**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**OF THE 83RD SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**

**SESSION (2020-2024) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**

**AT 2.00 P.M.**

**ON MONDAY, 8TH JULY, 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 (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 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 (Virtual – Participation)

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) (Virtual – Participation)

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)**

1. **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. (Absent on – Leave)

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.

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. (Virtual – Participation)

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 Kissoon, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

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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 2.25 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk led in Prayers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-**

The Speaker made the following announcements:

1. **ELECTED PARTY MEMBERS**

The Speaker congratulated Members who were elected to their Party Executives by their respective Political Parties.

1. **WELCOME**

The Speaker acknowledged and welcomed the Former Member of Parliament, Mr. Dunstan Barrow, Major General (Ret’d) Joe Singh, Chairman of the Natural Resource Fund Board and the other Members of the Board.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-**

1. By the Speaker of the National Assembly (Chairperson of the Committee of Selection):
2. Minutes of Proceedings of the 14th Meeting of the Committee of Selection held on 17th May, 2024.

(Circulated)

1. Annual Report of the Public Accountability and Oversight Committee for the year 2023.

(Circulated)

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6.

(iii) Annual Report of the Public Procurement Commission for the period July 8, 2022, to July 7, 2023.

(Circulated)

1. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs & Governance and Government Chief Whip, on behalf of the Prime Minister presented the following:

Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commission for the year 2023.

(Circulated)

1. By the Minister of Public Works:

The Civil Aviation (Registration of Civil Aircraft) Regulations 2024 – No. 13 of 2024.

(Circulated)

1. By the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service:
2. Annual Reports of the National Insurance Scheme for the years 2021 and 2022.

(Circulated)

1. Annual Reports of the Dependant’s Pension Fund for the years 2022 and 2023.

(Circulated)

1. Annual Report of the Natural Resource Fund for the year 2023.

(Circulated)

1. Government Notice No. 3/2024, regarding Notification Receipts of all petroleum revenues paid into the Natural Resource Fund during the period 29th March, 2024 to 30th June, 2024.

(Circulated)

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7.

1. By the Minister of Education:

The University of Guyana (Amendment) Order 2024 – No. 43 of 2024.

(Circulated)

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Presentation and First Readings**

1. **MATRIMONIAL CAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024 – Bill No. 10/2024**

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

A BILL intituled An ACT to amend the Matrimonial Causes Act.

(Circulated)

1. **FAMILY VIOLENCE BILL 2024 – Bill No. 11/2024**

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide increased protection for victims of family violence, to make provision for the granting of family violence orders and for matters connected thereto.

(Circulated)

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

1. **GOVERNMENT’S BUSINESS**

**BILLS – Second Readings**

**ITEM 1 - FUGITIVE OFFENDERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024 – Bill No. 6/2024**

**published on 2024-05-09**

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

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8.

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Fugitive Offenders Act. **(Read a first time 2024-05-09)**

**The following Members spoke to the motion:**

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Hugh Todd, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Hon. Brindley Benn, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

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 & 2** were passed as printed.

**Assembly resumed.**

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Fugitive Offenders (Amendment) Bill 2024, was read a third time and passed as printed.

**SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 4.37 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

**RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 6.08 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

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9.

**ITEM 2 - CRIMINAL LAW PROCEDURE (PAPER COMMITTALS) BILL 2024 –**

**Bill No. 7/2024 published on 2024-05-09**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the abolition of preliminary inquiries; to provide for the procedure in respect of paper committal proceedings in criminal matters; and for matters connected thereto.

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

**The following Members spoke to the motion:**

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Sanjeev Datadin, M.P.

Hon. Geeta Chandan-Edmond, M.P.

Hon. Priya Manickchand, M.P., Minister of Education

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 10(1)**

At 7.57 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.

Hon. Priya Manickchand, M.P., Minister of Education continued and concluded her speech.

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.

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10.

**In Committee**

**Clauses 1 to 6** were passed as printed.

**Clause 7**

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

1. “In subclause (1) by substituting for the word “credible” the word “relevant”; and
2. In subclauses (2) and (3) by deleting the word “all” wherever the word appears.”

Clause 7 was then passed as amended.

**Clauses 8 to 24** were passed as printed.

**Assembly resumed.**

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Criminal Law Procedure (Paper Committals) Bill 2024, was read a third time and passed as amended.

**ITEM 3 - MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024 –**

**Bill No. 9/2024 published on 2024-05-15**

The Minister of Home Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

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

**(Read a first time on 2024-05-17)**

**Presiding by Dr. Asha Kissoon, M.P.**

At 9.05 p.m., while the Hon. Brindley Benn, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs, was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Dr. Asha Kissoon, M.P., took the Chair.

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11.

Hon. Brindley Benn, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs continued and concluded his speech.

**The following Members spoke to the motion:**

Hon. Amanza Walton-Desir, M.P.

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

Hon. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

**Return of the Speaker**

At 10.00 p.m., while Hon. Annette Ferguson, M.P., was speaking to the motion the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

Hon. Annette Ferguson continued and concluded her speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

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

Hon. Devin Sears, M.P.

Hon. Catherine Hughes, M.P.

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

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

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12.

**In Committee**

**Clauses 1 to 3** were passed as printed.

**The Schedule** was passed as printed.

**Assembly resumed.**

On a motion by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill 2024, was read a third time and passed as printed.

**MOTION**

**ITEM 4 - AFFIRMATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA (AMENDMENT)**

**ORDER 2024 – NO. 43 OF 2024**

The Minister of Education moved the following motion:

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly, in accordance with section 12(7) of the University of Guyana Act, Chapter 39:02, affirms the University of Guyana (Amendment) Order 2024 (No. 43 of 2024) which was made on the 26th day of June, 2024, under section 12(7) of the University of Guyana Act, Chapter 39:02 and published in the Official Gazette dated 27th June, 2024.

**(Notice Paper No. 345 (M82 Gov43) published on 2024-06-28)**

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

At 12.25 a.m., while the Hon. Priya Manickchand, M.P., Minister of Education was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

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13.

Hon. Priya Manickchand, M.P., Minister of Education continued and concluded her speech.

**The following Members spoke to the motion:**

Hon. Coretta McDonald, M.P.

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

Hon. Sherod Duncan, M.P.

**Return of the Speaker**

At 2.13 p.m., while Hon. Sherod Duncan, M.P., was speaking to the motion the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

Hon. Sherod Duncan continued and concluded his speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

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

Hon. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

Hon. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley, M.P.

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

Hon. Amanza Walton-Desir, M.P.

Thereafter, the Minister of Education replied.

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

**FOR** **AGAINST**

Mr. Sears Dr. Kissoon

Mr. Sinclair Ms. Coonjah

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14.

Ms. Alert Ms. Veersammy

Ms. Philadelphia Mr. Williams

Mr. Jaiprashad Dr. Smith

Mrs. Flue-Bess Mr. Jaffarally

Mr. Rajkumar Dr. Westford

Mr. Mahipaul Dr. Ramsaran

Mr. Figueira Mrs. Pearson-Fredericks

Mr. Cox Mr. Narine

Mr. Patterson Mr. Datadin

Ms. Ferguson Dr. Mahadeo

Mrs. Sarabo-Halley Mr. Charlie

Dr. Cummings Mr. Seeraj

Mr. Henry Mr. McCoy

Mr. Ramsaroop Mr. A. Persaud

Ms. Mc. Donald Mr. Indar

Mrs. Walton-Desir Ms. Rodrigues

Mr. Jordan Ms. Parag

Mr. Duncan Mr. Ramson

Mrs. Hughes Dr. V. Persaud

Mr. Holder Mr. Croal

Mr. Norton Mr. Bharrat

Mr. Hamilton

Ms. Sukhai

Mr. Mustapha

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15.

Ms. Manickchand

Dr. Anthony

Bishop Edghill

Mr. Todd

Ms. Teixeira

Mr. Nandlall

Mr. Phillips

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**ADJOURNMENT**

At 4.55 a.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

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**HON. MANZOOR NADIR, M.P.,**

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,**

**Public Buildings,**

**Brickdam, Georgetown.**

**9th July, 2024.**