

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 80TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2020-2024) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 10.00 A.M.
ON FRIDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY, 2024,
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 (Absent – on Leave)

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 (Virtual Participation)

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 and the Public Service

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

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***Non-Elected Member**

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. Collin D. Croal, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini), 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 Local Government and Regional Development

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
(Absent – on leave)

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

Hon. Bhagmattie Veerasammy, M.P.

Hon. Nandranie Coonjah, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam)

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION (32)

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

Hon. Aubrey Norton M.P., Leader of the Opposition (Virtual-Participation)

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

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

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

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

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Hon. Sherod A. Duncan, M.P.

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***Non-Elected Member**

4.

Hon. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

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

Hon. Christopher A. Jones, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip

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

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

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

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

Hon. Vincent P. Henry, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P.

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

Hon. Natasha Singh-Lewis, M.P.

Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

Hon. Juretha V. Fernandes, M.P.

Hon. David A. Patterson, M.P.

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

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

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

Hon. Haimraj B. Rajkumar, M.P.

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

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

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

Hon. Beverley Alert, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

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

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. Dr. Asha Kisooson, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (Virtual-Participation)

5.

Officers (2)

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

Ms. Hermina Gilgeours, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 10.20 a.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk led in Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-

The Speaker made the following announcements:

1. Birthday Greetings

The Speaker extended birthday greetings to Mr. Frank A. Narain, C.C.H, A.A., former Clerk of the National Assembly.

2. Attendance of the Teachers and Students of St. Stanislaus College

The Speaker informed Members that the students and teachers from the St. Stanislaus College were expected to attend the Sitting during the course of the day. The Speaker also stated that President Dr. Irfaan Ali attended St. Stanislaus College.

BUSINESS

(i) GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS

MOTION

ITEM 1 - BUDGET SPEECH 2024 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2024

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to consider the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2024.

6.

**(Moved by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for
Finance on 2024-01-15)**

In Committee of Supply

The following Agencies and Programmes in the Estimates of Expenditure were considered and approved by the Committee as presented with the respective amounts allocated thereto:

40 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Current Expenditure

401 Policy Development and Administration

402 Training and Development

403 Nursery Education

404 Primary Education

405 Secondary Education

406 Post - Secondary/Tertiary Education

Presiding by Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

At 12.32 p.m., the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

Capital Expenditure

401 Policy Development and Administration

402 Training and Development

403 Nursery Education

404 Primary Education

405 Secondary Education

406 Post - Secondary/Tertiary Education

Assembly resumed.

7.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 12.43 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 1.48 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

In Committee of Supply

The following Agencies and Programmes in the Estimates of Expenditure were considered and approved by the Committee as presented with the respective amounts allocated thereto:

44 – MINISTRY OF CULTURE YOUTH AND SPORTS

Current Expenditure

441 Policy Development and Administration

442 Culture

Return of the Speaker

At 2.24 p.m., while the Assembly was considering the Current Estimates of the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports – Line Item 442 – Culture, the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

Current Expenditure

443 Youth

444 Sports

Capital Expenditure

441 Policy Development and Administration

442 Culture

443 Youth

444 Sports

8.

47 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Current Expenditure

- 471 Policy Development and Administration
- 472 Disease Control - Communicable Diseases
- 473 Family and Primary Health Care Services

Presiding by Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

At 4.12 p.m., the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

Current Expenditure

- 474 Regional and Clinical Services
- 475 Health Sciences Education
- 476 Standards and Technical Services
- 477 Disability and Rehabilitation Services
- 478 Disease Control - Non-Communicable Diseases

Capital Expenditure

- 471 Policy Development and Administration
- 472 Disease Control - Communicable Diseases

Assembly resumed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 5.04 p.m., while the Assembly was considering the Capital Estimates of the Ministry of Health – Line Item 472 – Disease Control – Communicable Diseases, the Sitting was suspended due to a lack of a quorum.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 5.08 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

In Committee of Supply

The following Agencies and Programmes in the Estimates of Expenditure were considered and approved by the Committee as presented with the respective amounts allocated thereto:

Capital Expenditure

- 473 Family and Primary Health Care Services
- 474 Regional and Clinical Services
- 475 Health Sciences Education
- 476 Standards and Technical Services
- 477 Disability and Rehabilitation Services
- 478 Disease Control - Non-Communicable Diseases

51 – MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Current Expenditure

- 511 Policy Development and Administration

Return of the Speaker

At 5.30 p.m., while the Assembly was considering the Current Estimates of the Ministry of Home Affairs – Line Item 511– Policy Development and Administration, the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

Current Expenditure

- 512 Guyana Police Force

Presiding by Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

At 5.33 p.m., while the Assembly was considering the Current Estimates of the Ministry of Home Affairs – Line Item 512 – Guyana Police Force, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

Current Expenditure

513 Guyana Prison Service

515 Guyana Fire Service

516 General Register Office

517 Customs Anti-Narcotics

Capital Expenditure

511 Policy Development and Administration

512 Guyana Police Force

513 Guyana Prison Service

515 Guyana Fire Service

516 General Register Office

517 Customs Anti-Narcotics

Assembly resumed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 7.00 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 7.45 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

In Committee of Supply

The following Agencies and Programmes in the Estimates of Expenditure were considered and approved by the Committee as presented with the respective amounts allocated thereto:

14 – MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Current Expenditure

141 Policy Development and Administration

142 Human Resource Development

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 10(1)

At 8.16 p.m., during consideration of Agency 14 – Ministry of Public Service, Current Expenditure – Line Item 142 – Human Resource Development, the Prime Minister moved that Standing Order No. 10(1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to continue and conclude the business for that day.

Current Expenditure

143 Human Resource Management & Technology

Capital Expenditure

141 Policy Development and Administration

142 Human Resource Development

143 Human Resource Management & Technology

03 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Current Expenditure

031 Policy and Administration

032 Public Financial Management Policies and Services

12.

Capital Expenditure

031 Policy and Administration

032 Public Financial Management Policies and Services

Assembly resumed.

The Senior Minister within the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service reported that the Committee of Supply had considered the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2024 and had approved of them as printed.

Thereafter, the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2024 was put and carried.

BILL – FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD READINGS

ITEM 2 – APPROPRIATION BILL 2024 – Bill No. 1/2024 published on 2024-01-15

With the Leave of the Speaker, and on a motion by the Senior Minister within the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Standing Order Nos. 13(n) and 54 were suspended to enable the Appropriation Bill 2024 to be introduced at this stage and to be further proceeded with at that Sitting.

On motions by the Senior Minister within the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, 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, 2024, 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.

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13.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 10.00 p.m., the Sitting was suspended to investigate a serious matter raised by the A Partnership for National Unity and Alliance for Change Members.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 10.15 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

BILLS – Second Readings

ITEM 3 – FISCAL ENACTMENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024 – Bill No. 2/2024
published on 2024-01-26

The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance and the Public Service moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Income Tax Act, the Value-Added Tax Act, the Customs Act, the Natural Resource Fund Act, the External Loans Act and the Public Loan Act.

(Read a first time on 2024-01-26)

The Bill was read a second time.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 14 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, the Fiscal Management and Accountability Bill 2024 was read a third time and passed as printed.

14.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.38 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Manzoor Nadi". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered on a light-colored rectangular background.

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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

2nd February, 2024.