

# Hilaire sues State for \$9.86M for unlawful dismissal



Former Central Bank governor Dr Alvin Hilaire

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Former Central Bank governor Dr Alvin Hilaire has indicated his intention to initiate legal proceedings against the State for the unlawful revocation of his appointment in June this year.

Attorneys representing Hilaire dispatched a pre-action protocol letter to the Cabinet secretary and the Attorney General yesterday following the breakdown of out-of-court settlement discussions.

The pre-action protocol letter includes a demand for damages totalling \$9.86 million, citing breach of constitutional rights, emotional distress and loss of earnings for the unexpired term of his appointment.

In a statement issued yesterday, Hilaire confirmed that his legal team comprises Stuart Young, SC,

and attorneys Imran Ali and Anthony Bullock.

His attorneys have been instructed to pursue, with urgency, a claim for judicial review of the advice of the Cabinet to the President to revoke Hilaire's appointment as Governor on June 24.

"Since that time, discussions initiated by the State towards an out-of-court settlement have been inconclusive," Hilaire said.

He added that as a result of the lack of resolution, legal proceedings will now be brought before the High Court, seeking what he described as "material declarations and orders against the State, including damages."

The letter outlines for the first time that Hilaire's appointment as Governor was revoked pursuant to section 12 (e) of the Central Bank Act (that is that he was guilty of misconduct in relation to his duties) and section 12 (g) of the Act (that he failed to carry out of the duties and functions conferred or imposed on him under the Central Bank Act).

Hilaire served as Governor of the Central Bank of T&T from December 2015 to June 2025. He replaced Jwala Rambarran, whose appointment was terminated by the previous administration. Hilaire was due to serve until December 2026.

His tenure was marked by efforts to stabilise the financial system during periods of economic uncertainty, particularly following the collapse of energy revenues in the mid-2010s.

The July 2 pre-action protocol letter, a copy of which was shared with Guardian Media, outlines the basis of his legal claims. However, up to press time, there was no official response from the Office of the Attorney General.

The letter lays out a timeline of events beginning on June 24, when Dr Kennedy Swaratsingh, Minister of Planning, Economic Affairs and Development, and Minister in the Ministry of Finance, allegedly visited Hilaire at his office at the Central Bank to press for his resignation.

According to the letter, Swaratsingh told Dr Hilaire that the Prime Minister was dissatisfied with his refusal to allow the Auditor General to audit the Central Bank's accounts, calling it "the last straw."

Dr Hilaire responded by stating that the Auditor General had ceased to be the Bank's external auditor in 2024 at her own request, but that he had met with her and indicated that her office could review any specific discrepancies related to T&T's fiscal accounts.

The document from the former governor's lawyers said the Minister also raised concerns about the appointment of BDO Trinidad and Tobago as the Central Bank's external auditor, suggesting that the firm had links to a government minister's relative.

Dr Hilaire said he clarified that BDO was selected after a competitive and independent procurement process, fully aligned with Central Bank policy, and that there was no ongoing connection between BDO and Angus Young, who ended his employment with the firm in 2014.

The letter alleged that Swaratsingh made it clear the new administration intended to install "their own persons" in key institutions, including the Central Bank.

He allegedly informed Dr Hilaire that a replacement had already been selected and would be appointed later that same day, regardless of whether or not Dr Hilaire resigned.

The pre-action protocol letter further stated that when Hilaire asked for time to seek legal advice, the Minister is said to have insisted he make a decision immediately, stating that failure to resign

would result in the revocation of his appointment.

Later that afternoon, the minister allegedly returned to Dr Hilaire's office with a letter signed by the Attorney General, stating that upon his resignation, he would receive a full payout "as soon as possible."

The Minister allegedly asked that the Human Resources Department work out the final calculations urgently.

When contacted on the matter, Minister Swaratsingh said he could not respond as it is now a High Court matter and he requested that all questions be directed to the Attorney General John Jeremie.

Up to press time, the AG did not respond to Guardian Media's questions.