

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 24TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2020-2021) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 10.00 A.M.
ON MONDAY, 1ST MARCH, 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 (Virtual-Participation)

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

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***Non-Elected Member**

4.

Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

Hon. David A. Patterson, M.P. (Absent)

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. Jaiprakash, 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

5.

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 10.08 a.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk led in Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-

The Speaker made the following announcements:

(1) UNPARLIAMENTARY EXPRESSIONS

The Honourable Speaker reminded Members of the list of Unparliamentary Expressions that was circulated and should not be used in their speeches and the Dome.

(2) MEDIA COVERAGE

The Honourable Speaker commended the Media for their exceptional coverage over the past week.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

1. REPORTS REQUESTED BY DR. LUIS FONDEBRIER

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

1. Can the Hon. Minister state what reports were requested by Dr. Luis Fondebrier, the Argentine Forensic Specialist?
2. Could the Hon. Minister state why from the inception was Dr. Luis Fondebrier request not honoured by the Guyana Police Force?

(Notice Paper No. 51 (Q33 Opp.33) published on 2021-02-01)

6.

ANSWERS

(1) “A number of forensic type reports were requested by Fondebrier.

(2) Dr. Fondebrier’s requests could not be entertained in entirety because of the view that he was being introduced and facilitated by some who had an interest in confusing, delaying and thwarting the investigations which have, in the main been successfully concluded”.

2. POLICE ESCORT

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

Minister Answering: The Minister of Home Affairs

What are the conditions and protocols in relation to the provision of a police escort to private citizens?

(Notice Paper No. 52 (Q34 Opp.34) published on 2021-02-01)

ANSWER

“Conditions and Protocols Police Escorts to private citizens

Request for the service of “Police Escort: can be made by:

- Private Organisation(s)/ Private Individual(s).
- Police Escorts shall only be “eligible” if it fits no less than one (1) of the following categories:
- To provide escort for cash, payroll/disbursement of cash such as Old Age Pensions and cash grants. In accordance to the Force Training Manual under this escort, the responsibility shall be protecting the cash, and will be familiar with various precautions and for seeing that they are carried out by all concern including the driver of the vehicle and the person responsible for handling or paying cash.
- To provide mineral escorts which includes gold and diamond.
- To provide explosive, arms and ammunition escorts.
- To provide body escorts which includes VIP, Dignitaries, Government Officials, Diplomats among others.

Protocols

Ranks on Escort Duties shall perform the following tasks before escort:

- Obtain a copy of all permits.
- Review the route plan and ensure copies are distributed to all participants.
- Determine the number of Police Escorts needed based on the permit and jurisdictional requirements.
- Ensure a list of telephone contacts has been compiled (i.e., power companies, utility companies, railroad companies, tow truck companies etc.) to accompany the escort and is distributed to all participants.
- Ensure a reliable means of communication is available.
- Ensure a contingency plan is developed that includes safe stopping places.
- Identify a lead contact for the entire escort.
- Coordinate and test all communications equipment.
- Identify who will make notifications when necessary.
- Discuss where vehicles will be located and when they will be there (including drop-ins, etc.)

During Escorts

- Undertake risk assessments of person(s) item(s) to be escorted to determine the most appropriate method of transport, the number of escorts and the level of restraint required to ensure the safety of those involved.
- Perform an inspection of the transport vehicle(s) before placing person(s) items inside and in their presence to ensure vehicles are safe.
- Monitor communications with all other vehicles in convoy.
- Ensure the movement is always proceeding lawfully.
- Ensure all procedures and special conditions mandated by permit(s) are followed.
- Maintain and facilitate traffic control.
- Activate contingency plan if necessary, including safe stopping points.

8.

- Supervise and monitor progress of the movement, paying attention to all time constraints.
- Operate vehicles safely and in accordance with Motor vehicles and Road Traffic Act Chapter 51:02 to ensure the safety of the person(s) or item(s) being escorted and other road users”.

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. Roysdale Forde, M.P.

Hon. Frank Anthony, M.P., Minister of Health

Hon. Catherine Hughes, M.P.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 12.04 p.m. the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 1.13 p.m. the Sitting was resumed.

9.

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

Hon. Mohabir Nandlall, Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 2.29 p.m., the Speaker suspended the Sitting.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 2.36 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. Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon, M.S.M., M.P., Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark A. Phillips, M.S.S., M.P., Prime Minister

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

At 4.34 p.m., while the Hon. Brigadier (Ret') Mark Phillips, M.S.S., M.P., Prime Minister was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Lenox Shuman, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly took the Chair.

Speaker's Return to the Chamber

At 4.43 p.m., the Speaker returned to the Chair.

Hon. Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, M.S.S., M.P., continued and concluded his speech.

Thereafter, the Hon. Dr. Ashni Singh, M.P., Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance replied.

CONCLUSION OF BUDGET DEBATE

Following the conclusion of the general debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2021, Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to consider and approve of the Report of the Business Sub-Committee of the Committee of Supply.

In Committee of Supply

The Speaker reported that the Business Sub-Committee of the Committee of Supply met on, Friday, 26th February, 2021, considered the allocation of time for the consideration of the 2021 Estimates of Expenditure in the Committee of Supply, and passed a Resolution on the matter.

Copies of the Sub-Committee's Minutes, Resolution and Timetable were circulated to Members at today's Sitting.

On a motion by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance, the Committee of Supply agreed with the Business Sub-Committee in its Resolution.

The Speaker stated that in accordance with the Resolution, the Committee of Supply would commence consideration of the 2021 Estimates of Expenditure at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 2nd March, 2021.

11.

Assembly resumed

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.10 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 2nd March, 2021.

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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

1st March, 2021.