

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

Second Session

WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 2020

No. 127

1.30 pm

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PRESENT:

Mr SPEAKER (Mr Tan Chuan-Jin (Marine Parade)).

Mr AMRIN AMIN (Sembawang), Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health.

Mr ANG HIN KEE (Ang Mo Kio).

Mr ANG WEI NENG (Jurong).

Mr BAEY YAM KENG (Tampines), Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth.

Miss CHERYL CHAN WEI LING (Fengshan).

Mr CHAN CHUN SING (Tanjong Pagar), Minister for Trade and Industry.

Mr CHEE HONG TAT (Bishan-Toa Payoh), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Education.

Miss CHENG LI HUI (Tampines).

Dr CHIA SHI-LU (Tanjong Pagar).

Mr CHONG KEE HIONG (Bishan-Toa Payoh).

Mr DESMOND CHOO (Tampines).

Mr DARRYL DAVID (Ang Mo Kio).

Mr CHRISTOPHER DE SOUZA (Holland-Bukit Timah).

Mr ARASU DURAISAMY (Nominated Member).

Mr CEDRIC FOO CHEE KENG (Pioneer).

Mr DOUGLAS FOO (Nominated Member).

Ms FOO MEE HAR (West Coast).

Ms GRACE FU HAI YIEN (Yuhua), Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Leader of the House.

Mr GAN KIM YONG (Chua Chu Kang), Minister for Health.

Mr GAN THIAM POH (Ang Mo Kio).

Mr GOH CHOK TONG (Marine Parade).

Mr HENG CHEE HOW (Jalan Besar), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defence.

Mr HENG SWEE KEAT (Tampines), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance.

Mr TERENCE HO WEE SAN (Nominated Member).

Ms INDRANEE RAJAH (Tanjong Pagar), Minister, Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for Finance and Second Minister for Education.

Dr INTAN AZURA MOKHTAR (Ang Mo Kio).

Mr S ISWARAN (West Coast), Minister for Communications and Information and Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations.

Dr JANIL PUTHUCHEARY (Pasir Ris-Punggol), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Communications and Information and Government Whip.

Mr KHAW BOON WAN (Sembawang), Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Transport.

Dr AMY KHOR LEAN SUAN (Hong Kah North), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources and Ministry of Health.

Dr KOH POH KOON (Ang Mo Kio), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Mr KWEK HIAN CHUAN HENRY (Nee Soon).

Dr LAM PIN MIN (Sengkang West), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Transport.

Er Dr LEE BEE WAH (Nee Soon).

Mr DESMOND LEE (Jurong), Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for National Development and Deputy Leader of the House.

Mr LEE HSIEN LOONG (Ang Mo Kio), Prime Minister.

Mr LEE YI SHYAN (East Coast).

Mr LIANG ENG HWA (Holland-Bukit Timah).

Mr LIM BIOW CHUAN (Mountbatten), Deputy Speaker.

Mr LIM HNG KIANG (West Coast).

Prof LIM SUN SUN (Nominated Member).

Ms SYLVIA LIM (Aljunied).

Dr LIM WEE KIAK (Sembawang).

Mr LOW THIA KHIANG (Aljunied).

Ms LOW YEN LING (Chua Chu Kang), Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Manpower.

Dr MOHAMAD MALIKI BIN OSMAN (East Coast), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr MOHAMED IRSHAD (Nominated Member).

Mr MUHAMAD FAISAL ABDUL MANAP (Aljunied).

Assoc Prof Dr MUHAMMAD FAISHAL IBRAHIM (Nee Soon), Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social and Family Development.

Mr MURALI PILLAI (Bukit Batok).

Dr LILY NEO (Jalan Besar).

Mr NG CHEE MENG (Pasir Ris-Punggol), Minister, Prime Minister's Office.

Dr NG ENG HEN (Bishan-Toa Payoh), Minister for Defence.

Mr LOUIS NG KOK KWANG (Nee Soon).

Ms ANTHEA ONG (Nominated Member).

Mr ONG TENG KOON (Marsiling-Yew Tee).

Ms JOAN PEREIRA (Tanjong Pagar).

Mr LEON PERERA (Non-Constituency Member).

Ms DENISE PHUA LAY PENG (Jalan Besar).

Mr PNG ENG HUAT (Hougang).

Mr PRITAM SINGH (Aljunied).

Ms RAHAYU MAHZAM (Jurong).

Mr SAKTIANDI SUPAAT (Bishan-Toa Payoh).

Mr SEAH KIAN PENG (Marine Parade).

Mr K SHANMUGAM (Nee Soon), Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law.

Ms SIM ANN (Holland-Bukit Timah), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and Deputy Government Whip.

Mr SITO H YIH PIN (Potong Pasir).

Ms SUN XUELING (Pasir Ris-Punggol), Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of National Development.

Mr DENNIS TAN LIP FONG (Non-Constituency Member).

Ms JESSICA TAN SOON NEO (East Coast).

Mr SAM TAN CHIN SIONG (Radin Mas), Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Social and Family Development.

Dr TAN WU MENG (Jurong), Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Mr PATRICK TAY TECK GUAN (West Coast).

Mr TEO CHEE HEAN (Pasir Ris-Punggol), Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security.

Dr TEO HO PIN (Bukit Panjang).

Mrs JOSEPHINE TEO (Bishan-Toa Payoh), Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Home Affairs.

Mr TEO SER LUCK (Pasir Ris-Punggol).

Mr THARMAN SHANMUGARATNAM (Jurong), Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies.

Assoc Prof WALTER THESEIRA (Nominated Member).

Ms TIN PEI LING (MacPherson).

Mr EDWIN TONG CHUN FAI (Marine Parade), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Ministry of Health.

Mr VIKRAM NAIR (Sembawang).

Dr VIVIAN BALAKRISHNAN (Holland-Bukit Timah), Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Mr LAWRENCE WONG (Marsiling-Yew Tee), Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance.

Prof YAACOB IBRAHIM (Jalan Besar).

Mr ALEX YAM ZIMING (Marsiling-Yew Tee).

Mr YEE CHIA HSING (Chua Chu Kang).

Mr MELVIN YONG YIK CHYE (Tanjong Pagar).

Mr ZA QY MOHAMAD (Chua Chu Kang), Minister of State, Ministry of National Development and Ministry of Manpower and Deputy Government Whip.

ABSENT:

Mr CHEN SHOW MAO (Aljunied).

Mr CHARLES CHONG (Punggol East), Deputy Speaker.

Prof FATIMAH LATEEF (Marine Parade).

Assoc Prof DANIEL GOH PEI SIONG (Non-Constituency Member).

Mr LIM SWEE SAY (East Coast).

Mr MASAGOS ZULKIFLI B M M (Tampines), Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs.

Mr ONG YE KUNG (Sembawang), Minister for Education.

Ms IRENE QUAY SIEW CHING (Nominated Member).

Ms YIP PIN XIU (Nominated Member).

Mr ZAINAL SAPARI (Pasir Ris-Punggol).

- 1 Papers presented to Parliament and received by the Clerk of Parliament pursuant to Standing Order No. 31 (Presentation of Papers) and ordered to lie upon the Table:
- 1.1 Planning (Development Charges) (Amendment) Rules 2020 – Presented on 9 March 2020 (S. L. 788 of 2020).
 - 1.2 Road Traffic (Collection of Toll at Woodlands and Tuas Checkpoints) (Amendment) Rules 2020 – Presented on 10 March 2020 (S. L. 789 of 2020).
 - 1.3 The Report of the Electoral Boundaries Review Committee, 2020 – Presented on 13 March 2020 (Cmd. 26 of 2020).
 - 1.4 Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Building Control (Amendment) Bill [Bill No 10/2020] – Presented on 18 March 2020 (Pres. Co. 162 of 2020).
 - 1.5 Report of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights on the Public Utilities (Amendment) Bill [Bill No 11/2020] – Presented on 18 March 2020 (Pres. Co. 163 of 2020).
 - 1.6 Road Traffic (Motor Vehicles, Driving Licences) (Amendment) Rules 2020 – Presented on 23 March 2020 (S. L. 790 of 2020).
 - 1.7 Environmental Public Health (Public Cleansing) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 – Presented on 25 March 2020 (S. L. 791 of 2020).

- 2 Announcement by Speaker – Mr Speaker made the following communication to the House:-

"Today, Singapore is in the midst of tackling the COVID-19 threat. We are working hard to keep all Singaporeans safe, pressing on with our efforts to mitigate the risk of local spread and to reduce the further importation of cases. We should remain on guard but never let COVID-19 paralyse us as a society.

Parliament is our nation's law-making body. As parliamentarians, all of us have pledged to discharge our duties and serve Singaporeans to the best of our abilities. We must remain steadfast in carrying out these responsibilities effectively despite the challenging circumstances posed by COVID-19.

Nevertheless, it is equally important to protect everyone's well-being even as we conduct our proceedings. We must maintain our vigilance and do our utmost to comply with the necessary precautions as advised by the Government's Multi-Ministry Task Force.

Hence, beginning today, we have implemented safe distancing measures for all hon Members. During Sittings, Members are seated at spaced intervals – as you can see now – both within the Chamber and extending to the galleries at other levels. Members will also be taking their refreshments in separate groups to further reduce mingling. To complement the maintenance of good personal hygiene, the respective groups will further use separate restrooms.

These steps are aligned to the stricter safe distancing measures which the Task Force had announced last week to prevent further spread of COVID-19 cases. Over the weekend, the Public Service Division further issued specific guidelines to intensify the implementation of safe distancing measures across agencies.

Let me assure Members that no matter where you are now seated, you can still make your speeches and present your impassioned ideas here in this Chamber. The microphones placed near you will duly capture and record your speeches.

This is the first time ever that we have spread out the seats for Members in such a manner, and over two floors. Members of the public and the media at the galleries will also be seated at spaced intervals. It will take some getting used to so thank you, hon Members and everyone here, for your cooperation as we all play our part in being socially responsible.

As we cannot be certain how long COVID-19 will be with us, we will continue to monitor all advisories to see if further precautionary measures should be implemented for forthcoming Sittings.

Beyond Sittings, our measures in Parliament also extend to the staff here at the Secretariat and to all visitors to the House. Since early February, we have steadily stepped up the necessary precautions in line with all advisories issued. The measures include having the temperature of all staff and visitors screened before entry, requiring them to declare their overseas travel history and maintaining a contact list for all visitors.

As the on-going COVID-19 situation evolves, we have been regularly reviewing and updating business continuity plans. Our Secretariat workforce has been split into separate teams, with distancing measures rolled out for all staff. The measures include telecommuting, staggering working hours, splitting shifts and working from separate locations within the House. We have also reduced and set limits on the number of students for our educational tours of the House. We will do our best in ensuring that these adjustments do not compromise the quality of services and operations that remain available and uninterrupted to hon Members and the public.

It is not business as usual as we deal with COVID-19. We will face varying degrees of inconveniences and disruptions to our daily lives, routines and even our economy, which has a very real impact on all Singaporeans. Yet, we must take all precautionary measures seriously and fully comply with them to prevent its further spread.

We have done it before for SARS and H1N1, and such collective social responsibility by Singapore and Singaporeans is how we will ultimately prevail over the spectre of COVID-19. Let us also do this as Singapore (SG) United – by looking out for the most vulnerable amongst us, and supporting and encouraging one another in keeping ourselves, our families and friends, as well as our co-workers in Singapore safe."

- 3 4 Questions for Oral Answer were answered during Question Time.
- 4 Ministerial Statements – Update on Whole-of-Government Response to COVID-19 – (Minister for Health and Minister for National Development).
- 5 Rearrangement of Business – (Leader of the House) – Motion made, and Question put – Resolved, "That, notwithstanding Standing Orders, the Second Reading of the Economic Expansion Incentives (Relief from Income Tax) (Amendment) Bill, Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Amendment) Bill, and the Hindu Endowments (Amendment) Bill be taken on 25 March 2020."

- 6 Hindu Endowments (Amendment) Bill – read a second time and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

The House immediately resolved itself into a Committee on the Bill – (Minister for Culture, Community and Youth).

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Bill to be reported.

Bill reported, without amendment; read a third time.

- 7 Wild Animals and Birds (Amendment) Bill – read a second time and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

The House immediately resolved itself into a Committee on the Bill – (Mr Louis Ng Kok Kwang, Member for Nee Soon GRC).

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 to 17 inclusive agreed to.

Bill to be reported.

Bill reported, without amendment; read a third time.

- 8 Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Amendment) Bill – read a second time and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

The House immediately resolved itself into a Committee on the Bill – (Senior Minister of State (Dr Lam Pin Min), on behalf of the Minister for Transport).

(In the Committee)

Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

Bill to be reported.

Bill reported, without amendment; read a third time.

9 Adjournment – (Leader of the House) – Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Parliament do now adjourn."; Debate arising.

On Question put – Resolved, "That Parliament do now adjourn."

Adjourned at 7.13 pm

TAN CHUAN-JIN,
Speaker

MEMORANDUM

Mr Speaker will take the Chair again at 1.30 pm on Thursday, 26 March 2020.
