

ORDER PAPER

TUESDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER, 2003

No. 60

1.30 p.m.

229

QUESTION(S) FOR ORAL ANSWER*

- *1. **Dr Chong Weng Chiew:** To ask the Minister for Community Development and Sports (a) how many of the Family Service Centres (FSC) which provide counselling services for crisis management operate beyond office hours; and (b) whether his Ministry will consider rendering FSC more resources to increase the number that can operate beyond office hours, on weekends and public holidays in order to better assist the distressed with urgent counselling needs.
- *2. **Dr Amy Khor Lean Suan:** To ask the Acting Minister for Education (a) what are the criteria for Normal (Technical) students to be transferred to the Normal (Academic) stream and the levels at which such transfers can take place; (b) whether these criteria will be reviewed to allow more opportunities for Normal (Technical) students who have the inclination and aptitude to switch streams; and (c) what is the percentage and number of Normal (Technical) students who are transferred to the Normal (Academic) stream per year over the past 5 years.
- *3. **Ms Braema Mathiaparanam:** To ask the Acting Minister for Education (a) how many students applied for free textbooks for this school year (2003); (b) how many were successful in their applications; (c) what are the criteria used to process such applications; and (d) whether the Ministry will look into why it is necessary for the content of primary school textbooks and workbooks to be changed each year and split into two sections, making it difficult for children to share their books across the years.
- *4. **Mdm Ho Geok Choo:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) what steps are being taken to review the organisational structures of the various Ministries and Statutory Boards with a view to having a flatter structure and lesser layers, in line with the mission of the Cut Waste Panel; and (b) what will be the estimated number of positions in the whole Government machinery that could be collapsed, re-combined or re-designed for greater efficiency.

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- *5. Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) what is the number of foreign chief executive officers employed by Government-linked companies and the Temasek group in the last 6 years; and (b) of the number employed, how many are still in Singapore and serving with these companies.
- *6. Mr Charles Chong:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs what is (a) the number of agency security guards who have been certified under the National Skill Recognition Scheme (NSRS) and the estimated number yet to complete training and certification; and (b) the pass rate of those taking the test for NSRS certification and the reasons for the low pass rate.
- *7. Mr Charles Chong:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs what security screening and training requirements need to be fulfilled by private and agency security personnel before they are permitted to be deployed as security guards.
- *8. Mr Chiam See Tong:** To ask the Minister for Home Affairs whether he will consider putting in more supervision at the Woodlands checkpoint to ease the jam and crowding of Singaporeans returning to Singapore by bus, especially during the weekends.
- *9. Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Minister for Community Development and Sports (a) what is the ratio of teachers to pupils in pre-school education classes; (b) how many children received financial assistance in 2003; (c) how many children dropped out of pre-school classes in 2003; and (d) what are the support programmes in pre-school classes to help children acquire the minimum literacy and numeracy skills necessary for Primary 1.
- *10. Ms Braema Mathiapparanam:** To ask the Acting Minister for Education (a) what are the minimum literacy and numeracy skills needed for a child to be successfully enrolled into Primary 1; (b) what programmes are there to prepare the child, who has fallen short of these standards, for Primary 1; and (c) what is the rationale for such minimum requirements in Primary 1.
- *11. Mr Chiam See Tong:** To ask the Minister for National Development whether the upgrading work at Sennett Estate, as promised by the Prime Minister, has commenced and, if not, when will the work commence.
- *12. Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Acting Minister for Education if he will give the rationale for allowing school students to carry mobile phones for use in schools.

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- *13. Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Defence (a) if there is a 'white horse' classification for national servicemen in the Singapore Armed Forces and, if so, (b) who qualifies to be classified as a 'white horse' and what privileges are accorded to them.

* Members may signify to the Clerk their desire to postpone their Questions to a later sitting day, if their Questions are not reached by the end of Question Time. The forms for postponement of Questions are available at the Chamber entrances and should be given to the Clerk at the end of Question Time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Bill [Bill No. 24/2003] –

Resumption of Debate on Question (10th November, 2003), "That the Bill be now read a second time." – (Minister of State, Ministry of Trade and Industry).

2. Regulation of Imports and Exports (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 25/2003] – (Minister for Trade and Industry) – Second Reading.
3. Urban Redevelopment Authority (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 26/2003] – (Minister for National Development) – Second Reading.
4. Planning (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 27/2003] – (Minister for National Development) – Second Reading.
5. Income Tax (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 28/2003] – (Second Minister for Finance) – Second Reading.
6. Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 2) Bill [Bill No. 29/2003] – (Second Minister for Finance) – Second Reading.
7. Central Provident Fund (Amendment) Bill [Bill No. 30/2003] – (Acting Minister for Manpower) – Second Reading.
8. Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board Bill [Bill No. 31/2003] – (Acting Minister for Education) – Second Reading.
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QUESTION FOR WRITTEN ANSWER

1. **Mr Steve Chia Kiah Hong:** To ask the Minister for Transport whether Parliament will be consulted for approval if there is a proposed merger of the two Mass Rapid Transit train operators as reported in the public media.
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PAPER(S) PRESENTED*2003**Date Presented*

- S. 114 Annual Report of the National
 Environment Agency 2002/03 7th November, 2003
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