

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

FIRST SESSION

ORDER PAPER

TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2017

No. 54

11.00 am

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QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER*

- *1. **Mr Dennis Tan Lip Fong:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) when were the pumps in the tunnel between Bishan and Braddell MRT stations last inspected before a malfunction led to the tunnel flooding on 7 October 2017; (b) how often are MRT operators required to inspect such pumps in all MRT tunnels; and (c) what is LTA's oversight system on timely inspections of equipment/machinery and repair or replacement of faulty equipment/machinery carried out by the operators.
- *2. **Mr Dennis Tan Lip Fong:** To ask the Minister for Transport with regard to the tunnel flooding between Bishan and Braddell MRT stations on 7 October 2017 (a) why did the recent flood mitigation measures carried out by LTA for the MRT network fail to prevent the flooding; and (b) whether the mitigation measures included a review of the pump system and, if so, what was its outcome.
- *3. **Er Dr Lee Bee Wah:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) what is the root cause of the flooding in the MRT tunnel on 7 October 2017; (b) whether there are standby pumps at each MRT underground tunnel; (c) how often are these pumps checked as part of regular maintenance; (d) whether there are CCTVs in the MRT tunnels for the control station to monitor tunnel situations; and (e) whether this occurrence is avoidable.
- *4. **Miss Cheng Li Hui:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) other than the Bishan MRT station, what faulty pump items are found in the other four stations of Lavender-Kallang, Redhill-Tiong Bahru, Kembangan-Bedok and Expo-Changi; (b) whether their maintenance schedules have also been deferred; (c) what are the procedures for oversight and verification of the maintenance works carried out; (d) what are the standard operating procedures for maintenance works found wanting and how promptly are remedies carried out; and (e) how are the maintenance crew trained for such works.

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- *5. **Mr Christopher de Souza:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) what was the root cause of the MRT tunnel flooding of 7 October 2017; (b) how will the Ministry seek to reduce, through regulation, the likelihood of a recurrence; and (c) what protocols are in place to keep passengers safe in the event water meets electricity within the tunnel or within the train.
- *6. **Assoc Prof Daniel Goh Pei Siong:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) whether the transfer of all operating assets from SMRT to LTA has been completed; (b) whether these assets have been audited for their net book value and their operational condition; and (c) whether the anti-flood system at Bishan station is included in the assets transferred and audited.
- *7. **Mr Liang Eng Hwa:** To ask the Minister for Transport in light of the MRT train breakdown due to a flooding of the tunnel near Bishan (a) whether more risk assessments will be done on the entire train system to identify other possible risk spots; and (b) whether more regulatory supervision will be carried out on the public transport operators.
- *8. **Mr Christopher de Souza:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) what are the "deep-seated cultural issues" the SMRT CEO alluded to as reasons for multiple malfunctions of SMRT's rail transit network; (b) whether these issues caused the separate malfunctions over the past two years, including the incidents on 7 July 2015, 22 March 2016, 25 April 2016 and 30 August 2017; and (c) if so, whether the Ministry has plans to address these issues to ensure reliability and safety of the rail network.
- *9. **Mr Murali Pillai:** To ask the Minister for Transport how does LTA balance its role as the regulator that determines whether rapid transit system operators should be imposed penalties for failing to discharge their responsibility with the desirability of ensuring that the same operators work closely with LTA, in its capacity as the system owner, as a team to resolve problems affecting the system's reliability.
- *10. **Dr Lim Wee Kiak:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) what is the preventive maintenance schedule for the MRT system over the next six months; (b) how effective are these plans at reducing the frequency and scale of breakdowns and delays of our train services; and (c) whether there are plans to close MRT lines for major maintenance works.
- *11. **Mr Desmond Choo:** To ask the Minister for Education (Schools) (a) how does the Ministry ensure that the teachers and career guidance counsellors deployed to our schools are kept abreast with updated industry and employment trends; and (b) what collaborations does the Ministry have with SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), Workforce Singapore (WSG) and Employment and Employability Institute (e2i) to provide an integrated career support for our students.

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- *12. **Ms Sun Xueling:** To ask the Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills) (a) in the last three years, what has been the take-up rate for the Young Talent Programme and the SkillsFuture award for internationalisation; (b) how can the Ministry work more with the institutions of higher learning to encourage young Singaporeans to pursue work and immersion experiences overseas; and (c) what have been the qualitative feedback from young Singaporeans on overseas immersions.
- *13. **Mr Teo Ser Luck:** To ask the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth with the completion of another Southeast Asian Games and ASEAN Para Games, how does the Ministry support the post-Games and post-sports career plans of athletes especially for those who went into full-time training to represent Singapore for these Games.
- *14. **Mr Leon Perera:** To ask the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth (a) what are the processes behind the development of guidelines and conditions for arts funding; (b) how frequently are such processes, guidelines and conditions reviewed; (c) when is the next review; (d) who are the stakeholders and actors that participate in the review process; and (e) to what degree are local artists consulted in these reviews.
- *15. **Asst Prof Mahdev Mohan:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade) what is the updated status on negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, in particular the headway made on (i) improving the liberalisation of goods, services and investment beyond the existing ASEAN +1 Free Trade Agreements (and other agreements) among the participating countries (ii) reducing non-tariff regulatory barriers to ease the flow of trade and investment and (iii) the inclusion of a dispute settlement mechanism that can provide an effective and transparent process for consultations and dispute resolution.
- *16. **Asst Prof Mahdev Mohan:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade) if he can provide an update on efforts since May 2017 to ensure that the Singapore-European Union Free Trade Agreement comes into force in its concluded or an alternative form.
- *17. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs (a) whether ambulances are allowed to run red traffic lights when attending to emergencies; (b) if not, whether there are plans to allow this; and (c) what are the steps that the Ministry is taking to encourage motorists to give way to ambulances.

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- *18. **Mr Chong Kee Hiong:** To ask the Minister for National Development regarding our infrastructural projects under construction (a) whether any of the materials used in our infrastructure projects have been sourced from Kobe Steel which had admitted to data-falsification; and (b) if so, what rectifications are being made to ensure the safety of these projects.
- *19. **Assoc Prof Daniel Goh Pei Siong:** To ask the Minister for Health what is being done to elevate the status and standing of generalist doctors, enhance the health infrastructure to support generalist doctors and promote generalist medicine among young doctors beyond moral suasion.
- *20. **Mr Leon Perera:** To ask the Minister for Finance (a) why is the gap between GIC's nominal return and its reference portfolio return higher over the past five years versus the past 20 years; (b) how have GIC and Temasek Holdings performed in terms of annualised rate of return over the past 10 years versus major international sovereign wealth funds such as those of Norway, Qatar, UAE, China, Hong Kong, Australia and Saudi Arabia; and (c) how do GIC and Temasek Holding's total management and operating expenses as a share of assets managed compare to the average for leading global sovereign wealth funds.
- *21. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for Finance (a) whether environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors are considered in the investment decisions of Singapore's sovereign wealth funds; and (b) whether the Ministry will consider requiring these institutions to adopt ESG standards used increasingly by private investors and sovereign wealth funds in countries such as Malaysia and South Korea.
- *22. **Mr Leon Perera:** To ask the Minister for Communications and Information (a) which entity owns the copyright to the video recordings of parliamentary proceedings; and (b) if these video records are protected by copyright, whether the Ministry will consider removing such copyright and making all video footage of parliamentary proceedings freely available for use.
- *23. **Mr Melvin Yong Yik Chye:** To ask the Minister for Transport whether LTA will consider the installation of protective screens in our public buses to protect our bus captains and to minimise the risk of a hijack of a public bus.
- *24. **Er Dr Lee Bee Wah:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) what is the progress in the construction of the North-South Expressway; and (b) whether its completion deadline can be pushed forward so that traffic conditions along the Central Expressway can be improved.

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- *25. **Er Dr Lee Bee Wah:** To ask the Minister for Education (Schools) with more families moving into HDB BTO flats in Yishun (a) how will the Ministry ensure that there will be sufficient vacancies in neighbourhood primary schools to meet the increased demand; and (b) what assistance is available to help new residents' children enrolled into a nearby school.
- *26. **Mr Gan Thiam Poh:** To ask the Minister for Manpower (a) in the last three years, how many policy holders had their Home Protection Scheme (HPS) cover lapse because of failure to pay the premiums; (b) how many appeal cases were there from family members claiming HPS benefits upon the HPS member's death or cancellation of the insurance shortly before death; (c) whether measures are taken to ensure that HPS members know the consequences of lapsed insurance and, if so, what are these measures; and (d) whether there are plans to make HPS compulsory for HDB home owners including those with pre-existing medical conditions.
- *27. **Assoc Prof Daniel Goh Pei Siong:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) whether electric bicycles, electric scooters and other personal mobility devices requiring the charging of their batteries are designated as controlled goods under the Consumer Protection (Safety Requirements) Registration Scheme and, if not, whether they should be so designated to ensure they meet safety standards.
- *28. **Mr Dennis Tan Lip Fong:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) whether foreign-registered motorcycles or scooters are allowed to be used in Singapore for delivery services, carriage of goods within Singapore for hire or reward, or as part of their employment and, if so, how does LTA ensure that such owners or users have valid motor insurance policies allowing such uses in Singapore; and (b) what actions will be taken against those who do not have motor insurance policies allowing such uses.
- *29. **Ms Sun Xueling:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) how does the Ministry ensure that there are sufficient engineering graduates from our institutions of higher learning to meet the projected needs for rail engineering and the opening of the Thomson-East Coast Line; and (b) whether the Ministry has plans to train young engineers to develop "deep engineering expertise" as recommended by SMRT's technical advisory panel and, if so, what are these plans.

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- *30. **Miss Cheng Li Hui:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) how large is our reserve fleet of buses and drivers; (b) whether it is sufficient to minimise disruptions caused to commuters during MRT breakdowns; (c) whether there are plans to involve taxi companies and their network of taxis during such disruptions to minimise the impact on commuters; and (d) whether there is a system currently in place to hold the operators to task in cases of service disruption.
- *31. **Miss Cheng Li Hui:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) what are the contingency measures to ensure that the rest of an MRT Line's network still operates when there are service disruptions at other parts of the Line; (b) whether the driverless nature of underground lines hamper the detection of abnormalities along tracks such as the presence of debris and arcing and what are the measures to circumvent this limitation; (c) whether pump systems are installed along the underground network where flooding is generally thought to be less likely; and (d) what age-reliability issues are our trains and stations facing.
- *32. **Asst Prof Mahdev Mohan:** To ask the Minister for Law what is the Ministry's position on the proposed reforms to the investor-state arbitration regime, particularly the creation of a stand-alone appellate body in the current regime or a new international investment court as a multilateral permanent tribunal.
- *33. **Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang:** To ask the Minister for National Development whether the Ministry will consider banning the practice of declawing cats except for medical reasons.

* Members may postpone their Questions to a later sitting day if their Questions are not reached by the end of Question Time. The postponement forms are available at the Chamber entrances. Members must submit their notices to the Clerk within one hour after the end of Question Time. Questions will be given a written answer if no such notices are received by the Clerk within the stipulated time.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

1. Minister of Transport:

7 October 2017 SMRT Flooding Incident and Related Issues.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 40/2017] – (Minister for Health) – Second Reading.
 2. Travel Agents (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 41/2017] – (Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry)) – Second Reading.
 3. Sale of Food (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 42/2017] – (Minister for National Development) – Second Reading.
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MEMORANDUM

Matter proposed to be raised on the Motion for the Adjournment (SO 2(8)(b)).

Mr Leon Perera : Maximising Every Student's Potential in
(Non-Constituency Member) Classrooms of the Future.

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

1. **Mr Leon Perera:** To ask the Minister for Transport (a) whether the peak hour MRT delays experienced on 24 October 2017 were announced to commuters through all the usual channels and, if not, what was the reason; and (b) whether the delay had exceeded the 10-minute delay threshold beyond which such announcements are mandatory.
 2. **Mr Leon Perera:** To ask the Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) regarding the \$18.7 billion SIA-Boeing deal that was recently announced (a) whether there will be economic activities to be undertaken in Singapore that can support the development of our aviation industry as a result of this transaction; and (b) whether economic activities such as the manufacturing of parts of the aircraft being ordered or provision of related services were negotiated as a condition of the transaction.
 3. **Mr Dennis Tan Lip Fong:** To ask the Minister for Social and Family Development what safeguards are in place to protect the interests of children enrolled in pre-school programmes as well as employees of pre-school centres in the event that such centres become insolvent and cease operations.
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PAPERS PRESENTED

PAPERS PRESENTED – *continued*

	<i>2017</i>			<i>Date Presented</i>
S.L.	373	Architects (Amendment) Rules 2017	3 November 2017
S.L.	374	Architects (Professional Conduct and Ethics) (Amendment) Rules 2017	.....	3 November 2017
S.L.	375	Architects (Exemption from Practising Certificates) Order 2017	.....	3 November 2017
S.L.	376	Road Traffic (Driver Improvement Points System) (Amendment) Rules 2017	.....	6 November 2017
S.L.	377	Immigration (Amendment) Regulations 2017	.....	6 November 2017
S.	288	Public Transport Fund Financial Statements for Financial Year ended 31 March 2017	.....	6 November 2017
S.	289	Land Transport Authority of Singapore and its Subsidiaries Financial Statements for Financial Year ended 31 March 2017	.....	6 November 2017
