



GRENADA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

(HANSARD)

**Third Session of the Tenth Parliament**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

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**House of Representatives Meeting**  
**Held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's**  
**On Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.**

**Attendance**

**PRESENT**

Mr. Speaker  
The Honourable Michael Pierre  
*in the Chair*

Dr. the Rt. Honourable Keith Mitchell, PC, MP, JP (St. George North-West)	- Prime Minister and Minister for National Security, Public Administration, Home Affairs, Information and Communications Technology, Finance, Planning, Economic Development and Physical Development
Honourable Gregory Bowen, MP (St. George South-East)	- Minister for Infrastructure Development, Public Utilities, Energy, Transport and Implementation
Honourable Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, MP (St. Mark)	- Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation
Honourable Alvin Da Breo, MP (St. John)	- Minister wrf Forestry and Fisheries
Honourable Peter David, MP (Town of St. George)	- Minister for Foreign Affairs and Labour
Honourable Yolande Bain-Horsford, MP (St. Andrew North-West)	- Minister for Agriculture and Lands
Honourable Oliver Joseph, MP (St. David)	- Minister for Trade, Industry, Co-operatives and CARICOM Affairs
Honourable Kate Lewis, MP (St. Andrew North-East)	- Minister wrf Youth Development
Honourable Pamela Moses (St. Patrick East)	- Minister wrf Special Projects, Needy Assistance and ICT
Honourable Emmalin Pierre, MP (St. Andrew South-East)	- Minister for Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs and Information

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***Attendance***

Honourable Nickolas Steele, MP (St. George South)	- Minister for Health, Social Security and International Business
Honourable Kindra Maturine-Stewart, MP (Carriacou and Petite Martinique)	- Minister for Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs, Local Government and Legal Affairs
Honourable Anthony Boatswain, MP (St. Patrick West)	- Deputy Speaker
Honourable Tobias Clement, MP (St. George North-East)	- Leader of the Opposition

***ABSENT***

Honourable Delma Thomas, MP (St. Andrew North-West)	- Minister for Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment
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***Prayers  
Minutes***

***The Sitting of the House of Representatives began at 9:00 a.m.***

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, let us pray.

***(House Prayer was said)***

**Mr. Speaker:** Please join with me, as we say together, the Lord's Prayer.

***(The Lord's Prayer was said)***

**Mr. Speaker:** Pray be seated.

***(Sound of gavel)***

**Mr. Speaker:** This Honourable House is now in Session.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 3 - Oath of Allegiance or Affirmation of a New Member.

Item 4 - Confirmation of Minutes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Sitting of the House of Representatives held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 be taken as read.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Minutes taken as read.**

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***Minutes***

***Announcements***

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move that the said Minutes of the proceedings of the Sitting of the House of Representatives held at the Parliament Chamber, Mt. Wheldale, St. George's on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 be confirmed.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Minutes confirmed.**

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 5 - Messages from the Governor-General.

Item 6 - Announcements by Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, just one announcement. Today, during the Item 14, just after the Motion that is listed on the Order Paper, we will take an adjournment and resume at 11:50. So, there'll be an adjournment after that Motion. So, we would be taking an adjournment on Item 14 and resume on Item 14. Thank you. Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, I just crave your permission to indicate, you said before, but had already instructed me and the others, sorry, you said after, but it would be before.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before Item 14. Okay. So, just one correction there. That would happen before Item 14, before Item 14 is taken. So, the adjournment would be after Item 13. Thank you.

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**Papers / Reports**  
**Questions**

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 7 - Presentation of Petitions.

Item 8 - Presentation of Papers and Reports from Select Committees.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the following Papers be laid on the Table:

1. Report of the Director of Audit on the resources managed for the period May, 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2019 for Solar PV Demonstration and Scale-up Project;
2. Report of the Director of Audit on the Financial Statements of the Consolidated Assets Fund for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2018;
3. The Annual Report of the Grenada Development Bank (GDB) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019; and
4. Annual Report of the Grenada Tourism Authority for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, these Papers are so laid on the Table.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 9 - Unopposed Private Business.

Item 10 - Questions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the questions that are on the Order Paper. But, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on a few of the questions that were answered, but the answers were given written. But, at the same time, the answers were not given in time for me to question in the last Parliament. I got it after the question. So, with your indulgence, Mr.

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**Questions**

Speaker, the question that was asked of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to provide to this House a list of all the Diplomatic Status given by the Government of Grenada, the names and places of birth. I would just want to find out from the Honourable Member, if that list is a complete list? A list was indeed given, Mr. Speaker, but I do believe that there might be names missing. I just wanted clarity.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. I got the question. Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**Hon. Peter David:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I intended to address the issue, at some point this morning. There were some names that were, as I indicated to the Member earlier, we're in the process of a review. Some people have expired, some people were off, some people were on. So, there are some names that a supplemental list is supposed to be given to the Clerk of the House. It should have been done two (2) days ago. I am not sure. I would have to double-check that.

But also, I want to let the Member know that the question that was asked, is persons who are holding Diplomatic positions, not persons who have Diplomatic Passports, because I am sure he has one, his name would not be there. But the persons with Diplomatic positions, there is a supplemental list coming, because as I told the House before, we are doing an extensive review, when the question was asked, and there were some names that were on, some were off. So, within the next week or so, he should have what the supplemental list would bring, of diplomatic positions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I also follow up on a question that was posed to the Minister for Works, in terms of the development at Molinere, and I have here the notice that was given for the home that was constructed. And, it says here: **"The development authorised here by granting for the development of a parcel of land comprising four thousand, one hundred and fifty-**



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**one (4,151) square feet situated in Molinere, St. George by carrying out the building operation, namely, the erection of a three (3) bedroom, one storey building for the use of a single family residence in accordance with the application dated 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2016.”**

I just wanted to find out, Mr. Speaker, that in the construction of that home, it was not a single family home that was constructed. If you look well, you will see a three-storey building constructed. But yet on this paper, a single family home, or a single storey building was asked for permission. So, I wanted to find out what permission was granted, in terms of the building that was erected, that was not the permission given.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have the document in front of me, as the Leader of the Opposition does, because he has indicated that it's a single family that the letter said was granted. Well, one storey, two stories, three stories, I don't know. It's a single family, and we can't determine whether it's a multiple family or so by the level of floors, you know, in a building. But ideally, what was granted, I think was built and it was a Physical Development...

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just take your light off. I thought you wanted an explanation.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Yes, but in his explanation, he's saying whether one or two stories is a single family, but it is also saying, **“a three (3) bedroom, one storey building; three bedroom, one story building for the use of a single family residence; three bedroom, one storey.”** So, this is my contention here that it's not a

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two or three story, a single story. Mr. Speaker, the Member was making a point before I interrupted. So, I do not know if he wishes to continue.

**Mr. Speaker:** He did not indicate. He did not indicate that he wishes to continue.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also ask that, as indicated by the Clerk, the rest of the question on the Order Paper, I do believe that he mentioned to me, just a while ago, that he has received some email to the questions that were on the Order Paper. So, I guess I will wait and get the directive from the Clerk, as towards the answers that were given for these questions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Very well. Thank you.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. George South.

**Hon. Nickolas Steele:** Mr. Speaker, in relation to the questions posed by the Leader of the Opposition to the Minister for Health, myself, the responses were sent to the Clerk earlier this week and the Clerk informed me this morning that he had some issues opening it. I have sent it back to him again in multiple formats, with the assumption that he would be able to access it now.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you Honourable Minister for Health. Thank you. Honourable Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, one question. Question one that was addressed to the Prime Minister, the data has been compiled and being audited accordingly, before it is given. So, it's not yet ready.

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**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 11 - Urgent Questions under the Provisions of  
Standing Order No. 20 (1) - Notice of  
Questions

Item 12 - Statements by Ministers.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Minister for Health.

**Hon. Nickolas Steele:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to give an update, since last we were at the House, with respect to the events at the Ministry of Health, Social Security and International Business.

Mr. Speaker, I am and continue to be pleased and grateful to the Almighty, to again announce that to date we have no new cases of COVID-19 in Grenada. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately though, that may be the only bit of good news with respect to COVID-19.

The United States continues, our major close neighbour, partner, Tourism Investor etcetera continues to have very high figures. Mr. Speaker, Canada, unfortunately, as of today, they went over that limit, which was twenty (20) or below. It does not mean that as of today, we change the protocols for Canadians coming here. The way that the science observes it (WHO and PAHO) is that after a period, if consistently they have remained above twenty (20) cases per hundred thousand or rise significantly, then the adjustment is made. So, we observe them over the next couple of days to a week and would make the appropriate adjustment. The hope is that this would not be the case.

The issue there, as well as in the UK, Mr. Speaker, I am sure you and Members would be aware, the United Kingdom has passed additional Regulations as well, specific to COVID and gatherings, in an effort to control the spread. These are measures that are not entirely different to what we have been saying, as a Government, as a Ministry, in terms of social gathering, in terms of protocols. These are severe

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measures compared to what we have now, because in the instance of the UK, regrettably, things have gotten a bit out of hand, and therefore, we need to take significant measures.

Mr. Speaker, I think the message there simply is that we continue to plead, preach, implore the public, at large, to adhere to the protocols. And it is a simple principle, Mr. Speaker, that there are certain behaviours that put the population at risk, the mass gatherings, the non-wearing of masks, when in surroundings.

And while, as a Government, we should find a level of comfort in the fact that the population is saying, you've done a good job, we don't have COVID in Grenada, so therefore, we don't have to do these things. No, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that if we were to do that and allow that, we would be saying that we place our lives entirely, on those good men and women, who are doing our border protection and quarantine control, and they are human. And while, they are providing yeoman service, worthy of praise, consistently, in this House and elsewhere, we cannot have behaviour that relies purely on that, such would be reckless, Mr. Speaker. We have to adhere to certain rules, regulations and principles that say that, if something were to happen, that it would not be that bad, that we would be able to keep it under control, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have seen continued level of relaxation, with respect to the seriousness of this disease, while at the same time, elsewhere, our very neighbour in Trinidad, the disease continues to grow from strength to strength. We continue to say, let us not take for granted what we have achieved here in Grenada. Let us not take for granted the sacrifices that we have made, here, in Grenada. Let us not throw caution to the wind. Let us find that balance between preservation of life and preservation of lifestyle. It cannot be either or. Yes, there must be a balance, but we must be cautious. There are certain lifestyle habits that put our preservation of life at risk. And then there are certain implementations to protect life that would put our lifestyle at risk, and we find, as best as possible, a balance.

The safest method for our Government to take would be to keep the borders closed, entirely and to have left our very citizens who are outside, outside indefinitely, to continue a Policy that would have created hardship, that would have led to continued

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higher and higher levels of unemployment here in Grenada. This is not practical. But the alternative is not to throw the baby out with the bathwater. The alternative is to find a balance and find an understanding. And so we implore the members of the population to adhere to that balance, to allow as best as possible, day to day activities, that are necessary for lifestyle, part of which is social, part of which is social. But it is possible to have social activities without being reckless. It is possible to socialise as a people and still remain safe, as best as possible from, or putting yourself at risk to the spread of COVID-19, and this is what we continue to plead and request and ask, and in the Regulations to protect as best as possible.

This disease continues to change. It continues to catch First World Nations off-guard. Many First World Nations, with systems, much better funded, much better staffed and equipped than us, have been caught off-guard, now twice, in the first wave, and are now experiencing, to an extent, a second wave, and some never got past the first wave, continues to grow from strength to strength there, the virus that is.

So, we are going to be passing in this House, Regulations dealing with quarantine, specifically, later today, Mr. Speaker. But, that is not all that is needed. That is not the only thing that will keep us safe. What will keep us safe, as a people, as a nation is a united position on the adjustments in lifestyle to maintain, as best as possible and as close as possible that which we hold near and dear, our freedoms and our genuine way of life, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our relationship with SGU continues to grow from strength to strength, with respect to testing. We are now looking at automated extractors, what are called extractors, which would greatly increase the number of PCR tests that we are able to do daily, as well as, a new form of extraction of samples that will be less evasive. But, we work with them and with CARPHA and with PAHO on that.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to touch on the issue of a vaccine. There is much talk in the public forum with respect to a vaccine for COVID. There is much concern. There is much anxiety. Grenada's policy, as to the policy, most, if not all of our OECS and CARICOM brothers and sisters, Ministry of Health and Government, we are not rushing into it. But, we do believe that it is necessary, because

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of the importance of a vaccination to be engaged in the conversations being had at the multilateral levels on a vaccination. So, Grenada will participate, with the WHO and Pan American Health Organization on discussions of vaccinations that we are seeing from other nations being developed, at present. That is not the same as rushing into, that is saying that we are going to participate in the discussion, the exchange of knowledge from the beginning, which will allow us to make the educated and informed decisions, as we go along. But, we will not rush into this.

And, it is necessary that we recognise that there should not be a fear of vaccination of any type, once the proper development procedures are followed. It is because of vaccinations that people no longer die of Yellow Fever, of Polio, that we don't have Measles, Chickenpox. There are so many other diseases that would have been and were global outbreaks, because of the timely and proper... So, I understand and I can identify with some of the anxiety on discussions with vaccinations. But, I want to assure the public that we are not rushing. Because we are having discussions now does not mean that we will be throwing caution to the wind, with respect to any Vaccination Policy, not just the COVID-19 vaccination.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to other businesses of the Ministry of Health, we continue to move forward with the opening of Phase 2. We continue to experience the challenges, like any other developing country, but continue to push forward and not use COVID-19 as an excuse, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to take this opportunity to inform the public through this House, Mr. Speaker, that COVID-19 is not the only disease out there that threatens our nations. It is the most significant one on our minds now, because it is the newest, and it is one that, as a world, we were not prepared for, and we have been dealing with. But, we have other diseases, vector-borne diseases, in particular, that plague our region.

The Ministry has begun its annual pilgrimage, so to speak, as has other OECS and CARICOM countries dealing with vector control, fogging in certain areas, as we see it show up, because it is not practically possible for any nation to do widespread national fogging, nor is it safe, but directed based on where we see large outcroppings of vector, or vector-borne type disease also.

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But it is, like COVID, a battle that must be fought together. Like COVID, we, as a people have learnt, it is not just a Government that protects a nation, but the people together. So too, with the vector-borne diseases; it is the collective actions of a nation that cause the gains or losses in those battles. And we, as a people dealing with mosquitoes breeding in our environment, cannot adopt a Policy of, it is the Government's or the Ministry of Health's problem to deal with. It is a common responsibility of us all, to make sure that they are not circumstances, which are simple, stagnant water around our domiciles, to work collectively on that.

The Ministry will continue to do its part. But, year on year, every nation, including here in Grenada, the message is the same. We must all do our part to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes, in particular, the *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito, which only breeds around humans, around their houses. It doesn't breed in swamps and other areas of stagnant water. It breeds around human houses, guttering, open containers, tires, wherever water pools, plants, saucers; that's where it breeds. It cannot exist without us. It cannot exist without us creating that environment for it.

But, it's not just the fogging. It is for us to recognise that we need to remove and work collectively on this, because COVID-19 has been a strain on every Nation in the world, including Grenada, and therefore, we need to do our part, not to add additional burdens.

I think one of the very few pluses, if any, of COVID-19 is that most, if not all, nations in the world and populations have become sensitive to the health and how diseases are spread, and what to do to intervene and interrupt that. I ask that we contemplate the same, when it comes to vector-borne diseases, that it's a personal intervention that can be made by each and every one of us, to protect us individually and the more of us that take those measures, the less the spread. We begin to be insulation for the others, who do not follow. It is the same.

So, Mr. Speaker, having said that, I again take this opportunity to thank all of our individuals, our Public Health Officers, the same Department that is responsible and individuals that have been providing yeoman service, protecting our borders, making sure that individuals who come in have received the required testing, are placed in the

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appropriate quarantine or observation locations and remain there, and then receive their second test in a timely manner. And then and only then are released, to allow to be among us, are the same individuals, who are to deal with vector control, as well and are doing so, as best as possible. But I say that to say, the additional stress that is being placed and we must recognise that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not go my full length of time. We do have some other agendas to attend to, Mr. Speaker. But again, to thank those, who are doing their part, to implore upon those who are not, and to continue to assume that we will, by the Grace of God, get through this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Minister for Health. All right. The Minister for Finance and Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I think it's known that an important funeral of one of our Ambassadors is taking place shortly and some of us do have to leave and get back. So, I am supposed to be doing a Tribute, that's the reason I have to speak now and leave. Hopefully, I will be back.

Mr. Speaker, I stand to make some statements, as it relates to issues that affect the Government, and the image of the Government, as a whole. The first one relates, Mr. Speaker, to the issue of the pandemic, which the Minister for Health was speaking on a short while ago. Mr. Speaker, when the pandemic first came to our attention in March, the Government acted swiftly in taking decisions to protect the country. It's known that we, at the Cabinet established a COVID-19 subcommittee, which was chaired by the Minister for Health, the Minister for Foreign Affairs was on that too, and several other persons, including persons, the CMO and other Health Officials and other citizens, who had serious roles to play in the protection of this country in advising the Cabinet. It is well known that Grenada has been lauded for having, generally speaking, protected the border and protected the citizens of this country, so far, so good.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of August, we announced that the COVID subcommittee's work was ended. We established a Task Force in several areas, to



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look at aspects of how we proceed at a new stage going forward. And after that, Mr. Speaker, after these reports came in, we established some committees that would operate in advising the Cabinet, in several areas. And the one in Health is the one I want to speak to, and that is chaired by Dr. Bert Brathwaite, who reports his recommendation to the Minister for Health, who recommends to the Cabinet.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, that committee is the one, who has to issue official decisions that the Cabinet has agreed on. And I think it must be made clear, because it seems like we're getting our fingers crossed, where certain people are indicating that permission was given by this person and this person for activities, and this must be made very clear. It's only one group of persons responsible for governing the country, the Cabinet. I would assume that everyone knows this but it seems like sometimes we get our fingers crossed.

So, it has to be clear, because the reason I am saying this, Mr. Speaker, in recent times, some persons in our society, have been initiating activities inconsistent with the Regulations and of course, permission from the Government, in the whole process with the Government's intention to protect the country and protect all of us.

It was well known, the period of the two (2) day Carnival was supposed to be just cancelled, that the protocols and the behaviour pattern was inconsistent with this. The Police, in good judgment, did not attempt to come down with a heavy hand, and I think they were complimented by all and sundry for this. It could have been different.

In fact, I believe some people were hoping, some people were hoping that the Police would have, in fact, behaved in a manner, which gives the impression that a dictator was in charge of the country, because that was the narrative being pushed. So, the Police acted wisely, and in certain sections of our societies, some of us have not been observing the protocols. It appears that we sometimes feel, and at sometimes, I am not claiming, Mr. Speaker, there's any ill-intention, in many cases, because you see ordinary people doing it.

I go to places, and when I reach there, I see, I am the only person with a mask, and therefore I have to leave, because I tell my friends I am not staying, because you

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guys are not observing the protocols, and I can't be seen as saying one thing and doing another. You see that kind of image internationally. We don't want to be part of that.

But, in some cases, I believe there is a deliberate attempt to go against the fundamental decisions that are meant to protect the country, and in some cases by people who ought to know better, that is what I am talking about, because it was brought to our attention that some businesses, Hotel Facilities, in particular, not a lot, but some, have been holding serious parties, and when you see the pictures, you realise it must be deliberate, and it is by people who ought to know better.

But there is a level of selfishness permeating, as long as I am benefitting, to hell with everybody else. So if I am responsible for causing infection of a country and causing a lot of poor people to die, I don't care, because I am making some money. We have to call it out for what it's worth. Mr. Speaker, I will not fail, as long as I have that responsibility, and I know the Members of the Government feel the same thing, the Parliamentarians here and I assume the Opposition Leader feels the same way. We have to call it out for what it's worth, because with certain people, you see activities of commercial boat rides, jam-packed with noises, as if it's a free-for-all, business as usual.

I want to make it very clear, the Cabinet, the Prime Minister and the committee who is responsible for giving permission, gave no permission. Let us get that very clear. And I am angry, because it sends the perception that some people in this country can do as they want and poor people must be allowed to be disciplined or to be spoken about, if they do the same thing. This Government is not a class Government. It's a Government for all the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

**(Applause)**

We have seen this class thing in this country before. We have seen it. I grew up in it. I want no part of it, and I will not be heading a Government that participates in sending the message that some people in our country could do as they want and some must be dealt with in the opposite direction. I've got a real problem with that, Mr. Speaker, and that's why I am speaking here this morning on this matter, in the way that I am doing.

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I have therefore spoken to the Commissioner and his team that the Law of the Land must be adhered to. The Prime Minister has to obey the Law of the Land. The Governor-General has to obey the Law of the Land. Our Ministers do this, the Speaker, the President of the Senate, toot moon, all of us, and therefore no one, no one, Mr. Speaker, should be allowed to do as they wish, because they're bigger than everybody else, because some might feel that they have more privilege than others in this country.

We passed through that stage. The old Colonial period is gone. We are in a different period. And those of us that passed through some of the biasness in the society will not participate in sitting there and allowing that image and behaviour pattern to proceed in our name. The message therefore, would be if we allow it, that we reach where we want to go, to hell with everybody else now. Some of us forget where we came from. I will never be able to forget where I come from. Let it be very clear. So, I just want to make the point that no permission was given, and the Law was broken, period. Let us get it clear. So Jab Jab can break the Law, so all of us can break it too, that's the perception.

Mr. Speaker, there is also something I need to talk about. I have seen it happened over the years, and it's well-known that I have been in this politics for a lot of years. Every time this Government initiates a serious activity to bring development and opportunities, there are some elements in this society that oppose it. There has not been one major initiative, during the time that I have been Prime Minister of this country, and that's almost twenty (20) years, that this Government has initiated anything that some people have not come out and oppose and do everything to stop it. Activities that are meant to create jobs and opportunities for the development of the country, to bring people away from poverty, empower people and give them a chance to a better life, they oppose it. And it seems like the only time they will not do that is when Keith Mitchell is no longer Prime Minister, or the NNP isn't in office. I believe it is more Keith Mitchell, than NNP, because I have a feeling if the NNP leadership changes, some of them wouldn't behave like this. It's hatred of a man, and the man doesn't hate them. The man goes to sleep and he snoring in good time, while some of them can't sleep. They are going to sleep soon. It wouldn't be too long again. They will sleep soon, but

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take it easy. Don't hurt your country for a man. It's like they want to roast a corn, so they will burn down the church, that's what it is, burn down the church to roast a corn. I am not mad at this one. I was mad at the first one, because I feel sorry for them more than anything else.

So when it was the building of the Cruise Ship Terminal, man, certain pseudo environmentalists, overnight, became experts on the environment. The Lagoon area there was like a dump, all animals, old animals, dead animals, old truck, old bus, everything dumped there. No environmentalists said a word. Fish was afraid of the Carenage waters, no fish could be caught there. Those environmentalists were around; not a word. Someone comes spending millions of dollars to clean up the place, to provide development and to create jobs, overnight, Mr. Speaker. And even the gentleman sitting in your Chair was heading demonstrations, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, then you know who was involved in the demonstration. I am giving history here if some people don't know. You can't believe, Mr. Speaker.

***(Inaudible comments by the Leader of the Opposition)***

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Behave yourself.

***(Laughter)***

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, the point I am making is, people must think of country first. So, it's an opportunity now. So that was the Lagoon; the place was cleaned up, beautiful project. Sometimes I go there for a bite, and I see some of them sitting there, enjoying the surroundings, I say God is a good God. God is a good God, and they are enjoying the food, so to speak.

Mr. Speaker, the Cruise Ship on Melville Street there, we were supposed to create such havoc in the country, with the building of the Cruise Ship, because Grand Anse Beach was going to be destroyed completely. Cruise Ship comes, we had to fight that, Mr. Speaker. Cruise Ship comes and Grand Anse is as beautiful as ever. And

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they don't even come and apologise afterwards, you know. They go onto the next time we initiate another project, and they're back there again. So if the project is in St. George's, they'll find themselves there. If it is in St. Andrew, they'll find themselves there, to oppose. It's in Carriacou, some of them went to Carriacou, when they had that important project in Carriacou, they were there. They bring experts from outside Grenada, to say that the mangroves will be destroyed, the same thing, you know, they couldn't catch a fish in that place. Today, the mangroves are better than ever before, more of it, and people are catching fish, just like in the Lagoon now. But all these environmentalist, overnight emerged.

The Ministerial Complex, we were going to destroy the Gardens, completely destroy it. We were not supposed to do that, they opposed it. Now the Levera Project, the Chinese want to take over Grenada. The Chinese want to take over Grenada. I mean, it's amazing, you know. The Chinese want to take over Grenada, because, if it were the Americans that were coming and build those projects, you would have heard Americans taking over, or we are selling the country off to Americans.

Jobs are being created, developments are being created, and the farmers are benefitting from development. Look at that Silver Sands Project, they opposed that too. All sorts of persons became politicians overnight at Silver Sands. Some of them living close to Silver Sands, the property, watched that place being a dump for years. Someone comes, spending millions of dollars, creating one of the best properties, they opposed it, again. Nothing you do, they support it. How many Grenadians have worked there? They opposed it, Mr. Speaker. Some of them have no conscience. People without jobs, getting opportunities, the farmers are being contracted.

The Levera Project, scores of farmers will be contracted to produce food for that property. We should be so happy. They are opposing it. All sorts of persons and people, so-called aspiring politicians that can't get ten (10) votes when they run, but they are out there demonstrating against the project, demonstrating. All kinds of failed politicians, failed leader, all kinds of stuff emerged up there to oppose the project; Chinese taking over Grenada. Mr. Speaker, it's about time. It's about time we learn to grow up.

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This NNP Party, Mr. Speaker, which I am part of, who has been in opposition twice, they could never say that this NNP opposed any serious project that the previous Government then, in both cases, brought into the country, that was in the interest of the country. In some cases, I had problems with some of them, but I said jobs and opportunities, I am not going to criticise them.

I never forgot, the Sandals Project. I was in Opposition. When I saw the deal, they got everything, and I even told Bush, when I went there, I said: "Bush, well you cleaned the barrel?" I made a joke of it. But, I refused to criticise it, because that was one of the few projects that were brought into the country. Jobs were being created. We had no major hotel activities. So I complimented the Government for taking that decision, and I stayed quite. On the side, I talked about the deal, but I never criticised it.

I criticised the GRENLEC sale for one reason, not the sale, but the condition of the sale, where the authority that determines rates, and you have a solar panel, you must go through the company. This was the only country in the world, you have to go through a private operation to establish something to save electricity. It was not the sale, it was the condition that was given that we criticised, Mr. Speaker, and I have always held that position, consistently. I had no problem with the buyer. I had no problem with the individuals. It was the condition.

So, I make the point, Mr. Speaker, that some of us must learn to support things, based on what is right for the country, Mr. Speaker, and not just this personal thing. You don't like the man, you don't like the man, you don't like the man. You don't like the man and the people like the man, so it's you. Three (3) times the man and the Party winning every seat, yet, you don't like him and you want to do everything to destroy the country, because you don't like him, and he doesn't hate you. In some cases, I have no problem.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I'll just make the point to ask all of us to recognise this. We are in a period now, where we have done well. We don't want to go back. We see what is happening in Trinidad. They were being rated as having done extremely well with COVID-19. What is happening now? The country has to be locked down. I hope and pray that we don't drop our guard. It's not about me, because I make it very clear, I am

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not going to any functions. Some people say they are not seeing me. Well, so be it. I am not going to go and expose myself and expose others, because I want to play the best politician out and I will end up in some other place, Mr. Speaker. And I ask everyone to do the same thing, Mr. Speaker.

On this note, I ask you for your patience this morning and to say I will try to be back after the funeral that I am now going to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for Finance. Honourable Minister for Agriculture.

**(Minister for Foreign Affairs rose)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. You will go first. Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**Hon. Peter David:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I didn't see my sister rise. Do I proceed?

**Mr. Speaker:** Go ahead.

**Hon. Peter David:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Member for St. Andrew South-West, are you...

**Mr. Speaker:** Are you giving way to the Member? Okay.

**Hon. Peter David:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just rise to make some brief remarks on the issue of the matters raised by my colleague from St. George North-East, with respect to diplomatic appointments. I just rise, because I think it's a duty of the Government, it's a duty of us, in the Foreign Ministry, to make some clarity to debates. You know, I have always said that I love debates and I love when persons are asking questions. It leads, hopefully, at the end of the discussion, to clarity

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and increased knowledge, because quite frankly, we all pursue knowledge, and I do hope that when questions are raised, particularly, in the Media and on Social Media, it is the pursuit of knowledge and not the pursuit of other things.

With respect to diplomatic appointments, I just want to make some brief remarks on that. First of all, Mr. Speaker, and I raise it because it is out in the public domain and I think it is the duty of the Government to bring clarity, or bring information on the issue.

One, what appointments are made in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Cabinet of Grenada? First of all you accredit diplomats and I am referring now, Mr. Speaker, to Grenada's pursuit of diplomacy, Grenada's pursuit of relations with other countries, Grenada's pursuit of development of diplomacy. We have accredited Diplomats and I am bringing the clarity that I promised my friend from North-East, earlier, I would do and we have non accredited diplomats. Accredited diplomats are those persons who are accredited to a country. So for example, we have in Cuba, Ambassador Claris Charles. She is accredited to Cuba and there is an Agreement between Grenada and Cuba. So, Cuban Diplomats in Grenada receive immunity and certain privileges, and Grenada's Ambassador in Cuba, Honourable Charles, Her Excellency, receives certain privileges. Similarly, with our Ambassadors in London, High Commissioner Alexander, Ambassadors in New York, in Washington, they all are accredited. So they get immunities and we reciprocate, if that country has an Ambassador in Grenada, so the British High Commissioner in the Caribbean will also get immunity.

And then we have non-accredited Diplomats. Those are persons, who pursue our Foreign Policy, along with us, assist us, but they are not accredited to our country. Therefore, they do not get immunity. So, immunity is only granted to persons who are accredited, because the countries have to agree. We call it an Agreeema. I guess it's French. It's an Agreement between the two countries. Somebody cannot just land with a Diplomatic Passport and say, I have a Diplomatic Passport and I have immunity. I am sure the Member for North-East has a Diplomatic Passport, or had one, I am not sure if he continues to have it. In his position, I am sure he does. He can travel with his Diplomatic Passport, but he does not get immunity. I can travel, but I do not get



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immunity, because I am not accredited to the country. And similarly, all of our PSs have Diplomatic Passports, some high Officials; it is just a document to facilitate ease of travel. It does not bestow on the person any diplomatic immunities.

Mr. Speaker, there are over one hundred and ninety (190) countries in the world that the United Nations recognise. Most Developed Countries have Embassies and accredited individuals in many of these States, and in addition to that, they have what you call Consular Officials. So Developed Countries with huge amounts of resources, they can establish an Embassy in Grenada, an Embassy in St. Vincent, an Embassy in Dominica, an Embassy in Pakistan, an Embassy in India, Embassies all over the place, where they have accredited Diplomats, who have Diplomatic immunities and the other privileges that come with accreditation. But, they have the resources to do it. We, Small Island Developing States, Grenada, St. Vincent, Dominica, Small Island Developing States, all over the World and small Countries, are not so fortunate, and therefore, are limited with their resources.

The question is, how do we pursue our diplomacy, and I am making these comments, again, I say simply because of the debate out there about diplomats. How do we as a Small Island Developing State pursue diplomacy? We cannot afford to put an Embassy in India. We cannot pay for it, we cannot afford. We have Embassies in Cuba and we have an Agreement with the Cuban Government that gives us assistance. We have Embassies in China, we have Agreements. We have an Embassy at the United Nations, which is necessary, an Embassy in Washington, because of the deep relations between us and the United States. We have one in Brussels, so we have a few Embassies. But, relatively speaking, it is quite small, the amount that we have. So, how do we pursue diplomacy in the world, given these limitations?

Mr. Speaker, it is through diplomacy that we get scholarships. You know, before our relations developed with Cuba, the pursuit of Medicine was the domain of a few privileged persons. But it was since we developed a relationship with Cuba that now ordinary persons have become Doctors. You go through the Hospitals, throughout the region; you will see Doctors, who all have been trained in Cuba. Why? The pursuit of diplomatic relations with Cuba has led to that.

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Look at the Farmers. The Member for St. Andrew South-West, who is our Minister for Agriculture, Morocco, it is through the pursuit of relations with Morocco that we get fertiliser from Morocco. So, in every Ministry that you go, Education, Health, Housing, the Minister for Housing, it is through diplomacy that much of what we have, we have received. But, how do we pursue this diplomacy, if we don't have the resources. And herein lies the origin of the idea of the Honorary Consuls. The Honorary Consuls are persons that we appoint to several places throughout the world, and it is endorsed by the United Nations. There is a group called UNITA, at the United Nations. The Honorary Consuls are persons who are not accredited, who we do not pay, but who are, in a sense, pursuing our diplomacy, based on their own resources. So, in other words, let me give you some examples, Mr. Speaker, and I plan to be brief. Let's hope I am.

We have Honorary Consuls in Dubai, although we have a Consulate in Dubai, we have Honorary Consuls in Europe, in Africa, in Lebanon, in China, in Jamaica, in Belize, in France, Dominican Republic, India. Let me give you some examples of how it benefits us. We had a recent experience with our Honorary Consul in the Philippines. We cannot establish an Embassy in the Philippines, so there is a Philippines individual, who has influence and resources and is prepared to represent Grenada. Of course, they like the representation, they enjoy it and they want to do it.

Recently, a ship was stranded in that area during COVID. A Grenadian person on the ship ended up in Vanuatu, and then had to go back to the Philippines, and then was stranded. He was helped by our Honorary Consul in the Philippines. Similarly in the Dominican Republic, we had Fishermen stranded there. Who are they being helped by; by our Honorary Consuls in the Dominican Republic, so the Philippines, the Dominican Republic. We have students who were stranded in China. Where do we get the help from them? Although we have an Embassy, China is a huge place. So we have established Honorary Consuls, Trade Consuls, and other Diplomatic Officials, throughout China. And the reason for that, and you know, many Grenadians have received the benefit of this form of diplomacy, the parents of students, the families of these fishermen, all of them.

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Jamaica; it was our Honorary Consul in Jamaica, who helped the students in Jamaica, recently. The students are thankful to the Honorary Consul; similarly in the Philippines and other countries. So, the development of this non-paying diplomacy through the United Nations has been of tremendous benefit to this country.

Before any such appointment is made, Mr. Speaker, we do a thorough 'due diligence'. We do a thorough 'due diligence', to ensure that they are of good character and to ensure that they have an impeccable record. If any issues arising with them in the future, after they have been appointed, they are immediately terminated. There are no contractual obligations on our part. If they do have a Passport, it is immediately revoked. Well these days, you don't have to get back a Passport, you just terminate it by pressing a button and, they are no longer accredited, they are no longer working on behalf of Grenada.

I served in two (2) Governments in the Foreign Ministry, and I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that this practice is not reserved for this Government. It is all of the Governments, because all of the Governments face these limitations of resources. And I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that throughout the region, this practice exist; as a matter of fact, throughout the world.

I have attended Seminars and other discussions at the level of UNITA, and I assure you that, that is what is happening. These persons do not have diplomatic immunity. I come back to the point I started with, because that is what is in the public domain. These persons do not have diplomatic immunity, even if they have a Diplomatic Passport, because a Diplomatic Passport, in and of itself, does not entitle you to diplomatic immunity. And I hope I am making this point for the last time, Mr. Speaker, because I have said it over and over and I decided to use this forum to make that.

Trade Commissioners do not have diplomatic immunity. Ambassadors-at-Large do not have diplomatic immunity. If we were to rely, Mr. Speaker, if our diplomacy was to rely on the resources of Central Government, I assure you that our diplomacy would not have led to all the benefits.

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But, Mr. Speaker, there is another issue that I want to address before I go. This is the issue of Grenada/China relations. I was an advocate for the establishment of these relations for many years, even when I was not in Government, and I was extremely happy, when Grenada re-established relations with the People's Republic of China. China is the second largest economy in the world, and again, I make these comments because of what is, I think, the word is 'trending' out there, in terms of Grenada/China's relations.

In my view, the establishment of diplomatic relations between Grenada and the People's Republic of China was one of the best strategic decisions taken, with respect to our diplomacy in the recent history of this country, and I commend this Government for making that decision. I commend the Prime Minister in that regard. **(Applause)**

Grenada, along with most developing countries has been seeking new relations in the last fifteen (15) to twenty (20) years. While we maintain excellent relations with our traditional partners, in Canada, the United Kingdom, Great Britain, we maintained excellent relations with them. As I said earlier, we have Embassies in all of them; we have a Consulate in Canada, High Commission in London, Embassies in Washington. But while we maintain those relations, we are seeking new partnerships, and there is a reason for that, because even our traditional allies have been seeking these new relationships. Mr. Speaker, we grow up in a time, when Richard Nixon took the decision, very stark decision, to open up China, in the 70's. You remember Nixon and Kissinger opened up China. Richard Nixon was widely and continues to be widely praised for that.

So today, Chinese investments in the US are in the billions, over one hundred and forty-five billion (\$145 b). In Canada, in 2019, it was \$3.9 b. In the United Kingdom, in 2018, it was \$6.1 b, and in 2019, it was \$8.3 b. I say that to say, not only are we seeking new partnerships, even our traditional allies are themselves seeking new partnerships. So, while we maintain good relations with our traditional partners, we seek new relationships, and there is good reason for this.

Our farmers can tell you, and I turn to the Member for St. Andrew South-West, again, our farmers can tell you about the loss of preferential treatment with bananas.

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You see what happened to the economies of our Agricultural Sector throughout the Caribbean, with the loss of preferential treatment from our traditional partners in Europe, so it is clear.

Many of us grew up when the most coveted scholarship in Grenada was a CIDA Scholarship, the Canadian International Development Agency Scholarship and the British Scholarship, they were coveted. You don't see them anymore. So what do we have now? Scholarships to China, scholarships to Cuba, scholarships to Serbia, scholarships to places that are non-traditional partners, and this is where our relationships with the People's Republic of China comes in, because not only, not only has it affected the farmers etcetera, but there has been a serious reduction in overseas development aid by these traditional partners, Britain, United States, etcetera. There is a serious pull back, and I think my friend in the Ministry of Trade, the Representative from St. David is very much aware of this, because he a trade man, himself; that we have lost a lot, with respect to overseas development assistance; so that is where China comes into the picture.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at Chinese assistance over the last couple of years, in Health, Education, Housing, sixty-seven million dollars (\$67 m) in the area of Low Income Housing; forty-five million dollars (\$ 45 m) in Sports and Arts; eleven million dollars (\$11 m) in Agricultural Assistance; \$2.5 m in Policing and Law Enforcement; Education, thirteen million dollars (\$13 m) and fifteen million dollars (\$15 m). The relationship with the People's Republic of China has led to substantial benefits.

But what I want to say, mostly, Mr. Speaker, China itself, has done an amazing job in dealing with its own poverty. Like Cuba, China is a developing country and they have chosen to assist us. I am not suggesting that because of that, one must be just grateful. But I am simply saying that it is the mutual benefit of our countries that we must seek. And while at the same time that we criticise, we must do so, not...

***(Time Bell Rings)***

**Hon. Peter David:** Can I have a couple of minutes, Mr. Speaker?

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**Mr. Speaker:** Go ahead.

**Hon. Peter David:** The relationship between Grenada and the People's Republic of China has been done in the spirit of mutual respect, non-interference in each other's internal affairs and the pursuit of development.

I have no difficulty with criticisms. I know that there are people who are concerned about this or that. I know that there are people, who would prefer that we go back to the Province that we had a relationship with and there is an argument there. St. Vincent does not have relations with the People's Republic of China. St. Kitts does not have relations with the People's Republic of China, but they have pursued economic relations with the People's Republic of China. In fact, at the OECS level, the OECS is setting up an office in the People's Republic of China. So while they continue not to recognise and to recognise the Province of Taiwan, they still pursue relations.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I am simply suggesting that while we can have a discussion about where is the best country, let us not descend into xenophobia and narrow nationalism. Let us have a debate, at a level that I expect our society to debate that. Is there a benefit in our relations in the People's Republic of China? I say a resounding, yes. You may believe differently, but let us debate it at a level of what is the best developmental model for our country.

China has not interfered in our internal affairs. I have been Foreign Minister for a while in this Government and the previous Government. I know of no instance where there has been any attempt at interference in our internal affairs, or any attempt to change our political models. It has all been done. We do not interfere in China; China does not interfere with us. We pursue development models, based on mutual respect, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and the mutual interest of Peoples of both countries. So, that is the point I am making.

Let us, for once think of country, rather than seeking a political advantage in the debate. There is enough xenophobia and narrow nationalism in the world today. It is increasing the dangers in the world for Small Island Developing States. Let Small Island Developing States not participate in that, but look at their interests, have a debate

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about those interests and pursue those interests, not just pursue narrow nationalism. We see what is happening in huge countries, to the North, where nationalism and xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment is raging all over the place. We, as a people, even if we do not support each other politically, must pursue our development interests, rather than our narrow political interest.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will continue to raise these issues for as long as I can. I have done it. But I do believe that our people must recognise the interest that this country has to pursue and pursue those, not necessarily, the interests of those who will descend us into nationalism and xenophobia. I thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs. Let me just say that I permitted the extension of the time, because I know a question was once asked concerning the diplomats and so on, and I thought the explanation was of critical importance, so I extended your time for you.

**Hon. Peter David:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I much appreciate. And of course, I think in doing that, you did what I said, you pursued the national Interest. Thank you.

**(Laughter)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Sit down, please. Honourable Minister for Agriculture.

**Hon. Yolande Bain-Horsford:** Thank you, and good morning, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give brief statements on some important developments within the Agriculture Sector.

Mr. Speaker, firstly, I wish to express best wishes to Senator the Honourable Dunstan Campbell, the Representative for Agriculture and Fisheries, in the Upper House of Parliament. Mr. Campbell, Mr. Speaker, has announced his retirement from the Senate on medical grounds. Mr. Speaker, I must say that Dr. Campbell has played

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a stellar role in the development of the Agriculture Sector over the years, and his contributions must be acknowledged.

Over the years, Dr. Campbell has brought his professional expertise to bear in prestigious Regional and International Institutions, such as UWI and FAO. He has also brought his expertise to bear in the realm of development of Farmers' Organisations. He founded the Grenada Organic Agriculture Movement (GOAM), as a vehicle to promote natural agricultural production and develop the productive capacities of farmers. Soon after, he was elected to the Senate, I recall I sat with him, Mr. Speaker, to discuss programmes and projects of the Ministry of Agriculture, to share and to have a discussion with him. He was very, very supportive and gave ideas, some of which we have incorporated in our programmes. We also discussed organising a solid Farmers' Association and the benefits that can be derived from such an organization for the farmers. He was someone who attended all our meetings and all our Training Programmes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Campbell's contribution to National Development is significant, and I want to publicly acknowledge this here this morning. I believe I speak for all Members of this Honourable House and for the Agriculture Fraternity in wishing Dr. Campbell a speedy recovery and all the best in the future.

Mr. Speaker, like the other parts of our National Economy, the Agriculture Sector has been given resources to cushion the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, and place the sector in a better position to improve our Food and Nutrition Security Status. Permit me to share on three (3) important interventions that the Ministry of Agriculture and by extension, the Government of Grenada has initiated, in recent weeks. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry launched its Farm Labour Support Programme on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020. To date, we have provided labour support to one hundred and forty-eight (148) farmers, six (6) Government Agriculture Stations, including Limlair Livestock Station and Dumfries Agriculture Station in Carriacou. I see the Minister smiling, the Minister for Carriacou.

We have also supported the Cedar's Home for Battered women, the Father Mallaghan's Home and the Cadrona Home for the Aged in the improvement of their gardens. Mr. Speaker, to date, four hundred (400) persons have received short-term



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employment under this programme and Government has expended approximately three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars (\$375,000.00).

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry launched its Backyard Garden Programme at the Cadrona Home. Under this programme, we will assist five hundred (500) vulnerable households in establishing or improving their Home Gardens. We will also support select institutions to improve existing gardens or establish new gardens where none exist.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative is being undertaken jointly with the SAEP Project. SAEP, through the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has made available one hundred thousand dollars to support our Backyard Gardening Programme.

Mr. Speaker, the third initiative, which I will speak briefly on, is the Agriculture Feeder Roads Project. Mr. Speaker, only five (5) weeks ago, the Ministry of Works signed off on an EC\$46.8 contract for the construction of eleven (11) roads and two (2) bridges, which create access to hundreds of acres of agricultural lands. Mr. Speaker, this initiative will create two hundred and fifty (250) jobs in the short term, but it will create countless more sustainable livelihoods over the long-term. I wish to commend the Minister for Works for advancing this very important initiative. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, before I close, permit me to offer congratulatory sentiments to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), who is celebrating its seventy-fifth (75<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary. Mr. Speaker, over the years, FAO has been an excellent partner and continues supporting Grenada's Agriculture and Fisheries Sector in very, very tangible ways. Just recently, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry endorsed a Regional Initiative to help the Agriculture and Fisheries Sector in select Islands' response to the COVID-19 pandemic and support the Value Chain Development, as a means of creating employment and protecting livelihoods. The Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Economic Recovery Support Project (BECERS) is funded by US\$4.9 m grant from the Government of Japan. The funds will be channelled through the FAO and the UNDP.

Mr. Speaker, there are other initiatives, which the FAO is supporting Grenada, such as, increasing the contribution of Aquaculture to Resilience, Food Security and

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well-being in the Caribbean Project, it's a combined project; Strengthening Agriculture Data Management in the OECS Project of which we are a part; the Land Bank Project; the Agriculture Risk Insurance Project. Mr. Speaker, there are several other initiatives, which the Ministry and FAO are currently discussing. It's on the Table at this moment, and we intend to bring on stream, shortly.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing again, I want to wish them well. They have done well. They have worked well in Grenada, and not only in Grenada, internationally, throughout the Region, and they are celebrating seventy-five (75) years in existence. And we want to put on record here and to give them congratulations for all the support they have given the Ministry and the Government of Grenada. In these few words, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Agriculture. Thank you. Honourable Minister for Youth.

**Hon. Kate Lewis:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning, Mr. Speaker, I am happy for the opportunity to update on some of the initiatives, programmes and projects of the Ministry of Youth Development, Sports, Culture and the Arts.

Mr. Speaker, as a Government, we continue to invest heavily, in our Youth Development Agenda. And, it is important that our people must understand that it goes way beyond the IMANI Programme, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak about, first of all, the M-Power Programme. This programme was designed and created to serve the needs of our young men at risk, on the blocks. And currently in that programme, Mr. Speaker, we have over three hundred and fifty (350) young men engaged. They have embraced the programme wholeheartedly, and they are very happy for the opportunity to be given a second chance, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, for the past two (2) months, the young men were engaged in a Developmental Session, where they looked at things as Team Building, Knowing One's Self, Time Management, these key important characteristics of life to help them make

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better decisions. At the end of that two (2) months Developmental Session, they were involved in various activities, and I was able to attend the activity at Her Majesty's Prisons. Yes, Mr. Speaker, our M-Power Programme goes as far as Her Majesty's Prisons. And I sat there and I listened to some of the inmates, giving their testimonies, accepting their issues with the Law, accepting where they have failed, and recommitting themselves to make better life's decisions, because of the opportunities from the M-Power Programme. Mr. Speaker, I felt overwhelmed by listening to those inmates, who indicated that they are not ready to make their contribution to National Development.

Mr. Speaker, from Monday, our M-Power participants will begin the core aspects of the programme, and that is Creating Opportunities for Rewarding Experiences. Following that, they will be engaged in the technical and vocational aspects, where they will be involved in a lot of skills, the skills training aspect of it, the Technical and Vocational Skills, such as landscaping, small engine manufacturing, things like construction and tiling. These are the skills that we will have our young men engaged in, so that they can make it for themselves, Mr. Speaker, giving them that empowering opportunity to make it in our country, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to speak on the YUTBIZ Programme. The YUTBIZ provides entrepreneurial support for our young people. And added to our YUTBIZ Programme, we do have a Small Business Support Centre. So any young person, who has a creative idea, who wants to get involved in business, can go to that YUTBIZ Support Centre to receive hands-on training. They will also be receiving access to financing for their small business. And for the year so far, Mr. Speaker, twenty-two (22) young people have received financing through the YUTBIZ Programme, at a cost of five hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$520,000.00), Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)** And that is what we are doing, encouraging our young people to get involved in entrepreneurial activities. Yes, we have the Public Sector, yes, we have the Private Sector, but they too, can become part of the Private Sector by creating their own employment and employment for others. But what we are doing is giving them that opportunity and helping them along the way, through the YUTBIZ Department of the Ministry, and also the YUTBIZ Support Centre. We continue to monitor the operations

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of those businesses, to ensure that the participants and the beneficiaries can operate successful businesses, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to speak here on Project FLY, a Community Intervention Programme that is currently taking place in Willis, St. George and Dover, Carriacou. They have already completed the Life Skills component of the programme and are now preparing to get involved in the technical skills aspect. Again, there will be training in Electrical Insulation, Commercial Food Preparation, Tiling, Plumbing and other important skills that we deem necessary for the demands of the Job Market, Mr. Speaker

Mr. Speaker, we know at this time, as a result of the pandemic, we have a lot of our young people, who are displaced or misplaced and lost job opportunities, Mr. Speaker. And, we do empathise with our young people, who are in those categories, Mr. Speaker. And as a result of that and continuing our Youth Development Agenda and recognising the important role the IMANI plays in transitioning our young people between school and employment, we are about to launch Batch 7 of the New IMANI Programme, Mr. Speaker, where we will see an intake of over six hundred (600) young people to be involved in Life Skills aspect and training opportunities, at various levels, moving them from the low level to the high level, equipping them with the necessary skills and the right attitudes, so that they can make their contribution to our country's development, as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, very soon, you would see, from the Ministry of Youth Development, a Garment Production Factory. And this will be to serve our students, who normally benefit from the School Uniform Assistance, because what this Garment Production Factory will do is to produce school uniforms for our parents, who normally depend on the Government assistance. Our participants have already been trained in the CVQ Level (II) aspect of Sewing, and right now they are involved in training in the production of harmonised products and production at the Commercial Level, Mr. Speaker, and that is what we are doing. They were participants of the IMANI Programme. We are now moving them into a Sewing Corporative to produce school uniforms for the beneficiaries of the School Uniform Voucher Programme, Mr. Speaker.

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Mr. Speaker, on-going also, we have the National Youth Parliament and they have been in training on an on-going basis. Again, the Youth Parliament gives our young people the opportunity to develop their leadership skills, the opportunity to develop their communication skills, to be able to do research, to understand Parliamentary proceedings. And what we do, Mr. Speaker, we give them the opportunity to debate in the Houses of Parliament, where all the Bills that have been passed in the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, they now can have their own debate, because we know that they will attract the youthful population to understand. So, our Youth Parliamentarians are preparing for the second Sitting of the National Youth Parliament, and they would be debating the Gaming Act, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just thought it was very important to update our people on some of the initiatives of the Ministry of Youth Development, and what we are doing here to ensure that our young people are engaged meaningfully, so when they have developed and harnessed all these skills, the right attitudes, they can make valuable and meaningful contribution to our country's development. Thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister for Youth and Sports. Honourable Minister in the Prime Minister's Ministry for ICT.

**Hon. Pamela Moses:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker, good morning to this Honourable House. I stand just to briefly share on the distribution of the School Uniform Vouchers. Mr. Speaker, this Government has made great efforts to provide assistance in the form of school uniforms, supplies to needy families, to single mothers, despite the fact that this Government has drastically reduced income.

Mr. Speaker, due to COVID-19, the revenue that Government collects is not as it used to be, our Minister for Finance would have shared this, on many occasions. But, despite this, despite the serious challenges that we now face, the Prime Minister's Ministry spent over \$1.1 m for the School Uniform Voucher Programme, this year.

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Mr. Speaker, this programme aims to alleviate the burdens of families, especially now, in the COVID-19 times. Nearly five thousand (5,000) applications were processed, and this was done online, Mr. Speaker, for the first time. Approximately, twelve thousand (12,000) students, throughout Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, benefitted from the School Uniform Voucher Programme, this year, 2020.

Mr. Speaker, many families are very grateful. Some said they did not expect any vouchers this year, based on the financial state, as a result of COVID-19. You know, some persons expressed concern that Government has to pay salaries to its workers. Government has to run the country, you know, take care of its regular responsibilities. But here is Government, still reaching out to those who are in need. And so they expressed their appreciation to this Government for its continued sacrifices in assisting the single mothers and the low income families.

Mr. Speaker, the following, I would share with this House, a breakdown on the allocation for each child and household. Mr. Speaker, all Preschool children would receive vouchers valued at fifty dollars (\$50.00). One page is fifty dollars. A Primary School student will receive two (2) printed sheets, valued at one hundred dollars (\$100.00). A Secondary school student will receive three (3) sheets, that's valued at one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00). There's a maximum per household of four hundred and fifty dollars (\$450.00). And, many families received that amount of money, four hundred and fifty dollars (\$450.00), thereabout, based on the amount of children that are in those low income family households.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that this programme started very late, this year, and, of course, it was due to COVID-19, again. And so, our Ministry of ICT, the IT team, at our Ministry of ICT, designed a School Uniform App, an App that was tested, it was launched, an App that was found to have significantly, reduced the time that it took to complete the vouchers this year. And we are very happy, and I want to commend the members of that team who helped made that happen **(applause)** and all the persons who worked, particularly, Mr. Chitterman, and a few of them that really worked to make this happen. Mr. Speaker, we started two (2) months late, and because of the App, 95% of the vouchers were ready before school reopened. And Mr. Speaker, most

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families would have collected theirs over the weekend, by Saturday, Saturday morning, and were able to go shopping by Saturday afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, our Ministry of ICT is exploring the possibility now of making this School Uniform Programme totally digital by 2021, because, Mr. Speaker, we've had to print thousands and thousands of very expensive sheets of voucher paper. It's a special paper that is used to print the vouchers and it had to be done for twelve thousand (12,000) children, with a secondary child getting, as much, as I just mentioned, three (3) voucher sheets, Mr. Speaker, plus, there's the cost of ink, so it is very, very expensive. But, that's not all, printing also takes time, and, Mr. Speaker, workers had to leave their regular duties, in order to complete the vouchers. They left their regular jobs undone.

And, Mr. Speaker, there's also the sorting of the vouchers and the stapling of the vouchers. Those things took days to be completed. And so, as a Ministry, heading forward to a digital economy, Mr. Speaker, we aim to have the payment for School Uniform Vouchers, in the future, in the form of a code, a code that can be just sent to your cell phone and you can go into the merchant shop and so use it in exchange for school items.

This is our plan for the future, Mr. Speaker. This plan will shorten the process. It will reduce costs, and it will most definitely, propel our little Island, our Tri-Island State of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique in its journey to becoming a digital Nation. We will certainly keep this Honourable House updated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Mr. Speaker, just on a Point-of-Clarity. Can the Member for St. Patrick East give this Honourable House the mode of distribution of the vouchers to the children, vis-à-vis, St. George North-East?

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**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Parliamentary Representative.

**Hon. Pamela Moses:** Okay. I would just like to inform the Honourable House that it was collected by the SEED Officers and distributed. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Government, in terms of getting these vouchers to our children. The vouchers came from Government and...

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Mr. Speaker, on a Point-of-Order Ministerial Statements are not a position for the debate on questions or so forth. I think the Member will have the chance, at the correct Sitting, to make statements, or inquire into anything else.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you for that.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** And, this is what it is, Mr. Speaker. I was asking for clarity, but I did not get the clarity, I was seeking, that is for St. George North-East.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. That is that is why you should wait till I call you, because I was about to say that that was just a part of clarity that you were seeking. Okay. Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Minister for Education.

**Hon. Emmalin Pierre:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning just to give an update on three (3) matters, as it relates to Education. And, of course, it would be remiss of me, if I did not say a few words, as it relates to the opening of school, which started last Monday.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start on a note of thank you and to say a very special thank you to all of our stakeholders, for working with us to make the reopening of school on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, a possibility and the success that it was. Mr. Speaker,



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tremendous credit must be given to all of those, who have worked hard and worked beyond their call of duty, putting structures and systems in place, at all levels, the levels of the Ministry of Education, the levels of the school, and all of our other stakeholders, the Grenada Union of Teachers, the Denominational Board for all these suggestions, advice, recommendations that were provided to the Ministry of Education. I must say, it was indeed teamwork.

While this is a challenge, we do not have it perfect; it would never be perfect, we continue to work, together, to put all the additional systems in place that we need to put. As we go along, tweaking is taking place, Principals are using different methods, different systems on the ground to suit their particular situation. And, Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but again say, a special thank you to everyone, our parents, the cooperation of parents, our students for their resilience. I looked at some of the students on Monday, and I thought to myself, when we say Grenadians are a resilient people, we are not just talking about adults; we are indeed talking about our children too. And I really want to applaud and recognise everyone, every single individual, every single Sector for their tremendous support.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to use this opportunity publicly, to express my sincerest appreciation to the Minister for Finance and to every single Cabinet Colleague of mine, for their support throughout this process, at times even creating inconveniences, as it relates to financial support from various Ministries to make this possible. And I want to say a special thank you to my colleagues. You have made a significant contribution to what we are experiencing now, and I wanted to register this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, during the first week of school, we said that the focus would be on Orientation and Needs Assessment, teaching our students this new norm, teaching our students how to operate in an environment of COVID-19. While we do not have any known cases on Island, Mr. Speaker, we cannot lose sight of the fact that right in our backdoor, Trinidad and Tobago, they are grappling to deal with this situation, and so we have to be very cognisant of what is happening around us. I often say this, we do have loopholes, in terms of entries on Island, and so we ought not to take anything for granted, especially when we look at what is happening so very close to us.

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Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, we started Personal Development Sessions for our Teachers. We said before, we have to retrain, we have to retool, we have to provide that support. And, in addition to all of the training that was done before, whether it be use of devices, use of platforms, e-learning preparation, content preparation, and so on, Mr. Speaker, that's an on-going work that we have to continue, and we are very committed to this.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, in this first week of school, we also had the start of distribution of devices to students. So, we are aware that the week before the opening of school, devices were distributed to our Secondary School Teachers, and that went quite smoothly, and we went straight into the distribution for the students, starting with Form 5s, and we are going down the line, ensuring that we complete that phase where all of our Secondary School students will have devices.

While, this is happening, Mr. Speaker, various teams are working simultaneously. So, we have a team that is working day and night continuing the process of configuration of all of those devices to be distributed in Phase 1.

Mr. Speaker, I always say this, and I continue to say we are blessed to the extent that I do not believe we understand how blessed we are. While we are distributing devices to every Secondary School student on Island, in this phase, Mr. Speaker, some of our neighbours are still trying to figure out how they are going to support their blended approach to online learning for their students.

So, one of our neighbouring Islands, speaking to the Minister and PS there, they said they were only able so far, to purchase about six thousand (6,000) devices, and they have more than twelve thousand (12,000) Secondary School students. Mr. Speaker, in Trinidad and Tobago, just next to us, only last week, we saw in the Media, about sixty-five thousand (65,000) students still without devices, as pronounced by the Minister for Education, and they were calling on the Private Sector, they were calling on citizens to donate devices. Mr. Speaker, we have a lot going for us, and we have to recognise how God has been extremely, extremely faithful to us in the process.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward, in this week coming we are going to be doing major engagement of our parents, because our parents do have to understand some of

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the challenges that schools are facing. In this test first week, when students went back, we want to give feedback to our parents; we want to collect data from our parents. And in that period we are also preparing for the 'what if'. So what if we have a lockdown that is coming? We cannot just hope and pray that it doesn't happen. We have to put systems in place, in the event that this happens, and we continue to pray that this would never be the case. But data collection becomes extremely important, and so I want to make an appeal to our parents to give their full support to our schools. Most of our students would be home in the coming week, very few exceptions, with special situations in some schools, but most of our students will remain home in the coming week, while we engage our parents. Distribution of devices will also continue and other support would continue in the coming week.

I also should mention, Mr. Speaker, very important to us, the work that has been done in the area of Psycho-Social Welfare and support for our students. And I want to comment all of the officers, who are out in our schools, our Counsellors and so on, working with our students, supporting our teachers, to ensure that we do not just take care of the academics, which we have said will be delayed until the last week in September, first week in October, because we want to make sure our students are mentally and otherwise prepared for what is ahead of them.

Mr. Speaker, since our last session, we had the launch of a major initiative in the Ministry of Education, the STAR Project, and I want to use the opportunity this morning, to just speak very briefly on that. Mr. Speaker, for many years, we have seen a number of our students needing special support, coming into conflict with the Law, having situations, Mr. Speaker, in school that we are not very proud of. And, Mr. Speaker, some of those students, on many occasions have been brought before the Magistrate's Courts. In some cases, many cases, Mr. Speaker, these students have been sent to the Grand Bacolet Rehabilitation Centre and many of them have had to spend months at that facility for rehabilitation programmes. Mr. Speaker, this is a situation that we are not happy about. It is a situation that has been happening for many years, and we are very grateful that we now have that facility that can support some of these students. But we are making an additional intervention as Government, because we believe that we

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should not and must not wait for a child to get before the Magistrate's Court to go to Rehabilitation Programme. And so, we have started this intervention called STAR. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, currently, we have a group of students in the Pilot Project that has started and they are currently engaged in a three-week Sleeping Camp and, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the team that is working with those students.

There was an incident, earlier in the week, when one student had a slight seizure, had to be taken to hospital. And, Mr. Speaker, what touched me about this is that when the Doctor said to the student that he had to remain for observation, that child insisted that he wanted to go back on the Camp. And even after his relatives would have left the hospital that child attempted to run away to go back on Camp. And while I am not happy that he did that, but, Mr. Speaker, it was a sign that there is something on the Camp that he felt good about, that he wanted to be there, and we want to provide that support. We want to continue to support our students in reform.

But what is significant about this programme, Mr. Speaker, is that we cannot just look at the child. And so, I am extremely happy with the response and the support that we have received from the parents of these students. All students have been engaged voluntarily, every person, indicating their interest in participating after they were oriented in what the programme is about. And so too, their parents willingly, agreed for their child to participate in the programme, but that they too would also be part of the programme **(time bell rings)** because we believe that our parents must be supported, as well.

Mr. Speaker, the programme goes into communities, because if we attempt to work with the child, with their parent and we do not address some of the issues in the communities where they come from, then the programme would not see the fully benefit that it has the potential to achieve. And so, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I will continue to update this House on the progress of this initiative, which seeks to address a number of areas, the academics, the spiritual, the psychosocial and the physical. All of those areas are captured in this programme.

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Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if I heard the bell, but I would like to ask for just one more minute just to say two brief words on the issue of rehabilitation of schools.

**Mr. Speaker:** One more minute.

**Hon. Emmalin Pierre:** Thank you, Sir. Mr. Speaker, I want to just commend again, the team of persons who have been out, over the last few weeks, working extremely hard, in some cases leaving facilities 10:00 o'clock in the night, working towards ensuring that last Monday, our students, our teachers, principals could have returned to our various schools, at least in a condition, conducive to start the School Year.

Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to have all of our schools ready at the state that we would love to have them at, and so that work is in progress, and I want to use the opportunity to recognise and commend the Minister for Works for his continued support. I have been calling on him, over and over and over, extremely supportive. Even at late nights, Mr. Speaker, his team has been doing an excellent job, supporting the work of the Ministry of Education, as it relates to ensuring that we create conducive environments for teaching and learning.

Mr. Speaker, in the that light, seventy-five (75) schools, that initiative, Mr. Speaker, that Project of Schools Rehabilitation between 2020/2021, this Government is spending over fifty million dollars (\$50 m) on schools and the development of schools. And so, Mr. Speaker, I just want to give the assurance that we are totally committed. We would not be able to solve every situation overnight, but the commitment is very clear, that this Government is prepared to work towards the development of the infrastructure in all of our schools. Thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ministry for Education. Leader of Government's Business.

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**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to request of you as you made in your opening statement, the request for the break at this time just before Motions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. We just have Item 13, that is Personal Explanations. Any Personal Explanations?

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Parliamentary Representative for St. Patrick West.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am happy that you have recognised my presence. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Clerk of Parliament for bringing to my attention...

**Mr. Speaker:** Just one moment. We just want to change the Item. We have not made the announcement yet that we have gone to Personal Explanations. So, as soon as we do that, you will get back on the floor.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 13 - Personal Explanations.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. Patrick West.

**Hon. Anthony Boatswain:** Once again, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I will like to thank the Clerk of Parliament for bringing to my attention the fact that, as a Member of Parliament, you can speak under this Agenda Item, and not only on the Adjournment. So, I really want to take the opportunity to give a Personal Explanation, Mr. Speaker.

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Mr. Speaker, I really want to inform this House, as to why I considered it necessary, as a Member of Parliament to excuse myself from a panel discussion that was held virtually, last Sunday. Mr. Speaker, I am not one who really follow Social Media, but I understand that there was extensive discussion, debate, positions taken, along political lines, as to what transpired on that day, and I have no problem with that.

My problem, Mr. Speaker, is that, that issue was not a political issue. It was more a national issue, and hence the reason I am raising it here. If it was political only, I wouldn't even bother with it. But it was a national issue, and I felt that the image of our country was being threatened and I had to respond, and hence the reason why, Mr. Speaker, I am giving this explanation here today, as to what exactly transpired, because you hear it more on one side. I think it is opportune that I present what exactly the issue was all about.

Mr. Speaker, I was invited by, one, Mr. Kellon Bubb, who host a Sunday Programme, virtually, to be a participant on his programme, and I was informed that the other members of the panel would be the Parliamentary Representative for St. Patrick-East, Honourable Pamela Moses and a gentleman by the name of Mr. Clouden, who I understand works with the CBI Programme, that was the information given to me. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, I felt it was opportune that the occasion be taken, as Mr. Bubb said, to discuss the Levera Project, because that was the topic to be discussed, on the Levera Project, and I thought it was necessary that we do present our side, as Parliamentarians representing the area, as to why we felt that project should be supported.

However, Mr. Speaker, just before the programme was scheduled to begin, I realised that the two (2) names they called were not there at all. Instead I saw four (4) different persons on the programme, and I thought it was unethical that I was invited to a programme, given the names of the person to be there, and when the programme actually started, they were not there, and other persons were on the programme, persons, who I did not recognise, I did not know. I could have taken a decision at that point to excuse myself and say I am not participating, because that was not the arrangement. But, I felt obliged to be part of the discussion.

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Another issue was that of the timing, because I discussed with the gentleman that time was critical for me. I could only allocate or give up half hour to the programme, and he agreed that yes, for the first half hour of the programme, a gentleman who studied in China would speak about COVID, and for the second half, we will be entertained, in terms of the discussion on the Levera Project.

Unfortunately, the programme went on for over an hour and a half, and as I indicated to him I could not stay beyond the stipulated time, because I recalled at that time, Mr. Speaker, three (3) calls came in from Honourable Gregory Bowen to me, and I don't know, if he realised that. And every time the call came, I had to keep cutting him off. And on the third occasion, I said well, no, maybe it's very important, I cannot keep cutting him off, again.

But the most contentious aspect, which I want to deal with, Mr. Speaker, was the statement made by one of the panellist, a gentleman by the name of, I can't recall his first name, but I think his surname is Douglas, who is supposed to be a resident abroad, a Grenadian, as I said, a resident, abroad, involved in Investment Financing. And, Mr. Speaker, from the tone of his presentation, I got the feeling that we were really not there to discuss this Levera Project at all, and I was a bit taken aback. Although the discussion was proceeding smoothly, I was a bit taken aback, when he referred to Grenada as a corrupt country. Mr. Speaker, that one I could not accept. I had no problem. I had no difficulty, Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman had referred to the NNP Administration as being corrupt. We are accustomed to that. We have heard that many times. We have grown used to it, and as a matter of fact, the more they accuse NNP of being corrupt, the better we do at the Polls. So, if those who are making those statements are not learning their lesson, then, that's too bad for them. So, you could call NNP corrupt, if you want. But to refer to your country, as someone, who says that he is a Grenadian, but abroad, I thought it was a bit, as we say in cricket, "beyond the boundary." And therefore, I had to excuse myself from that discussion, because no way, Mr. Speaker, I could be a part of any Panel Discussion, where someone is referring to their country as corrupt. I won't be part of that, and therefore, I left. And I



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indicated to Mr. Bubb that I am leaving, because I could not, in due conscience, be part of discussion of that nature.

Mr. Speaker, we have to be very careful. When you label a country as being corrupt and I will come to the definition and the role of Transparency International; when you label a country as corrupt, you can do serious damage to that country, Mr. Speaker, especially when that message is being broadcasted out there, worldwide. For one, you are telling investors, that is not a country to go and invest in. Two, once a country is labelled as corrupt, the transaction cost of doing business will be much higher than average, because investors will be looking at how can they recover in the event that they lose their money based on corruption. But even more, Mr. Speaker, our citizens, the citizens of Grenada become stigmatised, because let us remember, Mr. Speaker, when we travel, we do not travel on an NDC passport, because there is no such thing, or an NNP passport, we travel on a Grenadian Passport. And if you travel on a Grenadian Passport and you call your country corrupt, it means that the same brush will dab the NNP supporters, as well as the NDC supporters. We are all in the same bracket, so it is not an issue of politics. It's an issue, Mr. Speaker, of nationalism, how we see our country. And I consider it extremely unpatriotic and undignified for someone who is supposed to be a Grenadian to making such a remark.

Mr. Speaker, there was another member of the Panel, who actually recognised what was happening. I think his name is Mr. Brian Samuel, and he did not really want to get involved in that kind of deceit and misconception, in terms of what that programme was supposed to be, and therefore he sent me a message in which he apologised for what happened and in that message, Mr. Speaker, he made mention of the fact that his fellow panellist was too aggressive and confrontational, that was his point, that his fellow panellist, that is Mr. Douglas, was a bit too aggressive and confrontational. But, you would not hear that. Nobody would say that, because that is what really started the whole thing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend some time in discussing this whole issue of corruption. Transparency International, Mr. Speaker, which is the main International Watchdog, the Agency that monitors corrupt practices in various countries, describes

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corruption as: ***“The Use of Public Power for Private Benefits.”*** And they have constructed two (2) major indices for measuring corruption. There is one what you call the ‘Absolute Corruption Index’, and that Index, Mr. Speaker, is evidence based. That is to say if you bring a charge of corruption, you must be able to provide the evidence. So, you cannot say a country or this individual is corrupt, unless you can substantiate. And because it is so difficult to substantiate absolute corruption, they do not use that Index. They use instead, Mr. Speaker, what you call the ‘Corruption Perception Index’, perception. It’s like saying, well, it’s an allegation and the Corruption Perception Index, Mr. Speaker, is just what it is, that’s how people think.

You have a group of experts, representing various organisations that will come together and make pronouncements on certain countries, based on their observations and what they think is happening, the reaction of people, but it is not scientific. But yet it is used by Transparency International to give some idea, as to how people perceive corruption in various countries. For example, countries like Norway, Sweden, they might rank them very high, whereas they rank certain countries in Africa and Latin America very low, on the Perception Index. Again it is a perception, not scientific, but yet they do use it, and organisations do use that Index in determining or influencing investment flows to different countries, so it is still important.

The question is, Mr. Speaker, where does Grenada stand in this whole issue? Because when you say Grenada is corrupt, you can either use the Absolute Index, which is not used at all, as I said, or you must use the Perception Index, and as far as the Perception Index reveals, Mr. Speaker, the latest Index, 2019/2020, Grenada ranked fifty-one (51) out of one hundred and eighty (180) countries, in 2019/2020, third in the Region. The highest ranking is from No. (1), going down. So, only three (3) countries were ahead of Grenada in this ranking.

In 2012, under the then NDC Government, Grenada had the same ranking, fifty-one (51), but it was 4<sup>th</sup>. In essence, Mr. Speaker, if you use the ranking and the position, the score, it tells you that Grenada might even be slightly better off now, on the Index, than it was in 2012. So how can someone conclude that Grenada is more corrupt now, when the evidence does not support it, based on the Perception Ranking?

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And therefore, Mr. Speaker, one has to be very careful how we use the word 'corruption', because, as it stands right now, as I said, Mr. Speaker, it cannot be said that Grenada is more corrupt than it was eight (8) years ago.

But, what is telling, Mr. Speaker, even if a country might be corrupt, you do not go out there, even though there is some perception, as a Grenadian, we cannot do that, Mr. Speaker, because we are tarnishing the image. Jamaica has a lower ranking than Grenada, Trinidad has a lower ranking. We rank better than them, but you will not hear a Trinidadian telling everybody Trinidad is corrupt, or a Jamaican telling everybody that Jamaica is corrupt, no country, whatsoever. We do not do that, Mr. Speaker, as patriots. And I have no apology disassociating myself with anyone, any group that seeks to destroy the good image of our Country, Mr. Speaker, and that is the essence of the whole thing.

So, you could take your position, you can criticise me, if you want. You can say, yes, I was upset, yes, I was upset, and there is no difficulty in me saying that I was upset. You could also say, as some say, well, I was disrespectful for walking out, you could say that, as well, because, as I said, Mr. Speaker, I will not associate with such behaviour.

And if you want to speak of disrespect, I want to know what could be more disrespectful than when someone, who was Leader of the Opposition, would walk out of Parliament. Walking out from a Panel Discussion, you consider that to be as disrespectful, as someone, as a Leader walking out of Parliament? So we have to be very careful, Mr. Speaker, when we make those kinds of comparisons.

And on this note, I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that as Grenadians, we have to demonstrate a higher level of national pride. This is our country. And some of us would go to the extreme to destroy this country, just to get at one person. When you destroy the image of Grenada, you are not destroying Keith Mitchell or NNP, you know. You might be destroying your own future, because it is the country that is ranked, not the political organisation, not the Party that is in power, at the time, and we have to be careful about that. Do not go to the extreme of destroying your country just because you want to get at one man. It does not work that way.

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And again, Mr. Speaker, I am urging my fellow Grenadians, whether you are in Grenada, or whether you are in the diaspora, you ought to be ambassadors of your country. If you say you are patriot, you have to act in that manner, and no patriot, no one, who claims to have that national pride will describe his country in that context of being a corrupt country. As I said, if you want to say NNP corrupt, so be it. I will take no objection to that, because we have heard that before and maybe it is good you say it, because as I said, history will show that the more you target and accuse NNP of corruption, the better we do at the Polls, because the people understand that what you are saying is not correct. They understand that NNP is a Government that provides for our people, and all this talk about corruption that cannot be proven, we understand that as well.

Because don't forget, Mr. Speaker, in 2008, the NDC campaigned on a platform that they will bring corruption charges against the Leadership of the NNP. They had five (5) years and three (3) months and not one iota of evidence was provided. So you know what the people said: **"Don't come back to us with that kind of ole talk."** They did it in 2013, they saw the results. They came back with the same thing in 2018, they saw the results. Let them continue on the same path and the result in 2023 or whenever will not be dissimilar to 2013 and 2018. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
**(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you Honourable Representative for St. Patrick-West. Thank you for that explanation. Honourable Representative for St. Patrick-East.

**Hon. Pamela Moses:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I stand here today in support of my colleague from St. Patrick-West, in defending our country for our major projects. And just to share that at no point in time did I receive any invitation to that Talk Show that he attended.

I also stand, Mr. Speaker, just to share that many things that are on Social Media, we must be careful, as a people, what we are listening to and what we are believing, because last Thursday, my colleague, the Representative for St. Patrick-West

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and I and a few Environmentalists, visited the Levera site, and we went there, not to visit the construction site. We did not request that, we just sought permission to enter the area, walk through the entrance and to use the road, and just to walk at the back of the construction site, if we so desired, and only that was requested, Mr. Speaker.

But, it's all over the country and it's discussed on Radio Programmes, TV Programmes and Social Media that my colleague and I were locked out by the Developers at that area, and that we were not allowed to enter the construction site. Nothing was further from the truth, Mr. Speaker. We had no intention of visiting the construction site, and as such, the workers at the construction site, including the Administrative Officer had no need to be informed of our visit, because we were just walking the road, far from the construction site. So, only the Security Guards at that Development, were informed that we were coming.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I just want to make it very clear that our Government, we have a great working relationship with the Developers. We are welcomed there. Actually, we were asked if we didn't want to enter, and we told them no, this was not the purpose of our visit. The purpose of our visit was just to observe the RAMSAR site, to look at sketches of the development to come, in relation to the lake and the environment, and just to let the Environmentalists know, well look, the Lake is over here, the building structure will be on this side. Here is your lake, the Gulf Course will be on another end, basically that, and to take some drone pictures, which we did. So, that was the purpose of the visit, not to visit the construction site. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, very much Honourable Representative, for St. Patrick-East. At this time, we will move to take an adjournment and return. How many minutes we should go to, thirty/forty minutes?

***(Members agreed on forty (40) minutes)***

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**Mr. Speaker:** Forty (40) minutes. So, we should be back here at 12:05 p.m. Honourable Members, at this time, we will take an adjournment and resume at 12:05 p.m.

**House adjourns at 11:25 a.m.**

**House resumes at 12:05 p.m.**

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members, pray be seated.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Mr. Speaker, it seems as we resume, I would say that maybe we don't have a quorum, but, okay...

**Mr. Speaker:** Oh yes, we do, five (5), six (6), seven (7). We do have a quorum. Good. Honourable Members, we now resume after our adjournment. I would just like to mention that I had communication with Honourable Parliamentary Representative for St. Andrew North-West, and she indicated to me that she was not going to be here today, because of personal reasons.

**Ag. Assistant Clerk:** Item 14 - Motions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. Mark.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the Motion standing in the name of the Minister for Health, the Member for the South of St. George, who is unavoidably absent, having to perform a very important duty, which while not more important than this one, is important to the Government, and so I beg your permission to present this Resolution in his name.

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**Mr. Speaker:** Please proceed.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker:

**WHEREAS** it is provided by section 4 (1) of the Quarantine Act Chapter 271 and from hereon, it will be referred to as (“the Act”) that the Minister may make Regulations, as respects to the whole, or any part of Grenada, including the Ports and Coastal waters thereof, for preventing-

- a). danger to public health from ships, or aircrafts, or persons, or things therein, arriving at any place; and
- b). the spread of infection by means of any ship or aircraft about to leave any place, or by means or by any person or thing about to leave any place in any ship or aircraft;

**WHEREAS** it is provided by section 4 (3) of the Act that Regulations made under section 4 (1) of the Act shall not have any force or effect until confirmed by resolution of the House of Representatives;

**AND WHEREAS** it is now expedient that the Quarantine COVID-19 Regulations, 2020 attached hereto, as a Schedule be confirmed by the House of Representatives;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of section 4 (3) of the Act, that the Quarantine COVID-19 Regulations, 2020 be now confirmed by the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, the original Act was formulated, as I read here in the Resolution, to prevent any infectious disease coming into our country either by sea or by air. So that infectious disease comes into the country in spite of efforts to prevent it, to prevent the spread of infection by any person, or thing that could have come in by a ship or by an aircraft.

And, Mr. Speaker, this Legislation was formulated in a time and a period when other diseases presented themselves. It covered SARS, other Coronaviruses and so on, but it does not cover the COVID-19 disease in these Regulations. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, we are asking permission to amend the Regulations, so that it can serve the purpose for which it was intended, to prevent diseases from coming into our country,

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infectious diseases, in particular, and to prevent the spread of these infections. So, Mr. Speaker, the body of this amendment or the request for the...

**(Technical difficulties with mics)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative for St. Mark, I think we are having a technical problem with the microphones. All of them seemed to have just gone out. Could we just get a few secs to get it rectified from upstairs?

**Mr. Clerk:** It's back on.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's back on?

**Mr. Clerk:** Yes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. Please proceed.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We are all aware that if it's one thing that we know about COVID-19, is that we do not know everything about this disease. The dynamics of this pandemic...

**(Technical difficulties with the mics)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Alright. It seems as though we are back in.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, we see changes in the dynamics of the pandemic, and when some of the experts think that they have it covered, it does something that baffles all of us, and therefore, we must bat in our creases. The presence of the disease, in various States and how it behaves, is a lesson for all of us.



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We look at our neighbouring sister Island, Trinidad and Tobago, we look at further afield, we look at one of our biggest source markets, the United States; while some States in that country are going up, some are coming down. We look at the UK, and a few weeks ago I was extremely happy, because we were talking to the Airlines about them coming in, come October, Virgin, British Airways and even Condor from Germany, and that was based on the Risk Categorisation of that country. It was coming down very nicely. And recently, the word has not been that great, but as said earlier, by the Member for the South, we are looking at it very cautiously to see what happens. One little spike doesn't necessarily change the whole risk level of that country, and so we have to monitor the data that comes out of the country. But I do hope that it continues to go down.

We look at Canada, again, the same feeling of happiness. Canada is one of our significant source markets; Canada was deemed to be Green, and so, anybody coming from Canada could just come in with their PCR test, be checked in, pick up their suitcase and walk. And again, we are hearing some very troubling information concerning Canada, that their numbers have up, not enough for us to change their Risk Categorisation, but enough for us to be looking at it.

Mr. Speaker, we are very fortunate and blessed to be in the Green Category of Risk. As a matter of fact, we are in the Category with a few foreign countries, five (5) countries that are in the CARICOM Bubble and that includes: Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, the Legal minds have it, as St. Christopher and Nevis, but just in case we do not all know; St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica. I think I mentioned Barbados, already, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada. We are all in this bubble together.

It means that we can facilitate ease of travel between these five (5) Member States for persons, who need to travel for various reasons. Some might want to travel for business, but we also hope that we can use that opportunity to maximise leisure travel between these countries, which are very similar, but also have differences that could attract citizens from the different States into each country. And, at this particular point in time I am holding discussions with the Ministers for Tourism of the other Islands in the

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bubble, to see what we can do together to stimulate some of kind of passenger travel between those countries.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of knowledge, but there are lots of misconceptions, a lot of perceptions, whether to wear mask, if it is important to wear mask, whether it is not. At one time, they were saying it must be contact and now the scientists are telling us it's airborne. And it seems like that the science is saying to us and the scientists are saying, one of the things that seems to stand out and that more scientists agree on that wearing mask does reduce the transmission of the disease and by implication, reduce the number of deaths.

There are also supporting very heavily, the social distancing, and so some of the things that we take very lightly; I know a number of persons, when they come up to me, they come without a mask, or the bandana that they put over their nose and so on, and as soon as you say, well, I cannot have a conversation with you without a mask, they flick it out from their pockets, or some of them wear it below their chin, so it has become a style, rather than a means to keep all of us safe and this concerns me.

The social distancing, Mr. Speaker; I know over the weeks and the months, when discussions of COVID were at a height and the COVID Committee was meeting, as we started to loosen up the country, as Government gave permission for facilities and businesses to open up and do certain things, they will come requesting, we can have the social distancing, we can sanitise the hands, we can do this and we can do that. And many of the businesses, I must say, and I must applaud them, have followed the guidelines that they shared with us, and said that they will do. But, Mr. Speaker, very unfortunately, many of them have not. But maybe not many, but some of them, let me clarify, have not. So, they have abused the privileges that were given, because we realise that if the virus doesn't kill us directly, if we just keep everybody locked down inside, people might start getting mental problems, there will be financial and social problems and so. And so, the Government, in its wisdom, has deemed it necessary to start opening up, cautiously, with a lot of guidelines, but start opening up. And what we find is, people find the most, well, I would call it outrageous, because under normal circumstances, it would not be outrageous, we are accustomed with our fetes and the

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partying and so on. But people who know, who have the guidelines, facilities, and I am ashamed to say that I represent some of them. Tourist Accommodation Facilities, they have seen it fit to beat their chest and say, we are having something, one hundred (100) people, one hundred and ten (110) people, come everybody, forget the social distancing, forget the mask and let us play. We have seen what has happened. We have seen the spikes in many countries. And the people say, God is Grenadian, I don't want to offend my God, but sometimes one tends to believe that, because I held my breath, when we saw the mass gatherings during the Jab Jab. But thank God, we have not seen any spikes and God is holding our hands, and I thank Him for it, but we have seen spikes in other places. When people went on the beach in Florida, a couple of weeks after, a number of cases came out, and a number of other meetings that were held in various places. So we know that mass gathering does take its toll.

Mr. Speaker, we also know that based on the level of risks, we have the bubble, we have the low risk, which we call Green, we have the medium risk, which we also call Yellow, or Amber, and we have the high risk, because some persons say, well, why not treat everybody the same, everybody is a visitor to this country. But it is also demonstrated that persons coming from the higher the risk, is the higher the potential to transmit and spread the infection.

This Act is striving to minimise the income of the disease into our country and also the transmission, and that is why it is so very important. So we also know that behavioural patterns play a significant role in the transmission of the disease. People wear masks, they social distance, they wash hands, less disease. They do the opposite, more disease.

So, we have the three (3) areas of risk, Mr. Speaker, and the Act will speak to each one of them. The low CARICOM bubble, the low risk, next, the medium and so on, and many of the changes that I will speak to later on, have reference to that. How many days you quarantine somebody for, whether you quarantine them for longer or for shorter? But also, Mr. Speaker, and which tests you do?

We have found that from since COVID came in, early in 2020, a number of tests have changed. We started off on, Rapid Test was the gospel for us, and now, it's PCR.

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And now we know that a number of businesses and entities are looking at other tests, so, maybe, in the next few weeks, next few months. I know we're looking at the Saliva test, and CARPHA is looking at it, to see if it's just as good as the PCR, because people would love that. The airlines are begging us, please, do the saliva test, but we must do the Due Diligence on that test before we can say, yea or nay. Our primary goal is to keep our Nation safe, as that Act says, keep our Nation healthy.

But, the test will change. The number of days you keep somebody in quarantine, based on the scientific evidence, will change, and a number of other things. So these are variables that, if we were to do that, going back to what the Resolution says, where we have to come to Parliament, Mr. Speaker, and we have picked up on our pace in coming into Parliament. We will probably have to come every day, because, you know, there's a frequency with which these things take place. So, what the our Legal Luminaries and our advisors have told us, perhaps, we should leave the decision to the Minister for Health and the doctors and so, the team that supports him, so that from time to time, they can change certain Regulations without having us, necessarily, come and have this Sitting in Parliament.

***(Inaudible comment made by a Member)***

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you. Thank you for the correction, the Minister, and 'Minister' here means 'Minister in Cabinet.' It means that and as was said before, by the Member for St. George North-West, that Cabinet has to approve. And I want to reemphasise that, because it's the COVID Committee. The new COVID construct comprises of persons with the scientific knowledge, working with the Minister in Cabinet, and therefore, the approval must come from Cabinet. Yet we hear people doing things, and they said they got approval, but we can't hear who gave them the approval. And so, I want to support the Member by saying, Cabinet, the buck stops with Cabinet, to give the approval for certain out of the ordinary things, and that Cabinet, in its deliberations, is advised by scientific information, Mr. Speaker. **(Applause)**

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So, Mr. Speaker, the question is, how do we prevent it? What do we do? How harsh can you be? How strong can you be? How soft can you be? How do we prevent the spread in our country? How do we bring our Grenadians home at the same time, because we have brought in quite a number, but we still have others waiting out there to come in. How do we revive the Tourism Industry and return the four thousand, five thousand persons, who directly are employed in the industry and a number of more thousands, who are indirectly employed? The Fishermen are bawling out, no place, no local market for fish. The farmers are crying out, because many of the hoteliers purchased things from them, and so on and so on, Mr. Speaker.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I am in the heat of it speaking to the Airlines. They want to know whether they have to have that invasive thing go up in their nose every time their Crew come in. The Cruise Ships want to start coming in and some will even start before the end of the year. And they're saying that they might just take their people off the ship in their own boats, so that there is very low risk for physical contact. And they want to bring them on a beach, let them have a little fun, maybe we'll have some drums and dancers way back, so that they do not touch, they do not have contact. And we keep dialoguing to see how we can jumpstart, how we can get the economy going, bearing in mind that sometimes the revenues are 50% and under of what we used to have before.

So, Mr. Speaker, it cannot be business as usual. The reality is we need to be safe. But I also know that no tourist would leave their country and come into Grenada to stay locked up in a room for fourteen (14) days or for ten (1) days, and then just turn around and go back and say: "I had a time in Grenada." So, we have an onerous task to balance between both issues. How do we keep our country safe? How do we keep visitors safe? And how do we start back the Tourism Industry that benefitted so many people? I do not believe the answer, Mr. Speaker, rests in all of us hiding; keep the borders closed, don't let ships come in, don't let aircraft come in and let us lock ourselves in our room. I do not believe that, that is the answer, and, Mr. Speaker, the details of this Resolution seek to answer just that. How long can you reasonably keep people and so on? All of these questions, Mr. Speaker.

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So, based on the level of risk, the days will be longer, the quarantine will be tighter, the monitoring would be tighter and so on. We will be talking about the geofencing watch that can monitor people's activities. I note that the geofencing watch was very effective in raising the alarm, the red flag that some persons who were given a perimeter, or a circumscribed area in which to operate, that they had stepped out of that. And it seemed to be working very well, Mr. Speaker, and therefore, we have two (2) instruments that could help us in monitoring activities, that would be the App that everyone is required to download before they come in, or certainly, when they come in, on their device, their phone, and also the geofencing watch, that could help us, especially as we look to bring some measure of satisfaction, especially to our locals, who want to self-quarantine. I have my own house; nobody lives there, how can I go to my house and spend the rest of the quarantine, where they'll be more comfortable, and maybe financially a little bit better off than staying in an approved Government Facility. But everyone who comes in must go into an approved Government Facility for the first forty-eight (48) hours or so, as determined by the Minister in Cabinet, responsible for Health and his team.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Legal Advisors have removed the figures, how many days, the name of the test, whether it's PCR or not, because, as science changes, the name of the test will change and as things happen, we hope we can get a vaccine, things can happen. We may not need to quarantine for that long. So, based on the number of uncertainties, the main aim of this is to make it more open and flexible, so that the changes can be made without us necessarily having to come into Parliament. So, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I present this Resolution for approval of this Honourable House.  
**(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. Mark. Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe from day one since March/April, we were talking about the Coronavirus and how serious it

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can be. And I believe on the first debate that we had in Parliament, I spoke about the one that we had one hundred (100) years ago. We had phase one, phase two and phase three, and it is, Mr. Speaker, that what was said, and what I read, that the same debate that we are having today, it's the same debate that was held in 1919/1920, about the Spanish Virus.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am standing here today and I am thinking that I have looked at our disposition here, in Grenada, over the past few months, and I ask myself the question, that some of the trappings that we have seen, you know, where did it come from, and how did it come to this that we are here today, in terms of this Resolution?

There is always the Quarantine Resolution, I think of 1987, and maybe we are putting some teeth to it. And this is the Government's second attempt at bringing some semblance of order to our description.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to your attention here a particular issue, and it was an article on CNN, and it says here: ***"Elites are flouting COVID restrictions that could hurt all of us. Elites are flouting COVID restriction that could hurt all of us."*** And, Mr. Speaker, it went on to say here: ***"The EU Commissioner, Phil Hogan was asked to resign after he went on a golfing trip during the time of restriction."*** Ireland's Minister for Agriculture was asked to resign after she too, flouted COVID restriction. It says here: ***"The New Zealand Minister for Health was asked to resign, too, when he took his family to the beach when there was restriction on COVID-19 there."*** And then it says: ***"The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson's Chief Adviser, Dominic Cummings, came under fire too, to for driving up and down England with his wife while she was suspected of having COVID-19 restriction."***

Mr. Speaker, these apply to our Commonwealth brothers and sisters. I looked in Grenada, and I saw for the event that was surrounding Carnival and the level of disrespect that was shown to the Prime Minister and to other Ministers, like nobody's business. But I ask the question, in some instances, didn't we creat that atmosphere? When we say there is no Carnival and then we come and we say we are doing it virtual, and the pictures showed it that there was some people in VIP, no mask, no social

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distancing, so we let the Jab Jab loose. Who is held responsible, Mr. Speaker? Nobody!

Then when I go home to Carriacou, they tell me just the week before that, we had a mini Regatta, when again, we should not encourage assembling of that nature. Who was held responsible? Nobody! If the atmosphere is set for such things, Mr. Speaker, then we will suffer the outcome. But, Mr. Speaker, moreover, what is poignant here, we must lead by example.

I heard the Member for St. George North-West said this morning, he isn't going anywhere, and he did not give, or the Government did not give anybody approval to do any of this. But, Mr. Speaker, all over Grenada, even in my constituency, I did not go out. Usually, for Carnival time, when I go home on a Friday evening, I don't come out, again until Wednesday morning. But, I saw there was Jab Jab in my constituency, and when I investigated, as who was leading it, you wonder. Respectable people who are in position of authority and who are up there were helping to create that atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, and I pray God and I said that I just hope that we did not have one (1) case of COVID-19 anywhere in those crowds, because I go back to 1919, in Philadelphia. One man came in with the Spanish Flu, and they had a big parade and Carnival and what we say: "All hell broke loose from there." It is still not yet fully understood how the depth of the Spanish Flu was, in terms of the amount of people who died. They said between forty to sixty, seventy-five million people.

Look at what is happening today, Mr. Speaker. Like the Member said, our closest Trading partner, where most of our Tourists come from, and we hear on the news that they did not take it seriously, or they tried to downplay. But today, what we see happening in the United States it's almost approaching two hundred thousand (200,000) people dead, because of COVID-19. Over seven (7) million people contracted the disease. In terms of the world population, Mr. Speaker, we are still there. And as I said before, and I will say it again, we cannot say here in Grenada, that we are COVID free, unless the world is COVID free. So, we have to take these things into consideration.



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But, Mr. Speaker, if I turn to the Resolution that is before us, that is what I have to speak about here. There are some things here that concern me that I would have to ask about. The geofencing watch works well, technology, GPS positioning, so we know where everybody is and the alarm can go off when you step out of the particular parameter.

But I see, Mr. Speaker, the geofencing watch would be applied at a cost of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per day. If you are quarantined for fourteen (14) days, and you have it on for ten (10) days, it means therefore, that at the end of the time, with whatever other cost that you'd have to incur, you will have to pay the twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) a day. At ten (10) days, that is two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00). So, the cost of having this, to the private citizen, will be three hundred and fifty dollars (\$350.00) to two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00), that is the cost, ten (10) to fourteen (14) days.

But my question is, Mr. Speaker, I would ask, is it the Government that is running or in control of the geofencing watch? Is it a private company? Do I get to keep the watch after I pay three hundred and fifty dollars (\$350.00) for it? Or it was on me for ten (10) days, or for fourteen (14) days, do I get to keep it? I mean, I am in favour of good business, but if we have visitors into Grenada and a plane load comes in, then somebody is in line, if it's not Government, to make some monies too. Somebody will make some monies. So, I am looking at that part of it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the question about the PCR test. I do not know, maybe somebody might be able to enlighten me. But, I understand that the PCR test is the test that would really verify if a person contracts COVID-19 or not. We see that the rapid test has its limitations, its shortfalls, false positive or false negative. It can be repeated over and over again.

But, Mr. Speaker, the PCR test, I do believe, I think I heard that it was four hundred and ten dollars (\$410.00) per test. I see here that coming into Grenada, you would have to get a test, at least seven (7) days prior to you coming in, and you should be tested negative to come in. But on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, if you come into Grenada and you are asked to quarantine, my question is, we are not immune to contracting COVID-19 at any time, and this is why I look at this piece of paper here. It

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gives us a waiver, a Liability Agreement that the Government is not responsible, if you are in quarantine and you develop COVID-19 in quarantine. Mr. Speaker, it can happen, because when you look at what took place, my heart goes out to the healthcare workers, the doctors, the nurses, the contact tracers, and everybody involved, because between well since the year started and now, we have lost thousands of healthcare workers, not by their own doing, but because, when they were carrying out their duties, they contracted COVID-19, but they continued to provide service even in the face of death.

But, Mr. Speaker, it says here that if you are going under quarantine and you come from certain specific areas, you would have to do a PCR test to finalise that you do not have COVID-19, and then you too, will have to bear the burden of that cost of the PCR test. But my question is, Mr. Speaker, I am placed in quarantine, God forbid by some reason or the other, I contracted COVID-19 from one of the healthcare workers, the burden is still placed on me to do my PCR test. And, Mr. Speaker, let's open up the door a little bit. If I contract COVID-19 under any circumstances, it's not just for fourteen (14) days. I have seen some people that were in hospital because of COVID-19 for a month, for two (2) months, for three (3) months, for one hundred (100) days.

If I contract COVID-19, and I am hospitalised or I am under the Healthcare System here and I have to do a PCR test every seven (7) days, at the end of two (2) or three (3) months, I would have to stand the cost of each of those tests. Moreover, I didn't come in with it, but I caught it while I was in quarantine. So, you're telling me now that the Government is not liable, I have to pay the cost of being quarantined or being under care for three (3) months, because I have to do the COVID test every seven (7) days.

Now, the question I ask, how fair is that to me, when I came in healthy, but just per chance? And we cannot say that this is hypothetical, because it had happened before, and it may happen again. And these are the little things that I see that we have to tweak, so that we have to understand how to treat our citizens in terms of the care while they are there. I mean, one cannot be too careful you know, Mr. Speaker, because some people that contracted COVID-19, they will tell you they do not even

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know how, because, again, it is highly contagious, and I pray to God that we keep the status quo in Grenada.

But even so, Mr. Speaker, while we are keeping the status quo, and we have to open up, it means therefore, the possibility exists that it will come, and when it comes, if this Resolution helps to alleviate some of the spreading of it, then that is good too. But, what I am saying, let us look at the details in there to see how we treat people, who just perhaps, or per chance, may have contracted within the scope of what I am saying here.

Mr. Speaker, on another note too, in terms of the risk, because this here, it says: **“As respect to the whole, or in part of Grenada.”** So it is not just people that are coming in via the Ports, but it's for the whole of Grenada. And this goes to some questions that I still have outstanding, in terms of COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, I must applaud the Government in terms of reopening schools. But even so, this here, will apply maybe to the school area. And, Mr. Speaker, I have a young one, so I had to go to a PTA meeting via Zoom and some of the questions surrounding the opening of school could not be answered, because the school is prepared, they have their room for isolation, and the question is asked, if any symptom is shown, your kid will be isolated and would be placed there, and parents and COVID team would be called. But the parents wanted to find out, will they have to pay for the test, if their child is isolated? If the child is isolated and they test and they test negative, then will the parents still have to pay?

In a case where you go into a classroom, a child is tested positive for COVID, even though there might be social distancing, will the entire class have to be quarantined and to be tested? These are the some of the questions that were not yet answered and so, it still leaves parents kind of baffled, as to what they should do. Should I go with the blended approach? Should I keep my child at home? Should I educate them at home or teach them at home?

I am not blaming the Government for this position. But what I am saying there must be some form of resolution, so that people can rest at ease, especially in terms of testing and in terms of the cost of testing, because, like I said, if I come in and I come in

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whole and I catch it, and if I have to pay for the bills that are surrounding me, maybe after a period of say three (3) months, I could be in debt of tens of thousands of dollars for care and for testing, and this must be looked at too.

I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that as we go, a lot of things will change, and something that concerns me too, that, as we move... I think the Member for St. George North-West mentioned that, that position might be here until we get a vaccine. But, Mr. Speaker, through you, the talk of vaccine these days is where the world is going now.

A couple days ago, one company scrapped the third phase of the vaccine, because it was not working out right. And the race for a vaccine, will we put science aside now and try to get vaccine as soon as possible? We have seen it happening. I mean, in some parts of the world they were trying to see if they could get it in October, fast forward the third phase. In another country, Mr. Speaker, in Russia, they talk about the vaccine is ready, the Sputnik-5 vaccine. And, Mr. Speaker, we see AstraZeneca, the third phase, they pulled it, because there were some adverse effects.

Now, mind you the Member for the South said this morning, in some cases, vaccines work well. But what I am saying, if we have to introduce it, we must let the Science speak, in that, today, we are here, we are smallpox free, because we created the vaccine; or should I say we are smallpox free, not really. I think they have a reserve in Russia and the United States, so that when the time comes, they can weaponise it and release it and that is how it was not destroyed, Mr. Speaker. The Russians still have a reserve; the Americans have a reserve of smallpox. But, globally it is gone, and this is where, even today, COVID-19 and this is where we talk about biological weapons.

But, Mr. Speaker, in moving forward, and this is why I am looking at it, will we come back to this House, again, Mr. Speaker, if a vaccine is ready, would we have to get another Resolution, or will Cabinet or the Minister determine whether or not people are compelled to take such a vaccine, if such is the case? Because in some cases you might be thinking, I may not be able to travel, I may not be able to eat or drink, unless I take the vaccine. And these are some of the things that bother me, in terms of the powers there be and the powers that can float around the place, in terms of the control

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of COVID-19. Yes, I know we want to get back to normal. Yes, I know we want to get back to where we were as a people, as an economy and being free, so that we can get our people moving again. But I do believe, if we tread, Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we have to continue to tread, carefully.

And in this whole thing, I do believe we must set the example, so that others can follow, not do as I say and not as I do. So, our people will be looking at us, and our people will continue to look at us to see our disposition and they will reveal us when the time comes. So, Mr. Speaker, I look at it and for the concerns that I raise, I hope it is worth something and it can be looked at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. Honourable Parliamentary Representative for St. George North-West.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I stand of course, to support the Resolution, as it was appropriately explained by the Minister for Tourism deputising for the Minister for Health, and pointing out the necessity for us to have this Resolution, so that we won't have to be back here, at every time there is need for some change in regulations to manage this important pandemic that is engulfing our country and of course, the world as a whole.

As was clearly articulated already, and I think over the period of time, we have spoken a lot about what we are doing and how we are protecting the country, as a whole. Mr. Speaker, this is not an issue of the quarantine and cost related to quarantine and tests. The issue is, the Government is clearly faced with an enormous problem, all Governments throughout the Region of course, and the International Community faced with serious drops in resources, because the same pandemic is responsible and of course, it has, clearly affected countries who depend heavily on Tourism. It probably has its biggest impact on the Tourism Sector, whether it's the Airlines, whether it's the Hotels, all other related tourism activities. So it's a question of how do we meet the challenges that we face?

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With dwindling Government resources, the Government cannot take responsibility to pay for tests. I think that has to be clearly stated. If someone wants to come to our country, it is clearly stated that you have to get your PCR test. If you have to come to a country, you must get to an airline to get a flight. If the flight is costly, you decide whether you can travel or not. So if you have to pay for a test, you decide whether if you can afford it or not, and that's the nature of what you are doing. So, Government will not want to take responsibility for paying, although I did not hear that word, I only heard about the question about **“suppose somebody have to stay in for how many days, or weeks, what will happen, the cost?”** The pandemic and related costs have to be treated, like anything else. People that go through dialysis, it cost them a lot of money. It is very prohibitive for any family to support an individual with dialysis. In situations like that, those who can afford it, pay accordingly and those who cannot have been given support by Government, and of course, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and charities. So, this is a situation, where, if there is a cost factor related to someone, who has to go through this process, then clearly, the whole question of how you deal with it, has to be dealt with, in the context of all the other programmes that Government has initiated, whether it's the Needy Assistance Programme and other Programmes, whatever Government can afford. But, the fact is, if you can afford it, then, simply, you have to take care of that responsibility.

I have consistently said that no Government, particularly in our Region is able to meet the cost of services for the entire population, in anything. That's why, clearly, this Government, even when we were in Opposition, the Party in Opposition, did not support free schoolbooks for everybody. We said those, who can afford to buy their books should buy them, and the Government has a responsibility to make sure the child who cannot pay for the books, they certainly were given the support. So, like with everything else, this pandemic has posed enormous burden on all individuals in all countries, so we have to meet the challenges related to it.

The question of vaccine, as was mentioned, a while ago by the Leader of the Opposition, the harsh reality is, this Government, consistently, has relied on as much information from science. I don't think there is anyone who questioned that, because

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this Government has moved swifter than most Governments, when the whole issue of this virus came about and the pandemic started, because we understood what the science was saying. And the science has never said that it understand everything about this. The science has always said, we don't know a lot about these things. There is still a lot of guessing game in the scientific community. There are some basic principles that have been understood, that's why they say, wear a mask, social distancing, wash your hands and other parts that are exposed regularly, and they told us that they are sure that that has reduced the pandemic considerably, in all countries. But, they cannot tell you all aspects.

So, many of the vaccines that have been on trial, and of course, been produced and being tested, have to go through a rigorous process, three (3) stages of testing thousands of people, that is the process. And that is why, when some wants to see a vaccine in a few months, or a few weeks, or a year, the real persons that understand how these things are done over the years, know that, virtually, it's risky to be able to force a vaccine on a population, because one of the most exciting prospects was that the vaccine, which originated in Oxford, Rendezvous, or something like that, and everyone was expecting. In fact, the American Government has spent hundreds of millions of dollars in supporting the programme.

But in the third stage of trial, one person got sick, not a lot, only one. But one person developed a spinal problem, and they said, well look, let's halt. In other words, although it's one, it's still one, but it's still important. You never know what will happen, you're going to put that vaccine in the public and producing it as a company, the next thing people have various illnesses developed. So people are going to be going through this testing period, that's a normal thing, and that's why I have constantly said, if there is a vaccine that has been proven to be effective and safe, we have already indicated and put ourselves in line with the Organisations like the European Union and others, who are supporting countries like ours, so if a successful vaccine comes on stream, we would already be in line to get some of those vaccines as quickly as possible. We will be ahead of a number of countries, because of the initiative we have

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taken. But, we don't know, and that's why we tell people, be careful. Do not drop our guards, because I am very concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I just came from a funeral. It was at the Trade Centre, and I must say that almost everybody was wearing a mask, most people were. But, not only that, there was social distancing; the chairs were appropriately placed, so that people were not very close to each other. If that sort of methodology is used, consistently at funerals, and I don't think it has been so, I don't think we should have a lot of worries. But I think sometimes we get so relaxed that we drop our guard, and that's my fear. We dropped our guards over the last few months. My fear is that we should not depend on luck. We should take the necessary precautions that we have to take.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is in order for all of us to give strong support to this Motion, which of course, would mean that we won't have to be back here regularly, just to make changes that are necessary, because of the situation that we are confronted with. On that note, Mr. Speaker, I support, wholeheartedly, this Motion.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Representative for St. George North-West. Honourable Representative for St. Mark.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the two (2) Members for their contributions. I must say that I would have liked to hear my good friend and colleague, Leader of the Opposition, being a little bit more supportive. Rather than just picking the weaknesses, I would have liked to see him a little bit more balanced, because I am convinced that this is a national issue and we need all hands on deck. So, while I appreciate the singling out of the shortcomings and if there are, it is our responsibility to accept it and to look at it, but I was listening to hear some support, because there are times when we do not have to just pick the negatives, and I am begging my brother to give support.

I just want to mention the geofencing watch. One of the benefits of that is that it allows people to go home, and when Grenadians come they want to go home, they do not want to spend ten (10) to fourteen (14) days in quarantine. And, if the Math is done,



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you will find that it's much cheaper for them to go home, especially when it's families; be able to cook their own food and take care of themselves rather than staying the ten (10) to fourteen (14) days, because somebody has to meet the bill. And we heard the Member, our Minister for Education talk about the computers. While others are wondering and they are begging, this Government has put its money where its mouth is and has purchased, in a COVID time, with reduced revenues, purchased those computers.

We heard the Member for St. Patrick-East talk about the vouchers, when people came to me a few weeks ago, I told them, based on what is happening, I don't think Government will be able. But again, the Minister for Finance and his team, they worked some magic, in spite of giving 40% payroll support to persons working in the Private Sector, they were able to do that.

We have never been short of reagents, or whatever, the Testing Kits from since the COVID-19 started. **(Applause)** We have always been on top of it, as a Government, should anybody, and anybody who went to hospital, or had to be checked, were checked free of cost. But, there has to be a limit to the freeness, and, you know, while we would know that are some people who would have some difficulties, the point is, this Government, with all that it is doing, cannot give tests free, especially for our visitors who want to come, or maybe even persons who even went abroad, they should have a little change somewhere set aside. But, if we're talking about cost, it is cheaper, far cheaper to have a geofencing watch that allows the technical people to monitor and keep this nation safe. If we send them out without a geofencing watch, it is going to cost this nation and maybe the individual's family much, much more. So, I wholeheartedly support it. I know there is a cost of twenty-five (\$25.00), but the maximum, so far, for being in quarantine is about ten (10) days, that's two hundred and fifty (\$250.00) EC, that's less than one night in a reasonable hotel. So, it is not as costly as it may seem, so let's not create that kind of fear and that kind of thing to take it, because this is going to make the difference in us saving lives and we have done well to implement that.

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You know, in Canada, what they are doing, they have people calling people saying, we are checking to see if you're home, and if we don't hear an answer from you within the next twenty-four (24) hours, they come, the Police, everybody come right there and pick you up in the home. So, I think it's a good innovation.

The cost of the test was spoken about. I just wanted to say that there are forms, that the Member also alluded to, to be downloaded and they can be signed and uploaded before the visitor comes in. It's a Health Declaration Form, Waiver of Liability Agreement Form, Public Health Location Form, and the Passenger Home Quarantine Application Form, and, of course, I am happy to say that we were advised to have the Waiver of Liability Agreement. I know the Member will not like to see Government held liable for everybody who test positive in a Quarantine Facility. No Government will be able to withstand that and it has not happened in any country.

Mr. Speaker, I now will like your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to speak to the number of areas. Some twenty-eight (28) changes have been made, and I seek your guidance as to whether we should break them down by listing, dealing with the normal procedure for each one, or whether it would be easier for me to just list all of them, and then you throw out the question to this august body for the approval of this Resolution, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** That was part of the Schedule that you have?

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. All of the changes under the Schedule.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just proceed with it one time.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, it's just a reminder that section 4 (3) of the Quarantine Act provides that in conforming any regulations, the House of Representative may make amendments, which it may deem

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desirable and this is what we are attempting to do now. So, the amendments for the Schedule are recommended as follows, Mr. Speaker:

In Regulation 2, the definition of PCR Test, Rapid Test and Quarantine Authority should be deleted, and the following definition should be inserted: **“Prescribed test means a test conducted to diagnose whether a person is infected with SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 as prescribed under Regulation 10.**

The second recommendation is that in Regulation 2, the following Definition should be inserted; **“a business day excludes Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Government-approved place of observation and isolation includes a hotel approved by the Ministry of Health. Prescribed period means a period prescribed under Regulation 10.”**

The third one in Regulation 2, 7 (8) (b) and (8) (b) the word **“calendar”** should be inserted before the word **“days”**, wherever it appears except in the definition of a business day. Fourth one, in Regulation 2 in the definition of the term “COVID-19”, the words **“am infectious disease”** should read **“an infectious disease”** to correct the typographical error there, Mr. Speaker. The fifth one, in Regulation 2 in the definition of the term **“High Risk State”** the words: **“more than sixty (60)”** should read: **“not less than sixty (60)”**, so that, that would include sixty (60). If we just say more than sixty (60), then sixty (60) is left out.

Number six (6), in Regulation 2, in the definition of the term **“medium-risk State”**, the words **“more than twenty”** should read: **“Not less than twenty”**, to again, rectify the same problem to include twenty in the threshold. Number seven (7), in Regulation 6, (1) (a), the words: **“a PCR Test not more than 7 days”** should be substituted with the words: **“a prescribed test within the prescribed period.”** As tests may change as time goes on, we were advised that this will be a better terminology than to list the test, and then having to come back here to rectify that. In Regulation 6 (1) (b), the term **“PCR”** should be deleted. In Regulation 7 (1) (a), the words: **“a PCR test not more than seven days”** should be substituted with the words: **“a prescribed test within the prescribed period.”** In Regulation (7) (1) (b), the term **“PCR”** should be deleted. In Regulation 7 (1) (c), in paragraph (i), the word **“and”** after

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the comma should be deleted. Subparagraph (ii) should be substituted with the following paragraph: “**subject himself or herself to mandatory observation and isolation for a minimum prescribed period.**” And subparagraph (iii), “**remain in a Government-approved place of observation and isolation for a prescribed period being the portion of the period of mandatory observation and isolation under subparagraph (ii).**”

In Regulation 7 (2), in the chapeau, the words “**first 48 hours of the mandatory observation and isolation**” should be substituted with the words: “**prescribed period under sub regulation (1) (c) (iii).**” In Regulation 7 (2) (a), the word “**another**” should read “**a**”. In Regulation 7 (2) (b), the words: “**if is suitable**” should read: “**if it is suitable**”, and a **comma** and the words “**or at a Government-approved hotel at his or her expense**”, should be inserted after the words: “**other persons.**” In Regulation 7 (4), the words “**rapid test**” should be substituted with the words “**prescribed test.**” In Regulation 7 (5) and 7 (6) in the chapeau the word “**rapid**” should be deleted. In Regulation 7 (6) (a), the words: “**of 48 hours**” should be substituted with the words: “**prescribed period.**” In Regulation 7 (6) (b), the words: “**PCR test**” should be substituted with the words: “**prescribed test.**” In Regulation 7 (7) and 7 (8) in the chapeau, the term “**PCR**” should be deleted. In Regulation 7 (8) (b), the word “**PCR test**” should be substituted with the words: “**prescribed test.**”

In Regulation 8 (1) (a), the words “**of a PCR test not more than 7 days**” should be substituted with the words: “**a prescribed test within the prescribed period.**” In Regulation 8 (1) (b), the term “**PCR**” should be deleted. In Regulation 8 (1) (c), in sub paragraph (i), the word “**and**” and the **comma** should be deleted.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Representative, I realise that we each have copies of this Schedule, and since we have the copies and that is the Schedule, I will save you some time.

**Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen:** Mr. Speaker, I am so happy. I did ask before, but I was told I had to read it all out, so I yielded. But I thought it was a lot,

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because we get the gist of it. It is to remove specifying the test, remove specifying numbers of days and so on, so that these things can be changed in short order, without us having to visit here. I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and so I submit the Resolution for its passage. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Motion approved.**

**Mr. Speaker:** The Regulation is now part of the Law.

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 15 - Bills.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you have just graciously afforded us the amendments, so that we can shorten the normal procedure, and so I am happy to propose to this Honourable House that the Bill for an Act to consider the Public Finance Management (Amendment) Bill be not taken, at this Sitting.

**Mr. Speaker:** Honourable Members under the Item - Bills, the Motion; oh, this here is for the Motion?

**Mr. Clerk:** Yes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just one item here. Under the Motion that should have been read: "As amended." So, I would again read the question, so that we would get it right.

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**Question put and agreed to.**

**Motion approved as amended.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, we move to Bills, that the Public Finance Management Bill be debated at another time.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**Bill deferred.**

**Ag. Clerk Assistant:** Item 16 - Request for leave to Move the Adjournment of the House on Matters of Urgent Public Importance.

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of Government's Business.

**Hon. Gregory Bowen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move the Adjournment of this Honourable House, *sine die*.

**Question proposed.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on this Adjournment, there are a few matters, which I want to bring to the attention of this Honourable House. A couple of weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, maybe a few days ago, you submitted to this House, the Benchmarks that were done by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and, Mr. Speaker, I took to reading it.

And, Mr. Speaker, I went back again, to a few years and I was reminded by the Member for St. George North-West, in his deliberation and in his wisdom then, said to

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me: "You are the keeper of the flame of our democracy." I hope this flame is burning bright enough today.

Mr. Speaker, but the Benchmark document speaks about where we are in this beautiful little Spice Country of ours, as the Member would say, in terms of our democracy. And, I do believe that, as a serious Body, we ought to take the time to look at some of the pointers there. I spoke to some before and I would not belabour the point.

But, Mr. Speaker, in just the beginning, it's one hundred and something pages there. But, from beginning to end, I am seeing there that there's substance there that must be looked at by each and every one of us in this House and outside of this House. And, I hope it is a document that can be circulated within the community, so that we can have a more open discussion, in terms of where our democracy is and where we can take it, because I am a believer in democracy.

We rise and we fall today, Mr. Speaker, because of democracy that is operating in this country. So for what it's worth, Mr. Speaker, I will urge us to have the document circulated, and let us have a discussion on this document, and we will bring a more perfect democracy to our little nation.

Mr. Speaker, the second thing that I want to talk about, and I must commend our parents, teachers, students and the whole Educational Sector, in terms of reopening of schools. But, Mr. Speaker, I know the Member for St. Mark just pointed out that I pointed out some issues, but I should look at the brighter picture, and I am looking at the brighter picture. And, I am looking at the reopening of schools and we had promised, many, many moons ago that we will let the students have Tablets. I think COVID-19 forced our hand a little bit, and so Tablets will be in all Secondary Schools, Primary schools, and who can afford it will afford it. But, Mr. Speaker, before the Tablets were given out, they were supposed to be configured, and maybe, Apps were put on them, so that they can be looked at and they can be regulated, and I say, yes, I am all for that.

But, Mr. Speaker, in terms of configuring, I asked myself the question, will the people who configure the Tablets have control over the Tablets, so that they can

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regulate on what website the children will go and where they cannot go? And, maybe, Mr. Speaker, I do believe so, because it will be that they have it and they can be regulated, which is a good thing. But, Mr. Speaker, on the other side, I could bring a case here now that we, as a Body, we even have to be careful.

A few years ago, Mr. Speaker, in Pennsylvania, a young lady went to the Library to get a computer, a laptop. They had computer on loans, so she was given one. Well, they configured it in such a way that they can restrict the child's movement on the Internet and that was good. The child was doing our homework, the mother noticed that the little light with the camera came on. Mr. Speaker, the system was checked, and remotely, the people in charge, went into the computer and turned on the camera, so that they were looking at the child inside her room. These devices, Mr. Speaker, and these days, you don't have to be that very good, you know. If they are configured properly, Mr. Speaker, I could turn on the camera and see you in your home, because I am in charge of it, or I could turn on the mike wherever I am and listen to your conversation.

I do not believe that we, as a Government will go down that road. I would not want us to. But, those who are in charge of configuring, we have to be circumspect, because it can happen. It has happened before. And, I pray that to the Minister for Education, let us err on the side of caution and make sure that these devices are configured and configured in the right way, so that our children and our families will not be exposed, not by Government, you know, but there's sometimes somebody sitting in a room and just say, let me see what your son is doing, or let me hear what is going on at home, so we have to err on the side of caution. You see this COVID-19, now, is exposing us to all different tractions, and we must be on our guard.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the schools reopening, and as I said I was in a PTA meeting, and I know where we are as a people, we are not yet settled, in terms of where we are going, and what is the possibilities, because today we can open and next week we might shut down. But I would urge, again, like I've always urged before that students, parents, teachers, and everybody, we have to advocate a different education, because I know my son said, Daddy, I miss my friends, at school. But, then when you



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go to school, you have to wear your mask, you cannot share x, y, z, you have to social distance, but you're talking to a little kid.

How can we prevent kids from doing what we were trained to do normally, our children, in terms of developing, socially? It's a hard, hard sell. And some parents are very concerned about the disposition. I know that there are a couple of parents, who have contacted me, that they will be pulling their child from school, getting the curriculum, because of underlying conditions that they have. If ever that the child goes to school and comes back home to the grandmother and the mother, they are there, and I have had situations like this.

I mean, one of the saddest things, my wife indicated to me that she took her mother to the grocery store and everybody was masked up and everything. But, just the wisdom that prevailed, she had to stop and administer the inhaler to her mom, because of the mask, she could not breathe properly. So, we have to look at all these things and judge people on what they are facing and this new dimension we are facing.

Mr. Speaker, in moving on, I stand here, and I think I cannot fault the Member for St. George North-West, in his disposition, a couple of Parliaments ago, when he indicated where we stand as a nation and what he have seen. And probably what I am seeing and what I am experiencing now, I have never seen that before in our country, under COVID-19.

But, Mr. Speaker, and I must warn, again, we, as the Government in power, we have to set the standard, and we must set the standard, because we are the people that other people will follow, and I ask the Member, again, to think about it. What we are seeing today and in some of our behaviour, was this promoted? Was this promoted by people in high places?

You were out there, just a little bit ago, when I read from the document there that a few Members of the Irish Parliament and the New Zealand Parliament, or the Cabinet, they were fired, they were asked to resign, because they flouted the COVID-19 Regulations, and I know you missed it. But, it is such an important piece of a document. And, it says here, and I think I wrote it down here, and I mostly reiterate this here. **"The EU Commissioner, Phil Hogan was asked to resign. The Irish Minister for**

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**Agriculture was asked to resign. The New Zealand Minister for Health was asked to resign, because they flouted COVID Regulations. Boris Johnson, Chief Adviser, Dominic Cummings was asked to resign.** It went on to say here (and I know you're a lover of cricket), Jaffa Archer was excluded from the Test Match against the West Indies in the latest Match, because he flouted COVID Regulations. Can we do this here in Grenada, and just get away scotch free?

Let us, Mr. Speaker, follow the example of the rest of the world, so that we can get on board and lead by example. And this is how we can overcome COVID-19. I look at it, Mr. Speaker, because this is the time that we are in. Look at a country like Sweden; can we have the discipline of the Swiss? Where, they did not impose any regulation or anything, but they educate their people as to how to behave, and the people behaved well. And in that case, Mr. Speaker, Sweden is where they are today, without any form of Regulation. But, we, we here in Grenada, we must set the example, so that our people would follow, and it's only when we set the example that we can stand up and talk.

Mr. Speaker, I will rest this here, today, and pray God's blessings and safety on all of our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Leader of the Opposition. And I would just like to, oh, just take your light off.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I've got some difficulties. The Leader of the Opposition was talking in parables a while ago. I wish he would not speak in parables, but be direct. But he made enough insinuations for me to make this point. He mentioned the Member of the North-West and he talked about leading by example. That I heard, as if we're not leading by example.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** I wasn't talking about you, know.

**Mr. Speaker:** Please, please do not disrupt.

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**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, tell the Member take it easy.

**Mr. Speaker:** Please, take it easy. Please, don't disrupt.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** He spoke, he spoke, he spoke and he has to realise, the Member sitting on the opposite side has been in this Parliament for a lot of years, long before, probably he was born. So, you can't say about disciplining Members outside, mention the Member for North-West and the points he has been making, talk about being a lover of cricket, so he was on to the Member for North-West, consistently. And, Mr. Speaker, the Member must conduct himself responsible in this House. No one spoke, when he was speaking.

So, the point I am making, Mr. Speaker, I got the impression the Member was saying, and that's the point, people are listening, so I have to speak about the impression I get. The impression I get is that we here in Grenada, were not leading by example. That's what I heard. And therefore, for us to deal with the problem we are facing, we must lead by example, and I assume that this Government has been leading by example. Oh, you heard this? The Member needs to tell us, who is not leading by example. He needs to say that. He cannot come here, that's the point. You've got to get up on a Point-of-Order. You've got to understand and behave yourself in the House.

***(Leader of the Opposition rose)***

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** It's a Point-of-Order. If you have a Point-of-Order, get up. But if you don't have a Point-of-Order, I am not yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is making it very clear, if there's any information that has proven factual, that a Member of this Government is not obeying the rules, of which the Government have set, let me know. And, if it's proven right, we will deal with it, accordingly. I just want to make it very clear, because I lead by example, and I

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expect other Members of the Cabinet to lead by example. So if he knows about any one of us not doing it, he must not come here and speak in parables, or insinuating...

***(Leader of the Opposition rose)***

**Mr. Speaker:** Yes, Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, just for the Member...

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, the Point-of-Order that you are standing on?

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, he has asked that...

**Mr. Speaker:** The Point-of-Order that you are speaking on?

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** On a Point-of-Order, Mr. Speaker. If he wants the information publicly here...

**Mr. Speaker:** What is the Point-of-Order?

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** In terms of what he said that I should not make any insinuation.

**Mr. Speaker:** No, no, no, no, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you stood on a Point-of-Order. What is the Point-of-Order?

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** The Point-of-Order, Mr. Speaker...

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, I have my Standing Orders here.

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**Hon. Tobias Clement:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** So, please just tell me what Point-of-Order you're speaking to.

**Hon. Tobias Clement:** He will get the information that he is requesting.

**Mr. Speaker:** Then please, sit, Honourable Leader of the Opposition. When you stand, you must be able to say if it's Order No. 10, 20, 30 or 40. Until such time, please. Honourable Prime Minister.

**Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, the Member, maybe you need to take him in and give him some coaching. He has to understand there are Rules in this House. I think it's the second time he has been in this House, and he ought to know the fundamental Rules of the House. And that's exactly why I stood up, because there were insinuation and there were parables and that cannot be allowed to go unnoticed. I didn't intend to speak, but when I heard about the insinuation, it was clear what the Member was implying, because we have made it very clear.

In fact, I spoke this morning about people doing their own thing and expecting this Government to support it. In fact, I spoke, at length this morning, to imply that we will not support people doing their own things. So, if Members of this Government are doing so, and the Member or anyone has information, let us know, because I've heard rumours and I questioned Members. And the information has not proven correct. So, I don't know what the Member is talking about.

So, in the future, I hope, when he comes here and he makes those statements, please say exactly, or he doesn't even have to wait. As a responsible Member of the society, you don't wait to come to Parliament. If you know a Member of Parliament, or a Member in this House, or a serious Government person is, in fact doing things completely opposite to what we preach, you ought to bring it to our attention. You don't have to wait to be in this House to parade, tell us immediately, and if we don't act, then you deal with it in the Parliament of the House.

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Mr. Speaker, I just want to advise the Member, that that's the responsibility of a Member, and I am making it clear here. Mr. Speaker, this Government feels strongly that we have to abide by the Rules we set. And, in fact, Mr. Speaker, I've gone to places that I have been invited to, and as soon as I reach there and I see no mask, and people want to come up to talk to me, I say, you may want to get infected, but please, I don't want to, and I leave, so I lead by example.

I go by my mother, who is ninety-eighty-eight (98) years and she sits down there, I sit far from her, because I don't want to be responsible for her demise and either the other way. So, I lead by it, so if any Member of this Government is not leading by it, I need to know. Mr. Speaker, I thank you. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you Honourable Parliamentary Representative for St. George North-West. I just want to raise two (2) issues; one has to do with the draft document that we received from the CPA Consultant; that is the Benchmark. Again, let me say that the Benchmark was a self-assessment of our Parliament in Grenada. It's a self-assessment conducted by the Consultant from the CPA. I again, ask those of us, who have the opportunity or the time to read through. We may have been consulted, see if what was said, what is said on the Report, is reflective of the participation that we made, because you won't know what somebody else said. But if you know of what your contribution was, or there is anything said in the Report that does not reflect what is taking place in our country then you must let us know. And as quickly as we can get it, we will want to respond to the CPA, so that we can really own the document. Right now, it's a draft, but we would want to own a document that reflects the Benchmarks that came from us. So, for this one, I wanted to make sure that we spoke to this. Honourable Parliamentary Representative for St Patrick East.

**Hon. Pamela Moses:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I just want to share on some of our projects that's going on in the in my constituency. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Grenada has brought many projects to St. Patrick. In the area of Education, we have a new Wing at the Grenada Seventh-Day Adventist Comprehensive School in Mt. Rose,

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valued at eight million dollars (\$8 m). This is on-going, bringing so many jobs to our people in that area there. After the pandemic, Mr. Speaker, we have this going on.

Mr. Speaker, we also have the River Sallee Preschool that was on-going, but had some delays, based on some issues in which the Contractor had to be replaced. Mr. Speaker, right next door we had the River Sallee Community Centre being transformed into a Resource Centre to produce School Uniforms to complement or supplement our School Uniform Programme. Mr. Speaker, a twenty-seven million EC dollars (EC\$27 m) project is going on, the St. Patrick Road Project, Mr. Speaker, where we have four (4) bridges being built to prevent flooding in that area. Mr. Speaker, we are very pleased and very happy to know that all of these projects can continue in St. Patrick, to ensure that there is vehicular communication, or transportation between St. Patrick and St. Andrew, even though there are heavy rains, with all the bridges being repaired.

Mr. Speaker, employment continues for persons in the community, in the areas of new Construction Brigades, Environmental Wardens continuing. Debushing has begun and will continue until the end of the year, despite the reduced revenues that our country is facing. Mr. Speaker, the farmers in the area are also happy, because some of them are getting their lands cleared. It really does show this Government's commitment to agriculture through the Farm Labour Programme.

Now, permit me to share on the Shambo Project, where water will be pumped from a river, the Morne Fendue River, using an electrical pump into Shambo Estate. Farmers will benefit, tremendously, from this project, Mr. Speaker, over one hundred and fifty (150) Cattle Farmers and Crop Farmers. **(Applause)**

Mr. Speaker, we will be carrying water all the way down to Bathway and to Savon Swazee where the cattle are grazing, because every dry season at least ten (10)/fifteen (15) cattle die there. And so, at present now, Mr. Speaker, though the project has been on-going for the last year and a half, it continues. At present, the pipes are being laid, from the River all the way down to Bathway and to Savon Swazee.

Mr. Speaker, I want to proudly announce that thus far, a total of six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000.00) has been sourced for this Shambo Water Project. It

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came from the Japanese Climate Change Project from the Jeff grant, and, of course, supported by our Government, as well.

So, by the end of the year, Mr. Speaker, this project will unfold much more, and just to announce we need more funds to really fulfil our objective for this project and so we are in the process of trying to source some more funds that can help to bring water to as many farmers, as possible.

Mr. Speaker, we also have a tractor at Shambo. Shambo farmers have their own tractor, packed there for their service. Mr. Speaker, I stand here to say to you today that St. Patrick is ready. St. Patrick is ready and is preparing for greater development. Mr. Speaker, right now, as we speak, a huge project is unfolding in the Northern part of the Island. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that Shambo farmers are smiling. They are smiling wide, because a five hundred (500) hotel rooms is coming, at the same time when they're preparing to increase their production of crops.

Mr. Speaker, what we were preparing before when this project was being conceptualised was a thirty (30)/forty (40) room Villa; that is what the last development was really doing. And then, Mr. Speaker, I personally was a bit worried, because I know that with so many production, you know, that small development wouldn't be able to absorb these farmers' produce. But, Mr. Speaker, I can proudly say that with this large development, our farmers in River Sallee, Rose Hill and Levera look forward to it. They are happy, they look to feeding their families, much more. So, the bigger the hotel, Mr. Speaker, and the more food that is produced inside Shambo, inside the whole of St. Patrick, it would mean, therefore, more revenues for farmers. It means therefore, that the farmers do not have to travel all the way down to St. George's to hire a truck and to come and sell their produce. So, we have very happy farmers there, who are looking forward to this project. And of course, Mr. Speaker, we know more jobs for our people here in Grenada, and even as far as Carriacou.

Mr. Speaker, people may not have thought of it, but we don't have a Taxi Service in St. Patrick. If I want to go somewhere now and I don't have a transport, I don't have a taxi in my phone that I can call. But, with this five hundred (500) Hotel Rooms, we will have a St. Patrick Taxi Association. Mr. Speaker, there will be more Guiding and



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Touring jobs, created for persons to visit the Lake, to visit the Welcome Stone, to visit Leapers' Hill, Carib Stone, plus the Slave Pen. There will be need for Ferries to carry persons up the Grenadine Islands. There will be also be need for persons, Mr. Speaker, to have small boats, to make quick trips from the Levera Beach into Sauteurs. It's just a five (5) minute drive on sea. But, if you take land and you drive through, it may take you up to ten (10)/fifteen (15) minutes.

Mr. Speaker, there will be so many jobs created. People who do Arts and Crafts, will surely have an opportunity to offer them for sale, whether it is on the beach or whether it is in local shops. Mr. Speaker, there will be jobs in the five hundred (500) Hotel Rooms itself, there will be jobs on the Gulf Course, there will be jobs in the Water Park. Mr. Speaker, these are jobs, real jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I can safely say that there will be much more opportunities that I can list here with the time that I have. Mr. Speaker, the investment will be huge, and all I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that such an investment can only filter into the pockets of the locals in the community and everyone here in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, because we are a very small Island.

Mr. Speaker, our people will not have to travel to the City anymore, in search of jobs. Persons in my community like Mt. Fendue, Mt. Rose, Hermitage, they have to take two (2) buses, sometimes three (3) buses to get to Grand Anse, to get to the South of the Island, for a daily bread. So having such large development in the Northern part of the Island, is really long overdue. Mr. Speaker, with our improved road network, the St. Patrick Road Network, preparing for this, improved food production to come from Shambo farmers, it will surely all come together and help to contribute to the development and the transformation of the entire Northern part of this little Island.

Mr. Speaker, the Parish of St. Patrick is ready. Mr. Speaker, our people want this project. Mr. Speaker, we need it. They come to us for jobs, as a Government. As Government Representatives, Mr. Speaker, they expect us to find jobs for them and I have outlined many of the jobs that have been created by this Government, post COVID-19. Regardless of the challenges that this Government is facing, many jobs have been created.

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**On Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.**

**Adjournment**

But I stand here, Mr. Speaker, to tell you that it's not enough. Sometimes, it's a big burden on our shoulders. What can we do to help our people? How can we help them more? Mr. Speaker, there is only so much that Government can do. We can't do more. We could never do it all. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, I stand here to say that we need this development. And so we have to work together, as a people. We have to balance everything. We have to balance nature, we have to respect it and we have to protect it. But we need this. We need this for a better life for our people, for ourselves and for our community.

And, Mr. Speaker, I just end here by saying, and I got a little bit emotional there, Mr. Speaker, our people depend on this. And, I thank you for this opportunity, and also I thank the people of St Patrick East for that opportunity to serve them. And, I just want to say that I will do so with the greatest of respect and humbleness. Thank you for the opportunity. **(Applause)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you Honourable Representative for Patrick-East.

**Question put and agreed to.**

**House adjourns *sine die* at 2:03 p.m.**

**Mr. Speaker:** And I hope that all of us would assemble for lunch.

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