

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 82ND 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, 17TH MAY, 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)

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 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 (Absent – on Leave)

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. (Virtual-Participation)

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 (Absent)

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)

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Hon. Sherod A. Duncan, M.P.

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***Non-Elected Member**

4.

Hon. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P. (Virtual-Participation)
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. (Virtual-Participation)
Hon. Deonarine Ramsaroop, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)
Hon. Vincent P. Henry, M.P.
Hon. Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P. (Virtual-Participation)
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. (Virtual-Participation)
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

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 10.28 a.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk led in Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-

The Speaker made the following announcements:

1. VISIT BY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FROM MARIAN ACADEMY

The Speaker welcomed the teachers and Grade Six students of Marian Academy to the Sitting.

2. PAPERLESS PARLIAMENT BOOTH

The Speaker encouraged Members to visit the Paperless Parliament Booth since it is the aim of the Parliament to be paperless by 2025.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

(1) By the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service:

1. Agreement No. GY-O0009 dated February 23, 2024, between the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for an amount of US\$150,000,000.00 for the establishment of a Conditional Credit Line for

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6.

Investment Projects (CCLIP). The CCLIP is to be used for Transforming Guyana's Education Sector. Under the CCLIP, the first individual loan operation has been processed (Loan Contract No. 5809/OC-GY below) in keeping with the Beneficiary's development priorities.

(Circulated)

2. Loan Contract No. 5809/OC-GY dated February 23, 2024, between the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for an amount of US\$90,000,000.00, to finance the first individual operation for the Support for Educational Recovery and Transformation Program in Guyana. This Project will be financed through the abovementioned Conditional Credit Line Agreement No. GY-O0009 dated February 23, 2024, and contribute to the development of the required human capital needed to manage and drive economic growth and diversification as outlined in Guyana's National Development Plan.

(Circulated)

3. Amendatory Contract No. 1 Loan Contract No. 4676/BL-GY (Amendatory Contract No. 1) dated February 23, 2024, between the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), to revise Loan Contract No. 4676/BL-GY dated February 11, 2019, to finance the Original "*Energy Matrix Diversification and Institutional Strengthening of the Department of Energy (ESMIDE) Program*".

(Circulated)

4. Dollar Credit Line Agreement dated March 15, 2024, between the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Export-Import Bank of India for US\$23,370,000.00 to finance the procurement of two Hindustan 228-201 aircrafts from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.

(Circulated)

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7.

5. Dollar Credit Line Agreement dated February 29, 2024, between the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Export-Import Bank of India for US\$2,500,000.00 to finance the installation of Solar PhotoVoltaic Power Plant at Cheddi Jagan International Airport. Guyana.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Minister of Public Works:

- (i) The Civil Aviation (Rules of the Air) Regulations 2024 – No. 4 of 2024.

(Circulated)

- (ii) The Civil Aviation (Operations) Regulations 2024 – No. 5 of 2024.

(Circulated)

- (iii) The Civil Aviation (Aviation Accident and Serious Incident Investigations) Regulations 2024 – No. 6 of 2024.

(Circulated)

- (iv) The Civil Aviation (Aerodrome and Ground Aids) Regulations 2024 – No. 7 of 2024.

(Circulated)

- (v) The Civil Aviation (Airworthiness) Regulations 2024 – No. 8 of 2024.

(To be Circulated)

- (vi) The Civil Aviation (Personnel Licensing) Regulations 2024 – No. 9 of 2024.

(To be Circulated)

8.

(vii) The Civil Aviation (Air Navigation Services) Regulations 2024 – No. 10 of 2024.
(to be Circulated)

(viii) The Civil Aviation (General) Regulations 2024 – No. 11 of 2024.
(To be Circulated)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Oral Reply

***ERECTION OF BILLBOARD OF DESIGN OF OFFICE COMPLEX BY THE
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS IN THE HOUSTON AREA, MANDELA/ECCLES
INTERLINKED ROAD**

Hon. Annette Ferguson, M.P., asked the Minister of Public Works the following questions:

"During the examination of the 2023 Budget, I suggested to Hon. Bishop Juan Edghill, Minister of Public Works, to erect a billboard, depicting the design of the Office Complex, and the Minister made a commitment to erect same."

1. *Could the Hon. Minister inform the National Assembly what has caused the delay in the erection of a the billboard displaying the design of the Office Complex in the Houston Area?
2. *Can the Hon. Minister give the National Assembly an undertaken when the billboard, depicting the design of the Office complex will be erected at the project site?

(Notice Paper No. 301 (Q226 Opp.226) published on 2023-10-30)

Thereafter, the Minister of Public Works replied.

9.

Hon. Annette Ferguson, M.P., asked a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Public Works replied.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Reading

MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024 – Bill No. 9/2024

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

(i) GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS

BILLS – Second Readings

ITEM 1 - SEA AND RIVER DEFENCE BILL 2023 – Bill No. 21/2023 published on 2023-12-13

The Minister of Public Works moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to repeal and replace existing legislation on sea and river defence, to make provision for protection from inundation from the sea or rivers and to provide for the establishment, construction and maintenance of sea and river defences, natural defences and to provide for related matters.

(Read a first time on 2023-12-19)

Hon. Amanza Walton-Desir, M.P., spoke to the motion.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 12.02 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 2.13 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

Assembly resumed the debate on the Bill.

The Following Members also spoke to the motion:

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

Hon. David Patterson, M.P.

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P., Minister of Agriculture

Thereafter, the Minister of Public Works replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 85 were passed as printed.

Schedules I and II were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Minister of Public Works, the Sea and River Defence Bill 2023 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ITEM 2 - ARBITRATION BILL 2023 – Bill No. 18/2023 published on 2023-12-08

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to facilitate domestic and international arbitrations by encouraging the use of arbitration as a method of resolving disputes; and for connected purposes.

(Read a first time on 2023-12-11)

Presiding by Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

At 4.40 p.m., while the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Mr. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P., took the Chair.

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs continued and concluded his speech.

The Following Members spoke to the motion:

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

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

Return of the Speaker

At 5.26 p.m., while the Hon. Oneidge Walrond, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce was speaking to the motion the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

Hon. Oneidge Walrond, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce continued and concluded her speech.

12.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Hon. Sanjeev Datadin, M.P.

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Thereafter, the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 75 were passed as printed.

The Schedule was passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Arbitration Bill 2023 was read a third time and passed as printed.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 95(2)

At 6.40 p.m., the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip, moved that Standing Order No. 95(2) be suspended to enable the Committee of Selection to nominate Members to the Special Select Committee on the National Intelligence and Security Agency Bill 2023 – No. 5 of 2023, which was referred to a Special Select Committee on 10th May, 2023.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 10(1)

At 6.41 p.m., the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip, moved that Standing Order No. 10(1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to continue and conclude its business for the day.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 6.43 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 7.54 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

ITEM 3 - CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (PLEA DISCUSSION, PLEA AGREEMENT AND ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT) BILL 2023 – Bill No. 19/2023 published on 2023-12-11

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to establish a system of plea discussions and plea agreements in criminal procedure and for matters connected thereto.

(Read a first time on 2023-12-11)

The Following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Hon. Sonia Parag, Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Sanjeev Datadin, M.P.

Thereafter, the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 7 were passed as printed.

Clause 8

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the following amendments which were put and carried:

1. “Renumbering existing clause 8 as **subsection (1)**; and
2. Insert the following as **subsection (2)** –
“(2) A prosecutor shall initiate or participate in a plea discussion or conclude a plea agreement where-
 - (a) The accused person or suspect;
 - (b) Any person or company that holds assets, or an interest in assets, on behalf of the accused person or suspect; or
 - (c) Any property held by the accused person or suspect, may be precluded from being the subject of a pecuniary penalty order, forfeiture order or civil forfeiture order, as the case may be.””

Clause 8 was then passed as amended.

Clauses 9 to 38 were passed as printed.

The Schedule was passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Criminal Procedure (Plea Discussion, Plea Agreement And Assistance Agreement) Bill 2023 was read a third time and passed as amended.

ITEM 4 - DEFENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024 – Bill No. 5/2024 published on 2024-05-03

The Prime Minister moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Defence Act.

(Read a first time on 2024-05-09)

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 9.55 p.m., the Speaker suspended the Sitting due to disorderly behaviour in the Chamber.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 10.07 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

Hon. Amanza Walton-Desir, M.P., continued and concluded her speech.

The Following Members also spoke to the motion:

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

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

16.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Prime Minister, the Defence (Amendment) Bill 2024 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.31 p.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.

17th May, 2024.