

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 69TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND
SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 4TH AUGUST, 2005
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
BRICKDAM, 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

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 (Absent - on leave)

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 (Absent - on leave)

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

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

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 (Absent)

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. J. Ronald Gajraj, 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)

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)

Mr. Zulfikar Mustapha, M.P.

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

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

*Non-Elected Minister

**Elected Member from The United Force

Members of the Opposition (30)

(i) People's National Congress/Reform (27)

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

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

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

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

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

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P.

Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P. (Absent - on leave)

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

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

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Dr. Dalglish Joseph, M.D., M.P.

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

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

Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P. (Absent - on leave)

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

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

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

Dr. Carl Max Hanoman, M.P.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mrs. Sheila V.A. Holder, M.P. (Absent - on leave)

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 2.06p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Welcome to the CPA United Kingdom Delegation

The Speaker, on behalf of the Members of the Assembly and himself, welcomed the CPA (United Kingdom Branch) Delegates and their spouses to Guyana and the National Assembly.

He also wished them a pleasant and joyable stay in Guyana.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

(1) By the Speaker of the National Assembly:

- (i) Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly Report of the Commonwealth Senior Parliamentary Staff Advisor to the Guyana National Assembly.

(Circulated)

- (ii) Addendum to the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly by the Commonwealth Senior Parliamentary Staff Advisor to the Guyana National Assembly.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Prime Minister:

Defence Board Report pursuant to Resolution 50/2004, dated 21st October, 2004, of the National Assembly on the Deployment of GDF Troops overseas on a Humanitarian Mission in Grenada.

(Circulated)

(3) By the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs:

Memorandum of Understanding for the support of the next General Elections in Guyana between the Government of Guyana, the Guyana Elections Commission and Donors.

(Circulated)

(4) By the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development:

Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development Annual Report for 2004.

(Circulated)

(5) By the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security:

Report of the Special Select Committee on the Age of Consent Bill 2004 - Bill No. 22/2004.

(Circulated)

(6) By Mr. Abdul Kadir, M.P. (Chairman of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources):

First Periodic Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources.

(Circulated)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Reading

AMERINDIAN BILL 2005 - Bill No. 13/2005

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the recognition and protection of the corrective rights of Amerindian Communities, the grant of land to Amerindian Communities and the promotion of good governance within the Amerindian Communities.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA, THE GUYANA ELECTIONS COMMISSION AND DONORS

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the Government of Guyana is committed to democracy and to free, fair and transparent elections in Guyana;

AND WHEREAS the Donor Governments and Agencies are willing to support Guyana in this democratic process;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana and the Guyana Elections Commission and the Donors entered on Wednesday, 20th July, 2005, into a Memorandum of Understanding which constitutes the basis on which the Donors will support the democratic process in Guyana,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly of the Parliament of Guyana -

- affirms its commitment to the conduct of free, fair and well-managed general and regional elections; and
- takes note of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Guyana and the Donor Community and sees it as an integral part of fulfilling this commitment;

And that we, the Members of the National Assembly, comprising Representatives of the political parties herein, having received the text of the Memorandum:

8.

- do hereby state our support of the Memorandum, our agreement with and support for the undertakings, obligations, and commitments entered into by the parties that are signatories to the Memorandum which we endorse with its Annexes, and our individual and collective agreement with its implementation; and
- pledge to work individually and collectively towards free, fair and transparent elections in 2006, by supporting the enactment of legislation in a timely manner, by taking action to maintain the desired electoral climate, by contributing to confidence building measures.

(Notice Paper No. 215 (M89 Govt82) published on 2005-07-28)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Robert Corbin,

Mr. Ravindra Dev

and

The Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 3.51 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 4.32 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. Vincent Alexander,
The Minister of Health,
Mrs. Shirley Melville,
Mr. James McAllister
and
Mr. Donald Ramotar

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

By the deletion of the first Recital Clause and its replacement with the following:

“WHEREAS there is general stakeholders concern over the arrangements and preparation for General Elections in 2006”

In the second Recital Clause delete of the word “this” and replace by the word “the”

Insert after the third Recital Clause, the following:

“AND WHEREAS the said Memorandum of Understanding (MOU incorporates Annex 2: Report of the Commonwealth Assessment Mission which is the subject of serious disagreement by some stakeholders”

“AND WHEREAS the MOU does not include an annex dealing with a time bound implementation plan of GECOM for securing free, fair and transparent elections by 2006”

That the second Resolution Clause be amended by insertion of a “full stop” after the word “Community”, and deletion of all the words thereafter.

By the deletion of the third Resolution Clause and its replacement by the following:

“Suspend support of the Memorandum until the GECOM attaches to the said memorandum the following:

- “(a) An annex dealing with GECOM’s time bound implementation plan and for the holding of free, fair and transparent elections;
- (b) A list of the recommendations contained in the Needs Assessment Annex 2 of the MOU that have been “mutually agreed.”
- (c) The submission to the National Assembly subsidiary legislation of the rules and regulations for the conduct of continuous registration in Guyana”

The motion was then put and carried.

A PRODUCTIVE RECESS TO ALL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

The Speaker made the following statement:

“Honourable Members, I have had no indication that there is likely to be another sitting of the National Assembly before 10 August, 2005. In that event I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Members and their families a productive recess. I know this is a period, traditionally, when Members of National Assembly take the opportunity to spend a little extra time for themselves and their families. I would therefore like to wish you all the best during this period of recess and hope that you return in October refreshed. I would like to see, however, a bit more cooperation between the Government and the Opposition in organising and managing our debates. From what I have witnessed, there is very little communication in that, and as a result, our debates to-date are not managed as well as they can be. All that is required is a simple phone call and some simple courtesies. I hope

that during the next period we will see that. I raised the issue at the Management Committee and absolutely nothing was done about it and I was not happy about the situation today. I am sure if there was communication between the two sides this situation would not have occurred. I hope and look forward to the continued cooperation of Members of the Assembly.”

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs made the following statement:

“Mr Speaker, we will work towards achieving those noble items to which you have referred. They are worth considering and worth putting into action. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that all of us are committed to those suggestions so that we will have a better Parliament as we meet again.”

Mr. Robert Corbin made the following statement:

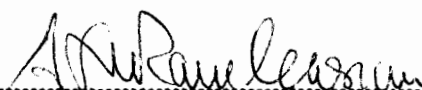
“Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to reciprocate those wishes to you and your family as well, and to assure you that the PNC/R remains committed to the efficient and effective workings of the Parliament.

We hope that in the new term, after the recess, that indeed the Parliamentary Management Committee will function and that we will have a legislative agenda which will facilitate the kind of development which you so rightfully request should exist.

I wish you and other Members on that side of the House a very warm and successful vacation.”

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.20 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.



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

Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,

Public Buildings,

Georgetown.

4th August, 2005