

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 23<sup>RD</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (2020-2021) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 10.00 A.M.**  
**ON FRIDAY, 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 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 (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

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

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

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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. (Absent)

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

Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

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**\*Non-Elected Member**

4.

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.

Hon. Amanza O.R. Walton-Desir, M.P. (Virtual - Participation)

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 – BarimaWaini)

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)

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

Hon. Vincero 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 10.07 a.m.

### **PRAYERS**

The Clerk led in Prayers.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-**

The Speaker made the following announcements:

#### **(1) MEMBERS, STAFF AND VISITORS**

The Honourable Speaker requested that persons should refrain from walking behind Members when they are making their presentations at the podiums. He related that this would result in unprofessional viewing.

#### **(2) CRITICISMS OF DECISIONS OR RULINGS MADE BY THE SPEAKER**

The Honourable Speaker informed Members that decisions or rulings made by him could not be criticised except by a motion properly brought before the House.

#### **(3) DRESS CODE**

The Honourable Speaker informed the House that he spoke with the Chief Whips and the Clerk of the National Assembly on addressing the Dress Code of Members in the National Assembly. Members are to be guided by the Dress Code in the Members Handbook until the matter is dealt with at a meeting of the Parliamentary Management Committee to be held after the consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure.

### **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-**

#### **For Written Replies**

#### **1. MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATIONS**

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

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

1. Recently citizens have observed that a number of vehicles have been fitted and are utilising flashing lights and sirens. Could the Minister state whether all Government vehicles are conforming to Section 41 of Cap 51:02, Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Regulations?
2. Could the Minister state what action(s) he intends to take to deal with any breach of Section 41 of Cap 51:02?

**(Notice Paper No. 46 (Q28 Opp.28) published on 2021-02-01)**

**ANSWERS**

- (1) “This matter is currently under review since all may not be conforming largely because some vehicles taken over from the previous administration were fitted with the sirens and flashing lights.
- (2) Following the review conformance and/ or any necessary amendments will be made”.

**2. CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES**

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

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

1. Can the Minister provide the designation of each person employed on contract in the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as its gazetted umbrella and associated Agencies since August 2, 2020?
2. Can the Minister provide the emoluments (salaries and other benefits) for each of the persons employed on contract since August 2, 2020, as stated above?

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3. Can the Honourable Minister advise if financial provision for these positions were made in Budget 2020, and, if so, under which Line Item are they being paid?

**(Notice Paper No. 47 (Q29 Opp.29) published on 2021-02-01)**

**ANSWERS**

- (1) “The table below shows the list of Contracted Positions within the Ministry of Home Affairs with effect from August 2, 2020:

NO	POSITIONS	SALARY SCALE
1	Head Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit	GS:14
2	Permanent Secretary	GS:14
3	Advisor to the Minister	GS:13
4	Registrar General	GS:13
5	Administrator Community Policing Group	GS:11
6	Administrative Assistant	GS:10
7	Senior Administrative Assistant	GS:9
8	Science Officer	GS:9
9	Systems Development Officer	GS:9
10	Intelligence Officer (5)	GS:8
11	Community Policing Liaison Officers (15)	GS:7
12	Driver/Administrative Support Officer	GS:7
13	Temporary Accounts Clerk (2)	GS:2
14	Clerk II (G)	GS:2
15	Driver (2)	GS:2
16	Handyman	GS:1

- (2) A request was made to the Ministry of Finance for funds under Line 6141 – Revision of Wages and Salaries”.

8.

### **3. GUYANA'S LARGEST DRUG BUST**

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

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

Since the start of November last year, this country infamously recorded its largest drug bust: 11.5 tons (23000 pounds) of cocaine, with a street value of 900 million Euros, GY \$ 360 billion, almost a quarter of the gross domestic product (GDP) of this country. Regrettably, two months after this dastardly development, we have seen no breakthrough of any consequence locally.

1. Could the Hon. Minister state whether this matter was brought and discussed by the Government?
2. If yes, can you state what decisions have been since taken?
3. Has there been any review by agencies involved in this issue and if so, what new measures and new policy frameworks have been implemented to avoid this reoccurrence in the future?
4. Has there been any request by regional and international agencies for information in relation to this matter?
5. If so, has that information been transmitted to the relevant agency?
6. There has been conflicting information on the scanners at the wharf where the illegal drugs left Guyana. Could the Minister state definitively what is the situation in relation to the State's inability to identify in clear terms what occurred at the wharf?

**(Notice Paper No. 48 (Q30 Opp.30) published on 2021-02-01)**

### **ANSWER**

- (1) "The matter is under confidential review and actions will be advised on at the appropriate time".

### **4. DEATH OF PRISONER, MR. ROGER SAMUELS**

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

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



9.

The Guyana Prison Service in its press release dated the 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, stated that Prisoner Roger Samuels died at the Lusignan Prison on the said date after being received at the Prisons with several injuries to his body.

1. Could the Hon. Minister provide the circumstances surrounding the death of the aforementioned prisoner?
2. Can the Hon. Minister state the extent of the injuries at the time of his reception at the Lusignan Prison?
3. Having established that Mr. Samuels was injured before he was received by the prison officials, what protocols and procedures were followed?
4. Could the Hon. Minister state whether Section 27(1) of the Prison Act was followed.
5. Could the Hon. Minister state what subsequent developments contributed to the demise of this prisoner?
6. Could the Hon. Minister state what administrative reviews have been undertaken to ensure there is no repeat of this unfortunate situation?

**(Notice Paper No. 49 (Q31 Opp.31) published on 2021-02-01)**

### **ANSWERS**

- (1) “On January 10, 2021, at about 06:00 hours, the Duty Officer was performing duties from 18:00 to 06:00hrs at the Quarantine Section of the Lusignan Prison, reported that during the morning unlocking process a prisoner who is living in Unit No. 1 reported that prisoner Roger Samuels was not moving. Immediately, the Officer-in-Charge, Director of Prisons(ag), Prison Doctor and Police were informed. Doctor Ceon Britton, Government Medical Officer examined the prisoner and he was pronounced dead at 07:00hrs on the same morning.
- (2) Upon admission to prison, it was observed that prisoner Rogers Samuels had several lacerations to his body in various stages of healing and his right lower extremities had a plaster of paris covering same.

10.

- (3) Upon admission of prisoner Roger Samuels to prison, he was immediately seen and examined by the Nurse on duty and was given medication and referred to the Prison Doctor on Monday, January 12, 2021 for further evaluation. In addition, the escorting Police Officer submitted a statement in relation to the injuries received by prisoner Samuels, however, the Police did not provide any medical for the prisoner.
- (4) Section 27(1) of the Prison Act was not followed because prisoner Roger Samuels was not suffering from any communicable disease”.
- (5) According to the Post-Mortem examination which was performed by Government Pathologist Dr. Nehaul Singh the cause of death was given as Gastrointestinal Hemorrhaging and a fractured limb.
- (6) The Guyana Prison Service will make a careful assessment of prisoners who are admitted to prison regarding their health condition(s). Upon submission to prison, persons are immediately interviewed by the medical personnel and based on their medical condition they would be referred to the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation for medical observation or they would be given treatment at the prison. If a person is admitted to prison with visible injuries or make a complain of a medical problem, the Police escorting the prisoner is required to submit a statement and provide a medical showing that the prisoner has received medical treatment from the hospital or from the Government Medical Officer (GMO)”.

## **5. SEXUAL ASSAULT CASES**

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

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

From 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2020 to date, what is the number of sexual assault cases, broken down by those that were: -

- a. Reported to the authorities?

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- b. Prosecuted? and
- c. Resulted in convictions?

**(Notice Paper No. 50 (Q32 Opp.32) published on 2021-02-01)**

**ANSWER**

- (1) “From the 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2020 to 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 there were eighty-three (83) sexual assault cases which were reported to the authorities; resulting in sixty-one (61) cases being prosecuted.

Please see summary of comparative details in the table below for the period:

Sexual Assault Cases	Number of Sexual Cases assault cases 2 <sup>nd</sup> August, 2020 – 25 <sup>th</sup> January, 2021.	Number of Sexual Assault Cases 2 <sup>nd</sup> August, 2019 – 25 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020.
Reported to the Authorities	83 Cases	77 Cases
Prosecuted	61 Cases	28 Cases”

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

**BUDGET SPEECH 2021 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF  
EXPENDITURE FOR 2021**

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2021.

**(Moved by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance  
on 2021-02-12)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Hon. Coretta McDonald, M.P.

Hon. Collin Croal, M.P., Minister of Housing & Water

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Hon. David Patterson, M.P.

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

### **SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 12.45 p.m. the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

### **RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 1.59 p.m. the Sitting was resumed.

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2021.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Haimraj Rajkumar, M.P.

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

Hon. Vincent Henry, M.P.

Hon. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

Hon. Dineshwar Jaiprashad, M.P.

Hon. Faizal Jaffarally, M.P.

### **SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 4.49 p.m. the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

### **RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 6.25 p.m. the Sitting was resumed.

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2021.

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The following Members also spoke to the motion:

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

Hon. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

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

### **SUSPENSION OF SO (10) 1**

At 7.54 while the Hon. Brindley Benn, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs was speaking to the motion the Prime Minister moved that Standing Order No.10 (1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to continue beyond 8.00 p.m.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs continued and concluded his speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

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

Hon. Dr. Tandika Smith, M.P.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9.07 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2021.

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

**Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly**

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,**

**Public Buildings,**

**Brickdam,  
Georgetown.**

**26<sup>th</sup> February, 2020.**