

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 29TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2020-2021) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON MONDAY, 14TH 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

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

/...2

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

/...3

***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
(Absent)

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

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)

/...4

***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 (Virtual Participation)

Officers (2)

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

Ms. Hermina Gilgeours, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

5.

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 2.05 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk led in Prayers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

1. LANDS IN POMEROON-SUPENAAM

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

During a visit to Pomeroon-Supenaam on 9th December 2020, His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali announced that an additional 600 house lots will be developed and distributed to residents in several Region 2 communities. The Chief Executive Officer of the Central Housing and Planning Authority, Mr. Sherwyn Greaves further explained, “that the areas identified for house lots are Charity and Lima Sands.”

Can the Honourable Minister state:

1. Where in Charity and Lima Sands are the lands located?
2. How many house lots are expected to be developed in each area?

(Notice Paper No. 65 (Q42 Opp.42) published on 2021-03-25)

ANSWERS

1. “The lands identified for allocation in Region No.2, is located at:
 - a. St. Joseph and Charity.
 - b. Onderneeming Phase 4.
2. Three hundred and fifty (350) house lots each are to be developed in Charity and Onderneeming Phase 4”.

6.

3. **HOUSES FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

On September 10, 2020, the Honourable Minister stated, “there will also be the construction of houses catering for young professionals... three areas in Region 4 have been identified to start construction and we have had several expressions of interests.”

1. Can the Honourable Member state the three (3) areas in Region Four (4) where the professional houses are expected to be constructed?
2. How many professional houses will be built as per area?
3. What is the expected cost (s) per unit?

(Notice Paper No. 66 (Q43 Opp.43) published on 2021-03-25)

ANSWER

1. “The three (3) areas in Region Four (4) where the professional houses are expected to be constructed are Plantation Little/Great Diamond, Plantation Prospect and Plantation Providence. The number of expected professional houses to be built are 100, 100 and 200, respectively. There are three models for which prices vary”.

3. **HOUSE LOTS DISTRIBUTION**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

During an outreach hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Water, Department of Central Housing and Planning Authority in East-Berbice, Corentyne on December 29, 2020, it was reported via the Department of Public Information, “over 3,600 house lots were delivered over the span of four months by the Ministry of Housing and Water; during the Dream Realised exercise.”

Can the Honourable Minister provide the following:

- (i) A disaggregation of the 3,600 house lots allocated in the various areas/regions where the “Dream Realised” outreaches were held?

7.

(ii) Provide for each area, the number of house lots per category that has been allocated?

(iii) Has the Central Housing and Planning Authority paid in full for the lands listed below?

- Meten-Meer-Zorg, West Coast Demerara
- Anna Catherina, West Coast Demerara
- Stewartville, West Coast Demerara
- Edinburgh, West Coast Demerara
- Corneila Ida, West Coast Demerara

(iv) If no, what mechanisms, or procedures are being utilized by the Central Housing and Planning Authority in acquiring the lands above?

(v) When are developmental works expected to commence on the lands listed above? Kindly provide schedule for each area.

(Notice Paper No. 67 (Q44 Opp.44) published on 2021-03-25)

ANSWERS

(i) “The table below shows the disaggregation of the 3,600 house lots:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>NO. OF HOUSE LOTS</u>
Edinburg	292
Anna Catherina	335
Cornelia Ida	197
Stewartville	225
Meten-Meer-Zorg	451
Little Diamond	290
Great Diamond	210
Cummings Lodge	462
La Bonne Intention Tract NY	149
La Bonne Intention Tract NX	33
Annandale	220
Vigilance	156
Blanden Hall	70
Strathspey	210
Ordinance Fortlands	187
Hampshire	25
Williamsburg	39

No. 75 Village	35
No. 79 Village	14

(ii) No, CHPA has not paid in full for those Lands.

(iii) The transfer of the said lands to CHPA by NICIL/GUYSUCO is in process. The final payment will be made upon completion of the transfer process.

(iv) Developmental works for each area has commenced and is on-going”.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. From Budget 2021 (Details of Capital Expenditure – Project Code 1302200 – Community Infrastructure Improvement Project), a sum of \$1.172B was approved. Can the Hon. Minister say how much of this lump sum will be spent on the Parika, Charity and Mon Repos Markets?
2. Can the Hon. Minister state what is the allotted sum for the rehabilitation of Neighbourhood Democratic Council buildings at Annandale/Riverstown, Aberdeen/Zorgen-Vlugt, Leguan, Canefield/Enterprise, Black Bush Polder and No. 52/74?

(Notice Paper No. 74 (Q50 Opp.50) 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”.

5. REVALUATION OF PROPERTIES

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

9.

1. In view of the recent Ruling by the Chief Justice concerning Rates and Taxes and the need for the Valuation Officer to do a countrywide revaluation of properties so that proprietors can pay their rightful taxes in keeping with the Laws of Guyana, can the Hon. Minister say when will the revaluation begin?
2. What is the salary and other benefits of the Chief Valuation Officer?

(Notice Paper No. 75 (Q50 Opp.50) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWERS

1. “The Ministry is not in receipt of the Chief Justice’s Ruling.
2. The Chief Valuation Officer is not a staff of the Ministry”.

6. PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES FROM AUGUST 5, 2020 TO MARCH 5, 2021

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

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

In keeping with Section 10(2) of the Procurement Act 2003, can the Hon. Minister provide a description of the goods, services, construction or consulting services procured from August 5, 2020 to March 5, 2021, from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, the names and addresses of suppliers or contractors that submitted tenders, proposals or quotations and the names and addresses of the suppliers or contractors with which contracts were entered into and contract prices from August 5, 2020 to March 5, 2021?

(Notice Paper No. 76 (Q51 Opp.51) published on 2021-03-30)

ANSWER

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

10.

7. **REFERENCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE – PLANNING AND SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COUNCILS**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

1. Reference Technical Assistance – Planning and support for Local Councils, would the Ministry be hosting a Local Conference on Local Democratic Organs and a National Conference on Local Democratic Organs, and, if yes, which month is it likely to be hosted?
2. In keeping with the Government’s policy, can the Hon. Minister state exclusively what is the Ministry’s policy on Local Government and Local Government Organs?

(Notice Paper No. 77 (Q52 Opp.52) 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”.

8. **PROGRAMME 731 – REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE**

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 731 – Regional Administration and Finance – Staffing Details, there is no increase in Clerical and Office Support staff and Semi- Skilled Operatives and Unskilled staff. In 2020, the number of staff members were 42 and 44 respectively, but the amount of money budgeted in 2021 is not the same as the amount expended in 2020. Can the Hon. Minister explain why the amount budgeted in 2021 for Line Items 6114 and 6115 are not the same as what was expended in 2020?
2. Can the Honourable Minister provide a list of the vacant positions that are currently existing within Programme 731 – Regional Administration and Finance?

(Notice Paper No. 78 (Q53 Opp.53) published on 2021-03-30)

/...11

11.

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.

For Oral Replies

9. ***OVERDRAFT BALANCE ON THE CONSOLIDATED FUND**

Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P., asked the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance the following questions:

- (i) Can the Honourable Minister state the overdraft balance on the Consolidated Fund as at December 31, 2020?
- (ii) How does this balance compare with the balance as at August 2, 2020?
- (iii) What has caused the deterioration/improvement in the two balances?
- (iv) What instruments does the Government plan to use to retire the overdraft?
- (v) With respect to (iv), please provide an approximate time when this will be done.

(Notice Paper No. 79 (Q54 Opp.54) published on 2021-03-30)

Thereafter, the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance replied.

Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P., asked the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance replied.

10. ***BOND SECURED BY NICIL TO BE USED BY GUYSUCO**

Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P., asked the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance the following questions:

- (i) Can the Honourable Minister state the amount of the bond secured by NICIL for use by GUYSUCO?
- (ii) With respect to (i), can the Honourable Minister state the amount secured and how much has been disbursed by the bondholders to NICIL?
- (iii) With respect to (ii), can the Honourable Minister state the amount disbursed by the bondholders to NICIL and how much has been disbursed to GUYSUCO, as at August 2, 2020 and at December 31, 2020?
- (iv) With respect to (iii), can the Honourable Minister state how the money was expended by GUYSUCO between current and capital expenditure?
- (v) Can the Honourable Minister state how much of the bond has been repaid by NICIL?
- (vi) Can the Honourable Minister state whether Government, as guarantor, has had to meet any of the repayments made to date?
- (vii) Can the Honourable Minister state whether the Government will continue to retain the balance of the bond for use by GUYSUCO?
- (viii) With respect to (vii), if the answer is yes, please, provide a schedule of disbursement of the balance.

13.

- (ix) With respect to (vii), if the answer is no, when will the balance of the bond be returned to the bondholders?

(Notice Paper No. 80 (Q55 Opp.55) published on 2021-03-30)

Thereafter, the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance replied.

Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P., asked the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance replied.

STANDING ORDER 22(8)

In accordance with Standing Order 22(8), the answers to the following Oral Questions will be circulated at the next Sitting of the National Assembly:

11. *VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS IN REGIONS #1-10

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

(A) *Can the Honourable Minister inform the House of the number & percentage of students by gender in Regions (1-10) that attended online classes, in the September to December 2020 term and the January to March 2021 term, for nursery, primary and secondary schools?

(B) *Can the Honourable Minister also inform the House of the number and percentage of students by gender in (A) that attended classes online 50% of the time and 75% of the time in Regions (1-10) for nursery, primary and secondary schools?

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14.

(C) *Can the Honourable Minister further inform the House of the number of students that were required to attend online classes for the last two terms by gender in regions (1-10), for nursery, primary and secondary schools?

(Notice Paper No. 94 (Q68 Opp.68) published on 2021-04-12)

12. ***PHYSICAL ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS IN REGIONS #1-10**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

(A) *Can the Honourable Minister inform the House of the percentage & number of students by gender in Regions (1-10) that attended classes face to face, in the September to December 2020 term and the January to March 2021 term, for primary and secondary schools?

(B) *Can the Honourable Minister also inform the House of the number of students that were required to attend classes face to face for the last two terms by gender in Regions (1-10), for primary and secondary schools?

(C) *Can the Honourable Minister further inform the House of the number & percentage of students by gender in (A) that attended classes face to face 50% and 75% of the time in regions (1-10), for primary and secondary schools?

(Notice Paper No. 95 (Q69 Opp.69) published on 2021-04-12)

13. ***REFITTING OF SCHOOLS OR CLASSROOMS TO DELIVER VIRTUAL CLASSES**

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Education

(A) *Can the Honourable Minister inform the House whether any schools/classrooms were refitted over the last two terms, September 2020 - March 2021, by the Ministry of Education to deliver online classes?

15.

(B) *If yes, please list the name of the schools and Region/s in which this was done and the number of students that school serves.

(Notice Paper No. 96 (Q70 Opp.70) published on 2021-04-12)

PUBLIC BUSINESS

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTIONS

**ITEM 1 - CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 1/2021 – CURRENT
AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES**

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

In Committee of Supply

The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance signified the recommendation or consent of the Cabinet and moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

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

(Notice Paper No. 119 (M27 Govt.17) published on 2021-06-10)

(Paper presented on 2021-06-10)

**(i) 47-473 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – FAMILY AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE
SERVICES**

CURRENT ESTIMATES

6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies

**(ii) 51-512–MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS – GUYANA POLICE FORCE
CAPITAL ESTIMATES**

2405900 – Land and Water Transport

**(iii)53-531-GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE – DEFENCE AND SECURITY SUPPORT
CAPITAL ESTIMATES**

2404600 – Air, Land and Water Transport

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, the Assembly adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly doth agree with the Committee of Supply in the following Resolution:

RESOLVED,

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 5.21 p.m. the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 6.33 p.m. the Sitting was resumed.

**ITEM 2 - CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 2/2021 – CURRENT
AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES**

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

In Committee of Supply

The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance signified the recommendation or consent of the Cabinet and moved the following motion:

17.

BE IT RESOLVED:

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

(Notice Paper No. 120 (M28 Govt.18) published on 2021-06-10)

(Paper presented on 2021-06-10)

(i) **02-022 – OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER – DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND MANAGEMENT**
CURRENT ESTIMATES

6294 – Other

(ii) **21-212 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE – AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

4503200 – Contributions to Local Corporation – GUYSUCO

Assembly resumed

SUSPENSION OF SO. 10(1)

At 7.52 p.m., during Consideration of Financial Paper No. 2/2021, Agency 21-212 – Ministry of Agriculture – Agriculture Development and Support Services, the Prime Minister moved that Standing Orders No.10(1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to continue beyond 8.00 p.m.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to continue consideration of Financial Paper No. 2/2021.

(iii) **31-312 – MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS – PUBLIC WORKS**
CAPITAL ESTIMATES

1101100 – Demerara Harbour Bridge

1404100 – Miscellaneous Roads/Drainage

1404900 – Rehabilitation of Public and Main Access Roads

18.

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

At 8.39 p.m., during Consideration of Financial Paper No. 2/2021, Agency 31-312 – Ministry of Public Works – Public Works, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

Speaker's Return to the Chamber

At 9.12 p.m. the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

(iv) **44-444 – MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS – SPORTS**

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

4506400 – Grounds Enhancement Programme

(v) **45-452 – MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER – HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

1903100 – Infrastructural Development and Buildings

(vi) **45-453 – MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND WATER – WATER SERVICE**

EXPANSION AND MANAGEMENT

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

2802200 – Coastal Water Supply

2802600 – Urban Sewerage and Water

(vii) **47-473 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – FAMILY AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE**

SERVICES

CURRENT ESTIMATES

6221– Drugs and Medical Supplies

(viii) **47-474 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – REGIONAL AND CLINICAL SERVICES**

CURRENT ESTIMATES

6221- Drugs and Medical Supplies

19.

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

1216200 – Ministry of Health-Buildings

2405600 – Land and Water Transport

2509000 – Equipment-Medical

(ix) **51-517 – MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS – CUSTOMS ANTI NARCOTICS**

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

2609200 – Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit

(x) **53-531 – GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE – DEFENCE AND SECURITY SUPPORT**

CURRENT ESTIMATES

6222 – Field Materials and Supplies

6241 – Rental of Buildings

6242 – Maintenance of Buildings

6292 – Dietary

6294 – Other

CAPITAL ESTIMATES

1200100 – Buildings

2404600 – Air, Land and Water Transport

2512600 – Furniture and Equipment

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, the Assembly adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly doth agree with the Committee of Supply in the following Resolution:

/...20

RESOLVED,

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

BILL – FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD READINGS

ITEM 3 – SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (NO.1 FOR 2021) BILL 2021 – Bill No. 13/2021 published on 2021-06-10

With the Leave of the Speaker, and on a motion by the Prime Minister, Standing Order Nos. 13(n) and 54 were suspended to enable the Supplementary Appropriation Bill No.13/2021 to be introduced at this stage and to be further proceeded with at that Sitting.

On a motion by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance the following Bill was introduced and was read the first, second and third times and passed as printed:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sums necessary to meet the expenditure (not otherwise lawfully charged on the Consolidated Fund) of Guyana for the fiscal year ending 31st December, 2021, estimates whereof have been approved by the National Assembly and for the appropriation of those sums for the specified purposes, in conformity with the Constitution.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 10.49 p.m. the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 11.30 p.m. the Sitting was resumed.

MOTION

ITEM 4 - REMOVAL OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the Public Accounts Committee met on December 28, 2020, under the Chairmanship of the Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly where Mr. David Patterson, M.P., was nominated and declared the Chairperson;

AND WHEREAS at the Sixth Meeting of the Public Accounts Committee, on February 1, 2021, following certain exposures during the examination of the 2016 Auditor General's Report, a motion was moved by Minister Gail Teixeira calling for Mr. David Patterson to resign as Chairperson while remaining as a member of the Committee and that another member of the Opposition be elected as the Chairperson; the motion was put in accordance with Standing Orders 26 (Admissibility of Motions) and 30 (h) Exemption from Notice;

AND WHEREAS the Chairperson having not agreed to resign, the motion was then moved and supported by the majority of the members for the removal of the Chairperson;

AND WHEREAS the Chairperson having not "put" the motion to a vote as required by the Standing Orders, the Clerk of the National Assembly was invited into the meeting to provide guidance;

AND WHEREAS the Clerk advised the Committee that the Regional Group of Clerks in the Caribbean had agreed that any member could move a motion for the Chairperson to step aside and that "no notice was required for a motion to be brought in a committee and the motion should be "put", and if a division was called, it should be voted on;"

AND WHEREAS on the departure of the Clerk, the Chairperson did not ‘put’ the motion but instead vacated the chair while remaining in the room and invited other members of the Opposition to take the chair whereby they declined; resulting in their being no Chair and the meeting being aborted;

AND WHEREAS the Seventh Meeting was summoned by the Chairperson on March 15, 2021, with the “Motion for the removal of the Chairperson” not listed as an item on the Agenda;

AND WHEREAS at the said Meeting, a motion was moved to amend the agenda to include, as the first item, “the Motion for the removal of Mr. David Patterson as Chairperson of the PAC”; this motion to amend the agenda was put to a vote and carried; and again, the Chairperson did not put the motion for his removal;

AND WHEREAS the Clerk of the National Assembly was again invited to the meeting and advised that the Clerk of the Committee could conduct an election for a temporary Chair for the day’s meeting; it was also noted that the Chairperson, according to SO 102(3), has “no original vote but in the event of an equality of votes shall have a casting vote”; therefore, the Chairperson although personally involved could occupy the Chair and “put” the motion; the Chairperson did not comply and again vacated the Chair; there was no Chairperson in place to “put” the motion to a vote once again; it was then agreed that the Clerk of the National Assembly would seek legal advice from a lawyer who was “not politically aligned” on the interpretation of the Standing Orders;

AND WHEREAS the Clerk of the National Assembly formally circulated the legal advice he received dated March 23, 2021 “on whether SO 95(4) overrides SO 82(2)” to the Chairperson and Members of the Committee and called for a meeting to be held on March 31, 2021, no meeting was held, however, until April 12;

23.

AND WHEREAS at the April 12th Meeting, the legal opinion was listed as Item #1 and “Motion for the removal of the Chairperson” as Item # 2 on the Agenda;

AND WHEREAS the Chairperson refused to allow a motion for the adoption of the legal opinion circulated by the Clerk and repeatedly ignored and refused to allow motions to go to Item 2 on the agenda and “put” the “Motion for the removal of the Chairperson” instead he overrode every effort to do so and moved to other items on the Agenda;

AND WHEREAS a Committee Meeting was convened for April 19, at which Item # 1 “Motion for the removal of Mr. David Patterson as Chairperson” was asterisked by the Chairperson on the Agenda; the meeting was subsequently cancelled;

AND WHEREAS on May 3, 2021, the Speaker of the National Assembly wrote the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee, copied to all members of the Public Accounts Committee, in which he stated that i) as Speaker he could intervene in a committee related issue in “ very serious and special circumstances;” (ii) the Chairperson of a Committee does not have the authority to place an asterisk against a Member’s motion, only the mover could; (iii) this action by the Chairperson was a “gross violation of the Standing Orders and tantamount to bullying,” and, iv) he compelled the Chairperson to “put” the motion;

AND WHEREAS to date Mr. David Patterson has demonstrated that he has no respect for the Speaker of the National Assembly and, it would appear, in the absence of a response to the Speaker’s letter he is unprepared to obey the Speaker’s instruction; he has disregarded the advice of the Clerk of the National Assembly on several occasions with regard to the Standing Orders and is resolute in his refusal, using all forms of subterfuge, to allow the motion for his removal to be “put” to the vote;

24.

AND WHEREAS Mr. David Patterson has consistently and openly violated the Standing Orders and has introduced a level of bullyism unbecoming of a Member of Parliament, and, in doing so, bringing the image of the National Assembly into disrepute,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That as a result of Mr. David Patterson's conduct as Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee with respect to his open violation of the Standing Orders, among other things, in particular since February 1, the majority of the members of the Public Accounts Committee have lost confidence in him as the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves the removal of Mr. David Patterson as the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee.

(Notice Paper No. 116 (M26 Govt 16) published on 2021-06-03)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Hon. Juretha Fernandes, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Vishwa Mahadeo, M.P.

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P.

Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Hon. Catherine Hughes, M.P.

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Sanjeev Datadin, M.P.

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

At 2.06 a.m., while the Hon. Sanjeev Datadin, M.P., was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

Hon. Sanjeev Datadin, M.P., continued and concluded his speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Sherod Duncan, M.P.

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Speaker's Return to the Chamber

At 2.56 a.m. while the Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P., was speaking to the motion the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P., continued and concluded her speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

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

Hon. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Hon. Lenox Shuman, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Hon. Roysdale Forde, M.P.

Thereafter, Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government's Chief Whip replied.

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

AGAINST

Mr. Sears

Mr. Figueira

Mr. Sinclair

Mr. Jaiprashad

Mr. Jordan

FOR

Mr. Shuman

Ms. Veerasammy

Mr. Williams

Dr. Smith

Mr. Jaffarally

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

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

27.

31

34

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.31 a.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

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

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.**

14th, June 2021.