

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 54<sup>TH</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (2020-2023) OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 10.00 A.M.**  
**ON MONDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY, 2023,**  
**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 (Absent)

**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 (Absent – Performing the functions of the Office of the President)

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

**\*Non-Elected Member**

/...2

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 – 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 the Public Service

**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

/...3

**\*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.

**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

Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Hon. Roysdale A. Forde, S.C., M.P. (Absent)

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.

Hon. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

/...4

**\*Non-Elected Member**

4.

Hon. Dawn Hastings-Williams, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)  
Hon. Christopher A. Jones, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip  
Hon. Vincero H. Jordan, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice) (Suspended)  
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. (Suspended)  
Hon. Natasha Singh-Lewis, M.P.  
Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P. (Suspended)  
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. Jaiprakash, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)  
Hon. Maureen A. Philadelphia, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Suspended)  
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. Lenox R. O'Dell Shuman, 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 10.44 a.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk led in Prayers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-**

The Speaker made the following announcements:

**1. INVITATION TO THE HON. GAIL TIEXEIRA, M.P., MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND GOVERNANCE AND GOVERNMENT CHIEF WHIP**

The Speaker informed the House, that he extended an invitation to the Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip who was performing the duties of President to join him in the gallery to listen to that day's Budget Debate.

**2. LATE COMMENCEMENT**

The Speaker apologised to Members for the late commencement of the Sitting.

**3. CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES**

The Speaker extended congratulations to Hon. Dawn Hastings, M.P., on her appointment as General Secretary of the Peoples National Congress.

6.

**4. BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

The Speaker extended happy birthday wishes to the Hon. Bharrat Jadgeo, M.P., Vice-President and Hon. Charles Ramson, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

**5. Death of Ms. Rajcoomarie Bancroft a/k Gloria**

The Speaker informed Members that Ms. Rajcoomarie Bancroft a/k Gloria Bancroft, a former Member of Parliament, died on the 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-**

**For Oral Replies:**

**1. \*HEALTH FACILITIES IN REGION #10**

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P., asked the Minister of Health the following question:

\*Can the Minister inform this House how many health facilities are in Region 10 and how many are located in Linden?

**(Notice Paper No. 209 (Q157 Opp.157) published on 2022-11-02)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Health replied.

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P., asked supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Health replied.

**2. \*CARIBBEAN PREMIERE LEAGUE (CPL) IN GUYANA**

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P., asked the Minister of Culture, Youth & Sports the following questions:

(a)\*Can the Minister inform this House how much was paid to secure the Caribbean Premiere League (CPL) semifinals and finals for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, to be played in Guyana?

/...7

7.

(b)\*Can the Minister further inform this House whether the process of securing the CPL semifinals and finals involved a bidding process and, if yes, where and when were the bids open?

**(Notice Paper No. 210 (Q158 Opp.158) published on 2022-11-02)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth & Sports replied.

3. **\*NATIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE**

Hon. Jermaine Figueira, M.P., asked the Minister of Culture, Youth & Sports the following questions:

(a)\*Can the Minister inform this House what was the cost for the rental of the use of the National Cultural Centre for a day or night at (i) December 2019 and (ii) March 2022, for a theater performance?

(b)\*Can the Minister inform this House what was the cost per night for the use of the National Cultural Centre for rehearsals in (i) December 2019 and (ii) March 2022?

**(Notice Paper No. 211 (Q159 Opp.159) published on 2022-11-02)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth & Sports replied.

**For Written Replies**

4. **STATUS OF GUYANA'S HIGH COMMISSIONER TO INDIA**

**Member Asking:** Ms. Amanza Walton-Desir, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

1. Can the Hon. Minister advise whether Mr. Charrandas Persaud has ceased to function as Guyana's High Commissioner to India and if so, as of what date?

8.

2. Can the Hon. Minister advise whether the Government of Guyana has sent a Letter of Recall to the Government of India, recalling Mr. Charrandas Persaud as High Commissioner of Guyana to India, and, if so, on what date was the letter sent?

**(Notice Paper No. 222 (Q166 Opp.166) published on 2022-12-12)**

### **ANSWERS**

1. “The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation can confirm that Mr. Charrandas Persaud ceased to function as Guyana’s High Commissioner to India with effect from November 10, 2022.
2. The Government of India was notified on November 10, 2022, of Mr. Charrandas Persaud’s recall as High Commissioner in accordance with diplomatic practice”.

### **PUBLIC BUSINESS**

#### **(i) GOVERNMENT’S BUSINESS**

### **MOTION**

### **BUDGET SPEECH 2023 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2023**

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2023.

**(Moved by the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance on 2023-01-16)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Hon. Nima Flue-Bess, M.P.

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

**SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 11.55 a.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

**RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 1.13 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

**MINUTE OF SILENCE**

A minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect for the late Ms. Rajcoomarie Bancroft a/k Gloria Bancroft.

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2023.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Amanza Walton-Desir, M.P.

Hon. Warren Kwame McCoy, M.P., Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister

Hon. Ronald Cox, M.P.

Hon. Sonia Parag, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

Hon. Ganesh Mahipaul, M.P.

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

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

**SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 5.05 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

**RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 6.20 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

10.

Assembly resumed the debate on the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2023.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Hon. Yvonne Pearson-Fredericks, M.P.

Hon. Deonarine Ramsaroop, M.P.

Hon. Dr. Vishwa Mahadeo, M.P.

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

At 7.30 p.m., Hon. Sonia Parag, M.P., Minister of the Public Service, moved that Standing Order No.10 (1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to continue beyond 8.00 p.m., until the conclusion of the debate on the Annual Budget and the Consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2023.

Hon. Natasha Singh-Lewis, M.P.

Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

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

At 8.35 p.m., while the Hon. Haimraj Rajkumar, M.P., 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 8.45 p.m., the Speaker returned to the Chair.

Hon. Haimraj Rajkumar, M.P., continued and concluded his speech.

Hon. Dr. Tandika Smith, M.P., also spoke to the motion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 9.09 p.m., on a motion by the Hon. Mohabir Nandlall, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Manzoor Nadir". 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.**

**23<sup>rd</sup>, January 2023.**