



GUYANA NEWS

President not required to justify choices for constitutional posts – Teixeira



Gail Teixeira

By Stabroek News May 25, 2022



President Irfaan Ali is not required to give reasons to justify his choices for the filling of constitutional posts, according to Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance Gail Teixeira.

The minister's comment comes more than one week after the first meeting between President Ali and Leader of the Opposition Aubrey Norton to commence the process of agreeing on the appointments to constitutional commissions. The May 13, 2022 meeting was a result of an invitation from President Ali to Norton.

At his first press conference as Opposition Leader, Norton accused the President of consulting in bad faith. At the initial meeting, Norton requested the curriculum vitae of proposed appointees be provided for perusal prior to future discussions and President Ali had agreed to make those documents available to him within two days.



on May 10, 2022, at 9 am to Congress Place – the headquarters of the People's National Congress Reform, the political party that Norton leads.

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“Following the Friday, May 13 joint statement after the meeting between His Excellency [HE] and [the] LOP [Leader of the Opposition] the CVs of all of the names proposed by HE was delivered on May 16th at 9 am to Congress Place. To date no response [has been received] except Mr Norton’s recent comment in media [that] he was waiting for justification of those names.

“[The] Constitution does not require HE to do so. This is again LOP devising manufactured hurdles to delay the appointment of the Integrity Commission, the Judicial, Police and Teaching Service Com-missions. HE is not required to furnish a justification why he chose certain names,” Teixeira explained.

After the initial meeting between the two leaders, Norton was asked why the CVs were a prerequisite and of importance, to which he responded “When I see the CVs I will tell you why.”

Pressed for an explanation, given the request for the documents came from him, he added, “Because you need to know about people. We need the CVs because the whole process of meaningful consultation is defined in law... which says you need time to assess. So the CVs are needed. And once we get the CVs, we will do what we have to do. That is it basically.”

“All I want to see is everything happens in keeping with law and keeping with the constitution. I think we have been able to make this point [to the government]. And moving forward, we will operate in keeping with the constitution and what meaningful consultations are.”



government is maintaining the additional information about the appointees.

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His prepared statement read "...to date, the material and grounds on which the recommendations of persons for appointments to the Constitutional and Statutory Commissions remain with the President. Hence, the consultation process has not been in accordance with the requirements of meaningful consultation.

Norton had also said that no communication has been received from the government as to when the two leaders would meet again.

Under the laws of this country, the President and the Opposition Leader are required to hold consultations, guided by the respective clauses, for the appointment of the Commissioner of Police, Chancellor of the Judiciary, and Chief Justice.

Ali had refused to meet the previous Leader of the Opposition, Joseph Harmon on the grounds that he did not recognise the government. That condition was later dropped but there was no meeting as the PNCR held internal elections and Harmon was defeated in the contest for party leader by Norton. Harmon subsequently resigned under pressure from within the PNCR but it would be weeks before Norton was officially added to the opposition parliamentary lineup. He was then elected Opposition Leader.





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