



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

**MEDIA RELEASE: Post Cabinet Press Briefing Summary**

*Kent House, Maraval. May 12th, 2016:* The Minister of Public Administration and Communications, the Honourable Maxie Cuffie, hosted the Post Cabinet Press Briefing today (Thursday 12th May, 2016) at the Office of the Prime Minister, St. Clair, Port of Spain.

Senator Franklin Khan, Minister of Rural Development and Local Government, also presented an update on the recently concluded local government reform consultation process. Senator Khan reported that, following the consultations, the key areas of reform within the 14 Regional Corporations and the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) include:

1. The collection and retention of property tax
2. Executive authority to be given to the municipal corporations similar to that of the THA. NB: Municipal police will be employed to strengthen the police service.
3. Increases in the areas of responsibility assigned to the municipal corporation. For example, they will be responsible for school repairs.
4. Authorisation to approve simple plans as opposed to the current system which consists of going to the Town and Country Division
5. The appointment of full time councillors

Senator Khan noted that a policy paper will be presented to Cabinet in one month's time while Minister Stewart Young and his team will draft the legislative changes required to implement this major policy shift, mainly amendments to the Municipal Corporations Act and the Finance and Audit Act as it relates to the Municipal Corporations having the power to spend taxes on behalf of the Government.

Senator Franklin Khan will be piloting a paper in Parliament tomorrow (Friday 13th May 2016) on the draft of the Elections and Boundaries Commission, Local Government and Tobago House of Assembly Order (2016). The motion tables the EBC's report to the Parliament which recommended some boundary changes to the local government system.

Minister Khan noted that Local Government Elections are due on the 21st October, 2016 and up to 90 days thereafter. He also provided assurances that the local government elections will not be postponed saying that they will be held before the 21st January 2017.

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**Corporate Communications Unit**

Kent House, Long Circular Road, Maraval, Trinidad and Tobago  
Tel: (868) 628 – 5187 ext. 3353, 3354; (868) 628 – 4449 Fax: (868) 628 – 0432  
Website: [www.rdlg.gov.tt](http://www.rdlg.gov.tt) Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RDLGTT>