

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 75TH 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, 15TH DECEMBER, 2005
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (69)

Speaker (1)

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

Members of the Government (38)

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

(ii) Non-elected Ministers (3)

(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 (Absent – on leave)

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

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs (Absent)

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. 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
- * 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 Culture, Youth and Sport
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. Harry Narine Nawbatt, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics
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)
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)
Dr. Moti Lall, C.C.H., M.P.
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)

*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.

Mr. Winston S. 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

Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomereroon/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. Basil Williams, M.P.

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

Dr. Dagleish Joseph, M.D., M.P.

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

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

Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P.

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)

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

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

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

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)

(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. (Absent - on leave)

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 2.15p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

(1) **By the Speaker (Chairman of the Committee of Selection):**

Minutes of proceedings of the 16th Meeting of the Committee of Selection, held on Thursday, 24th November, 2005.

(Circulated)

5.

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

- (i) The Ministers, Members of the National Assembly and Special Offices (Emoluments) Order 2005.

(Circulated)

- (ii) The Constitutional Offices (Remuneration of Holders) Order 2005.

(Circulated)

- (iii) Technical Co-operation Loan Agreement No. **1649/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on September 9, 2005 for US\$80,000 for the support of the design of the program "Support for Competitiveness Programme (GY-L1006)".

(Circulated)

- (iv) Technical Co-operation Loan Agreement No. **1653/SF-GY** between the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank signed on September 9, 2005 for US\$1,000,000 within the Line of Credit of the Project Preparation and Executing Facility PPF/010-GY, "Citizen Security Programme".

(Circulated)

- (v) Loan Agreement No. **5/SFR-OR-GUY** between the Caribbean Development Bank and the Government of Guyana signed October 13, 2005 for US\$13,580,000 for the Community Services Enhancement Project.

(Circulated)

6.

- (vi) **Bilateral Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana on the Debt write-off and Rescheduling of Bilateral Debt, the First Supplemental Agreement and the Supplemental Agreement made pursuant to the agreed Minute of the Paris Club dated January 14, 2004.**

(Circulated)

- (vii) **Financial Paper No. 6/2005 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totaling \$1,327,227,625 for the period 2005-10-15 to 2005-12-13.**

(Circulated)

- (viii) **Financial Paper No. 7/2005 – Supplementary Estimate (Capital) totaling \$1,714,452,190 for the period ending 2005-12-31.**

(Circulated)

- (3) **By the Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation:**

Annual Report of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation for the years 2001-2002.

(Circulated)

- (4) **By the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security:**

Recommendation which was adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 92nd Session held in June, 2004:

➤ **Human Resources Development Recommendation 2004, No. 195.**

(Circulated)

7.

(5) By Mr. Bernard DeSantos(Chairman of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Foreign Relations):

The First period Report of the Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Foreign Relations.

(Circulated)

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

For Written Replies

1. **UNIVERSAL AIRLINES**

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics the following questions:

- (i) What date was the seventeen million dollars escrow account put in place by Universal Airlines?
- (ii) Did the Universal Airlines escrow account earn any interest on the seventeen million dollars principal lodged as security? If so, how much did it earn for the duration of its establishment? And with which agency did Universal Airlines deposit the escrow funds?
- (iii) What was the methodology employed to compute the amount of seventeen million dollars to arrive at the amount to be deposited in escrow by Universal Airlines? Which agency did the calculations?
- (iv) What was the average passenger load per route recorded by Universal Airlines out of Guyana?

8.

- (v) Did the Civil Aviation Authority utilise North American Airlines services when rescuing stranded Universal Airlines passengers? If not, why not?

(Notice Paper No. 229 (Q132 Opp127) published on 2005-11-10)

Written replies submitted by the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics:

- (i) The escrow account was opened on 4th December, 2001.
- (ii) No interest was earned. The account was established with the Bank of Nova Scotia.
- (iii) The amount of \$17,127,616.00 in escrow account was a one off deposit made on 4th December, 2001 by Universal Airlines.
- (iv) The average passenger load per flight in respect of Universal Airlines out of Guyana as recorded by the CJIA Corporation is: 125 in 2004; and 121 in 2005 (January – September).

The Ministry is not in receipt of any information from Universal Airlines in relation to the average passenger load per route.

- (v) The information I have is that North American Airlines was approached but could not have assisted at that time.

2. **BRITISH WEST INDIES AIRWAYS (BWIA)**

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics the following question:

Does BWIA owe the Guyana Government through the CBJ International Airport authority any aviation fees such as landing fees, etc., in relation to their operations in Guyana? If so, how much is owed?

(Notice Paper No. 230 (Q133 Opp128) published on 2005-11-10)

Written reply submitted by the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics:

BWIA is indebted to the Cheddi Jagan International Corporation in the sum of \$7,191,404 for October, 2005 as follows:-

Landing Charges - \$6,692,004
Rental - \$ 499,400

\$ 7,191,404

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and first Reading

BERBICE RIVER BRIDGE BILL 2005 – Bill No. 21 /2005

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to make provision for a privately financed Berbice River Bridge and to confer regulatory authority to the Minister responsible for Public Works and for matters incidental thereto and connected therewith.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

BILLS - Second Readings

ITEM 1 - COMPETITION AND FAIR TRADING BILL 2005 - Bill No. 18/2005
published on 2005-11-09

The Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to promote, maintain and encourage competition and to prohibit the prevention, restriction or distortion competition and the abuse of dominant positions in trade; to promote the welfare and interests of consumers, to establish a Competition Commission and for connected matters.

(Read a first time on 2005-11-10)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Jerome Khan,
Minister of Fisheries, Other Crops and Livestock,
Mr. Ivor Allen
and
Mr. Odinga Lumumba.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 3.48 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 4.51 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

11.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., also spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce replied.

The Bill was read a second time.

On a motion by the Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, the Competition and Fair Trading Bill 2005, was referred to a Special Select Committee.

ITEM 2 - LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ELECTIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL
2005 - Bill No. 19/ 2005 publish on 2005-11-10

The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Local Authorities (Elections) Act to provide for the postponement of elections of councillors of local democratic organs.

(Read a first time on 2005-11-24)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Vincent Alexander,
Minister of in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional
Development,

Mrs. Sheila Holder

and

Mrs. Shirley Melville.

Thereafter, the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development replied.

The Bill was read a second time.

Thereafter, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill Clause by Clause.

In Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development the Local Authorities (Elections) (Amendment) Bill 2005 was read a third time and passed as printed.

MOTIONS

ITEM 3 - RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GUYANA FIDUCIARY OVERSIGHT PROJECT REPORT (THE BRADFORD REPORT)

Mr. Winston Murray, M.P., moved the following motion:

WHEREAS on the 27th day of October, 2005 the National Assembly adopted a motion accepting, in general, the recommendations of the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly Report and its Addendum by the Commonwealth Senior Parliamentary Staff Advisor to the Guyana National Assembly, Sir Michael Davies;

AND WHEREAS the recommendations of the said Report have been referred to a Select Committee of the National Assembly;

AND WHEREAS under the Public Sector Technical Assistance Credit (PSTAC) a Guyana Fiduciary Oversight Project was commissioned;

AND WHEREAS the strengthening of Fiduciary Oversight was considered under the study of that Project;

AND WHEREAS the recommendations under study 1 almost exclusively relate to Parliamentary Fiduciary Oversight;

AND WHEREAS thirty (30) recommendations have been accepted by the Government for implementation, twenty (20) of which relate to Fiduciary oversight by the National Assembly;

AND WHEREAS there is a high degree of similarity between many of the recommendations in Study 1 of the Guyana Fiduciary Oversight Project and the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly Report and its Addendum,

AND WHEREAS under the Fiscal and Financial Management Programme Draft Revised Standing Orders have been prepared;

AND WHEREAS it would be prudent that the Draft Revised Standing Orders be considered by the Special Select Committee already established by the National Assembly on the 27th October, 2005, in order to avoid any inconsistencies in recommendations.

BE IT RESOLVED;

1. That this National Assembly refers the recommendations in Study I of the Guyana Fiduciary Oversight Project Report (The Bradford Report) and the Draft Revised Standing Orders to the Select Committee already established by the National Assembly on 27th October, 2005;

2. That the twenty (20) recommendations relating to Parliament Fiduciary Oversight and identified in the action plan for implementation be approved by the National Assembly;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the said Committee in considering the Needs Assessment of the Guyana National Assembly Report and its Addendum, the recommendations in Study I of the Guyana Fiduciary Oversight Project Report (The Bradford Report) and the Draft Revised Standing Orders ensures that all recommendations relating to the rules, procedures and Standing Orders of the National Assembly be comprehensively considered in the light of the aforesaid reports and reported on to the National Assembly by January 31, 2006.

(Notice Paper No. 228 (M94 Opp7) published on 2005-11-09)

15.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Minister of Health

and

Dr. Carl Max Hanoman.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 6.25 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 8.02 p.m., the sitting resumed.

The Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce also spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, Mr. Winston Murray replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

ITEM 4 - NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Mr. James McAllister, M.P., moved the following motion.

WHEREAS over 150 members of Guyanese civil society of various walks of life and from various fields of endeavour have put forward a National Development Strategy that details a series of bold economic initiatives and exciting programmes geared towards the transformation and diversification of the economy;

AND WHEREAS among the stated objectives of the National Development Strategy are attainment of the highest possible rates of economic growth, the alleviation of poverty, the equitable geographic distribution of economic activities and benefits and the diversification of the economy;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana agreed with the Civil Society to table that National Development Strategy document in the National Assembly for its examination and adoption,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly accepts the National Development Strategy and the measures and policies therein as an overarching strategy for pursuing the economic and social transformation of Guyana;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly directs that the National Development Strategy be placed before a Special Select Parliamentary Committee to commence consultations immediately with the private sector, wider civil society and other stakeholders to establish a Representative Cross Sectional Group, supported by a suitably resourced secretariat with access to research expertise, to update the National Development Strategy at the earliest practicable date;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly directs that the Representative Cross Sectional Group reports periodically to the Special Select Parliamentary Committee and that the finally updated National Development Strategy be submitted to the Special Select Parliamentary Committee to make recommendations to the National Assembly for the consideration and adoption of the said updated National Development Strategy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That subsequent to the adoption of the updated National Development Strategy this National Assembly authorises its Sectoral Committee on Economic Services to monitor the policies and the implementation of the National Development Strategy by the Executive.

(Notice Paper No. 232 (M95 Opp8) published on 2005-11-18)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Prime Minister,
Mrs. Deborah Backer,
The Minister of Finance
and
Mr. Winston Murray.

At 10.11 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly agreed to continue sitting beyond 10.00 p.m., uninterrupted.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan,

Mr. Donald Ramotar,

Mr. Raphael Trotman

and

Mr. Winston Murray.

Thereafter, Mr. James McAllister replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.01 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to Thursday, 22nd December, 2005.



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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Georgetown.

15th December, 2005