

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 73RD SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION
(2006-2009) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 2009
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (70)

Speaker (1)

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

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (41)

(i) **People's Progressive Party/Civic (40)**

(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 (Absent – performing the functions of Office of President)

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. 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 Foreign Affairs

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

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

2.

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

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.D., 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

*The Hon. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

The Hon. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P.

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

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

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

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

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***Non-Elected Minister**

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

3.

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

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

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

***Mr. Steve P. Ninvalle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (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 in the Ministry of Housing and Water

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

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

Dr. Vishwa Deva Budhram Mahadeo, M.P.

Rev. Kwame Gilbert, M.P.

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 (Absent – on leave)

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip

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*****Non-elected Parliamentary Secretary**

4.

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P.

Ms Cheryl Sampson, M.P.

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

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

Mr. Ernest Barnabas 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 Kissoon, M.P., (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice) (Absent)

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 Holder, M.P.

Mrs. Latchmin Punalall, 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 (2)

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

Mrs. Lilawtie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The sitting commenced at 2.32 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

By the Speaker of the National Assembly:

The Ethnic Relations Commission Report on the Inter/Intra Community Dialogue.

(Circulated)

ORAL QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

IMPORTATION OF SUGAR FOR THE DOMESTIC MARKET

The following questions from Mr. David Patterson, M.P., were disallowed by the Speaker:

- (a) Can the Honourable Minister of Agriculture inform this Assembly on the total amount of sugar to be imported to offset the current domestic shortfall?
- (b) Can the Honourable Minister of Agriculture also advise on the estimated financial loss that will be incurred due to GUYSSUCO's inability to satisfy the domestic market?

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

1. **NUMBER OF PERSONS DETAINED FOR 72 HOURS OR MORE**

Member Asking: Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P.

Minister Answering: Minister of Home Affairs

Could the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs provide this National Assembly with a list of the number of persons detained for the year 2007, at each Police Station listed below, for 72 hours or more, who were subsequently released without any charges being preferred against them:-

- (i) Sparendaam Police Station
- (ii) Beterverwagting Police Station
- (iii) Vigilance Police Station
- (iv) Cove and John Police Station
- (v) Brickdam Police Station
- (vi) Providence Police Station

(Notice Paper No. 309 (Q225 Opp 220) published on 2008-11-05)

7.

Answer:

“The Honourable Minister wishes to inform the National Assembly that the number of persons detained for 72 hours or more at the Police Stations mentioned hereunder was two hundred and ninety one (291)-

(i)	Sparendaam Police Station	-	23
(ii)	Beterverwagting Police Station	-	nil
(iii)	Vigilance Police Station	-	160
(iv)	Cove and John Police Station	-	7
(v)	Brickdam Police Station	-	93
(vi)	Providence Police Station	-	<u>8</u>
			<u>291</u>

Of the two hundred and ninety one (291) persons held, one hundred and eighty four (184) were released without any charges being preferred against them.

Of the one hundred and eighty four (184) that were released without charges preferred, eleven (11) were held beyond seventy two (72) hours or more, as a result of applications made by the Police to the Court.”

2. **NUMBER OF PERSONS DETAINED FOR 48 HOURS OR MORE**

Member Asking: Mrs. Deborah Backer

Minister Answering: Minister of Home Affairs

Could the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs provide this National Assembly with a list of the number of persons detained for the year 2007, at each Police Station listed below, for 48 hours or more, who were subsequently released without any charges being preferred against them:-

8.

- (i) Sparendam Police Station
- (ii) Beterverwagting Police Station
- (iii) Vigilance Police Station
- (iv) Cove and John Police Station
- (v) Brickdam Police Station
- (vi) Providence Police Station

(Notice Paper No. 310 (Q226 Opp 221) published on 2008-11-05)

Answer:

“The Honourable Minister wishes to inform the National Assembly that the number of persons detained for 48 hours or more at the Police Stations mentioned hereunder was four hundred and sixty four (464)-

(i)	Sparendam Police Station	-	36
(ii)	Beterverwagting Police Station	-	27
(iii)	Vigilance Police Station	-	135
(iv)	Cove and John Police Station	-	33
(v)	Brickdam Police Station	-	211
(vi)	Providence Police Station	-	<u>22</u>
			464”

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

Presentation and First Readings

1. **STATUS OF CHILDREN BILL 2009 – Bill No. 5/2009**

A request by the Minister of Human Services and Social Security, and with the approval of the Assembly, the following Bill was referred to a Special Select Committee:

9.

A BILL intituled AN ACT to repeal and re-enact the provisions of the Children Born Out of Wedlock (Removal of Discrimination) Act 1983; to provide for presumptions of parentage and parentage testing procedures; to effect reform of the law generally and for related purposes.

2. **ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BILL 2009 – Bill No. 6/2009**

A request by the Minister of Human Services and Social Security, and with the approval of the Assembly, the following Bill was referred to a Special Select Committee:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the reform of laws for the adoption of children and for related matters.

PUBLIC BUSINESS-

(i) **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

BILLS – Second Readings

ITEM 1 - CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2009 – Bill No. 4/2009 published on 2009-01-15

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

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

(Read a first time on 2009-01-22)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Winston Murray

Ms Gail Teixeira

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 4.00 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

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

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. Raphael Trotman

Mr. Donald Ramotar

Mr. Everall Franklin

The Minister of Labour

The Minister of Home Affairs

Mr. Robert Corbin

Thereafter the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs replied.

The Bill was read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clause 1 was passed as amended.

Clause 2

Mr. Raphael Trotman moved the following amendments which were put and carried:

“Delete the numbers and letter “119D” and replace them with 119D(1) immediately after Clause 2 the words:

Insert after the Clause 119D(1) a new Clause 119D(2) to read as follows:

‘To assist it in its work, the committee shall have the power to co-opt experts or enlist the aid of other persons of appropriate expertise, whether or not such experts or persons are members of the National Assembly.’”

Mr. Robert Corbin moved the following amendments which were put and negatived:

Article 119D to be renumbered ‘119D(1)’.

In line 4 of 119D, after the word ‘for’, delete the words ‘examining the policies’ and replace with the words ‘the scrutiny of all areas of Government policy’.

In line 5, after the comma, delete the word ‘namely’ and replace with the words ‘including the entities in’.

The amended Article 119D(1) would, accordingly, read:

119D(1). There shall be a Standing Committee of the National Assembly to be named the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on the Security Sector and it shall have responsibility for the scrutiny of all areas of Government policy and administration of the entities in the Security sector, including the entities in the Disciplined Forces of Guyana.

Insert a new Article 119D(2):

119D(2). The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on the Security Sector shall be elected from the opposite sides of the National Assembly and shall not be a Government Minister.”

Clause 2 was then passed as amended.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2009 was read a third time and passed as amended.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS**MOTION****ITEM 2 - ADOPTION OF THE THIRD PERIODIC REPORT OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY SECTORAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES**

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., (Chairperson of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Services) moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Third Periodic Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Services be adopted.

(Notice Paper No. 358 (M88 PPP/C Private Member No. 9) published on 2009-01-21)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Ms Amna Ally

Mrs. Latchmin Punalall

Thereafter Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal replied.

The motion was put and carried.

FAREWELL GREETINGS TO HON. DOODNAUTH SINGH, S.C., M.P.

The Speaker extended farewell greetings to Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs. He also extended thanks to the Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P., for the services he rendered to the National Assembly and wished him good health and all successes in his future endeavours.

Mr. Raphael Trotman, Mr. Robert Corbin and the Minister of Home Affairs on behalf of their respective parties, joined the Speaker in extending farewell greetings to Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C. M.P.

Thereafter, Hon. Doodnauth Singh thanked the Speaker and the Members of the Assembly for the kind wishes extended to him.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8.07 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.



HON. HARI N. RAMKARRAN, S.C., M.P.,
Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

29th January, 2009.