr. Imbert: No. No, no, no.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Just no. Thank you.

Mr. Imbert: No, no and no.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Oh, please. Just answer. Thank you.

Mr. Imbert: Three noes.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia, are you finished? You are finished?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes, Ma'am. Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Item 02/003. Sorry. Yes, 02/003/62, Promotions, Publicity and Printing, 2.8 million: To facilitate payment to electronic and print media for various advertisements with respect to the publication of Government's vision and accomplishments.

I heard the Minister in his response indicating that he would take out the middleman i.e., the advertising agency, and go directly to the media. Is the Minister aware that it is that the advertising agencies get lower rates than if someone were to go directly to the media? And they are listening and they are aware of that procedure which exists in England and in Trinidad and Tobago.

4.20 p.m.

Hon. Young: That may be so in your time. This Government has negotiated with the media houses for lower fees because of the amount of work that the Government can potentially offer.

So as I say, we took a decision to cut out the middleman, like the Ernie Rosses, the Ross Advertising, and those types of firms because from what we saw – and it is a public record, there was huge escalation so they were not cheaper.

Mr. Charles: Would you give an undertaking to examine both avenues to ensure that the Government gets value for money, and that is all I am asking?

Hon. Young: I can give an undertaking now that this Government is always concerned about value for money for taxpayers.

Madam Chairman: And the second question is, when you talked about the “preferred media” –

Hon. Young: I did not say “preferred media”, I said “established media”.

Mr. Charles: Established media.

Hon. Young: Preferred is a term that you all would use –

Mr. Charles: So when –

Hon. Young: – preferred contractors –

Mr. Charles: Come on.

Hon. Young: – and preferred this, preferred that. I said “established”.

Ms. Ameen: Madam Chairman, is this allowed –

Mr. Charles: Madam Chairman, that is annoying and disgusting.

Hon. Young: As are you.

Mr. Charles: I consider myself –

Ms. Ameen: [*Inaudible*] – unbecoming of a Minister.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: You could get away with that with Quest, not with me. So the question is, for established media would you include media houses like Synergy, like Jaagriti and radio stations like the Radio Tambrin in Tobago to broaden the reservoir of that –

Hon. Young: That would be determined by the Communications Division as to where they think these things should be best placed.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members – oh, I am sorry, Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Madam Chair, just one last question on the Children’s Authority, 03. The hon. Minister spoke about children who have been extracted from these homes that are listed in the children’s report, can the hon. Minister say, since receiving the report in December of 2021, how many children have been extracted from children’s homes who have been placed at risk?

Madam Chairman: Member – Minister – Member, as I said, we are not debating the report? Okay? We are dealing with the allocation. I am sure your question is an important question and I am sure you have other avenues to ask it other than this Standing Finance Committee where that

is not an issue for what we have before us. Okay?

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Ma'am, but the hon. Minister raised the issue so that I was just asking for clarification since the Minister raised it.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 13 supplemented by the sum of \$59,961,300.

Madam Chairman: I thank the Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister. I thank the Minister of—the two Ministers. I thank the PS and your team.

Head 15: Tobago House of Assembly, \$60,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. [*Crosstalk*] We are at page 13, Head 15.

Hon. Imbert: The Tobago House of Assembly is responsible under the Tobago House of Assembly Act for certain matters relating to the administration in Tobago.

Question proposed: That Head 15 be supplemented by the sum of \$60,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. In the interest of transparency, could the Minister inform this meeting what does this debt of \$27,800,000 to the National Helicopter Services Limited entail?

Hon. Imbert: These are arrears owed to National Helicopter Services over the last two years.

Mr. Indarsingh: Arrears for, Minister?

Hon. Imbert: Arrears for transport of patients from the Scarborough General Hospital to various institutions in Trinidad.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay.

Hon. Imbert: When services are not available in Tobago, when certain tertiary health services and other specialized services, other forms of acute care are not available in Tobago, there is an airlift to Trinidad and they use the National Helicopter Services Limited to airlift the person to the relevant medical institution in Trinidad.

Mr. Indarsingh: And how many patients have been airlifted for this period?

Hon. Imbert: The helicopter made an average of 10 trips monthly in 2020 and five trips monthly in 2021. I cannot give you precise figures on the total number of patients airlifted but this is the information I have; 10 trips a month in 2020; five trips a month in 2021.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much. With respect to, Minister—with respect to this \$19 million that is owed to T&TEC between 20—I noted it is between 2017 to 2021, so that is really during the PNM's tenure as it relates to the THA, could you advise if this is the current outstanding debt?

Hon. Imbert: For what?

Mr. Indarsingh: Is this \$19 million the current debt that will be fully settled?

Hon. Imbert: But to who? This Item, if you look at it very carefully, this Item speaks to both T&TEC and gratuities. What are you talking about?

Mr. Indarsingh: No. No. No. No. No. No. No. You see, you are not listening. [*Crosstalk*] You are not listening, Minister.

Madam Chairman: Nineteen million dollars was—

Mr. Indarsingh: Nineteen million dollars I am pointing you to.

Dr. Moonilal: Put on your glasses.

Hon. Imbert: Are you all finished? You are referring to the amount owed to T&TEC?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes. Certainly.

Hon. Imbert: And what you are asking?

Mr. Indarsingh: Is this sum of \$19 million, will it settle all outstanding debts to T&TEC?

Hon. Imbert: T&TEC is owed \$13,137,510.74 and therefore it should be enough.

Mr. Indarsingh: Mr. Minister, are you in a position to inform this meeting why or have you enquired why the THA failed to honour its payments to T&TEC during this period?

Hon. Imbert: What I can tell is that we have decided to make the supplementary allocation to the THA for them to pay arrears to T&TEC. This is the purpose of this supplementary appropriation. I can tell you that.

Mr. Indarsingh: But taking into consideration that you are the Minister of Finance and you have oversight over the disbursement of funds and public utilities and so on, it leaves me to wonder about your overall responsibility, but coming back to this issue of the \$13,200,000 as it relates to gratuity owed to persons, would you be so kind to inform this meeting, how many persons will receive their gratuity benefits from this \$13.2 million supplementation?

4.30 p.m.

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I see the Member opposite is extemporized, but the fact of the matter is that when we give the THA its allocation, it is given in a block. The Minister of Finance does not have the level of oversight over expenditure by the THA that the hon. Member thinks the Minister has. That is not how it works. The money is sent in a bloc, and the THA is permitted to move money around without the permission of the Minister of Finance. I just want to correct that misinformation you put in the system just now, that the Minister of Finance has the power to interfere with expenditure by the THA.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I deliberately pointed the Minister in the direction of not the question of moving around money within the THA, but the question of

oversight in terms of having that responsibility for all moneys under the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Imbert: Now, Madam Chairman, I want to make it crystal clear that that information is incorrect. That would be in breach in the Tobago House of Assembly Act. The Tobago House of Assembly gets its money en bloc, and it works within the Exchequer and Audit Act, and it is entitled to move money around. With respect to gratuities, the number of persons earmarked to be paid gratuities is 400.

Dr. Moonilal: The Chairman of the PNM— [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Minister. I am sure that as the Minister of Finance you would be very concerned about whether the THA's accounts were indeed, audited under your tenure as the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: That is a matter for the Auditor General.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, if I can ask the Minister with regard—I just want to go back to the NHSL expenditure, arrears for 27,800. I know the Minister indicated the average number of patients per month that were transferred from the—

Madam Chairman: No, the response of the Minister was the average number of trips.

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you, Madam. So I can ask if the Minister can undertake, perhaps not now but in writing, to give a breakdown for the actual number of trips for the period under review here, 2020/2021.

Hon. Imbert: I believe that question was asked and answered. I said I do not have the information on the actual numbers. The information I have is on the average number of trips per month. If you wish me to get the actual number of people transported on the helicopter for Monday, I will try my best.

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you, Minister.

Madam Chairman: Finished, Member for Fyzabad? You are finished?

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Hon. Minister, line Item 06. With respect to the same point of T&TEC, would the Minister agree that these massive debts that Government has to T&TEC contribute in a big part to the fact that this company, T&TEC, is in the red.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Imbert: No. [*Laughs*]

Question put and agreed to.

Head 15 supplemented by the sum of \$60,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you, Minister of Finance, and I thank you for the team from the Tobago House of Assembly.

Head 16: Central Administrative Services Tobago, \$2,648,400.

Madam Chairman: I now invite the Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Central Administrative Services Tobago plays a critical role in Tobago in ensuring that the service of the Office of the Prime Minister are delivered on the island, and is responsible for supporting all central government agencies in Tobago. Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 16 be supplemented by the sum of \$2,648,400.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam. I am looking at 007, 40: Gratuities to Contract Officers. Can the Minister advise the number of persons who would benefit from this additional funding for gratuities?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Chair, through you, 12 persons in all.

Mr. Tancoo: Ma'am, could you also advise, I notice that these would be gratuities for the period 2014 to 2021. Can you advise why we have persons waiting for this extended period of time for their gratuity after retirement?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Madam Chair, we pay gratuities according to how we receive the funding to do so. Thank you.

Mr. Tancoo: Can you repeat please?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Sorry, you did not hear me.

Mr. Tancoo: No, Ma'am.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Sorry, I do apologize. I said we pay gratuities according to how we receive funds to do so.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Tabaquite.

Ms. Haynes: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I am on Sub-Head 02, Sub-Item 08: Rent, Lease, Office Accommodation. We see a net increase of 2.3 million thereabout. Could the Minister provide a breakdown of the properties rented, as well as the monthly rental payment to each and the length of time being paid up until September 30th.

Hon. Webster-Roy: That figure accounts for our general administrative building, the landlord – you want all the information?

Ms. Haynes: If it is possible.

Hon. Webster-Roy: The landlord is Radica Bissessar. The amount is 300,000 plus VAT, and the contract—and we are on a month to month arrangement at the moment. Sorry, you had also asked how long we have been renting that facility?

Ms. Haynes: [*Inaudible*] – and has been paid up until September 30, 2022.

Hon. Webster-Roy: This building has been from 2015.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 16 supplemented by the sum of \$2,648,400.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister, and I thank the team from the Central Administrative Services Tobago.

Head 17: Personnel Department, \$9,728,000.

Madam Chairman: I now invite the Minister of Public Administration to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. West: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Personnel Department is responsible for determining and advising on pay and terms and conditions of employment for employees in the public service, estimated to be around 90,000 workers. The Department determines through consultation and negotiations with appropriate recognized majority unions and associations, the terms and conditions of service for persons in the civil service, statutory authorities, subject to the Statutory Authorities Act, the teaching service, the police service, the fire service and the prison service.

The Department is also responsible for the determination of terms and condition of employment of members of the defence force, daily-rated workers, contract employees and the provision of secretariat services and advising the Salaries Review Commission on the terms and conditions of employment of officeholders within its purview, as well as providing secretariat services to the Human Resource Advisory Committee, a subcommittee of Cabinet, for which the Department provides recommendations and advice to treat with organizations in the state sector.

4.40 p.m.

The Department is also required to advise in a wide-range of HR issues in the public service including matters related to industrial relations. These include matters before the Industrial Court, grievances and disputes. Currently, the Department is engaged in three job evaluation exercises. The leadership of the departments with the implementation of the Strategic Planning Framework 2022 continues to strengthen the organization to improve the timeliness and quality of service delivery to all stakeholders. Critical to the success of the ongoing work and

improvements being effected to the Department is the issue of financial resources. This current request for additional expenditure originated from the shortfall of the 2021 to 2022 fiscal allocations. The expenditure is required to meet Personnel Expenditure, rental payments, payments for contracted services and the purchase of minor equipment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Question proposed: That Head 17 be supplemented by the sum of \$9,728,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, I just want to go to Sub-Item 16, Contract Employment and 28 together, Other Contracted Services, because the notation provided by the Minister of Finance refers to the Salaries Review Commission Consultancy Services for a review of officers under their purview. Could you, for this Committee, could you give us some clarity and what is the status of that project? I am assuming it is reviewing salaries of all positions and officers under the Salaries Review Commission?

Hon. West: That exercise is slightly behind the deadline that was originally set, but it is close to completion. The job evaluation is complete, the general review is still ongoing.

Mr. Lee: Do you have a—Minister, follow up, do you have a timeline when this project will be completed and what will be the additional cost?

Hon. West: By the end of the fiscal, the general review should be completed.

Mr. Lee: I did not hear you.

Hon. West: By the end of this fiscal.

Mr. Lee: By the end of this fiscal the project would be completed?

Hon. West: The exercise will be completed. The exercise undertaken by the CPO's office will be completed by the end of this fiscal.

Mr. Lee: And then that report goes to Cabinet, I assume. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Minister, in your opening remarks you indicated that your Ministry was currently engaged in three job evaluation exercises, in terms of Other Contracted Services, does it mean during this fiscal you would need additional moneys and so on for any of the other job evaluation exercises?

Hon. West: All the funds required to the end of this fiscal have been requested in this supplemental, and it is being accommodated by the amount that is before this honourable House.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much. Additionally, would you be at liberty to provide a status as it relates to the other job evaluation exercises which are currently in progress?

Hon. West: The one for the public service was due to be completed by the end of June of this

year. At the moment it is lagging behind by a month or two, so I am hoping by the end of this fiscal that would be completed as well. The last one is about to start in August, it has not yet started.

Mr. Indarsingh: And the last one will focus on which area?

Hon. West: Prison service.

Mr. Indarsingh: The prison.

Hon. West: Correct.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, I am looking at Sub-Head 02, Sub-Item 08, the Rent/Lease/Office Accommodation/Storage. Are these new premises that are being leased or is it an existing lease arrangement?

Hon. West: All existing lease arrangements.

Mr. Rambally: And hon. Minister, how is it that we were not able to budget this sum before in the last allocation?

Hon. West: The Department would have requested the full allocation, would not have received it and so it is seeking the supplementation at this time.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima. Naparima and then Couva South.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam. A follow up question on the same Item, Rent/Lease/Accommodation/Storage. You indicated it was an existing property that was –

Hon. West: Properties, it is more than one.

Mr. Charles: Does your Ministry handle the rental, these rentals and negotiate these figures, or is it handled externally?

Hon. West: Most of the Government property rentals are negotiated and handled by the Property and Real Estate Division of the Ministry of Public Administration.

Mr. Charles: So, are you aware, from your position, maybe the Minister of Finance – is there somebody, some unit that is reviewing all these rents to see whether there could be lease/rental options or purchasing property so that we have a sense that we are getting value for money in these areas?

Hon. West: All of that is handled.

Mr. Charles: It is coming up every time and it seems to be just a repeat. You know, we paid that last year, we continue and whatnot, and I am not getting the sense of any reduction, any negotiation, or anything.

Hon. West: Okay, so all of that is handled by the aforementioned Property and Real Estate

Services Division. You will appreciate that when we enter into a lease agreement it is for a period. So renegotiations will generally have to be deferred until the end of the current lease arrangements. But we are looking at, and we continue to look at renegotiations, reducing costs, whether – what kind of mix of rental and ownership we should have.

Mr. Charles: Right. So you are saying then, and I am happy to hear that there are clauses for renegotiations even during the lease if property values drop, for example.

Hon. West: I did not say that.

Mr. Charles: Okay.

Hon. West: I said that in the majority of cases, if not all, renegotiations will have to wait until the lease term expires, because we enter into a lease agreement for a period.

Mr. Charles: Right.

Hon. West: But to the extent that we can make adjustments, we do.

Madam Chairman: Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, if I can take the Minister to page 14 under the Development Programme, 09/005/068/043 Development of the Human Resource Capacity of the Personnel Department for the expenditure of \$500,000. And two questions, how many senior managers are expected to benefit from this programme, Minister? And secondly, who will be the provider for this programme? Has a provider been identified, and if so, who?

Hon. West: In terms of the first question, we are looking at five directors and two deputy chief personnel officers. The intention being to ensure that we have succession planning options in place. With respect to the service provider, I am not sure we have determined that yet. Cipriani Labour College and the University of the West Indies.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. My colleague from Fyzabad asked one, but with respect to the review of the Public Service Employee Assistance Programme, Minister, in recent times we have been hearing about the mental health of workers throughout Trinidad and Tobago, and you have alluded to that under your purview approximately 90,000 persons are in the public service. Do you feel that \$500,000 really is sufficient in the context of a proper employee assistance programme dealing with the mental health issue in the workplace?

Hon. West: The 500,000 included in this supplemental appropriation is not to pay for EAP services. It is to assess the programme so that we can determine what we need going forward.

4.50 p.m.

Mr. Indarsingh: And when will this assessment, as you rightfully said a minute ago, be completed?

Hon. West: We are hoping to have it completed by the end of August.

Mr. Indarsingh: And you have had the concurrence and involvement of the recognized majority unions as it relates to this assessment in relation to the EAP programme?

Hon. West: At this point in time, no, we have not. This is a management responsibility so the management is doing the assessment and as it becomes appropriate to reach out to the recognized trade unions we will do so.

Mr. Indarsingh: Based on my experience, I will offer advice in terms of building a sense of involvement with the trade unions in the context of –

Hon. West: The CPO works with the trade unions all the time.

Mr. Indarsingh: – mental health issue.

Madam Chairman: Member for Moruga/Tableland.

Ms. Benjamin: Asked and answered, Madam Chair. Just wanted to know when the report was due and the Minister said August.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Item 09/005/06/002, Customization and Outfitting of New Office Building at No. 3 Alexandra Street, St. Clair, for a sum of \$500,000. And the explanation is outfitting and furnishing of the sixth floor, the new office located at No. 3 Alexandra Place. Is this – could the Minister indicate how many floors remain in that building to be outfitted or if this is the final?

Hon. West: This is the last one.

Mr. Charles: This is the last. Could you give us an idea of the square footage involved?

Hon. West: The square footage for the building?

Mr. Charles: Approximately. Yes. No, square footage of the floor, of the sixth floor.

Hon. West: Well, the building is 40,000 square feet so I am assuming, we can estimate one-sixth of that which would be a little over 600,000 square feet.

Mr. Charles: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodo: Thank you, Madam. Asked and answered, thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam. Hon. Minister, I note on Sub-Item 007 Households, Item 40, Gratuities to Contract Officers, that you are requesting a \$2.4 million allocation for payment of gratuities. I see no allocation was initially provided during the budget. Is there a reason for that? Were no funds requested during that period or funds simply not provided?

Hon. West: We would have requested what we estimated was required at that time. Since then computations of the outstanding amounts would have been referred to both the treasury and the

Board of Inland Revenue. We would have gotten feedback so we are now clear on what is due and the Minister of Finance is now seeking to allocate the amount that we need.

Mr. Tancoo: Understood, Ma'am, but you would have estimated that some people would have resigned, retired – contracts.

Hon. West: And as I indicated, we did request the funds but we did not get what we needed so which is why we put in a further request at this time.

Mr. Tancoo: So would this value fulfil all your requirements for gratuity payments?

Hon. West: This is what is estimated, yes, between now and the end of the fiscal.

Mr. Tancoo: Can you then advise me, advise the House of the number of persons that would benefit from this?

Hon. West: Approximately 75 persons.

Mr. Tancoo: Seventy-five. Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I just want to go back line Item 09/005/06F to 002, Customization, Outfitting of New Office Building at No. 3 Alexandra Street, St. Clair, in the sum of \$500,000. Minister, can you just confirm this \$500,000 is to be spent for the outfitting of one floor?

Hon. West: It is. No, there are three items that are to be covered. It is the CCTV cameras, installation, access control and the outfitting of the sixth floor.

Mr. Hosein: Can you just give us a breakdown of what works are to be completed in terms of the outfitting and furnishing of this floor?

Hon. West: That is not currently available.

Mr. Hosein: Can you then tell us what will be the cost alone for the outfitting of the floor? Because you are saying that –

Hon. West: I do not have that breakdown with me.

Mr. Hosein: You do not have that breakdown?

Hon. West: I have one global as well as the work to be done in respect to the building.

Mr. Hosein: And what about the cameras that you mentioned. Who is the provider of these cameras?

Hon. West: That procurement is still to be done. We will need to be able to confirm availability of funds before we can go to tender. So this will determine that.

Mr. Hosein: Is there an estimate on which the Personnel Department has for the expenditure of those CCTV cameras?

Hon. West: Repeat, sorry.

Mr. Hosein: Is there an estimate in terms of what the cameras —

Hon. West: I suspect they have a rough estimate. I do not have it with me and in the absence of a procurement process it is difficult to say with any certainty how much it will cost.

Mr. Hosein: Minister, can you — previously you had advised us that the outfitting of this building would have cost the taxpayers \$20,000 million. Can you indicate how much of that has been, if that total amount has been spent? And this is additional to this; this \$500,000 is in addition to that \$20 million?

Hon. West: I do not have that information with me, but the last time I checked we were still within the estimating expenditure spreading it over a few years. And as I indicated this should be the last of those years. But I can report at year end what the position is with respect to that.

Mr. Hosein: And is there one specific provider for the outfitting and furnishing?

Hon. West: No, there is not.

Mr. Hosein: Can you in writing provide us with the list of persons who have on the outfitting and furnishing of this building?

Hon. West: We should be able to do that.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 17 supplemented by the sum of \$9,728,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you to the Minister of Public Administration and the Chief Personnel Officer and his team. Hon. Members, I propose that we suspend now. We return at 5.15 p.m.

Member: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: 5.15 p.m.

4.56 p.m.: *Standing Finance Committee suspended.*

5.15 p.m.: *Standing Finance Committee resumed.*

Head 18: Ministry of Finance, \$225,996,500.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: The Ministry of Finance is a world-class organization—

Members: [*Laughter and desk thumping*]

Hon. Imbert:—that implements balanced macro-economic fiscal policies and initiatives, facilitates the expansion and diversification of the economy, ensures fiscal sustainability—

Member: World peace.

Hon. Imbert:—and is responsible to the global environment. You were almost right. [*Laughs*] The mandate includes facilitation of revenue collection, revenue management, budget planning,

formulation and promotion of national fiscal and economic policies, border control, debt management and management of the state enterprise sector.

Question proposed: That Head 18 be supplemented by the sum of \$225,966,500.

Madam Chairman: Member for Mayaro.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Hon. Minister, if I can draw your attention to Item 011 under Transfers to State Enterprises, Item 96 Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited. There is a \$100 million appropriated to facilitate the initial capitalization of this new company called Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited. Hon. Minister, can you tell us when was this company incorporated and who are the current members that make up that board if it has been done as yet?

Hon. Imbert: The board has not yet been appointed.

Mr. Paray: When was the company incorporated?

Hon. Imbert: It will be shortly.

Mr. Paray: Okay, so it is not an actual entity at this time. Hon. Minister, which line Ministry will this company report to?

Hon. Imbert: The assignment of portfolios is a matter for the Prime Minister.

Mr. Paray: Okay, so it has not been assigned as yet. Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: I did not say that. I said that is a matter for the Prime Minister.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Minister. Item No. 3, Minister, the Rural Development Company, RDC, P.U.R.E and the regional corporations, they all have responsibility for secondary roads. What in your view is the rationale for the creation of this new vehicle to look after secondary roads in Trinidad and Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: To rehabilitate and improve secondary roads.

Mr. Paray: So this is in addition to the state agencies that are already mandated?

Hon. Imbert: It is to rehabilitate and improve secondary roads.

Mr. Paray: With regard to the \$100 million that has been allocated for capitalization, is this \$100 million to cover both the set up and operations plus project spend as well for a fiscal year?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Minister.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister, can you indicate how roads would be selected to be considered under this entity?

Hon. Imbert: Rationally.

Mr. Tancoo: What is the process that would be used for the selection of roads to be undertaken

by this entity?

Hon. Imbert: A number of different factors.

Mr. Tancoo: You must be joking, Minister. What are the factors, Minister, not a number of factors. That is not a response.

Hon. Imbert: Well, it is more than one so it is a number.

Mr. Tancoo: And what are they, Sir?

Hon. Imbert: Well, for those of us who have had some responsibility for roads, the factors involved in the selection process in determining what level of priority one would give to road rehabilitation and improvement would include the traffic density, the condition of the road, the importance of the road as a connector road. Those are the three most important factors: traffic, condition and the importance of the road as a connector road.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: In addition to population density which would be a secondary factor.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister. And how is this Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited to interact with the requirements of the Ministry of Local Government, well local government entities and P.U.R.E are also responsible for repairs of roads?

Hon. Imbert: This company, as I indicated, its name says it all. It is to rehabilitate and improve secondary roads. That is it.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Tancoo: Can you advise, Minister, if there is any intention to commence road repairs during this fiscal?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you. One further question with regard to this heading. Can the Minister indicate what percentage or what value of this \$100 million being requested will be used towards the actual road repair and rehabilitation?

Hon. Imbert: That is a very odd question. The Member for Mayaro just asked whether this would be for setting up the company and its operations. It is almost impossible to give you that kind of information at this time.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister, you have just indicated that road repair will be undertaken during this fiscal by this company.

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Tancoo: I am asking for a percentage or a value of estimate.

Hon. Imbert: I am telling you it is almost impossible to give you that information at the time.

Mr. Tancoo: So, Minister, you have no basis for determining how this \$100 million was determined. It is just a bulk figure.

Hon. Imbert: That will be determined by the company.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: You are welcome.

Mr. Tancoo: I go to Item 009, Other Transfers, Infrastructure Development Fund. I note that \$92 million is to be used to pay VAT and other costs with regard to the construction of the Phoenix Park Industrial Estate. Can the Minister indicate how much of this allocation is to be used to pay VAT and how much is to be used for what these other costs are?

Hon. Imbert: Okay, now, this is a project of the Ministry of Trade. The Ministry of Finance is also a facilitator. So this is a project being managed by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the hon. Minister is here.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: So you can kindly direct questions of that nature to the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry.

Mr. Tancoo: Absolutely. Hon. Minister of Trade, can you kindly advise what percentage or what value of this \$92 million that is being requested for under the rubric to pay VAT and other costs, what percentage of it will be used to actually pay VAT and what would be used to pay the other costs and what are these other costs?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: The 92.66500 actually is for satisfying VAT.

Mr. Tancoo: It is all to pay VAT, Ma'am?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Yes.

Mr. Tancoo: Can you advise then what period in time this VAT had become due?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Sorry?

Mr. Tancoo: Over what period of time is this VAT due?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: It is over the period of the project.

Mr. Tancoo: And what period is that, Ma'am, in terms of years, calendar years?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: The project would have started actually in—let me give you the date. The project would have started in January 2020 and it is going to be completed by August of this year, August 2022.

Mr. Tancoo: So is it that no VAT was paid from inception to current so that this VAT value would pay off whatever arrears there exists from January 2020 to current?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: That is right.

5.25 p.m.

Mr. Tancoo: Ma'am, can you clear up with me whether this VAT is being paid by Government to the VAT Office directly, or to a contractor for works undertaken? Or who would then pay the VAT?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: I am not sure of the actual process, and I would not want to comment on it. I think Ministry of Finance is going to give guidance on that.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister.

Mr. Imbert: What was the question?

Mr. Tancoo: Can you advise whether the VAT is being paid directly to the State or whether it is being paid to a company on behalf of the State?

Mr. Imbert: Well, I would have thought that hon. Member would be familiar with the VAT Act but I will elaborate. In accordance with the VAT Act, VAT is applicable where the place of supply of the goods and services is regarding is taking place within Trinidad and Tobago in the following circumstances: Firstly if the supplier is resident in Trinidad and Tobago. Or secondly, and this is what is applicable in this case, the supplier is not resident in Trinidad and Tobago but the services are physically performed in Trinidad and Tobago.

So the Phoenix Park Industrial Estate is taking place within Trinidad and Tobago and, therefore, the provisions of the VAT Act apply. The contractor would be required and is required to include VAT on services, which are standard commercial supplies. And, therefore, the contractor has to comply with the VAT system. So, as you may or may not know, whenever a contract is awarded by the Government or by a state enterprise and VAT is included, the contractor would go through the normal process of paying VAT on his supplies and then submitting a VAT return. The contractor would charge VAT for services provided and there would be a system of reconciliation of VAT paid on inputs and VAT charged on the final product. So this is to allow the contractor to make payments within the context of the Value Added Tax Act.

Mr. Tancoo: Can the Minister indicate who the contractor was or is?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Beijing Construction.

Mr. Tancoo: I am sorry?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Beijing Construction Group.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Ma'am. Can you also advise what was the value of the contract and what is the status of the contract to date?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: The value of the contract is, I will give you the exact amount, RMB ¥688,347,000.

Mr. Tancoo: And the status of the project to date?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Status of the project, I can give you that. In terms of the river works, 100 per cent; in terms of natural gas works, 100 per cent; flood mitigation, 100 per cent; sewer pipeline installation, 97 per cent; potable water line, 73 per cent; waste water treatment plant, 60 per cent; concrete bridge/reinforce concrete bridge, 95 per cent; construction of five factory shells, 56 per cent; storm water drainage, 45 per cent; fencing and boundary wall, 72 per cent. I can go on.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister, what is the projected time frame for the completion of the construction of the Phoenix Park Industrial Estate?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: August 2022.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you. I want to move on to the other issue which is the \$8 million facility to acquire, by private treaty, a property for the Ministry of National Security in San Fernando. Can the Minister indicate whether this is the purchase price or whether this value includes other fees associated with the acquisition?

Mr. Imbert: The purchase price is \$7.9 million. We have made an allocation of \$8 million because when the Immigration Division takes possession, they may have to do some minor works on the property.

Mr. Tancoo: Can the Minister indicate who the seller is? Who is the owner of property prior to the administrative –

Mr. Imbert: I do not have that information. What I have is the address, 32 St. James Street, San Fernando. But I understand it is a TSTT property and I might also say that this is well worth the money that is being paid for it.

Mr. Tancoo: I have no more questions, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Member for Mayaro.

Mr. Imbert: We did not buy it at an overprice.

Mr. Paray: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Minister, going back to Item 011/96. Is it normal practice to allocate funding for companies that are not in existence at the point in time when doing the budgetary process?

Mr. Imbert: Yes, it is.

Mr. Paray: Minister, also I just want to draw your attention, I am not sure if it is a calculation error on the note that we have here, but I am looking at the three allocations, the 92 million for the IDF, 8 million for the building and 100 million for the Secondary Roads Company. That gives you a little over \$200 million, while the allocation, the net increase is 225.9. So there seems to be a \$25 million additional on this. Is that a calculation error or is there an Estimate –

Mr. Imbert: What document are you reading from, please?

Mr. Paray: I am looking at the same document that you are looking at.

Mr. Imbert: No, no, do not say that. Tell me what document you are looking at.

Mr. Paray: It is on page 14 of the explanations.

Mr. Imbert: Are you looking at the Schedule?

Mr. Paray: Yes, the Schedule as well.

Mr. Imbert: No, no, are you looking at the Schedule?

Mr. Paray: I will pull up. I will tell you the number.

Mr. Imbert: Please look at the Schedule.

Mr. Paray: I will give that to you. One second.

Mr. Imbert: "Ah doh know what he doing."

Mr. Paray: Page 16 of the Schedule.

Mr. Imbert: Yes. What is the problem?

Mr. Paray: So I am just looking at the allocations as is stated here in the explanations, right.

Mr. Imbert: So you are not looking at the Schedule?

Mr. Paray: Yes, well, okay. There is an explanation document with the agenda document, which is on page 14. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Imbert: It is not your turn to speak. So you are not looking at the Schedule, you are looking at the notes that were sent for the Committee.

Mr. Paray: "Both ah dem is de same thing. The numbers different."

Mr. Imbert: It cannot be the same thing.

Mr. Paray: If you look at—

Mr. Imbert: What are you looking at?

Mr. Paray: Page 14 on the agenda, Minister.

Mr. Imbert: On the agenda.

Mr. Paray: On the agenda, Head 18, Ministry of Finance. Your total Recurrent Expenditure, your additional, your increase is \$225,966,500. I am asking, is that in the explanation there is 92 million for the IDF, 8 million for the purchase of the building and 100 million for the Secondary Roads Company. When you add those three figures you are getting 200,065,500. There is a \$25 million difference, overestimates. So I am just asking: Is that a computational error or is there a rationale behind the additional 25 million?

Mr. Imbert: There is a rationale. That additional 25 is for the project.

Mr. Paray: It is for?

Mr. Imbert: The project.

Mr. Paray: Which project?

Mr. Imbert: There is only one project here.

Mr. Paray: So there is an error in the costing on the project?

Mr. Imbert: No. That additional money is for the project.

Madam Chairman: All right. So can I ask the Minister of Trade and Industry to assist us?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Maybe it is not written there but I can give the reason. The \$25.9 million is for extension of time on the project.

Mr. Paray: Extension of time.

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Yes.

Mr. Paray: Okay. Is that a penalty or something that you have to pay?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: No, no, no. So it is claims brought by the contractor to eTeck for additional cost associated with several instances: inclement weather, shut downs associated with—sorry?
[*Interruption*] Pardon me?

Mr. Imbert: [*Inaudible*] — talking about? His is babbling.

Madam Chairman: Minister, please continue.

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: I am giving an explanation but they are all talking. The \$25.9 million as I said is associated with the extension of time request by the contractor to eTeck and these sorts of claims are associated with inclement weather, with shutdowns during COVID, with increased shipping rates, squatter issues, et cetera.

Mr. Paray: Is that a normal type of charge that comes to a Ministry?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Absolutely normal with construction contracts, absolutely.

Mr. Paray: Okay.

Mr. Imbert: Standard.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

5.35 p.m.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, just to return briefly to 0401196, the Secondary Road Rehabilitation Improvement. Minister, bearing in mind your earlier responses that this has not yet been incorporated, no board has been appointed, and you are not sure of which Ministry it is to be assigned. What exactly would this company that is not in existence now do with \$100 million in the next four months?

Mr. Imbert: Chairman, the Member is twisting my words. I did not say I was not sure. I said, assignments of portfolios, that is a matter for the Prime Minister. I did not say I was not sure. And I am certain that this money can be spent and we do not have four months left in the fiscal year we have a little more than four months. Okay?

Dr. Moonilal: Four months and two weeks. Madam Speaker, could the Minister kindly indicate which Ministry this company is to— is assigned already or to be assigned?

Mr. Imbert: I said that is a matter for the Prime Minister—how many times you want me to say that?

Dr. Moonilal: So as Minister of Finance, you do not know?

Mr. Imbert: Shall I say 10 times?

Dr. Moonilal: You do not know. Could I go onto another question?

Madam Chairman: Yes please.

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, thank you. Minister of Finance, on the matter of the Infrastructure Development Fund again. Is there a reason why in the explanatory note before us, which I am not sure if you had sight of that the Ministry of Finance failed to indicate to the Members of the Parliament, that \$26 million that we could not find was for some type of cost to Beijing company, the Chinese company, and why did you fail to include it in your explanation, \$26 million?

Mr. Imbert: I do not know what kind of answer you want from me. It is not in the document?

Dr. Moonilal: Was is deliberate to cover up \$26 million in payments—

Mr. Imbert: No.

Dr. Moonilal:—Minister, to a Chinese company?

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Imbert: No.

Dr. Moonilal: Yes or no?

Mr. Imbert: I said no.

Dr. Moonilal: So, it was an oversight.

Mr. Imbert: This is what the public servants have told me.

Dr. Moonilal: So is the public servants fault? Madam Speaker, thank you. Madam Chair, thank you.

Madam Chairman: All right. So can we go on Member for Couva South you still have a question?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, with respect to the issue of Phoenix Park Industrial Estates and other costs associated with the construction. Could you inform this meeting if that—the other cost takes into consideration the relocation of Agnes Warner and others and the bulldozing of their agricultural crops and so on as it relates to compensation?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: The particular point you are making any bulldozing would be part of the contract, not these additional costs.

Mr. Indarsingh: I am talking about the agricultural crops.

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: I know you are very well aware you had spoken with us on it when I say so with e Teck. And I think you are quite comfortable with the final position that we have come to.

Mr. Indarsingh: Well, the final position is that Agnes Warner and others are still awaiting their relocation, they are still waiting on compensation –

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: And they will be – and as you will realize, relocation involves, finding property that is suitable and of course, it involves doing the deeds, et cetera, all of the things that are necessary to ensure that it is well executed. I can give you the – I can estimate that it will be completed by the end of May.

Madam Chairman: So –

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: No, it is not within this.

Madam Chairman: – hon. Members –

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: So I really do not even have to answer you.

Mr. Indarsingh: No, I asked the question in the context of under the explanation provided by the Ministry of Finance.

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Because it is not under this particular amount of money, but I know you have an interest in it and I – that is why –

Mr. Indarsingh: I do not have any personal interest –

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: I know it is not personal.

Mr. Indarsingh: I have interest as a Member of Parliament for Couva South –

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Indarsingh: – representing people who were abused by the State.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Indarsingh: That is what I have an interest in.

Members: [*Continuous desk thumping*]

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: All I can say, I can say that you made your approaches to me and also to e Teck and we facilitated you on several occasions.

Mr. Indarsingh: And it is more than a year now.

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: No, several occasions.

Madam Chairman: Members, Members –

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: It is a matter of procedure.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Trade and Industry, I think, from the general discussion, my understanding is that that question asked by Couva South, does not cover the monies that we are considering so, let us move on. Member for Couva South you have another question? Okay.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Okay, so Caroni Central.

Mr. Ram: Thank you, Madam Chair. The same line Item, Infrastructure Development Fund, to the Minister of Trade and Industry. In the amount of the 26 million do you foresee or are there any other claims in respect of similar type, what I want to call penalties, in respect of this contract at Phoenix Park.

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Larger naturally, but of course, we have made a provision based on the Interim Assessment and evidence provided. The FIDIC engineer employed in the contract would be—is the one assigned to do the assessment, and of course, collect the actual evidence and so on.

Mr. Ram: So the question is that all claims with e Teck have been settled at this point in time with respect to 26 million?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Probably, could you repeat?

Mr. Ram: All claims before—all claims has been settled by the FIDIC engineers?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: Nothing has been settled as yet, a provision is now made based on an interim assessment.

Mr. Ram: All right. And there are no other claims that has not been assessed?

Hon. Gopee-Scoon: As I said, it is a provision on an interim assessment, the word interim would apply that is incomplete.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: One final question with regards to the response the Minister gave earlier, that the owner of the property—the initial owner of the property at St. James Street was TSTT. Can the Minister indicate when the negotiation for this acquisition of this property commenced?

Mr. Imbert: Memory is that this matter was decided by Cabinet within the last month or so.

Mr. Tancoo: That is the decision but can you indicate when the negotiations commenced?
[Inaudible]

Mr. Imbert: I cannot see the relevance either.

Mr. Tancoo: You cannot see the relevance, Sir?

Mr. Imbert: No.

Mr. Tancoo: Well, if you are not inclined to provide an answer, that is all you need to say. The question is very clear—

Madam Chairman: Member, Member—

Mr. Tancoo: Can you indicate when?

Madam Chairman: Member, Member—

Mr. Imbert: Irrelevant.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance, Member.

Mr. Tancoo: It is not relevant, Madam.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West, what I heard the Minister of Finance say he is not in a position to answer that question now.

Mr. Tancoo: That is not what he said.

Madam Chairman: I do not know if based on that answer you want to ask another question?

Mr. Tancoo: I asked a specific question as to when. Let me ask another question, Ma'am. Sorry. Hon. Minister, would you be able to provide to this honourable House and the viewing community an indication as to when negotiations for acquisition of this particular property commenced?

Mr. Imbert: In 2022.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 18 varied by an increase in the sum of \$225,966,500.

Madam Chairman: I thank the Minister of Finance. I thank the Minister of Trade and Industry and the Permanent Secretary and her team.

5.45 p.m.

Head 22: Ministry of National Security, \$206,900,000

Madam Chairman: Minister, are you ready? Right. I will now invite the Minister of National Security to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. Hinds: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Ministry of National Security, responsible for public safety, protection of our citizens across this land, finds itself, Madam Chair, in need of some additional funding in order to carry out its very important mandate, and we are quite happy to present ourselves to this Committee for an examination of these requests and the additional funded alluded to. Thank you very much warmly, Madam Chair.

Question proposed: That Head 22 be supplemented by the sum of \$206,900,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: We cut to the chase –

Members: [*Laughter*]

Mr. Charles: –because this has been disturbing me and I think it is disturbing a number of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and I refer to Item 04/009/02: the Strategic Services Agency. And we see that \$66 million, additionally, has been allocated to this Ministry. And we say that in

the context—and I have five minutes—of the fact that Scouts only get 126,000 that Girls Guides get \$84,000, and we look at this as prevention and we look at SSA as part of the suppression, criminal suppression, and, in fact, we have rehabilitation. So it is bothering a lot of us—and I will get to the question—that we give \$348,100,000 as the revised provision for the SSA; \$66 million more. And the question that I would like to put to the Minister, in the context of limited or zero expenditure on our young people preventing them to go into crime to be spending this amount of money on the SSA, the first question. Could you provide a breakdown of the operational expenses since you say in the explanation:

To enable the SSA to meet its operational expenses.

Please provide.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Hinds: Madam Chair, first of all, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago taking the whole of Government approach that we do, do not only expend money for youth through the Ministry of National Security. There are other agencies of the Government, other Ministries. In fact, there is an entire Ministry dedicated to youth development. So the premise that my friend is operating on is wholly wrong. This allocation from the Ministry of National Security as it relates to the youth is only a small chunk, a small part of that which this Government focuses on the youth of this country. And just to complete that I would say, the entire education budget, from early childhood to primary school and secondary school and tertiary level education is, Madam Chair, directed to the youth and the young people of Trinidad and Tobago. It is a false premise.

Member: Answer the question on operational expenses.

Hon. Hinds: Quite apart from the Ministry of Youth Development and National Service.

Madam Chair, in respect of this supplemental funding, there is some outstanding debt owed from former members of the Special Anti-Crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago during the period 2004 to 2011, estimated at some \$16 million. And it should be noted, Madam Chair, just for the record, that the Cabinet, on the 10th of February, 2022, agreed to the waiver on the penalties and interest as at the December the 31st, 2021, with a payment due by the 30th of June, 2022.

Madam Chair, I just want to remind this House that that debt accumulated long before this current administration came into office and this is a tidy-up arrangement of moneys owed and due to the NIB. We waived the interest and the penalties and the amount still has to be paid. So, 16 million of this is directed to that kind of expenditure.

The upgrade of one of the systems—and Madam Chair, let me say from the outset that there are some elements of the issues around this particular expenditure that because of national security observations, we will not be as fulsome in our responses as we might otherwise be, but it

requires an upgrade of the Toledo system, which is one of the platforms that we use to conduct the business of national security. That accounts for the sum of \$20.6 million; some refurbishment and outfitting of a building at Piarco, \$10 million; Tobago facility, 750,000; procurement on intelligence infrastructure to secure diplomatic missions, \$7.6 million; upgrade of access control system at our St. Vincent Street location, \$221,000 and as well, Madam Chair, the delivery of a centralized intelligence platform that would cost \$6.8 million and, of course, as well the upgrade of some cameras systems that Cumuto and Piarco to the sum of 250,000. And finally, Madam Chair, purchase and installation of three 500 kVA standby generators to ensure that these systems continue to operate efficiently even in the advent of a drop off in electricity, in the sum of \$800,000 each and that totals \$2.4 million. That, Madam Chair, accounts for the \$66 million that my friend is asking about.

Mr. Charles: Thank you very much. Well, I hope before I go to my second question, I just remind the Minister that Barbados spends \$5 million on its Cadets with one-fifth of our population and, therefore, they spend 5 million, we spent 4 million. They have one-fifth. Once again, we see Barbados leading the way in youth development.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Charles: But the question I ask is: What are the deliverables from what you have enumerated, the expected deliverables?

Hon. Hinds: Improvement in the national security services to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Charles: So, are you saying, there is a view that if this this money were not spent, we would still have 600 murders this year?

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Hinds: That is your view.

Mr. Charles: And if you could justify to us that this expenditure on this agency will bring down the murder rate to what it was before you assumed office, then will support it 100 per cent.

Hon. Hinds: That is populist rubbish. Populist rubbish.

Madam Chairman: Member, I would ask that we use a little more temperate.

Hon. Hinds: An exercise in patience. Obligated, Madam. Obligated.

Madam Chairman: I go back to saying "an eye for an eye will make us all blind".

Hon. Hinds: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: You are a man of words.

Hon. Hinds: I am obliged.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. Hinds: It may even make us all bald.

Ms. Ameen: He is blind already. Tell that to your Prime Minister.

Hon. Hinds: The difference is he is bald on the outside and the inside. Sorry.

Madam Chairman: Could we get back to the business of the people and on both sides. Particularly under this Head, if we could all focus on what we are here to do. Some of us talk we are grandparents, some of us are parents. Let us show the respect we are supposed to show in here.

5.55 p.m.

Mr. Charles: I have another question. Sub-Item 43, on the same Head under Security Services and we see \$24 million provision—

Hon. Hinds: Where is this? Yes.

Mr. Charles: Sub-Item 43, and it is to meet the cost of arrears owed to the National Maintenance Training and Security Company Limited for security services provided and arrears owed for prisoners transport for the period August 2020 to September 2022. The question is, in these straitened times would it not be better to use National Security personnel rather than outside contracted services which adds to the cost to the taxpayer?

Hon. Hinds: First of all, Madam Chair, some of the contracted services of which the Member speaks might have existed and we are bound by them for some time before the period that we are looking at. This is an accumulation of debt under contractual obligations. So if my friend is speaking about present financial constraints, some of these arrangements would have been in existence a little bit before that. In any event, Madam Chair, this is an accumulation of debt that we have to provide for and we are doing so.

Mr. Charles: Could the Minister indicate what is the Ministry's total outstanding debt to MTS in relation to prisoner transport?

Hon. Hinds: I am unable to say so precisely at this time but that can be made available. And as a matter of fact, I can tell this honourable House that within recent times I have received—perhaps even invoices, demands for payment in this regard. And in the protection of the public interest, I thought it prudent to cause an enquiry to be conducted at the level of the Ministry to ensure that what is asked of us is in fact—what is asked of us is a just and fair and equitable amount and that is being reviewed as we speak and therefore we would be able to make a determination not too long from now.

Mr. Charles: I will ask one further question and I will hand over to my colleagues.

Madam Chairman: Excuse me, you will ask a further question and you have no other questions.—

Mr. Charles: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much.

Mr. Charles: I thank you for the guidance.

Madam Chairman: Perfect.

Mr. Charles: Sub-Item 37, Janitorial Services, I see \$10.5 million to meet the cost of arrears owed to National Maintenance Training and Security Limited for janitorial services provided. What is the Ministry's outstanding debt to the MTS in relation to janitorial services provided?

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I am seeing six not 10.

Madam Chairman: I think the Member referred not to the variation –

Mr. Charles: Yes, the –

Madam Chairman: – but to the global figure. The revised provision is what the Member referred to, Minister of Finance. We are at page 70.

Hon. Hinds: Yes. That sum, Madam Chair, is to process payment to that company for moneys owed – due and owing to them.

Mr. Charles: And lastly, is the Minister not worried that we are spending more on janitorial services than on training of cadets?

Hon. Hinds: That is so banal.

Madam Chairman: Just now. Is training of cadets a Vote here?

Mr. Charles: No, it is not.

Hon. Hinds: Yes. It is banal.

Mr. Charles: [*Inaudible*]

Hon. Hinds: So banal. I mean, so empty; so empty.

Ms. Ameen: Just like your brain.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, I am referring to Sub-Head 01, Item 004, and if I may take, Madam Chair, Sub-Items 1, 3, 4 and 5 together, as I ask this question. Minister, do we have a situation where after the last budget, October, 2021, the recruitment of additional officers whether prisons and/or fire?

Hon. Hinds: Yes, indeed.

Mr. Rambally: Can you elaborate to tell us how many and therefore how many are expected to benefit from –

Hon. Hinds: At the start of September 2021, the prison service recruited and completed a six-month training programme for 238 prison officers and 36 drivers, and they are the personnel that would be added and made necessary, the additional sums that we are talking about here. Altogether, as at April the 30th, 2022, there are 4,218 officers; number of posts filled, 3,583, and

still some vacant posts but recruitment is running apace and we had the last instalment of that, 238 of them as at the time I have stated.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, hon. Minister. So just for my clarity, the sums proposed here, this supplemental allocation is purely an account of this additional amount of officers?

Hon. Hinds: Yes.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you.

Hon. Hinds: Thank you kindly.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I want to go to Item 02/001/43, Security Services, in the variation or the supplementation of the sum of \$19 million for prison transport owed for the period August 2020, to September 2022, to the MTS. Minister, what I want clarification on is that during this period, August 2020, to September 2022 –

Hon. Hinds: Just let me correct it, it is not MTS, it is a firm, but not MTS for prison transport.

Mr. Hosein: So the document before us is inaccurate because the document is telling us it is MTS?

Hon. Hinds: It is payment to MTS but not for prison transport; it includes that.

Mr. Hosein: Okay. So out of that \$19 million then, how much is owed for prison transport?

Hon. Hinds: How much is owed is now being reviewed. This is a supplemental allocation to deal with both those Items as I have explained. I have had demands but we are reviewing it to make sure that you, the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago get value for money and that every cent demanded, so to speak, invoice requested would be genuinely so. So we have some reviews taking place to ensure that that is done.

Mr. Hosein: Minister, what you are telling us is that you are asking this Parliament to approve an additional \$19 million of which would go towards prison transport and you do not know exactly how much you are going to give to the transport firm?

Hon. Hinds: What you would see here is what the demand is on the contractual arrangements, but we are reviewing this to make sure that in fact the service was provided and it matches the demands that are now being made.

Mr. Hosein: And I am happy that you raised that point whether the service was provided, Minister, because for the period August 2020 to September 2022, we were in the period of COVID where in fact there was the advent of virtual court, so then I am very surprised that a claim is now being made for prison transport during the period of virtual court during COVID.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Hinds: It sounds very nice. It sounds very good and that is the reason why – partly the reason why it is being reviewed.

Mr. Hosein: Minister, I want to move on to 04/009/02, SSA, in the sum of an additional \$66 million and that will be added to a 287 million that was already appropriated for this fiscal year. So we are looking at SSA having an annual budget—a fiscal budget of about \$340 million-odd. Minister, what I want to find out is currently how many persons are employed at the SSA?

Hon. Hinds: I do not have that figure immediately before me but under advisement it might be made available.

Mr. Hosein: And recently you gave us a report on the—well, let me start this way, you would have indicated to us that the CCTV cameras and the management falls under the SSA. And recently you would have reported to this Parliament a certain percentage of cameras that are in fact functional in Trinidad and Tobago. Can you now update us and tell this Parliament how many cameras are functional as compared to those that are non-functional?

Hon. Hinds: The last time I looked, the figures that I would have given then, I maintain that today. Also, I must tell you procedurally, that is not an Item in front of us at this Committee today.

Mr. Hosein: No, the SSA budget covers CCTV cameras because you did tell us that the SSA—CCTV cameras come under the management of the SSA.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Hinds: The information I gave you on the last occasion obtains as far as I am aware today.

Mr. Hosein: Yeah. So basically you are saying, Minister, that there was no work done whatsoever with the CCTV camera infrastructure in Trinidad and Tobago—

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Hosein:—after every single day—

Hon. Hinds: Madam Chair—

Mr. Hosein:—we have seen gruesome murders in this country—

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Hinds: Madam Chair—

Mr. Hosein:—and you are telling this Parliament that no CCTV, not one single CCTV camera was repaired. Not a single camera and now you are coming to ask for \$66 million additional?

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

6.05 p.m.

Hon. Hinds: Madam Chair, I could not tell you where the member for Barataria/San Juan got that—how he arrived at that conclusion. I cannot understand it.

Mr. Hosein: Minister, what I want to find out also is that you are asking this Parliament to now

approve an additional \$66 million for the SSA. Can you explain why the SSA has not filed annual reports since 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, to explain the expenditure of the SSA?

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Chairman: But you know Member for Barataria/San Juan, you very well know that that is not allowed under the exercise that we are doing.

Mr. Hosein: And Minister –

Madam Chairman: So, one minute. If you want to make statements fine, but those are not questions.

Mr. Hosein: Sure. What I also want to also ask the Minister, Madam Chair, is whether or not any of the \$66 million will go towards the purchase, acquisition and management of spyware devices in Trinidad and Tobago?

Members.[*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Hinds: I will treat that foolish, idiotic –

Hon. Members: Ooooh!

Hon. Hinds: – question with silence. I will remain silent, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: So, Member, let us take out the word “foolish”.

Hon. Hinds: I will take out the word “foolish”.

Madam Chairman: So you will treat that question with silence?

Hon. Hinds: Yes. I will treat it with silence, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister 02/001/13: Maintenance of Vehicles. I see it is to facilitate the maintenance and repairs of vehicles by the fire service. Given what you want to achieve with this allocation, is there intent of repairs to be effected to tenders at the Couva South Fire Station and the Couva Fire Station?

Madam Chairman: Just now. Is this under “General Administration”?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes.

Hon. Hinds: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Will fire services come under “General Administration”?

Hon. Hinds: Yes, some vehicles, maintenance of vehicles.

Mr. Indarsingh: Maintenance of vehicles, Madam Chair.

Hon. Hinds: Item 13. This particular allocation is to repair two Atego water tenders and one Scannier water tanker, service parts for 14 Isuzu d’max, and purchase of tyres and batteries. That is for the fire service. Other elements of this will deal with some repairs and similar kinds of operation in respect of the prison and the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force. But in respect of

fire service, the expenditure goes to the items as I have just demonstrated.

Mr. Indarsingh: Minister, could I ask you to focus on the Couva South Fire Station and the Couva Fire Station, based on the fact that these stations are in very close proximity to the Point Lisas Industrial Estate?

Hon. Hinds: I give you the assurance —

Mr. Indarsingh: — and the Phoenix Park Industrial Estate.

Hon. Hinds: I give you assurance that this Government focuses on the entire system across the board.

Mr. Indarsingh: Well, I have not seen that in the last seven years.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, if I take you to Item 014 under the Defence Force Headquarters, line Item 96, Fuel and Lubricants. The original budget was \$50,000 that we passed in October, and you are now asking for \$11 million. I know you are a very efficient Minister. I do not understand if in October 2021, how could you only ask for \$50,000, and now you are asking for an increase of 11 million. Why is that wide disparity between 50,000 and 11 million additional?

Hon. Hinds: Well this additional sum is to facilitate the purchase of bulk fuel and lubricants for vehicles and vessels, replenishment of fleet cards and to deal with a shortfall in the allocation until September 30, 2022.

Mr. Lee: There is a follow-up, Minister. So when you request, you did not request 50,000 back in October, you would have requested much more. It is just that you did not get it from the Ministry of Finance?

Hon. Hinds: I cannot immediately remember those details, but I can assure you this additional sum is to treat with the purchase, the efficient arrangement of purchasing bulk fuel and lubricants for vehicles and vessels so that we can conduct the business of national security, a very costly element.

Mr. Lee: As well. A last question. You mentioned vessels. Is it fair to say that because of the inadequate allocation, vessels were not able to patrol our seas based on the limited amount of fuel and lubricants that were allocated?

Hon. Hinds: From the information—from all of the information available to me, the coast guard, those who operate them have been reporting, and the figures would show, and the successes we have had up to last Saturday, would show that the patrols have actually improved, and they have become far more efficient in protecting the borders of Trinidad and Tobago, contrariwise.

Mr. Lee: Thank you.

Hon. Hinds: As a matter of fact, Madam Chair, permit me. Recently a young woman who was trafficked made her views and her condition public on radio here, and she explained that when they were about to get them onto the vessel, they had to reschedule that because they had heard that the coast guard was regularly operating in the area. The two new vessels that we acquired recently, they have been very, very impactful on our border improvements for the protection of our people in Trinidad and Tobago.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Madam Chair. My colleague, Member for Barataria/San Juan, asked this question, but I am afraid I have to revisit it in light of the Minister's answer.

Minister, Sub-Head 02, Sub-Item 43. Minister, when we look at the accompanying notes that were supplied to us, and I am referring to now page 16, you will see at the third paragraph—Minister, you responded to my colleague that there was a revision taking place in light of what has occurred with the situation with the prisoner transport during the COVID period. What I am not understanding, Minister, and maybe you can clear this up for us, when you look at the note at Sub-Item 43, it clearly says “and arrears owed for the period August 2020 to September 30,

2022”.

So Minister, my question is, I am not understanding how it is there is in the note and we are making provision for arrears for this specific period, when it is accepted that we did not have the facility of the prisoner transports?

Hon. Hinds: Who accepts that?

Mr. Rambally: Well, Minister, in your earlier response.

Hon. Hinds: No, that is not what I said.

Mr. Rambally: So Minister, could you clear up that on my account then? You have here, you have in the notes “arrears owed for prisoner transport for this period”. Is it that prisoner transport did take place during this period?

Hon. Hinds: Yes.

Mr. Rambally: Okay. And may I ask, this prisoner transport, can you give an example of where it actually occurred?

Hon. Hinds: From the prison.

Mr. Rambally: To where, which courts?

Hon. Hinds: Well, you know, before, before, before. This is from August of 2020.

Mr. Rambally: That is during the pandemic. Minister, I am just trying to understand, you know. This is during the pandemic, so I am asking where was the prisoner transport effected?

Hon. Hinds: In some cases from one prison to another, from police stations to the prison. And if you are not aware –

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Hinds: Yeah. As a matter of fact, let me reserve that.

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Hinds: As a matter of fact, we should allocate some more money, more prisoner transport

soon.

Mr. Rambally: Minister –

Hon. Hinds: So they are asking. They are asking.

Madam Chairman: Okay, all right. Could we have some order and let us continue with the serious enquiry that we are about. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Madam Chair. So Minister, you are saying that this cost is on account of taking prisoners from the police station to the prison?

Hon. Hinds: I am saying it is prisoner transport.

Mr. Rambally: Hon. Minister, I will not go around in circles with you, but prisoner transport from where?

Hon. Hinds: I just told you, from police station to prison, from prison to courts.

Mr. Rambally: Minister, I just asked that question, and I said so you are saying that it is prisoner transport from the police station to the prison, and now you are saying otherwise? Is that what you are saying, it includes that and something else?

Madam Chairman: No, no, Member. I have been following this discussion. The Member answered you, from prison to court, from police station to prison. Okay. Those were the responses. Could you ask another question? That has been asked and answered. Prison to prison, prison to court, police station to prison. Those are the things I heard.

Mr. Rambally: Madam Chair, I do not follow those responses, but I think the Minister is taking us in circles. I will leave it at that.

6.15 p.m.

Madam Chairman: Member for St. Augustine.

Ms. Ameen: Thank you, Madam Chairman, Sub-Head 02, 001 General Administration, Sub-Item 12, Maintenance of Vehicles. I note here that the 16 million, the additional 16 million that has

been allocated is described as:

To facilitate the maintenance and repairs of vehicles by the fire services, water tenders, prison services, fleet of vehicles and defence force, land vehicles and sea vessels.

What I would appreciate is if we could get a breakdown of the disbursement of this 16 million between the fire services. How much will go to fire services, how much will go to prisons, how much will go to defence force, and what it will be used for? How many vehicles will be maintained and so on?

Hon. Hinds: For the actual allocations, we will make that available.

Ms. Ameen: I appreciate it. What I would also like to ask, if the Minister could provide the answer now or later. Who are the service providers who conduct the maintenance and repairs of these vehicles for fire services, prisons and the defence force?

Hon. Hinds: That would be provided later.

Ms. Ameen: All right.

Hon. Hinds: But in respect of the defence force, they do a lot of the servicing internally.

Ms. Ameen: All right. For those vehicles that are maintained by external service providers, can you indicate the names of those service providers, and how much money will be paid within this financial year for each one of those service providers?

Hon. Hinds: We will do what we can. Yes.

Ms. Ameen: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much. Madam Chair, 02/001/16, Contract Employment. Minister, very quickly, could you provide this meeting with the information as it relates to the nature of this debt? Is it Employer's Contribution, Employees?

Hon. Hinds: Yes indeed. Again, to settle some outstanding debt to the National Insurance Board

in respect of the Transit Police Unit. NIS was not deducted and paid on behalf of the employees and employer. The employees, General Admin and Transit Police Officers, were treated as service providers, and as a consequence of that non-payment we acquired a principal sum in debt to the tune of \$2,539,532. A penalty of 2.5 million plus interest. It should be noted that the Cabinet on the 10th of February, 2022, agreed to a waiver on the penalties and interest as at December the 21st, 2021, and as I said earlier, with payment due by the 30th of June, 2022. And I might tell you for good measure, the very inexplicable position of treating Transit Police Officers and administrative staff, as service providers leading to this problem was done between the years 2011 and 2015. Do you know about that?

Madam Chairman. Member for Naparima.

Mr. Indarsingh: If I could tell you, I am articulating something on behalf of workers in the country, and I sought your clarification.

Hon. Hinds: Madam Speaker, I am open to questions.

Madam Chairman: I am now calling upon the Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Chair. I refer to Item 02/014/40, Food and Institutions for which an allocation of \$8.5 million has been requested, and the explanation is to facilitate the purchase of food for the Prison Service, 2.5 million, and the Defence Force six million to September, 2022. Now we note that only 1.4 million was budgeted. And the question very simply is, was this kind of expenditure or increase not foreseen at the time, or was it a case of you requested it and there were no moneys available?

Hon. Hinds: I can truthfully tell you, I cannot remember those details at this time, but what I do know is that this sum is to treat with outstanding payments in respect of the purchase of food until September 2022, and six million in respect of the TTDF, and this is to cover the shortfall in the allocation.

Mr. Charles: Minister, if you go to the Recurrent Expenditure –

Hon. Hinds: Well, you could check it.

Mr. Charles: You could see it is one –

Hon. Hinds: Well, it is there already so why are you asking?

Mr. Charles: All I am just asking is why the discrepancy, a six-fold discrepancy?

Hon. Hinds: No, you wanted to know what was allocated.

Mr. Charles: No, I wanted to know why only 1.4 was allocated at the start of the budget year, at the start of the fiscal year. And a couple months into the year we are now asking for a six-fold increase. And I am just simply asking.

Hon. Hinds: I too, I take your question.

Mr. Charles: What is the reason?

Hon. Hinds: I take your question.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Asked and answered, Ma'am.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 22 supplemented by the sum of \$206,900,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you, Minister. I thank you PS and your team.

Hon. Hinds: Thank you warmly, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, with the agreement of both sides, the order has been changed just for us to take at this time the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services. The Whip was advised some time ago, and I hope that information has been circulated.

Head 78: Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, \$390,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Social Development and Family Services to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Cox: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services continues to effectively carry out its mandate of maintaining the nation's safety net. One critical element in order to sufficiently meet the growing demands of the vulnerable segments of our society is identifying the levels of vulnerability amongst those deemed as such. Madam Chair, given our continued ageing population where 13 per cent of the population averages 65 and over, today we are at this juncture urging requisite funding on behalf of this particular cohort of citizens. The Senior Citizens Pension is one of the core social assistant grants provided by the Ministry. The Ministry assessed the payments currently being made alongside the number of new clients to be added between March and September 2022, and concluded that an additional allocation of \$389,073,000 is required to meet its commitment for fiscal 2022.

6.25 p.m.

In closing, the Ministry recognizes its fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the limited resources are adequately managed given stringent economic circumstances. In this regard we remain resolute in the delivery of our responses and multi-faceted social service system, the caring for and protection of our poor and vulnerable families as we invest in the development of the people needing it the most. Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 78 be supplemented by the sum of \$390,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I have a few questions on this particular Item, Head 78, 04/007/02, Senior Citizens Grant. Madam Chair, based on the Minister's opening statement as well as the justification given here, can the Minister indicate the total number of persons currently in receipt of the Senior Citizens Grant as at March 31, 2022?

Hon. Cox: At March? – 103,625 persons.

Ms. Mohit: Could you repeat?

Madam Chairman: Minister, could you kindly repeat?

Hon. Cox: 103,625 persons are currently in receipt of Senior Citizens Grants as at March the 30th.

Ms. Mohit: Madam Chair, a supplemental question for the Minister. What was the numerical increase from the last fiscal year into this fiscal year?

Hon. Cox: 5,400 persons.

Ms. Mohit: Madam Chair, to the Minister, does this supplementary sum of \$390 million cater for the expenditure of the current recipients and those anticipated to qualify within this fiscal year?

Hon. Cox: Yes, this will cater for that.

Ms. Mohit: Minister, you mentioned new clients in terms of this \$390 million. Can you indicate to us the anticipated number of new clients?

Hon. Cox: We expect around 4,100 persons, new clients.

Ms. Mohit: Thanks. Madam Chair, Minister to you, previously you would have stated that a review was ongoing in terms of the Senior Citizens Grant. Can you advise whether persons were added or deleted from this particular programme arising from the review?

Hon. Cox: Because of the review we have removed 12,010 persons.

Ms. Mohit: 12,010 persons. All right. And in terms of additions?

Hon. Cox: 5,400 persons were added.

Ms. Mohit: Minister, can you state the rationale behind the removal of those clients who were removed?

Hon. Cox: Okay, most of them were dead.

Ms. Mohit: Madam Chair, to the Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Minister,

can you state what is the average time for a recipient or an applicant to get his or her Senior Citizens Grant?

Hon. Cox: The average time is supposed to be three months.

Ms. Mohit: Three months. Minister, based on some reports can you advise what are the reasons for the inordinate delay in applicants receiving their Senior Citizens Grants?

Hon. Cox: Okay. Part of the problem is the process where the Ministry must receive information from NIB; there must be information validation; employer information; home visits to be scheduled and reported; information from the immigration department; NIB; US Embassy and insurance agencies and that sometimes would take some time.

Ms. Mohit: Madam Chair, through you. Minister, can you state if there is currently a challenge facing the Ministry in terms of conducting visits as it relates to senior citizens applicants?

Hon. Cox: Yes, I think there is a bit of a challenge. That forms part of the issue with regard to the delay, but we are working on it. There has been some problems because of COVID-19 which humbug some of the visits to clients. But now we are opened up at this time and we expect to improve the service.

Ms. Mohit: Minister, can you state what exactly – how do you expect to improve the service and what is being done to have this corrected?

Hon. Cox: Well, persons are out there, now that we have opened back up and persons are conducting investigations. We have been doing some retraining with the social welfare officers and we also are having discussions with some of the agencies because there has been a delay with immigration information, NIB information, particularly, also, and we have been having discussions to improve it. Our digitalization efforts also will also assist us in improving the service.

Ms. Mohit: And, Madam Chair, one final question. Minister, can you state for us approximately how many persons or applicants are awaiting these visits to be conducted by the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services under the Senior Citizens Grant Programme?

Hon. Cox: We have 4,731 pending applications. I do not have the exact figure as to how many are awaiting a visit, but in that figure we are awaiting information from the other agencies that are supposed to provide us with the information before we move forward.

Ms. Mohit: And one final question, Madam Chair, to you Minister. Does this sum of \$390 million cater for these 4,731 applicants?

Hon. Cox: Yes, it will.

Ms. Mohit: Okay. Thanks a lot, Madam Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 78 supplemented by the sum of \$390,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Social Development and Family Services. Thank you, PS and to your team. We revert.

Head 23: Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs, \$95,613,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Attorney General to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Attorney General.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you, Madam Chairman. The Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs is seeking supplementary fees to address critical areas under *Recurrent Expenditure* in both general administration and the Director of Public Prosecutions Division for its operations, namely: one, materials and supplies; two, contract employment and gratuity; three, short term employment; and four, legal fees.

Additionally, funds are being allocated under the *Development Programme* for the continuous strengthening of the information management under the Registrar General's Department which encapsulates the Civil Registry, Land Registry and Companies Registry. The Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs has supervision of 14 bodies and also has indirect employment for numerous persons across the direct units that the office manages. The Office is crossed into several thousand if you were to add the number of supervisory and functionary employment positions that are managed, be it the Equal Opportunity Commission, the Environmental Commission and several other public authorities, and also functions as a conduit for the Judiciary. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Question proposed: That Head 23 be supplemented by the sum of \$95,613,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Minister, I just start off at 02/001/16, Contract Employment, the increase in the sum of \$17.2 million.

6.35 p.m.

Based on the explanatory note, I am seeing that it is to pay officers who are employed on contract and there is an arrears of salaries due to the revised terms and conditions of employment as well as to meet other commitments up until September 30, 2022. AG, can you just inform this meeting how many contract officers will benefit from this increase of the \$7.2 million.

Hon. Armour SC: Yes, thank you very much, Member. The total number of contract positions at the end of April 2022, 848; number of contract positions filled, 523.

Mr. Hosein: AG, these contract officers, do they also work under the Solicitor General department and also the Chief State Solicitor?

Hon. Armour SC: They work across the remit of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs and if

you were to refer to the *Gazette* of the 9th of September, 2020, you would see that that remit is quite wide. In schedule, it covers a remit over three pages of the *Gazette* of the 9th of September, 2020 which has been supplemented by the subsequent *Gazette* of March 2022 so it is much more than the two departments that you referred to.

Mr. Hosein: The reason I am asking about these two departments is because I am advised that—I heard that there is a shortage of manpower basically in the Solicitor General and the Chief State Solicitor departments so I wonder whether or not there is sufficient employment there or this sum was going to be allocated for increasing the number of staff in these departments.

Hon. Armour SC: The short answer to that is yes. It will go towards increasing but it is also, as I have said, spread across the remit of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much for that answer. AG, can you just explain what the difference will be with the contract employment under the line Item we just dealt with and that under 02/001/22: Short-Term Employment where there is an increase in \$15 million?

Hon. Armour SC: Yes. There are a number of different reasons for that short-term employment. The Ministry has requested \$21,100,000 in its Draft Estimates and only received \$10 million in the fiscal year 2022. There is the digitization unit of the Ministry to facilitate digitization of the Ministry's records, particularly the Registrar General's Department. This includes the scanning of records, data entry and technical IT staff. And we also have to note that during the pandemic, which we are not yet recovered from, staff had the data and technical support to work remotely, very effectively, in that a number of rostering systems were introduced so that staff would be able to work remotely and we needed to upgrade our remote IT capacity.

Mr. Hosein: And AG, how many persons are currently on this short-term employment?

Hon. Armour SC: The answer is 325.

Mr. Hosein: And this \$15 million will be to increase that number from 325 or is it to service these 325?

Hon. Armour SC: That is to meet existing expenditure, not to increase the number.

Mr. Hosein: So we are going to basically stay with this 325 until the end of this fiscal?

Hon. Armour SC: Yes.

Mr. Hosein: Yeah. And I just want to go on to the other line Item 02/001/23 which deals with fees in the sum of an increase of \$30 million to meet the payment of fees to local and foreign attorneys for the provision of services. AG, like I asked previously, will you be willing to disclose to this honourable House a breakdown of those attorneys and the fees that they would have received disaggregated both local and foreign?

Hon. Armour SC: Well, Member, may I, Madam Chairman, through you, vary slightly from my

answer previously on another related subject to make this statement. That when the issue of legal fees had arisen before the Finance and General Purposes Committee and before Cabinet and now before this honourable House, I have declared the interest that there are some fees outstanding to me when I was in private practise as a private practitioner. So I wish to put that on record, through you, Madam Chairman. To that extent, Member, clearly I am one of those persons but that does not preclude me from defending the budget allocation, supplemental budget allocation. As to the other persons, as I said to you before, I would need to get the permission of persons to put their names on record. I certainly would be prepared to do that and at the appropriate time to lay a document before the Parliament.

Mr. Hosein: Sure. So AG, we assume that you will be one of the attorneys who will be giving consent to your position. AG—

Member: *[Interruption]*

Mr. Hosein: Sorry. I am directing to the current AG, not the former AG.

Members: “Ahhhh.” *[Desk thumping]*

Madam Chairman: Member, are you finished?

Mr. Hosein: No, thank you very much, Madam Chair. AG, can you give this Chamber an appreciation of the policy for the retainer of external counsel by the Office of the Attorney General?

Madam Chairman: So, remember this exercise is not about policy questions and I am going to ask all Members, and by no means restricting your right to do what we are mandated to do here, okay, but to keep in mind, it is 20 to seven, my last count, we have 12 other Heads to do so let us do what we are supposed to do. You are senior enough here to know what kinds of questions you can ask.

Mr. Hosein: Yeah. Madam Chair, well then I will just rephrase the question differently. AG, is there a criteria which the office uses in order to retain external counsel under this particular Head under Fees?

Madam Chairman: *[Inaudible]* The policy kinds of questions are not questions for the—

Members: *[Interruption]*

Madam Chairman: No, no, and maybe that is why people are not hearing me because if other people talking while I am talking, maybe others are not hearing.

Member: *[Interruption]*

Madam Chairman: Very. Okay, I would not allow that question. You are allowed to ask something else, let us see if you can get a question that is within the remit of this body.

Mr. Hosein: Madam Chair, that will be all for me.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Thank you, Madam Chair. If I may ask the Attorney General in relation to the said Sub-Head 02, sub-Item 23 in addition to the information which has been sought by my colleague, if we can also have the matter that the particular attorney or the services which they provided.

Hon. Armour SC: The answer to that is no at this point in time. That is not information I am prepared to disclose. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Just for clarity, Madam Chair, I was suggesting that in due course, if that information is coming forward as to the names and the amounts paid to them, that also included with that. I was not suggesting that it be done now.

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman.

Hon. Armour SC: Thank you for that clarification. I thought you were asking the question for me to answer that now.

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, can I ask a question? We are dealing with it—

Member: *[Interruption]*

Mr. Imbert: I am asking the Chairman a question. Madam Chairman, may I ask a question?

Madam Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Imbert: Thank you very much. We are dealing with the supplementation for the debate on the Bill on Monday. May I ask you whether questions about things that have nothing to do with the debate on Monday can be asked or are those out of order?

Madam Chairman: Questions can be asked if they are within the mandate of the Standing Finance Committee. Okay.

Mr. Imbert: Clarification of something that happened down the road that has nothing to do with this is not within the remit in my opinion.

Madam Chairman: Well, Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: It is your Committee.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: "You running the Committee."

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance, I would also say this. Sometimes a question is asked, it is not really within the remit of the Committee but the Government sometimes finds the need to answer and if it is a question is asked and allowed and the Member wishes to answer, I would not stand in the way. I would not, however, allow a protracted conversation on it. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Rambally: Madam Chair, I was just about to say that the Minister of Finance is now wasting

our time but I do not need to say that anymore.

Member: Always, always.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Imbert: That is a very useful comment that did not waste any time.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 23 supplemented by the sum of \$95,613,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you, Attorney General, Minister in the Office of the Attorney General, Madam PS and your team. Head 26, Ministry of Education.

6.45 p.m.

Head 26: Ministry of Education, \$300,000,000.

Madam Chairman: A supplementation of \$300 million. I will now invite the Minister of Education to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Ministry of Education is charged with the general administration and management of public schools comprising 208 ECCE Centres, 477 primary schools, 134 secondary schools and nine post-secondary institutions with an approximate student count of 220,000.

The Ministry of Education is staffed by approximately 20,000 persons, including 14,277 teachers. The Ministry, during the period 2022 to 27, will place deep focus on the following eight areas: one, digital transformation; two, equity in quality education; three, the seamless transition of learners throughout the education system; four, TVET revitalization; five, human resource development; six, amendment of the Education Act; seven, student achievement; and eight, curriculum reform. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Question proposed: That Head 26 be supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Tabaquite.

Ms. Haynes: Thank you, Madam Chair. Under Sub-Item 04, Electricity, is there a reason why T&TEC was not paid for services provided between 2018 and 2021?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Madam Chairman, at this time the T&TEC is owed by the Ministry of Education a total of \$130 odd-million. In the fiscal to date we have paid 7.7 million. At this time I cannot proffer the reason or explanation for payments that were due before. What I can say is what is owed at this time and the payment we have paid for this fiscal.

Ms. Haynes: Okay. So I guess that means we will just see this expenditure recurring in terms of the arrears.

Madam Chair, through you, Sub-Item 28, Other Contracted Services, which we are seeing is to enable payments to PTSC for provision of school transport for Term 3 of the academic year.

The Minister would know, through my writing, et cetera, that I would have had some difficulties with regard to the provision of public transportation to residents within my area to get to certain schools. So, if the Minister could undertake to provide a breakdown of the areas that PTSC will be providing school transport for Term 3 for the academic year?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Madam Chair, let me indicate that I have not yet received the letters from the MP. However, I am sure when they come they will be treated with and certainly we can provide from PTSC at this point what areas will be covered.

Ms. Haynes: The letters were dated January 10th, 23rd and 31st and I received a response. So I was just undertaking from you the areas for general information for everybody in this Parliamentary Chamber.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Well, Term 3 is from April 19th. So certainly I can identify from PTSC what areas are covered in Term 3.

Ms. Haynes: Thank you. Madam Chair, I am looking at Sub-Item 006, Primary Education. Looking at Item 04, Electricity. Now, I know that would have given us a total figure of the amounts owed from the Ministry of Education but my question here is: Would T&TEC have taken any punitive actions against any schools with regard to this non-payment between 2018 to 2021, because we are seeing that sum 17 million increase needed to be allocated to cover the amount owed under primary education.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: No.

Ms. Haynes: Okay. So I guess the similar holds for secondary and the early childhood care, no punitive action. All right, thank you.

And then can I go to Sub-Item 001, Regional Bodies? Okay. So I am looking at the allocation to the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC). Now, in the Standing Finance Committee of October we would have allocated a provisional sum of some \$11 million, which I am now seeing would have been transferred out. Is that correct? Yes.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Mm hmm.

Ms. Haynes: And so now we are reallocating \$9.8 million to cover this sum. But that is substantially less than was actually paid in 2020, and then again what was the revised estimate for 2021. So are we going to have to provide additional sums for the CXC allocation in the coming fiscal year?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: If additional sums are required this year, there is always the measure of transfers or virements, as would have been happening from this vote, so that we can keep up to date with our payments.

Ms. Haynes: Noted. And so looking at educational institutions, grants to assisted primary

schools for the school equipment and upkeep of primary school premises, could the Minister undertake, or if you can provide now, the list of assisted primary schools that would benefit from this supplementation?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: That supplementation is meant to pay the utility bills that are outstanding as well as the running cost, and so on, for all the schools. So that will cover all government-assisted primary schools.

Ms. Haynes: But Madam Chair, through you, are utility bills not covered on their own via electricity, WASA, because we have seen those payments occurring earlier? So how is this also covering utility bills?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: There are different arrangements for the government-assisted schools and even in the category of government-assisted schools, some of them are covered in different Votes.

Ms. Haynes: Okay. So this net increase of 3.1 million covers all of the additional payments for all the government-assisted primary schools? There are no specific schools here?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It covers grants to all of the schools on it and also existing utility bills that have to be paid.

Ms. Haynes: Okay. Thank you. And so I would like to go to Sub-Item 33 Grant to Private Secondary Schools. And we are seeing a \$20 million increase in the supplementation and we are told it is to facilitate the implementation of the interim funding arrangements for the operational expenses at Bishop Anstey High School East, Trinity College and the Sixth Form for fiscal year '21 to '22. So can we get some details as to this arrangement, please?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: For the last 20 years there was a loan arrangement in place for the building of this school and the operation. That loan ended in 2021, and so the management system that is taking place at that school has to now be redone. In the interim, while that is being hashed out between Bishops and the Government, we allocated money for the school's operational expenses. So this represents payment under that arrangement.

Ms. Haynes: So how long will this interim funding arrangement last?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It should last within this fiscal year and that is what we have given to be able to refashion the arrangement.

Ms. Haynes: Noted. And Madam Chair, I am looking at Transfers to State Enterprises, National Schools Dietary Services. And we are looking at a net increase of \$43 million. And so if the Minister can undertake to provide a breakdown of the cost incurred to provide school meals in Term 3, so that we can understand how this \$43 million is being allocated.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Well, Term 3 is ongoing so what is the breakdown being requested?

6.55 p.m.

Ms. Haynes: So we are being asked to supplement an additional \$43 million, you would have put in for that supplementation based on some data based on some – There must be some rationale for requesting an additional \$43 million. So I am asking that the Parliament be made aware of what is the rationale for asking for the additional \$43 million?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Well, the rationale is that schools were not operating in their full capacity and they are operating to full capacity since April the 19th. So the increase in the number of students at school would naturally have an increase in the number of meals that are required and that is the money allocated to be able to do that.

Ms. Haynes: Understood. And so that is why, right, so then within that there is a cost for the meal, and there is a cost for transportation towards the school, et cetera, which is why we are asking for the breakdown so that our analysis for the debate on Monday could be a little more clearer when we are debating the additional \$43 million. So I understand where it comes from but I am asking for an undertaking for a breakdown of the cost incurred to the National Schools, Dietary Services Limited please?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Madam Chair, I feel the answer has been sufficient. So I think the answer has been sufficient in that it is to take up the excess cost of catering for all of the students. And –

Ms. Haynes: So all of the cost is really – it is just in food then, so, the additional cost is in food, there is no additional cost in transportation to the schools or anything like that?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: This is the National Schools Dietary Services Limited, they provide –

Ms. Haynes: Meals

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: – meals –

Ms. Haynes: Correct.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: – to the schools. So yes, the cost is food.

Ms. Haynes: Okay, thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Tabaquite, might I ask you to stand down a bit so I can invite the Member for Mayaro to ask his question –

Ms. Haynes: Absolutely.

Madam Chairman: – so we could come back to you in another round? Member for Mayaro.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Minister, very quickly, line Item under Sub-Head 02: General Administration, Sub-Item 28: Other Contracted Services. I know Minister would appreciate the fact that you know this maxi service is so critical for constituencies like ours, where students depend on it. I noticed that this allocation of \$8.2 million is primarily for the term three payments for the maxis. And just recently, I heard – I saw on the television where the

Maxi-Taxi Association leader was complaining about arrears and that there was a plan to hold back services. I am wondering if this commitment of term three payments is adequate to get them back out in September when I suspect all the little teething problems that schools would have been having, we would have full complement of students going back out. Any position in terms of addressing the arrears or do you think this would be sufficient to get back the maxis out there in September?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Based on the invoices submitted by PTSC the total number of—the total amount of the payments was 1.2 million. The Ministry records show that we have paid over 700,000 of that. So there is a balance of about 400,000 that there are some queries and so on ongoing on those and then that will be paid. So the arrears that are outstanding at this point, based on the invoices we have would be \$400,000. So, what is allocated here is simply to ensure that term three is gone through. We have met with the Association and PTSC, Ministry officials twice so far and we will continue this meeting to ensure that there is a smoother process in terms of the payments to the concessionaires. I think that is the issue and the delay in handling the invoices so, we are working through that process now to fine tune to ensure we do not have that level of wait for the payments.

Mr. Paray: Thank you, Minister.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. Minister, just for clarity in the Transfers to State Enterprises, National School Dietary Services Limited, the \$43 million extra, would that take care of arrears owed to caterers? Are there any arrears owed to caterers, school caterers for this programme, for meals?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: At this time, we do not have invoices that indicate we have anything outstanding outside of what would be in the normal processing time for meals that would have been supplied in the recent past.

Mr. Lee: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Tabaquite. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair, just going back very quickly, Minister, I know you provided some degree of clarification to my colleague, Mayaro, with respect to Other Contracted Services. I know that you have been grappling with this issue. But there seems to be up until today, the president of the concessionaires association indicating that in spite of commitments given for payments to be effected, of 1.2 million and so on, it is not forthcoming. And we are pleading with you, as the line Minister to liaise with the other Minister involved in this matter to facilitate that, because at this point in time, it is really proving challenging to vulnerable families, as it relates to transportation for their children to school.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: The plea is understood, and we will be doing our best to sort it out. As I said, we do not have at this time any invoices that are not under query to be paid. However, we really need to work that system out to make sure on all sides we have everything that is submitted correctly, because it is between the PTSC and the Ministry. So you have to ensure that whatever is submitted is submitted properly so that we do not have any delay and we understand very clearly the importance of the service especially to children in rural areas.

Madam Chairman: Member for Tabaquite. No?

Question put and agreed to.

Head 26 supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Education; thank you, Minister in the Ministry; thank you, PS.

Head 28: Ministry of Health, \$362,887,700.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Health to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. Deyalsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, good afternoon to you and good afternoon to all. Madam Chair, health systems around the world have become noted for the past two years and five months because of the COVID-19 pandemic and how we responded. I would like to put on record my thanks and gratitude to the hon. Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley, for leading an excellent national COVID-19 response. His scientific background and steely determination has brought us to a level in the pandemic, where we have passed for the time being the acute phase. I will also like to put on record my undying appreciation for every single health worker in Trinidad and Tobago, who worked with me and the team I had the pleasure and honour to lead. In recognition of International Nurses Day which was celebrated yesterday, May 12th I want to again thank every single health care worker and every single nurse for bringing us to this point in time.

Madam Chair, as the Ministry of Health moves in this post-acute phase of the pandemic and the pandemic is not over, the acute phase seems to be over, we at the Ministry will be focusing on four areas of national interest as we move forward for the next two to three years.

1. The reinvigoration of our HIV/AIDS programme again, which was put on the back burner because of the pandemic.
2. Very topical, finally getting a hold of the issue of non-communicable diseases. The number one killer, number two killer, number three killer, high blood pressure, hypertension, cancers and so on. We have to get a handle on that.

3. The further decentralization of mental health and especially the incorporation of mental health into primary health care services.

To that end, a team has been set up to do just that and everyone is enthusiastically looking forward to the day that mental health is seen as a primary health care issue.

7.05 p.m.

And the fourth main issue, Madam Chair, is the vexing issue of blood donations in this country. For too long, we have relied on coercion to force people to donate blood, and following the Rome Declaration WHO of 2013, it is the intention of the Ministry of Health to at last, at long last, move this country to a system of voluntary, altruistic non-remunerable blood donations. We hope to launch this initiative as early as June 2022, which is a month away.

So, Madam Chair, that is where we are. Again, I want to thank everyone involved in the COVID response. Those are our four strategic objectives moving forward, and we are now ready to take questions.

Question proposed: That Head 28 be supplemented by the sum of \$362,887,700.

Madam Chairman: Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, Madam Chair, to the hon. Minister. And Minister, I just want to look at the allocations to the RHAs and, perhaps, we could look at 04/09, two, three, four and five together for the first question, and I note the explanation is to pay salaries and related allowances totalling 274,344,200 to allow the four RHAs to augment personnel assigned to various health facilities within the parallel health care system. So, just for clarification, Minister, you are saying to augment personnel. So, is it that some of this is to pay outstanding salaries and allowances or is it that we are going to have new personnel for the rest of the financial year in these facilities?

Hon. Deyalsingh: No. We have no salaries outstanding. So, let me make that clear. I think one of the good things about this pandemic that we showed is that, as a government, we paid all salaries on time and we laid off no one. Every gazetted worker in Trinidad and Tobago, every public officer, retained their positions and they were paid on time. So this is not for arrears. This is going forward so as we proceed.

Dr. Bodoë: For new personnel to be engaged?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Some will be, of course, yes and existing.

Dr. Bodoë: So, Minister, in that respect, can I ask and maybe you could provide this in writing for us for each of the RHAs in terms of the category of staff, the number and the terms in which they will be engaged?

Hon. Deyalsingh: We will be able to get that for you.

Dr. Bodoë: I just want to raise the issue as well and maybe you could shed some light on this. Now, I know some decommissioning of hospitals is taking place. So, I refer to the NCRHA allocation which is 124,914,200, with the fact that the Arima Hospital is being decommissioned as a parallel health facility. How do you reconcile that? And before your answer, I would just refer as well to SWRHA with regard to the decommissioning of the Point Fortin Hospital as a parallel health care system. So, I am saying, the point I am making is that these hospitals have come out of the parallel health care system and how do you reconcile?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Yeah, thanks. No, no, that is a very reasonable question to ask. And as I indicated publicly, we are removing away from the parallel health care system to more a hybrid system now. What that hybrid system would mean is that hospitals that were previously solely dedicated to COVID, will now be treating both COVID and non-COVID patients as they see fit.

The first hospital earmarked to be a hybrid system, a hybrid hospital will be the Arima Hospital. So, it is being decommissioned as a COVID facility, but we must remember Arima was the national centre for dialyzing COVID positive patients. That would be retained. The patients currently in Arima are all on dialysis. So, as we decommissioned it as a COVID facility, it will be recommissioned first week in June as our first hybrid facility admitting non-COVID patients at the ward level, but continuing the treatment of our dialysis patients. Similarly with Point Fortin, if the need arises to have COVID positive patients housed there, all facilities in the medium term, if necessary, if required, will become a hybrid system.

Dr. Bodoë: Minister, in that regard, can I ask with regard to the hybrid system whether a similar arrangement is being contemplated for the Couva Hospital? Can you answer that at this point in time, Minister?

Hon. Deyalsingh: The Couva facility, as you know, was vested with the University of the West Indies. We are paying attention to the numbers. The Couva Hospital will not become a hybrid hospital. We are looking in the medium term to return the Couva Hospital to the University of the West Indies once the hospital numbers allow us to do that. Okay?

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you. Madam, I will give way to my colleagues at this point.

Dr. Ragbir: Thank you, Madam Chair. To you, hon. Minister, Item 009, Sub-Item 001. That is the allocation of \$53,370,000. Hon. Minister, could you provide us with a breakdown of cost incurred for this service per year?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Yeah. So, that is for them to pay for ambulance services, GMRTT. The average cost per year to run the ambulance system is about 10.2 million, per month. Sorry. So you multiply that by 12, you get your approximate cost for the year.

Dr. Ragbir: And, hon. Minister, I am asking about the External Patient Programme. Is that

included in the new net increase?

Hon. Deyalsingh: No, no.

Dr. Ragbir: It is not?

Hon. Deyalsingh: The External Patient Programme is nowhere on this appropriation.

Dr. Ragbir: All right. Thank you.

Hon. Deyalsingh: You are welcome.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, line-Item – the same line-Item 04/009/01 for the continued operation of the Global Medical Response T&T. Has a cost-benefit assessment been done on this vendor given that over the last couple of years hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on this vendor? So, has there been an assessment of the service provider performance versus the need of the population?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Member, a national emergency response system as provided by GMRTT is one that is constantly under review. It is strange that you would have asked for a cost-benefit analysis, because it was your Government that awarded this contract on a sole-select basis overriding the then wishes of the then Minister of Health, Fuad Khan, who had to put in writing his opposition to Anand Ramlogan, telling him to give this contract on a sole-select basis. So, I find it rather strange that you would be asking for a cost-benefit analysis. Quite strange. Sole select on the eve of the 2010 elections – 2015 elections under the hand of the Member of Parliament for Siparia, you all went up sole-select, and the then Minister of Health, Fuad Khan, put on record his opposition to this.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, so when does the contract with this provider end?

Hon. Deyalsingh: The contract ended in August 2020 and as a responsible government, led by a responsible Prime Minister, we went up for open tender, which is now before the Central Tenders Board. That is the way we do it.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, so what is total debt owe to this vendor, currently?

7.15 p.m.

Hon. Deyalsingh: We are currently on a month-to-month contract with the vendor and we pay on a month-to-month basis.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Chair. Moving on to Line Item 02/04/39, Drugs and Other Related Materials and Supplies. Minister, the notes say that it is to facilitate the acquisition of COVID-19 vaccines for children and adults at the cost of \$12.5 million. Which versions of these

vaccines are being acquired for the population?

Hon. Deyalsingh: No, this is for further acquisition. And I would give him an example. In my opening statement, Madam Chair, through you to the Member, I made it clear that this pandemic is not over. As someone who has to constantly monitor what is happening internationally, we have no idea what future variants are going to come on the scene. We have no idea what special populations may need to be re-boosted. Right now Moderna is working on a bivalent vaccine. All the vaccine—all the COVID-19 vaccines so far are monovalent, against once strain.

So those are developments we are paying attention to. Novavax is working on what we call a year-three vaccine because we in a third year into a pandemic. That year-three vaccine that Novavax is working on will be for new primary people who have not been vaccinated, for new primary doses, boosters, and for the paediatric population. Again, to the paediatric doses we are getting it from Spain. And I want to really thank the Government of Spain for donating vaccines.

We have to pay the freight for that and the freight for that is TT \$150,000. So although the vaccines are free we still have significant costs, logistical costs. So this allocation will be for future uses and also for those vaccines coming in from Spain to pay for freight.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Minister, given that the paediatric vaccines attained WHO authorization since last year for the five to 11-year age group, why has it taken so long to get these vaccines here in Trinidad and Tobago?

Hon. Deyalsingh: The vaccine that was approved was Pfizer. You need to ask Pfizer that question. That is the million-dollar question. We were working on three tracks because I know you are upset that this Government is acquiring vaccines.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Deyalsingh: For the record, the Caricom was working with Pfizer on a Caricom initiative; that did not bear fruit. It had nothing do with our lack of intention; two, we were also working bilaterally with Pfizer, and, three, we were working with the Government of Spain. This is the first one, and I dare say, if you investigate other Caricom countries to see whether they have the five to 11 vaccines, I think you will have a different picture of our method of acquiring vaccines.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Hon. Deyalsingh: And Barbados, I do not think has it as yet.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, I take umbrage with your statement that I am against the acquisition of vaccines.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Seecheran: Personally, I have two sons in this age group and I actually had to send them to

Toronto to get vaccine – *[Inaudible]* – their vaccines –

Hon. Deyalsingh: Have you investigated –

Dr. Seecheran: – because you could not provide vaccines. *[Inaudible]*

Members: *[Desk thumping]*

Hon. Deyalsingh: Have you investigated how many Caricom countries have that vaccine? Have you investigated that before you again malign Trinidad and Tobago as the UNC constantly does?

Members: *[Desk thumping]*

Hon. Deyalsingh: How many Caricom countries have this vaccine? Investigate that.

Dr. Seecheran: Can I ask another question?

Madam Chairman: Please.

Dr. Seecheran: Minister, given the fact that the 12.5 million is for the acquisition of COVID-19 vaccines, do you have any specific vaccine orders currently that you can speak of in terms of which vaccine, the number of doses that you are ordering and possibly the estimated time of arrival of these vaccines?

Hon. Deyalsingh: We have a non-disclosure agreement with Pfizer so it is difficult for me to give that information. Pfizer is the only vaccine that is currently approved for the five to 11 age group.

Dr. Seecheran: I am speaking across the board, children and adults, the 12.5 million.

Hon. Deyalsingh: And I said, we are looking at the Moderna bivalent vaccine, and I remember – distinctly remember –

Dr. Seecheran: And the number of doses?

Hon. Deyalsingh: If you will let me finish, please? Thank you. So we are looking at the Moderna bivalent vaccine. It has not yet been approved. Once it is approved we will then look at number of doses. Similarly, we are looking at the Novavax, what they are calling the Novavax year-three vaccine because we are going to the year of this pandemic. We are just being very proactive in having the allocation. So in case the vaccines are approved and we can apply them for Trinidad and Tobago, the funding is there.

Dr. Seecheran: Well, Minister, what that means is that in the short-term the students between the age group of five to 11 will only have 20,000 vaccines available to them – for 20,000 persons, children, in the short-term because we have not even received the 40,000 doses from Spain as yet.

Hon. Deyalsingh: And that is the only vaccine available for that age group at this point in time. I do not know why that is so hard to understand –

Dr. Seecheran: There is huge amount of COVID-19 in schools. Children are acquiring COVID-19 in droves and are carrying it home to their homes. We had over 500 cases of COVID-19 today.

Hon. Deyalsingh: If you look at the number of vaccines being distributed now and people

talking about guinea pigs – people talking – one UNC Senator talking about he does not want to be vaccinated because this is not a communist state. That is the type of narrative that is hampering the vaccination – [Inaudible]

Dr. Seecheran: Minister, what I am trying to say is that little children in this age group are not protected.

Hon. Deyalsingh: And we are going to have 20,000 doses.

Members: [Crosstalk]

Madam Chairman: Members. All right, Members, Member for Fyzabad, please.

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, this is just a point for clarification. It may be an error in the document but I just want clarification. So I want to refer 04/011/16, that is the NIPDEC Loan, the payment, on page 20, but I want to link that to the schedule which is on page 23, and they both speak to line Item 16. Now, when you go back to the original budget documents these are new Items that were laid in the last budget. So, it is showing a figure here on page 23 of the Schedule of \$46,399,358, and you are looking at the revised provision there, the additional 22, but that \$46 million for line Item 16 and the original budget allocation there was a figure of \$35,524,438 – [Inaudible] – if we look at those figures. So I am asking whether one is incorrect?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Could you just repeat that please –

Dr. Bodoë: What is the explanation?

Hon. Deyalsingh: – because I have the Schedule here. Just repeat the question please.

Dr. Bodoë: Yes. If you look at the Schedule, Sub-Item 16, it is \$46,399,358, but I am seeing the original budget document when laid gave a figure for Item 16, a figure of \$35,524,438. I do not know if you have reference, if you will have access to the original budget allocation.

Hon. Deyalsingh: What I have is the Schedule here and you are right, it says \$46,399,358, but I not have the original document here.

Dr. Bodoë: Okay. Maybe it is something you can look at.

Hon. Deyalsingh: 46,399,358.

Dr. Bodoë: Yeah. Can I ask perhaps if that could be looked at and clarified for Monday? Before Monday?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Sure. We would try.

Dr. Bodoë: Okay. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. And just to put it in the proper perspective, the UNC has never been upset about the Government acquiring vaccines. It is about the Government's

inability –

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Indarsingh: – and procrastination as it relates to the acquisition of vaccines.

Mr. Young: The Member for Oropouche East was the first one on the block screaming do not be guinea pigs.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, I am trying to ask the Minister a question. Why is this outburst from Members of the –

Member: – disrespectful

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Deyalsingh: Madam Chair, could I respond to that please for the record?

7.25 p.m.

Mr. Indarsingh: The Minister made some broad pronouncements to my colleague and I think it is important for me to clarify the Opposition's position.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Indarsingh: More importantly, Minister –

Hon. Deyalsingh: Madam Chair.

Mr. Indarsingh: –you boasted and you indicated –I listened to you very attentively. You indicated that in relation to 04/09/02, and the allocation of \$20 million for the North West Regional Health Authority, and 39,300,124-plus million for the North Central Regional Health Authority, and Southwest Regional Health Authority, \$90.1 million, you indicated that this is for payment going forward, and there are no outstanding arrears in relation to salaries for employees at the respective Regional Health Authorities. Could you indicate to this meeting what is the current status, or in terms of workers' employment, what salaries are they working on in the Regional Health Authorities, whether it is 2012, 2022 or 2014 and so on?

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, is that relevant to this Committee meeting? It cannot be. It cannot be.

Madam Chairman: I will not allow that question.

Mr. Imbert: He is wasting our time.

Mr. Indarsingh: It is not wasting time.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance, Member for Couva South. Minister of Finance and Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: [*Inaudible*] He is very condescending and disrespectful –

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South. I will ask the both of you all, maybe you need to take a little drink "ah" water. "I know we sitting down here long." Maybe you all need to do that,

and resume. Member for Caroni East.

Hon. Deyalsingh: Just for clarification please. The Member for Couva South made some remarks about vaccines. May I have a chance to correct the record please? It was the Member for Oropouche East who in a Saturday morning newspaper, I read with horror, telling this country not to take Sinopharm vaccines because they will be guinea pigs.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Deyalsingh: Two, in that same article – in that same –

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Deyalsingh: In that same article, he is quoted as saying why is the Government –

Mr. Indarsingh: You cannot continue to use your ministerial portfolio here to engage in propaganda.

Hon. Deyalsingh: “Yuh see.”

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South. Member for Couva South. Member for Couva South, are you hearing me?

Mr. Indarsingh: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Well, please if I am addressing you, kindly look in my direction, because you are almost backing me. If somebody says something, and they say something inciteful, this is what is going to happen.

Hon. Deyalsingh: Exactly.

Madam Chairman: So let us get on with the business. Okay?

Hon. Deyalsingh: So may I finish? And in that same article, he questioned why is the Government bringing so many brands of vaccine. So in one article he discourages people do not be guinea pigs. Two, he is accusing the Government – [*Interruption*]

Madam Chairman: If you want to speak, you know what to do.

Hon. Deyalsingh: He is accusing the Government of bringing too many brands of vaccine. Sen. Nakhid is on the record as saying he is not going to be vaccinated because he does not want to live in a communist state. Sen. Lyder is quoted as saying he is healthy, so he does not need to be vaccinated.

Mr. Lee: Madam Speaker, can I invoke 48(1) please?

Hon. Deyalsingh: If that is not being anti-vaxxers, I do not know what is.

Mr. Lee: 48(1), irrelevance. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Young: I agree. [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann’s West.

Mr. Young: I said that loud again, Ma’am?

Madam Chairman: Very. So maybe I will have to get you a little volume controller. “Ah know allyuh tired, we here long, so ah allowing everybody to get a little pow wow.” All right? Everybody got a lil pow-wow? Let us now compose ourselves and move forward. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, line Item 39, Drugs and other related Materials and Supplies. My question to you is, with this \$12.5 million would the Government be acquiring any of the COVID-19 drugs recommended by the Seemungal report that are in deficiency in the Ministry of Health?

Hon. Deyalsingh: There are no drugs recommended, spoken about in the Seemungal report, that are deficient. What the Seemungal report spoke about was methylprednisolone. However, we had the alternative which was first recommended by WHO, which is betamethasone. That is one.

Two, the issue of the other drug, as the Chief Medical Officer has explained on numerous occasions, we never ran out of the drug. It was used in accordance with the type of patient it was recommended to.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member, I just want to caution. Under that Item the note is to facilitate the acquisition of COVID-19 vaccines for children. I allowed you to stretch it to COVID drugs, let us get back on track. We are not going down “de road about de other drugs”. This is about COVID-19 vaccines. It is not that your question is not important. This is not the forum for it.

Dr. Seecheran: No problem. Another question?

Madam Chairman: Sure.

Dr. Seecheran: Under line Item 04/009/02, 3, 4 and 5, the Member for Fyzabad had asked for the number of persons that would be hired with this allocation to be given in writing. What I am asking is, could I ask you some direct questions about that as well?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Yes. I do not think the Member for Fyzabad asked for the number of persons per category. Am I correct? If that is available, if it is available—because this is going forward into the future, and as all Ministers have explained, going into the future we cannot have fixed numbers at this point in time. It is an allocation based on contingencies moving forward.

Dr. Seecheran: Do you have an idea, could you give me an idea of the number of doctors, nurses, attendants and orderlies that you plan to hire in the future, using this allocation?

Madam Chairman: I think the answer that was given anticipated your question. Okay. Do you have another question?

Dr. Seecheran: Minister, with this new allocation of \$274 million, are you confident that the Ministry of Health would have enough personnel should another COVID-19 surge occur?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Yes.

Dr. Seecheran: Another question? Minister, has any consideration been given to acquiring additional services in the mental health aspect, professionals, to assist frontline workers that have been under constant strain for the last two years, in this allocation?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Yes.

Dr. Seecheran: You have an idea of the job titles and the number of persons to be hired?

Hon. Deyalsingh: As I have explained before, this allocation is moving forward. It would be based on needs as they arise.

Dr. Seecheran: Madam Chair, can I go back to line Item 04/009/01? With regard to the GMRTT, has this vendor given any indication that they would be increasing the number of ambulances that would be in service in the near future?

Hon. Deyalsingh: That would be determined by the new contract to be awarded, because the contract would have built into it things like average response times and the number of ambulances that would be required. So we would have to wait until the new contract is approved to look at that.

Dr. Seecheran: And Minister, in this new contract would additional advanced life support and basic life support ambulances be required to be provided by this vendor?

Hon. Deyalsingh: As I have just explained, based on what new contract is approved, that will determine the mix and type and numbers of ambulances moving forward, once the new contract is approved. Whether it is advanced life, basic, whatever.

Dr. Seecheran: And in this new contract, Minister, is there a provision for a second ambulance hub possibly in central or south Trinidad?

Hon. Deyalsingh: Madam Chair, just for clarity. This is just to pay some existing – I mean, this is just for some arrears to continue the ambulance service, but this enquiry is not about the new contract. I have tried to give you some leeway. [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: Minister. Minister of Finance, I think the Minister of Health can handle his portfolio adequately.

7.35 p.m.

Madam Chairman: Minister. Minister of Finance, I think the Minister of Health can handle his portfolio adequately. Okay. So, the Member for Caroni East, I am not going to allow any more questions on contract to happen, the Minister has given us some information which is outside of the remit, but let us come back to this. If you have no further questions, I can now proceed to put the question

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 28 supplemented by the sum of \$362,887,700.

Madam Chairman: Thank you Minister of Health; thank you, PS Health and your team. You all are relieved.

Head 37: Integrity Commission, \$350,000.

[Technical difficulties]

Hon. Imbert: I will do it because it will be done in one second.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: The Integrity Commission is a constitutional body created by sections 138 and 139 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and established by section 4 of the Integrity in Public Life Act.

Question proposed: That Head 37 be supplemented by the sum of \$350,000.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 37 supplemented by the sum of \$350,000.

Madam Chairman: The Minister of Finance, thank you; the Registrar of the Integrity Commission and your team, thank you. You are relieved.

Head 39: Ministry of Public Utilities, \$467,882,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Public Utilities to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Gonzales: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker – Madam Chair, sorry. Madam Chair, I welcome the opportunity to address the Standing Finance Committee of Parliament. When I took the mantle of leadership of the Ministry of Public Utilities, I resolved that the Ministry and its agencies would eliminate the inefficiencies through stronger leadership, governance and accountability, maximize existing resources and achieve greater cost effectiveness so that the needs of the population with respect to public utilities services can be adequately met.

In this regard, the Ministry of Public Utilities continues to be unswerving in its efforts to accelerate the transformation of the utilities sector. This is an urgent and absolute imperative as the sector globally continues to be challenged by rapid technology advancements. This situation mandates a need for utilities to inter alia deploy smart-grid technologies as well as adopt more agile delivery models to improve their customers' experience in a sustainable manner. At the same time, their ageing infrastructure requires huge capital investments in maintenance repairs and expansion. The Ministry is very cognizant of the country's financial constraints and the socio-economic challenges being experienced. We remain resolute in our commitment to ensure that

the population is provided with enhanced, reliable and efficient utility services, and that the country gets value for money for the expenditure of public funds. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Question proposed: That Head 39 be supplemented by the sum of \$467,882,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 02/001/42, Street Lighting. There is an allocation of 68,400, can the hon. Minister indicate the recreation grounds which this sum was utilized for?

Hon. Gonzales: Can you ask that question again, hon. Member? I did not hear you clearly.

Mr. Padarath: The question, hon. Minister is, in light of this expenditure of 68,400, the explanation says it is for street lighting and lighting of parks and recreation grounds. I was wondering if you could provide us with the recreation grounds that this facilitated?

Hon. Gonzales: All.

Members: [Laughter]

Hon. Gonzales: All.

Mr. Padarath: All?

Hon. Gonzales: Correct.

Mr. Padarath: Over the last financial year?

Hon. Gonzales: So, this Item is to pay T&TEC in its recurrent sum for the lighting of street lights, parks and recreational facilities. So, the Ministry of Public Utilities is responsible for paying T&TEC that sum for the light of street lights, recreational grounds, recreational spaces across Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. Minister, in light of that answer then, would you be able to provide, through T&TEC the grounds that were lit for the last financial year?

Hon. Gonzales: No, no, no, it is a recurrent sum. It is recurrent.

Mr. Padarath: Oh, this is recurrent?

Hon. Gonzales: Correct.

Mr. Padarath: Okay.

Hon. Gonzales: Okay?

Mr. Padarath: Okay. Minister, line Item 04/007/08. This has to do with the rebates of the electricity bills, a sum of 12 million. Can you indicate how many persons benefited from this?

Hon. Gonzales: Two hundred and twenty thousand citizens. They are all beneficiaries of this programme. It was recently, in the last budget increased from 25 per cent to 35 per cent. And normally, or not normally, but citizens whose bills are \$300 and below they benefit from this rebate, and it is approximately 220,000 citizens benefit from this programme.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. Line Item 02/004/51, WASA. I see that there are some allocations with respect to salaries for employees at WASA, but also with respect to the loan payments to DESALCOTT in the tune of 161,325,000, Minister can you tell us when would this loan mature?

Hon. Gonzales: I do not have that information with me at this point in time, but I can provide it at a later date.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. And, also can you clarify the US \$25 million loan facilities to settle outstanding balances of the existing revolving credit facility?

Hon. Gonzales: What is the question you want me to clarify?

Mr. Padarath: Just for clarification on this particular line Item, I was not too sure.

Hon. Gonzales: To settle an outstanding balance of an existing revolving credit facility.

7.45 p.m.

Mr. Padarath: Can you give us some clarification in terms of what this would have been last utilized for?

Hon. Gonzales: For the payment of outstanding sums to Desalcott.

Mr. Padarath: To Desalcott.

Hon. Gonzales: Yes.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. Minister, if we go on to the items identified under DP –

Member: *[Interruption]*

Hon. Gonzales: Yes.

Mr. Padarath: The first line Item under DP 003/ 05A/591 which is the Transmission Infrastructure to move forward from TGU to National Grid, 18 million. Minister, in the establishment of Union Estate, Gandhi Village, 220KV double circuit with this expenditure, does the Ministry envisage that there will be a programme of decentralizing these facilities over the next financial year in light what happened with the blackout?

Hon. Gonzales: What facilities?

Mr. Padarath: To decentralize where you have here the Union Estate Gandhi Village substations, from one part of the country to rather throughout the entire country.

Hon. Gonzales: This programme or project really is the construction of an extra 220 kilovolt line. Right now we just have one. And unfortunately the last blackout that we had it is as a result of that single line that got interrupted by the fallen Palmiste tree and another high powered line coming into contact with it. With the construction of this line it adds an additional layer of resilience to the system and redundancies. So therefore if God forbid there is an interference with your existing 220 kilovolts line this will give you that additional resilience to the system. So that is what this project is all about. It is due to be completed later on this year and it will give that

greater resilience to the electricity infrastructure.

Mr. Padarath: Madam, if you would allow line Item 03/05A/601, the Renewable Energy Incentive, \$2,382,000. The explanation here says it is to enable the procurement of two Wind Lidar Unit and ancillary equipment. Can the hon. Minister indicate whether or not they would be going out for public tender –

Hon. Gonzales: Public tender.

Mr. Padarath: – with respect to this?

Hon. Gonzales: Absolutely.

Mr. Padarath: Minister, do you have like a turnaround time of when you expect of these projects will come on stream?

Hon. Gonzales: Yes. The information I have is that the two LiDAR devices should be procured by September/October of this year. They will be put into effect and the outcome of the investigation should completed in about 18 months.

Mr. Padarath: And if we go on to line Item 005/06A/061, the Community Water Improvement Programme.

Hon. Gonzales: Yes.

Mr. Padarath: A sum here of 35 million and the explanations says, the completion of 34 projects and the Community Water Improvement Programme. Can the hon. Minister be kind enough to share with us the 34 projects?

Hon. Gonzales: You would like to get a list of the 34 projects?

Mr. Padarath: Please.

Hon. Gonzales: So I will start. So it is the construction of a La Fillette booster or rehabilitation to La Fillette booster in Paramin; the upgrade of another booster in the Paramin area; number three, is the replacement of a 330 metre old encrusted pipeline along Second Street in Barataria. It is the installation of a new line in Balata Hill, Paramin; Quarry Street, Champ Fleur; the installation of an 800 millimetre pipeline at Middle Quarry Street Drive in Champ Fleur; Upper Phillip Trace, Tunapuna; the replacement of 200 metre line; a high leakage four inch line at Maingot Road to the end of Phillip Trace and Phillip Trace Extension; Church Street in Matura; the installation of a 450 metre; 100 millimetre PVC pipeline on Church Street in Matura; Pine Avenue in Valencia, pipeline project; Sugar Lane; Blake Avenue, Sangre Grande; Jubilee Street in Guaico Tamana; St. Alban's in Valencia; First People Blanchisseuse; Valsayn Waterworks; Huda Drive, Las Lomas; Appoo Avenue Orange Field in Carapichaima; Kanchan Trace in Caratal; Corosal Road in Grand Couva; Patino's booster in Tobago; Signal Hill Main Road in Tobago; Les Coteaux Main Road Extension; Young Street in Tobago; the completion of the Petro Guaya water treatment plant in

Mayaro; the construction of a new pilot raw water intake plant in Mayaro and there is another one in Carapichaima, I cannot remember the exact location. But those are some of the project that we intend to undertake in the third phase based on the funding that is made available to us.

Mr. Padarath: Minister, can you indicate how these projects are identified because the areas you have listed 90 per cent of them are in north Trinidad. There seems to be very little work being done in south and central Trinidad. Can you identify how these projects –

Hon. Gonzales: So in the second phase a lot of projects were completed in South and Central Trinidad, all right. The Member for Manzanilla he benefited tremendously and he would let you know –

Member: Mayaro.

Hon. Gonzales: Just hold a second. I can only do based on funding that is available to me, all right. And we have executed a number of these projects in UNC constituencies where UNC supporters are being very grateful for what we have done, but we have to do it across the board and we have to very fair and we have to be very equitable and this project so far has benefited over 100,000 citizens. So in the third phase we continue to spread it across and you asked about what happens and what is the criteria. The criteria is that once a community is receiving water at least under 24/2 or they do not have access to water, that community will qualify for the project based on funding that is available.

Madam Chairman: Member for Mayaro.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Minister, I just want to bring your attention back to Sub-Head 09 Developmental Programme, project 61, Community Water Improvement Programme, the \$35 million that have been appropriated. I just heard you mention two projects specifically for the Mayaro which I am very excited to hear about, because as you would know we have been having severe issues with distribution and supply throughout the constituency. My question to you Minister is these two projects, will it address what I think we would have conversations with the WASA folks about, a shortfall about two millions of gallons of water per day throughout the constituency? On a best case scenario, right now we get one day in seven and in the worst case scenario sometimes –

Hon. Gonzales: Some areas.

Mr. Paray: – one every three weeks which I know is the challenge that we are facing. Would these projects address those issues for us or are there anything earmarked for future that can address these issues and bring us to something a little more reasonable in the constituency?

Hon. Gonzales: Thanks. So those two projects that I have mentioned for the Mayaro area, they will impact positively in some of the communities as WASA would define as the extremities.

Those communities that get water from the Navet facility and/or reservoir where it takes approximately 48 hours, sometimes two days, three days, for that line to be charged up for water to reach the end point and the extremities of those communities. What we believe is that we have to localize the sources of water and in those two projects that I have mentioned a short while ago there will now be a localized source of water that will increase water productivity so that those communities will not have to rely on water coming from Navet. That is in the short term, because the sea way projects are really short-term investments that can have a big impact within a short period of time. But we also earmarked for the Mayaro area the construction of water treatment plant utilizing water from the Ortoire River, and we believe based on preliminary investigation by the WRA that we can get approximately two million gallons of water from the Ortoire River with a separate water treatment plant that can bring that Mayaro community closer to 24/7 water.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Minister.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I want to take the hon. Minister attention back to project number 061, Community Water Improvement Programme. Hon. Minister last year in the mid-year review under this same line item you requested an additional \$16 million and you gave an undertaking in that mid-year review that the improvement of the water supply in Brickfield, Carapichaima –

Mr. Young: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Okay. The Member is prefacing his question with something.

Member: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: Please, remember, remember we have five minutes on an intervention. I did not make the rule, I met the rule that you all made.

Mr. Ratiram: Port of Spain North continues to be disrespectful in a committee –

Madam Chairman: So the question is –

Member: 48(1).

Mr. Ratiram: Port of Spain North just continue to be disrespectful to the Committee –

Madam Chairman: Member, Member, some things Member, some things you focus on and some things you do not. Please ask your question.

7.55 p.m.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Guided accordingly. Yes, hon. Minister, in last year's Standing Finance Committee, you had requested an additional \$16 million and you did give us an undertaking that one of the projects that that \$16 million would focus on was the

improvement of the water supply for Brickfield community. I heard you call out a list of projects and you ended off by saying and another one in the Carapichaima area you cannot recall. Can you advise if the Brickfield improvement water supply—

Hon. Gonzales: It is in Brickfield and that project is due to commence in two to three weeks.

Mr. Ratiram: Two to three weeks. Thank you very much, hon. Minister. Madam Chair, may I ask just one more? Thank you. And with respect to the Orange Field Appoo Avenue Water Improvement Project that you called out there, can you advise when that is expected to commence?

Hon. Gonzales: In the third phase.

Mr. Ratiram: In the third phase?

Hon. Gonzales: Yes. The third phase is due to commence in one month's time.

Mr. Ratiram: One month's time. Thank you very much, Minister.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Dr. Ragbir: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the hon. Minister, well, same line Item, Community Water Improvement Programme. Hon. Minister, does that area also include the Turure project by national quarries?

Hon. Gonzales: No.

Dr. Ragbir: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni Central. No? Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, with respect to 005/06 A., 061, Community Water Improvement Programme, as you would be aware of some issues that I have been liaising with you in relation to the constituency of Couva South, are you prepared under this Head going forward to liaise or consult with Members of Parliament in the compilation of these Community Water Improvement Programme projects?

Madam Chairman: Wait, we are under 005/06/ A. 061? Those are the 34 projects that the Minister was asked to identify. Are you asking about one of the 34 projects?

Mr. Indarsingh: [*Inaudible*]

Madam Chairman: Are you asking about one of the 34 projects?

Mr. Indarsingh: I am asking in the context of all 34 projects in terms of consultation with Members of Parliament.

Madam Chairman: I am not going to allow that question because very clever, we are allowed to talk about the 34 projects that were identified. Okay? Yes.

Mr. Indarsingh: Minister, with respect to 02/004/51, Water and Sewerage Authority, \$328 million. This \$150,248,000 to meet payment of wages and salaries, could you inform or advise this

meeting whether this is for what purpose in terms of meeting salaries and wages? Have WASA recruited additional personnel? WASA signed off on any collective agreement and so on?

Hon. Gonzales: It is to pay existing obligations for wages and salaries and COLA and other allowances.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay, but in terms of the initial allocation, that was not factored in when the budget in terms of Ministry of Public Utilities via WASA through the Ministry of Finance—

Hon. Gonzales: That is the purpose of this exercise.

Mr. Indarsingh: Well, something seems to be amiss so that in the mid-year review, \$150 million.

Mr. Imbert: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Indarsingh: I know, Minister, but it seems to be one of under budgeting and a lack of planning.

Madam Chairman: Member for Moruga/Tableland.

Ms. Benjamin: Thank you, Madam Chair. With regard to line Item 61, was just to get clarity from the Minister if the Marac booster plant is part of this due to consultations that I would have had with WASA officials recently. I did not hear that itemized as one of the projects.

Madam Chairman: [*Inaudible*] 34 projects?

Ms. Benjamin: Yes, Madam.

Madam Chairman: So if you did not hear it—is it in the 34?

Ms. Benjamin: Nothing on it.

Mr. Young: “Doh go and bun no tyre.”

Members: [*Laughter and crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: No, no, let us stop wasting time. Member—

Members: [*Interruption and crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: Excuse me. A Member asked the Minister to list all 34. He listed all 34.

Ms. Benjamin: Madam Chair, my question was based on documents that would have been sent to the Minister and conversation and consultation in the area.

Madam Chairman: And Member for Moruga/Tableland, if you would have heard my ruling just now to the Member for Couva South, you would understand why I have adopted this approach.

Ms. Benjamin: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the question is— Minister of Finance, I am being disturbed.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 39 supplemented by the sum of \$467,882,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you, Minister of Public Utilities; I thank you Madam PS and your team. You all are relieved. Head 40, Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries.

Head 40: Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, \$300,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I would just like to use this opportunity to thank the Permanent Secretaries and all of the staff at the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries for the tremendous amount of work that they have been doing in an interesting, challenging but gratifying time in the energy sector.

Madam Chairman: Finished?

Hon. Young: That is it, yeah.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 40 be supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, in the line item in this Ministry that you are asking for \$300 million for the shortfall in subsidy, resale of petroleum products and the original budget back in October, the request was for \$10 million, it was approved and that would have been based on projection for this fiscal year and it did not pan out that way. Could you tell this House, this committee how the \$300 million that is being required or requested, how you all arrived at that \$300 million?

Hon. Young: As is known in the energy sector, unfortunately, certain global events have taken place and one of the effects of that is that fuel prices have gone up, they have skyrocketed to be honest and as the Minister of Finance has explained in the public domain on a number of occasions in the past few weeks, the country was faced with approximately \$2 billion in fuel subsidy and certain decisions were taken after you deducted the levy from the petroleum companies which is only about 20 per cent of the real cost of fuel and therefore, we were left with certain figures that had to be met, certain amounts of subsidy that had to be met. So the Ministry of Finance determined that at this stage, they will provide \$300 million towards subsidies that have to be paid, but of course, if there is a need for more, we will consult with the Ministry of Finance and they would be able to provide it from the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Lee: A follow-up.

Madam Chairman: Yes, please, Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: This is mid-year review and it is based on for the remainder of the fiscal year which is about four and a half months. Is it safe to say that the \$300 million that you are requesting is sufficient to fulfil the entire fiscal year as far as a subsidy?

Hon. Young: The energy sector is particularly volatile right now so it is safe to say very little and

I am certainly not going to go and commit myself to saying that it will be or it will not be. This is what has been provided to us at this stage and we will deal with it as it comes.

8.05 p.m.

Mr. Lee: Minister, given that the subsidies requested here, do envisage any increase in the gas prices at the pump until the remainder of the fiscal year; till the rest of the fiscal year?

Hon. Young: As I just said it is very, very volatile. I will tell you, I was in Houston recently and literally at an intersection, you look on one side and the price for diesel at a Shell gas station was US \$4.63. So multiply that by roughly \$7, over \$30 for diesel. On the other side of the interaction was another gas station. I cannot remember the name and it was at \$4.25. You went to that same intersection the day after, the prices had risen to above \$5. Fortunately, we here in Trinidad and Tobago do not face that type of volatility at the pump on a daily basis. I cannot predict where prices will go but what I can say is the Government has taken a decision and we are absorbing some of the cost of this for the citizens. And as the Minister of Finance has been educating us in the last few weeks, unfortunately we had to go with a rise at the pump, but it is still quite subsidized.

Mr. Lee: My final question. Minister, based on what was in the public domain by the Minister of Finance about between a billion and \$2 billion in subsidy and now it is only \$300 million has been requested, the question I would like to ask for the first part of the fiscal year, is it safe to say that the public was paying a high price at the pump that is why we are now only requesting \$300 million gas a subsidy for the rest of the fiscal year?

Hon. Young: The Minister of Finance is going to come in to answer – want to say something. The answer is no.

Mr. Imbert: If you look at the Estimates of Revenue for 2022, you would see a surplus on fuel of over \$500 million. That was generated when the price of oil was much lower than it is now. That entire surplus has been eaten. So this is an addition to that. And the subsidy is not just on gasoline and diesel. It is also on LPG. And the subsidy on LPG that we have had to pay recently is over \$500 million. So it is a combination of factors. So that the revenue from the surplus no longer exists and also in our calculations it includes LPG. Okay? So it is not just the liquid fuels.

All right? It is quite complicated.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 40 supplemented by the sum of \$300,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Energy and Energy Industries. Thank you, PS and thank you to your team. You are relieved.

Head 42: Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, \$95,357,000.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Rural Development and Local Government to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair. In recognition of the number of hours spent here today and of my colleagues' efforts, I make myself available to answer any questions that may be posed.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 42 be supplemented by the sum of \$95,375,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for St. Augustine.

Ms. Ameen: Thank you. Madam Chairman, I want to take Item 001, General Administration, the Sub-Item 23, Fees. There is 2.5 million which, under the explanation provided, is to meet expenditure associated with the implementation of the Procurement Act for the digitalization of the Ministry's records for legal services, as well as the acquisition of software licence. Can the Minister provide a breakdown of how this 2.5 million will be spent on each of these Items?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, I cannot, because it is an aggregated sum which is an estimate to take us to the year end. We are in the process of mapping out from the public sector/public admin position, that which is required to operationalize both the digitization unit of the Ministry, and secondly the public procurement unit, which include challenge proceedings. In those

circumstances the position is yet to be confirmed by the Ministry of Public Admin. As we progress with the local government reform, we are expecting that this sum would at least take us to the end of this financial year.

Ms. Ameen: One of the Items listed here is legal services. Surely that is a cost that you could provide separate to indicate the amount that you have spent or you plan to spend on legal services.

Hon. Al-Rawi: So Madam Chair, this is not a matter of what has been spent, it is a matter of what to be incurred by way of postulation –

Ms. Ameen: Yes, what it is allocated for.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Would you allow me to answer the question?

Ms. Ameen: Yes.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Thank you. Madam Chair, this is to take us to the year end. In anticipation, this Head aggregates a number of Items set out in the explanation. It also includes, Madam Chair, that which we have to pay for, for service-level agreements and for IT funding for the digitization. So it is an estimate which we hope will take us through to the year end. And surely at the closing of accounts, by the Ministry of Finance, we will have accurate figures, as every year they are produced.

Ms. Ameen: Yes. With regard to software licenses, can you state what software licences are going to be attained/acquired under this Vote and who the vendor will be, who is providing the software?

Hon. Al-Rawi: I cannot, because they are not yet confirmed. It is a matter once fees are populated, once the expenditure is identified, it is then that the procurement process begins, because you have to have confirmation of funding first before the procurement cycle can go in an open tender or RFP or EOI cycle. It is then that vendors become identified with certainty. So that

is not the way procurement operates, Madam.

Ms. Ameen: Can you state what software licences the Ministry intends to acquire under this allocation?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Several software licences which include information technology tools for applications and positions. Again, because of the manner in which procurement is done, the multiple versions of software licences are not yet there because that will be produced in the procurement cycle. So by way of example, if you are going for a particular information technology product, there may be three or four different types of licences, which may all be adequate and fit for purpose but which pricing would not be best until the procurement cycle happens.

Madam Chairman: Member for St. Augustine.

Ms. Ameen: Madam Chairman, Sub-Item 28, Other Contracted Services. I note that there is a 1.8 million allocation under this Sub-Item and the explanation is to facilitate the purchase of materials for the National Clean-up Campaign. Can the Minister provide a breakdown in terms of how this will be spent? I know the campaign is ongoing?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Yes, Madam Chair. Each corporation will receive on average \$130,000 – multiply by 14, you will get the figure – and the figures are specifically for the need Items identified by the corporations. I wish at this moment please, Madam Chair, to thank the many corporations for the very excellent work they have engaged in. Our campaign began in April.

8.15 p.m.

Last weekend we finished the corporation of Siparia and this weekend will be in Penal/Debe and I have had direct discussions with the several chairmen in these constituencies. And whilst the sum is a tight sum \$130,000 it certainly has managed to allow us to do Diego Martin Regional Corporation, Port of Spain Regional Corporation, Siparia Regional Corporation and this week Penal/Debe Regional Corporation.

Ms. Ameen: Mr. Minister, this 130,000 realistic? I am thinking this is more like to clean up one electoral district. What is your intention with this programme going forward and how do you intend to fund it?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Sure, Madam Chair, thank you. It is a tough some. Fortunately, Madam Chair, if you see what we have done already, with \$130,000 in Diego Martin Regional Corporation, which is nearly the entire northwestern end of Trinidad. Port of Spain Regional Corporation and Siparia, we have stretched quite frankly because of the ingenuity of clustering assets, where we bring several corporations together to assist. So, Diego Martin had the advantage of San Juan/Laventille, Port of Spain, Diego Martin, Tunapuna/Piarco regional and then volunteers on top of that. And again, I would like to pay public tribute to my Permanent Secretary who is sitting to my left to the hard-working members of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government and to the several Chairmen who have all jumped in to lend a hand to basically do something which appears in some perspectives to only do one electoral district, but which has in actuality already done three corporations.

Ms. Ameen: Madam Chair, I—later on as we go on to the regional corporation that I want to mention it here that it is clear that the Ministry is really taken the corporations' resources to do this, and therefore that is why the cost is this low. The Item also lists purchase of materials, what materials will they be purchasing here?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, the statement made by my friend is a little confusing because some corporations have no resources at all. So if you go to the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation or San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation, some of them do not have assets at all. And therefore, to say that we are clearly using the assets of the corporation—number one, we are entitled to use the assets of the corporation and we are clustering those assets. And number two, we are paying \$130,000 per corporation to exercise three successful cleanups and surveys so far. In respect of the second part of the question, which was what are the goods and services we will have a full tally of those as we proceed, they are diverse in nature, and they are not with precision, nor are they with uniformity from corporation to corporation, because each need is different.

Madam Chairman: Okay, Member St. Augustine, I know you have other questions, might I invite Member for Couva North at this stage. I will come back at you. Member for Couva North, Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair, I will give way for the Member for St. Augustine to complete the rest of her question.

Madam Chairman: Does that mean you are no longer asking any questions?

Mr. Ratiram: Sorry.

Madam Chairman: That means you are no longer asking any questions?

Mr. Ratiram: Yes, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Well, I am inviting you to ask your questions now.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, with respect the Sub-Head 03 current transfer to statutory bodies and similar bodies. Item 005, the corporations are listed there and the increases is to enable the 14 municipal corporations to pay wages as well as, sums owed for the provision of goods and services. Can you hon. Minister identify what are the goods and services that are being owed, the payment is for?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, to engage in an identification of the diversity of goods and services in 14 regional corporations is a sheer impossibility at this microphone because they are just completely diverse. The good news is that this is an anticipated expenditure for moneys to be provided for goods and services to be incurred in the next half of this financial year. When that money is spent, the many years that some people will have recognized our records reveal, the closing of accounts will have precision what the goods and services that have been spent upon are and certainly Madam Chair, this system of audit and identification at year end will provide that answer.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, to the hon. Minister, if the Minister does not have the answer or thinks it is too much to answer in this forum would the hon. Minister be able to provide us with a breakdown of the outstanding payments in writing?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, I did not say that I did not have it because it did not exist, I said it is yet to be put in place. I cannot foretell now what is going to be secured. What I do know is that there is an estimate that was requested to meet goods and services in a future context. And insofar as that is a hypothetical equation, we will have to wait for the year end to get that answer.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, Minister, what the explanation provided here, as well as sums owed for the provision of goods and services. So what I am asking you for, if you read the document, you will understand the question, I am asking if you can identify what is being owed?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, the Member's restatement of his question is with a lot more precision than that first asked. He has now bifurcated his question into that which is owed, but he said tell us what is due for the rest of this. I started off by saying that it was an impossibility at this point because of the future application. And in answer to the precision now provided as to what is owed historically, Madam Chair, that is an exercise that we are currently auditing. In fact, we have been corporation to corporation to confirm the exact figures and regrettably that information is not available at present.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: So we are asking for moneys to pay outstanding expenses for the provision of goods and services and this is approximately \$40 million. The Minister is here asking for and the Minister cannot provide us with what this \$40 million is to pay?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, perhaps –

Mr. Ratiram: Something seems fundamentally wrong here.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Yes, Madam Chair, my friend is correct. There is something fundamentally wrong with comprehension. Part is future –

Ms. Ameen: Madam Speaker –

Hon. Al-Rawi: – part is future –

Ms. Ameen: Madam Chairman.

Hon. Al-Rawi: I am speaking. Part is future and therefore contingent and conditional and part is certain. The part which is certain is under audit. What we do know Madam Chair, is that if there is a shortfall, the Minister of Finance will be approached once the audit exercise is completed because what we are certain about is that once moneys are due and owing and confirmed to be due and owing, there is an obligation to pay. It is something I have already alerted the Minister of Finance to, the Permanent Secretary working together with the CEOs and Chairmen of the relevant corporations to obtain that which is in audit.

Madam Chairman: Member for St. Augustine.

Ms. Ameen: Madam Chairman, I, perhaps – Each regional corporation following this standing, this Committee meeting will receive a document with their Heads and Sub-Heads indicating what is allocated to them that will total to the sum here. That document will reflect a breakdown for the specific goods and services that moneys identified here in these Items 005 for local government bodies, and that is what my colleague is referring to. So even if the document is not available at this moment, in order to come up with the sums listed here, the Minister, the Permanent Secretary, must have added up some different Heads to arrive at this total and that is why it is not the same for every corporation. It is not an arbitrary figure or is it? So in order to arrive at the amounts here, you would have determined, in collaboration with the corporation, that they have some outstanding money, for instance, Chaguanas to fix their sewer system, to fix their AC unit in their main building, they would be only in certain contractors and so on. And you would tally that up and that would give you a breakdown for his specific services. And that is what I am asking, together with my colleague, if that could be provided because it would be in the Ministry. So if you could provide that for us by Monday, but even if not by Monday, it would be a useful document.

8.25 p.m.

Hon. Al-Rawi: I thank my colleague for taking care to identify the process by which these estimates are arrived at, Madam Chair. The hon. Member is perfectly correct, that they are identified estimates that are provided. If I could explain, some of those estimates provided are outside of the bounds of the year-on-year allocations. I have before me, Madam Chair, the recurrent and DP expenditure for all of these divisions from the year 2008 to present. And what I can say is that we are within the expenditure parameters of both initial allocations and mid-year supplementation. What we have recognized at the Ministry, is that the need to have a certainty of figures is upon us. There are arrears which are under audit and there are projections which are being certified. Most unfortunately, that exercise is not yet complete.

As I have said before, I have alerted the Minister of Finance to the certainty of coming to figures, and I have already asked, at the appropriate opportunity – it may very well be in the new financial year – that we attend to the figures that are audited. But I do understand what my friend has put forward on the floor. Unfortunately, I am not in a position to provide the answer that the hon. Member has asked.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, through you, to the Minister, based on what the Member for St. Augustine would have asked. Minister, I just have one question in terms of this item which identifies sums owed as it relates to goods and services and that question is: Are you aware that sums owed for the provision of goods and services are significantly affecting the service delivery to burgesses, citizens and residents, based on these sums owed within the various municipalities?

Hon. Al-Rawi: In answer to my friend, Madam Chair, if I may, yes, I am aware, but that is only part of the conversation. The other part of what is affecting service delivery is the process by which sums are requested, releases are requested and sums are certified. What has happened is – and I know my friend is very experienced in this field as is the Member for St. Augustine – what happens is that the process mapping is entirely manual at present. Secondly, the time frame to get the certification for the request for releases is extremely long.

So, from my part, the largest part of the delay is really in the process in which things are paid. It is why we have focused on the previous question answered about the digitization. So, instead of spending three months to six months to effectively spend your PSIP, shortening the process time and having the certification is part of the exercise. So whilst my friend has correctly identified one part of the problem in delivery of services, which is release of moneys, the process and time that it takes is the other part that we are focused upon right now in the massive digitization programme that we have set upon.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, are you aware – well, let me ask it

differently. Some of these corporations are currently operating in a situation where the standard bills have not been paid? So, for example, in the Penal/Debe Regional Corporation, I have councillors whose office rents and payment for incidentals remain outstanding now, since September 2021. So this is not for new expenditure. This is actually expenditure which is programmable and targeted and should not have gotten to that stage where landlords are threatening councillors with eviction or councillors are being disenfranchised in terms of their ability to support.

Is it that the Ministry is now saying that this funding, as delayed as it is, would be applied to those outstanding arrears? And if that is so, what is going to be put in place to ensure that these regular recurrent expenditures do not fall back to the same situation where we have substantial arrears being taken place?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, I thank my friend for the question and the observation. In fact, what the hon. Member for Oropouche West has pointed out is something which has been a perennial problem for decades and the hon. Member is correct. It is part of what I had referred to a lil bit earlier in the process, reorganization of processes so that things which are standing payments and predictable, as you have correctly put onto the record, could be dealt with, with rapidity. Now, in answer to your question, yes, part of these moneys will be applied to those matters that are in arrears. Secondly, in the process reengineering and digitization, we will be able to attend to these things on a much more current basis and immediate basis.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister, just a follow-up, Ma'am. Minister, these are bills that would have been recurrent, so that they should have been budgeted for before, as far back as budget 2022 fiscal in October this year, last year, sorry, and they were not. Allocations were not made for these particular bills which is why I am saying that we are coming now to put a plaster on a situation which existed, because proper allocation of resources was missing. Digitization would not help that with all due respect, neither would this new process, because the process is these bills are recurrent and usually happen.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, whilst my friend is correct, it does not reflect upon an alternative remedy which is something called viring. Anything that is predictable can be vired and, therefore, the requests for virement also are delayed. So, I have seen, at my desk, requests that arrived on the desk months after they are made. So whilst they are predictable and whilst there are alternative techniques for virement, there are other things that delay those situations. So it is not really one jacket to fit one size.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister.

Ms. Ameen: Madam Chairman, in many cases, you cannot vire from where you do not have

money. I understand the Attorney General's attempt at an explanation, but in the budget Standing Finance Committee, there were a number of Votes in regional corporations where there were shortfalls in the allocation, based on what was required for recurrent, anticipated costs. This is not development where you have to request funding and so on in that manner.

Wages for workers, you know the number of employees, you know the cost to take them to until the end of the year. The full allocation was not given. Utility bills, you have an average of what it costs per year, the full amount was not given. Office rentals – that is why councillors are being evicted from their offices. This is a predictable cost. This is not something that you have to decide along the year and then make a request for funding as you would with development programmes.

Under every regional corporation here where the explanation is: To pay wages as well as sums owed for the provision of goods and services, I had raised in the budget and I am asking now, there were shortfalls for paying wages in a number of regional corporations, one of which was Tunapuna/Piarco where St. Augustine sits, and 300 workers were in danger of losing their jobs. I would like to know if the allocation under Sub-Item 30 covers that cost. But in every regional corporation there are employees whose salary or wages were not covered by the allocation made in the budget and the explanation, at that time, is that during this exercise, what is required to take them till the end of the year would be provided. This is why the breakdown for the goods and services is important. Can you tell us if the shortfalls for wages for employees within the regional corporations have been met? And, if not, what plans or what – I do not know what is the Minister of Finance's plans for the Ministry of Local Government in regard to ensuring that workers do not lose their jobs?

8.35 p.m.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, first of all the Government's priority, as the hon. Prime Minister has stated repeatedly during the COVID pandemic, is to maintain employment. Madam Chair, what I can tell you specifically in relation to the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation is that the estimates that were provided to the Ministry involved an increase in the number of days of cycles and therefore they were looking for an increase in goods and services which did not affect the number of people that were employed. It affected a different regime arrangement. Madam Chair, I, being dissatisfied with the information that came, have undertaken an audit to confirm with precision from the desk of each corporation with our accounts unit exactly what is due and owing. And I have already – it is the fourth time I am saying this, but perhaps in a different context, I have already alerted the Minister of Finance that the outcome of the audit, which would be an immediate one – the PS has already started the exercise – will be such that we can confer

with certainty if there are any arrears by the end of year.

There are mechanisms in the budget cycle by which moneys can be obtained even prior to the year end, but what I am saying, Madam Chair, to the best information given delivered to me so far, this will meet the needs and concerns. We are dissatisfied with the information before us and there is an audit to be certain about what we are doing.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Madam Chair, I just want to go back to Current Transfers – to Statutory Board and Similar Bodies – sorry – and, Madam Chair, with respect to the shortfalls that were identified in the initial Appropriation Bill in the budget and the statements that we will pick up that shortfall in this period – in this mid-year review, Madam Chair, there are areas in this Ministry – most areas in this Ministry – is closest to our citizens that falls under this line Item in the provision of Goods and Services; areas such as the scavenging and the picking up of garbage collections, et cetera. And there are many areas that are orphaned areas that has not been assigned to the Corporation but has developed, has houses. Even areas with HDC development exists, like in Couva North Phase 2, Roystonia, Roopsingh development, former Caroni development, et cetera, and these areas have not been vested into the regional corporation but the regional corporation is required to provide goods and services to these burgesses, from scavenging to maintenance of their watercourses, maintenance of their roadways, et cetera.

What I would like the hon. Minister to advise us is this increase that we are seeing here in front of us, does the Minister honestly believe that this increase will be able to fulfil the provision of goods and services to our burgesses, because definitely it will not. And what we are doing here today is really not providing the justice and the respect to our burgesses out there. We are demonstrating how it is that this Government continue to neglect our citizens –

Madam Chairman: Okay. All right. So, Member, I think the point has been made. It is the same point that has been repeated in various styles. I think the Attorney General – sorry – the Minister of Rural Development and Local Government has answered that question. I do not want to use the other word, ad infinitum. I will allow the Minister of Rural Development and Local Government to respond and any other questions, I would ask Members to go on to another Item, Sub-Item; if not I will put the question.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Thank you, Madam Chair. And just to lighten the moment, everybody seems to trip over past and present roles so they have fallen to calling me LG in the Ministry. I just make life easy. So, Madam Chair, what I can say, quite simply, the hon. Member has raised something which is quite true. If you could permit me just to say with respect to orphaned roads, the last

vestings to deal with the issue of orphans was dealt with in 2000 under hand of Carlos John. The current clean-up and survey campaign is precisely to identify the orphaned areas. It is part of the local government reform. And, Madam Chair, to answer the question put to us, we are obviously certain already that when the orphaned parks, roads, developments, et cetera, are vested and brought in, that the current allocations will not meet that expenditure which is why we are currently surveying with a view to conducting an immediate vesting exercise.

Madam Chairman: You have a question?

Ms. Ameen: Under Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Sub-Item 04, Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP), there is an additional \$50 million allocated to CEPEP, given that we had a number of teams being reduced, a number of people losing their jobs and a number of trimming down of the work programmes in CEPEP, can the Minister indicate what the moneys identified as being for the programmes, operational expenditure to September 30, 2022, will be utilized for? – a breakdown of how the \$50 million will be utilized for CEPEP.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Madam Chair, thank you to the hon. Member for the question. CEPEP, as we are well aware, is a very important aspect of the lives of many of us. Madam Chair, CEPEP currently has 319 contractors representing some 9,000 employees in six environmental areas, Central has 40; North-Central has 62; North-East has 65; North-West has 69; South-East has 30; South-West has 44 of the contractors. The 9,000 persons are spread into those regions. Madam Chair, 92 per cent of the 50 million, that is on average close to \$46 million, is specifically for the payment of salaries to make sure that we meet the needs and requirements.

To the best of my knowledge and information, it is only in the island of Tobago that there is any current issue concerning how people are employed by CEPEP. As you know that does not fall under the management of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government. I believe Pastor Terrance Baynes is the man sitting in that hot seat, but I have no answer to offer for him.

Madam Chairman: Okay.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 42 supplemented by the sum of \$95,357,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank the Minister of Rural Development and Local Government – LG, life is good – the Permanent Secretary and her team.

8.45 p.m.

Head 43: Ministry of Works and Transport, \$97,033,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Works and Transport to make a brief

opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Sinanan: Good evening all, Chair. The Ministry of Works and Transport is pleased to make ourselves available to answer any questions under the Standing Finance Committee of the House of Representatives this afternoon.

Question proposed: That Head 43 be supplemented by the sum of \$97,033,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Minister, for the brief statement. Just a few small questions please. I am looking at page 23 of our notes, 02/002/28, and the Ministry is requesting a further sum of \$11 million as part of outstanding payments on the 2021 fiscal. Could you indicate exactly how this 11 million is to be distributed, for what works completed and by which contractors depending on the works?

Hon. Sinanan: Thank you, through you, Madam Chair. This will help us to supplement under the Highways 28 vote. We did have some bills leftover from the 2020/2021 financial year, which will be taken up with this \$11 million. It will be actually added to the Vote to ensure that the programme that was earmarked will be completed.

Dr. Moonilal: Could you undertake to provide a listing of the outstanding bills and for the nature of the work? Mr. Imbert is waving to you, no, no, no. I am speaking to the Minister. The Minister has the responsibility. I cannot understand why he is waving that way. Could you undertake to give a list of the outstanding payments per project and the list of contractors owing?

Hon. Sinanan: Madam Chair, I will try my utmost best to facilitate the request.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you. Could I go on? We have as well under 0—anything I ask for, say no? Under 02/005/09: Rent, Lease, Vehicles, Equipment, \$10 million. This is to meet the cost rental of equipment to undertake additional clearing and desilting of watercourses. Again, could you undertake to indicate to us the nature of these works, the outstanding cost, or continuing cost really?

Hon. Sinanan: Under the desilting programme, the 09, and it is to continue the desilting programme for the financial year. Just to supplement the Vote again to continue with the desilting programme.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, there is a related matter just below, 02, 005, 28, where there is a request for \$9.3 million to facilitate the award of contracts. Is this the award of contracts for the next four months to the end of the fiscal, 4.5 months, for further works? Could you indicate the nature of those contracts and the areas in which the contracts will take place?

As you know Minister, to explain very briefly, you will be aware of some of the requests that have been made by all Members of Parliament, and particularly we have written—our

constituency has written to you concerning various watercourses in the Penal/Debe area, and we are very interested to know the identity of some of these projects that the supplementary moneys will facilitate.

Hon. Sinanan: I will try my utmost best.

Dr. Moonilal: On 06/004/39, \$66.7 million. Could you explain briefly what is captured by “operational costs” as to the end of the fiscal?

Hon. Sinanan: Sure. Through you, Madam Chair, we would also recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic would have put a severe strain on the airport, because the airport would have been closed for quite a while. Even with the resumption of air travel, the amount of passengers coming through the airport, would probably just be about 35 per cent, just back up to about 35 per cent. So this is to supplement the operational activities of the airport.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, could I ask, again briefly, could you give us—since this is operational costs of the airport, the status of that project initiated some time ago for the machine-readable passport on entry?

Hon. Sinanan: Through you, Madam Chair, that matter is before the court, so I would not be able to comment anything on it.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 43 supplemented by the sum of \$973,033,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you, Minister of Works and Transport, Madam PS and your team.

Head 61: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, \$103,600,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Housing and Urban Development to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Thank you very kindly, Madam Chairman. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development is responsible for the formulation and execution of the Government’s policy as it relates to the housing and urban development sectors. The Ministry also acts as a facilitator for the implementation of these policies through its various unions and affiliated agencies.

The affiliated agencies include the Housing Development Corporation, better known as the HDC, the Land Settlement Agency, better known as LSA, the Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited, better known as TTMF, the East Port of Spain Development Company Limited, the Port of Spain Shopping Complex, and the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee.

Madam Chairmen, there are two main units which provide direct services to the citizenry from the Ministry, and those are the Housing Programme Facilitation and Implementation Unit, and this unit administers a non-refundable grant of \$15,000 to eligible low-income households to

carry out approved repair works to existing housing stock, and the Programme Monitoring Coordinating and Evaluation Unit, which has responsibility for the implementation of the Urban Upgrading and Revitalization Programme through a \$50 million loan agreement between the IDB and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

With specific reference to the housing sector, the Ministry and its agencies focus on increasing home and land ownership for eligible applicants through the Accelerated Housing Programme, the Subsidized Affordable Mortgage Programme, the Aided Self-help Housing Programme, the Housing and Village Improvement Programme, and various squatter regularization and home construction subsidy programmes.

Madam Chairman, as I said, the Ministry is also responsible for urban regeneration, which is essentially conducted through the East Port of Spain Development Company.

Madam Chairman, we also have the Port of Spain Shopping Complex, which comprises the East Side Plaza and the New City Mall, and No. 43 Independence Square, and Madam Chairman, this goes a long way towards making our citizens more self-sufficient.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and we are open for the questions to myself and the Minister in the Ministry, the Member for Laventille East/Morvant.

8.55 p.m.

Question proposed: That Head 61 be supplemented by the sum of \$103,600,000

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Again, a few short questions for the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. The request to the Committee is to approve \$76.3 million broken up as we have before us in the notes. I am on page 24. At 04/009/01 there is a request, which is probably the most significant request before us, for \$67 million to enable the HDC to pay contractors for the provision of waste disposal, building maintenance and janitorial services. Minister, could you indicate the list, the name of the contractors for which the \$67 million will be used to pay specifically for waste disposal, building maintenance and janitorial services, and what outstanding sums are owed to those contractors for those three items?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Okay, just one second, please.

Dr. Moonilal: Sure. What you say, PICAL?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: You want the list of contractors?

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, for which the 67 million will be applied.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Okay. All Care Landscaping Company Limited, All in One Supplies and General Construction Limited –

Dr. Moonilal: Could you indicate whether it is for waste disposal or building maintenance or

janitorial services, as requested?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Well, it is a combination.

Dr. Moonilal: Combination.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: It is a combination.

Dr. Moonilal: Sure, fine.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Al Mega Enterprises, Almond Construction Company Limited, Ambita's Enterprises Limited, Andy & Liz General Maintenance Services, Antoinette's Maintenance Services, Ariel Newman Limited, Arturas Construction Limited, Avant Garde Construction & Services, BK Holdings Limited, Bas & Son Limited, BDMC Enterprise Limited, Benan Construction Limited, Bourgeoisie Home & Garden Centre Limited, Brent Simon Construction Company, CJ Maintenance Company, CME Services Limited, Cashicor Limited, Chain & Saw General Construction and Maintenance, Complesev Limited, Convenient Suppliers Services Limited, Costar Transport and Construction, Critical Engineering Solutions Limited, DES Limited, D Wilson Welding Works & Transport, Darwin Limited, De Bross Marketing & Services Company, Deep Down Grass Cutting, Diamond Bright Janitorial Services, DP Enterprises Limited, Dusty Dusty Limited, Environ Marketing Company Limited, Fine Choice General Contractors Company, Fitzroy Francis Company, Fraser Maintenance Services Company, Jelister Enterprises Limited, Genius General Contractors Limited, GNU Dimension Construction Company Limited, Good Vibes & Company Limited, GPR Developments Limited, Grandeur View, Granger Go Green Maintenance Services Limited, Green Hornet Landscaping & Drainage, Hannah & Pete Limited, Harry Pierre General Construction Building of Drains, Maintenance and Landscaping Company Limited, Ibis Holdings Limited, Ishrank Beautifying Services Limited, JC Edwards Construction & General Services Limited, Jason Mills Contracting Services Company Limited, Jells Constructions & Grounds Maintenance, John Jen Services Company, KIM Engineering Company, Clydon Enterprises Limited, KS Environmental Services Company Limited, Leequa Construction Services, MCE General Contractor Services, Mainstream General Contracting Limited, Maitland & Sons Limited, Mandis Building Maintenance Services, Marlon Mahadeo General Contractor, Maslows Contracting Limited, Matura Company, MGM Construction Limited, MINX Rentals, Most Imperial General Construction Company Limited, MTS Limited, Nile Investment Limited, New Course Security & Janitorial Services Incorporated Limited, Omally Construction Limited, One Soy Investments Limited, Patrick Gordon's Construction Limited, PICAL Services Limited, Pilot Property Solutions Limited.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Member, Minister. Minister, I am sorry your time has expired. Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, well, let me first thank the Minister for the good detail. Could I ask, Minister, now, if you can just repeat it and put the amount of money per contractor, because I had asked that initially, so you will have another five minutes to maybe complete the list or put the sum. Because it is about 40 or 50 the Minister is calling, and it would have been wise to indicate at one time the exact figure. So you could have another five minutes now to complete the list, if the Minister so chooses.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: All Care, \$281,250; All in One, \$405,000; Al Mega Enterprises, 24,200; Almond Construction, 63,673.60; Ambita's, 310,194; Andy & Liz, 15,486; Antoinette's Maintenance Services, 60,000; Ariel Newman, 443,531; Arturas Construction, 137,195; Avant Garde Construction, 3,476,250; BK Holdings, 3,375; Bas & Sons, 531,900; BDMC, 403,593; Benan Construction, 1,278,315; Bourgeoisie, 48,397; Brent Simon Construction, 69,280; CJ Maintenance, 311,456; CME Services, 358 – sorry, 358,012.50; Cashicor, 128,812; Chain & Saw, 750,000; Complexserv, 404,396.94; Convenient Suppliers, 1,436,000; Costar 1,025,304.18; Critical Engineering Solutions, 397,800; DES, 100,910.25; D Wilson \$18,000; Darwin, 190,000; De Bross Marketing & Services, 2,578,603; Deep Down, \$1,328,850; Diamond Bright, \$111,899; DP Enterprises, \$307,392.75; Dusty Dusty, \$271,000; Envion, \$247,358.80; Fine Choice, \$281,879.27; Fitzroy Francis, \$10,172; Fraser Maintenance Services, \$69,750; Jelister Enterprises, \$1,193 – one million sorry –

9.05 p.m.

Madam Chairman: Minister, your time is now spent.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, I really want to say for the record I appreciate the fact that the Minister has the information at her fingertip and is so willing to share. But I am extremely curious, Minister, and I want to ask you, there are some outstanding companies that you may not have the time, could you now inform us of the rest of the companies to make up this 67 million since that sum that you gave I mean I have been doing a quick maths when you were talking and it did not add up to \$67 million. If you could tell us the other companies and the figures? Thank you. Since you have it at hand, I mean, there is no need to ask for writing. It is at hand, she has it.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Zorina's Maintenance and Landscaping Company Limited, \$138,307; Water Tech Limited, \$190,159; Ultimate Construction Services Limited, \$113,645.25; Triple J's Scavenging Transport Services, \$393,210; Triple K Maintenance, \$8,260,494; Trinidad and Tobago Landscaping Company, \$2,599,903; Trinbago Landscaper Maintenance and Beautification, \$911,250; Toshiba Water Solutions America Inc., \$434,511; Thomas Construction, \$56,306; T. Blanc

Home and Garden Maintenance, \$296,250; Sure Serve, \$923,062; Sultan Industries, \$472,500; Spark Action Services Limited, \$233,832; Southern General Limited, \$514,282; Solid Construction, \$91,182; Shiatsu General Contractors Limited, \$596,996.57; Savitri Transport, \$8,800; Row Black Limited, \$1,055,391.96; Ramkissoon Mahabir Transport Company, \$24,485; Progressive Cutters and Builders, \$62,092; Profile Note, \$17,325; Pilot Property, \$1,486,320; Patrick Gordon Construction, \$1,796,170; One Soy Investments, \$35,775; K.I.M Engineering, \$457,200; KS Environmental Maintenance Company Limited. \$112,500; Lee Quah Construction Services, \$886,500; Marlon Mahadeo, \$868,500; Manday's Building Maintenance, \$2,717,000; MTS, \$2,859,000; New Core—

Madam Chairman: Minister, your time is now spent. Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Minister, again, my appreciation for the details. Minister the first question when I asked, myself and my colleagues, could you name the company, PICAL Services Limited, but when you were reading the figures you inadvertently, I am sure, left that out. Could you indicate the moneys owing for PICAL Services Limited?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Madam Chairman, I did not inadvertently leave it out. They asked for a list and all the names and the amounts and I was giving that list as I had read it initially. If you wanted that you should have asked for that from the very beginning instead of wasting our time.

Hon. Members: "Oooh."

Dr. Moonilal: Madam Chairman, with great respect the accountability requires that we are interested in all—

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Moonilal:—not just one. In fact I have no personal interest in PICAL or the principal of that company, but since you have introduced it initially I am wondering could you now indicate to us the costing and the moneys owed to PICAL?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Member for Oropouche East please, do not take us all for fools in here.

Dr. Moonilal: Madam Chairman, could you please ask the Minister to conduct herself?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: You conduct yourself.

Dr. Moonilal: I am asking some simple questions.

Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Madam Chairman: All right, Members, Members, Members, it is now 9.11 p.m. Member for Oropouche could you ask your question. Minister if you have the information you can answer. What is the question?

Dr. Moonilal: Could you indicate clearly the amount of moneys owing for works by PICAL Services Limited?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: The amount of money owing to PICAL Services is much more than we are going to pay because PICAL Services has worked for the HDC for many years and you should know because –

Dr. Moonilal: But Madam Chair –

Hon. Robinson-Regis: – between 2010 and 2015 PICAL Services worked for the HDC.

Dr. Moonilal: Madam Chairman, I am on a line Item. Could you answer –

Hon. Robinson-Regis: I am answering you. You cannot tell you how to answer.

Madam Chairman: The Minister has five minutes.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Exactly. You cannot tell me how to answer.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance, Minister of Finance, please, at this stage some of those statements are really not required, please, not at this stage. Minister of Finance, Minister of Finance. Minister.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Thank you, Madam Chairman. And, Madam Chairman, PICAL Services has worked with the HDC since before 2010 and the Member for Oropouche East was the Minister between 2010 and 2015. So he is well aware that PICAL Services worked for the HDC for many, many, years. Anyway, Madam Chairman, PICAL Services is owed a sizable amount of money and they will be paid, \$2,400,828.75.

Members: “Whaaat!”

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Interestingly, Madam, they are going to be paid for work done. They are not raiding the treasury for things that they did not do.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Another question. I would really like to move on. Minister, yes, this area of the rehabilitation and maintenance of HDC rentals and housing units, 12 million, there are outstanding bills for rehabilitation works on HDC rental apartments and housing units. Would the Minister care to, likewise, kindly indicate the identity of the contractors and moneys owing for rental apartments and housing units to the tune of 12,300,000 to supplement the earlier allocation.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: The amount fathomed is \$12,300,000 and this to pay for rehabilitation and maintenance works conducted on various HDC apartments and housing units. The funds were released initially. Our original allocation was \$8 million and the additional funds will be necessary for the payment of outstanding bills and to meet contractual obligations on new projects and on ongoing projects.

9.15 p.m.

Madam Chairman, the outstanding debt at this time is \$40,932,672 for remedial works on HDC apartments and housing units and this debt covers the period 2017 to present. Madam Chairman, I do not have that list in front of me.

Dr. Moonilal: Madam Chair, could the Minister undertake to present in some detail as the Minister kindly did earlier the list of contractors and outstanding moneys to be paid from this supplementary allocation?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: We do not have it with us. If we can provide it before Monday, we will; if not, it will be provided subsequently.

Dr. Moonilal: Madam Chairman, on 004, 08 Development of Residential Lots, the Petrotrin residential lots, could the Minister indicate the status of the preparation of lots for the former Petrotrin workers? I will start there.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: As at today's date?

Dr. Moonilal: Yes.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Certainly. At this point, Madam Chairman, the original allocation was \$40 million. We are asking for an increase of \$11 million. The expenditure to March 31, 2022, was \$21 million. There are 2,800 applicants. The number of eligible persons to benefit would be 1,400 because 1,400 have been disqualified because they already have an interest in land or a house. Madam Chairman, the areas are Glenroy II which is an estimated number of lots, it is 150; La Savanne, 50 lots; Nurse Trace, 20 lots; Woodford Lodge II, 620 lots; La Romaine II, 450 lots and at this point on Tuesday 10th May, 2022, 38 lots which is the first 38 were distributed to beneficiaries and this happened on last Tuesday, Tuesday gone.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. Could I ask the Minister to also indicate if you have at hand as you kindly did earlier, the contractual obligations, the list of contractors and moneys owing on these three sites identified in our particular note before us for this business?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Just one second, Ma'am. Madam Chairman, we do not have any moneys outstanding at this time so the money that we have—because as I said, the original allocation was for \$30 million. We have either spent or committed—\$40 million sorry. We have either spent or committed the full amount already so this is to proceed with new. So we do not have any money outstanding.

Dr. Moonilal: Could I then indicate if the Minister could enlighten the House on the nature of these contracts and the list of contractors for which you have contractual obligations and site maintenance as indicated in the explanatory note before us?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: The nature of the contract, Madam Chairman, is infrastructure and civil works, specifically at Glenroy II. There are also contracts for water infrastructure, drainage,

sewerage infrastructure and road works and there is in the La Savanne and Nurse Trace, Guayaguayare area, the contract for pressure testing of the water infrastructure and once this is completed, we will get final approval from WASA. And all of them are the works of that nature.

Dr. Moonilal: Sure. Yeah. Thank you very much for the—

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Sorry, Madam Chair, if I may, these sites are sites that are going to be prepared by the LSA to allow, when we distribute the sites, they are ready for building.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much for the information. Could you just indicate for us now the identity of the contractors on these three sites?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: The three contractors are RJB General Contractors Limited, General Earth Movers Contracting Limited, Millennium Holdings Limited and Austin Rogers General Contracting Limited.

Dr. Moonilal: Would that be in the order you have it in the explanatory note: Glenroy, La Savanne and Nurse Trace? And then the order you read the contractors, per site?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: No, no, no, these are the contractors for the sites that we have work on. The first three are on the Glenroy site.

Dr. Moonilal: The first three? And on the other two sites?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: And the RJB General Contractors is on the La Savanne site.

Dr. Moonilal: And on the Nurse Trace site is?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: The Nurse Trace and the La Savanne is RJB.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you. Thank you.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: You are welcome.

Madam Chairman: Finished? Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Minister, with respect to 04/009/01 and that allocation of \$67 million, in the list that you did not complete, is there a company by the name of Clydeon Enterprises Limited to benefit?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Sorry, can you repeat the name?

Mr. Indarsingh: Clydeon, C-L-Y-D-E-O-N Enterprises Limited.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Yes, it is K-L-Y-D-O-N.

Mr. Indarsingh: And what is the value?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: \$1,704,075.75.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And Minister, in your opening remarks, you indicated or you alluded to the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee. Could you or would you wish to inform this meeting as it relates to the status of this particular entity?

Madam Chairman: Member, is there an item—

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Madam Chair, this is not—

Madam Chairman: Just now. Is there an item that that refers to?

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, thank you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: No, Madam Chair. “He just macoing generally.”

Madam Chairman: Let us, please.

Members: *[Interruption and crosstalk]*

Madam Chairman: Members, I know sometimes we want to lend some levity to the process. Let us get on with it. Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Madam Minister, on the line Item 04/009/01, I know the Minister earlier read out a list in a couple of parts because of the five-minute restriction on speaking. Could I ask the Minister to also undertake since you would have read two or three times those lists, undertake to provide that in writing?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: I will try my best.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I am on line Item 04/009/01 and when the Minister was giving her answer with respect to the direct question asked by Oropouche East in relation to PICAL, the Minister said that \$2 odd million will be paid to PICAL Services Limited but they are owed much more than that. Can the Minister indicate to give an appreciation how much money is being owed to PICAL Services by the HDC?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: I cannot.

Mr. Hosein: I beg your pardon?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: I cannot. I do not have that information with me.

Mr. Hosein: Would you undertake to give us that information in writing before Monday?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: I cannot give that undertaking because I may not be able to get it to you before Monday.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan, I believe the \$2 million is what is comprised in this \$67 million.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Yes, it is. In the \$67 million.

Madam Chairman: And that is what is before us. Member for Oropouche East.

9.25 p.m.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. Madam Minister, well my final question: Is the Minister confirming therefore the information in a Special Branch report of PICAL being owed money by

the HDC.

Mr. Young: 48(1).

Dr. Moonilal: Okay.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 61 supplemented by the sum of \$103,600,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Housing and Urban Development.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: You are welcome, Ma'am.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister in the Ministry. Thank you, Madam PS and your team.

Head 67: Ministry of Planning and Development, \$9,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Planning and Development to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Beckles: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and it is indeed an honour and privilege to be invited to meet with the distinguished Members of the Standing Finance Committee to discuss the proposals for the supplementation of the appropriation for fiscal year 2022.

The principal mandate of the Ministry of Planning and Development is national development concentrated on four pillars, which are economic development, social development, spatial development, and environmental development.

Madam Chair, the Ministry of Planning and Development continues to place the environment at the center of national development and is therefore strengthening the management of waste, in particular biomedical waste, continues to implement strategies to address climate change and is developing an e-mobility policy. In this regard, the human resource capacity within the Ministry and its environmental agency is an imperative for the successful preservation and conservation of our environment.

Madam Chair, the Ministry of Planning and Development continues to collaborate with its statutory agencies, which includes the Environmental Management Authority and it achieved its objectives set out in our mandate of environmental development.

Madam Chair, the Ministry of Planning and Development is here to seek a supplementary appropriation in the sum of \$9 million. This supplementary appropriation is intended to treat with the payment of arrears of salaries and subsistence allowance to employees of the Environmental Management Authority for the period January 01, 2013, to December 31, 2015, in accordance with the Industrial Court judgment.

Let me use this opportunity to thank my Permanent Secretary and my two Acting Deputy Permanent Secretaries and the hard-working staff of the Ministry of Planning and Development.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for this opportunity to provide these remarks, and I make myself available to answer any questions from my esteemed colleagues.

Question proposed: That Head 67 be supplemented by the sum of \$9,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Minister, given that this is for payment of arrears of salaries and subsistence to employees of the EMA, based on the Industrial Court judgment for the period 2013 to 2015, can the Minister indicate when this court matter was resolved? When was it determined?

Hon. Beckles: The judgment was made June 2020.

Mr. Tancoo: Thank you, Minister. Can you therefore indicate why it took two years between the settlement by the court before the arrears were resolved?

Hon. Beckles: Well, it required us doing some calculations. I mean, it required some backpay, overtime and subsistence. So everything is now calculated and agreed upon.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister, is there any additional interest charges that would have been brought to bear as a result of the delay in making the payments of the arrears?

Hon. Beckles: No.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister, is this the full and final settlement of those arrears, based on the collective agreement?

Hon. Beckles: Yes. Normally, what we have to do is to work out all the individual members of staff, of which we would be dealing with about 275. So we have to work them out individually, as well as the percentages and the overtime and backpay.

Mr. Tancoo: Minister, can you advise what was the cost to the EMA of defending this matter and whether that cost is included in the allocation being provided here?

Madam Chairman: Okay. So, I will allow the question if the cost was included in the \$9 million. If that is answered then I will allow the other question, depending on that answer.

Hon. Beckles: Sorry, Madam Chair, this figure that I gave is strictly for the purposes of dealing with the matter before the court as agreed to and instructed by the court.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 67 supplemented by the sum of \$9,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank you, Minister of Planning and Development. Thank you, Madam PS and your team.

Head 75: Equal Opportunity Tribunal, \$2,427,500.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: Sure, you want me to do that? All right. Madam Chairman, the Equal Opportunity Tribunal is a court of law that determines complaints and where appropriate, penalizes offenders for discrimination, victimization or offensive conduct.

Question proposed: That Head 75 be supplemented by the sum of \$2,427,500.

Madam Chairman: Member for Barataria/San Juan.

Mr. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am on line Item 001/01, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowances. Minister, from this Vote, is it that the Chairman and the Assessors, their remuneration will be deducted from this particular Vote?

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, the Member for Barataria has managed to confuse us all. Could you repeat the question, please?

Mr. Hosein: You do not even understand. You did not hear the question.

Madam Chairman: Member.

Mr. Hosein: Yes, Madam Chair, I will repeat for the benefit of the Minister. Based on this line Item 001/01, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance, is this line Item for the payment of Chairman and the Assessors on the Tribunal?

Hon. Imbert: No, and you should know better. I said it was a court of law.

Mr. Hosein: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: It is a direct charge on the Consolidated Fund and it is not appropriated. You should know that.

Mr. Hosein: So these would be the persons on the establishment. And how many persons this would benefit, Minister?

Hon. Imbert: Nine.

9.35 p.m.

Mr. Hosein: Nine persons. Minister, there was an issue with respect to Ms. Vera Bhajan, has that issue been resolved?

Hon. Imbert: Sub judice.

Madam Chairman: In any event I am not going to allow that under — [*Inaudible*]

Hon. Imbert: But it is still sub judice.

Madam Chairman: Member?

Mr. Hosein: [*Inaudible*]

Question put and agreed to.

Head 75 supplemented by the sum of \$2,427,500.

Madam Chairman: I thank the Minister of Finance and the Registrar of the Equal Opportunity Tribunal and his team. Thank you, you are relieved.

Head 77: Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, \$120,040,800.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries to make a brief opening statement for maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Hosein: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. We at the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries are very pleased with the proposal for supplemental recurrent allocation in the amount of \$120,040,800. This will assist with the continued operations at the ministry, as we are well supported and ready to proceed, Madam Chairman.

Question proposed: That Head 77 be supplemented by the sum of \$120,040,800.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair, and a pleasant good night to the hon. Minister and supporting staff. Minister, in the appropriation Bill, this I am referring to Personnel Expenditure; Agriculture; Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance. This line Item got a decrease of \$3 million in 2022 budget, can the Minister advise if that was a matter of under-budgeting or if it is that vacant positions have been filled that this increase is now to pay for the filling of these vacancies?

Hon. Hosein: Hon. Member, there was cut in salaries in the last fiscal – cut in salaries.

Mr. Ratiram: Hon. Minister, was it cut in salaries or cut in the allocation?

Hon. Hosein: Yes, allocation, sorry.

Mr. Ratiram: That is okay, Minister, it is late. So, in the cut of the allocation is it that all the salaries under this line Item based on what was budgeted for, would not have been sufficient and that is why we have now this request for the increase to makeup what is on the structure at present? Hon. Minister, can you advise the number of staff for this line Item and the number of vacancies?

Hon. Hosein: Let us check it.

Mr. Ratiram: Sure.

Hon. Hosein: 1,037.

Mr. Ratiram: And the number of vacancies?

Hon. Hosein: Yes. Total staff is 1,037 and the vacancies 246.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, hon. Minister. Minister, can you advise if any of these vacancies are going to be filled during this financial year?

Hon. Hosein: Yes, they intend to fill them – discussions are taking place with the CPO and Director.

Mr. Ratiram: And how many of these vacancies we intend to fill in this financial year?

Hon. Hosein: I would have to provide that for you.

Mr. Ratiram: Sure Minister. Minister, if it is that there was a cut in the allocation under this line Item in the budget and we are now asking for additional funding to make up and the staff count has remained the same from the previous fiscal year to this fiscal year, then this allocation that is being requested here will definitely not be sufficient to pay the current salaries within the Ministry that this line Item represent. Because the cut was 3,000,000 and what we are asking for here now is only 1.8, so there is still going to be a shortfall.

Hon. Hosein: All right.

Mr. Ratiram: Taking that plus what you have just said that you intend the full additional vacancies. Is it that we are still under-budgeting for the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries this time?

Hon. Hosein: Well, what we intend to do is to vire from other votes to ensure that we take care of this.

Mr. Ratiram: And Minister, can you advise if the request was made for all the funding and this is what has been approved at this time?

Hon. Hosein: Yes.

Mr. Ratiram: Okay, Minister, thank you. Moving on to line Item 006. Surveys and Mappings; Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance. There is a request here for an increase of \$1,200,000. Again, this line Item in the budget received a cut of \$1,250,000 and now the Ministry is coming, asking for an additional 1.2 to make up for that shortfall. However –

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, can I ask a question please?

Mr. Ratiram: – can the Minister advise if it is –

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman?

Madam Chairman: Just now Minister.

Mr. Ratiram: – can the Minister advise the number of vacant positions under this line Item and if any of those vacant positions are going to be filled with this request for the increase?

9.45 p.m.

Mr. Imbert: The Member keeps saying that there was a cut in the original budget. Could the Member indicate the reference for that statement, because I do not think that information is correct?

Mr. Ratiram: Read the books and you will get the answer.

Mr. Imbert: No, no. I do not accept what you are saying.

Mr. Ratiram: You presented the budget, you are supposed to know where you cut. You have been cutting agriculture every year since you came, and quick to tell us to read our books. Read the books.

Mr. Imbert: What you are saying is incorrect. You are misleading the Parliament.

Mr. Ratiram: Since you became Minister of Finance you have been cutting agriculture.

Madam Chairman: Member. Okay. Right.

Mr. Imbert: Misleading the Parliament.

Madam Chairman: Let us get on with it. Minister of Finance, Member for Couva North, let us get on with it.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the hon. Minister. Can you kindly advise how many vacant positions are there with respect to survey and mappings and if this increase of 1.8 million is to facilitate filling of any of those vacancies?

Hon. Hosein: All vacancies. And just as before, we intend to look to vire money from other Votes to assist.

Mr. Ratiram: So Minister, the request the Ministry would have made to the Ministry of Finance with respect to fulfilling the financial requirements for this line-Item has not been fulfilled by the Ministry of Finance and what you are saying you will have to find the money by viring from other places?

Hon. Hosein: That is correct.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Minister. Moving on to line-Item 010: Forestry: Salaries and COLA. This line Item in the budget received a cut in the allocation, a decrease of \$3.5 million from what was in the 2021 Revised Estimates versus what was proposed in the 2022 budget. Now, you are asking for a net increase in the mid-year review of \$3.582. Can you identify if this request is to fulfil the shortfall in funding for this line Item or if additional persons have been hired in the Forestry Division?

Hon. Hosein: There was no additional hiring and the funding we have is sufficient.

Mr. Ratiram: This funding will be sufficient?

Hon. Hosein: Yes.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Minister. Moving on the Animal Production and Health. Minister, under this line Item, Animal Production and Health, we have graduates coming out every year from the ECIAF Campus. They have been churning out graduates with diploma in animal health, production, veterinary, public health, every year, but there are no job opportunities for plenty of these persons who graduate, and within this area, there are significant vacancies with respect to the technical staff, for example, Animal Health Assistance, Artificial Insemination Technicians, et cetera. Can you identify if any of these vacancies are going to be filled with respect to this increase that we are seeing here?

Hon. Hosein: That will be accomplished in the next fiscal year, and the funding for this is

sufficient so far, but that will be done in the next fiscal year, what you just asked about.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Minister. We take your commitment to have these vacant positions filled, so that the Animal Production and Health Division in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries will then be outfitted with the resource that is required for them to efficiently and effectively execute their work.

Minister, under this Personnel expenditure Head in the Items that we have identified before with respect to agriculture, survey and mappings, agriculture where we would have the engineering workers, Engineering Division, et cetera, coming out there to do our site visits. I recall doing a site visit with the Engineering Division Officers and my staff was telling me that in conversation before, they identified that they have some significant short staff. This was a site visit when we were dealing with the bridge that collapsed in the Randy Carter Road, that connector from Felicity to Waterloo and the Minister in the Ministry, Avinash Singh, he actually came out with us.

[Device sounds off]

Madam Chairman: Does somebody have a device that is causing a disturbance? I would ask that person to leave the room, get their device under control and they could return in five minutes. Okay? I know it is Friday, but it is a different kind of event that is happening in here.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, Minister. And Minister, when we conducted those site visits with the Minister in the Ministry, the Minister himself—you were not the Minister. We had another Minister before you—but the Minister himself was highlighting some of the challenges faced within that division in agriculture and even my colleague, the MP for Caroni East, indicated the importance of having the Lalloo Trace Bridge repaired and several other bridges that assisted farmers in accessing their agricultural plot. But one of the challenges is that in the agriculture, because of you said 200-something vacancies that we have there now: Is that something that you intend to also address in the next financial year, so that—

Madam Chairman: I am totally confused by the question, Member. You know—

Mr. Ratiram: Well, taking what the Minister—

Madam Chairman: I am not sure what you are asking. Okay?

Mr. Ratiram: What I am asking? Okay. If I may?

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, may I ask which line Item we are dealing with? Which line-Item?

Madam Chairman: Line-Item 01/002/01. Am I not correct?

Mr. Ratiram: We are at 01, yes, 01. And Minister, can you advise us if it is that the Ministry in this division of agriculture—the various divisions that fall under agriculture that deals with the issues that I have identified—if they are sufficiently staffed at this point in time?

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman?

Madam Chairman: One minute please. Member, I understood you to be asking about 01/002/01 concerning a bridge and so on. Under this, this is Salaries and Cost of Living Allowances, you had asked the Minister if there were 200 and how many vacancies and the Minister said there were 246 vacancies. They intended to fill some of the vacancies this year. Okay?

Mr. Ratiram: And it is related to that honourable—

Madam Chairman: Well, the question, whatever the question is, I am sure I am confused, because there was such a wide lead up, I am not sure what the question is. So, could you condescend on the question so that the Minister could understand, so that I could understand and we could get on with the business here? I do not know what the question is.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, would you be able to advise us if it is the short staff at the Ministry is preventing these works from taking place at this point in time?

Mr. Imbert: Which line Item is this? This is ridiculous.

Madam Chairman: Okay, Minister of Finance. Member, if you are under 01—

Mr. Ratiram: The staff at Agriculture.

Madam Chairman: Agriculture? You have to ask about the division and not the Ministry, because this is just dealing with that Sub-Item Salaries and Cost of Living under 002/01.

Mr. Ratiram: And the Engineering Division will fall under this, right? The officers at the Engineering Division in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries? Okay, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East. I would allow you an opportunity to come back and maybe you will refine your question.

Ms. Mohit: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, 01/002/01. I am just seeking some clarification in terms of the Minister's response. The Minister indicated that the CPO will fill the vacancies in his response. So I am just seeking clarification, because the CPO determines salary.

Member: [*Inaudible*]

Ms. Mohit: Yes, I am aware of that, but the Minister would have stated CPO.

Member: Yes.

Ms. Mohit: So the clarification is now given. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North, you have any further question?

Mr. Ratiram: Yes, yes, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I would like to refer the Minister's attention to Sub-Head 02: Goods and Services page 63, under 01: Travelling and Subsistence. Can the Minister advise how many members of staff received a travelling and subsistence allowance under this line Item?

Hon. Hosein: 80 staff members; 80, 8-0.

Mr. Ratiram: 8-0. And this increase, how many will receive payment from this?

9.55 p.m.

Hon. Hosein: The funding we got for this is insufficient and what we have to do is vire funds from other Votes to fulfil this obligation.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Minister. Minister, can you advise if there are arrears, outstanding payment in this for officers at the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries that falls under this line Item?

Hon. Hosein: Yes, there are, and we are going to start paying out.

Mr. Ratiram: Can you advise what is the arrears at this time, the total?

Hon. Hosein: We do not have the total right now. I will have to provide that in writing.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Minister. Minister, moving on to line Item 04, Electricity, this is a significant increase that is being requested here, \$11.1 million when the provision and Estimates of 2022 was only \$285,000. Can you explain for us the reason for this significant increase?

Hon. Hosein: All the arrears for previous years, all will be cleared and will be updated, Electricity.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, with this increase here, will there still be any further outstanding arrears?

Madam Chairman: Member, the answer was, all the arrears will be cleared and we would be up to date. I think—I know it is late and maybe we are not all hearing well, but that is what I heard the Minister say. So, is there another question?

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Chair—

Madam Chairman: I would ask all Members at this time to exercise the tolerance that they could find in every muscle in their body.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, with respect to the telephone, also there is a significant increase there. Is that to pay any sort of arrears or is that a new line Item of expenditure, capital expenditure?

Mr. Hosein: Both. All arrears will be paid, the previous years and it will be cleared up to date.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, in the last Standing Finance—

Mr. Imbert: Minister, may I come in here, please?

Mr. Ratiram:—Committee of—Minister, in the last Standing Finance Committee with the 14th of October, 2021, we asked similar questions and your predecessor stated:

“...the Ministry through the PS is very active in trying to manage telephone costs and reduce it using the technology that is now available.”

The Minister gave us the assurance that there will be no further arrears in the last Standing Finance Committee –

Mr. Young: Not true. No Minister would have given any assurance there would be no arrears? Where is the *Hansard* –

Madam Chairman: One minute, please. [*Crosstalk*]. Could we allow the Member to speak? And if Members wish they can ask for the reference in the *Hansard* and then respond accordingly.

Mr. Ratiram: So making reference to the *Hansard* of what was said at the previous Standing Finance Committee –

Madam Chairman: Minister –

Mr. Ratiram: – on the 14th of October – Port of Spain North, can you show a little respect please for what we are doing? Thank you. Moving on to the *Hansard* of the 14th of October, 2021, hon. Minister, I asked the Minister, and I quote:

“Minister, for this line Item for the 2022 Estimate there is 958,000, a decrease of 3.7 million, whereas the Actual for 2020 was 7.2 million; that is some significant difference with the Actual spend in 2020 versus what we are actually budgeting for in 2022. Can the Minister advise if this 11 million in arrears have been paid off or if there is still outstanding arrears?”

The hon. Minister – the former Minister, Minister Clarence Rambharat’s response was:

“The arrears, as I said before, the movement of the figures from 7 million to 4 to the provision we made now represents reduction of the liabilities which we met in 2015 and the figure represents an Estimate that we have made in respect of what we are likely to incur in this fiscal year.”

What the Minister explained to us is that the arrears were paid off over the previous years for 2016, ’17, ’18 and that what was being budgeted for did not include any arrears. You are saying to us now that an additional \$7.7 million in arrears just popped up for telephone? Something seems to be wrong there.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: In an effort to bring an end to this, what the Ministry of Finance has done for the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries under the general rubric, Goods and Services, 02, is that we have provided an allocation for the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries in electricity, telephones, water, security, sufficient to clear off all arrears and to give them sufficient funds to take them to the end of the fiscal year. So that is what we are doing. We are providing sufficient funds to clear off all arrears in electricity, telephone, water, security, and give them sufficient funds to go to the end of the year. I hope that will end these questions.

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Chair –

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Madam Chair, I have heard what the hon. Minister of Finance has interjected, I was just being guided by what the former Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries has shared with us here in this –

Mr. Imbert: Chairman, how could the Member be referring to something last year and year before – *[Inaudible]*

Mr. Ratiram: It is on the Parliament's *Hansard* –

Madam Chairman: Member – Minister of Finance – Minister of Finance – Okay, so –

Mr. Imbert: Ridiculous – *[Inaudible]*

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance and Member for Couva North, I think that matter is now settled. Could we go on to another line Item if you wish.

Mr. Indarsingh: *[Inaudible]*

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South, I know you love to assist me, but at this hour I really need no assistance. Okay? The only assistance I need is for Members to do what they are supposed to do. Member for Couva North. Minister of Finance, please. Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I would like to move on to line Item – *[Interruption]*

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance, Minister of Finance –

Mr. Imbert: *[Inaudible]*

Madam Chairman: Yes. The sucking of your teeth is not allowed.

Mr. Imbert: *[Inaudible]*

Madam Chairman: What you did?

Mr. Imbert: *[Inaudible]*

Madam Chairman: Okay, but it is not allowed.

Mr. Imbert: It is not –

Madam Chairman: All right. Okay. Good.

Mr. Imbert: That was not me.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I would like to throw the Minister's attention to line Item 16, Contract Employment, where we are asking for a – *[Crosstalk]*

Madam Chairman: – *[Inaudible]* – It is not allowed. Member for Couva North.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I would like to draw the hon. Minister's attention to Contract Employment where we are asking for an increase of \$2.2 million, could the

Minister advise us what is the total number of persons employed on contract at the Ministry at this point in time?

Hon. Hosein: There are 73 people employed. There is a shortfall in this allocation and we have to vire moneys to fulfil this obligation.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, hon. Minister. Minister, can you advise how many contract employees were hired in this fiscal year?

Hon. Hosein: As I told you we had 73 but for this year I will have to give that in writing.

Mr. Ratiram: And can you also provide me with what contract positions were created in this financial year that were filled? These contract employment, is there any arrears for the persons on contract?

10.05 p.m.

Hon. Hosein: Corporate communication, legal procurement, GIS and IT. That is it.

Mr. Ratiram: Those were the divisions, the areas, the contract positions?

Hon. Hosein: Yes, those are them, one, two, three, four, five.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, moving on to line Item 22, Short-term Employment. Can the Minister advise: What is the total number of persons employed on short-term employment at the Ministry at this point in time?

Hon. Hosein: There are 91 short-term employees, and there is also a shortfall in this allocation, and we intend to vire moneys to fulfil this obligation also.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, can you advise us how many short-term employees were hired for this fiscal year?

Hon. Hosein: Same as before, we have to provide that for you.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, it was established that under this line Item short-term employment, this is where the Praedial Larceny Squad is employed. Recently we saw the Praedial Larceny Squad having meetings with you to discuss their outstanding issues. Issues identified by the Praedial Larceny Squad were things like outstanding overtime payments. Would you be able to advise us, if it is that this increase is being requested for the Short-term Employment line Item of 3.2 million will be able to satisfy all outstanding moneys owed to members of the Praedial Larceny Squad?

Hon. Hosein: Yes, it would. Yes.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, would you also be able to provide us with a breakdown of the positions that are currently filled at the Praedial Larceny Squad, and what is vacant with respect to that squad?

Hon. Hosein: Yes, I could give you that.

Mr. Ratiram: And would you be able to provide us also with the contractual relationship that

these officers have with the Ministry, with respect to the terms of reference of engagement with the officers of the Praedial Larceny Squad?

Hon. Hosein: You will get that also.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, hon. Minister. Minister, moving on to line Item 23, Fees. Can you provide us a breakdown of fees the Ministry will incur up to September 30, 2022?

Hon. Hosein: There is a shortfall of 3-8-5-0-0-0, and we intend to request additional funding for this.

Mr. Ratiram: Would you will able to provide us with a breakdown of what these fees are?

Hon. Hosein: This is just for National Flour Mills; just one item, National Flour Mills.

Mr. Ratiram: It is a payment to National Flour Mills?

Hon. Hosein: Yes.

Mr. Ratiram: With respect to security services, Sub-Item 43. There is a net increase here of 10 million, from 500,000 to 10 million. Can the Minister advise which company or companies are contracted for security services?

Hon. Hosein: There are eight securities firms, but I do not have the listing of the names, but I know there are eight security firms. I can give you a few. There is MTS, Delta, IMJIN, PPL, Guardsman and UPSL.

Mr. Ratiram: Would you be able to provide us with the complete list in writing, with the firms and the amounts to be paid to those firms?

Hon. Hosein: Yes.

Mr. Ratiram: And Minister, can you advise when last has the Ministry embarked upon a needs assessment to determine how much security services necessary for the Ministry?

Hon. Hosein: Yes, that is ongoing right now.

Mr. Ratiram: Any idea when it is going to be completed?

Hon. Hosein: As soon as it is completed, they will let me know, and I will let you know.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, hon. Minister. Minister, with respect to line Item 01: Travelling and Subsistence under Forestry, can you identify how many members of staff at the Forestry Division receive travelling and subsistence allowance?

Hon. Hosein: Approximately 100, and the funds is sufficient to cover the expenses.

Mr. Ratiram: Sorry.

Hon. Hosein: Approximately 100, and we have the funds sufficient to cover the expenses.

Mr. Ratiram: With this would there be any further arrears being owed to the officers of the Forestry Division?

Hon. Hosein: No. The funds are sufficient to cover the expenses.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you, Minister. Minister, I would like to draw your attention to Sub-Head 04: Current Transfers and Subsidies, line Item 01, Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute. With this increase of 2.033 million, can the hon. Minister advise how many persons are employed by this agency?

Hon. Hosein: A total staff of 55, and we have sufficient funds to cover this item.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, with respect to 01/02 and the Sugar Cane Feed Centre, 04, the same question. If you would be able to provide us with the number of persons employed at those agencies?

Hon. Hosein: At the Sugar Cane Feed Centre we have 48, and the Caribbean Agriculture Research Development Institution, we have 31, and we have funds to cover all.

Mr. Ratiram: And are these people employed monthly paid, short-term or contract? Based on the figures, would you be able to provide us with that in writing, a breakdown?

Hon. Hosein: It is monthly paid, and we will provide a breakdown.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Minister. Minister, with respect to the Agricultural Incentive Programme, can you advise on this increase of 7.7 million, which is stated to pay outstanding farmers incentives for the period of 2020 to 2022? Can you advise what type of outstanding farmers' incentives are being owed?

Hon. Hosein: This is to pay outstanding farmers incentives for the period 2020 to 2022, and this will include the cost of packaging material, post-harvest equipment, agricultural equipment, et cetera, et cetera. This will cover the payment for 890 applicants as of the end of April 2022. Additional funds will be requested.

Mr. Ratiram: Minister, would you be able to provide us provide with a breakdown of this payment, in terms of who the payment is to be made to, for what purpose and the amounts?

Hon. Hosein: I will be able to provide you with any information you want.

Mr. Ratiram: Thank you very much, Minister. Is this incentive programme paid by region, by district, by constituencies? Can it be categorized by constituencies in terms of the recipients of these incentive programmes?

10.15 p.m.

Dr. Seecheran: Thank you very much for the support staff that is here. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, for this opportunity.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 77 supplemented by the sum of \$120,040,800.

Madam Chairman: I thank the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, the Permanent Secretary and her team.

Head 79: Ministry of Sport and Community Development, \$67,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Sport and Community Development. [Interruption] Now, I am going to ask all Members, we are on the second-to-last Head.

Members: [Desk thumping]

Madam Chairman: Okay, it is 10.15. Okay, so let us put our heads down, let us exercise discipline, tolerance and goodwill and let us finish the job. I will now invite the Minister of Sport and Community Development to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Cudjoe: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. The Ministry of Sport and Community Development was created in 2020. It is a merger of the former Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the former Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts and the whole intention is to empower our communities and utilize sports as a tool to strengthen and to provide opportunities for the people in Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 79 be supplemented by the sum of \$67,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni Central.

Mr. Ram: Thank you, Madam Chair. Sub-Item 40, to the Minister of Sport and Community Development, how many contract officers will receive this benefit in respect of the five million allocation?

Hon. Cudjoe: Madam Chairman, we have already paid 99 persons, we are looking to pay – right now we have 95 awaiting releases, and that we hope to pay an additional 53 by the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Ram: Line Item 04, 009/04 in respect of the \$62 million, can we have a breakdown of the amount of moneys that we paid to MTS as opposed to SWATT Estate Police. Those are the two companies provided any explanation as to the payment of 62 million.

Hon. Cudjoe: Madam Chairman, this is for – this supplemental allocation is for the payment of H payables for services to the facilities under the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, but under our state enterprise SporTT. And as of March 30th we were looking at \$45 million, \$45.5 million in H Payables, and at the Ministry of Finance the estimation was made that by the end of the year we would need an additional \$20 million or \$22 million or so, to pay these bills. So this is not only MTS and SWATT, you are talking here about janitorial services, ground maintenance, WASA, T&TEC, all those H payables are included in this figure.

Mr. Ram: Madam Chair, we can only go in respect of the note before us, and it clearly states in English MTS and SWATT Estate Police Company Limited. Can we have a breakdown then, our commitment that the amounts of 62 million, the amounts outstanding, the amount projected, and

how it is broken down, by the Minister, please?

Hon. Cudjoe: Madam Chairman, I would be more than happy to go through the figures with the Member. For janitorial services each payable was up to 30 September, 2021, was 13,478,686.62. That is up to September 2021. When you look with what is outstanding up to March 2022, it is an additional figure of 20,879,401.45 as it relates to landscaping. By September 30th we are looking at 16,096,725, and at March 2022 an additional 2,425,457.98; as it relates to technical maintenance. What was deemed at the end of September 30, 2021, was 20,783.28; and at the end of March an additional 48,495.32. For security or H Payables at the end of September 2021 was 10,477,561.78; and as of March 2022 an additional 15,785,173.97 for T&TEC. Our H Payables as of 30th of September, 2021, was \$5,119,391.52; and as of March 30th, 5,101,789.85; for WASA to the end of September 30, 2021, were H payables is 1,302,766.13. And as of March 2022, 1,216,384.94.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni Central.

Mr. Ram: Can the Minister indicate, after this allocation is made today, if there will be any arrears to any of those entities that the Minister has identified?

Hon. Cudjoe: We do not anticipate that because the figure that we are requesting brings us to March 2022 and, of course, we cannot foresee in the future but we can estimate based on what the Estimates have been before or based on what the bills have been before, and we think that would take us safely to September 30th, the end of this fiscal year.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 79 supplemented by the sum of \$67,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I thank the Minister of Sport and Community Development and her PS and the team.

Head 80: Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, \$20,000,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Minister.

Hon. Mitchell: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. The maximum amount of brevity, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts is mandated to provide policy and strategic direction for the tourism, culture and arts sectors in Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 80 be supplemented by the sum of \$20,000,000.

10.25 p.m.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you. Minister, you are asking for \$20 million to pay off a principal payment. When is this principal payment of \$100 million due to be paid off?

Hon. Mitchell: This year.

Mr. Lee: What time this year?

Hon. Mitchell: June of this year.

Mr. Lee: June of this year. Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 80 supplemented by the sum of \$20,000,000.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts; thank you, PS.

Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Question put and agreed to.

Appropriation for fiscal year 2022 supplemented by the sum of \$3,081,703,900.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, please note that the debate for the adoption of the Committee's Report will take place on Monday, May 16, 2022, at 1.30 p.m. This meeting of the Standing Finance Committee is now adjourned. I wish all Members a safe journey home and a good and restful weekend.

10.27 p.m.: *Standing Finance Committee adjourned.*

APPENDIX IV

Proposals for the Supplementation of Appropriation for fiscal year 2022

AGENDA FOR THE Second MEETING OF STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE

OF THE 2022 SESSION OF THE HOUSE OF

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

TO BE HELD ON

13th May, 2022

MATTERS RELATING TO THE 2022 ACCOUNTS

	F.C. NOTE NO.	FILE NO.	SUBJECT	PAGE NOS.
01	01	F:BUD:4/4/8	Supplementary Appropriation for fiscal year 2022	1 - 27

NOTE FOR STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE

ITEM NO. 1

F.C. (2022)

F: BUD: 4/4/8

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

Standing Finance Committee is being asked to consider the under-mentioned proposals:

Provision of Supplementary Funds in the sum of *Three Thousand, and Eighty One Million, Seven Hundred and Three Thousand, Nine Hundred Dollars (\$3,081,703,900)* to fund urgent and critical Recurrent and Capital Expenditure to September 30, 2022, in areas where insufficient or no allocation was provided.

2. Standing Finance Committee is asked to note that as a result of the review of the Recurrent Expenditure and the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) which was conducted by the Ministry of Finance it is necessary to return to Parliament to seek approval for a

supplementation of the Appropriation (Financial Year 2022) Act, 2021 for twenty eight (28) Heads of Expenditure totaling \$3,081,703,900.

3. Further, the Standing Finance Committee is now being asked to approve the additional sum amounting to **\$3,081,703,900** which will be sourced from the Consolidated Fund and is required to meet expenditure under the following sub-heads:-

- (i) Personnel Expenditure - \$51,630,100
- (ii) Goods and Services - \$620,833,580
- (iii) Minor Equipment Purchases - \$4,614,720
- (iv) Current Transfers and Subsidies - \$1,794,160,500
- (v) Current Transfers to Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies - \$505,640,000
- (vi) Development Programme - \$104,825,000

4. Details of the total proposed Supplementation by Heads of Expenditure are given in the Table below:

Supplementation by Heads of Expenditure - 2022

Heads of Expenditure	Amount \$
03 Judiciary	30,300,000
04 Industrial Court	7,924,000
05 Parliament	4,114,000
06 Service Commissions	14,419,000
08 Elections and Boundaries Commission	23,525,000
09 Tax Appeal Board	1,869,000
11 Registration, Recognition and Certification Board	2,152,300
12 Public Service Appeal Board	1,005,400
13 Office of the Prime Minister	59,961,300
15 Tobago House of Assembly	60,000,000
16 Central Administrative Services, Tobago	2,648,400
17 Personnel Department	9,728,000
18 Ministry of Finance	225,966,500
22 Ministry of National Security	206,900,000

23 Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs	95,613,000
26 Ministry of Education	300,000,000
28 Ministry of Health	362,887,700
37 Integrity Commission	350,000
39 Ministry of Public Utilities	467,882,000
40 Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries	300,000,000
Heads of Expenditure	<i>Amount</i>
	\$
42 Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government	95,357,000
43 Ministry of Works and Transport	97,033,000
61 Ministry of Housing and Urban Development	103,600,000
67 Ministry of Planning and Development	9,000,000
75 Equal Opportunity Tribunal	2,427,500
77 Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries	120,040,800
78 Ministry of Social Development and Family Services	390,000,000
79 Ministry of Sport and Community Development	67,000,000
80 Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts	20,000,000
TOTAL	<u>3,081,703,900</u>

5. Explanations for the areas for the proposed supplementary funding are as follows:

Head 03 – Judiciary

Recurrent Expenditure - \$30,300,000

02/001/16 – Contract Employment - \$30,300,000

The sum is required to facilitate the payment of salaries to contract officers to September, 2022.

Head 04 - Industrial Court

Recurrent Expenditure - \$7,924,000

02/001/01 – Travelling and Subsistence - \$136,405

The sum is required to pay officers travelling and upkeep allowances to September 2022 - \$136,405.

02/001/04 – Electricity - \$405,000

02/001/05 – Telephones - \$104,000

The sum is required to pay the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) and the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) for services September 30, 2022 \$405,000 and \$104,000 respectively.

02/001/08 – Rent/Lease-Office Accommodation and Storage - \$759,195

To meet the cost of rental of accommodation to September 30, 2022.

02/001/16 – Contract Employment - \$681,000

02/001/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$270,700

To pay salaries to contract officers and to persons employed on a short-term basis to September 30, 2022 - \$681,000 and \$270,700 respectively.

02/001/21 – Repairs and Maintenance – Buildings - \$792,000

To meet obligations to the National Insurance Property Development Company Ltd. (NIPDEC) for building management services provided in fiscal 2021.

02/001/23 – Fees - \$790,000

02/001/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$316,000

To facilitate payment of outstanding fees to Senior Counsel -\$790,000; and for consultancy services to September 30, 2022 - \$316,000 respectively.

02/001/37 – Janitorial Services - \$656,100

02/001/43 – Security Services - \$1,643,000

To meet the cost of janitorial and security services to September 30, 2022 - \$656,100 and \$1,643,000 respectively.

02/001/58 – Medical Expenses - \$823,600

To facilitate reimbursement to the President and members of the Court for medical expenses incurred over the period 2017 and 2018.

04/007/40 – Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$547,000

To enable the payment of gratuities to persons who completed their contract appointments.

Head 05 - Parliament

Recurrent Expenditure - \$4,114,000

04/007/40 - Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$4,114,000

This sum is required to facilitate the payment of gratuities to persons who successfully completed their contract appointments as well as contract officers whose appointments will expire in fiscal 2022.

Head 06 Service Commissions

Recurrent Expenditure - \$14,419,000

02/001/04 - Electricity - \$425,700

To pay the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) for services provided over the period August to November 2021 as well as from January to September 30, 2022.

02/001/05 - Telephones - \$435,000

To pay the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) for services provided over the period November 2021 to September 30, 2022.

02/001/08 - Rent/Lease-Office Accommodation and Storage - \$6,619,000

To meet rental cost for several properties to September 30, 2022 as follows:

- Land Security Ltd for Head Office for the period January to September 2022;
- Cipriani Properties Ltd for DFL Building for the period January to September 2022;
- Broadway Properties for two storage units for the period September, 2018 to September 2021 - \$547,200; and
- TREDCO Ltd for Pasea Office for the period December 2021 to September 2022 -\$765,000.

02/001/16 - Contract Employment - \$738,800

02/001/22 - Short Term Employment - \$600,000

To pay of salaries to contract officers as well as persons employed on a short-term basis to September 30, 2022 - \$738,800 and \$600,000 respectively.

02/001/23 - Fees - \$1,585,000

To facilitate the payment of outstanding fees in respect of the following : licences to access the Oracle Software (IHRIS); sums owed to examiners and markers for examinations held in 2021;

retention of Attorneys (\$955,000); and sums owed to persons engaged to conduct interviews held in 2021(\$45,000).

02/001/37 – Janitorial Services - \$420,000

02/001/43 – Security Services - \$2,205,000

To meet the cost of janitorial and security services to September 30, 2022.

02/003/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$940,500

To meet consultancy costs associated with the Assessment Exercise for the recruitment of Deputy Permanent Secretaries.

04/007/40 – Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$450,000

To facilitate payment of gratuities owed to persons who successfully completed their contract appointments.

Head 08 – Elections and Boundaries Commission

Recurrent Expenditure - \$23,525,000

02/001/01 – Travelling and Subsistence - \$1,500,000

To facilitate the payment of subsistence allowance to officers engaged in the preparation of the Annual list of Electors as well as the Registration Pop Up initiative.

02/001/05 – Telephones - \$2,000,000

To pay the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) for services provided from April 2019 to November 2021.

02/001/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$2,000,000

To ensure the payment of salaries to officers on a short term contract engaged in the Registration Pop Up initiative to September 30, 2022.

02/001/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$600,000

To meet the costs of the renewal of an IT equipment maintenance contract with Fujitsu and Spatial Innovision Ltd.

02/001/62 – Promotions, Publicity and Printing - \$1,000,000

02/002/62 - Promotions, Publicity and Printing - \$1,000,000

To facilitate payment to media houses for advertisements in respect of the Registration Pop Up initiative; the recently concluded Tobago House of Assembly's (THA) elections and the Local Government Bye Election in Penal/Debe.

02/002/12 - Materials and Supplies - \$3,000,000

To facilitate the purchase of items of materials and supplies to support the Registration of Electors (\$2,000,000) as well as 2022 Local Government Elections (\$1,000,000).

02/002/22 - Short-Term Employment - \$7,000,000

To pay salaries to persons employed on a short term basis and assigned to support the Registration of Electors (\$6,000,000) as well as to review aspects of the Training Procedures prior to the Local Government Elections (\$1,000,000).

02/002/28 - Other Contracted Services - \$2,000,000

To meet the cost of consultancy services to support the Registration of Electors.

03/001/02 - Office Equipment - \$1,025,400

03/001/04 - Other Minor Equipment - \$2,399,600

To facilitate the purchase of items of office equipment such as one (1) server, eighty (80) computers, ten (10) color printers, multi-function plotters and consumables as well as other minor equipment which includes a new PBX system and cell phones for use by Returning Officers re: the impending Local Government Elections.

Head 09 - Tax Appeal Board

Recurrent Expenditure - \$1,869,000

02/001/08 - Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage - \$1,692,500

This funding is required to meet the cost of rental accommodation to September 30, 2022.

02/001/16 - Contract Employment - \$176,500

To enable the payment of salaries to contract officers to September 30, 2022.

Head 11 - Registration, Recognition and Certification Board

Recurrent Expenditure - \$2,152,300

01/001/01 - Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$515,600

This funding is required to facilitate payment of salaries to monthly paid officers to September 2022.

02/001/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$652,700

To enable the payment of salaries to persons employed on a short term basis to September 30, 2022.

02/001/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$484,000

To meet the cost of consultancy services to September 2022.

03/001/04 – Other Minor Equipment - \$500,000

To facilitate the purchase and installation of a 20 ton air-condition unit.

Head 12 - Public Service Appeal Board

Recurrent Expenditure - \$1,005,400

02/001/08 – Rent/Lease – Office Accommodation and Storage - \$480,940

This sum is required to meet the cost of rental of accommodation to September 30, 2022.

02/001/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$334,740

To pay salaries to persons employed on a short term basis to September 30, 2022.

03/001/02 – Office Equipment - \$189,720

To facilitate the purchase of 14 computers for use by staff and members of the Public Service Appeal Board.

Head 13 - Office of the Prime Minister

Recurrent Expenditure – \$59,961,300

02/001/23 – Fees - \$4,293,000

To facilitate the payment of outstanding fees owed to Commissioners and Legal Counsels who were appointed to a Commission of Enquiry to examine and enquire into aspects of the management of the land acquisition process carried out by the National Infrastructure Development Company Limited (NIDCO) with respect to the construction of the Solomon Hochoy Highway Extension from San Fernando to Point Fortin.

02/001/65 – Expenses of Cabinet Appointed Bodies - \$5,000,000

To enable the National Security Council Secretariat to meet salaries and operational expenses to September 30, 2022.

02/002/16 – Contract Employment - \$2,500,000

02/003/16 – Contract Employment - \$700,000

To facilitate the payment of salaries to contract officers attached to the Divisions of Gender Affairs and Communications to September 30, 2022 - \$3,200,000.

02/003/04 – Electricity - \$200,000

02/003/05 – Telephones - \$500,000

To meet the payment of arrears to the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) and the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) for fiscal 2021.

02/003/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$500,000

To enable the payment of salaries to persons employed on a short term basis to September 30, 2022.

02/003/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$300,000

To meet the cost of engaging a Social Media Specialist for upskilling a team of officers with respect to the presentation of Government’s vision and accomplishments.

02/003/62 – Promotions, Publicity and Printing - \$2,800,000

To facilitate payment to the electronic and print media for various advertisements with respect to the publication of Government’s vision and accomplishments.

03/003/02 – Office Equipment - \$181,000

For the purchase of laptops and computers for the Communication Division.

03/003/04 – Other Minor Equipment - \$119,000

For the acquisition of items of other minor equipment for use by staff of the Communication Division.

04/005/03 – Contribution to Non Profit Institutions (Children’s Homes) - \$1,110,600

04/005/05 – St. Dominic’s Children’s Home - \$289,500

04/005/10 – St. Jude’s Home for Girls - \$3,000,000

04/007/03 – Children’s Authority - \$22,397,000

To provide additional funding totaling \$26,797,100 to enable the following agencies to meet operational expenses to September 30, 2022:

- Contribution to Non Profit Institutions (Children’s Homes) - \$1,110,600
- St Dominic’s Children’s Home - \$289,500
- St Jude’s Home for Girls - \$3,000,000
- Children’s Authority - \$22,397,000

04/009/12 – Response to HIV/AIDS - \$500,000

To enable the National Aids Coordinating Committee to provide assistance to the Cyril Ross Home to September 30, 2022.

04/011/09 – UDeCOTT – Interest Payment on \$500Mn Loan - \$5,271,200

To meet the interest payment on a UDeCOTT TT\$500Mn loan facility.

06/004/53 – National Library and Information System - \$10,300,000

To facilitate payment to the London Street Company for maintenance services provided to NALIS from January 2020 to September 2021 as well as current costs to September 30, 2022.

Head 15 – Tobago House of Assembly

Recurrent Expenditure - \$60,000,000

06/001/06 – Tobago House of Assembly - \$60,000,000

Funding is required to facilitate the payment of outstanding debts to the National Helicopter Services Limited (NHSL) for the period November 2019 to February 2022 (\$27,800,000); Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) for the period 2017 to 2021 (\$19,000,000) and gratuities owed to persons who completed contract appointments over the period 2017 to 2021 (\$13,200,000).

Head 16 – Central Administrative Services Tobago

Recurrent Expenditure – \$2,648,400

02/001/08 – Rent/Lease – Office Accommodation and Storage - \$1,088,000

To meet rental costs to September 30, 2022.

02/001/37 – Janitorial Services - \$549,000

02/001/43 – Security Services - \$419,400

To meet the cost of janitorial and security services to September 30, 2022.

02/005/17 – Training - \$102,000

To facilitate the participation of two (2) officers in the Senior Level Meteorology Technicians' Course in Barbados from January 2022 to July 2023.

04/007/40 – Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$490,000

To pay gratuities to persons who completed contract appointments over the period 2014 to 2021.

Head 17- Personnel Department

Recurrent Expenditure - \$8,228,000

01/001/01 – Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$1,515,000

To facilitate payment of salaries to monthly paid officers to September 30, 2022.

02/001/08 – Rent/Lease-Office Accommodation and Storage - \$2,322,500

To meet the cost of rental of accommodation to September 30, 2022.

02/001/16 – Contract Employment - \$1,220,000

02/001/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$600,000

To enable the payment for consultancy services for a review of officers under the purview of the Salaries Review Commission.

03/001/02 – Office Equipment - \$100,000

To facilitate the purchase of two (2) photocopiers with accessories.

03/001/03 – Furniture and Furnishings - \$100,000

To purchase modular storage units for the Personnel Department.

04/007/40 – Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$2,370,500

To pay gratuities owed to persons who completed contract appointments.

Development Programme - \$1,500,000

09/005/06/A/043 – Development of the Human Resource Capacity of the Personnel Department - \$500,000

To meet the cost for the Masters in Strategic Leadership and Innovation and Emotional Intelligence course for all Senior Managers in the Personnel Department.

09/005/06/A/044 – Review of the Public Service Employee Assistance Programme - \$500,000

To meet closing costs associated with the review of the EAP Programme.

09/005/06/F/002 – Customization and Outfitting of New Office Building at No.3 Alexandra Street, St. Clair - \$500,000

Outfitting and furnishings of 6th Floor of the new office location at No. 3 Alexandra Street, St. Clair and the purchase of security cameras.

Head 18 – Ministry of Finance

Recurrent Expenditure - \$225,966,500

04/009/11 – Infrastructure Development Fund - \$125,966,500

To supplement the Infrastructure Development Fund (IDF) to enable the Ministry of Trade and Industry to pay VAT in the sum of \$ \$92,066,500 and other costs in the sum of \$25,900,000 associated with the Construction of the Phoenix Park Industrial Estate in the sum of \$92,066,500; and to facilitate the Ministry of National Security's acquisition by private treaty of a property located at 32 St. James Street, San Fernando to accommodate the South Office of the Immigration Division - \$8,000,000.

04/011/96 – Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited (SRRICL) – \$100,000,000

To facilitate the initial capitalization of the Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited (SRRICL).

Head 22 – Ministry of National Security

Recurrent Expenditure – \$206,900,000

01/004/01 – Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$16,000,000

01/004/03 – Overtime – Monthly Paid Officers - \$10,900,000

01/004/04 – Allowances - \$9,000,000

01/004/05 – Government's Contribution to NIS - \$6,000,000

To cover shortfalls in allocations to enable the payments of remuneration to officers within the Fire Service and Prison Service for the period July to September 2022:

- Salaries and COLA - \$16,000,000;
- Overtime - \$10,900,000;
- Allowances - \$9,000,000; and
- Government's Contribution to NIS - \$6,000,000;

02/001/01 - Travelling and Subsistence - \$3,300,000

To enable the payment of arrears of travelling and subsistence to officers in the Immigration Division for the years 2005 and 2014 (\$2.5Mn) and arrears owed to Probation Officers for fiscal 2022 (\$0.8Mn).

02/001/04 - Electricity - \$9,000,000

02/001/05 - Telephones - \$14,200,000

To pay the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) and the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) for services provided to September 30, 2022 - \$9,000,000 and \$14,200,000 respectively.

02/001/13 - Maintenance of Vehicles - \$16,000,000

To facilitate the maintenance and repairs of vehicles by the Fire Service (water tenders), Prison Service (fleet of vehicles) and Defence Force (land vehicles and sea vessels).

02/001/16 - Contract Employment - \$3,000,000

To provide funding for the settlement of debt to the National Insurance Board (NIB) with respect to the Transit Police Unit.

02/001/37 - Janitorial Services - \$6,000,000

To meet the cost of arrears owed to National Maintenance Training and Security Company Ltd. (MTS) for janitorial services provided.

02/001/43 - Security Services - \$19,000,000

To meet the cost of arrears owed to National Maintenance Training and Security Company Ltd (MTS) for security services provided and arrears owed for prisoner transport for the period August 2020 to September 30, 2022.

02/014/40 – Food at Institutions - \$8,500,000

To facilitate the purchase of food for the Prison Service (\$2.5Mn) and the Defence Force (\$6Mn) to September 2022.

02/014/96 – Fuel and Lubricants - \$11,000,000

For the replenishment of fleet cards, purchase of bulk fuel for generators and reserve storage.

04/007/40 – Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$4,000,000

04/009/02 – Strategic Services Agency - \$66,000,000

04/009/16 – Transit Police Unit - \$5,000,000

Additional funds are needed under Current Transfers and Subsidies as follows:

- to enable the payment of outstanding gratuities to contract officers for the period 2018 to 2021;
- to enable the Strategic Services Agency to meet its operational expenses; and
- to enable the Transit Police Unit to meet payments for utility bills, fleet cards, repairs to vehicles and buildings and salaries for thirty (30) new recruits to September 30, 2022.

Head 23 – Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs

Recurrent Expenditure - \$79,070,000

02/001/12 – Materials and Supplies - \$8,600,000

For the acquisition of polymer certificates.

02/001/16 – Contract Employment - \$17,220,000

To pay officers employed on contract arrears of salaries due to revised terms and conditions of employment as well as to meet commitments to September 30, 2022.

02/001/22 – Short-Term Employment - \$15,000,000

To pay persons employed on a short term basis.

02/001/23 – Fees - \$30,000,000

To meet the payment of fees to local and foreign Attorneys for the provision of services.

02/009/23 - Fees - \$5,000,000

To pay fees owed to Deloitte and Touche for services provided over the period July 1 to December 2020.

04/007/40 - Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$3,250,000

To meet gratuity payments to persons who completed their contract appointments.

Development Programme - \$16,543,000

09/005/06/A/018 - Strengthened Information Management of the Registrar General's Department - \$16,543,000

The sum is required to complete components of the Strengthened Information Management of the Registrar General's Department project as the IDB loan arrangement which was executed in January 2014 ended in January 2022.

Head 26 - Ministry of Education

Recurrent Expenditure - \$300,000,000

02/001/04 - Electricity - \$7,500,000

02/006/04 - Electricity - \$17,500,000

02/009/04 - Electricity - \$1,250,000

02/001/05 - Telephones - \$7,715,000

02/006/05 - Telephones - \$1,310,000

The funding is required to pay the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) and the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) for services provided over the period 2018 to 2021 - \$26,250,000 and \$9,025,000 respectively.

02/001/16 - Contract Employment - \$38,194,000

To pay salaries to contract officers to September 30, 2022.

02/001/28 - Other Contracted Services - \$8,275,000

To enable payments to Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC) for the provision of school transport for Term 3 of Academic Year 2021/2022.

02/001/37 - Janitorial Services - \$54,372,000

02/001/43 - Security Services - \$55,000,000

To pay National Maintenance Training and Security Company Ltd. (MTS) and other companies for the provision of janitorial and security services.

02/006/06 – Water and Sewerage Rates - \$3,250,000

To pay the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) for services provided over the period 2018 – 2021.

04/001/01 – Caribbean Examinations Council - \$9,800,000

To facilitate the payment of the annual contribution to the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) for the year 2022.

04/006/09 – Grants to Assisted Primary Schools – School Equipment and Upkeep of School Premises - \$3,100,000

To facilitate the payment of grants to Assisted Primary Schools for school equipment and upkeep to premises.

04/006/24 – Grants to Government Secondary Schools – Education Programme - \$5,750,000

For the payment of arrears of Telephones and WASA bills for Assisted Primary Schools and Government Secondary Schools for the period 2018 to 2021.

04/006/33 – Grants to Private Secondary Schools - \$20,050,000

To facilitate the implementation of interim funding arrangements for the operational expenses at the Bishop Anstey High School East, Trinity College East and the 6th Form for fiscal year 2021/2022.

04/007/40 – Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$7,750,000

For the payment of gratuities owed to persons who completed their contract appointments.

04/010/02 – National Schools Dietary Services Limited - \$43,967,000

To meet the cost for the provision of school meals for Term 3 of Academic Year 2021/2022.

04/011/07 – Metal Industries Company Ltd. (National Skills Development Programme) - \$15,217,000

To enable Metal Industries Company Ltd (National Skills Development Programme) to meet payments to administrative staff to September 30, 2022.

Head 28 - Ministry of Health

Recurrent Expenditure - \$362,887,700

02/004/39 - Drugs and Other Related Materials and Supplies - \$12,500,000

To facilitate the acquisition of Covid-19 vaccines for children and adults - \$12,500,000;

04/009/01 - Regional Health Authority - \$53,370,000

For the continued engagement of the Global Medical Response of Trinidad and Tobago (GMRTT) for the operations of the National Emergency Ambulance Service in Trinidad.

04/009/02 - North West Regional Health Authority - \$20,000,000

04/009/03 - Eastern Regional Health Authority - \$39,300,100

04/009/04 - North Central Regional Health Authority - \$124,914,200

04/009/05 - South West Regional Health Authority - \$90,129,900

To pay salaries and related allowances totaling \$274,344,200 to allow four (4) Regional Health Authorities to augment personnel assigned to various Health Facilities within the parallel health care system.

04/011/16 - NIPDEC - TT\$284.19Mn 8 year Fixed Rate Term Loan - Procurement, Storage and Distribution of Pharmaceuticals/Non Pharmaceuticals - \$22,673,500

To meet the principal payment of \$17,762,219 and interest of \$4,911,281 on a loan facility re: NIPDEC - RBC Merchant Bank (T&T) Ltd. TT \$671.3Mn. 7 Year Fixed Rate Loan. The facility was accessed to meet the cost of procurement, storage and distribution of pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical items.

Head 37 - Integrity Commission

Recurrent Expenditure - \$350,000

02/001/22 - Short-Term Employment - \$350,000

To pay salaries to persons employed on a short term basis to September 30, 2022.

Head 39 - Ministry of Public Utilities

Recurrent Expenditure - \$408,400,000

02/001/42 - Street Lighting - \$68,400,000

To enable the payment to the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) for the provision of street lighting and lighting of parks and recreation grounds.

04/007/08 - Refunds to T&TEC - Re - Rebate on Electricity Bills - \$12,000,000

To pay refunds owed to the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) arising from the 25% and 35% rebate granted to all Rate A (Domestic) customer accounts with electricity billings of \$300 or less.

02/004/51 - Water and Sewerage Authority - \$328,000,000

To enable the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) to meet the payment of wages and salaries to September 30, 2022 - \$150,248,000; as well as principal and interest on US\$60Mn loan facility to meet payment obligations to Desalcott - \$161,325,000 and US\$25Mn loan facilities to settle an outstanding balance of an existing Revolving Credit Facility - \$16,427,000.

Development Programme - \$59,482,000

003/05/A/591 - Additional Transmission Infrastructure to move power from TGU to National Grid - \$18,000,000

To facilitate the establishment of a Union Estate Gandhi Village 220kv Double Circuit.

003/05/A/601 - Renewable Energy Incentive - \$2,382,000

To enable the procurement of two (2) Wind Lidar Units and ancilliary equipment.

005/06/A/061 - Community Water Improvement Programme - \$35,000,000

For the completion of thirty four (34) projects under the Community Water Improvement Programme.

005/06/A/065 - Upgrade of the Network Service Infrastructure - \$1,000,000

To facilitate the upgrade of the Network Service Infrastructure inclusive of a warranty period of five (5) years.

005/06/H/006 - Procurement of a Geostationery Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES-16) receiving System - \$1,400,000

To facilitate the procurement of (GOES-16) Receiving System to enable the Meteorological Services Division to improve environmental monitoring and build resilience to climate extremes as well as climate changes.

005/06/H/011 – Refurbishment of Radar Tower at Brasso Venado - \$1,700,000

To enable the refurbishment of structural steel infrastructure, tower walls, electrical support system, fire and safety systems as well as plumbing at the Radar Tower site.

Head 40 - Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries

Recurrent Expenditure - \$300,000,000

04/007/01 – Shortfall in Subsidy Re: sale of Petroleum Products - \$300,000,000

Funding is required to meet the short fall in subsidy with respect to the sale of petroleum products for the period November 2021 to September 2022.

Head 42 – Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

Recurrent Expenditure – \$95,357,000

02/001/23 – Fees - \$2,500,000

To meet expenditure associated with the implementation of the Procurement Act, the digitization of the Ministry’s records, legal services as well as the acquisition of software licences.

02/001/28 – Other Contracted Services - \$1,862,000

To facilitate the purchase of materials for the National Clean Up Campaign.

04/009/04 – Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP) - \$50,355,000

Additional funding is required for the Programme’s operational expenditure to September 30, 2022.

06/005/23 - Port of Spain City Corporation - \$2,300,000

06/005/24 - San Fernando City Corporation - \$2,600,000

06/005/25 - Arima Borough Corporation - \$1,040,000

06/005/26 - Point Fortin Borough Corporation - \$5,000,000

06/005/27 - Chaguanas Borough Corporation - \$2,300,000

06/005/28 - Diego Martin Regional Corporation - \$1,200,000

06/005/29 - San Juan/ Laventille Regional Corporation - \$9,200,000

06/005/30 - Tunapuna /Piarco Regional Corporation - \$7,300,000

06/005/31 - Sangre Grande Regional Corporation - \$1,000,000

06/005/32 - Couva /Tabaquite /Talparo Regional Corporation - \$1,000,000

06/005/33 - Mayaro /Rio Claro Regional Corporation - \$2,000,000

06/005/34 - Siparia Regional Corporation - \$2,300,000

06/005/35 - Penal /Debe Regional Corporation - \$1,400,000

06/005/36 - Princes Town Regional Corporation - \$2,000,000

To enable the fourteen (14) Municipal Corporations to pay wages as well as sums owed for the provision of goods and services - \$40,640,000.

Head 43 - Ministry of Works and Transport

Recurrent Expenditure - \$97,033,000

02/002/28 - Other Contracted Services - \$11,000,000

To facilitate the payment to contractors for works completed in fiscal 2021.

02/005/09 - Rent/Lease-Vehicles and Equipment - \$10,000,000

To meet the cost of rental of equipment to undertake additional clearing and desilting of watercourses.

02/005/28 - Other Contracted Services - \$9,333,000

To facilitate the award of contracts for the clearing and desilting of watercourses.

06/004/39 - Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago - \$66,700,000

To enable the Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago to meet its' operational costs to September, 2022.

Head 61 - Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

Recurrent Expenditure - \$76,300,000

04/009/01 - Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation - \$67,000,000

To enable the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) to pay contractors for the provision of waste disposal, building maintenance and janitorial services.

04/011/29 - UDeCOTT - Principal Payment on TT\$51.155Mn 1.5% 3 yr Fixed Rate Term Loan - \$8,916,337

04/011/30 - UDeCOTT - Interest Payment on TT\$51.155Mn 1.5% 3 yr Fixed Rate Term Loan - \$383,663

To facilitate payment of principal (\$8,916,337) and interest (\$383,663) on a UDeCOTT 3 year fixed rate term loan facility for the design and construction of Phase 1 of the Piccadilly Street Urban Regeneration Project.

Development Programme - \$27,300,000

004/08/D/075 - Rehabilitation and Maintenance of HDC Rental Apartments and Housing Units - \$12,300,000

To facilitate the payment of outstanding bills for rehabilitation works on HDC rental apartments and housing units.

004/08/E/232 - Housing Grants - \$4,000,000

To enable the disbursement of housing grants to September 30, 2022.

004/08/E/241 - Development of Residential Lots - Petrotrin - \$11,000,000

To meet contractual obligations and site maintenance at Glenroy II, La Savanne and Nurse Trace locations to September 30, 2022.

Head 67 - Ministry of Planning and Development

Recurrent Expenditure - \$9,000,000

04/009/01 - Environmental Management Authority - \$9,000,000

Funding is required to facilitate the payment of arrears of salaries and subsistence allowance to employees of the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) in accordance with an Industrial Court judgement related to the new collective labour agreement for the period January 01, 2013 to December 31, 2015.

Head 75 - Equal Opportunity Tribunal

Recurrent Expenditure - \$2,427,500

01/001/01 - Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$213,000

To meet the payment of increments and acting allowances owed to monthly paid officers.

02/001/16 – Contract Employment - \$257,000

To pay salaries to contract officers to September 30, 2022.

02/001/23 – Fees - \$1,618,000

To facilitate the payment of subscriptions and legal fees.

02/001/43 – Security Services - \$115,000

To meet the cost of security services to September 30, 2022.

04/007/40 – Gratuities to Contract Officers - \$224,500

To pay gratuities to persons who completed their contract employment.

Head 77 – Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

Recurrent Expenditure - \$120,040,800

01/002/01 – Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$1,810,484

01/006/01 – Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$1,280,542

01/010/01 – Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance - \$3,582,774

01/003/02 – Wages and Cost of Living Allowance - \$812,700

These sums are required to enable the Agriculture, Surveys and Mapping and Forestry Divisions to pay salaries and allowances (\$6,673,800) as well as wages for the Animal Production and Health Division (\$812,700) to September 30, 2022.

02/001/01 - Travelling and Subsistence - \$384,000

02/010/01 - Travelling and Subsistence - \$2,578,200

02/001/04 - Electricity - \$11,181,000

02/001/05 - Telephones - \$7,760,200

02/001/06 - WASA - \$4,460,600

02/001/16 - Contract Employment - \$2,239,000

02/001/22 - Short Term Employment - \$3,236,000

02/001/23 - Fees - \$1,350,000

02/001/43 - Security Services - \$10,862,300

To supplement funding to enable payments for travelling and subsistence, utilities, contract employment, short-term employment, fees and security services to September 30, 2022.

04/005/01 - Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute - \$2,033,000

04/005/02 - Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI) - \$960,000

04/005/04 - Sugar Cane Feeds Centre - \$1,500,000

To meet the payment of salaries to September 30, 2022 for the Agencies listed above.

04/008/01 - Agricultural Incentive Programme - \$7,723,000

To pay outstanding farmer's incentives for the period 2020 to 2022.

05/011/09 - EMBD - Principal on \$90Mn Loan - \$56,287,000

To facilitate payment of principal on an Estate Management and Business Development Company Ltd (EMBD) TT\$90Mn. loan for the settlement of a judgement debt to LCB Contractors Ltd.

Head 78 - Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

Recurrent Expenditure - \$390,000,000

04/007/02 - Senior Citizens Grant - \$390,000,000

Funding is required to facilitate payment of the Senior Citizens Grant to September 30, 2022.

Head 79 - Ministry of Sport and Community Development

Recurrent Expenditure - \$67,000,000

04/007/40 - Gratuity to Contract Officers - \$5,000,000

The sum is required to meet gratuity payments to contract officers to September 30, 2022.

04/009/04 - The Sport Company of Trinidad and Tobago - \$62,000,000

To pay amounts owed to the National Maintenance Training and Security Company Limited (MTS) and the SWAT Estate Police Company Limited to September 30, 2022.

Head 80 - Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Recurrent Expenditure

04/011/07 - NCC - Principal payment on TT\$100Mn 2-year Syndicated Loan Facility - \$20,000,000

The sum is required to meet the principal payment on a TT\$100Mn 2-year Syndicated Loan Facility.

**Schedule relating of the Supplementation
of Estimates 2022**

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
HEAD	03	JUDICIARY	\$	\$	\$	\$
			522,003,800	552,303,800	30,300,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	285,497,250	315,797,250	30,300,000	
Item	001	Judiciary Trinidad	269,237,450	299,537,450	30,300,000	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	125,417,800	155,717,800	30,300,000	
HEAD	04	INDUSTRIAL COURT	40,314,000	48,238,000	7,924,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	14,952,000	22,329,000	7,377,000	
Item	001	General Administration	12,292,073	19,669,073	7,377,000	
Sub-Item	01	Travelling and Subsistence	713,568	849,973	136,405	
Sub-Item	04	Electricity	725,000	1,130,000	405,000	
Sub-Item	05	Telephones	850,000	954,000	104,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	08	Rent/Lease-Office Accommodation and Storage	350,305	1,109,500	759,195	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	2,141,000	2,822,000	681,000	
Sub-Item	21	Repairs and Maintenance - Buildings	300,000	1,092,000	792,000	
Sub-Item	22	Short-term Employment	619,000	889,700	270,700	
Sub-Item	23	Fees	681,500	1,471,500	790,000	
Sub-Item	28	Other Contracted Services	734,000	1,050,000	316,000	
Sub-Item	37	Janitorial Services	871,300	1,527,400	656,100	
Sub-Item	43	Security Services	1,252,750	2,895,750	1,643,000	
Sub-Item	58	Medical Expenses	200,229	1,023,829	823,600	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	500,000	1,047,000	547,000	
Item	007	Households	500,000	1,047,000	547,000	
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	500,000	1,047,000	547,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
HEAD	05	PARLIAMENT	142,271,000	146,385,000	4,114,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	5,517,000	9,631,000	4,114,000	
Item	007	Households	4,854,900	8,968,900	4,114,000	
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	4,854,900	8,968,900	4,114,000	
HEAD	06	SERVICE COMMISSIONS	77,036,900	91,455,900	14,419,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	24,470,000	38,439,000	13,969,000	
Item	001	General Administration	18,594,000	32,563,000	13,969,000	
Sub-Item	04	Electricity	677,400	1,103,100	425,700	
Sub-Item	05	Telephones	700,000	1,135,000	435,000	
Sub-Item	08	Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage	5,923,000	12,542,000	6,619,000	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	1,800,000	2,538,800	738,800	
Sub-Item	22	Short-term Employment	1,300,000	1,900,000	600,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	23	Fees	2,800,000	4,385,000	1,585,000	
Sub-Item	37	Janitorial Services	450,000	870,000	420,000	
Sub-Item	43	Security Services	1,420,000	3,625,000	2,205,000	
Item	003	Public Service Commission	913,000	1,853,500	940,500	
Sub-Item	28	Other Contracted Services	346,000	1,286,500	940,500	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	261,000	711,000	450,000	
Item	007	Households	261,000	711,000	450,000	
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	261,000	711,000	450,000	
HEAD	08	ELECTIONS AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION	76,599,000	100,124,000	23,525,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	35,441,480	55,541,480	20,100,000	
Item	001	General Administration	28,272,100	35,372,100	7,100,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	01	Travelling and Subsistence	2,450,000	3,950,000	1,500,000	
Sub-Item	05	Telephones	1,300,000	3,300,000	2,000,000	
Sub-Item	22	Short-term Employment	3,600,000	5,600,000	2,000,000	
Sub-Item	28	Other Contracted Services	300,000	900,000	600,000	
Sub-Item	62	Promotions, Publicity and Printing	106,900	1,106,900	1,000,000	
Item	002	Election Expenses	7,169,380	20,169,380	13,000,000	
Sub-Item	12	Materials and Supplies	1,576,100	4,576,100	3,000,000	
Sub-Item	22	Short term Employment	2,270,100	9,270,100	7,000,000	
Sub-Item	28	Other Contracted Services	150,000	2,150,000	2,000,000	
Sub-Item	62	Promotions, Publicity and Printing	1,688,380	2,688,380	1,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	03	MINOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASES	300,000	3,725,000	3,425,000	
Item	001	General Administration	300,000	3,725,000	3,425,000	
Sub-Item	02	Office Equipment	100,000	1,125,400	1,025,400	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	04	Other Minor Equipment	100,000	2,499,600	2,399,600	
HEAD	09	TAX APPEAL BOARD	8,051,500	9,920,500	1,869,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	3,583,500	5,452,500	1,869,000	
Item	001	General Administration	3,583,500	5,452,500	1,869,000	
Sub-Item	08	Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage	602,680	2,295,180	1,692,500	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	645,000	821,500	176,500	
HEAD	11	REGISTRATION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION BOARD	3,816,000	5,968,300	2,152,300	
SUB-HEAD	01	PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE	2,552,500	3,068,100	515,600	
Item	001	General Administration	2,552,500	3,068,100	515,600	
Sub-Item	01	Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance	1,899,575	2,415,175	515,600	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	973,500	2,110,200	1,136,700	
Item	001	General Administration	973,500	2,110,200	1,136,700	
Sub-Item	22	Short-term Employment	116,900	769,600	652,700	
Sub-Item	28	Other Contracted Services	5,100	489,100	484,000	
SUB-HEAD	03	MINOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASES	40,000	540,000	500,000	
Item	001	General Administration	40,000	540,000	500,000	
Sub-Item	04	Other Minor Equipment	5,000	505,000	500,000	
HEAD	12	PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD	2,648,000	3,653,400	1,005,400	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	1,237,700	2,053,380	815,680	
Item	001	General Administration	1,237,700	2,053,380	815,680	
Sub-Item	08	Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage	284,418	765,358	480,940	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	22	Short-term Employment	269,800	604,540	334,740	
SUB-HEAD	03	MINOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASES	25,380	215,100	189,720	
Item	001	General Administration	25,380	215,100	189,720	
Sub-Item	02	Office Equipment	10,280	200,000	189,720	
HEAD	13	OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER	499,355,458	559,316,758	59,961,300	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	81,924,998	98,717,998	16,793,000	
Item	001	General Administration	58,386,960	67,679,960	9,293,000	
Sub-Item	23	Fees	1,600,000	5,893,000	4,293,000	
Sub-Item	65	Expenses of Cabinet appointed Bodies	28,265,700	33,265,700	5,000,000	
Item	002	Gender Affairs Division	2,961,800	5,461,800	2,500,000	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	2,700,000	5,200,000	2,500,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Item	003	Communications	9,369,400	14,369,400	5,000,000	
Sub-Item	04	Electricity	300,000	500,000	200,000	
Sub-Item	05	Telephones	300,000	800,000	500,000	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	2,500,000	3,200,000	700,000	
Sub-Item	22	Short-term Employment	1,300,000	1,800,000	500,000	
Sub-Item	28	Other Contracted Services	237,600	537,600	300,000	
Sub-Item	62	Promotions, Publicity and Printing	1,500,000	4,300,000	2,800,000	
SUB-HEAD	03	MINOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASES	555,000	855,000	300,000	
Item	003	Communications	65,000	365,000	300,000	
Sub-Item	02	Office Equipment	35,000	216,000	181,000	
Sub-Item	04	Other Minor Equipment	10,000	129,000	119,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	215,038,760	247,607,060	32,568,300	
Item	005	Non-Profit Institutions	57,342,285	61,742,385	4,400,100	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	03	Contribution to Non-Profit Institutions (Children's Homes)	8,000,000	9,110,600	1,110,600	
Sub-Item	05	St. Dominic's Children's Home	13,722,285	14,011,785	289,500	
Sub-Item	10	St. Jude's Home for Girls	8,500,000	11,500,000	3,000,000	
Item	007	Households	73,066,000	95,463,000	22,397,000	
Sub-Item	03	Children's Authority	67,816,000	90,213,000	22,397,000	
Item	009	Other Transfers	653,800	1,153,800	500,000	
Sub-Item	12	Response to HIV/ AIDS	588,800	1,088,800	500,000	
Item	011	Transfers to State Enterprises	83,835,075	89,106,275	5,271,200	
Sub-Item	09	UDECOTT-Interest payment on \$500 Mn. Loan	11,006,100	16,277,300	5,271,200	
SUB-HEAD	06	CURRENT TRANSFERS TO STATUTORY BOARDS AND SIMILAR BODIES	130,000,000	140,300,000	10,300,000	
Item	004	Statutory Boards	130,000,000	140,300,000	10,300,000	
Sub-Item	53	National Library and Information System	130,000,000	140,300,000	10,300,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
HEAD	15	TOBAGO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY	1,909,018,949	1,969,018,949	60,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	06	CURRENT TRANSFERS TO STATUTORY BOARDS AND SIMILAR BODIES	1,909,018,949	1,969,018,949	60,000,000	
Item	001	Tobago House of Assembly	1,909,018,949	1,969,018,949	60,000,000	
Sub-Item	06	Tobago House of Assembly	1,909,018,949	1,969,018,949	60,000,000	
HEAD	16	CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, TOBAGO	29,296,000	31,944,400	2,648,400	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	12,815,360	14,973,760	2,158,400	
Item	001	General Administration	8,818,200	10,874,600	2,056,400	
Sub-Item	08	Rent/Lease - Office Accomodation and Storage	3,750,000	4,838,000	1,088,000	
Sub-Item	37	Janitorial Services	108,000	657,000	549,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	43	Security Services	1,134,000	1,553,400	419,400	
Item	005	Meteorological Services	2,566,010	2,668,010	102,000	
Sub-Item	17	Training	10,000	112,000	102,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRASFERS AND SUBSIDIES	230,000	720,000	490,000	
Item	007	Households	200,000	690,000	490,000	
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	201,300	691,300	490,000	
HEAD	17	PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT	56,601,000	66,329,000	9,728,000	
SUB-HEAD	01	PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE	13,900,200	15,415,200	1,515,000	
Item	001	General Administration	13,900,200	15,415,200	1,515,000	
Sub-Item	01	Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance	11,881,500	13,396,500	1,515,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	21,116,800	25,259,300	4,142,500	
Item	001	General Administration	21,116,800	25,259,300	4,142,500	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	08	Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage	6,713,000	9,035,500	2,322,500	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	6,378,000	7,598,000	1,220,000	
Sub-Item	28	Other Contracted Services	1,700,000	2,300,000	600,000	
SUB-HEAD	03	MINOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASES	48,000	248,000	200,000	
Item	001	General Administration	48,000	248,000	200,000	
Sub-Item	02	Office Equipment	25,000	125,000	100,000	
Sub-Item	03	Furniture and Furnishings	0	100,000	100,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	0	2,370,500	2,370,500	
Item	007	Households	0	2,370,500	2,370,500	
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	0	2,370,500	2,370,500	
SUB-HEAD	09	DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	21,536,000	23,036,000	1,500,000	
Item	005	Multi Sectoral and Other Services	21,536,000	23,036,000	1,500,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	06	General Public Services	21,536,000	23,036,000	1,500,000	
Project Grp.	A	Administrative Services	18,536,000	19,536,000	1,000,000	
Project No.	043	Development of the Human Resource Capacity of Personnel Department	200,000	700,000	500,000	
Project No.	044	Review of the Public Service Employee Assistance Programme	200,000	700,000	500,000	
Project Grp.	F	Public Buildings	3,000,000	3,500,000	500,000	
Project No.	002	Customization and Outfitting of New Office Building at No. 3 Alexandra Steet, St. Clair	3,000,000	3,500,000	500,000	
HEAD	18	MINISTRY OF FINANCE	6,651,569,793	6,877,536,293	225,966,500	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	4,376,792,466	4,602,758,966	225,966,500	
Item	009	Other Transfers	2,833,829,982	2,959,796,482	125,966,500	
Sub-Item	11	Infrastructure Development Fund	1,700,884,000	1,826,850,500	125,966,500	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Item	011	Transfers to State Enterprises	488,156,630	588,156,630	100,000,000	
Sub-Item	96	Secondary Road Rehabilitation and Improvement Company Limited (SRRICL)	0	100,000,000	100,000,000	
HEAD	22	MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY	3,056,634,000	3,263,534,000	206,900,000	
SUB-HEAD	01	PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE	2,097,340,680	2,139,240,680	41,900,000	
Item	004	Prision Service	656,733,480	698,633,480	41,900,000	
Sub-Item	01	Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance	413,522,370	429,522,370	16,000,000	
Sub-Item	03	Overtime - Monthly Paid Officers	35,988,070	46,888,070	10,900,000	
Sub-Item	04	Allowances	161,689,040	170,689,040	9,000,000	
Sub-Item	05	Government Contribution to NIS	45,504,000	51,504,000	6,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	441,575,830	531,575,830	90,000,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Item	001	General Administration	145,129,730	215,629,730	70,500,000	
Sub-Item	01	Travelling and Subsistence	1,660,000	4,960,000	3,300,000	
Sub-Item	04	Electricity	1,000,000	10,000,000	9,000,000	
Sub-Item	05	Telephones	2,000,000	16,200,000	14,200,000	
Sub-Item	13	Maintenance of Vehicles	200,000	16,200,000	16,000,000	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	37,500,000	40,500,000	3,000,000	
Sub-Item	37	Janitorial Services	4,525,000	10,525,000	6,000,000	
Sub-Item	43	Security Services	5,721,000	24,721,000	19,000,000	
Item	014	Defence Force Headquarters	13,955,610	33,455,610	19,500,000	
Sub-Item	40	Food at Institutions	1,400,000	9,900,000	8,500,000	
Sub-Item	96	Fuel and Lubricants	50,000	11,050,000	11,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	398,999,130	473,999,130	75,000,000	
Item	007	Households	15,180,000	19,180,000	4,000,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	11,000,000	15,000,000	4,000,000	
Item	009	Other Transfers	332,097,730	403,097,730	71,000,000	
Sub-Item	02	Strategic Services Agency	282,100,000	348,100,000	66,000,000	
Sub-Item	16	Transit Police Unit	8,096,830	13,096,830	5,000,000	
HEAD	23	OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTRY OF LEGAL AFFAIRS	384,809,000	480,422,000	95,613,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	206,193,100	282,013,100	75,820,000	
Item	001	General Administration	152,114,450	222,934,450	70,820,000	
Sub-Item	12	Material and Supplies	13,390,000	21,990,000	8,600,000	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	39,500,000	56,720,000	17,220,000	
Sub-Item	22	Short-Term Employment	15,500,000	30,500,000	15,000,000	
Sub-Item	23	Fees	44,500,000	74,500,000	30,000,000	
Item	009	Criminal Law Department	39,893,200	44,893,200	5,000,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	23	Fees	20,000,000	25,000,000	5,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	94,815,400	98,065,400	3,250,000	
Item	007	Households	5,249,560	8,499,560	3,250,000	
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	5,249,560	8,499,560	3,250,000	
SUB-HEAD	09	DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	21,800,000	38,343,000	16,543,000	
Item	005	Multi Sectoral and Other Services	21,800,000	38,343,000	16,543,000	
Sub-Item	06	General Public Services	16,278,618	32,821,618	16,543,000	
Project Grp.	A	Administrative Services	13,278,618	29,821,618	16,543,000	
Project No.	018	Strengthened Information Management at the Registrar General's Department	10,607,777	27,150,777	16,543,000	
HEAD	26	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION	5,119,202,000	5,419,202,000	300,000,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	522,268,000	716,634,000	194,366,000	
Item	001	General Administration	479,691,712	650,747,712	171,056,000	
Sub-item	04	Electricity	1,200,000	8,700,000	7,500,000	
Sub-item	05	Telephones	13,360,000	21,075,000	7,715,000	
Sub-item	16	Contract Employment	150,000,000	188,194,000	38,194,000	
Sub-item	28	Other Contracted Services	9,924,943	18,199,943	8,275,000	
Sub-item	37	Janitorial Services	73,104,747	127,476,747	54,372,000	
Sub-item	43	Security Services	147,800,813	202,800,813	55,000,000	
Item	006	Primary Education	12,059,490	34,119,490	22,060,000	
Sub-item	04	Electricity	2,715,000	20,215,000	17,500,000	
Sub-item	05	Telephones	1,974,000	3,284,000	1,310,000	
Sub-item	06	Water and Sewerage Rates	0	3,250,000	3,250,000	
Item	009	Early Childhood Care and Education Unit	4,395,025	5,645,025	1,250,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-item	04	Electricity	500,000	1,750,000	1,250,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	1,592,424,000	1,698,058,000	105,634,000	
Item	001	Regional Bodies	509,917	10,309,917	9,800,000	
Sub-item	01	Caribbean Examinations Council	0	9,800,000	9,800,000	
Item	006	Educational Institutions	1,076,786,002	1,105,686,002	28,900,000	
Sub-item	09	Grants to Assisted Primary Schools - School Equipment and Upkeep of School Premises	52,357,000	55,457,000	3,100,000	
Sub-item	24	Grants to Government Secondary Schools - Education Programme	24,167,687	29,917,687	5,750,000	
Sub-item	33	Grant to Private Secondary Schools	29,950,000	50,000,000	20,050,000	
Item	007	Households	84,554,068	92,304,068	7,750,000	
Sub-item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	14,305,568	22,055,568	7,750,000	
Item	011	Transfers to State Enterprises	430,065,790	489,249,790	59,184,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-item	02	National Schools Dietary Services Ltd.	38,420,000	82,387,000	43,967,000	
Sub-item	07	Metal Industries Company Ltd.(National Skills Development Programme)	20,000,000	35,217,000	15,217,000	
HEAD	28	MINISTRY OF HEALTH	5,440,391,890	5,803,279,590	362,887,700	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	459,393,634	471,893,634	12,500,000	
Item	004	Vertical Services	264,092,507	276,592,507	12,500,000	
Sub-item	39	Drugs and Other Related Materials and Supplies	241,195,651	253,695,651	12,500,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	4,490,452,535	4,840,840,235	350,387,700	
Item	009	Other Transfers	4,226,044,680	4,553,758,880	327,714,200	
Sub-item	01	Regional Health Authority	119,600,000	172,970,000	53,370,000	
Sub-item	02	North West Regional Health Authority	1,014,312,600	1,034,312,600	20,000,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-item	03	Eastern Regional Health Authority	479,866,932	519,167,032	39,300,100	
Sub-item	04	North Central Regional Health Authority	1,256,200,000	1,381,114,200	124,914,200	
Sub-item	05	South West Regional Health Authority	1,206,400,000	1,296,529,900	90,129,900	
Item	011	Transfers to State Enterprises	156,320,600	178,994,100	22,673,500	
Sub-item	16	NIPDEC- TT\$284.19Mn. 8 year Fixed Rate Term Loan-Procurement, Storage and Distribution of Pharmaceuticals/Non Pharmaceuticals	46,399,358	69,072,858	22,673,500	
HEAD	37	INTEGRITY COMMISSION	8,303,000	8,653,000	350,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	5,656,800	6,006,800	350,000	
Item	001	General Administration	5,656,800	6,006,800	350,000	
Sub-Item	22	Short-Term Employment	3,298,000	3,648,000	350,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
HEAD	39	MINISTRY OF PUBLIC UTILITIES	2,555,023,600	3,022,905,600	467,882,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	315,479,030	383,879,030	68,400,000	
Item	001	General Administration	300,733,220	369,133,220	68,400,000	
Sub-item	42	Street Lighting	40,000,000	108,400,000	68,400,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	881,288,020	893,288,020	12,000,000	
Item	007	Households	57,193,100	69,193,100	12,000,000	
Sub-item	08	Refunds to T&TEC - Re-Rebate on Electricity Bills	50,000,000	62,000,000	12,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	06	CURRENT TRANSFERS TO STATUTORY BOARDS AND SIMILAR BODIES	1,251,912,500	1,579,912,500	328,000,000	
Item	004	Statutory Boards	1,251,912,500	1,579,912,500	328,000,000	
Sub-item	51	Water and Sewerage Authority	1,251,912,500	1,579,912,500	328,000,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
SUB-HEAD	09	DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	80,472,000	139,954,000	59,482,000	
Item	003	Economic Infrastructure	60,872,000	81,254,000	20,382,000	
Sub-item	05	Fuel and Energy	37,610,000	57,992,000	20,382,000	
Proj. Grp.	A	Electricity	37,610,000	57,992,000	20,382,000	
Project No.	591	Additional Transmission Infrastructure to Move Power from TGU to National Grid	5,630,000	23,630,000	18,000,000	
Project No.	601	Renewable Energy Initiatives	818,000	3,200,000	2,382,000	
Item	005	Multi-Sectoral and Other Services	17,100,000	56,200,000	39,100,000	
Sub-item	06	General Public Services	12,500,000	51,600,000	39,100,000	
Proj. Grp.	A	Administrative Services	12,500,000	48,500,000	36,000,000	
Project No.	061	Community Water Improvement Programme	11,000,000	46,000,000	35,000,000	
Project No.	065	Upgrade of the Network Server Infrastructure	0	1,000,000	1,000,000	
Proj. Grp.	H	Meteorological	0	3,100,000	3,100,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Project No.	006	Procurement of a Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES-16) Receiving System	0	1,400,000	1,400,000	
Project No.	011	Refurbishment of Radar Tower at Brasso Venado	0	1,700,000	1,700,000	
HEAD	40	MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND ENERGY INDUSTRIES	581,055,810	881,055,810	300,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	434,298,629	734,298,629	300,000,000	
Item	007	Households	14,891,600	314,891,600	300,000,000	
Sub-item	01	Shortfall in subsidy re sale of Petroleum Products	10,000,000	310,000,000	300,000,000	
HEAD	42	MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	2,332,469,000	2,427,826,000	95,357,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	76,301,000	80,663,000	4,362,000	
Item	001	General Adminisstration	76,301,000	80,663,000	4,362,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-item	23	Fees	50,000	2,550,000	2,500,000	
Sub-item	28	Other Contracted Services	1,000,000	2,862,000	1,862,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	478,246,770	528,601,770	50,355,000	
Item	009	Other Transfers	375,400,000	425,755,000	50,355,000	
Sub-item	04	Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP)	375,400,000	425,755,000	50,355,000	
SUB-HEAD	06	CURRENT TRANSFERS TO STATUTORY BOARDS AND SIMILAR BODIES	1,450,263,230	1,490,903,230	40,640,000	
Item	005	Local Government Bodies	1,450,263,230	1,490,903,230	40,640,000	
Sub-item	23	Port of Spain City Corporation	222,078,900	224,378,900	2,300,000	
Sub-item	24	San Fernando City Corporation	129,337,900	131,937,900	2,600,000	
Sub-item	25	Arima Borough Corporation	82,498,500	83,538,500	1,040,000	
Sub-item	26	Point Fortin Borough Corporation	69,555,200	74,555,200	5,000,000	
Sub-item	27	Chaguanas Borough Corporation	69,265,300	71,565,300	2,300,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-item	28	Diego Martin Regional Corporation	102,349,900	103,549,900	1,200,000	
Sub-item	29	San Juan / Laventille Regional Corporation	157,374,900	166,574,900	9,200,000	
Sub-item	30	Tunapuna /Piarco Regional Corporation	156,721,100	164,021,100	7,300,000	
Sub-item	31	Sangre Grande Regional Corporation	75,099,400	76,099,400	1,000,000	
Sub-item	32	Couva /Tabaquite /Talparo Regional Corporation	99,324,000	100,324,000	1,000,000	
Sub-item	33	Mayaro /Rio Claro Regional Corporation	58,012,900	60,012,900	2,000,000	
Sub-item	34	Siparia Regional Corporation	78,555,400	80,855,400	2,300,000	
Sub-item	35	Penal /Debe Regional Corporation	63,471,300	64,871,300	1,400,000	
Sub-item	36	Princes Town Regional Corporation	73,198,800	75,198,800	2,000,000	
HEAD	43	MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT	2,359,344,860	2,456,377,860	97,033,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	283,829,000	314,162,000	30,333,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Item	002	Highways	60,070,000	71,070,000	11,000,000	
Sub-item	28	Other Contracted Services	41,000,000	52,000,000	11,000,000	
Item	005	Drainage	66,489,000	85,822,000	19,333,000	
Sub-item	09	Rent/Lease- Vehicles and Equipment	25,000,000	35,000,000	10,000,000	
Sub-item	28	Other Contracted Services	25,000,000	34,333,000	9,333,000	
SUB-HEAD	06	CURRENT TRANSFERS TO STATUTORY BOARDS AND SMILIAR BODIES	308,454,482	375,154,482	66,700,000	
Item	004	Statutory Boards	308,454,482	375,154,482	66,700,000	
Sub-item	39	Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago	4,643,340	71,343,340	66,700,000	
HEAD	61	MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	647,060,100	750,660,100	103,600,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	438,979,863	515,279,863	76,300,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Item	009	Other Transfers	391,035,284	458,035,284	67,000,000	
Sub-item	01	Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation	384,035,284	451,035,284	67,000,000	
Item	011	Transfers to State Enterprise	45,643,079	54,943,079	9,300,000	
Sub-item	29	UDeCOTT - Principal Payment on TT\$51.155 Mn. 1.5% 3yr. Fixed Rate Term Loan	0	8,916,337	8,916,337	
Sub-Item	30	UDeCOTT - Interest Payment on TT\$51.155 Mn. 1.5% 3yr. Fixed Rate Term Loan	0	383,663	383,663	
SUB-HEAD	09	DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	133,900,000	161,200,000	27,300,000	
Item	004	Social Infrastructure	127,400,000	154,700,000	27,300,000	
Sub-item	08	Housing and Settlements	127,000,000	154,300,000	27,300,000	
Proj. Grp.	D	Housing Estates	8,000,000	20,300,000	12,300,000	
Project No.	075	Rehabilitation and Maintenance of HDC Rental Apartments and Housing Units	8,000,000	20,300,000	12,300,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Proj. Grp.	E	Settlements	119,000,000	134,000,000	15,000,000	
Project No.	232	Housing Grants	4,000,000	8,000,000	4,000,000	
Project No.	241	Development of Residential Lots - Petrotrin	40,000,000	51,000,000	11,000,000	
HEAD	67	MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	295,788,800	304,788,800	9,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	85,147,150	94,147,150	9,000,000	
Item	009	Other Transfers	42,900,000	51,900,000	9,000,000	
Sub-item	01	Environmental Management Authority	40,000,000	49,000,000	9,000,000	
HEAD	75	EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TRIBUNAL	4,133,000	6,560,500	2,427,500	
SUB-HEAD	01	PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE	2,571,300	2,784,300	213,000	
Item	001	General Administration	2,571,300	2,784,300	213,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-Item	01	Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance	710,000	923,000	213,000	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	1,504,700	3,494,700	1,990,000	
Item	001	General Administration	1,504,700	3,494,700	1,990,000	
Sub-Item	16	Contract Employment	594,000	851,000	257,000	
Sub-Item	23	Fees	65,000	1,683,000	1,618,000	
Sub-Item	43	Security Services	151,200	266,200	115,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	37,000	261,500	224,500	
Item	007	Households	37,000	261,500	224,500	
Sub-Item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	37,000	261,500	224,500	
HEAD	77	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES	709,144,000	829,184,800	120,040,800	
SUB-HEAD	01	PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE	321,294,916	328,781,416	7,486,500	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Item	002	Agriculture	112,952,500	114,762,984	1,810,484	
Sub-item	01	Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance	34,000,000	35,810,484	1,810,484	
Item	006	Surveys and Mapping	24,575,000	25,855,542	1,280,542	
Sub-item	01	Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance	10,250,000	11,530,542	1,280,542	
Item	010	Forestry	75,950,000	79,532,774	3,582,774	
Sub-item	01	Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance	20,000,000	23,582,774	3,582,774	
Item	003	Animal Production and Health	26,480,100	27,292,800	812,700	
Sub-item	02	Wages and Cost of Living Allowance	14,800,000	15,612,700	812,700	
SUB-HEAD	02	GOODS AND SERVICES	73,219,551	117,270,851	44,051,300	
Item	001	General Administration	30,549,830	72,022,930	41,473,100	
Sub-item	01	Travelling and Subsistence	2,300,000	2,684,000	384,000	
Sub-item	04	Electricity	285,000	11,466,000	11,181,000	
Sub-item	05	Telephones	958,400	8,718,600	7,760,200	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Sub-item	06	Water and Sewerage Rates	110,000	4,570,600	4,460,600	
Sub-item	16	Contract Employment	9,840,000	12,079,000	2,239,000	
Sub-item	22	Short-Term Employment	6,152,000	9,388,000	3,236,000	
Sub-item	23	Fees	4,000,000	5,350,000	1,350,000	
Sub-item	43	Security Services	500,000	11,362,300	10,862,300	
Item	010	Forestry	8,372,500	10,950,700	2,578,200	
Sub-item	01	Travelling and Subsistence	4,420,000	6,998,200	2,578,200	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	201,471,683	269,974,683	68,503,000	
Item	005	Non- Profit Institutions	17,077,000	21,570,000	4,493,000	
Sub-item	01	Caribbean Fisheries Training & Development Institute	6,132,000	8,165,000	2,033,000	
Sub-item	02	Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI)	4,000,000	4,960,000	960,000	
Sub-item	04	Sugar Cane Feeds Centre	6,000,000	7,500,000	1,500,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
Item	008	Subsidies	16,339,200	24,062,200	7,723,000	
Sub-item	01	Agricultural Incentive Programme	11,039,200	18,762,200	7,723,000	
Item	011	Transfers to State Enterprises	94,957,423	151,244,423	56,287,000	
Sub-item	09	EMBD- Principal on \$90Mn. Loan	33,713,000	90,000,000	56,287,000	
HEAD	78	MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SERVICES	5,270,815,000	5,660,815,000	390,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	5,019,107,150	5,409,107,150	390,000,000	
Item	007	Households	4,989,992,250	5,379,992,250	390,000,000	
Sub-item	02	Senior Citizens Grant	3,926,675,000	4,316,675,000	390,000,000	
HEAD	79	MINISTRY OF SPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	297,761,000	364,761,000	67,000,000	

HEAD/SUB-HEAD/ITEM AND SUB-ITEM			Provision in Estimates 2022 including Direct Charges, Transfers & Virements	Revised Provision 2022	NET	
					Increase	Decrease
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	185,779,500	252,779,500	67,000,000	
Item	007	Households	7,986,000	12,986,000	5,000,000	
Sub-item	40	Gratuities to Contract Officers	4,900,000	9,900,000	5,000,000	
Item	009	Other Transfers	84,225,085	146,225,085	62,000,000	
Sub-item	04	The Sport Company of Trinidad and Tobago.	69,632,585	131,632,585	62,000,000	
HEAD	80	MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND THE ARTS	273,465,000	293,465,000	20,000,000	
SUB-HEAD	04	CURRENT TRANSFERS AND SUBSIDIES	123,371,477	143,371,477	20,000,000	
Item	011	Transfers to State Enterprises	95,016,202	115,016,202	20,000,000	
Sub-item	07	NCC-Principal Payment on TT\$100.Mn 2-Year Syndicated Loan Facility	80,000,000	100,000,000	20,000,000	
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