

**TENTH SITTING OF THE FIRST SESSION
OF THE FIFTH HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**



**TO BE HELD ON
THURSDAY, 2ND MAY, 2024
AT THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY CHAMBER
ROAD TOWN, TORTOLA
AT 10:00 A.M.**

AMENDED

ORDER OF THE DAY

ORDER OF THE DAY

- 1) **Prayers**
- 2) **Administration of Oaths**
- 3) **Confirmation of Minutes**
 - i) Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of Tuesday, 31st January, 2024;
- 4) **Announcements by the Speaker**
- 5) **Statements by Ministers**
- 6) **Presentation of Papers**
 - a) **The Premier and Minister of Finance to lay on the table the following documents:**
 - i) Virgin Islands Recovery and Development Agency Annual Report – 31 December, 2018;
 - ii) Vetting Project – Virgin Islands/Vetting Policy and Approach – International Police Assistance Service (IPAS) - 6th December 2023;
 - iii) Policy Brief – Governance of Grants to Institutions – British Virgin Islands - Social Policy Research Institute (SPRI) – January 2023; and
- 7) **Notices of Motions Given Orally**
 - a) The Leader of the Opposition and Territorial Member to give notice that, at a later stage in the proceedings, he would seek leave to ask the questions standing in his name under Item 8(i) and (iii) on the Order of the Day.
 - b) The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member to give notice that, at a later stage in the proceedings, he would seek leave to ask the questions standing in his name under Item 8(iv) through (viii) on the Order of the Day.
 - c) The Member for the Third District to give notice that, at a later stage in the proceedings, he would seek leave to ask the questions standing in his name under Item 8(ix) through (xii) on the Order of the Day.

- d) The Member for the Eighth District to give notice that, at a later stage in the proceedings, he would seek leave to ask the questions standing in his name under Item 8(xiii) through (xvi) on the Order of the Day.
- e) The Member for the Sixth District to give notice that, at a later stage in the proceedings, he would seek leave to ask the questions standing in his name under Item 8(xvii) through (xx) on the Order of the Day.
- f) The Member for the Second District to give notice that, at a later stage in the proceedings, he would seek leave to ask the questions standing in his name under Item 8(xxi) through (xxiii) on the Order of the Day.

8) Questions and Answers to Questions

- i) **The Leader of the Opposition and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance provide this Honourable House with an overview of the current national security strategy in place to protect our citizens and safeguard the Territory against threats?

Question 2

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House what efforts, if any, are being made to enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in combating crime and maintaining public order within the country?

Question 3

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House what measures, if any, are in place to strengthen border security and prevent illegal immigration, trafficking, and the smuggling of contraband into the country?

Question 4

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House if there are measures in place addressing cybersecurity challenges and protecting critical infrastructure and sensitive data from cyber threats and attacks?

Question 5

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House if there are any regulatory framework that governs private security services within the country, and how does the government oversee and ensure compliance with relevant laws and standards?

Question 6

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House what requirements are in place for the training, certification, and licensing of private security personnel to maintain high standards of professionalism and competence?

Question 7

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House how does the government collaborate with private security firms to complement the efforts of public law enforcement agencies and enhance overall security in the country?

Question 8

Madam Speaker would the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House what mechanisms, if any, are in place to promote transparency, accountability, and oversight in the operations of private security firms to protect the rights and safety of citizens?

- ii) **The Leader of the Opposition and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker would the Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade please tell this Honourable House the total number of private security firms that have trade licenses to operate in the Territory and could the information be given by Island.

Question 2

Madam Speaker would the Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade tell this Honourable House, in light of a not so good report from the CFATF, how is the government monitoring and safeguarding the stability of the

financial sector in the British Virgin Islands to mitigate risks, prevent financial crimes, and promote trust in the jurisdiction as a reputable Financial Services Centre?

Question 3

Madam Speaker would the Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade inform this Honourable House what strategies, if any, are being implemented to promote financial inclusion and access to banking services for all residents in the British Virgin Islands, particularly marginalized or underserved communities?

Question 4

Madam Speaker would the Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade inform this Honourable House when was the last assessment conducted by the government to assess the Labour market to identify emerging skill demands, labour shortages, or areas for improvement in workforce planning and development?

- iii) **The Leader of the Opposition and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please provide this Honourable House with an overview of the current government strategy for collaborating with non-profit organizations such as the Red Cross, Family Support Network, Diabetes Association, The Cancer Society, Unite BVI etc. in the health sector to enhance the delivery of healthcare services and support to vulnerable persons in our Territory?

Question 2

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House how does the ministry evaluate the effectiveness of partnerships with the non-profit organizations in addressing healthcare challenges and improving health outcomes in the Territory?

Question 3

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what specific measures are being taken to ensure that non-profit organizations receive adequate resources and support to effectively complement the efforts of the healthcare system?

Question 4

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please share with this Honourable House any successful examples of collaboration between the government health agencies and non-profit organizations that have significantly impacted healthcare delivery and patient outcomes?

Question 5

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what steps are the government taking to promote greater coordination and cooperation between non-profit organizations, healthcare providers, and government agencies to address complex health and social development issues?

Question 6

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House how does the ministry ensure transparency and accountability in the distribution of funds and resources to non-profit organizations involved in healthcare and social support services?

Question 7

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House in what ways are non-profit organizations involved in health-related research, advocacy, and policy development, and how does the ministry support and leverage their expertise in these areas?

Question 8

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House how does the government plan to expand and strengthen partnerships with non-profit organizations to address emerging health and social challenges and adapt to the changing needs of the population?

Question 9

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what role do non-profit organizations play in promoting community engagement, public health awareness, and preventive healthcare initiatives, and how is the government collaborating with them in these areas?

Question 10

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House how does the Ministry plan to measure the impact and assess the outcomes of the collaborative efforts between non-profit organizations and the government in the Health and Social Development sectors?

- iv) **The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, since getting elected it has been brought to my attention that vessels operated by Chinese fishermen have been dragging nets in the waters off of Anegada, many of which have washed up on our shores. Could the Honourable Premier and Minister responsible for fisheries, please tell this Honourable House whether he is aware of this situation and what steps have the Government taken to address this concern? Has there been any seizures of boats or crew concerning this illegal activity?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Premier and Minister of Finance inform this honourable house of the following:

- a) Does the transition to the new salaries have an immediate effect on existing officers on contract?
- b) If yes, why would the new salaries not take effect upon negotiations of new contractual terms?
- c) How many public officers under contractual terms would have these adjustments within their existing contracts, and at what grade levels are these public officers' posts classified?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, in the press conference on March 15, 2024, the Premier and Minister of Finance, indicated Cabinet approval for hiring the Governance Reform Delivery Manager. Could the Honourable Premier please tell this Honourable House:

- a) If this post was advertised? If not, could he indicate the selection criteria applied for identifying prospective candidates?
 - i) How many candidates were shortlisted?
 - ii) What is the anticipated term of engagement?

- b) Could the Premier please provide a job description for the new post and outline the deliverables?
- c) Identify how the duties of this post differ from those of the current coordinator? and
- d) Are these two (2) posts expected to exist simultaneously?

v) **The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade the following question:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Trade and Labour, please inform this Honourable House of the progress, if any, with the development and implementation of the policy for grant assistance for small businesses in the Territory? If there is no progress as yet, then when does the Deputy Premier expect to have a substantial update?

vi) **The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works the following question:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, as you drive around the Territory, it can be noted that some places are not well lit in the evenings such as the Brandywine Bay area. Could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please inform this Honourable House if the ministry has identified any areas across the Territory that they will be improving? If yes, could the Minister please provide this Honourable House with a list of areas and dates when works will commence?

vii) **The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House the status of the youth courts in the Territory and give a summary of statistics including types of crimes, frequency of those crimes, ages and numbers of youth charged?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House, if the National Drug Advisory Council is in place? If yes, please state the names of the members. If not, please give a date when this board will be commissioned.

- viii) **The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member to ask the Honourable Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, there continues to exist a number of citizens in this Territory who are interested in the legislation and promotion of drag racing. In years, prior studies were done on the feasibility of promoting this sport and the tourism impact it would have. Could the Honourable Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please provide this Honourable House with an update on the status of this industry and has the Government made any progress forward?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, just after the elections in 2023, the ministry announced territory-wide after-school programmes. Could the Honourable Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please tell this Honourable House:

- a) The methods used for assessing the programmes' success?
- b) What changes have been made, if any, to the programmes offered, duration, number of schools engaged and enrolment numbers for each location? and
- c) How much money has been spent to date on salaries and resources per school?

- ix) **The Member for the Third District to ask the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House whether his government acknowledges spear fishing, commercial or otherwise in the Virgin Islands as legitimate?

- a) If the answer is yes, could he quote for this Honourable House the section of law under which it is authorized and clearly state which type of fishing it prescribes?

- b) If the answer is no, could he tell this Honourable House whether any efforts are being made by his administration to accommodate spear fishing, especially commercial, in the Virgin Islands?

Question 2

Similarly, as it relates to question number one Madam Speaker, can the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House whether his government acknowledges spear fishing aided with SCUBA, commercial or otherwise in the Virgin Islands as legitimate?

- a) If the answer is yes, could you quote for this Honourable House the section law under which it is authorized and clearly state which type of fishing it prescribes?
- b) If the answer is no, could you tell this Honourable House whether any efforts are being made by your administration to accommodate spear fishing with SCUBA, especially commercial in the Virgin Islands?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, given the massive sums of money needed to provide adequately for our Health Care, Education, and Infrastructure: particularly Water and Roads, and given that the 2024 Budget does not address these needs; could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House whether:

- a) It is his intention to address these matters during the lifetime of this administration? And
- b) If his answer is yes Madam Speaker, could he give this Honourable House the outline of his plan with a schedule indicating timelines for his action?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Premier and others in this and last Administration has been feeding us an incredible narrative without evidence, about the \$426 million loan guaranty the British government offered the Territory as a means to restore the Territory to pre-Irma conditions. Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House whether:

- a) This offer is no longer on the table?
 - i. If the answer is yes, can he provide this Honourable House with the correspondence from the British to that effect?

- ii. If the answer is no, can he tell this House if he is going to take the British up on their offer? And
- b) He agrees that it is time we bring the whole matter of this Loan guarantee to an end by being honest to the people and telling whole story?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, will the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance agree that we cannot claim pre-Irma restoration has been achieved until we have achieved among others:

- a) Rebuilding the Grandstand and Stables at Ellis Thomas Downs, which are all on Crown property, by the way?
- b) Removing the derelict yachts/boats from the Sea Cows Bay Harbour?
- c) Recommissioning the Burt Point Sewage Treatment Plant? and
- d) Realigning all of Drake's Highway from Fort Burt to Fort Recovery?

Question 6

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please share with this Honourable House his options for borrowing, to restore the Territory to pre Irma's conditions, besides the \$426 million loan guarantee by the British Government?

- x) **The Member for the Third District to ask the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, water is being rationed on a daily basis, to the cries of many residents especially my constituents in the 3rd District. Could the Minister for Communications and Works:

- a) Please tell this Honourable House why he tolerates this inability to execute the task to deliver by his department? and
- b) Could he please tell this Honourable House the reasons for such inability?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, the Government is obligated to pay Seven Seas for 2.3 million gallons of water each day, whether government takes the water or not, provided the water is produced, or if there is a failure in production due to a fault of the Government. Could the Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House:

- a) How much money have we paid to Seven Seas for the year 2023 giving the months and the dates, for water we did not take daily, that is the quantity between what we took and the 2.3 million gallons? And
- b) Give the reasons on each occasion for not taking the full 2.3 million gallons of water?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, in response to a question submitted to this Honourable House on June 29th, at the 5th Sitting of this Honourable House, the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works acknowledged familiarity with the poor conditions of the main road in Sea Cows Bay, especially in the area of De La Santa Bakery, and gave assurance that the poor conditions would be remedied. Madam Speaker, some patching was done since, but it is currently as bad now, or worse than it was then.

- a) Could the Minister please tell this Honourable House why this condition is allowed to persist? and
- b) Could he give a date for a substantial fix that is permanent in nature?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, in the 2024 Budget each District was given access to a small allocation for Civil Mitigation works, such as road and drainage works among others. Could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House:

- a) How much of that allocated for the 3rd District has been spent to date?
- b) What projects was the money spent on, giving a description? and
- c) How much was the allocation?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, with regards to the 2023 Civil Mitigation vote of \$250,000 for District 3, could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House:

- a) How much of the \$250,000 allocated for the 3rd District was spent on projects completed in 2022? and
- b) Why weren't those projects charged to the 2022 Civil Mitigation Vote?

Question 6

Madam Speaker, with regards to the moneys allocated to each District as stipulated in Question No. 4, could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House:

- a) How much money was spent in each of the 9 Districts for 2023? and
- b) How much of the money used from the said allocation was for work in 2022, or for any year except 2023?

Question 7

Madam Speaker, on Sunday, March 17th my constituents reported not getting water for three (3) days - that's since Thursday 14th. Upon enquiry, I learned that there was an intake main break to the reservoir, and that priority repairs were promised for Monday 18th, however, even if successful, residents should not expect water for at least a few more days, due to the curing time necessary. Madam Speaker, could Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House:

- a) Why would a situation like this be allowed to go on for three (3) days before a scheduled attempt to be fixed?
- b) How many repair crews does the Department have? and
- c) Is there a dedicated crew for evening and weekend emergencies?

Question 8

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House:

- a) The means by which water is conveyed from the Sabbath Hill reservoir to the

Fort Hill reservoir? and

- b) When was that infrastructure used to convey the water put in place?

Question 9

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House:

- a) How far west does the Fort Hill reservoir currently serve? and
- b) How far west could it realistically serve with effectiveness.

- xi) **The Member for the Third District to ask the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, upon the request of Honourable Members during Standing Finance for a special session with the BVIHSA and NHI to ascertain how what seemed to be some crucial miscommunications between the two (2) entities could be worked out, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House whether the two (2) bodies have met, and how many times?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House:

- a) Why does central government give NHI \$41 million to be further disbursed to the BVIHSA and not give the money directly to BVIHSA?
- b) What exactly is the money for? and
- c) Could the Minister please present this House with the Policy outlining how the money is to be disbursed?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House:

- a) How much of the \$41 million given to NHI since 2019 was transferred to BVIHSA each year? And

- b) If at any time did NHI not transfer the full amount,
 - a. How much was withheld?
 - b. Why?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, a few weeks ago I called the Honourable Minister to report a complaint I received about the MRI at the hospital being out of commission due to a broken Air Conditioning system. To which he confirmed. Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House:

- a) Whether this matter has been rectified?
- b) Is the MRI now functioning and accessible to residents? And
- c) When did this problem started, and when did it end?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, if my memory serves me correct, the CEO of the BVIHS is the Chief of Medical Staff in an acting capacity, or someone else who is not confirmed to the post. Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House:

- a) Whether the CEO position at BVIHSA is being held in an acting capacity?
 - a. If yes, who is in the position and why?
 - b. If no, who is in the position and when was the post filled? and
 - c. How long has the substantive post been unfilled?

Question 6

Madam Speaker, I note with interest that the patient rooms in the hospital no longer have a basic commodity which the authorities thought was worth having when it was dedicated. Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House:

- a) Why there are no televisions in the patient rooms anymore?
- b) Who's decision was it to have them removed? And
- c) Is this a permanent decision?

- xii) **The Member for the Third District to ask the Honourable Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, since 2019 during the last and this Administration, there have been some significant activities as relates to new and altered construction relating to schools and or other education facilities. Madam Speaker, could the Minister please tell this Honourable House:

- a) Exactly what facilities or projects falls into this category?
- b) Provide us with a list and the associated costs? And
- c) Tell us how these projects are being financed?

- xiii) **The Member for the Eighth District to ask the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, would the Premier and Minister for Finance please inform this Honourable House of the Government's strategy for dealing with the OECD's Global Minimum Tax initiative? More specifically will the Minister state whether it's the Government's intention to comply with the initiative before the 2025 deadline and what efforts, if any, have been made to sensitize the BVI populace of the potential ramifications of this initiative?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, the Government recently announced the repurposing of the Old CTL Building to house the Magistrates Court, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please inform this Honourable House and the people of these Virgin Islands what plans, if any, his Government has for repurposing the Old Government Administration on Main Street? Will the Minister agree that this building is of immense cultural and historical value to the Territory and that leaving it fallow in its current dilapidated and deteriorating state would be a national travesty when there are so many critical public purposes for which it can be rehabilitated?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House what was done with the plane that was ceased during a recent drug smuggling operation over on Anegada?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House an update on the Public Private Partnership (PPP) between the Premier's Office and BVI Football Association (BVIFA) and when does office intend to fulfil its obligation of the asphalt overlay for the surface for the track?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House if there is a cap on the amount/quantum of property that a non-belonger or non-belonger company could purchase or own under their name?

Question 6

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House if there is a cap on the amount/quantum of property that a belonger or belonger company could purchase or own under their name?

Question 7

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House an update on the Red Bay development and when the Red Bay Fisherman's Dock will be completed and officially handed over to the community with the necessary guidelines for its use?

Question 8

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House, a detailed account of every payable or receivable of the Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee for all 2022 festival activities conducted across the Virgin Islands inclusive of the name or business and discription of each transaction?

Question 9

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House, a detailed account of every payable or receivable of the Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee for all 2023 festival activities conducted across the Virgin Islands inclusive of the name or business and discription of each transaction?

Question 10

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House, the account balance for all bank accounts or funds held by the Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee for all 2022 festival activities conducted across the Virgin Islands as of 31st December, 2022?

Question 11

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House, the account balance for all bank accounts or funds held by the Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee for all 2023 festival activities conducted across the Virgin Islands as of 31st December, 2023?

Question 12

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House, a detailed list of all outstanding expenses of the Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee for 2022 and 2023 and any prior festival activity for all the festivals held across the Virgin Islands respectively?

Question 13

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House, a list of the final cost of all the festivals held across Virgin Islands by the Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee for 2019, 2022, 2023 respectively?

Question 14

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please give this Honourable House, a list of all the members that were last appointed to serve on the Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee inclusive of their date of appointment and expiration respectively?

- xiv) **The Member for the Eighth District to ask the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please tell this Honourable House of the over 1 million dollars awarded to repair the road from Paraquita Bay to Hodges Creek, does the works include replacing the dilapidated water infrastructure?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please tell this Honourable House of the over 1 million dollars awarded to repair the road from Paraquita Bay to Hodges Creek, why his Ministry decided not to have RDA execute this project?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please tell this Honourable House of the 30 plus miles of road his Ministry is proposing to fix that was recently tendered for some 30 plus million dollars, does the scope of this project include replacing the dilapidated water infrastructure throughout this Territory?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please tell this Honourable House of the 30 plus miles of road his Ministry is proposing to fix that was recently tendered for some 30 plus million dollars, why his Ministry decided not to have the RDA execute this project?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please tell this Honourable House of the 30 plus miles of road his Ministry is proposing to fix that was recently tendered for some 30 plus million dollars, it is understood that only one person tendered. Could the Minister provide the following information:

- a) The name and principles of the company and any local partners if any? and
- b) Why was such a large project allowed to go forward with only 1 tenderer and not sent back out to tender which would have afforded the people of the Virgin Islands to get value for money?

Question 6

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please give this Honourable House an update on the status of both the lower and upper Shepard Hill roads that have been undermined and pose a danger to residents of that community?

Question 7

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please tell this Honourable House when does his Ministry intend to fix the potholes and dug-up

uneven parts of the main road from the top of Hope Hill to Little Dix Hill junction to ensure the safety of the residents that traverse this very busy roadway daily?

Question 8

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please tell this Honourable House what works his Ministry conducted on the stretch of road from the community centre in East End to the police station and if the District Representative or community consulted or advised of said works?

Question 9

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works, please give this Honourable House an update on the undermined road above Mr. Perkins in Greenland that the Minister, District 8 Representative and the Director of Public Works visited in 2022 and ascertained imminent danger this road poses to the landowner and residents that traverse this area?

Question 10

Madam Speaker, could Minister for Communications and Works please advise this Honourable House and the people of the Virgin Islands when the stretch of road from the Community Centre to police station will be overlaid, which is without a doubt one of the worst stretches of roads in the entire Virgin Islands?

Question 11

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House the following:

- b) A list of all taxi licenses issued between 2019 to date and names of each recipient?
- c) The District or address of each recipient? And
- d) Age of each recipient?

xv) **The Member for the Eighth District to ask the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what is being done to address emergency services - more

ambulances, working ambulances, more emergency medical technicians (EMTs), overcrowded emergency room at the hospital, some emergency services on other parts of Tortola outside Road Town like the proposed Polyclinic in Capoons Bay - which would have provided EMS - whatever became of that?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what is being done by his ministry in the short, intermediate and long term to address the overburdened Dialysis Unit at the Dr. D. Orlando Smith Hospital?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what is being done by his Ministry to provide a more efficient and safe mode of inter-island emergency transfers from our Sister Islands?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please detail to this Honourable House what financial assistance, if any, is being given by government to the BVIHSA to complete important initiatives like the Cuban doctors, Cancer Treatment Centre, the medical school, nursing program and the Jost Van Dyke and East End/Long Look polyclinic?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what is his ministry doing to support BVIHSA with improving staff conditions - better pay, more staff to reduce burden on existing staff, safety and security, etc. of the Authority?

Question 6

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what is being done to improve the level of healthcare in the Sister Islands, with the North Sound clinic being out of service for some time now. The Anegada clinic is operating out of a 1-bedroom apartment. The Iris O'Neal Clinic is still not completed. The Jost van Dyke clinic needs to be looked at, as well?

Question 7

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House what is being done to maintain failing facilities at our public

health institutions, so as to not impact Healthcare Services to our people? Especially in light of the following occurrences of the air condition at the hospital not working recently. The MRI machine is constantly not working. Over, the last few months, both the Road Town and Anegada clinics were closed due to mould. What is your Ministry's plan to address these issues?

Question 8

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Health and Social Development please tell this Honourable House the following:

- a) What are the plans to have a permanent CEO, in place at the BVIHSA?
- b) What are the other management positions that are unfilled and does he plan to fill them? and
- c) If so, what are the plans to fill these positions?

Question 9

Madam Speaker would the Minister for Health and Social Development who recently acknowledged difficulty recruiting nurses, please tell this Honourable House what strategies, if any, the Government is employing to incentivize this noble and essential profession thereby making it more attractive to BVI Youth as well as competent and qualified BVI Professionals in the diaspora?

xvi) **The Member for the Eighth District to ask the Honourable Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please tell this Honourable House what is being done at the playground area of the Willard Wheatley Primary School and the scope of works?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please list from 1 to 5, 1 being the busiest, the most frequently used recreation facility on Tortola?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please list from 1 to 5, 1 being the busiest, the most frequently used public park on Tortola?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please tell this Honourable House what is her ministry's plans to address the restroom, fencing and lighting at the Greenland field and if any, what is the capital budget to address the same?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please tell this Honourable House what is her ministry's plans to address the playground, fencing and gate at the East End playground and if any, is funding available to address the same?

xvii) **The Member for the Sixth District to ask the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker in a recent press conference the Premier and Minister of Finance said that the government is pursuing full membership of CARICOM. As a matter of fact, he stated that he met the United Kingdom Overseas Territories Minister David Rutley and discussed "seeking an entrustment on behalf of the Territory to become a full member of CARICOM. Could the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House if he consulted with the people of the Virgin Islands on whether they wish for the Territory to become a full member of CARICOM?

- a) Could he state whether he consulted with his colleagues in the House of Assembly on this matter to solicit their views prior to making bold steps to pursue this matter?
- b) Could he categorically state whether the people of the Virgin Islands are aware of all that is entailed in becoming a full member of CARICOM? And
- c) Could the Premier explain why he continues to make these type of decisions, including accepting the COI recommendations and now this endeavour to become a full member of CARICOM without feeling that he has to consult the people of the Virgin Islands who are affected by these decisions?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, the Government recently appointed a new board to the completely defunct Prospect Reef Hotel, could the Premier and Minister for Finance please tell

this Honourable House what does his government expect a board to do with a property that is encompassed by a mountain of bush with buildings that are completely uninhabitable?

- a) The Premier indicated that the first order of business of the Board was to put together a request for proposal for a five-star branded hotel, could he state why this responsibility could not be given to one of the many consultants that are already being paid by the government?
- b) Supposing that he does give the responsibility for the request for proposal to the Board what else could they do with this dilapidated property to justify a monthly stipend from a property that generates no revenue? And
- c) Could he state how long the Board will be in place for and what is total cost to the people of the Virgin Islands for the term of the Board?

Question 3

Madam Speaker could the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House how much money will be spent (total amount) for the BVI music festival that is slated to be held from May 24-26, 2024.

- a) Could he provide this Honourable House with a copy of the marketing strategy for this event?
- b) Could he tell this Honourable House how he expects to generate new monies from inbound travellers as a result of the music fest when the event will take place a mere six (6) weeks following its first announcement? and
- c) With all the challenges that the Territory currently faces with constant unavailability of water, terrible road infrastructure, struggling small businesses etc., could the Premier tell us if he doesn't think that this money could have gone to better use particularly considering the lack of proper lead time for the marketing of the event?

Question 4

Madam Speaker could the Premier and Minister of Finance, please tell this Honourable House, if he has made any efforts to meet to with the owners of the Ellis Thomas Downs to resolve the current dispute since he was questioned on this matter some weeks ago in this House of Assembly?

- a) If he did, could he give this Honourable House an update on the progress made, if any?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, the economy of the Virgin Islands continues to struggle with many persons unemployed, many local contractors out of work due to the change in the petty contract system which had many engaged, growing frustration from businesses and contractors over the new procurement rules which in some respects are cumbersome and time consuming, many small businesses are on life support, the infrastructure of the country is crumbling particularly our roads and our water distribution network. Madam Speaker it is fair to say that the economy of the Virgin Islands is not working for the average Virgin Islander and we are witnessing the virtual disappearance of the middle class in this county. Could the Premier and Minister of Finance please provide this Honourable House with a copy of the economic plan that he has to address these issues that I have raised.

- a) Could he advise of his plan of action with specific timelines advising when we will see the above raised issues addressed?

Question 6

Madam Speaker, the UN Decolonisation group is getting ready to visit the BVI to determine the Territory's readiness for self-determination. Could the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House why he has not had a comprehensive discussion with the people of the Virgin Islands to ascertain their wishes with respect to further self-determination?

- a) Could the Premier assure the Public that he understands that he is elected by the people and cannot continue to go off on a frolic of his own with these weighty matters without consultation with his colleagues and the people of the Territory?
- b) Could he state what he expects to achieve from this visit? And
- c) If the UN Group says we are ready or not ready, could the Premier indicate what next steps will his administration take?

Question 7

Madam Speaker could the Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House what are the numbers for cruise, day-trippers and overnight visitors to date

from January 2024. Could he state whether these numbers are in keeping with those projected for 2024 to date?

- a) Could he provide a comparison of the year to date figures from 2016 for the same period in question?

xviii) **The Member for the Sixth District to ask the Honourable Deputy Premier and Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Financial Services, Labour and Trade please tell this Honourable House when the National Business Bureau will be functional and in a position to offer soft loans and grant funding to help the many small businesses that are having a difficult time keeping their doors open?

- a) From the money allocated to the Business Bureau in the budget for 2023-2024, could the Minister indicate how much money will actually be available to help businesses financially after all the administrative cost and other ancillary costs for the functioning of the bureau have been deducted? And
- b) Could the Minister indicate whether having regards to the needs of the small business community whether she is pleased with the sum allocated? And, if she is not, if she communicated her displeasure to the Minister of Finance and impressed upon him the importance of keeping these businesses afloat?

xix) **The Member for the Sixth District to ask the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works the following question:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, pursuant to his schedule of road pavings that was distributed during the Ninth Sitting of this House, could the Minister for Communications and Works confirm that the road paving activities for the secondary and tertiary roads in District 6 to commence, to take place in April and May, are on schedule?

xx) **The Member for the Sixth District to ask the Honourable Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports please provide this Honourable House with a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of the Virgin Islands (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports) and Unite BVI?

- a) Could she state whether Joyce Samuel School, Alexandrina Maduro School and the Virgin Islands School of Technical Studies will benefit from the current arrangements in the MOU and if so, state particularly how they will do so?
- b) Could she state the Public Schools that will benefit under the current arrangement and particularly how they will do so? And
- c) Could she state which, if any, private schools will benefit and state particularly how they will do so?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, the Belle Vue Gym was destroyed by the Hurricanes of 2017 and has not been rebuilt. This was a place for the entire community of District 6 to hold various functions including sports and other civic events. The Minister of Education who is an At-Large Member is aware of this issue and was questioned on this matter where she indicated that her Ministry had no plans to rebuild the gym. Considering the MOU signed with Unite BVI, could the Minister please advise this Honourable House if she included the rebuild of the Belle Vue Gym in her discussions of projects to be done under her portfolio? If so, could she state if any provisions were made for the rebuild and if not, state why not?

- a) Could the Minister give an undertaking now that she will ensure that the Belle Vue Gym will be rebuilt before 2027?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, could the Minister for Education, Youth affairs and Sports please tell this Honourable House if it is the Ministry of Education's intention to close the Virgin Islands School of Technical Studies? If so, could she state when?

- xxi) **The Member for the Second District to ask the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, would the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House when the Brewer's Bay Restroom and Waste Water Facility will be opened?

- a) What is the status of the 3phase electrical connection?
- b) What is the status of the water connection to the restroom?
- c) Is the sewerage treatment plant which was substantially completed not completed? And
- d) What is the status of the handicap access ramp at the facility?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance tell this Honourable House if he stands by the answer he provided to the question asked on 30th January, 2024, but submitted to be asked for the Sitting of the House on 31st October, 2023 regarding when he intends to address the issues of the Jost Van Dyke restroom facility in Great Harbour to cater to visitors in what's now a very busy tourism season?

- a) Since his personal commitment to visit the island and inspect the facility for himself, could he tell us what he discovered?
- b) When does he now expect for works to be completed to make the facility more functional and aesthetically pleasing for a world class tourism destination?

Question 3

Madam Speaker would the Honourable Premier and Minister of Finance please tell this Honourable House how he intends to secure the 200 nautical miles of water that under the Territory's borders?

- a) From illegal fishing and trawling?
- b) From the illegal trafficking activities of the underworld of humans, narcotics, firearms and explosives?

xxii) **The Member for the Second District to ask the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, when visiting the beautiful island of Jost Van Dyke, the first thing that you encounter is a bunch of tents that have been placed there since the hurricanes of 2017, which is unsightly and unpleasant for tourist to be under as they have to wait to clear immigration and customs. On the last Sitting, I noted to the Premier the bottle neck that is created when the USVI Ferry meets the JVD Ferry and the Cruise passengers together with day trippers and sometimes persons having to stand in the sun and or get wet in the rain because there is not enough room for them to be placed under these tents. Could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House the plan to address this problem?

- a) What is the start date for work to begin?
- b) How much longer will the people of Jost Van Dyke and visitors have to endure this discomfort in a pristine tourist destination?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please update this Honourable House on the potable water distribution since his last answer to the question asked more than six (6) months ago for the people in my communities of:

- a) Challwell, Great Mountain, Brewer's Bay, Meyers, Luck Hill, New Bush, Cane Garden Bay, Mayaba, Mt. Healthy and
- b) Jost Van Dyke?

Question 3

Madam Speaker, would the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works please tell this Honourable House which of the roads scheduled to receive asphalt overlay and patching in the Second District as per his scheduled date of March 2024 have been completed?

- a) Windy Hill/Carrot Bay junction?
- b) Challwell/Sage Mountain?
- c) Chalwell/Threllfall junction?
- d) Meyers (junction to Spyglass Hill)?
- e) Ridge Road/ Todman Estate?
- f) Ridge Road/Great Mountain?
- g) Ridge Road/Mt. Healthy junction?
- h) Todman Estate (above pump station)?
- i) Ridge Road/Spooners Estate?

- j) Spooners Estate?
- k) Cane Garden Bay/Ross Bridge to Arundell Bridge?
- l) Brewers Bay/Anderson Estate to the Community Centre?
- m) Brewers Bay/ Community Centre to Soldiers Hill?
- n) Mayaba?
- o) Luck Hill?

Question 4

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works provide this Honourable House with the design and costing for the new building that he has stated will house both the Public Works Department and Water and Sewerage Department on the Island of Jost Van Dyke who have been without a suitable working environment since the hurricanes of 2017?

Question 5

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Communications and Works tell this Honourable House if he has now secured the minute amount of approximately \$80k to have street lights installed on the ridge road that leads from Chalwell Estate to Stoutt’s Lookout since providing the cost several months ago?

- a) When can we expect to see works commence?
- b) What is the timeline for completion?

xxiii) **The Member for the Second Electoral District to ask the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development the following questions:**

Question 1

Madam Speaker, would the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please provide this Honourable House with status update on works for the Brewer’s Bay Community Centre?

Question 2

Madam Speaker, could the Honourable Minister for Health and Social Development please provide this Honourable House with the status update on works for the Cane Garden Bay Community Centre?

9) Public Business

1) Government Business

Second and Third Readings

- i) The Premier and Minister of Finance to move a motion for the Second and Third Readings of the Bill entitled, “**Beneficial Ownership Secure Search System (Amendment) Bill 2023**”;

2) Private Members Business

10) Other Business

11) Adjournment