

# TENTH PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

---

## FIRST SESSION

---

### REVISED ORDER PAPER

MONDAY, 25TH NOVEMBER, 2002

No. 29

12.30 p.m.

103

---

#### QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER\*

- \*1. **Mdm Ho Geok Choo:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry (a) what kind of programmes does the Government plan to initiate in order to reap the benefits that will be derived from the recent successful Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) reached between Singapore and various countries; and (b) how can the recently retrenched employees from the banking sector be reskilled and trained to take up job opportunities arising from the successful FTAs.
- \*2. **Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry in view of his statement that Singapore may slide into another recession, (a) how long and how deep will this coming recession be, and (b) what additional measures are being taken to help small and big Singapore companies to tide over this difficult period.
- \*3. **Mr Charles Chong:** To ask the Minister for National Development if his Ministry will consider extending the rental rebates and deferring the rental increases or the upward adjustments to 'market rental' of HDB and JTC commercial properties until the economic situation improves.
- \*4. **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.

- 
- \*5. 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.
- \*6. 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.
- \*7. Mdm Ho Geok Choo:** To ask the Minister for Transport in view of Shanghai promoting Pudong International Airport as an aviation hub in the Asia Pacific region from 27 October 2002, (a) what will be the impact on Singapore Changi Airport (SCA) which has consecutively been voted as the best Airport in the world by Business Travellers (Asia Pacific) in the last 11 years; and (b) what measures can SCA take to address the challenges so that it will continue to be competitive and maintain its number one position.
- \*8. Mr Gan Kim Yong:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) whether he will give an update on the status of the service level of the Bukit Panjang Light Rail Transit; (b) what were the causes of the major service disruption on 21 Oct 02; and (c) what measures are being undertaken to prevent recurrence of the same problem.
- \*9. Dr Teo Ho Pin:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) whether he will consider shutting down the Bukit Panjang LRT system for a period of time so as to conduct a thorough investigation and testing of the system; and (b) what are the key safety features of and the performance standards specified for the LRT system.
- \*10. 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.

- 
- \*11. Mr Charles Chong:** To ask the Acting Minister for Community Development and Sports (a) whether Singapore had registered any reservation to Article 10 of the UN Charter on the Complete Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) when it ratified the convention in October 1995; and (b) if not, is Singapore in compliance with Article 10 of CEDAW which provides women with equal rights as men in the field of education, including the study of medicine.
- \*12. Ms Olivia Lum:** To ask the Minister for Manpower whether his Ministry will consider lowering the foreign worker levy and raising the quota of foreign workers in value-added or highly specialised industries where SMEs are facing difficulties in attracting skilled local workers to fill vacancies in their operations.
- \*13. Ms Olivia Lum:** To ask the Minister for Manpower whether the Ministry will consider allowing the employment of foreign workers from non-traditional sources for the textile industry or other industries with high export activities.
- \*14. Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Manpower whether the Ministry plans to increase the foreign maid levy and, if so, whether the Ministry has considered other alternatives other than just increasing the levy.
- \*15. 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.
- \*16. Mdm Halimah Yacob:** To ask the Minister for Health, in view of the high risk of infection of unregulated tattooing procedures now freely conducted by untrained persons without any health or safety guidelines will his Ministry (i) regulate the conduct of this procedure; and (ii) consider banning those below 18 years from tattooing themselves unless they have parental consent as is the practice in some countries.
- \*17. Dr Amy Khor Lean Suan:** To ask the Minister for Education (a) what is the number and percentage of children entering primary 1 each year who are identified for the Learning Support Programme (LSP) since the Programme was introduced; (b) how are these children assessed to determine if they need to attend the Programme; (c) what is the standard against which the primary 1 children's reading abilities are benchmarked to determine if they need to attend the Programme; (d) what is the duration of the Programme and; (e) how effective has the Programme been.

- 
- \*18. 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.
- \*19. Mr Chiam See Tong:** To ask the Minister for Transport whether he will consider making it compulsory for taxi companies to install security devices in their taxis to give protection to taxi drivers.
- \*20. 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.
- \*21. Mdm Cynthia Phua:** To ask the Minister for Transport in view of the recent accident at Tanjong Katong Road, if he will consider displaying speed limit signs, for example 40km/h, on roads near schools instead of the current practice of displaying the 'school zone' signs so as to remind vehicles to slow down.
- \*22. Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) what is his Ministry's rationale for excluding singles, who have maids in their employment, from enjoying tax rebates on maid levies; and (b) whether his Ministry will consider reviewing this policy to help singles who employ maids to look after their elderly or siblings.

\* 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. Minister for Transport:**

Road Traffic (Amendment No. 2) Bill.

**2. Minister for Trade and Industry:**

*(President's recommendation to be signified).*

Economic Expansion Incentives (Relief from Income Tax) (Amendment) Bill.

**3. Minister for Health:**

Medical Registration (Amendment) Bill.

---

**ORDERS OF THE DAY AND NOTICE OF MOTION**

*(Those marked • are Orders of the Day)*

- 1. Income Tax (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 39/2002] – (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance) – Second Reading.  

[For amendments to the Bill, see Supplement No. 3 dated 25th November, 2002].
- 2. Stamp Duties (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 40/2002] – (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance) – Second Reading.
- 3. Payment and Settlement Systems (Finality and Netting) Bill [Bill No. 41/2002] – (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance) – Second Reading.
- 4. Rapid Transit Systems (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 33/2002] – Minister for Transport – Second Reading.
- 5. Strategic Goods (Control) Bill [Bill No. 44/2002] – (Minister for Trade and Industry) – Second Reading.

**6. Minister for Education:**

JUNIOR COLLEGE/UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION: That this House, having noted the Report of the Junior College (JC)/Upper Secondary Education Review Committee 2002, contained in Paper Cmd. 8 of 2002, (1) supports the new JC curriculum which will better develop thinking, communication and other process skills and engage students in greater breadth of learning; and (2) endorses greater diversity and opening of new pathways in JC/Upper Secondary education to cater to the different strengths and interests of students.

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER**

1. **Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Minister for Manpower (a) what is the number of distress calls received in a year by operators manning its toll-free telephone line to assist domestic workers; (b) what training is given to these operators; (c) whether these operators can speak different languages; (d) what are the follow-up support services given to the domestic workers; and (e) how many domestic workers have been helped through this service in a year.
2. **Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Minister for Education (a) what are the criteria used by the National University of Singapore to admit top student applicants into the medical faculty; (b) what is the composition (by profession and gender) of members of the interviewing board; (c) what criteria are used to match top students with the various disciplines under the initiative to spread Singapore's top talents among various disciplines; and (d) what is the extent an individual student's preference for a discipline is taken into account in this matching process.

**PAPERS PRESENTED**

<i>2002</i>		<i>Date Presented</i>
S. L.	115 Central Provident Fund (Medishield Scheme) (Amendment No. 3) Regulations 2002 ... ..	1st November, 2002
S.	126 Annual Report of CISCO 2001/2002 ...	1st November, 2002
S.	127 Annual Report of Nanyang Polytechnic 2001/2002 ... ..	2nd November, 2002

**PAPERS PRESENTED - *continued***

<i>2002</i>		<i>Date Presented</i>
S.	128 Annual Report of the Temasek Polytechnic 2001/2002 ... ..	2nd November, 2002
S. L.	116 Road Traffic (Rebate on Licence Fee for Motor Vehicles) (Amendment) Rules 2002 ... ..	2nd November, 2002
S. L.	117 Road Traffic (Rebate on Licence Fee for Electric Cars and Hybrid Cars) (Amendment) Rules 2002 ... ..	2nd November, 2002
S.	129 Annual Report of the Health Promotion Board 2001 ... ..	2nd November, 2002
S.	130 Annual Report of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore 2001/2002 ... ..	6th November, 2002
S.	131 Advice of the Council of Presidential Advisers on the Re-Appointment of Mr Ng Kok Song as Director to the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC) Board ... ..	8th November, 2002
S.	132 Annual Report of the Central Provident Fund Board 2001 ... ..	8th November, 2002
S.	133 Annual Report of the Land Transport Authority 2001/2002 ... ..	8th November, 2002
S.	134 Annual Report of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore 2001 ... ..	8th November, 2002
Pres. Co.	26 Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 29/2002] ... ..	13th November, 2002

---



---

**PAPERS PRESENTED - *continued***

<i>2002</i>	<i>Date Presented</i>
Pres. Co. 27    Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Arms and Explosives (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 32/2002] ... ..	13th November, 2002
Pres. Co. 28    Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Central Provident Fund (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 34/2002] ... ..	13th November, 2002
Pres. Co. 29    Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Housing and Development (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 35/2002 (Amended)] ... ..	13th November, 2002
Pres. Co. 30    Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Smoking (Control of Advertisements and Sale of Tobacco) (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 36/2002] ... ..	13th November, 2002
Pres. Co. 31    Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Media Development Authority of Singapore Bill [Bill No. 37/2002] ... ..	13th November, 2002
S. L.        118    Fees (Property Tax) (Amendment) Order 2002 ... ..	13th November, 2002
Cmd.        10    Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial Year 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2002 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2003 ... ..	15th November, 2002
S.            135    Annual Report of the Singapore Labour Foundation 2002 ... ..	15th November, 2002

---