

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 30<sup>TH</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (2001-2002) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON THURSDAY, 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2002**  
**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)**

**Speaker (1)**

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

**Members of the Government (37)**

**(i) People's Progressive Party/Civic (34)**

**(ii) Non-elected Ministers (2)**

**(iii) The United Force (1)**

The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works  
and Communications

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., J.P., M.P., Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Minister of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation

The Hon. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Education

The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P., Minister of Finance

The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

The Hon. Navindranauth O. Chandarpal, M.P., Minister of Agriculture

(Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

(Region No. 3 -Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P., Minister of Labour, Human Services and  
Social Security

The Hon. Clinton C. Collymore, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and  
Regional Development

The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., Minister of Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock  
(Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

\* The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R., C.C.H., M.P., Minister in the Office of the  
President with responsibility for Foreign Affairs (Absent - on leave)

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

The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

The Hon. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and  
Social Security (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

\*\* The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., Minister of Health

Mr. S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P., Chief Whip

Mr. Cyril C.L. Belgrave, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.

Mr. Husman Alli, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P.

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

Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, J.P., M.P.

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

Mr. Heeralall Mohan, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)

Mr. Ramesh C. Rajkumar, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Mr. Kumkaran Ramdas, M.P.

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne) (Absent)

Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P.

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Water

Mrs. Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)

\*Non-Elected Minister

\*\*Elected Member from The United Force

**Members of the Opposition (30)****(i) People's National Congress/Reform (27)**

Mr. H. Desmond Hoyte, S.C., M.P., Leader of the Opposition (Absent)

Mr. Robert H.O. Corbin, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P. (Absent)

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

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

Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam) (Absent)

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Vincent L. Alexander, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Andy Goveia, M.P. (Absent - on leave)

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

Dr. Dalgleish Joseph, M.D., M.P. (Absent)

Miss Amna Ally, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice) (Absent)

Miss Sandra M. Adams, M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice) (Absent - on leave)

Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P. (Absent)

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P. (Absent)

Miss Myrna E.N. Peterkin, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. James K. McAllister, M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara) (Absent)

Miss Lurlene A. Nestor, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Abdul Kadir, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice) (Absent)

Mr. Ricky Khan, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini) (Absent)

Mrs. Rajcoomarie Bancroft, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni) (Absent)

Mr. Nasir Ally, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne) (Absent)

Miss Judith David, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent - on leave)

Miss Genevieve Allen, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)



(ii) **Guyana Action Party/Working People's Alliance (2)**

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

Mrs. Shirley J. Melville, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

(iii) **Rise, Organise and Rebuild Party (1)**

Mr. Ravindra Dev, M.P.

**OFFICERS**

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 2.00 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read Prayers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

**SPECIAL SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

The Speaker informed Members that the special sitting of the National Assembly had been requested to consider four urgent Bills dealing with crime, racial hostility and evidence.

**QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS -**

**For Written Replies**

**No. 1 - ENQUIRY INTO THE POST 2001 ELECTIONS INCIDENTS**

Question by Mrs. Sheila Holder:

Does the Government of Guyana propose to hold, for the instruction of the population and the international community, an independent enquiry into the post elections incidents beginning on April 9, 2001 and ending on or about May 30, 2001?

*(Notice Paper No. 14 (Q6 Opp6) published 2002-05-21)*

**Reply submitted by the Prime Minister:**

The Government of Guyana believes that there is little controversy about the cause(s) of the unrest and violence surrounding the 2001 Regional and General Elections.

The Government of Guyana has not ruled out a public and independent enquiry into the incidents leading up to and following the March 19, 2001 General and Regional Elections.

**No. 2 - FISCAL MATTERS**

Questions by Mrs. Sheila Holder:

Will the Minister -

1. (i) Provide the annual amounts collected in taxes, duties, and consumption taxes and other levies during 1995 - 2000 inclusive on the following imports:-
  - Dieseline
  - Gasoline
  - Fuel oil (Bunker C)
  - Cooking gas

6.

(ii) Provide the annual amounts in taxes, duties, and consumption taxes and other levies collected for the following vehicles during the years 1995 - 2000 inclusive:-

- Motor cars
- Mini buses
- Trucks
- Lorries
- 4 wheel drive vehicles (All Terrain and Sport Utility Vehicles)

(iii) Provide the annual volume imported during the years 1995 - 2000 for each of the following fuel:-

- Dieseline
- Gasoline
- Fuel oil (Bunker C)
- Cooking gas

(iv) Provide the annual number of each category of the following vehicles imported for the years 1995 - 2000 inclusive:-

- Motor cars
- Mini buses
- Trucks
- Lorries
- 4 wheel drive vehicles (All Terrain and Sport Utility Vehicles)

2. Say whether the Government has a strategy plan to exit the IMF Programme?

3. Say how much money the Government of Guyana borrowed between 1992 and 2000?

7.

4. Declare the Government's policy on the National Development Strategy?
5. Say whether the Government intends to introduce any fiscal and other incentive arrangements to assist small businesses?
6. Say whether the Government has any plans to introduce wide scale tax reform?

*(Notice Paper No. 21 (Q11 Opp11) published 2002-06-17)*

**Replies submitted by the Minister of Finance:**

1. (i) Annual amounts collected in taxes, duties and consumption taxes and other levies during the period 1996 - 2000 inclusive on the undermentioned imports:

IMPORTS	YEARS				
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Dieseline	\$1,051,199,194	\$1,169,938,274	\$1,079,521,620	\$1,347,033,943	\$1,831,287,930
Gasoline	899,429,660	1,421,049,626	1,019,838,881	1,555,160,227	1,840,641,075
Fuel Oil (Bunker)	8,983,177	11,793,635	13,208,628	18,730,305	24,609,896
Cooking Gas	23,493,458	37,140,241	40,863,488	50,569,202	10,775,230

- (ii) Annual amounts in taxes, duties and consumption taxes and other levies collected for the following vehicles during the years 1995 - 2000 inclusive:

**(A) Customs and Trade Administration**

VEHICLE	YEARS				
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Motor Cars	\$884,407,988	\$1,065,368,937	\$952,009,398	\$1,127,104,860	\$1,263,359,861
Mini Buses	17,826,135	233,556,188	192,259,104	306,600,806	266,318,332
Trucks	236,467,483	366,532,132	213,270,026	167,298,935	256,479,037



**(B) Licence Revenue Division**

	YEARS					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Purchase Tax-Cars	\$335,069,000	\$470,512,000	\$415,475,000	\$443,018,000	\$427,070,000	\$474,530,000
Motor Vehicle Licenses	94,157,000	167,234,000	139,738,000	214,954,000	194,485,000	240,982,000
Other Vehicle Licenses	254,000	446,000	306,000	147,000	329,000	295,000
Motor Vehicle & Road Traffic Act	25,696,000	91,389,000	110,474,000	114,687,000	110,167,000	153,828,000

(iii) Annual volume imported during the years 1995 - 2000 for each of the following fuel:

**UNITS: BARRELS**

FUEL	YEARS					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Dieseline	884,821	1,055,529	999,584	966,176	1,193,434	1,059,279
Gasoline	593,604	714,676	645,519	688,129	742,267	708,106
Fuel Oil (Bunker C)	485,584	450,662	592,130	608,014	511,329	646,914
Cooking Gas	42,129	64,848	66,888	44,311	57,317	50,635



(iv) Annual number of each category of the following vehicles imported for the years 1996 - 2000 inclusive:

VEHICLE	YEARS				
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Motor Cars	2,475	3,026	2,711	2,564	3,289
Mini-Buses	82	756	588	792	945
Trucks	766	1,018	558	469	517

**N.B.** Please note that in the majority of cases, information for the year 1995 are not available since the ASYCUDA System was implemented in 1996 at the Customs and Trade Administration. Further, Lorries and Trucks are classified as vehicles for the carrying of goods with varying capacities, which are not identified separately. Please note also that Motor Cars and 4-Wheel Drive Vehicles are all passenger type vehicle with various engine capacities and the system makes no distinction between them. Similarly data from Licence Revenue Division are not kept in the format requested.

2. Yes, when that stage is reached where the government does not need Balance of Payments support.
3. The large debt stock, which the Government inherited from the PNC regime in October 1992, continues to have an impact on our fiscal and economic policies, and our capacity to implement development programmes. At the end of October 1992, Guyana's external debt amounted to approximately US\$1,997 million. By end 2000, the debt stock was reduced substantially to US\$1,188 million or by 40% through a combination of debt reduction initiatives, debt repayment and prudent new borrowing. Debt relief, (through the Paris Club, HIPC and other initiatives) was about US\$949 million. It should be noted that the reduction in the debt stock and rescheduling operations have reduced the country's annual debt service payments from approximately US\$103 million in 1992 to US\$92 million in 2000. Repayment of principal, over the period October 1992 to end 2000, amounted to approximately US\$503 million. At the same time, new borrowings, mainly from the multilateral institutions, on soft terms (30 years repayment period, 10 years grace period, 1-2% interest rate) amounted to approximately US\$643 million.

As noted above, the Government's borrowing has a large element of concessionality. While we are borrowing on these soft terms, we are at the same time repaying and securing write-offs for the high cost debt incurred by the PNC government. The debt is being managed in a way that will ensure debt servicing in the future does not place such a great burden on the taxpayers of this country as in the past, when the debt to revenue ratio was as high as 94%.

4. The government intends to debate the National Development Strategy in the National Assembly. Once approved, it will form part of the government's programme.
5. Yes, including a Small Business Act as announced in 2002 Budget Speech.
6. Yes, studies are currently being conducted in this regard.

**No. 3 - PURCHASE OF SOLAR REFRIGERATOR AND STORAGE OF VACCINES**

Questions by Mrs. Sheila Holder:

1. Why was no provision made in last year's budget for the purchase of a new solar refrigerator to replace the old, non-functioning one at the Paramakatoi Health Centre?
2. Taking into account the non-functioning of the solar refrigerator in Paramakatoi, could the Minister say what provision is being made to store vaccines to enable the programme of re-vaccination to be executed in an effective manner?

*(Notice Paper No. 20 (Q10 Opp10) published 2002-06-17)*

**Replies submitted by the Minister of Health:**

1. We know that the solar supply at Paramakatoi Health Centre is not functioning. Other sites in the Region are experiencing similar problems. We are using a wholistic approach to the solar system instead of a piece meal approach and a technical assessment of all solar system is to be done with a view of correcting the problem. Although budgetary allocation was not made, funds for this purpose is available through GAVI.
2. Vaccines are being kept at Kato for the Paramakatoi Health Centre. The vaccination proposed has not been affected and coverage is acceptable.

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS -**

**Presentation and First Reading**

**ITEM 1 - CRIMINAL LAW (OFFENCES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2002 - Bill No. 9/2002**

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 Criminal Law (Offences) Act.

**ITEM 2 - PREVENTION OF CRIMES (AMENDMENT) BILL 2002 - Bill No. 10/2002**

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 Prevention of Crimes Act.



**ITEM 3 - RACIAL HOSTILITY (AMENDMENT) BILL 2002 - Bill No. 11/2002**

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 Racial Hostility Act.

**ITEM 4 - EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2002 - Bill No. 12/2002**

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Evidence Act.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 2.07 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2002.



**HARI N. RAMKARRAN**

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

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

**19<sup>th</sup> September, 2002**