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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Wolfson of Tredegar	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Monday, 17 January 2022

Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games: Transport Plan

[HLWS526]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will take place from 28 July to 8 August 2022 and will be the biggest sporting event ever held in the city featuring thousands of world-class athletes and over a million spectators. With an estimated global television audience of 1.5 billion people, the Games will showcase Birmingham, the West Midlands and the entire country as an amazing place to live, work, study, visit and do business.

We know that putting in place effective transport provision is a crucial part of any major sporting event and requires detailed planning and coordination. A well understood and supported Transport Plan is therefore essential.

On 23 October 2020, in line with s25(1) of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games Act 2020, I directed the West Midlands Combined Authority to prepare a Transport Plan for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Today I am pleased to inform the House that the West Midlands Combined Authority Board has approved the final Games Transport Plan.

The Transport Plan has been produced in close collaboration with Birmingham City Council and the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee. It sets out a strategic approach to planning and coordination of transport to support the Games; covering the transportation of spectators, athletes and the Games Family, whilst at the same time ensuring that any disruption to transport users and residents is kept to a minimum.

The Transport Plan is also the result of consultation with key stakeholders, including local authorities, Police forces, transport operators, and the Department for Transport, as well as wider public engagement.

The Transport Plan presents five principles that have guided decision-making throughout the stages of strategic planning, and which underpin the objectives for transport during the Games. These principles are:

- Clean and Green; a public transport Games.
- Safe, secure, reliable and efficient transport.
- Minimising disruption.
- Long-term benefits.
- Access for all.

I am placing a copy of the Games Transport Plan in the libraries of both Houses.

Written Answers

Monday, 17 January 2022

A400M Aircraft

Asked by **Lord Jones**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many A400M Atlas aircraft are currently operated by the Ministry of Defence. [HL5327]

Baroness Goldie: There are currently 20 Atlas C.1 (A400M) aircraft in RAF service.

Armenia: Azerbaijan

Asked by **Baroness Cox**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Azerbaijan concerning the protection of Armenian territory during the border delimitation process. [HL5229]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK Government is monitoring the situation on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border following an increase in tensions last year. Through the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and bilateral engagement in Baku and Yerevan, UK officials continue to urge the Armenian and Azerbaijani authorities to settle all outstanding matters including the peaceful negotiation of their borders, in line with the Minsk Group Principles. The former Minister for Europe and Americas, Wendy Morton MP, met the Armenian and Azerbaijani Ambassadors to the UK in November to reinforce these messages.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they stopped funding workplace testing for COVID-19; and whether that decision will be kept under review. [HL5050]

Lord Kamall: Workplace testing ended in England at the end of July and employers were encouraged to direct their employees to order home tests from GOV.UK, collect from local pharmacies or order via the 119 service. The introduction of these citizen-direct testing channels meant that workplace testing was no longer required. Workplace testing will continue in some sectors where there is a particular need and the Department will continue to monitor any issues in other sectors. We have also announced that we will deliver tests to workplaces to allow 100,000 workers in priority, critical roles to test daily for the next five weeks. Roll out started from Monday 10th January. Tests will be separate from public sectors who already have a testing allocation with UK Health Security Agency, such as adult social care or education, and separate to those delivered to pharmacies

and homes, so those channels will not be impacted by the new scheme.

Developing Countries: Equality

Asked by **Baroness Greengross**

To ask Her Majesty's Government which Minister has responsibility for inclusive societies. [HL5117]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The FCDO Minister responsible for gender and equalities is Vicky Ford. I am the Minister responsible for open societies and human rights.

Educational Institutions: Registration

Asked by **Baroness Deech**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to legislate to close the loopholes that enable unregistered but de facto full-time educational settings to avoid registration. [HL5105]

Asked by **Baroness Deech**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their response to the Regulating independent educational institutions consultation, which ran from 14 February 2020 to 27 November 2020. [HL5107]

Asked by **Baroness Deech**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of children that have left unregistered religious schools lacking (1) basic skills, or (2) qualifications, since 2013. [HL5108]

Asked by **Baroness Deech**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of children who have been subjected to (1) serious abuse, or (2) corporal punishment, in (a) unregistered, or (b) illegal, religious schools since 2013. [HL5109]

Baroness Barran: Any educational institution which provides full-time provision to 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age (or one or more pupils of compulsory school age who is 'looked after' or has an education, health and care plan) is required to register with the Secretary of State for Education as a school. It is a criminal offence under section 96 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to conduct an independent educational institution unless it is registered.

The existing definition of full-time education does not capture education providers which offer only a narrow curriculum even if this teaching takes place throughout all, or most, of the school day.

The consultation on regulating independent educational institutions included proposals to consider how to expand on the categories of full-time institutions that will be regulated in the same way that independent schools are currently regulated, and to change the definition of independent schools in primary legislation to incorporate

such education providers. Taking forward the proposals would bring a range of currently unregistered institutions under the independent education regulatory regime.

The government remains committed to changing the law on the registration of independent educational institutions. We repeated that commitment in the department's evidence to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, and we welcomed the recommendation when the report was recently published.

Publication of the response to the regulating independent educational institutions consultation is expected in early 2022.

The department has not made any estimate of the number of children attending or who have left unregistered schools. Those conducting an unregistered school are committing a criminal offence and they do not generally inform the department about the school's operation. The same principle applies to the number of children who have suffered serious abuse or corporal punishment at an unregistered school.

Energy Supply: Prices

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of a potential increase in energy prices in 2022. [HL5181]

Lord Callanan: The Government is monitoring the significant increases in wholesale energy prices closely, and meeting regularly with Ofgem, suppliers and consumer groups to understand the future impact on consumers as well as to discuss potential mitigations.

Health: Disinformation

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking in order to guard against misleading health information being made available online. [HL5164]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Government takes the issue of health misinformation and disinformation very seriously. That is why we stood up the Counter Disinformation Unit on 5 March 2020 to bring together cross-Government monitoring and analysis capabilities to provide a comprehensive picture of the extent, scope, and reach of misinformation and disinformation.

The Counter Disinformation Unit works closely with social media platforms to help them identify and take action to remove incorrect claims, in line with the platforms' terms and conditions, and to ensure the promotion of authoritative sources of information.

The upcoming Online Safety Bill will have robust and proportionate measures to deal with misinformation and disinformation which could cause significant physical or

psychological harm to an individual, such as falsehoods about COVID-19.

We have also developed the [SHARE checklist](#) which aims to increase audience resilience by educating and empowering those who see, inadvertently share, and are affected by false and misleading information.

IRA: Libya

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to reconsider their decision not to publish The Shawcross Report: Compensation for Victims, completed in May 2020. [HL5169]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Mr Shawcross's report was commissioned as an internal scoping report, to provide internal advice to Ministers. Its content is based on private, confidential conversations and information shared on this basis.

Iran: Detainees

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are making representations to the government of Iran about (1) Nasser Navard Gol-Tapeh, held in Evin Prison and denied parole, and (2) members of house-churches and non-recognized churches held in prison in that country. [HL5125]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Promoting the right to freedom of religion or belief for all is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities, and the persecution of Christians in Iran is of serious concern. We raise human rights issues with the Iranian government at all appropriate opportunities and we continue to take action with the international community to press Iran to improve its poor record. In November 2021, we co-sponsored the annual UN Third Committee resolution on human rights in Iran which called on the Government of Iran to release all religious practitioners imprisoned for their membership in or activities on behalf of a recognized or unrecognized minority religious or belief group.

Israel: Christianity

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the socio-economic (1) exclusion, and (2) marginalisation, experienced by Christians in Israel. [HL5200]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the incidents of (1) harassments of priests, (2) intimidation of local Christians, and (3) attacks on churches, by radical fringe groups in Israel. [HL5201]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities. Israel is a thriving democracy with a long-standing commitment to equality for all. We encourage the Israeli Government to do all it can to uphold the values of equality for all enshrined in its laws.

Jerusalem: Christianity

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the 'Statement on the Current Threats to the Christian Presence in the Holy Land by the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem', published on 13 December 2021; in particular, the recommendation that a special Christian cultural heritage zone be created in the Christian Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem. [HL5202]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities. We are aware of this statement and are reviewing its recommendations. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv and Consulate General in Jerusalem regularly raise issues of FoRB with the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority. The UK recognises that Jerusalem holds particular significance for many groups, especially the three Abrahamic faiths of Christianity, Islam and Judaism.

Libya: IRA

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the amount of (1) money, (2) explosives, and (3) other weaponry, provided by the government of Libya to the Provisional Irish Republican Army. [HL5170]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Qadhafi regime's support for the IRA was extensive. It is widely documented in the public domain. It involved money, weapons and training from the 1970s onwards. The UK continues to press the Libyan authorities - including at the highest levels of the Libyan Government - to address the Libyan State's historic responsibility for the Qadhafi regime's support for the IRA.

Magnetic Resonance Imagers

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many multi-parametric magnetic resonance imaging scans are in use in each Cancer Alliance. [HL4566]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much the NHS has invested in multi-parametric magnetic resonance imaging scanners in the last three years. [HL4567]

Lord Kamall: The information requested on the number of multi-parametric magnetic resonance imaging (mpMRI) capable scanners and the investment in such scanners in the last three years is not held centrally.

However, NHS England and NHS Improvement's national magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) specification includes the capability to perform mpMRI for prostate cancer. A total of 97 MRI machines were purchased through the £200 million equipment replacement programme to this specification from October 2019 to March 2021. NHS trusts are encouraged to adopt the national specification as a minimum requirement when purchasing new MRI equipment.

Middle East: Christianity

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report Defeating Minority Exclusion and Unlocking Potential: Christianity in the Holy Land, published in October 2021. [HL5199]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of this report. The UK stands in solidarity with Christian communities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and condemns all attacks on the right to freedom of religious belief, freedom of religion, or belief. Israel is a thriving democracy, and has made clear its commitment to freedom of religion. The UK is committed to working with all parties across the Holy Land to ensure the safety and security of the holy sites and all who worship there, including Christians from all nations.

Nigeria: Military Alliances

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government in what ways the UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnership protects civilians in Nigeria's Middle Belt, including communities vulnerable to Islamist attacks. [HL5103]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Government condemns all incidents of intercommunal violence in Nigeria, including in the Middle Belt, which has a devastating impact on affected communities. Islamic extremism is a driver of conflict involving terrorist groups in the North East. The drivers of intercommunal violence elsewhere in Nigeria, including in the Middle Belt, are complex and frequently relate to competition over resources and criminality.

Through our Security and Defence partnership, we are working with the Government of Nigeria to respond to both domestic security challenges across Nigeria, and shared security threats. We are looking to refresh our

partnership in the coming months to agree future cooperation to help respond to increasing insecurity across Nigeria, promote human rights and respond to shared threats, including on terrorism and serious organised crime in Nigeria.

Social Services

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the survey by the Association of Directors in Adult Social Services, published on 29 November, and (2) in particular, the findings that (a) almost 400,000 people are now waiting for an assessment of their needs, and (b) more than 1.5 million hours of commissioned home care could not be provided between August and September because of a lack of staff. [HL4479]

Lord Kamall: We have noted the results of this survey, which improves the evidence base for the demand for social care and current issues of concern to local authority leaders in the sector. Local authorities are responsible for assessing an individual's eligibility for care and support and for meeting care needs in their local area. On 10 December 2021 we announced £300 million to support local authorities and care providers to recruit and retain staff through winter. This is in addition to the existing £162.5 million Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund. We have also launched a new phase of our national recruitment campaign which will run until March 2022.

Tempus Court Developments: Annual Reports

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, against the directors of Tempus Court Developments Limited concerning the accuracy of annual accounts filed at Companies House on 18 March 2021 and 9 November 2021 for the financial years ending 31 July 2020 and 31 July 2021. [HL5193]

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, against the directors and partners of Mortar Tempus Court LLP concerning the accuracy of

annual accounts filed at Companies House on 18 March 2021 and 9 November 2021 for the financial years ending 31 March 2020 and 31 March 2021. [HL5194]

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, against the directors of Tempus Court Developments Limited concerning claiming dormant company exemptions in their filings at Companies House on 18 March 2021 and 9 November 2021 for the financial years ending 31 July 2020 and 31 July 2021. [HL5195]

Lord Callanan: Where a document (whether filed electronically or on paper) appears to be "properly delivered", the registrar is obliged to register it. A document is properly delivered when it contains the information required by law; is completed in the proper form; has the correct fee attached (where appropriate) and is authenticated.

The Registrar of Companies does not have the legal power to verify or validate information filed with her. If a complaint is received as to the content of the filing, Companies House may contact the entity to make enquiries. No complaint has been received in this case.

Trade Agreements: Australia

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to establish a "labour consultative or advisory body, or similar mechanism, for members of the public, including representatives of labour and business organisations, to provide views on" matters in the UK–Australia Trade Agreement, as provided for in Article 21.15 of that Agreement. [HL5120]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: We recognise the importance of the involvement and monitoring of labour-related issues by UK stakeholders on this agreement.

That is why this deal establishes a committee for cooperation, and UK stakeholders will have the opportunity for consultation and active engagement. The provisions agreed allow for businesses and other labour organisations to support the effective implementation of the agreement. We are currently considering options for how this can be best achieved.

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