

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 114TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2015-2019) OF THE ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON WEDNESDAY, 15TH MAY 2019,
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN.
MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (69)

Speaker (1)

*Hon Dr. Barton U.A. Scotland, O.R., C.C.H., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (36)

(i) A Partnership For National Unity/Alliance For Change (36)

First Vice-President and Prime Minister (1)

+ Hon. Moses V. Nagamootoo, J.P., M.P., First Vice-President and Prime Minister

Other Vice-Presidents (2)

+Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P., Vice-President and Minister of Public Security

+*Hon. Sydney Allicock, M.S., M.P., Vice-President and Minister of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs

Senior Ministers (16)

+ Hon. Amna Ally, M.P., Minister of Social Protection and Government Chief Whip

+ Hon. Basil Williams, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

+ Hon. Ronald A. Bulkan, M.P., Minister of Communities

+ Hon. Dr. George A. Norton, M.P., Minister of Social Cohesion with responsibilities for Culture, Youth and Sports

+ Hon. Winston D. Jordan, M.P., Minister of Finance

/...2

+ Cabinet Member

*Non-Elected Member

2.

- + Hon. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P., Minister of Natural Resources
- + Hon. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica),
Minister of Public Health
- + Hon. David A. Patterson, M.P., Minister of Public Infrastructure
- +*Hon. Winston G. Felix, D.S.M., M.P., Minister of Citizenship
- + Hon. Catherine A. Hughes, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica),
Minister of Public Telecommunications
- +Hon. Dawn Hastings-Williams, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni), Minister of State
- +Hon. Dr. Karen Cummings, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister of Foreign
Affairs
- +Hon. Noel L. Holder, M.P., Minister of Agriculture
- +Hon. Dr. Nicolette O. Henry, M.P., Minister of Education
- +Hon. Haimraj Rajkumar, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam), Minister of Business
- +Hon. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

Junior Ministers (6)

*Hon. Keith Scott, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Social Protection (Absent)

Hon. Annette N. Ferguson, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Communities with
responsibility for Housing

Hon. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs

Hon. Jaipaul Sharma, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica), Minister within the Ministry of
Finance

Hon. Simona Charles-Broomes, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of the Presidency with
responsibility for Youth Affairs

Hon. Valarie Patterson, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice), Minister within
the Ministry of Agriculture with responsibility for Rural Affairs

/...3

+ Cabinet Member

*Non-Elected Member

3.

Other Members (9)

Ms. Jennifer J. Wade, M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)
Ms. Rajcoomarie Bancroft, M.P. (Region No. 8 –Potaro/Siparuni)
Mr. John Adams, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
Mr. Richard Allen, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)
Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P.
Mr. Michael Carrington, M.P.
Mr. Jermaine Figueira, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)
Mr. Audwin Rutherford, M.P.
Ms. Barbara P. Pilgrim, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/ Corentyne)
Ms. Donna Mathoo, M.P.
Mr. Reynard Ward, M.P.

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION (29)

(i) People’s Progressive Party/Civic -PPP/C (29)

Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, M.P., Leader of the Opposition (Absent)
Mr. Clement J. Rohee, M.P. (Absent)
Mr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara) (Absent)
Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)
Ms. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice) (Absent)
Dr. Frank C.S. Anthony, M.P. (Absent)
Ms. Pauline Campbell-Sukhai, M.P. (Absent)
Bishop Juan A. Edghill, M.S., J.P., M.P. (Absent)
Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P. (Absent)
Dr. Vindhya V. Persaud, M.S., M.P. (Absent)
Ms. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P. (Absent)

3 vacant seats in the PPP/C

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4.

Mr. Joseph L.F. Hamilton, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Collin D. Croal, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini) (Absent)

Ms. Gillian R. Burton-Persaud, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.P. (Absent)

Dr. Jennifer Westford, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent)

Ms. Africo Selman, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne) (Absent)

Mr. Ganga Persaud, M.P. (Absent)

Ms. Yvonne Pearson- Fredericks, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Neendkumar, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. (Region No.3 – Essequibo Islands/
West Demerara) (Absent)

Dr. Vishwa D.B. Mahadeo, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne) (Absent)

Mr. Cornel Damon, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam) (Absent)

Mr. Alister S. Charlie, M.P. (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo) (Absent)

Mr. Nigel D. Dharamlall, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Harry Gill, M.P. (Absent)

Ms. Bhagmattie Veerasammy, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Vickram O. Bharrat, M.P. (Absent)

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 2.22 p.m.

5.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER-

The Speaker made the following announcements:

(1) Re-designation of Members of Parliament

- (a) “Honourable Members, by copy of an Instrument dated the 2nd day of May, 2019, I was informed that Mrs. Dawn Hastings-Williams was re-designated Minister of State in the Ministry of the Presidency with effect from the 25th day of April, 2019.

- (b) By copy of an Instrument dated the 2nd day of May, 2019, I was informed that Mr. Haimraj Rajkumar an ordinary Member of the National Assembly was appointed to be Minister of Business with effect from the 25th day of April, 2019.

- (c) By copy of an Instrument dated the 2nd day of May, 2019, I was informed that Ms. Tabitha Sarabo-Halley was appointed to be Minister of the Public Service in the Ministry of the Presidency with effect from the 25th day of April, 2019.

- (d) By copy of an instrument dated the 2nd day of May, 2019, I was informed that Ms Annette Ferguson was re-designated Minister within the Ministry of Communities with responsibility for Housing with effect from the 25th day of April, 2019.

- (e) By copy of an Instrument dated the 2nd day of May, 2019, I was informed that Ms Simona Charles-Broomes was re-designated Minister within the Ministry of the Presidency with responsibility for Youth Affairs with effect from the 25th day of April, 2019.

6.

(f) By copy of an Instrument dated the 2nd day of May, 2019, I was informed that Ms. Valerie Patterson-Yearwood was re-designated Minister within the Ministry of Agriculture with responsibility for Rural Affairs with effect from the 25th day of April, 2019.

(g) By copy of an Instrument dated the 2nd day of May, 2019, I was informed that Dr. Karen Roslyn Vanessa Cummings was re-designated Minister of Foreign Affairs with effect from the 25th day of April, 2019”.

(2) Congratulations to Members

“Honourable Members, I would like, on behalf of all of us, to extend best wishes to those Ministers who have been given new portfolios and to congratulate Mr. Haimraj Rajkumar on him becoming a Minister of the Government”.

(3) Appeals to the Caribbean Court of Justice

“In keeping with my undertaking to you at our last Sitting, I let you know that during the period of 6th May to 10th May, 2019, the Appeals to the Caribbean Court of Justice (the CCJ) were heard and it would be correct to say that the Hearings are now concluded.

The Caribbean Court of Justice will declare a date for its decisions. Until the decisions are rendered, the decision of the Court of Appeal rendered on the 22nd March, 2019, that the No Confidence Motion was not properly passed continues to serve as guide for my treatment of the Affairs of the National Assembly”.

(4) Death of Sir Fenton Harcourt Wilworth Ramsahoye, S.C.

“Honourable Members, I was informed of the death of Sir Fenton Harcourt Wilworth Ramsahoye who died on the 27th December, 2018, at the Bayview Hospital in Barbados after a brief period of illness.

7.

He was cremated at the Chapel of Coral Ridge Memorial Gardens in Barbados on the 5th January, 2019. He was 89 years old having been born on the 20th May, 1929.

Sir Fenton came from the People's Progressive Party. On the 21st August, 1961, General Elections were held for the last time under the first-past-the-post system for 35 seats in the Legislative Assembly. From 1961 to 1964, the House comprised the Legislative Assembly and the Senate.

The Legislative Assembly first met on the 5th October, 1961. On that said date Sir Fenton was appointed Attorney General. The First Meeting of the Senate was also held on the 5th October, 1961. On the 25th September, 1964, the House was dissolved.

From 1964 to 1966, there was The House of Assembly. On the 7th December, 1964, General Elections were held for the first time under the system of proportional representation.

The House of Assembly held its first meeting on the 31st December, 1964. The Members of the People's Progressive Party did not attend that meeting. The Ceremonial Opening of the House took place on the 29th March, 1965. On the 18th May, 1965, Sir Fenton together with the Members of the People's Progressive Party attended the Assembly and made and subscribed the Oath of Office. Sir Fenton was appointed an ordinary Member of Parliament.

From 1966 to 1968, the House of Assembly was called the National Assembly of the First Parliament of Guyana and the Members of the House of Assembly became the Members of the National Assembly. On the 5th November, 1968, the First Parliament of Guyana was dissolved.

8.

General Elections of the Second Parliament of Guyana were held on the 16th December, 1968, under the system of proportional representation. The Second Parliament commenced when the National Assembly first met on the 3rd January, 1969. Sir Fenton was appointed an ordinary Member of Parliament. On the 7th June, 1973, the second Parliament of Guyana was dissolved. Sir Fenton ceased to be a legislator on that date”.

(5) Death of Mr. Bernard Celestino De Santos, S.C.

“Honourable Members, I was also informed of the death of Mr. Bernard Celestino De Santos, S.C., a former Minister and Member of Parliament, who died on the 8th March, 2019, at a city hospital after a brief illness. He was 80 years old, having been born on the 27th April, 1938. Mr. De Santos came from the People’s Progressive Party/Civic.

General and Regional Elections were held on Monday, 5th October, 1992. The Sixth Parliament of Guyana commenced when the National Assembly first met on the 17th December, 1992. On the 13th October, 1992, Mr. De Santos was appointed a Minister and was named Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs of Guyana.

On numerous occasions Mr. De Santos had the responsibility to treat with matters of the Government which fall under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whenever the substantive Minister was out of the jurisdiction. Mr. De Santos served continuously in the Sixth Parliament until it was dissolved on the 29th October, 1997.

General and Regional Elections were held on Monday, 15th December, 1997. The Seventh Parliament of Guyana commenced when the National Assembly first met on the 26th February, 1998. Mr. De Santos was elected an ordinary Member of the National Assembly.

He served throughout the Seventh Parliament until it was dissolved on the 15th February, 2001.

Elections were held on Monday, 19th March, 2001. The Eighth Parliament of Guyana commenced when the National Assembly first met on the 4th May, 2001. Mr. De Santos was again elected an ordinary Member of the National Assembly on the 12th April, 2001, and continued working in the Eighth Parliament until it was dissolved on the 2nd May, 2006.

Elections were held on Monday, 28th August, 2006. The Ninth Parliament of Guyana commenced when the National Assembly first met on the 28th September, 2006. Mr. De Santos was again elected an ordinary Member of the National Assembly on the 12th day of September, 2006 and served in that Parliament until it was dissolved on the 27th day of September, 2011. On that date Mr. De Santos ceased to be a Member of Parliament.”

A Minute’s Silence

A minute’s silence was observed as a mark of respect for the late Mr. Harcourt Wilworth Ramsahoye and Mr. Bernard Celestino De Santos.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

(1) By the Speaker of the National Assembly:

- (i) Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) for the Guyana Elections Commission in the sum of \$3,496,496,155.

(Circulated)

- (ii) Supplementary Estimate (Current) for the Guyana Ethnic Relations Commission in the sum of \$83,355,678.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Minister of Finance:

- (i) Financial Paper No. 1 of 2019 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totaling \$7,962,209,485 for the period 2019-01-01 to 2019-12-31.

(Circulated)

The Minister of Finance named May 23, 2019, for consideration of the Financial Paper.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Guyana Securities Council for the year 2018.

(Circulated)

- (iii) Annual Report of the Guyana National Shipping Corporation for the year 2017.

(Circulated)

- (iv) Financing Agreement Credit No. 6382-GY dated April 11, 2019 between the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the International Development Association (IDA) for an amount of SDR14,300,000.00 to finance the Guyana Petroleum Resources Governance and Management Project.

(Circulated)

(3) By the Minister of Communities:

- (i) Annual Report of the Central Housing and Planning Authority for the year 2017.

(Circulated)

- (ii) Audited Financial Statements of the Central Housing and Planning Authority for the year ended 31st December, 2017.

(Circulated)

PUBLIC BUSINESS

(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTION

1. AFFIRMATION OF THE PETROLEUM (EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION) (TAX LAWS) (TULLOW GUYANA B.V., ECO (ATLANTIC) GUYANA INC. AND TOTAL E&P GUYANA BV) ORDER 2019 – NO. 2 OF 2019

The Minister of Finance moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly, in accordance with Section 51 of the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act 1986, Chapter 65:04, affirms the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) (Tax Laws) (Tullow Guyana B.V., Eco (Atlantic) Guyana Inc. and Total E&P Guyana BV) Order 2019 – No. 2 of 2019 which was made on 14th February, 2019, under Section 51 of the Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act 1986, Chapter 65:01 and published in an Extra Ordinary copy of the Official Gazette dated 18th February, 2019.

(Notice Paper No. 183 (M 130 Govt. 69) published on 2019-05-02)

The motion was then put and carried.

BILLS – Second Readings

ITEM 1 - INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2019 – Bill No. 1/2019 published on 2019-01-10

The Minister of Public Telecommunications moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Interception of Communications Act.

(Read a first time on 2019-04-26)

12.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Public Telecommunications, the Interception of Communications (Amendment) Bill 2019 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ITEM 2 - PROCUREMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 2019 – BILL No. 2/2019 published on 2019-01-24

The Minister of Finance moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Procurement Act.

(Read a first time on 2019-04-26)

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 5 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the Procurement (Amendment) Bill 2019 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ITEM 3 - CUSTOMS AND TRADE SINGLE WINDOW SYSTEM BILL 2019 – Bill No. 3/2019 published on 2019-01-31

The Minister of Finance moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to establish the Customs and Trade Single Window System to facilitate trade and for connected matters.

(Read a first time on 2019-04-26)

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Part 1 was passed as printed.

Part 2 was passed as printed.

Part 3 was passed as printed.

Part 4 was passed as printed.

Part 5 was passed as printed.

Part 6 was passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the Customs and Trade Single Window System Bill 2019 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ITEM 4 - CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT OF SCHEDULES) BILL 2019 – Bill No. 4/2019 published on 2019-03-28

The Minister of Finance moved the second reading of the following Bill:

14.

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Customs Act.

(Read a first time on 2019-04-26)

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were passed as printed.

The Schedules were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the Customs (Amendment of Schedules) Bill 2019 was read a third time and passed as printed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 4.02 p.m., the Sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 5.05 p.m., the Sitting was resumed.

ITEM 5 - NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 2019 – Bill No. 5/2019 published on 2019-04-05

The Minister of Education moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the National Accreditation Council Act 2004.

(Read a first time on 2019-04-26)

15.

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 9 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Education, the National Accreditation Council (Amendment) Bill 2019 was read a third time and passed as printed.

**ITEM 6 - NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL ACT 2004 (VALIDATION) BILL
2019 – Bill No. 6/2019 published on 2019-04-05**

The Minister of Education moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to validate the commencement of and all acts and things done under the National Accreditation Council Act 2004.

(Read a first time on 2019-04-26)

The Bill was then read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 4 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Education, the National Accreditation Council Act 2004 (Validation) Bill 2019 was read a third time and passed as printed.

COMMITTEES BUSINESS-

MOTION

**ITEM 1 - ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SELECT COMMITTEE
ON THE FOOD SAFETY BILL 2016 – BILL NO. 22/2016**

The Minister of Agriculture, M.P. (Chairman of the Special Select Committee on the Food Safety Bill 2016 – No. 22/2016) moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Report of the Special Select Committee on the Food Safety Bill 2016 – Bill No. 22/2016 be adopted.

(Notice Paper No. 182 (M 129 Committees 37) published on 2019-04-27)

The motion was then put and carried.

BILL – Third Reading

ITEM 2 - FOOD SAFETY BILL 2016 – Bill No. 22/2016 published on 2016-11-02

The Minister of Agriculture, M.P. (Chairperson of the Special Select Committee on the Food Safety Bill 2016 – No. 22/2016) moved the third reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to prevent the spread of food borne diseases through the control of the production, preparation, handling, storage and the transportation of food and provide for connected matters.

(Read a first time on 2016-11-04)

(Read a second time and committed to a Special Select Committee on 2017-02-09)

On a motion by the Minister of Agriculture, the Food Safety Bill 2016 was read a third time and passed as amended.

MOTIONS

ITEM 3 - ADOPTION OF THE FOURTH PERIODIC REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SECTORAL COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Minister of Communities (Vice Chairperson of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources) moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Fourth Periodic Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources be adopted.

(Notice Paper No. 175 (M 122 Committees 34) published on 2018-12-06)

The motion was then put and carried.

ITEM 4 - ADOPTION OF THE FIFTH PERIODIC REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SECTORAL COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

The Minister of Communities (Vice Chairperson of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources) moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Fifth Periodic Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources be adopted.

(Notice Paper No. 176 (M 123 Committees 35) published on 2018-12-06)

The motion was then put and carried.

**ITEM 5 - ADOPTION OF THE SIXTH PERIODIC REPORT OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY SECTORAL COMMITTEE ON NATURAL
RESOURCES**

The Minister of Communities (Vice Chairperson of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources) moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Sixth Periodic Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources be adopted.

(Notice Paper No. 177 (M 124 Committees 36) published on 2018-12-06)

The motion was then put and carried.

SYMPATHY MESSAGE

The First Vice-President and Prime Minister expressed sympathy to the Vice-President and Minister of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs on the death of his father.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.00 p.m., on a motion by the First Vice-President and Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to Thursday, 23rd May, 2019.

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HON. DR. BARTON U.A. SCOTLAND, O.R., C.C.H., M.P.,
Speaker of the National Assembly

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

15th May, 2019.