

ANNOUNCEMENT 1

SITTING OF 07 NOVEMBER 2023

"Announcement 1 by Mr Speaker – Interview of Hon. Juman in media- Use of Committee Rooms of the National Assembly - Unfounded allegations against the Chair - Mr Speaker invited Hon Juman to tender apologies to the House. Failing to tender apologies, Hon Juman ordered out from the Chamber"

Honourable Members,

I have an announcement to make.

My attention has been drawn to an interview given by the Hon. Juman to L'express on Sunday 05 November 2023.

In the said interview, Hon. Juman is reported to have stated that Dr the Hon. Minister of Health and Wellness met three religious persons in the Committee Room of the National Assembly when the Assembly was sitting on Tuesday last whilst Members of the Opposition are refused access to the offices for holding press conferences.

Honourable Members,

The responsibility for the management of the buildings and the general administration of the Assembly Chamber is vested in the Speaker pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 78.

Honourable Members are well aware that the two Committee Rooms of the National Assembly are meant exclusively for the holding of Parliamentary Committee Meetings. Hence, requests for the use thereof for other purposes by Members, both from the Government and the Opposition side are not acceded to.

I must point out that neither my Office nor the Office of the Clerk was in presence of any request from Dr the Hon. Minister of Health and Wellness for the use of any of the Committee Rooms of the National Assembly.

Following the above press Article, I caused an internal enquiry to be carried out.

I have to report to the House that the internal enquiry has revealed that at no point in time did Dr the Hon. Minister of Health and Wellness make use of any of the Committee Rooms of the National Assembly on Tuesday last which in any event remain closed at all times on Sitting days.

The enquiry has further revealed that in fact

Dr the Hon. Minister of Health and Wellness made use of the Conference Room of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development.

Honourable Members,

I take the view that such a statement coming from a Honourable Member without confirming his averments shows an utter lack of seriousness. Moreover, the said statement is misleading and is tantamount to a gratuitous accusation of connivance between the Speaker and Members of the Government to the detriment of Members of the Opposition regarding access to the Committee Rooms of the National Assembly.

Honourable Members,

In view of the seriousness of the unfounded allegations against the Chair, not worthy of a Hon. Member, I cannot allow the matter to go unchecked and I am inviting the Hon. Juman to make amends and tender his unreserved apologies to the House, failing which I will have no alternative than to order the Hon. Member out from the Chamber.
