

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 28TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2020-2021) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 10th JUNE, 2021
IN THE DOME OF THE ARTHUR CHUNG CONFERENCE CENTRE,
LILIENDAAL, GREATER GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (71)

Speaker (1)

*Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (38)

Peoples Progressive Party Civic (38)

Prime Minister (1)

Hon. Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark A. Phillips, M.S.S., M.P., Prime Minister

Vice-President (1)

Hon. Bharrat Jagdeo, M.P., Vice-President (Virtual Participation)

Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (1)

Hon. Mohabir A. Nandlall, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Senior Ministers (17)

Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni), Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip

Hon. Hugh H. Todd, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation

*Hon. Dr. Ashni K. Singh, M.P., Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance

Hon. Bishop Juan A. Edghill, M.S., J.P., M.P., Minister of Public Works

***Non-Elected Member**

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2.

Hon. Dr. Frank C. S. Anthony, M.P., Minister of Health

Hon. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara),
Minister of Education

*Hon. Brindley H.R. Benn, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

Hon. Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne), Minister of
Agriculture

Hon. Pauline R.A. Campbell-Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

Hon. Joseph L.F. Hamilton, M.P., Minister of Labour

Hon. Vickram O. Bharrat, M.P., Minister of Natural Resources

*Hon. Oneidge Walrond, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Hon. Nigel D. Dharamlall, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam), Minister of Local
Government and Regional Development

Hon. Collin D. Croal, M.P. (Region No. 1 – BarimaWaini), Minister of Housing and Water

Hon. Vindhya V. H. Persaud, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister of
Human Services and Social Security

Hon. Charles S. Ramson, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Hon. Sonia S. Parag, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

Junior Ministers (4)

Hon. Susan M. Rodrigues, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister within the
Ministry of Housing and Water

Hon. Deodat Indar, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Public Works

Hon. Anand Persaud, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Local Government and Regional
Development

Hon. Warren K.E. McCoy, M.P., Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister

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***Non-Elected Member**

3.

Other Members (14)

Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Hon. Alister S. Charlie, M.P. (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

Hon. Dr. Vishwa D.B. Mahadeo, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Hon. Sanjeev J. Datadin, M.P.

Hon. Seepaul Narine, M.P.

Hon. Yvonne Pearson-Fredericks, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P.

Hon. Faizal M. Jaffarally, M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)

Hon. Dr. Tandika S. Smith, M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Hon. Lee G.H. Williams, M.P.

*Hon. Sarah Browne, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs

*Hon. Vikash Ramkissoon, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture

Hon. Bhagmattie Veerasammy, M.P.

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION (32)

(i) A Partnership For National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU/AFC) (31)

Hon. Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph F. Harmon, M.S.M., M.P., Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Roysdale A. Forde, S.C., M.P.

Hon. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P. (Virtual - Participation)

Hon. Dawn Hastings-Williams, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Hon. Dr. Nicolette O. Henry, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Karen R.V. Cummings, M.P.

Hon. Tabitha J. Sarabo-Halley, M.P.

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Hon. Christopher A. Jones, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip (Virtual Participation)

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***Non-Elected Member**

4.

Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

Hon. David A. Patterson, M.P.

Hon. Coretta A. McDonald, A.A., M.P.

Hon. Catherine A. Hughes, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Hon. Haimraj B. Rajkumar, M.P. (Virtual Participation)

Hon. Amanza O.R. Walton-Desir, M.P.

Hon. Natasha Singh-Lewis, M.P.

Hon. Sherod A. Duncan, M.P.

Hon. Juretha V. Fernandes, M.P.

Hon. Vincent P. Henry, M.P.

Hon. Ronald Cox, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

Hon. Shurwayne F.K. Holder, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam)

Hon. Ganesh A. Mahipaul, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Hon. Nima N. Flue-Bess, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Hon. Maureen A. Philadelphia, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Virtual Participation)

Hon. Deonarine Ramsaroop, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Hon. Vinceroy H. Jordan, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)

Hon. Dineshwar N. Jaiprashad, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Hon. Richard E. Sinclair, M.P. (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

Hon. Jermaine A. Figueira, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

Hon. Devin L. Sears, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

A New and United Guyana, Liberty and Justice Party and The New Movement (ANUG, LJP & TNM) (1)

Hon. Lenox R. O’Dell Shuman, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Officers (2)

Mr. Sherlock E. Isaacs, A.A., Clerk of the National Assembly

Ms. Hermina Gilgeours, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

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COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 2.23 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk led in Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-

The Speaker made the following announcement:

Ruling made by the Chief Justice on the Parliamentary Secretaries

“Hon. Members, we have had, since our last Sitting, the Ruling by the Courts regarding two persons who were sitting in the National Assembly. I refer to the words of the former Honourable Speaker, Dr. Scotland, on the 27th February, 2016. The Honourable Members are not here, but I believe that I owe it to the Honourable Members of this House to understand their absence. He concluded that: “Whatever views may exist in relation to the decision of the court, at any time, the first objection is to obey the Courts decision and then we proceed from there.”

As I mentioned, the persons are not here today”.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

(1) By the Prime Minister:

Annual Reports of the Public Utilities Commission for the years 2018 and 2019.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance:

Mortgage Finance Agreement between the Government of Guyana and the Bank of Baroda (Guyana) Inc.

(Circulated)

(3) By the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance:

Annual Report of the Police Complaints Authority for the year 2019.

(Circulated)

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(4) By the Minister of Public Works:

Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority for the years 2012 to 2016.

(Circulated)

(5) By the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance:

- (i) Loan Agreement No. 10/SFR-OR-GUY dated February 24, 2021 between the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for an amount of US\$112,432,000. The purpose of this Loan is to assist the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana in financing the Linden to Mabura Hill Road Upgrade Project.

(Circulated)

- (ii) Loan Agreement No. 22/SFR-GUY dated February 24, 2021 between the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for an amount of US\$9,780,000. The purpose of this Loan is to assist the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana in financing the Hospitality and Tourism Training Institute Project.

(Circulated)

- (iii) Loan Contract No. 5180/BL-GY dated March 9, 2021 between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for an amount of US\$30,400,000. The purpose of this Loan is to contribute to the financing and execution of the Support to Safety Nets for Vulnerable Populations Affected by Coronavirus in Guyana.

(Circulated)

7.

- (iv) Financing Agreement Credit No. 6825-GY dated March 10, 2021 between the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the International Development Association (IDA) in an amount equivalent to SDR9,500,000 for the purpose of: (i) providing additional financing for the Original Secondary Education Improvement Project dated October 10, 2014 (Credit No. 5473-GY); and (ii) amending the said Original Financing Agreement (Credit No. 5473GY).

(Circulated)

- (v) Public Debt Annual Report for 2020.

(Circulated)

- (vi) Financial Paper No. 1 of 2021 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$1,906,775,000 for the period 2021-04-01 to 2021-06-08.

(Circulated)

- (vii) Financial Paper No. 2 of 2021 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$21,360,385,051 for the period ending 2021-12-31.

(Circulated)

- (6) By the Minister of Home Affairs:

The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) (Amendment of Second Schedule) Order 2021 – No. 8 of 2021.

(Circulated)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

1. CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES IN THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

1. Can the Honourable Minister provide the designation of each person employed on contract in the Ministry of Housing and Water from August 2, 2020?

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2. Can the Honourable Minister provide the emoluments (salaries and other benefits) for each of the persons employed on contract from August 2, 2020?
3. Can the Honourable Minister advise if allowances for these employments were in Budget 2020 and, if so, under which Line Item are they being paid?
(Notice Paper No. 55 (Q36 Opp.36) published on 2021-02-18)

ANSWERS

See **APPENDIX I** for answers to the questions above.

2. COVID-19 RELIEF DISBURSEMENT

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Human Services and Social Security

On Monday, December 28, 2020, the National Assembly approved an additional sum of \$2.5B, “provision for payment of the COVID-19 Relief for Household Initiative.”

1. Can the Honourable Minister state what percentage of the \$2.5B has been paid out to households in the Demerara-Mahaica Region between December 28, 2020 to December 31, 2020?
2. Can the Honourable Minister state the areas in Demerara-Mahaica still to be serviced with the COVID-19 disbursement?
3. Can the Honourable Minister provide a specimen of the “pre-assessment form” being used by the COVID-19 Relief teams for the disbursements of the \$25,000.00 per household?

9.

4. Can the Honourable Minister provide a copy of the schedule for the COVID-19 disbursements in Central Georgetown, Demerara- Mahaica Region?

(Notice Paper No. 58 (Q39 Opp.39) published on 2021-02-18)

ANSWERS

1. “A total of 10,000 cash grants were paid out in the Demerara-Mahaica Region during the period December 28th to December 30th, 2020. This amounted to \$250,000,000, representing 10 percent of the \$2.5B.
2. To date we have serviced all areas in the Demerara-Mahaica Region, with the completion date for phase one of the programme slated for Friday 12th March.
3. See **APPENDIX II** for Application Form used for primary household recipients, and **APPENDIX III** for the Pink Slip Application.
4. Schedules cannot be provided due to security reasons since it involves the transportation and disbursement of cash.”

3. ALLOCATIONS OF HOUSELOTS MADE PRE AUGUST 2, 2020

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

Can the Honourable Minister provide information on the following:

1. Number of house lots for housing purposes in the following areas:
 - Prospect, Providence, Little Diamond and Great Diamond – East Bank Demerara;
 - Cummings Lodge, Mon Repos, Annandale, La Bonne Intention, Vigilance, Blandenhall and Strathspey – East Coast Demerara;

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- Experiment – Mahaica-Berbice; and
 - Hampshire, Williamsburg, Fort Ordinance, No.75 and No.79?
2. Is the Central Housing and Planning Authority refusing to accept payments from allottees who were allocated lands in areas listed above pre-August 2, 2020?
 3. If so, when will allottees who were allocated lands pre-August 2, 2020, be allowed to make their payments?
 4. Can the Honourable Minister provide the total number of persons who paid for their house lots in full up to the end of the year 2020 and are yet to receive their respective Certificate of Title?
 5. Can the Honourable Minister provide the total number of persons who paid for their house lots in part up to the end of the year 2020, and are yet to receive their respective Agreement of Sale?
 6. Can the Honourable Minister provide the total number of persons who paid for their house lots in full up to the end of the year 2020, and are yet to receive their respective Agreement of Sale?
 7. After allottees are allocated their house lots and paid in-part, how long, in terms of days, months or years does it take the Central Housing and Planning Authority to give allottees their respective Agreement of Sale?
 8. After allottees are allocated their house lots and paid in-full, how long, in terms of days, months or years does it take the Central Housing and Planning Authority to give allottees their respective Agreement of Sale?

11.

9. After allottees receive their Agreement of Sale, how long in terms of days, months or years does it take the Central Housing and Planning Authority to give allottees their respective Certificate of Title?

(Notice Paper No. 59 (Q40 Opp.40) published on 2021-02-18)

ANSWERS

- (1) “The table below shows the number of house lots for housing purposes:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>NO. OF HOUSE LOTS</u>
Prospect	506
Providence	190
Great Diamond	1044
Little Diamond	524
Cummings Lodge	1090
Mon Repos	203
Annandale	373
La Bonne Intention	445
Vigilance	416
Blanden Hall	120
Strathspey	316
Experiment	673
Mahaica-Berbice	-
Hampshire	98
Williamsburg	147
Ordinance Fortlands	341
No. 75	258
No. 79	36

- (2) No, the CH&PA has/is accepting payments from allottees who were allocated lands listed above pre-August 2, 2020. However, during transition there was a one month holding period.

- (3) Not applicable.

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- (4) The total number of persons who paid for their house lots in full up to the end of the year 2020 is two hundred and thirty-nine (239) that were yet to receive their respective Certificate of Title.
- (5) The total number of persons who paid for their house lots in part up to the end of the year 2020 is three thousand, two hundred and sixty-three (3,263) that were yet to receive their respective Agreement of Sale.
- (6) The total number of persons who paid for their house lots in full up to the end of the year 2020 is two hundred and thirty-nine (239) that were yet to receive their respective Agreement of Sale.
- (7) After allottees are allocated their house lots and paid in-part, it takes the CH&PA approximately two (2) or three (3) weeks to give allottees their respective Agreement of Sale on the condition that the land is already owned by the CH&PA.
- (8) After allottees are allocated their house lots and paid in-full, it takes the CH&PA approximately two (2) to three (3) weeks to give allottees their respective Agreement of Sale on the condition that the land is owned by CH&PA.
- (9) After allottees receive their Agreement of Sale, it takes approximately three (3) to six (6) months to give allottees their respective Certificate of Title on the condition that the land is owned by CH&PA.”

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4. **INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS**

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

On Monday, December 28, 2020, the National Assembly approved an additional sum of \$2B, “Infrastructural Development and Buildings” for the infrastructural works in new areas.

1. Can the Honourable Minister state what percentage of the \$2B has been expended between December 28, 2020 to December 31, 2020?
2. Can the Honourable Minister provide a detailed list of where infrastructural development and building works are being done, the amount expended, and the percentage of works done for each activity as at January 14, 2021?
3. Can the Honourable Minister provide a list of the eighteen (18) areas where developmental works are taking place and the status of each?

(Notice Paper No. 60 (Q41 Opp.41) published on 2021-02-18)

ANSWERS

1. “Sixty percent (60%) of the 2B was expended between December 28,2020 to December 31, 2020.
2. A detailed list of where infrastructural development and building works are being done, the amount expended, and the percentage of works done for each activity as at January 14, 2021 is attached in **APPENDIX IV**.
3. A list of the eighteen (18) areas where developmental works are taking place and the status of each is attached in **APPENDIX V.**”

5. **FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE NEW ROAD LINKAGE FROM DIAMOND TO ECCLES, EAST BANK DEMERARA**

Member Asking: Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

Can the Honourable Minister provide the following:

1. When was the project conceived?
2. Is there a Feasibility Study for the project? If so, kindly state the duration of the Feasibility Study?
3. What procurement method was used for procuring the services of a Consultant or Consulting Firm? Kindly provide copies of the published advertisement.
4. What is the cost of the Feasibility Study and how was the study funded? Kindly provide copies of the completed report.
5. Was the funding catered for in the 2020 National Budget? If yes, kindly indicate the Line Item.

(Notice Paper No. 56 (Q37 Opp.37) published on 2021-03-08)

ANSWERS

1. “The project was conceived when H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali was the Minister of Housing and Water.
2. No feasibility study for this project was done.
3. No procurement method was required. All the designs were done by the Projects Department of CHPA.
4. Not applicable.
5. Yes, the funding was catered for in the 2020 National Budget under line item 1903100-Infrastructural Development and Buildings.

6. PROGRAMME 131 – POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Member Asking: **Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development**

1. Can the Honourable Minister provide a list of the vacant positions that are currently existing within Programme 131 – Policy Development and Administration?

2. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 131 – Policy Development and Administration – Other Goods and Services Purchased, line item 6284 (other), there is an allocated sum of \$8M. Can the Honourable Minister please provide a breakdown for this sum?

3. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 131 – Policy Development and Administration – Other Operating Expenses, line item 6294 (other), there is an allocated sum of \$4.5M. Can the Honourable Minister please provide a breakdown for this sum?

4. For Programme 131 – Policy Development and Administration, a sum of \$2.8M is approved for training (including scholarships). Can the Honourable Minister say what training course will be offered and which category of staff will benefit from the training, including scholarship?

5. Can the Hon. Minister provide a list of the designations of all the employees in his Ministry whose salaries are currently being withheld?

(Notice Paper No. 69 (Q45 Opp.45) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
3. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
4. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.

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5. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.”

6. PROGRAMME 134 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT

Member Asking:

Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Minister Answering:

The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 134 – Local Government Development – Staffing Details, there is an increase from 28 to 33. Can the Honourable Minister please provide the designations of the 33 employees in this programme, their salaries, and other benefits?
2. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 134 – Local Government Development, Line item 6211 (Expenses Specific to the Agency), can the Honourable Minister provide a detailed breakdown of the approved \$285M and can the Honourable Minister specify the salaries, stipend, and all other financial benefits of the 10 Regional Chairpersons, 10 regional Vice Chairpersons, 10 Regional Executive Officers, 10 Mayors, 10 Deputy Mayors, NDC Chairpersons and Overseers?
3. With an approved sum of \$19.7M under Programme 134 – Local Government Development for the year 2021 as shown in the Details of Current Expenditure for 2021, can the Honourable Minister provide a list of the roads, bridges, drainage, and irrigation works and other infrastructure to be maintained? Can the Honourable Minister specify the location of the roads, bridges, drainage, and irrigation works and other infrastructure, along with the specific cost attached to each project?
4. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 134 – Local Government Development, can the Honourable Minister provide a detailed breakdown of Line Item 6294 (other) which has an approved sum of \$534M?

17.

5. From the details of the current expenditure 2021, Programme 134 – Local Government Development, Line Item 6312 has an approved sum of \$132.894M. Can the Honourable Minister provide a list of the Local Authorities that will receive a subvention from the Ministry and the amount of subvention associated to each Local Authority?

(Notice Paper No. 70 (Q46 Opp.46) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
3. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
4. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
5. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.”

8. HAAGS BOSCH LANDFILL SITE

Member Asking: **Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Local Government and Regional Developmen**

1. Can the Honourable Minister specify the type of work expected to be done along with the cost for each type of work at the Haags Bosch Landfill site?
2. Can the Honourable Minister provide a detailed breakdown of the operational cost of Haags Bosch Landfill site for 2021?
3. Can the Hon. Minister state what is the cost attached to the completion of Cell 2 at Haags Bosch Sanitary Landfill site?

(Notice Paper No. 71 (Q47 Opp.47) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. “Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
3. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.”

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS AND COMMISSION

Member Asking: Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. Can the Honourable Minister say what awareness programme will the Ministry be engaged in as it relates to educating our nation on Local Government Elections?
2. Can the Honourable Minister say when will the Local Government Commission be fully constituted and functioning and what intervention will he make concerning the current Secretary of the Commission directing and instructing Local Authorities in the absence of the Commission?
3. Can the Honourable Minister say what are the salaries and other benefits of members of the Local Government Commission, including the Secretary of the Commission?
4. Can the Honourable Minister say in which month is the Government anticipating the holding of Local Government Elections?

(Notice Paper No. 72 (Q48 Opp.48) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. "Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
3. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.
4. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly."

10. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD ENTREPRENEURIAL (SLED) PROJECTS

Member Asking: Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. The Ministry spent \$105M from the 2020 Budget on Sustainable Livelihood and Entrepreneurial Projects (SLED). Can the Hon. Minister state the type of projects, where the projects are located, the cost of each project and what systems are in place to ensure the sustainability of the projects?

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2. Can the Honourable Minister say how much money from the \$180M approved in Budget 2021, Capital Expenditure (Project Code 1904300 – Regional Economic Transformation) will be spent on Sustainable Livelihood Entrepreneurial Development (SLED) projects?

(Notice Paper No. 73 (Q49 Opp.49) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. “Prior to August 2020, the Ministry of Social Protection was directly responsible for the (SLED) projects for which there is total lack of information.
2. Refer to the National Estimates passed at the 12th Sitting of the National Assembly.”

11. CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT- GUYANA POLICE FORCE

Member Asking: **Ms. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of Home Affairs**

- A. Can the Honourable Minister state whether the recently established Corporate Communications Unit was created in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Guyana Police Force? If yes, can the Honourable Minister indicate which section was amended. If no, can the Honourable Minister state under which authority was the Unit established?
- B. Can the Honourable Minister state whether the positions of the Director and Deputy Director were advertised and what criteria were used in selecting these individuals?
- C. Can the Honourable Minister provide copies of the terms of the contracts for the appointments of the Director and Deputy Director of the Corporate Communications Unit? Also, can the Honourable Minister provide their duties and responsibilities and state if other allowances and benefits are afforded to the Director and Deputy Director, which are not included in their contracts?

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- D. Can the Honourable Minister state what additional costs, if any, are attached to the services render by the Director and Deputy Director for which the Government of Guyana and, by extension, taxpayers are responsible?
- E. Can the Honourable Minister state whether the roles of these new employees overlap those of Police Officers who have been trained and assigned to perform these tasks?
- F. Can the Honourable Minister indicate, other than the Director and Deputy Director, if they are other civilians attached to this Unit? If yes, what are their salaries, and allowances? Can the Honourable Minister also state if the positions were advertised and what criteria were used in selecting these individuals?
- G. Can the Honourable Minister indicate, if any, how many Police Officers operate within this Unit?
- H. Can the Honourable Minister state how many staff are assigned to this Unit?

(Notice Paper No. 106 (Q80 Opp.80) published on 2021-05-06)

ANSWERS

- (A) “The Communications Unit was established as part of the Strategic Plan of Guyana Police Force.
- (B) The designations of the persons employed within the Communications Unit of the Guyana Police Force are Communications Coordinator and Public Relations Officer and not the positions stated in the question. These positions were not advertised.
- (C) The Communications Coordinator position attracts a salary on the GS:12 Scale, while that of the Public Relations Officer attracts salary at the GS:11 Scale. The related allowances are standard for these positions.

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(D) The positions are not on the Force's authorized inventory; hence the expenses are 'additional cost'.

(E) The roles of the new employees of the Communication Unit do not overlap those of the Police Officers who are attached to the Unit, however these enhances the work of the Unit.

(F) There are no other civilians attached to the Communications Unit.

(G) Nine (9) Police Officers operate within the Unit.

(H) Eleven (11) staffers are assigned to the Unit.”

12. GUYANA ONLINE ACADEMY OF LEARNING (GOAL) INITIATIVE

Member Asking: **Ms. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley, M.P.**

Minister Answering: **The Minister of the Public Service**

1. The Ministry of the Public Service has opened the application process for scholarships under its GOAL initiative in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service state whether recipients under this programme will be contractually obligated to the Government of Guyana?
2. Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service state whether beneficiaries of this programme will be required to join the Public Service upon completing their studies?
3. Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service please state whether a formal needs assessment was completed to inform on the current and future skills needed for the Public Service and the country?

22.

4. Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service provide this National Assembly with any document that establishes the number and break down of Public Servants by skillset as well as the current needs of the Public Service in particular and Guyana in general by sector?
5. Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service furnish this National Assembly with any document that clearly outlines how the programmes being offered for scholarships were decided on and by whom?
6. Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service provide an outline of the process being used to ensure that there is equity and equality in the awarding of scholarships under the GOAL programme?
7. Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service explain the process and office holders that will determine who the recipients of the GOAL scholarships will be?

(Notice Paper No. 107 (Q81 Opp.81) published on 2021-05-06)

ANSWERS

1. “Yes. The recipients of the 20,000 online scholarship programmes will be contractually obligated, based on their new skills, to provide community services before completing the program of study. The duration of the community service is related to the length of their studies as provided below:
 - (i) Six months of study -2 weeks of Community Service
 - (ii) One year of study - 4 weeks of Community Service
 - (iii) Two years of study - 6 weeks of Community Service
 - (iv) Three years of study - 8 weeks of Community Service

23.

The non-paying Community Service may be performed with registered Private Sector Organizations, Neighbourhood Democratic Councils, National Government Agencies, Non- Governmental Organizations, Community Based Organizations, and Approved Educational Institutions.

2. No. Since this is aimed at National Educational Development rather than training for the Public Sector solely; the beneficiaries are not required to join the Public Service upon completing their studies. They are however free to apply for jobs in both the Public and Private Sectors once vacancies exist. They will also be encouraged to become entrepreneurs, creating jobs based on their skill levels and to seek seed funding from the public domain.
3. This initiative is the first of its kind to be implemented in Guyana and it was birthed having recognized the challenges faced by several categories of Guyanese, particularly in the Hinterland and Rural communities in accessing tertiary and technical Education. The PPP/C in its manifesto promised “to raise the quality of education across all levels; and to prepare students for the job market, especially at the technical and tertiary level”. In an effort to achieve these goals. It promised to undertake the following actions:
 - (i) Build, expand and improve educational facilities across Guyana.
 - (ii) Expand the use of ICT in Education.
 - (iii) Enhance opportunities in Technical Vocational Education.
 - (iv) Facilitate the establishment of an online university and promote e-learning for hinterland students.
 - (v) Update a manpower survey and undertake curricula reform accordingly.
 - (vi) Provide 20,000 online scholarships.

The aim of the 20,000 GOAL online Scholarships is to create educational and technical opportunities for the middle and lower-class groups of the population to achieve self-development and will inevitably support manpower requirements of both the Private and Public sectors by the year 2025.

The objectives of this programme are:

- To provide training and educational opportunities to persons who lacks access to tertiary education because of where they live and financial constraints.
- To develop a new cadre of work force who are better trained to enhance their current jobs.
- To provide training opportunities in new areas of studies that will support Guyana's future development.

Hence, there is no need for a formal need assessment study. The programmes are not designed to fill the vacancies in the Public Service but to bring tertiary education to persons and communities who have been ignored or neglected or were otherwise restricted.

4. There is no document which establishes:
 - i. The number and break down of Public Servants by skillset,
 - ii. Current needs of the Public Service and Guyana in general.

5. There is no document. However, the programmes offered under the 20,000 Online GOAL scholarships programme of the PPP/C Administration were chosen by the Minister of Education and Minister of Public Service after consultations with several Government Ministries, Agencies, and the public prior to the 2020 National and Regional Elections. Consequently, negotiations were held with five (5) highly accredited and recognized Universities around the world namely: Indira Ghandi Open University, Jain "Deemed to be" University, University of Applied Sciences, University of Southern Caribbean, and University of the West Indies Open Campus.

6. The process of awarding scholarships under the GOAL initiative will be conducted in a manner consistent with fairness. Several critical factors will be considered based on the selected programme, namely: academics standing, financial capacity, regional balance, national human development priority and quality of motivational statement.

25.

All of these are based on data extracted from the applicant's application forms. Special attention will be placed on regional balance so as to ensure citizens in the hinterland and rural communities are well served.

7. Recipients of the GOAL scholarship programme will be by a selection panel consisting of four (4) persons headed by the director of the Guyana online Academy of learning. The awardees will be selected based on the criteria stated in Response to Question 6 above.”

For Oral Replies

***13. AURORA GOLD MINE/ZIJIN MINING**

Mr. Jermaine Figueira, M.P. asked the Minister of Labour the following questions:

- (A)*Can the Honourable Minister inform the House how many Guyanese and Foreigners are presently employed at the former Guyana Goldfield Operations at Aurora, that is now managed as AGM/ZIJIN?
- (B)*Can the Honourable Minister further inform the House whether they are sub-contractors employed by AGM/ZIJIN? If yes, please provide the names of those sub-contractors and the number of Guyanese they employ.
- (C)*Can the Honourable Minister also inform the House whether the Guyanese workers directly employed with AGM/ZIJIN are permanent or contracted for a period? Please provide the numbers for each category and state the length of contract in each instant.
- (D)*Is the Minister in a position to advise this House whether the employers referred to in (B) and (C) are in compliance with the National Insurance Scheme Act?

(E) *Can the Honourable Minister additionally inform the house how many Guyanese employees covered in B & C, if any, contracted COVID-19 during 2020-2021 were negatively affected by non-remittance of their NIS contributions by their employer, when they sought to make sickness benefit claims?

(F) *Can the Honourable Minister also inform the house how his Ministry plans to assist those Guyanese employees, if any, that contracted COVID-19 at their place of employment AGM/ZIJIN, and were not paid either by NIS or their employer when they were off the job attending to their illness?

(Notice Paper No. 91 (Q65 Opp.65) published on 2021-04-12)

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

***14. UPGRADING OF SPORTS GROUNDS**

Mr. Jermaine Figueira, M.P. asked the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports the following questions:

(A)*Can the Honourable Minister inform the House which sports grounds (name & region) will be upgraded in 2021?

(B)*Can the Honourable Minister inform the House what selection process was utilized to identify the sports grounds and at what cost? Given that there is a sum of \$186,400M in the 2021 Estimates under project code 4506400.

(C)*Can the Honourable Minister additionally inform the house whether any of the grounds to be upgraded will be for a specialized sport discipline?

(D)*Can the Honourable Minister inform the House if the facilities will be improved to be unsterilized under any weather to accommodate play day, or night?

27.

(E) *If yes, please identify the sports discipline, the ground, and the cost.

(F) *Can the Honourable Minister inform this House how much of the \$186,400M was spent as at, 31st March 2021?

(Notice Paper No. 92 (Q66 Opp.66) published on 2021-04-12)

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports replied.

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P., asked the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports replied.

***15. CONSTRUCTION OF MINI SPORTS STADIUMS**

Member Asking: Mr. Jermaine Figueira, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports

(A) *Can the Honourable Minister inform the House which areas in Regions 10, 6 & 2 will mini sports stadiums be built in 2021, how were these sites selected, cost per stadium and proposed contract length? Given that a sum of over one billion dollars was identified in the 2021 Budget at REF 220, Volume 1.

(B) *Can the Honourable Minister inform the House in what way building of mini stadiums in regions (10 & 6) complement or augment ongoing construction of semi stadiums with synthetic tracts in Regions 10 & 6? Given the conceptual design of the latter.

(Notice Paper No. 93 (Q67 Opp.67) published on 2021-04-12)

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports replied.

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P., asked the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports replied.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS-

(1) FLOOD SITUATION IN GUYANA

The Prime Minister made a statement re. the present Flooding in Guyana.

(2) COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND VACCINATION

The Minister of Health made a statement re. COVID-19 Pandemic and Vaccination in Guyana.

(3) DR. WALTER RODNEY'S DEATH RECORDS

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs made a statement re. 41st Death Anniversary of Dr. Walter Rodney.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS-

SUSPENSION OF SIX (6) A PARTNERSHIP FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph F. Harmon, M.S.M., M.P., Leader of the Opposition, made a Personal Explanation re. Suspension of Six (6) A Partnership for National Unity and Alliance for Change Members of Parliament from the 27th Sitting of the National Assembly.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE-

The Hon. Speaker informed Members that a request for leave to move the adjournment of the Assembly on Definite Matters of Urgent Importance was received from Hon. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P., re. Flooding in Guyana.

The Speaker indicated that the matter was definite and important but not an issue of ‘urgency’. He stated in relation to the issue of urgency the matter must be, of recent occurrence and raised without delay. In this regard, *The Erskine May* states on page 386 “The fact that a grievance is continuing, is not sufficient”. The Speaker also refer to *Parliamentary Procedure*: Dr. Subash C. Kashyap. It is stated on page 767 that “the matter must have arisen suddenly in a manner of an emergency and should not have arisen over a series of weeks”. The motion was then disallowed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

Presentation and First Readings

ITEM 1 - SUMMARY JURISDICTION (OFFENCES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 6/2021

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, on behalf to the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Act.

ITEM 2 - CIVIL LAW OF GUYANA (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 7/2021

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, on behalf to the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Civil Law of Guyana Act.

ITEM 3 - POLICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 8/2021

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Police Act.

ITEM 4 - **FIREARMS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 9/2021**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Firearms Act.

ITEM 5 - **REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No.10/2021**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Registration of Births and Deaths Act.

ITEM 6 - **EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 11/2021**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Evidence Act.

ITEM 7 - **NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES (CONTROL) (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 12/2021**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Act.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

(i) **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

MOTIONS

ITEM 1 - NATURAL GAS FLARING AT THE ESSO EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION GUYANA LIMITED

In light of the Speaker's Ruling the following motion will not be proceeded with until the matter is resolved by the Courts:

WHEREAS Esso Exploration and Production Guyana Limited (EEPGL) was on June 1, 2017, granted an Environmental Permit, No. 20160705-EEDPF, to undertake Phase 1 of the Liza Development Project (Liza 1) which included, the use of a Floating Production, Storage, and Offloading (FPSO) vessel "to process, store and offload the recovered oil during production operations within the Stabroek Block";

AND WHEREAS the Liza 1 Permit (Clause 1.10) enjoined the Permit Holder, EEPGL, to "Employ effective operational and maintenance systems on all aspects of the facility whose failure could impact the environment...";

AND WHEREAS the Liza 1 Permit (Clause 3.6) expressly prohibits flaring and venting; with exceptions being made for "tank flashing emission, standing/working/breathing losses" and flaring related to the startup of the FPSO, emergencies or during periods of maintenance;

AND WHEREAS EEPGL has routinely been engaged in flaring in direct contravention of the terms of the Liza 1 Permit issued and acknowledged, and as a result, has caused, and is causing substantial damage to the environment and the credibility of the Liza 1 Development Project;

32.

AND WHEREAS calculations based upon reported EEPGL's production data shows that zero flaring, except for the small amount allowed for pilot flaring, may be achieved by reducing oil production by approximately 15,000 bopd;

AND WHEREAS according to Clause 13.1 in the Liza 1 and Liza 2 Permits, "The Environmental Protection Agency reserves the right to review and amend the conditions attached to this Permit",

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly expresses its dissatisfaction, that all reasonable measures have not been taken or are being taken to prevent the flaring of gas as currently exists, and which reported by EEPGL to be 16 million cubic feet, per day (mcf) at the designed maximum safe oil production limit of 120,000 barrels oil, per day (bopd).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the National Assembly calls on the Government of Guyana:

1. To direct Esso Exploration and Production Guyana Limited to abide by the terms and conditions of the Liza 1 Permit issued on June 1, 2017;
2. To request that the Environmental Protection Agency takes all reasonable measures to ensure compliance including, EEPGL achieving zero flaring at the Liza 1 Project through reduction of oil production rates; and suspension of same Liza 1 Permit if zero flaring is not met, until it is satisfied that all reasonable and lawful efforts are being made to ensure that there is no flaring of gas as has occurred over the past several weeks; and

33.

3. To request that the Liza 1 and Liza 2 Permits be immediately amended by the EPA to become consistent with the updated conditions in the Payara Permit, relative to flaring.

(Notice Paper No. 63 (M22 Opp. 4) published on 2021-02-26)

ITEM 2 - LOCATION OF GUYANA SHORE BASE SERVICES

Mr. David Patterson, M.P. moved the following motion:

WHEREAS successive Governments of Guyana have approved three Development Plans for ExxonMobil (Liza I, Liza II and Payara) and additionally, the company has announced its intention to apply for a 4th Development Plan (Yellowtail) before the end of 2021;

AND WHEREAS the Guyana Shore Base Inc., is located on the Demerara River, which is the busiest river in the country;

AND WHEREAS ExxonMobil has recently issued a Request for Information to identify contractors who can provide fully functional, fit for purpose shore base facilities, to support their needs of future projects, starting 2023,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the National Assembly advises the Government to establish a Multi-Agency

Taskforce to prepare a Land Use Policy, specifically for the location of the Oil and Gas Sector and present their Report to this Assembly, as early as possible, but within six (6) months;

34.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Government advises the Taskforce that it is the preference of this National Assembly for future onshore bases to be in the Counties of Berbice and Essequibo to ensure parity in development of the Oil and Gas Industry and the equal-able development across Guyana for the benefit of all Citizens;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Government of Guyana advises ExxonMobil and all other Oil and Gas Operators that they should suspend their RFI until the Taskforce completes its Report on the Land Use Policy, which should be completed within six (6) months; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Government of Guyana informs ExxonMobil and all other Oil and Gas Operators that all future shore bases shall be State-Owned but leased to private operators so as to ensure the maximum benefit for all Guyanese.

(Notice Paper No. 68 (M24 Opp.5) published on 2021-03-26)

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 5.19 p.m. the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 6.30 p.m. the Sitting was resumed.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Hon. Bishop Juan Edghill, M.P., Minister of Public Works

Hon. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley, M.P.

Hon. Deodat Indar, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Public Works

/...35

35.

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P.

SUSPENSION OF SO (10) 1

At 8.11 p.m., the Prime Minister moved that Standing Order No.10 (1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to continue beyond 8.00 p.m.

Hon. Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P., also spoke to the motion.

Presiding by Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.,

At 8.35 p.m., while Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P., was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

Speaker's Return to the Chamber

At 9.00 p.m. the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Dr. Ashni Singh, M.P., The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with
Responsibility for Finance

Hon. Devin Sears, M.P.

Hon. Vickram Bharrat, M.P., Minister of Natural Resources

Hon. Vinceroy Jordan, M.P.

Thereafter, the Hon. David Patterson, M.P., replied.

STANDING ORDER 39(2)

In accordance with Standing Order 39(2), the Minister of Natural Resources concluded the debate on the motion.

The motion was then **put** and **negatived** on the following division:

FOR

Mr. Sears
 Mr. Figueira
 Mr. Sinclair
 Mr. Jaiprashad
 Mr. Jordan
 Mr. Ramsaroop
 Ms. Philadelphia
 Mrs. Flue-Bess
 Mr. Mahipaul
 Mr. Holder
 Mr. Cox
 Mr. Henry
 Ms. Fernandes
 Mr. Duncan
 Mrs. Singh-Lewis
 Mrs. Walton Desir
 Mr. Rajkumar
 Mrs. Hughes
 Ms. Mc Donald
 Mr. Patterson
 Ms. Ferguson
 Mr. Jones
 Mrs. Chandan-Edmond
 Mrs. Sarabo-Halley
 Dr. Cummings
 Dr. Henry

AGAINST

Ms. Veerasammy
 Mr. Williams
 Dr. Smith
 Mr. Jaffarally
 Dr. Westford
 Dr. Ramsaran
 Mrs. Pearson-Fredericks
 Mr. Narine
 Mr. Datadin
 Dr. Mahadeo
 Mr. Charlie
 Mr. Seeraj
 Mr. McCoy
 Mr. A. Persaud
 Mr. Indar
 Ms. Rodrigues
 Ms. Parag
 Mr. Ramson
 Dr. V. Persaud
 Mr. Croal
 Mr. Dharamlall
 Mr. Bharrat
 Mr. Hamilton
 Ms. Sukhai
 Mr. Mustapha
 Ms. Manickchand

Mrs. Hastings-Williams
Mr. Trotman
Mr. Forde
Mr. Ramjattan
Mr. Harmon

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Dr. Anthony
Bishop Edghill
Mr. Todd
Ms. Teixeira
Mr. Nandlall
Mr. Jagdeo
Mr. Phillips

33

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.33 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m. on Monday, 14th June, 2021.

.....
HON. MANZOOR NADIR, M.P.,
Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

10th, June 2021.

