

I now turn to Procurement

I am advised that the Office of Procurement Regulation (OPR) has now reached 95% of its required staffing. Further, the OPR has reported that its software application is being installed to facilitate the establishment of a comprehensive database of on public procurement, including information of tenders received, the award and value of contracts. Additionally, the Procurement Depository, required in accordance with Section 26 of the Act is expected to be accessible within the next three months.

The OPR has also advised that it will soon be able to roll out a number of handbooks for the guidance of procuring entities across the state sector.

The Procurement Regulations

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Since my last Report to Parliament in February 2019, on the status of preparation of the Procurement Regulations, essential for implementation of the Act, further progress has been made. The OPR undertook a comprehensive review of the comments submitted by the Ministry of Finance and external Senior Counsel and reverted to the Ministry of Finance at the end of March 2019, having treated with most of the issues raised.

Detailed comments on the redrafted regulations will be submitted by the Ministry of Finance to the Procurement Regulator in the next few days.

Accordingly, I am advised that barring unforeseen circumstances, further proclamation of important Sections the Act can be achieved by August 2019. Following Proclamation, the Regulator proposes a three-day workshop for familiarizing procuring entities with the Regulations together with a six-month transition period to allow entities to fulfill their requirements.