



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

For immediate release

July 24, 2024

MEDIA RELEASE

INACCURATE AND MISLEADING ARTICLE IN THE TRINIDAD GUARDIAN ON DEBT FINANCING AND GOVERNMENT BORROWING

The Minister of Finance, Hon. Colm Imbert, MP, has taken note of a very misleading article in today's Trinidad Guardian newspaper entitled ***"Government Borrows \$14B in 9 months"***

This article gives an entirely false impression that as a result of massive Government borrowing, the public debt increased by over \$14 billion between October 2023 and June 2024.

However, this is simply untrue and because of its gross inaccuracy, and the large figure quoted, this misreporting can create confusion in the minds of the general public.

What the author of the article and the newspaper fail to realise is that their superficial and flawed analysis of public debt financing has led them into the same trap as the Opposition, who in evaluating government borrowing take no account of refinancing transactions or repayments of principal, and their erroneous commentary is thus based on grossly inaccurate figures for government borrowing.

Indeed, over the period October 2023 to June 2024, the Government made Central Government and Government Guaranteed **Principal Repayments totaling \$9.23 billion**, of which Central Government was \$6.8 billion and Government Guaranteed was \$2.43 billion. **These repayments had the effect of reducing the net public debt by \$9.23 billion.**

Further, over the same period, a total of **\$2.67 billion** in debt involved **refinancing** of Central Government and Government Guaranteed debt, **which did not increase the public debt.**



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Principal repayments and borrowing for refinancing must always therefore be deducted from the total government debt financing for any period to get the true level of borrowing.

In this case, for the period October 2023 to June 2024, the public debt actually increased by \$4.07 billion, or \$10 billion less than the \$14 billion figure quoted in the Guardian article.

It does not assist the public in any way in understanding our true economic situation when sensationalist and inaccurate articles of this nature are published, and the Guardian is urged to do better research and more in-depth analysis of the facts, rather than rushing to print such gross misinformation.

Finally, it is also necessary for the Guardian writers to understand that the Monetary Policy Report of the Central Bank reflects all primary market issuances; inclusive of issuances of corporates and non-Government Guaranteed debt. Over the period in question, the National Investment Fund Holding Company raised \$400 million in February 2024 and First Citizens Investments Services Limited raised US\$30 million in October 2023. **These issuances are primary market activities but do not add to the government's debt.**

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The Honourable Colm Imbert M.P.
Minister of Finance