

TENTH PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

FIRST SESSION

ORDER PAPER

THURSDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 2002

No. 28

12.30 p.m.

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QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER*

- *1. **Dr Ong Chit Chung:** To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs whether he will give the House an update on the latest developments in (i) the Singapore/Malaysia bilateral talks on water; and (ii) other bilateral issues in the package of negotiation.
- *2. **Ms Irene Ng:** To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs to clarify (a) whether, under the provisions of the 1961 and 1962 water agreements, Malaysia has any legal basis to ask for (i) a price review of raw water after failing to do so in the two years, 1986 and 1987, or (ii) a price revision to be backdated to 1986 and 1987 and (b) if not, why Singapore is prepared to consider a price review now.
- *3. **Mr Low Thia Khiang:** To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs whether and how will the Government respond to Singapore being listed as a high-risk country by the Australian Government after the Bali bomb incident on 12 Oct 2002.
- *4. **Dr Amy Khor Lean Suan:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry on the Ministry's assessment of (i) the impact of the Bali bomb blast on South-east Asian economies in general and the Singapore economy in particular; and (ii) the outlook for the Singapore economy in the next six to twelve months.
- *5. **Mr Leong Horn Kee:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry, in view of the weak flash estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) figures for the third quarter, whether he will give an update on the status and outlook of the Singapore economy and what measures are being undertaken or considered to stimulate the economy.

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- *6. **Mdm Halimah Yacob:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry what is the Ministry's projection of the economic outlook for the fourth quarter of this year as well as for next year.
- *7. **Mdm Halimah Yacob:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance whether the Government will consider deferring the date of implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) increase from 3% to 5%, in view of the still uncertain economic outlook for next year.
- *8. **Mr Gan Kim Yong:** To ask the Minister for Manpower if he could give an update on the number of Singaporeans who remain jobless and whether he expects the situation to improve by early next year.
- *9. **Mr Yeo Guat Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Health, since the introduction from 1 November 2001 of the one-year hospitalisation fee assistance scheme as part of the second off-Budget package to help lower income and retrenched Singaporeans (a) how many retrenched workers and their families have benefited from the scheme so far; (b) how much has it cost the Government; and (c) in view of the continued economic downturn, does his Ministry plan to extend the scheme.
- *10. **Dr Amy Khor Lean Suan:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs, following the recent tragic Bali bomb blast, (a) what security measures have been taken and what advisory has been or will be given to individuals, businesses and private security agencies to prevent attacks of similar nature from occurring in Singapore; and (b) given that many Singaporeans are making holiday plans, what advisory will be issued for those travelling overseas.
- *11. **Mdm Ho Geok Choo:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs (a) what lessons can Singapore draw from the recent terrorists' bombing in Bali with regard to alerting Singaporeans' receptiveness to information on terrorists' activities; and (b) what more can the Government do to ensure that Singaporeans shall at all times be prepared for any eventuality and not presume that all is well because the Government is taking care of everything.
- *12. **Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs what travel directives and additional security measures are being introduced to protect our installations, assets and people working overseas, especially those on the Indonesian islands of Batam and Bintan.

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- *13. **Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Prime Minister whether any assistance was offered, eg medical aid, refrigeration facilities or airlifts, to the people in Indonesia during the recent Bali disaster and, if no such gestures were made, what were the reasons.
- *14. **Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Prime Minister (a) if he will clarify how the Code on Religious Harmony can be applied by Singaporeans; (b) from whom individuals can seek counsel when the Code is flouted; (c) what kind of remedial action can be taken when it is flouted; and (d) whether he will consider setting up a mediation council comprising different religious leaders to resolve conflicts arising from non-compliance with the Code on Religious Harmony.
- *15. **Mr Gan Kim Yong:** To ask the Minister for Health (a) what were the main reasons for the large number of people opting out of the ElderShield Scheme; (b) will his Ministry consider improving the Scheme so as to encourage more people to participate in it; and (c) what can his Ministry do to help those who have opted out of the Scheme.
- *16. **Mdm Ho Geok Choo:** To ask the Acting Minister for Community Development and Sports, after September 11 and the recent development of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) activities, (a) are there plans to (i) review the model of self-help groups and (ii) enhance the concept of cohesiveness by amalgamating them under one umbrella body without disrupting their individuality at the same time; and (b) what more can be done and how can we ensure that there is more collaboration of resources among these self-help groups.
- *17. **Mdm Halimah Yacob:** To ask the Minister for Health (a) the rationale for disallowing the use of Medisave to pay for the costs of inserting stents in an angioplasty procedure when Medisave can be used for other charges related to this procedure and (b) will his Ministry review this policy.
- *18. **Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Health if his Ministry will accept the private hospitals' offer to treat subsidized C class and B2 class patients.
- *19. **Mdm Cynthia Phua:** To ask the Minister for Law why does Singapore Land Authority need to appoint other government agencies, such as Urban Redevelopment Authority, Housing and Development Board and Land Transport Authority, to sell state land when it is capable of undertaking such a sale itself.

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- *20. Dr Amy Khor Lean Suan:** To ask the Minister for National Development, since the last amendment of the Land (Titles) Strata Act in 1987, whether there is now a need to review and further explain the law to prevent the many problems of management and maintenance faced by condominium owners such as those of the Bukit Timah Plaza, People's Park Centre and Kentish Green, as well as problems faced by owners of mixed-use developments.
- *21. Ms Irene Ng:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance whether his Ministry will review the Civil Service Medisave-cum-Subsidised Outpatient Scheme for dependants of female civil servants to ensure equal treatment with their male counterparts.
- *22. Ms Irene Ng:** To ask the Minister for Manpower in view of Singapore's ratification of the International Labour Organisation Convention 100 on Equal Pay for Equal Work, whether the Singapore Civil Service is in compliance with this convention.
- *23. Mr Low Thia Kiang:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry what is his Ministry's response to the observation of the Economic Review Committee's sub-committee on manufacturing that electricity in Singapore has become too expensive.
- *24. Mr Chiam See Tong:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry, at this time of economic difficulties, whether he will advise Power Supply Ltd and the Public Utilities Board not to cut electricity and water supplies to consumers who are in arrears of utility bills but to give them more time to pay up.
- *25. Mr Zainudin Nordin:** To ask the Acting Minister for Community Development and Sports and Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs (a) what is the number of requests for translation of documents and rulings of the Syariah Court from Malay to English; (b) is there an increasing number in such request; (c) does his Ministry find it necessary for future written documents and rulings of the Syariah Court to be given in both Malay and English.
- *26. Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Minister for Education based on the merits of Literature as endorsed by the Ministry and the Economic Review Committee, if he will (i) consider making Literature a compulsory subject for all students at the upper primary and lower secondary school levels using a range of books to manage the different linguistic abilities of children; and (ii) introduce a compulsory module of Literature for all polytechnic students to give them an all-rounded education.

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- *27. Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Education whether the proposed changes to the junior college system can be implemented before 2006.
- *28. Mr Low Thia Khiang:** To ask the Prime Minister whether the Government will consider using electronic voting at the next election of the President.
- *29. Ms Olivia Lum:** To ask the Minister for the Environment (a) if he will provide an update on the proposed pilot Eco-Recycling Park in Tuas; and (b) whether his Ministry plans for more schemes and programmes to encourage recycling companies to set up their facilities and invest in advanced technology and capital equipment there.

* Members may signify to the Clerk their desire to postpone their Questions to a later sitting day, if their Questions are not reached by the end of Question Time. The forms for postponement of Questions are available at the Chamber entrances and should be given to the Clerk at the end of Question Time.

AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS

Introduction of Government Bills

1. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance:

(President's recommendation to be signified).

Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill.

2. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance:

(President's recommendation to be signified).

Income Tax (Amendment) Bill.

3. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance:

(President's recommendation to be signified).

Stamp Duties (Amendment) Bill.

4. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance:

Payment and Settlement Systems (Finality and Netting) Bill.

5. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance:

(President's recommendation to be signified).

Supplementary Supply (FY 2002) Bill.

6. Minister for Home Affairs:

Registration of Criminals (Amendment) Bill.

7. Minister for Trade and Industry:

Strategic Goods (Control) Bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 29/2002] – (Prime Minister) – Second Reading.
 2. Estate Duty (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 30/2002] – (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance) – Second Reading.
 3. Property Tax (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 31/2002] – (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance) – Second Reading.
 4. Arms and Explosives (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 32/2002] – (Minister for Home Affairs) – Second Reading.
 5. Central Provident Fund (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 34/2002] – (Minister for Manpower) – Second Reading.
 6. Housing and Development (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 35/2002] – (Minister for National Development) – Second Reading.
 7. Smoking (Control of Advertisements and Sale of Tobacco) (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 36/2002] – (Minister for Health) – Second Reading.
 8. Media Development Authority of Singapore Bill [Bill No. 37/2002] – (Acting Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts) – Second Reading.
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QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

1. **Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs (a) how many reported cases of missing children were filed in the years 2001 and 2002; (b) what is the average age group of these missing children; and (c) what is the success rate in the police investigation.
 2. **Dr Jennifer Lee:** To ask the Minister for Manpower (a) what was the government levy for foreign domestic workers at the time of its introduction and how has it increased over the years to its present rate; and (b) what was the number of foreign domestic workers at the time of introduction of the levy and what were the numbers since then, specifically in the years before and after each change in the levy.
 3. **Mr Low Thia Khiang:** To ask the Minister for National Development how many market produce and cooked food stalls respectively have been vacant at the Block 11 Hougang Avenue 3 food centre as at 1 Oct 2002 and whether the Housing and Development Board has plans to tender out those stalls.
 4. **Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) why is the Bukit Panjang Light Rail Transit constantly breaking down despite repeated assurances from the Ministry that service standards are up; and (b) what kind of safety measures are in place for such a driverless transport system, when train wheels can become dislodged in the operation process.
 5. **Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) if his Ministry has thought of using other more convenient fare systems when replacing the single-trip Mass Rapid Transit fare card with the standard fare card where a deposit is required and refunded at the end of each trip, which has highly inconvenienced commuters; and (b) what happens to the deposits that remain unclaimed after a while.
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PAPERS PRESENTED

	<i>2002</i>	<i>Date Presented</i>
S.	111 Annual Report of the Energy Market Authority 2001/2002	1st October, 2002
S.	112 Annual Report of the Economic Development Board 2001/2002	2nd October, 2002

PAPERS PRESENTED - *continued*

<i>2002</i>		<i>Date Presented</i>
S.	113 Annual Report of Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore 2001/2002	4th October, 2002
S.	114 Annual Report of the National Arts Council 2001/2002	8th October, 2002
S.	115 Annual Report of the Agri-food and Veterinary Authority 2001/2002	8th October, 2002
S.	116 Annual Report of the Urban Redevelopment Authority 2001/2002	8th October, 2002
S.	117 Annual Report of the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore 2001/2002 ...	8th October, 2002
S. L.	107 Goods and Services Tax (General) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2002	8th October, 2002
S.	118 Annual Report of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies 2001/2002 ...	9th October, 2002
S.	119 Annual Report of the Medical Endowment Scheme 2001/2002	10th October, 2002
S. L.	108 Central Provident Fund (Statutory Bodies and Aided Schools – Employees) Regulations 2002	11th October, 2002
S. L.	109 Central Provident Fund (Government Employees) Regulations 2002	11th October, 2002
S. L.	110 Central Provident Fund (Permanent Residents – Employees) Regulations 2002	11th October, 2002
S. L.	111 Central Provident Fund (Withdrawals for Eldersshield Scheme) Regulations 2002	11th October, 2002

PAPERS PRESENTED - *continued*

<i>2002</i>		<i>Date Presented</i>
S. L.	112 Central Provident Fund (Medisave Account Withdrawals) (Amendment No. 3) Regulations 2002	11th October, 2002
Pres. Co.	25 Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the International Arbitration (Amendment) Bill (Bill No. 28/2002)	14th October, 2002
S. L.	113 Poisons (Amendment) Rules 2002	15th October, 2002
S. L.	114 Customs (Amendment No. 3) Regulations 2002	21st October, 2002
S.	120 Annual Report of the Elderly Care Endowment Scheme 2001/2002	21st October, 2002
S.	121 Annual Report of the National Parks Board 2001/2002	21st October, 2002
S.	122 Annual Report of the Institute of Technical Education 2001/2002	22nd October, 2002
S.	123 Annual Report of the Skills Development Fund 2001/2002	22nd October, 2002
S.	124 Annual Report of the Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board 2001/2002	22nd October, 2002
Cmd.	8 Report of the Junior College/Upper Secondary Education Review Committee	22nd October, 2002
S.	125 Annual Report of the Building and Construction Authority 2002	23rd October, 2002
Cmd.	9 Annual Report of the Ministry of Home Affairs 2002	28th October, 2002
