

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 23<sup>RD</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (2006-2007) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON THURSDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2007**  
**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (71)**

**Speaker (1)**

The Hon. Hari. N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

**Members of the Government (42)**

(i) **People's Progressive Party/Civic (41)**

(ii) **The United Force (1)**

The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice),  
Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P., Minister of Education

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Foreign Trade and International  
Cooperation

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne),  
Minister of Health

The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, M.P., (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo),  
Minister of Amerindian Affairs

\*The Hon. Dr. Ashni K. Singh, M.P., Minister of Finance

\*The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R., C.C.H., M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs (Absent – on leave)

The Hon. Harry Narine Nawbatt, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water (Absent)

**\*Non-elected Minister**

The Hon. Robert M. Persaud, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne),  
Minister of Agriculture

The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P., (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni),  
Minister of Public Service

The Hon. Kellawan Lall, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

\*The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Absent)

The Hon. Dr. Frank C.S. Anthony, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

The Hon. B.H. Robeson Benn, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

\*\*The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Minister of Labour

The Hon. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice),  
Minister of Human Services and Social Security

The Hon. Dr. Desrey Fox, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Education

The Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Health

The Hon. Jennifer I. Webster, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Finance

The Hon. Manniram Prashad, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P.

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Chief Whip

Ms Bibi S. Shadick, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Island/West Demerara)

Mr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P.

Mr. Albert Atkinson, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

**\*Non-Elected Minister**

**\*\*Elected Member from the United Force**

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

Mr. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Mohamed F. Khan, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

Mr. Moses V. Nagamootoo, J.P., M.P.

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P.

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

\*\*\*Mr. Steve P. Ninvalle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Parmanand P. Persaud, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary

\*\*\*Mrs. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Mr. Norman A. Whittaker, M.P., (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

**Members of the Opposition (28)**

**(i) Members of People's National Congress Reform-One Guyana (22)**

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Winston Murray, C.C.H., M.P.

Mrs. Clarissa S. Riehl, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip (Absent – on leave)

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.

\*\*\*Non-elected Member

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Anna Ally, M.P.

Mr. James McAllister, M.P.

Mr. Dave D. Danny, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Aubrey C. Norton, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Ernest B. Elliot, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P., (Region No.7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P., (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Island/West Demerara)

Ms Africo Selman, M.P.

Dr. John Austin, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Ms Jennifer Wade, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)

Ms Vanessa Kisson, M.P., (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P., (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

(ii) **Alliance For Change (5)**

Mr. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P.

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mrs. Sheila V.A. Holder, M.P.

Ms Chantalle L. Smith, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. David Patterson, M.P.

**(iii) Guyana Action Party/Rise Organize and Rebuild (1)**

Mr. Everall N. Franklin, M.P.

**OFFICERS**

Mr. Sherlock E. Isaacs, Clerk of the National Assembly

Mrs. Lilawattie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

**COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING**

The sitting commenced at 2:08 p.m.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-**

**(1) By the Speaker of the National Assembly:**

- (i) Amended 2<sup>nd</sup> Minutes of the Committee of Selection held on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2007.

(Circulated)

- (ii) The Ethnic Relations Commission Report on the MSF National Conversation held on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2006.

(Circulated)

- (iii) Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Selection held on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2007.

(Circulated)

(iv) **Parliament of Guyana Manual of Rules of Procedure and Operations of Committees.**  
(Circulated)

(v) **The Ethnic Relations Commission Annual Report for the year 2006.**  
(Circulated)

(2) **By the Minister of Home Affairs:**

**The Minor Offences (Penalties) (Amendment) Order 2007 – Order No. 5 of 2007.**  
(Circulated)

(3) **By Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., Chairperson of the Committee on Appointments:**

(i) **Second Report of the Committee on Appointments in relation to the Appointment of Members of the Public Service Commission.**  
(Circulated)

(ii) **First Report of the Committee on Appointments in relation to the Appointment of Members of the Judicial Service Commission.**  
(Circulated)

(4) **By the Minister of Finance:**

(i) **The Commissioner of Insurance Annual Report for the year 2006.**  
(Circulated)

(ii) **The Guyana Revenue Authority Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2004.**  
(Circulated)

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- (iii) The Guyana Revenue Authority Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2005.

(Circulated)

- (iv) The Guyana Securities Council Audited Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2005.

(Circulated)

- (v) The Guyana Securities Council Audited Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2006.

(Circulated)

- (5) By the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications:

Direction given by the Prime Minister under Section 50(4) of the Telecommunication Act No. 27 of 1990.

(Circulated)

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

A request by Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., in accordance with Standing Order No. 18 to ask an oral question without notice, was ruled out of order by the Speaker.

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-****For Oral Replies****1. CARICOM CHARTER OF CIVIL RIGHTS****Member Asking: Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P.****Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs**

At the request of the Prime Minister and with approval of the Assembly, the answers to the following questions were deferred:

- (i) \*Can the Hon. Minister say whether his Government has established “the mechanism at the national level to monitor the recommendations of the Caricom Charter of Civil Rights?
- (ii) \*If such a mechanism has been established can the Hon. Minister inform this National Assembly what results have been obtained to date?
- (iii) \*If the mechanism has not been established can the Hon. Minister say when this mechanism will be established?

**(Notice Paper No. 67 (Q49 Opp49) published on 2007-01-23)**

**2. CONFERENCE/RETREAT OF HEADS OF OVERSEAS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS****Member Asking: Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P.****Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs**

At the request of the Prime Minister and with approval of the Assembly, the answers to the following questions were deferred:

- (i) \*Can the Hon. Minister inform this National Assembly when last a Conference/Retreat of Heads of Overseas Diplomatic Mission was convened?
- (ii) \*Could the Hon. Minister say what is the date and venue for the next Heads of Overseas Diplomatic Missions Conference/Retreat?

**(Notice Paper No. 68 (Q50 Opp50) published on 2007-01-23)**



3. **HEAD OF A DIPLOMATIC MISSION**

**Member Asking: Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs**

At the request of the Prime Minister and with approval of the Assembly, the answers to the following questions were deferred:

- (i) \*Could the Hon. Minister indicate if the disadvantages of having the Head of a Diplomatic Mission for more than five (5) years in one post outweighs the advantages?
- (ii) \*Is such an approach useful in the present international situation?  
(Notice Paper No. 69 (Q51 Opp51) published on 2007-01-23)

4. **UNSATISFACTORY WORK DONE BY CONTRACTORS IN THE REGIONS**

**Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Finance**

Could the Hon. Minister of Finance inform this National Assembly:-

- (i) \*Whether he is aware that for several years the people in the various Regions of Guyana have complained of the unsatisfactory work done by contractors retained by the Government?
- (ii) \*How many contractors were fined for unsatisfactory work and how many have paid the fines imposed?
- (iii) \*Whether any contractor has been blacklisted by his Ministry due to:
  - (a) substandard work;
  - (b) breach of specifications;
  - (c) supply of substandard materials; or
  - (d) failure to complete projects within the specified time?

(Notice Paper No. 103 (Q 79 Opp 79) published on 2007-01-31)

**Answers:**

- (i) I am aware of complaints made, from time to time, primarily from reports in the press.
- (ii) I am not aware that contractors have been fined for unsatisfactory work. I am advised that other mechanisms, such as withholding retention payments, requiring remedial works, applying liquidated damages, or going to arbitration, are used to obtain redress.
- (iv) I am not aware that contractors have been blacklisted for the reasons indicated in the question.

5. **INCREASING EVIDENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

**Member Asking: Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Agriculture**

\* Recently the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its Fourth Assessment Report "Climate Change 2007" which shows increasing evidence of changes in the global climate due to human activities. It also points to the vulnerability of low-lying states from possible sea level rise and other consequences of global climate change.

In the aftermath of the 2005 floods, and the increasing evidence of climate change and its potential impacts, can the Honourable Minister say what policies, plans, and activities are being put in place by the Government of Guyana to prepare us to face this challenge?

**(Notice Paper No. 117 (Q92 PPP/C Private Member No.1) published on 2007-02-09)**

Thereafter the Minister of Agriculture replied.

6. **DEPLORABLE STATE OF FOREST ROADS AND BRIDGES IN REGION NO.10**

**Member Asking: Mr. David A. Patterson, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics**

The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics declined to answer the following question which was wrongly addressed to him:

- (i) \*Could the Hon. Minister acknowledge that the forest roads and bridges within Region No. 10 are in a deplorable state?
- (ii) \*Could the Hon. Minister acknowledge that the above situation has been brought on by poor road alignment, sub-standard road and bridge construction and a lack of maintenance?
- (iii) \*Could the Hon. Minister accept that the prevailing situation is a potential disaster in waiting especially to the environment through soil erosion and water/stream contamination?
- (iv) \*What action is being taken to prevent the potential for loss of life and limb and to ensure the safety of members of the public who traverse these roads daily?
- (v) \*What mitigation measures are being taken to stem the current state of environmental degradation along the roads and water ways?

**(Notice Paper No. 121 (Q93 Opp92) published on 2007-02-28)**

Thereafter the Speaker directed that the above question be addressed to the Minister of Agriculture.

7. **DIVERSIFIED DEVELOPMENT OF REGION NO. 10**

**Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communication**

- (i) \*Could the Prime Minister acknowledge that the diversified development of Region No. 10 will depend largely on the forestry and agriculture sectors in this Region and the necessity for developing the road network/system?
  
- (ii) \*Could the Hon. Prime Minister indicate what is the government's plan and target dates to complete the rehabilitation and ensure the maintenance of the road system that links the agriculture and forestry communities of Ituni, Kwakwani, the Intermaediate Savannah and the Amerindian and mixed communities of the Upper Berbice with Linden, the seat of Regional Administration of Region No. 10?

**(Notice Paper No. 122 (Q94 Opp93) published on 2007-02-28)**

Thereafter the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications replied.

8. **APPOINTMENT OF BERNARD KERIK AS ADVISOR**

**Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communication**

- (i) \*Could the Hon. Prime Minister state the date that the services of Bernard Kerik were contracted to serve the Government of Guyana, and in what capacity?
  
- (ii) \*Could the Hon. Prime Minister state the terms and conditions of the contract between the Government of Guyana and Bernard Kerik or his company and associates including the scope of work to be carried out, the contract sum and the duration of the contract?

- (iii) \*Would Mr. Bernard Kerik, or his associates be given any privileges, immunities or powers in the execution of their duties whilst in Guyana?

**(Notice Paper No. 123 (Q95 Opp94) published on 2007-02-28)**

**Answers:**

- (i) The services of Mr. Bernard Kerik have been contracted for one (1) year from 2007-02-01, in an advisory capacity to His Excellency the President and the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs.
- (ii) Mr. Kerik is contracted to advise on matters of crime and security and to perform resource mobilization. This contract is for US\$100,000.
- (iii) No, the work envisaged does not require any privilege, immunities or powers.

9. **REPORTED INCIDENTS OF TYPHOID IN GEORGETOWN**

**Member Asking: Mr. Everall Franklin, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Health**

\*Will the Hon. Minister state whether his Ministry has received reports of an increase in the reported incidents of Typhoid in Georgetown and its environs.

**(Notice Paper No. 136 (Q106 Opp105) published on 2007-03-13)**

Thereafter the Minister of Health replied.

**For Written Replies****10. EXERCISE BOOKS****Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.****Minister Answering: The Minister of Education**

Could the Hon. Minister of Education inform this National Assembly:-

- (i) The total quantity of exercise books obtained by his Ministry?
- (ii) The total quantity of exercise books which were distributed to Primary Schools throughout Guyana?
- (iii) How many exercise books were given to each primary school child?  
(Notice Paper No. 101( Q77 Opp 77) published on 2007-01-31)

**Answers:**

- (i) Total quantity of exercise books obtained by the Ministry in 2006 was 2,059,959.
- (ii) Total quantity of exercise books distributed to Primary Schools throughout Guyana was 1,126,995.
- (iii) Number of exercise books given to each primary school child is as follows:

Single Line	3 per each prep A and B student 4 per each primary 1 and 2 student 5 per each primary 3 to 4 student
Double Line	1 per each student
Plain	1 per each student

Checked Line      1 per each student

11.      **TEXTBOOKS FOR THE 2006-2007 SCHOOL YEAR**

**Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Education**

Could the Hon. Minister of Education inform this National Assembly:-

- (i)      How many textbooks his Ministry plans to distribute to each Secondary School child for the 2006-2007 school year?
  
- (ii)     Has this plan been achieved?
  
- (iii)    Which schools in Regions Nos. 4 and 6 were given their full quotas of textbooks for the 2006-2007 school year?

**(Notice Paper No. 102 (Q78 Opp 78) published on 2007-01-31)**

**Answers:**

- (i)      The plan is to distribute 49,499 textbooks to secondary schools for the 2006/2007 school year.
  
- (ii)     The plan has not yet been achieved and is in process.
  
- (iii)    The secondary schools in Region 4 that received textbooks for the school year 2006/2007 are as follows:

<b>Name of School</b>	<b>Total</b>
St. Johns' Secondary	87
Richard Ishmael	87
Christ Church	87
Lodge Community High	38
St. Roses' High	87
St. Mary's Community	39
Freeburg Secondary	39
East Ruimveldt Secondary	39
David Rose Community	38

The schools in Region 6 received their supply of text books in May, 2006.

12. **REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES FOR PRISONERS**

**Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.**

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

Could the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs inform this House-

- (i) What rehabilitation programmes are in place for prisoners?
- (ii) How many social workers are on staff?
- (iii) How many professionals were/are to be recruited by the Prison Administration to provide rehabilitation programmes and what programmes are taught?

**(Notice Paper No. 130 (Q102 Opp101) published on 2007-02-28)**



**Answers:**

- (i) There are several rehabilitation programmes in place to enhance convicted prisoners positive reintegration into the society at large. The following programmes are conducted at the various locations:

**A. Georgetown Prison:**

- **Literacy and Numeracy:** Basic Literacy and Numeracy for illiterate and semi-illiterate inmates. Advanced Literacy and Numeracy and Pre-CXC subjects.
- **Skills Training:** Carpentry, Joinery, Handicraft, Tailoring, Masonry, Electrical Installation, Welding, Food Preparation, Mechanic, Barbering and Music.
- **Moral Development:** Religious teaching (Hindu, Muslim, Pentecostal, Catholics and others).
- **Personal Development:** Behaviour modification programmes for Sex Offenders, violent offenders (Anger Management), setting goals and objectives, HIV/AIDS programmes, alcohol and drug addiction, conflict Resolution.
- **Leisure:** Drama, sports (indoor), music (playing of instruments and singing, reading).

**B. Mazaruni Prison/Sibley Hall:**

- **Literacy and Numeracy:** Literacy and Numeracy for illiterate and semi-illiterate inmates, advanced literacy and numeracy.
- **Skills Training:** Cash crop farming and animal husbandry, carpentry, joinery, handicraft, tailoring, electrical installation, food preparation and automobile repairs.
- **Moral Development:** Religious teachings.
- **Personal Development:** HIV/AIDS programmes (Hope Foundation)
- **Leisure:** Drama, Sports, Reading

**C. New Amsterdam Prison: Male and Female:**

- **Literacy and Numeracy:** Literacy programmes for illiterate and semi-illiterate inmates.

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- **Skills Training:** Needlework, cosmetology, entrepreneurial training, tailoring, cash crop farming, carpentry, joinery, electrical installation, masonry and food preparation.
- **Moral Development:** Religious teachings
- **Personal Development:** Leisure: Reading, sports and drama

**D. Lusignan Prison**

- **Literacy and Numeracy:** Literacy programmes for illiterate and semi-illiterate inmates.
- **Skills Training:** Cash crop farming and animal husbandry, ceramics, carpentry, masonry, joinery, food preparation.
- **Moral Development:** Religious teachings
- **Personal Development:** HIV/AIDS programmes (Nemesis Development Association)
- **Leisure:** Reading, sports (indoor and outdoor games), poetry.

**E. Timehri Prison:**

- **Literacy and Numeracy:** Literacy programmes for illiterate and semi-illiterate inmates.
- **Skills Training:** Concrete block making, cash crop farming, carpentry, masonry and food preparation.
- **Moral Development:** Religious teachings
- **Personal Development:** HIV/AIDS programmes
- **Leisure:** Reading, indoor and outdoor sports.

- (ii) There are no practicing Social Workers performing specific welfare duties within the prison system, notwithstanding there are four (4) qualified Social Workers who are performing Administrative duties.

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- (iii) There are twenty nine (29) professionals recruited by the Prison Administration to provide rehabilitation programmes (vocational skills) within the prisons and their job designations are Prison Trade Instructors. They are responsible for conducting a number of basic skills training programmes. There are other specialists in the literacy and skills training fields, some of whom are volunteers and others are given stipends, including groups such as the AEA (New Amsterdam and Bartica) to perform specialist.

13. **ABUSE OF PRISONERS**

**Member Asking:** Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

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

Could the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs inform this House-

- (i) How many reports of abuse have been received against staff members of the Prison Service?
- (ii) How many staff members have been disciplined as a result of these reports?

**(Notice Paper No. 131 (Q103 Opp102) published on 2007-02-28)**

**Answers:**

- (i) All reports of abuse are investigated to determine their truthfulness. Disciplinary proceedings are instituted as deemed necessary by such reports.
- (ii) The numbers in the table below represent ranks who were adjudicated and sanctioned for using unnecessary violence against prisoners during the years stated. Various sanctions including reprimand to recommended dismissals from the Guyana Prison Service were implemented:

2004	2005	2006
08	37	03

14. **LAND GIVEN/SOLD TO MR. BUDDY SHIVRAJ**

**Member Asking: Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Agriculture**

Could the Honourable Minister of Agriculture tell this National Assembly-

- (i) How much land was taken out of the Diamond Sugar Estate Cultivation at Providence, East Bank Demerara and given/sold to Mr. Buddy Shivraj to construct an international hotel?
- (ii) If the land was given to Mr. Shivraj, could the Honourable Minister tell this Honourable House what is the market value of this land?
- (iii) If the land was sold to Mr. Buddy Shivraj, could the Honourable Minister tell this Honourable House what was the sale price?
- (iv) Could the Honourable Minister tell this Honourable House how much additional land is to be given or sold to Mr. Buddy Shivraj for a golf course?

**(Notice Paper No. 124 (Q96 Opp95) published on 2007-02-28)**

**Answers:**

- (i) No land was taken out of cultivation.
- (ii) The land was leased to Buddy's on January 1, 2006, not sold, and so no valuation was required to be done.
- (iii) Land was not sold to Mr. Shivraj but leased by the Government of Guyana to him for a period of 99 years at a rental of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) per acre per annum.
- (iv) I am not aware of any public lands given to or sold to Mr. Shivraj for a golf course.

**15. USE OF WEEDICIDE (GLYPOSATE) UP STREAM OF THE MAHAICA RIVER**

**Member Asking: Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Agriculture**

Could the Honourable Minister of Agriculture tell us why is the chemical weedicide Glyphosate being used to spray the Mahaica river up stream of farmers who use the river water for domestic purposes and to irrigate their crops?

**(Notice Paper No. 125 (Q97 Opp96) published on 2007-02-28)**

**Answer:**

There is no spraying in the Mahaica Creek, however, there is spraying of Glyphosate in the Mahaicony Creek.

Riverain communities along the Mahaica River are plagued by antelope grass and other weeds which affect drainage and irrigation and farming activities.

The growth pattern of these weeds is such that it is anchored to the Banks of the river and grows towards the centre of the river. The grass grows at a rapid pace, which blocks the drains and canals, making it difficult for farmers to transport their crops and affect the flow rate of the river.

Glyphosate is used to control the vegetation on the banks of the river so as to prevent growth of weeds across the river and to maintain the flow rate of the river thereby improving the drainage and irrigation and farming activities (transportation) within these communities.

Glyphosate is a foliar-applied, translocated, non-selective, herbicide used to control most shoreline vegetation and emergent weeds. Glyphosate is classified as slightly hazardous as classified by the World Health Organisation i.e. Class III.

By applying herbicide on the weeds anchored on the banks of the river, the chemical is absorbed through the leaves and is then transported throughout the plant. The chemical inhibits the metabolic pathway required to form the essential amino acids that exist in plants. By virtue of this application the parts of the weed that exist in the river are killed and it appears as if the chemical has been applied to those areas or in the water, which is not the case as this is a serious environment concerns.

Since the glyphosate is applied to the banks of the river directly to the foliage of the plants there is no risk posed to domestic householder using the water or to the water being used for irrigation purposes.

16. **SUGAR PRODUCTION 2000-2006**

**Member Asking: Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Agriculture**

- (i) Could the Minister of Agriculture tell us how many tons of sugar production was lost in years 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006, as a result of the kiln to mill period of 48 hours not being met with any consistency by the estates?

- (ii) Could the Minister also inform this Honourable House why the estates are unable to meet this important commitment to grind the canes on time?

(Notice Paper No. 126 (Q98 Opp97) published on 2007-02-28)

**Answers:**

- (i) I cannot give absolute tonnages for sugar that was lost as a result of the extension of time for cane to get to the factory to be crushed following burning. I have given an estimate based on the following assumptions:

- (1) 0% loss in sucrose for cane crushed under 48 hours old
- (2) 2% loss in sucrose for cane that is 49-72 hours old
- (3) 5% loss in sucrose for cane that is 73 hours plus old
- (4) The average Po1% cane is 10%

The estimated loss of sucrose from the stale canes is as follows:

Year	Burn to grind Hours	Estimate Only	
		Subtotal tonnes	Total tonnes
2000	0-48	-	2,763
	49-72	1,072	
	73+	1,692	
2001	0-48	-	4,102
	49-72	1,382	
	73+	2,721	
2002	0-48	-	6,584
	49-72	1,796	
	73+	4,788	
2003	0-48	-	3,881
	49-72	1,300	
	73+	2,581	
2004	0-48	-	4,653
	49-72	1,558	
	73+	3,095	
2005	0-48	-	3,836
	49-72	1,044	
	73+	2,792	
2006	0-48	-	3,741
	49-72	1,244	
	73+	2,497	

- (ii) The main reasons for stale canes are listed below in the order of priority:
- (1) Strikes
  - (2) Labour turnout
  - (3) Inclement weather causing burning of canes for more than 24 hours supply
  - (4) Factory breakdown

17. **WATER LEVEL IN THE LAMA CONSERVANCY**

**Member Asking: Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Agriculture**

- (i) Could the Honourable Minister tell this National Assembly why the Lama Conservancy level is 556 GD?
- (ii) Is the Minister aware that the present low level of the Lama Conservancy is likely to negatively affect the upcoming rice and sugar crops?
- (iii) Is the Minister also aware that the present low level of the Lama Conservancy is likely to negatively impact on the supply of potable water to Georgetown?
- (iv) Can the Honourable Minister tell this National Assembly how he expects to replenish the low level of water level in the Lama Conservancy if there is no excessive rainfall?

**(Notice Paper No. 127 (Q99 Opp98) published on 2007-02-28)**

**Answers:**

- (i) The level is of the conservancy is at 55.6 GD due to rainfall and runoff from the catchment area into the conservancy.



- (ii) A level of 55.6 GD is considered safe and water demand for both rice and sugar and Georgetown will be satisfied. At present the conservancy is replenishing itself and with the advent of the May/June rains the conservancy should have enough water stored to satisfy the upcoming rice and sugar crops. The level of 57.5 GD is targeted to be attained after the advent to the May/June rains of 2007.
- (iii) This did not occur. The problem was one of discoloration due to some works being carried out at the conservancy. The conservancy level was at lowest of 52.6 GD on March 4, 2007.
- (iv) A level of 57.5 GD is targeted to be attained at the completion of the May/June rains of 2007. The May/June rains, from the information I have, have never failed.

18. **SUGAR INDUSTRY – STRIKE FOR YEARS 2000 – 2006**

**Member Asking: Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Labour**

Could the Minister of Labour give this National Assembly-

- (i) The Total man days lost to the sugar industry due to strikes for the years, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006?
- (ii) The economic loss to Guyana in the form of lost sugar production due to strikes for the years, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006?

**(Notice Paper No. 128 (Q100 Opp 99) published on 2007-02-28)**

**Answer:**

With respect to parts 1 and 2, answers are contained in the table below: except we do not have the economic loss to Guyana, we only have the wages lost.

Year	No. of Strikes	Man days Lost	Wages Lost
2000	305	66,432	\$85.7M
2001	243	60,755	\$79.6M
2002	226	70,544	\$136.9M
2003	205	53,577	\$91.8M
2004	229	83,760	\$127.4M
2005	165	85,279	\$149.6M
2006	208	120,032	\$204M

19. **TRAFFICKING AMONG YOUNG AMERINDIAN GIRLS**

**Member Asking: Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Human Services and Social Security**

Can the Hon. Minister state:

- (i) Whether there has been an increase in the tide of trafficking of young Amerindian girls?
- (ii) If so, what new measures have been put in place to stem the increasing tide of trafficking?

**(Notice Paper No. 135 (Q105 Opp104) published on 2007-03-13)**

**Answers:**

- (i) Since the onset of the Counter – Trafficking in Persons measures for Guyana there has been a general misconception that all persons of Amerindian decent that are working in bars or groceries have been trafficked.

Reports of alleged trafficking are made by ordinary citizens who have been sensitized about the issue of trafficking. These reports have to be verified by the Police before they can be classified ones that merit the charge of trafficking. Thus far for the year 2007 there has been an increase of reports but only one has been classified as a trafficking in person case. Investigations by the police are pending in the other reports.

- (ii) As outlined above there is no reason to believe that there is an increasing tide of trafficking in persons in Guyana.

In carrying out its mandate, however, the Unit has been conducting awareness programmes throughout the country. During the ICC CWC WI 2007 Super Eight matches in Guyana, a public awareness programme comprising of frequently aired advertisements on both television and radio addressed the issue of Trafficking in Persons. It is expected that these advertisements will be ongoing and updated from time to time.

Further, the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour has started an exercise that entails visiting business establishments. This exercise started in January, 2007; the team has completed its' visits on the East Bank of Demerara and have begun making visits to the West Coast of Demerara.

20. **DEATHS OF OSLYN VANDENBURG AND GENEVA LETLOW BY ELECTROCUTION**

**Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.**

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

**Communications**

Will the Honourable Prime Minister say what are the findings and recommendations of the report of the Inter-American Bank consultant relative to the deaths of Osllyn Vandenburg and Geneva Letlow by electrocution at Kwakwani, Berbice River on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2007?

**(Notice Paper No. 137 (Q107 Opp106) published on 2007-03-13)**

**Answer:**

The Chief Electrical Inspector investigated the incident and concluded in his report that Oslin Vandenburg and Geneva Letlow were electrocuted by a chain-linked fence which was electrified by an exposed neutral conductor that was in contact with the fence. The exposed conductor was part of a cable that was used to supply electricity from Geneva Letlow's residence to a fowl-pen.

According to the report, the neutral conductor was live because of conditions that existed at the supply transformer of the Kwanwani Utility Inc. A review of that report by qualified electrical engineers raised the following questions:

- (i) Whether checks were made to eliminate the other possible ways that the neutral conductor could have become live. For instance, the connection of the cable that was supplying electricity to the fowl-pen could have had a reversed polarity. Nowadays two-pin plugs and sockets are of such that they could be plugged in only one way (the neutral pin is wider than the other). Most two-pin plugs in Guyana now can be plugged either of two ways. As such, what was identified as the neutral conductor could have been the line?
- (ii) Whether the transformer connections were configured in a way that the neutral conductor could have been live as a result of conditions that existed at the transformer?

The Chief Electrical Inspector did not mention in his report, how the transformer was connected to the secondary network and what was the supply voltage.

**STATEMENTS BY MIINISTERS INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS**

The Prime Minister made a statement with respect to a direction he had given under Section 50(4) of the Telecommunication Act No. 27 of 1990.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Take over of the Bauxite operations at Linden by the Chinese company, BOSAI Mineral Group Company Limited**

A request by Mr. Robert Corbin to move the adjournment of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing the take over of the Bauxite operations at Linden by the Chinese company, BOSAI Mineral Group Company Limited, with the consent of the Speaker, was converted to an Adjournment motion under Standing Order No. 11(4) with the consent of the Speaker.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-**

**Presentation and First Readings**

1. **THE FIREARMS (AMENDMENT) BILL – Bill No. 14/2007**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Firearms Act.

2. **JUVENILE OFFENDERS (AMEMDMENT) BILL – Bill No. 15/2007**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Juvenile Offenders Act.

3. **SUMMARY JURISDICTION (OFFENCES) (AMENDMENT) BILL – Bill No. 16/2007**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Act.

4. **CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL – Bill No. 17/2007**

The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to alter the Constitution in accordance with Articles 66 and 164.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS-**

**(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

With the consent of the Speaker obtained in accordance with Standing Order No. 28(2), the following motion was proceeded with at that sitting:

**ITEM 1 - NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO THE ETHNIC RELATIONS COMMISSION**

Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works & Communications, moved the following motion:

**WHEREAS**, Article 212A of the Constitution has established an Ethnic Relations Commission;

**AND WHEREAS**, in accordance with Article 212 B (1) of the Constitution, the Ethnic Relations Commission shall consist of-

- (a) not less than five nor more than fifteen members nominated by entities, by a consensual mechanism determined by the National Assembly, including entities, representative of religious bodies, the labour movement, the private business sector, youth, women, after the entities are determined by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all elected members of the National Assembly;
- (b) a member who shall be a nominee, without the right to vote, chosen by and from each of the following commissions to be established under this Constitution, Indigenous People's Commission, Women and Gender Equality Commission, Rights of the Child Commission and Human Rights Commission;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly determines the entities to nominate Members of the Ethnic Relations Commission, in accordance with Article 212B (1) (a) of the Constitution, to be as set out in the First Schedule attached;

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That the number of nominees for each group of entities be as follows:-

<u>Group of Entities</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>
Christian Religion	One Member
Hindu Religion	One Member
Muslim Religion	One Member
Trade Unions	One Member
Private Sector Organisations	One Member
Youth Organisations	One Member
Women's Organisations	One Member

And there will be an alternate nominee named for each group.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That the consensual mechanism for the nomination of the Members by the entities be as set out in the Second Schedule attached.

**(Notice Paper No.146 (M36 Govt 23) published on 2007-05-03)**

**FIRST SCHEDULE****Groups and Entities within each Group to Nominate Members of the Ethnic Relations Commission:****Religious Bodies:-*****Islamic Bodies***

The Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana  
 Guyana Islamic Trust  
 Guyana United Sadr Islamic Anjuman  
 Anjuman Hifazatul Islam  
 Hijatul Ulamaa  
 Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat

***Hindu Bodies***

Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha  
 Guyana Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha  
 Guyana Pandits Council  
 Guyana Maha Kali  
 Guyana Central Arya Samaj  
 Guyana Arya Pratinidhi Sabha  
 Hare Krishna Movement

***Christian Bodies*****Members of the Guyana Council of Churches**

The Alleluias Church  
 African Methodist Episcopalian  
 African Methodist Episcopalian (Zion)  
 The Anglican Church of Guyana  
 The Church of God  
 District of the Nazarene Church of Guyana  
 Ethiopian Orthodox Church  
 Guyana Congregation Union  
 Guyana Presbyterian Church  
 The Lutheran Church of Guyana  
 The Methodist Church in Guyana  
 The Moravian Church



Outreach Ministry  
 Presbytery of Guyana  
 Roman Catholic Church  
 The Salvation Army  
 Guyana Missionary Baptists

### **Other Religious Bodies**

#### Inter-Religious Organization

The Guyana Evangelical Fellowship- 8 members listed below

The Wesleyan Church  
 Christian Brethren Church  
 Assemblies of God in Guyana  
 New Testament Church of God  
 Full Gospel Fellowship  
 The Christian Mission  
 Faith Miracle Ministries  
 Elim Pentecostal Church

Ambassadors for Christ  
 Church of Christ  
 Guyana Conference of Seven Day Adventists  
 Lifespring Ministries  
 Love and Faith Ministry  
 National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of Guyana  
 New Amsterdam Christian Fellowship  
 Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organisation of Guyana  
 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
 The Guyana Rastafari Council  
 The Guyana United Apostolic Mystical Council  
 The Jewish Orthodox Church (Apostolic Faith)

### **The Labour Movement Bodies**

Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (AT&GWU)  
 Association of Masters and Mistresses (AMM)  
 Clerical & Commercial Workers Union (CCWU)  
 Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana  
 General Workers Union (GWU)  
 Guyana Agricultural & General Workers' Union (GAWU)  
 Guyana Bauxite and General Workers Union (GBSU)

Guyana Labour Union (GLU)  
 Guyana Local Government Officers' Union (GLGOU)  
 Guyana Mining, Metal and General Workers Union (GMMGWU)  
 Guyana Postal and Telecommunications Workers Union (GP&TWU)  
 Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU)  
 Guyana Public Service Senior Staff Association (GPSSA)  
 Guyana Teachers Union (GTU)  
 Guyana Trade Unions Congress (GTUC)  
 National Association of Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE)  
 National Mining and General Workers Union (NM&GWU)  
 National Union of Public Service Employees (NUPSE)  
 Printing Industry Allied Workers Union (PIAWU)  
 Union of Agricultural & Allied Workers (UAAW)  
 University of Guyana Workers Union (UGWU)  
 University of Guyana Senior Staff Association (UGSSA)

#### **Private Business Sector Bodies**

Bankers' Association of Guyana  
 Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry  
 Guyana Private Sector Commission  
 Guyana Manufacturers Association  
 Guyana Forest Products Association  
 Guyana Gold & Diamond Miners Association  
 Association of Non-Traditional Exporters  
 Guyana Rice Millers and Exporters Development Association  
 Guyana Rice Producers Association  
 Guyana Trawlers and Seafood Processors Association  
 Private Aircraft Owners Association of Guyana  
 Shipping Association of Guyana  
 The Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana  
 Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
 Bartica Chamber of Commerce  
 Berbice Chamber of Commerce and Development Association  
 Essequibo Chamber of Commerce  
 Linden Chamber of Industry and Commerce  
 Rupununi Chamber of Commerce

#### **Youth Bodies**

AFC Youth Arm  
 Central Baptist Youth Fellowship  
 Church of Christ Youth Group  
 Dharmic Naujawan (Dharmic Youth)

Full Gospel Youth Fellowship  
 Gandhi Youth Organisation  
 Girl Guides Association  
 Guyana Congregational Young People's Union  
 Guyana Junior Chamber ( Jaycees)  
 Guyana Network of Schools Health Clubs  
 Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association Under 20's Club  
 Guyana Scouts Association  
 Guyana Youth and Student Movement  
 Guyana Youth Development Association  
 Leo Association of Guyana  
 Methodist Youth Club  
 Moravian Youth Club  
 Muslim Youth League  
 Muslim Youth Organisation  
 National Youth Commission  
 Progressive Youth Organisation  
 Rights of the Child  
 Roman Catholic Youth Office  
 Rotaract Clubs of Guyana  
 St. Francis Community Developers (SFCD)  
 Seventh Day Adventist Pathfinders  
 Trades Union Council Youth Movement  
 The United Force Youth Arm  
 University of Guyana Student Society  
 Volunteer Youth Corps  
 Working People's Alliance Youth Organisation  
 Youth Achievers  
 Youth Ambassadors First Assembly of God  
 Young Men's Christian Association

### **Women's Bodies**

Anglican Mothers' Union  
 Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana (Women's arm)  
 Church Women United  
 Congregational Women's Union  
 Federation of AME Women  
 Guyana Association of Women's Artists  
 Guyana Association of Women's Lawyers  
 Guyana Federation of Women's Institutes  
 Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha's Mahila Mandale  
 Guyana Nurses Association  
 Guyanese Women in Development (GUYWID)

Lutheran Church Women  
 Methodist Women's League  
 National Commission on Women  
 National Congress of Women  
 Police Wives' Association  
 Red Thread Women's Development Project  
 Rural Women's Development Network  
 Salvation Army Home League  
 TUC Women's Advisory Council  
 The United Force Women's Auxiliary  
 Women Across Differences  
 Women's Progressive Organisation  
 Young Women's Christian Association of Guyana (YWCA)

### **SECOND SCHEDULE**

#### **Consensual Mechanism for the Nomination by Entities of Members of the Ethnic Relations Commission**

All the Entities in each Group, immediately on the passage of this motion, should be written to by the Clerk of the National Assembly inviting them to send a representative on an appointed day/date, time to appear before the Parliamentary Standing Committee to Appoint Members of Commissions at the Parliament Buildings to present the name of their nominee and to participate with other entities in that group to come to a determination on the Nominee (and one substitute who would replace the Nominee in the event that the Nominee is no longer able to function) for Membership on the Ethnic Relations Commission.

Where there is a recognized "umbrella organisation" in the list of entities for that Group, the Clerk should write to that organization and copy his letter to each of the "constituent entities" within the Group.

A deadline should be set by the Clerk of the National Assembly on advice by the Standing Committee by which time it would be formally notified of: the name and other requested particulars of the Nominee; the "process/procedure" used for the selection of the Nominee by the entity; a "statement" to the effect that the Nominee is supported and accepted by that entity.

The Nominee and Substitute chosen to represent the Group must be persons who are competent to contribute positively to the work of the Commission and who are committed to ensuring that it discharges all of its functions. They should have earned public respect and be of unquestioned and unblemished honest and integrity.

The "process/procedure" used must be demonstrated to be unbiased and transparent. It is important that the Nominee and Substitute obtain the unquestioned support and acceptance of the Entity nominating them as well as the Entities within the Group.

Where the entities in that Group are unable to reach agreement, the nominees of that Group would be submitted to the Standing Committee which will make the final determination.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mrs. Sheila Holder  
 Mr. Winston Murray  
 Ms Gail Teixeira  
 Mrs. Deborah Backer

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.

#### **SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 4.02 p.m. the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

#### **RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 5.07 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

The motion was put and negatived on the following division in the Assembly by failing to obtain the support of the required two-thirds (44 votes) of all sixty-five (65) elected Members of the Assembly:

<b><u>FOR</u></b>		<b><u>DECLINED TO VOTE</u></b>
Mr. Franklin	Mr. Whittaker	Mr. Fernandes
Mr. Patterson	Mr. Seeraj	Ms Kissoon
Ms Smith	Mrs. Sahoye-Shury	Ms Wade
Mrs. Holder	Mr. Permanand Persaud	Dr. Austin
Mr. Ramjattan	Mr. Neendkumar	Ms Selman
Mr. Trotman	Mr. Nandlall	Mr. Mervyn Williams

Mr. Nagamootoo  
 Mr. Lumumba  
 Mr. Khan  
 Mrs. Edwards  
 Mr. DeSantos  
 Mr. Chand  
 Mr. Atkinson  
 Mr. Ali  
 Ms Shadick  
 Mrs. Chandarpal  
 Mr. Nokta  
 Ms Teixeira  
 Mr. Prashad  
 Ms Webster  
 Dr. Fox  
 Ms Manickchand  
 Mr. Nadir  
 Mr. Benn  
 Dr. Anthony  
 Mr. Lall  
 Dr. Westford  
 Mr. Robert Persaud  
 Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett  
 Dr. Ramsammy  
 Dr. Jeffrey  
 Mr. Baksh  
 Mr. Rohee  
 Mr. Hinds

Mrs. David-Blair  
 Mr. Elliot  
 Mr. McAllister  
 Miss Ally  
 Mr. Scott  
 Mrs. Lawrence  
 Dr. Norton  
 Mr. Basil Williams  
 Mr. Vieira  
 Mrs. Backer  
 Mrs. Riehl  
 Mr. Murray  
 Mr. Corbin

(ii) **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**MOTIONS**

**ITEM 2 - INTRODUCTION OF THE VALUE-ADDED TAX (VAT)**

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the PNCR-1G had always supported in principle the introduction of (VAT) to replace a number of existing taxes with the objective of widening the tax base and bringing within the tax net persons and supplies which hitherto escaped payment of taxes;

AND WHEREAS the introduction of the tax was expected to reduce the burden of taxation on those categories of workers, such as teachers, policemen, nurses and public servants, who were captive targets of the tax system;

AND WHEREAS throughout all stages of the passage of the relevant Legislation the PNCR-1G suggested a reduction of the proposed rate, the zero rating of essential commodities, a phased implementation of the tax and a deferral of the date of implementation beyond January 1, 2007;

AND WHEREAS the Government is in possession of information which demonstrates that to achieve their stated objective of revenue neutrality the rate of the tax could be lowered;

AND WHEREAS the implementation of the (VAT) on January 1, 2007 has led to a dramatic rise in the cost of living that is decimating the working poor and their families, with the harshest effects being felt by the unemployed, pensioners, unwaged housewives and low waged workers, resulting in a deepening sense of desperation among citizens,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- (1) A special all-Party Parliamentary Committee be established immediately to make recommendations for the reduction on the rate of the tax, for widening the range of zero rated and exempt supplies and a phased implementation of the Value-Added Tax;
- (2) The Government immediately implement significant levels of salary increases for those categories of workers most adversely affected by the implementation of (VAT);
- (3) The Government promptly, but no later than six weeks of the passage of this Resolution, establish a National Commission on Tax Reform to review of the tax system and make recommendations for, inter alia, the raising of the income tax threshold and reduction of income and corporation taxes;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:**

The membership of the aforesaid Commission includes various stakeholders, including, the Guyana Trades Union Congress, the Private Sector Organisations, the Religious community, and other social sector organizations.

**(Notice Paper No. 87 (M18 Opp 6) published on 2007-01-23)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Minister of Finance  
Mr. Winston Murray  
The Minister of Labour  
Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan



The Minister in the Ministry of Finance  
The Minister of Health

Thereafter Mr. Robert Corbin replied.

The motion was then put and negatived.

**ITEM 3 - AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDER NO. 10**

At a request by Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P., the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS the hours of Parliament are prescribed by Standing Order No. 10 of the Standing Orders of the National Assembly to be 2.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. with suspensions at 4.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. respectively;

AND WHEREAS Members of the National Assembly have expressed varying views on the times for sittings of the Assembly with some Members favouring the commencement of sessions at an earlier time whilst others appear to prefer the strict observance of the prescribed times;

AND WHEREAS it would be desirable for a compromise to be found so as to allow for the hours of sittings to be varied from time to time by the Parliamentary Management Committee depending on the business to be disposed of,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Standing Orders Committee examines the issue of the times at which the Assembly shall meet including, the right of the Speaker to suspend the Standing Orders to allow the time to be abridged or varied and to report to the National Assembly its finding and recommendations within three months.

**(Notice Paper No.92 (M23 Opp 7) published on 2007-01-30)**

**ITEM 4 - AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVERY**

At a request by Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P., the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS the 25<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007 marked the bicentenary of the abolition of the Slave Trade Act between Africa and the British Empire;

AND WHEREAS scholars estimate that between 50 and 100 million Africans were either killed or abducted during the existence of European slavery and the slave trade;

AND WHEREAS it is universally accepted that slavery and the transatlantic slave trade were the most inhumane tragedies in the history of mankind;

AND WHEREAS our African fore parents, first as slaves and then as free men and women built the infrastructure of modern Guyana and made unparalleled contributions to the development of Guyana,

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly unequivocally acknowledges the immense debt that all Guyanese owe to our African ancestors and recognizes the outstanding contribution they have made to the development of Guyana;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That an African Land Commission be established, similar in status to the Rights Commissions established under Article 212G of the Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, to determine the issue of ancestral land rights of African Guyanese;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly urges the British Government to enact measures to effect reparation to the descendants of the victims of the African Slave Trade and slavery.

**(Notice Paper No.141 (M32 Opp 10) published on 2007-04-17)**

**ITEM 5 - CRICKET WORLD CUP**

At a request by Mr. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P., the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS Guyana played host to Cricket World Cup Super Eight matches in March and April, 2007, and the overall hosting of the event can be categorized as successful;

AND WHEREAS notwithstanding the overall success of the event, there are the issues of the future viability of the National Stadium including the means of recovering the financial outlay, and the servicing of the loan agreements and other facilities which were entered into to ensure the construction of the National Stadium and appurtenant facilities such as bridges, roads and car parks;

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly expresses its appreciation and extends congratulations to all the organizations and persons which were instrumental in making preparations for the successful hosting of the event including the Local Organising Committee, the Disciplined Forces and Private Security firms, the Private Sector, the Georgetown Municipality and other Local Government Organs, the Guyana Scouts Association, volunteers, and others; and

That this National Assembly directs the Economic Services Committee to conduct a review of all processes and aspects of the preparation and hosting of the games and to make recommendations thereafter for future events and for the viability of the stadium.

**(Notice Paper No.143 (M33 Opp 11) published on 2007-04-25)**

**(iii) COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**MOTIONS**

**ITEM 6 - REPORTS OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF GUYANA - EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee, moved the following motion:

WHEREAS in accordance with Standing Order No. 76(1) of the previous Standing Orders of the National Assembly every Committee was required before the end of the session in which it was appointed to make a report to the Assembly upon matters referred to it;

AND WHEREAS the Public Accounts Committee, which was a Sessional Select Committee, of the National Assembly of the Second Session of the Eighth Parliament, was unable owing to the dissolution of the Eighth Parliament on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2006, to report on its examination of the Reports of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of Guyana and the Accounts of the Ministries, Departments, and Regions for the fiscal years ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2002, 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2003 and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2004, referred to it in the Second Session of the Eighth Parliament,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly of the Ninth Parliament takes into account –

- (1) the above-mentioned Reports of the Auditor General;
- (2) the evidence and Minutes in respect of the examination of these reports;  
and
- (3) make reports to the National Assembly on the examination of these reports.

**(Notice Paper No.139 (M31 Opp 9) published on 2007-04-05)**

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal spoke to the motion.

The motion was then put and carried.

**ITEM 7 - ADOPTION OF THE FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS IN RELATION TO THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIAL SERVICE COMMISSION**

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., Chairperson of the Committee on Appointments, moved the following motion:

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly adopt the First Report of the Standing Committee to address matters relating to the appointment of Members of the Commissions established under the Constitution, and signify to the President that the following persons:

Mr. Brynmor Thornton Innis Pollard, C.C. H., S.C.

and

Mr. Prem Persaud, C.C.H., Retired Justice of Appeal,

have been nominated in accordance with Article 198(2)(b) of the Constitution to be appointed Members of the Judicial Service Commission.

**(Notice Paper No.144 (M34 PPP/C Private Member No. 1) published on 2007-05-03)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Robert Corbin

Mrs. Sheila Holder

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security

Thereafter Ms Gail Teixeira replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

**ITEM 8 - ADOPTION OF THE SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS IN RELATION TO THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., Chairperson of the Committee on Appointments, moved the following motion:

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this National Assembly adopt the Second Report of the Standing Committee to address matters relating to the appointment of Members of the Commissions established under the Constitution, and signify to the President that the following persons:

Mr. Carvil Duncan

and

Mr. Cecil Seepersaud,

have been nominated in accordance with Article 200(1)(b) of the Constitution to be appointed Members of the Public Service Commission.

**(Notice Paper No.145 (M35 PPP/C Private Member No. 2) published on 2007-05-03)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mrs. Deborah Backer

Mr. Basil Williams

Thereafter Ms Gail Teixeira replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

#### **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 10(1)**

At 10:02 p.m., the Prime Minister moved a motion for the suspension of Standing Order No. 10(1) for the Assembly to continue the debate on the motion uninterrupted until its conclusion.

#### **ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

At 10:30 p.m., in keeping with an earlier decision made by the Speaker and on a motion by Mr. Robert Corbin, the Assembly was adjourned.

Mr. Robert Corbin raised a matter on the take over of the Bauxite operations at Linden by the Chinese Company, BOSAI Mineral Group Company Limited.

The Prime Minister replied.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 10.26 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2007.



.....  
**HON. HARI N. RAMKARRAN, S.C., M.P.,**

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,  
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