

SITTING OF TUESDAY 25 June 2024

ANNOUNCEMENT 1

“Decision by the Speaker requesting Hon. Ittoo, Deputy Chairperson of Committees to chair the Committee of Supply on Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19, June 2024 was taken in all fairness”

“Mr Speaker appealed to members of media to exercise caution while publishing articles which may be misleading and tantamount to casting doubts on the democratic processes of the Assembly”

Hon. Members

I wish to draw the attention of the House to a press article which appeared in daily l'Express of Friday 21 June 2024, under the caption – “Committee of Supply” Budget 2024-25 – Présidence: Nazurally boycotté!

The said press article purports to cast aspersions on my impartiality as Speaker in the discharge of my duties and has also cast doubts on my discretionary powers of requesting Hon. Ashley Ittoo to chair the Committee of Supply in his capacity as Deputy Chairperson of Committees in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 8(2).

Hon. Members

I view this matter with serious concern as this amounts to an external interference and an invasion of the privileges of the House and that of the Speaker in the discharge of his functions.

I have therefore deemed it fit to set the record straight.

Hon. Members

The House will recall that Hon. Ashley Ittoo was elected Deputy Chairperson of Committees at the Sitting of Tuesday 26 March 2024 by the Assembly pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 7(7) and has not had the opportunity of chairing any Committee of Supply until Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19, June 2024.

Hon. Members,

It is clear from the provisions of Standing Order 8(2) that the discretion of giving the chair to the Deputy Chairperson of Committees for chairing the Committee of Supply rests with the Speaker, the moreso that the duties of the Deputy Chairperson of Committees is to chair the Committee of Supply.

The House may also wish to note that on numerous occasions when the Speaker was chairing the Committee of Supply, questions have been put to the Hon. Prime Minister as to the number of Committees chaired by the Deputy Chairperson of Committees thereby prompting the Speaker to take this decision in all fairness of giving the opportunity to Hon. Ashley Ittoo to chair the Committee of Supply.

Therefore, the issue of boycotting the Deputy Speaker from this exercise does not arise.

Although, the contents of the said press article potentially amount to a contempt of the Assembly under Section 6(1)(s) of the National Assembly (Privileges, Immunities and powers) Act, I am nevertheless making an appeal to members of the media to exercise caution while publishing articles which may be misleading and tantamount to casting doubts on the democratic processes of this august Assembly.

I thank you.
