



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

For immediate release

February 23rd 2024

MEDIA RELEASE

CABINET, NOT JSCs, MAKES POLICY

The Minister of Finance, Hon. Colm Imbert, MP, has taken note of media coverage of a recent discussion in a Joint Select Committee of Parliament (JSC) where an Opposition MP proposed the imposition of new taxes on cultural artistes.

The Minister of Tourism and Culture has already debunked the false narrative that that Opposition MP's random thought was a Government plan. However, it appears from the coverage and commentary that followed this JSC meeting that there is a mistaken belief that a JSC is a policy making body and that a JSC has to power to change our tax laws or to initiate such a process.

It also appears that there is a mistaken belief that if any member of a JSC proposes something, including Opposition MPs, however outlandish their proposals may be, that these proposals will automatically find their way into the Government's fiscal measures. For the avoidance of doubt, Parliamentary Committees, while essential for our system of democracy and for transparency in matters of State, are simply empowered to enquire into, and examine and report on, various matters.

Unlike the Cabinet, JSCs are not responsible for initiating and deciding on policy or the direction and control of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and a JSC certainly cannot formulate a plan to impose new taxes.

We trust this clarifies this issue.

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The Honourable Colm Imbert M.P.
Minister of Finance