

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (COVID-19 SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS) BILL TO ENSURE A SAFE ELECTION FOR ALL**

The Parliamentary Elections (COVID-19 Special Arrangements) Bill has been introduced in Parliament on 7 April 2020, allowing the Elections Department (ELD) to implement temporary arrangements to ensure the safety of voters, candidates and election officials, should the next General Election (GE) take place amid the COVID-19 situation.

2 This Bill forms part of ELD's contingency planning for the next GE, which has to be held by 14 April 2021. The provisions in the Bill are temporary arrangements, and will only apply to the next GE, and not to any election held after the stipulated date. The provisions in the Bill will allow –

- (a) Electors who are subject to COVID-19 stay orders to vote outside of their electoral divisions, such as the designated facilities at which they are staying. This ensures that voters on stay orders will not mingle with other voters while voting.
- (b) An aspiring candidate to authorise a representative to file his nomination paper on his behalf, if he is unable or unfit to do so because of a COVID-19 quarantine order or stay order, hospitalisation or ill health. Currently, the Parliamentary Elections Act requires aspiring candidates to file nomination papers in person.

4 The health and safety of voters, candidates and elections officials is paramount. ELD is reviewing our election processes, and putting in place the necessary precautionary measures, in compliance with prevailing advisories from the Ministry of Health. This is so that should the GE take place amidst the COVID-19 situation, the safety and health of voters, candidates and election officials will be safeguarded.

ISSUED BY  
ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT  
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

7 APRIL 2020