With the gradual reopening of economic sectors and preparations to move into a post-“lockdown” world, crucial public services and duties – some of which were delayed or put on hold during the “lockdown” – must eventually return. These include several aspects of society which are fundamental for its regular functioning and in keeping with democratic practices – elections, parliament sittings, the court system, as well as the running of public services such as education and transportation.

This Snapshot explores how such duties and public services of the Government are affected by COVID-19 and the actions taken to adapt.

### ELECTIONS – PROCEED OR POSTPONE?
55 countries/territories have postponed elections and referendums (Idea.int). South Korea’s 2020 elections which proceeded 2 days in April was conducted under strict health and safety measures (WEF). Singapore passed a law enabling Singaporeans who are under stay-at-home notices to vote (CNA); several states in US are considering mail-in voting for a limited group (WSJ). In Malaysia, an online-based electoral process is still being studied (NewStraitsTimes).

Malaysia’s Parliament postponed the sitting to a one-day event on 18 May, with the next sitting scheduled in July (MalayMail). United Kingdom introduced “hybrid” proceedings with MPs joining the session either physically or remotely (WEF). In Canada, Zoom sessions replaced in-person questioning with Ministers (TheStar). The European Parliament has temporarily allowed electronic voting via e-mail (TechCrunch). In Brazil, a system enables Members to view all phases of the legislative process (Senado.leg.br; IPU).

In China, students wear DIY “one-meter” hats to help them understand and observe social distancing (BBC) while in Taiwan and South Korea, dividers were placed at desks / cafeteria tables to prevent the possible spread of the virus whilst eating (Reuters). In Malaysia, authorities are considering to limit the number of students at 17 only (half the usual size) for each class (MalayMail). Due to the shortened school year, curriculums were adjusted accordingly in France (UNESCO).

### SAFER AND SMARTER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
Public transportation have resumed with limited passenger capacity, health and safety measures. Smart transit enabling near-real time measuring of crowd distribution is seen in China and New Zealand. A reservation service to encourage staggered shifts and reduce waiting time was launched in Beijing (CGTN). Cities including London and Paris provided more public space for cyclists and pedestrians (PedBikeInfo). New York released an app to help essential workers plan their travels during overnight subway closures (MTA).

### [DIGITAL] ACCESS TO THE JUSTICE SYSTEM
In Malaysia, proceedings of the Court of Appeal were livestreamed to the public for the first time on 23 April (NewStraitsTimes). Parties involved in civil cases were also encouraged to apply for online hearings (Bernama, Kehakiman.gov). Other jurisdictions allowing similar flexibility and implementing digital functionalities to complement court functions include Indonesia, Singapore and China.

### CONTINUING PARLIAMENTARY FUNCTIONS
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