

FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE
(SECOND SESSION)

ORDER PAPER
MONDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2024

No. 124

11.00 am

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QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER*

- *1. **Mr Darryl David:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs in view of the announcement by ICA on 13 February 2024 that all foreign visitors to Singapore can soon clear immigration at the air, land and sea checkpoints using automated lanes by the second half of 2024, whether there will still be dedicated lanes at these immigration checkpoints set aside exclusively for Singaporeans and permanent residents.
- *2. **Mr Yip Hon Weng:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) why was GST charged wrongly by Government agencies; and (b) whether the Ministry can share on plans, such as to leverage more on technology as well as simplified rules and processes, to prevent similar situations from happening in the future.
- *3. **Dr Tan Wu Meng:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) what are the root causes for the wrong charging of GST on the 18 Government fees which were incorrectly designated as processing fees rather than regulatory in nature prior to the November 2023 review; (b) whether the Ministry maintains an overview of such fees; (c) whether the Ministry previously provided specific guidance to agencies on such interpretations; and (d) whether there have been prior appeals or legal challenges to the interpretation of fees and, if so, what are the outcomes.
- *4. **Mr Gerald Giam Yean Song:** To ask the Minister for Communications and Information (a) whether the Government has set specific targets for Singapore's global share of aggregate computing power over the next five to 10 years; (b) if so, what is this target share and by when; (c) which agency is responsible for this initiative; and (d) what interim milestones will the Government use to track progress.
- *5. **Assoc Prof Razwana Begum Abdul Rahim:** To ask the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth how does the new Singapore Government Partnerships Office plan to build and maintain respectful, age-appropriate and on-going partnerships with children and young people under 18 years old.
- *6. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Education for each year in the past five years (a) what is the number of teacher counsellors employed in schools in Singapore; (b) what is the average percentage of teachers who are teacher counsellors in each school; and (c) how many hours of counselling training do these teachers undergo.
- *7. **Ms Carrie Tan:** To ask the Minister for Sustainability and the Environment in view of rising land demands for storing cremation niches and urns (a) how quickly can the Ministry ramp up the capacity for inland ash scattering as the main method for the management of cremated remains; and (b) whether the Ministry will consider launching a programme to make inland ash scattering the default method for managing remains of non-Muslim Singaporeans and provide an opt-out option to those who do not prefer it.
- *8. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs for each year in the past five years, how many persons have been (i) investigated and (ii) prosecuted respectively under section 6(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1993 (CYPA) for causing emotional harm to a child or young person as defined under sections 6(3)(b)(ii) and 6(3)(c)(ii) of the CYPA.

- *9. **Ms Joan Pereira:** To ask the Minister for Transport with regard to requests for road safety features such as speed bumps, zebra crossings, traffic lights and overhead bridges received from Members of Parliament, residents and members of the public (a) how does the Ministry evaluate such requests; (b) whether the Ministry will re-evaluate the requests upon further studies conducted or following accidents; and (c) whether the Ministry will consider revising its criteria for road safety features around schools and residential areas arising from these requests.
- *10. **Mr Gerald Giam Yeap Song:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry (a) what are the primary strategic objectives of the National Gallium Nitride Technology Centre in terms of technological advancement, economic impact and international collaboration; (b) what is the current stage of the Centre's development; (c) how will the Centre integrate with educational institutions and the existing semiconductor industry to offer practical experience and training in gallium nitride technologies; and (d) how will the success of the Centre be measured or evaluated.
- *11. **Mr Yip Hon Weng:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) what are the factors leading to a decline in real income growth for the bottom 10% of income earners in 2023 despite the positive increase in median monthly household income and a lower overall Gini coefficient figure; and (b) whether there are additional initiatives or policy adjustments being considered to help the low-income households particularly in areas like essential goods, utilities and transport.
- *12. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs whether he can provide an update on the Ministry's review on the proposal of civil society, lawyers and law professors to include illegal wildlife trade offences under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act 2006 and the Wildlife Act 1965 as serious offences under the Schedule of the Organised Crime Act 2015.
- *13. **Mr Yip Hon Weng:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) how will the Ministry ensure that no vulnerable groups are impacted by the decline of readily available street-hail taxis, particularly seniors and special needs individuals, who may find it challenging to use ride-hailing apps; and (b) whether the Ministry works with the SG Digital Office to offer training programmes specifically targeted at helping these vulnerable groups to utilise ride-hailing apps.
- *14. **Mr Gerald Giam Yeap Song:** To ask the Minister for Sustainability and the Environment (a) in the last 10 years, how many street hawking licences have been issued for streetside ice-cream vendors; (b) how many of these vendors are still active today; (c) whether the licences from the inactive vendors may be transferred to new applicants; and (d) how much longer will streetside ice-cream vendors be allowed to exist.
- *15. **Mr Mohd Fahmi Bin Aliman:** To ask the Minister for National Development besides connecting the replacement contractor with existing SME sub-contractors, what other assistance and recourse are provided to sub-contractors of the main contractor of HDB housing projects in a situation where the main contractor was dismissed by HDB and currently undergoing liquidation.
- *16. **Mr Leong Mun Wai:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs whether he can provide information on when the individual recently served with a Notice of Intended Designation as a Politically Significant Person was (i) registered as a permanent resident and (ii) naturalised as a Singapore citizen.

* Members may postpone their Questions to a later sitting day if their Questions are not reached by the end of Question Time (QT). For such Questions, Members may email to parl_cop@parl.gov.sg in advance a postponement notice that will be effected after QT. Members must submit their notices to the Clerk within one hour after the end of QT (SO 22(3)). Questions will be given a written answer if no such notices are received by the Clerk within the stipulated time.

AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS**Introduction of Government Bills****1. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance:**

Supply Bill.

(President's recommendation signified).

2. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance:

Supplementary Supply (FY 2023) Bill.

(President's recommendation signified).

ORDER OF THE DAY**1. BUDGET STATEMENT:**

Resumption of Debate on Question (16 February 2024) (Allotted Day) –

“That Parliament approves the financial policy of the Government for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.”. – (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance).

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

- 1. Mr Leong Mun Wai:** To ask the Prime Minister whether he will consider the introduction of public disclosure of assets for (i) political office holders and (ii) key personnel in the Civil Service and Government-linked corporations to boost transparency and public trust.
- 2. Mr Shawn Huang Wei Zhong:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance with regard to GST being wrongly charged by Government agencies (a) how was this issue detected and what role did internal controls or external reporting play in identifying the wrongful GST charges; and (b) what steps are being implemented to prevent a recurrence of such an oversight in the charging of GST on Government fees.
- 3. Mr Shawn Huang Wei Zhong:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) how will the wrongful GST charged by Government agencies impact the affected individuals and businesses; (b) whether there is any compensation beyond the refund for any inconvenience caused; and (c) whether the Ministry will review the use of relevant technologies to avoid future GST discrepancies.
- 4. Mr Leong Mun Wai:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs whether the Ministry has data on the number of Singapore citizens who have participated in foreign political or legislative bodies both before and after the enactment of the Foreign Interference (Countermeasures) Act 2021.
- 5. Mr Patrick Tay Teck Guan:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs whether ICA will be retaining designated lanes for Singaporeans across all land and air checkpoints.
- 6. Ms Hazel Poa:** To ask the Minister for Sustainability and the Environment how many Singaporean households were in arrears on their utility bills in 2023 and what were the median and maximum number of months they were in arrears.

7. **Ms See Jinli Jean:** To ask the Minister for Sustainability and the Environment whether the Government has considered offering plant-based meals for Government events to lead the way in making sustainability more mainstream.
8. **Mr Pritam Singh:** To ask the Minister for Education (a) what was the overall cohort size and of that the total number of students taking Tamil and Non-Tamil Indian languages (NTILs) for each year from 2013 to 2023 for (i) PSLE (ii) N-level (iii) O-level and (iv) A-level examinations respectively; and (b) what is the difference in funding, expressed as a percentage, between Tamil language as an official mother tongue language and each of the other five NTILs per student.
9. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Social and Family Development for each year in the past five years, how many Care and Protection Orders have been applied for and ordered by the Youth Court respectively.
10. **Mr Patrick Tay Teck Guan:** To ask the Minister for Health whether nurses who are union members and who are to present themselves before the Nursing Board for inquiries can be represented by designated officers of the trade union whom they are members of, to be at the meetings and hearings.
11. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Health for FY 2022 and FY 2023 (a) what is the number of students who enrolled into nursing programmes in the ITE, polytechnics and universities respectively; and (b) what is the number and percentage of nursing students who go on to practise after graduation from the ITE, polytechnics and universities respectively.
12. **Ms Hazel Poa:** To ask the Minister for National Development how many Singaporean households were in arrears on their housing loan instalments in 2023 for public housing and what were the median and maximum number of months they were in arrears.
13. **Ms Hazel Poa:** To ask the Minister for National Development (a) in 2024, how many HDB flats under the Selective En Bloc Redevelopment Scheme are expected to be vacated upon the completion of replacement flats; and (b) whether these vacated flats will be added to the interim housing supply under the Parenthood Provisional Housing Scheme.
14. **Ms Hazel Poa:** To ask the Minister for National Development whether the Ministry or HDB has conducted any study on the impact of lease decay on resale HDB flat prices since 2017.
15. **Ms See Jinli Jean:** To ask the Minister for National Development (a) what proportion of buildings in Singapore provide (i) accessible changing rooms for adults with disabilities or seniors who need caregivers to help change them and (ii) larger accessible toilets on every floor for motorised wheelchairs users, respectively; and (b) how does the Ministry seek to encourage more building owners to introduce accessible changing rooms and larger accessible toilets in their buildings.
16. **Mr Yip Hon Weng:** To ask the Minister for National Development (a) whether the Ministry will consider the feasibility of implementing a requirement for mandatory neutering of cats in HDB homes to reduce abandonment and stray populations; (b) if not, why not; and (c) what specific initiatives are currently in place to raise awareness about the importance of neutering pet cats before the cat management framework is implemented.
17. **Mr Leong Mun Wai:** To ask the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth (a) what is the total cost of developing and maintaining the IT systems, helplines and other processes to disburse Community Development Council Vouchers, including man-hours for civil servants tasked from their other roles; and (b) what is the total cost of onboarding merchants to the system.

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18. **Mr Gan Thiam Poh:** To ask the Minister for Manpower in the last five years (a) what is the total number of cases referred to the Ministry by unions for conciliation because the unionised companies have refused to enter into a Collective Agreement; and (b) how many of these cases are (i) eventually escalated to the Industrial Arbitration Court and (ii) referred for conciliation or arbitration and managed to have the company agreeing to enter into a Collective Agreement.
 19. **Mr Gan Thiam Poh:** To ask the Minister for Manpower what are the common reasons for stalemate after conciliation at the Ministry or arbitration at the Industrial Arbitration Court where unionised companies and unions are unable to enter into Collective Agreements.
 20. **Mr Patrick Tay Teck Guan:** To ask the Minister for Manpower (a) from 2020 to 2023, what is the annual number of work injury claims under the Work Injury Compensation Act that were received by the Ministry for work-from-home injuries; and (b) of which, how many of these claims were (i) successful and (ii) unsuccessful, respectively.
 21. **Mr Patrick Tay Teck Guan:** To ask the Minister for Manpower how many judges in the State Courts are trained and assigned to handle matters at the Employment Claims Tribunal as at 31 December 2023.
 22. **Mr Yip Hon Weng:** To ask the Minister for Manpower (a) what are the qualifications and eligibility criteria for individuals to serve as grievance handling officers in workplaces; (b) whether there are specific considerations regarding the nationality of the officers with a view to ensuring impartiality and understanding of local workplace culture and sensitivities; and (c) how can employees be assured of impartiality and effectiveness of grievance handling processes regardless of the nationality of the grievance handling officer.
 23. **Ms Hazel Poa:** To ask the Minister for Transport whether the Ministry will consider providing a pedestrian crossing or an overhead bridge along Yuan Ching Road where a 12-year-old girl was killed in an accident recently.
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