

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 71<sup>st</sup> 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, 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 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

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 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

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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  
(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

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.

Hon. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P. (Virtual-Participation)

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**\*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)

Hon. Amanza O.R. Walton-Desir, M.P.

Hon. Coretta A. McDonald, A.A., M.P.

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.

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)

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

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 2.42 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk led in Prayers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-**

The Speaker made the following announcements:

**1. Salutation**

The Speaker extended good wishes for 2024 to the Members of the National Assembly, staff of the Parliament Office, media, Police, caterers, and staff of the Arthur Chung Conference Centre.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-**

(1) By the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance:

Annual Report of the Supreme Court of Judicature for the year 2022.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance:

(i) Government Notice No. 1/2024, regarding Notification Receipts of all petroleum revenues paid into the Natural Resource Fund during the period 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2023.

(Circulated)

6.

(ii) Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of Guyana for the financial year 2024.

(Circulated)

**STANDING ORDER 22(9)**

In accordance with Standing Order **22(9)**, the following questions for written and oral replies were **deferred** for twelve (12) clear days:

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-**

**For Written Replies**

**1. NAMES OF NEIGHBOURHOOD DEMOCRATIC COUNCILS THAT DID NOT  
RECEIVE SUBVENTIONS FROM THE GOVERNMENT**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister within the Ministry of Local Government and  
Regional Development

Can the Hon. Minister inform this House of the names of Neighbourhood Democratic Councils that were not given a subvention (in the form of cash transfer) from the Ministry of Local Government, for the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and up to June 2023?

(Notice Paper No. 315 (Q240 Opp.240) published on 2023-10-30)

**2. MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION THAT ACCOMPANIED HIS  
EXCELLENCY, DR. MOHAMED IRFAAN ALI ON OVERSEAS TRIPS**

**Member Asking:** Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and  
Government Chief Whip

Can the Hon. Minister provide a detailed list to the National Assembly, of the persons who accompanied the President on overseas trips, from August 2, 2020 to May 17, 2023?

(Notice Paper No. 322 (Q247 Opp.247) published on 2023-10-30)

7.

**3. MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION WHICH ACCOMPANIED HON. BHARRAT JAGDEO. M.P., VICE-PRESIDENT, ON OVERSEAS TRIPS**

**Member Asking:** Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance and Government Chief Whip

Can the Hon. Minister provide a detailed list to the National Assembly, of the persons who accompanied Hon. Bharrat Jagdeo, M.P., Vice-President, on overseas trips, from August 2, 2020, to May 17, 2023?

(Notice Paper No. 323 (Q248 Opp.248) published on 2023-10-30)

**For Oral Replies**

**4. \*FULL DIMENSION OF THE PLOT OF LAND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OFFICE COMPLEX IN THE HOUSTON AREA FOR THE MANDELA/ECCLES INTERLINKED ROAD**

**Member Asking:** Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Public Works

"During the consideration of Budget 2023 under the Ministry of Public Works, program -

"Policy Development and Administration, Project code 214800 — Government Buildings a contract for the sum of \$15,874,143,300, was awarded to Caribbean Green Building Incorporated for the construction of an office complex in the Houston area on the Mandela/Eccles interlinked road."

\*Can the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly the full dimension of the plot of land in the Houston area where the complex is to be constructed?

(Notice Paper No. 298 (Q223 Opp.223) published on 2023-10-30)

8.

**5. \*PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL ALLOCATED SPENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OFFICE COMPLEX IN THE HOUSTON AREA, MANDELA/ECCLES INTERLINKED ROAD**

**Member Asking:** Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Public Works

"During the consideration of Budget 2023 under the Ministry of Public Works, program – "Policy Development and Administration, Project code 214800 — Government Buildings a contract was awarded the sum of \$15,874,143,300, to Caribbean Green Building Incorporated for the construction of an office complex in the Houston area on the Mandela/Eccles interlinked road."

\*Could the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly what percentage of the total sum allocated for the construction of the Office Complex has been spent as of June 16, 2023?

**(Notice Paper No. 299 (Q224 Opp.224) published on 2023-10-30)**

**6. \*PERCENTAGE OF THE WORK COMPLETED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OFFICE COMPLEX IN THE HOUSTON AREA, MANDELA/ECCLES INTERLINKED ROAD**

**Member Asking:** Ms. Annette Ferguson, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Public Works

"During the consideration of Budget 2023 under the Ministry of Public Works, program – "Policy Development and Administration, Project code 214800 — Government Buildings – the sum of a contract for \$15,874,143,300, was awarded to Caribbean Green Building Incorporated for the construction of an office complex in the Houston area on the Mandela/Eccles interlinked road."

9.

\*Could the Honourable Minister inform the National Assembly what percentage of work has been completed as of June 16, 2023?

**(Notice Paper No. 300 (Q225 Opp.225) published on 2023-10-30)**

**7. \*SKILLS AUDIT OF VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Labour

\*Can the Hon. Minister indicate whether the Ministry of Labour has conducted a skills audit of Venezuelan migrants at any time between 2020 and June 16, 2023?

**(Notice Paper No. 309 (Q234 Opp.234) published on 2023-10-30)**

**8. \*CODIFICATION OF THE LABOUR REGULATIONS AND LEGISLATION**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Labour

\*Can the Hon. Minister inform the House whether the Ministry of Labour has commenced the codification of the labour regulations and legislation under one code for reference?

**(Notice Paper No. 310 (Q235 Opp.235) published on 2023-10-30)**

10.

**MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND  
MOVED BY A MINISTER-**

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS NOS. 10(2) AND 38(9)(a)**

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That Standing Orders Nos. 10(2) and 38(9)(a) be suspended to enable the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance to complete uninterrupted the reading of the Budget Speech for 2024 at the Sitting of the National Assembly on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2024.

**(Notice Paper No. 327 (M76 Govt 40) published on 2024-01-08)**

The motion was put and carried.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**(i) GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

**1. BUDGET FOR 2024**

The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance moved the motion for the approval of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 2024.

The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance read the Budget Speech.

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

At 6.52 p.m., while the Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance was speaking to the motion, the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Hon. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P., took the Chair.

11.

**Speaker's Return to the Chamber**

At 7.00 p.m., the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

The Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance continued and concluded his speech.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8.12 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to 10.00 a.m., on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2024.



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

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,**  
**Public Buildings,**  
**Brickdam,**  
**Georgetown.**

**15<sup>th</sup> January, 2024.**