



PRESS RELEASE

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Government Convenes Parliament For Emergency Budget On Friday

The Government has convened a meeting of the Parliament for this Friday at 11am.

The Government is relying on the power to convene Parliament in an emergency without having to give the usual five clear days notice.

Opposition Members have all agreed not to ask questions for this meeting.

Additionally, the Government has this morning also published a Bill to amend the Appropriation Act 2019.

This will, in effect, extend the financial year 2019/20, for which a Budget Session, was held in June, initially until September of this year. It may be extended beyond that in future.

This will enable the Government to put in place and EMERGENCY BUDGET for the coming months.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, said: "I have convened Parliament for Friday. It is important we should meet now, whilst we know we are able, to ensure that our finance laws, our Appropriation Act 2019, can cover the spending that we will need. It is clear that we are not going to be able to prepare as normal in our annual internal spending round and prepare our Estimates Book in the usual way or have a normal Budget Session in June this year. So we are preparing for that. I have been working closely with the Minister for Economic Development and the Financial Secretary on this matter for some days now. The matter was discussed by the Cabinet on Monday. I raised this with the Leader of the Opposition and Ms Hassan Nahon and we have agreed this is the best way to proceed. Based on the work of the Financial Secretary and his team, the Hon Sir Joe Bossano has spoken at length with Hon Roy Clinton on the numbers we are bringing to Parliament for what will be an initial six month extension to our Budget 'year'.

This will also enable me to table emergency budget measures for business and to implement more measures as necessary by amending regulations and legislation as may be required to provide the necessary relief to businesses as this COVID 19 pandemic progresses.

I am very grateful for the cooperative approach taken by Hon Mr Azopardi in his role as Leader of the Opposition and Hon Ms Hassan Nahon, as well as the attitude of Hon Mr Clinton in respect of the need to move quickly on the financial aspects of this crisis."



ENDS