

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 32ND SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2012) OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON MONDAY, 17TH DECEMBER, 2012
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)

Speaker (1)

The Hon Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (34)

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

Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, O.E., M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

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

Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., Minister of Agriculture

Hon. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica),
Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

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

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

Hon. Robert M. Persaud, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne),
Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

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

2.

Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsarran, M.P., Minister of Health

Hon. Mohamed I. Alli, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

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

Hon. Brindley H.R. Benn, M.P., Minister of Public Works

Hon. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice),
Minister of Education

Hon. Ganga Persaud, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

Hon. Jennifer I.M. Webster, M.P., Minister of Human Services and Social Security

Hon. Pauline Campbell-Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

*Hon. Dr. Nanda K. Gopaul, M.P., Minister of Labour

Hon. Alli Baksh, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam),
Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture

Hon. Norman A. Whittaker, J.P., M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini),
Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development

Hon. Bishop Juan A. Edghill, M.S., J.P., M.P., Minister in the
Ministry of Finance

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., Government Chief Whip

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

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

***Non-Elected Minister**

3.

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

Mr. Odinga Lumumba, M.P.

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

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Dr. Vishwa D.B. Mahadeo, M.P.

Rev. Dr. Kwame A. Gilbert, M.P.

**Mr. Joseph Hamilton, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Health

Dr. Vindhya Vasini Persaud, M.S., M.P.

Mr. Cornel Damon, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

Mr. Faizal M. Jafarally, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Members of the Opposition (33)

(ii) Members of A Partnership for National Unity(26)

Brigadier (Ret'd) David A. Granger, M.S.S., M.P., Leader of the Opposition

Dr. Rupert Roopnarine, M.P.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Dr. George Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

****Non-Elected Member**

4.

Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret'd) Joseph F. Harmon, M.S.M., M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Dawn Hastings, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Winston Felix, D.S.M., M.P.

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

Mr. Sydney Allicock, M.S., M.P.

Ms Africo Selman, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Desmond Trotman, M.P.

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

Mr. James A. Bond, M.P.

Mr. Ronald A. Bulkhan, M.P.

Mr. Jaipaul Sharma, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Mabel Baveghems, M.P.

Mr. John Adams, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

Mr. Christopher A. Jones, M.P.

Mr. Richard Allen, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

Mr. Renis Morian, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

Miss Annette N. Ferguson, M.P.

5.

(iii)Members of The Alliance For Change (7)

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

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

Mrs. Catherine Hughes, M.P.

Mrs. Valerie Garrido-Lowe, M.P.

Dr. Veersammy Ramayya, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

Ms June Eula Marcello, M.P. (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

Mr. Trevor Williams, 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 2.07 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read the prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

(1) By the Speaker of the National Assembly (Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee):

Second Report of the Standing Orders Committee.

(Circulated)

6.

(2) By the Minister of Finance:

- (i) The Ministers, Members of the National Assembly and Special Offices (Emoluments) Order 2012 – No. 187/2012.

(Circulated)

- (ii) The Constitutional Offices (Remuneration of Holders) Order 2012 – No. 188/2012.

(Circulated)

- (iii) The Annual Report of the Guyana National Shipping Corporation Ltd. for the year ended 31st December, 2010.

(Circulated)

- (iv) The Audited Financial Statements of the Guyana National Cooperative Bank for the year ended 31st December, 2008.

(Circulated)

- (v) The Annual Report of the National Industrial and Commercial Investments Ltd., (Company) for the year ended 31st December, 2006.

(Circulated)

- (vi) The Annual Report of the National Industrial and Commercial Investments Ltd. (Company) for the year ended 31st December, 2007.

(Circulated)

- (vii) The Annual Report of the National Industrial and Commercial Investments Ltd. (Company) for the year ended 31st December, 2008.

(Circulated)

7.

(viii) The Annual Report of the National Industrial and Commercial Investments Ltd. (Company) for the year ended 31st December, 2009.

(Circulated)

(ix) The Annual Report of the National Industrial and Commercial Investments Ltd. (Company) for the year ended 31st December, 2010.

(Circulated)

(x) Financial Paper No. 3/2012 – Statement of Excess (Current) Estimates totalling \$204,609,821 for the period ended 2012-12-31.

(Circulated)

(xi) Financial Paper No. 4/2012 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$2,713,939,675 for the period 2012-09-02 to 2012-12-17.

(Circulated)

(xii) Financial Paper No. 5/2012 – Supplementary Estimates (Capital) Estimates totalling \$393,000,000 for the period ended 2012-12-31.

(Circulated)

The Minister of Finance named Thursday, 20th December, 2012 for consideration of the Financial Papers.

(1) By the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport:

Audited Financial Statements of the National Sports Commission for the years ended 31st December, 2005_– 2010.

(Circulated)

8.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES-

By Mr. Carl Greenidge, M.P., Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee:

The Report of the Public Accounts Committee of Guyana on the Public Accounts of Guyana for the year 2009.

(Circulated)

ORAL QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

1. **Siting of the African Holocaust Monument**

Mr. Christopher Jones, M.P., asked the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport the following questions:

On the 1st August, 2000, President Jagdeo, in the presence of Minister Gail Teixeira, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and citizens, buried coins at the Parade Ground and announced that a Monument would be erected there to honour the slaves who were slaughtered in 1823.

Could the Hon. Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport inform this House:-

- (i) What has occasioned the change in location?
- (ii) Who were the persons and or organizations that were consulted, if any?

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport replied.

Mr. Jones asked the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport replied.

9.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip, asked the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport replied.

Brig. (Ret'd) David Granger, M.P., Leader of the Opposition, asked the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport replied.

2. **Ezijet Debacle**

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P., asked the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics the following questions:

- (i) Could the Minister indicate what the Government of Guyana is doing to assist passengers who have been unable to recover refunds from Ezijet?
- (ii) Could the Minister kindly indicate what background checks, if any, the Government conducted before granting permission for Ezijet to operate a service from Guyana to North America?
- (iii) Is the Government proposing any investigation into the operations in view of the fiasco it turned out to be and the fact that the main principal is now in prison?

Thereafter, the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics replied.

10.

3. **Landing fees owed by Ezijet**

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., asked the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics the following question:

Could the Minister say whether Ezijet owes the Government any moneys for landing fees or any other fees at this time and could he perhaps tell us the amount owed to the Government?

Thereafter, the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics replied.

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., asked the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Transport and Hydraulics replied.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Reply

GRANTING OF TITLE TO STATE LANDS AND PROPERTIES TO FORMER PRESIDENTS OR PRIME MINISTERS

Member Asking: Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

Could the Hon. Prime Minister provide this Honourable House with:

A list of all the transactions involving the granting to former Presidents or Prime Ministers whilst they were still in office, title to state lands and properties? For each transaction, the Minister will indicate the price per acre, the total cost, the size of the plot and other terms and conditions of the acquisition?

(Notice Paper No.102 (Q 59 Opp 59) published on 2012-11-14)

Answer:

The Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission, which records all transactions involving State Lands, was requested to research the information about which the Honourable Member, Mr. Carl Greendige, M.P. enquired. The Commission submitted the following list. Please see listing below.

It may be appropriate to note that with respect to the land originally leased to Mrs. Burnham, subsequent negotiations led to a settlement in which 4 acres were granted at no charge on the release of any and all other rights to the remaining land.

List of Leases issued to Ex-Presidents, Prime Ministers and their spouses by Lands and Surveys

Name	Lease No.	Location	Acreage	Remarks
Arthur Chung	Nil			
L.F.S. Burnham	Nil			
Mrs. Viola Burnham	GLL 546	Rear of Botanical Gardens	9.6 Arces	Issued 1972 Expired 1991
Mrs. Viola Burnham	GLL 547	Rear of Lands and Surveys backlands of Stabroek	12.49 Acres	Issued 1972 Expired 1991 Transport passed for part
H.D. Hoyte	Nil			
Mrs. M. Hoyte	Nil			
Ptolmey Reid	GLL 559	Somerest and Berks	4.9 Acres	Issued 1973 Expired 1993 Land is being utilized for school and community center now
Ptolmey Reid	A 9187	Somerest and Berks	8.48 Acres	Issued 1973 Expired 1998 Land is being utilized for Housing Scheme
Hamilton Green	Nil			
Cheddi Jagan	Nil			

12.

Samuel Hinds	Nil			
Mrs. Yvonne Hinds	Nil			
Mrs. Janet Jagan	Nil			
Bharrat Jagdeo	Nil			
Donald Ramotar	Nil			
Mrs. D. Ramotar	Nil			

PUBLIC BUSINESS

(i) PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

BILL – Second Reading

ITEM 1 - OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BILL 2012 – No. 8/2012 published on 2012-08-10

Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to set out the responsibilities and authority of the Clerk and Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly of Guyana and to provide for the establishment and administration of an independent Office of the Clerk of the National Assembly.

(Read a first time on 2012-08-09)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan

The Bill was then read a second time.

Thereafter the Bill was referred to a Special Select Committee.

13.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 3.57 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

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

MOTIONS

ITEM 2 - FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (AMENDMENT) BILL

2012 – No. 24/2012

Mr. Carl Greenidge, M.P., moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly, in accordance with Standing Order No. 52(1), grant leave for the introduction and first reading of the Fiscal Management and Accountability (Amendment) Bill 2012 – Bill No. 24/2012 –

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act 2003.

(Notice Paper No. 99 (M41 Opp 23) published on 2012-10-02)

The Minister of Finance spoke to the motion.

A motion seeking leave of the Assembly to have the Bill be read a first time was put and carried on the following division:

FOR

Mr. T. Williams

Ms Marcello

AGAINST

Mr. Jafarally

Mr. Damon

/...14

Dr. Ramayya

Mrs. Garrido-Lowe

Mrs. Hughes

Mr. Nagamootoo

Mr. Ramjattan

Ms Ferguson

Mr. Morian

Mr. Allen

Mr. Jones

Mr. Adams

Ms Baveghems

Mr. Sharma

Mr. Bulkan

Mr. Bond

Ms Kissoon

Mr. Trotman

Ms Selman

Mr. Allicock

Ms Wade

Mr. Felix

Ms Hastings

Mr. Scott

Lt. Col. (Ret.'d) Harmon

Mr. Greenidge

Mrs. Backer

Dr. Norton

Mrs. Lawrence

Dr. Persaud

Rev. Gilbert

Dr. Mahadeo

Mr. Neendkumar

Mr. Lumumba

Mr. Chand

Ms Shadick

Mrs. Chandarpal

Mr. Nadir

Ms Teixeira

Bishop Edghill

Mr. Whittaker

Mr. Baksh

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai

Ms Webster

Mr. G. Persaud

Ms Manickchand

Mr. Benn

Dr. Anthony

Mr. Ali

Dr. Ramsarran

Dr. Westford

Mr. R. Persaud

Dr. Singh

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett

Mr. Nandlall

Dr. Ramsammy

Mr. B. Williams

Mr. Hinds

Ms Ally

Dr. Roopnarine

Brig.(Ret.'d) Granger

33

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Thereafter leave was granted and the Clerk read aloud the title of the Bill.

ITEM 3 - FORMER PRESIDENTS (BENEFITS AND OTHER FACILITIES)

(AMENDMENT) BILL 2012 – No. 25/2012

At the request of Mr. Carl Greenidge, M.P., the following motion was withdrawn:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly, in accordance with Standing Order No. 52(1), grant leave for the introduction and first reading of the Former Presidents (Benefits and Other Facilities) (Amendment) Bill 2012 – Bill No. 25/2012 –

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Former Presidents (Benefits and Other Facilities) Act 2009.

(Notice Paper No. 100 (M42 Opp 24) published on 2012-10-02)

**ITEM 4 - PUBLIC MONIES ON MARRIOT HOTEL BE HALTED UNTIL APPROVAL
BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P., moved the following motion:

WHEREAS on the 27th day of June, 2012, a Motion of this National Assembly was successfully approved which said Motion, among other things, resolved that the responsible Minister of Government:

- (a) Makes financial provision for the urgent commencing of an independent financial audit of the operations of National Industrial Commercial Investment Limited (NICIL); and
- (b) Provides the National Assembly as early as possible with:
 - (i) A detailed report on the disposal by sale or otherwise of all state assets entrusted on NICIL and the Privatisation Unit, the terms on which they were disposed of and the criteria used;
 - (ii) The outstanding bi-annual reports and annual audited accounts required of NICIL and the Privatisation Unit under the relevant legislation;
 - (iii) The handing over report from the Former Executive Director of NICIL (and Head of the Privatisation Unit and), Winston Brassington; and
 - (iv) Report on the disposal by sale or otherwise of all other state assets, including the terms on which they were disposed of and the criteria used;

AND WHEREAS the responsible Minister has failed to fully comply with the terms of the above-mentioned Motion, now known as Resolution No. 14 of 2012 of this National Assembly, to make the necessary financial provision or to provide the reports and information thereunder;

AND WHEREAS it is a notorious fact that NICIL has prime State Lands known as Block Apha, Kingston vested to it by Order of Minister Ashni Singh dated 23rd November, 2010 which vested is an illegality since NICIL is not a public corporation;

AND WHEREAS another illegality occurred when NICIL leased the said Block Alpha, Kingston for 99 (ninety-nine) years to a subsidiary company of NICIL, namely, Atlantic Hotels Incorporated which is the front company for the Marriot Hotel Project;

AND WHEREAS the moneys being invested by NICIL into Atlantic Hotels Incorporated are public moneys as defined by the Constitution and the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act, which monies ought to be made payable into the Consolidated Fund;

AND WHEREAS the expenditure of public monies, to be constitutional and lawful, has to be authorised for spending and/or investment by the majority approval of the National Assembly;

AND WHEREAS Government is using NICIL as an instrument, whether directly or indirectly through its subsidiary Atlantic Hotels Incorporated, to unlawfully acquire public lands and then to lease such lands, and also to spend billions of dollars of public monies into the Marriot Hotel Project so as to avoid and evade authorization and approval of the National Assembly,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the National Assembly finds it wholly repugnant that this illegal course is being taken by NICIL and its Directors and officers, which course is aided and abetted by the Government of Guyana;

18.

2. That NICIL, excepting those necessary administrative costs for maintaining its running operations annually, forthwith pays into the Consolidated Fund all revenues and proceeds from the sale of all properties and shares of companies belonging to the State and vested in the name of NICIL during the period 1992 to 2012; and
3. That no further expenditure be incurred by NICIL or its subsidiary Atlantic Hotels Incorporated on the Marriot Hotel Project without the authorisation and approval of this National Assembly.

(Notice Paper No. 103 (M44 Opp 26) published on 2012-11-21)

The Minister of Housing and Water spoke to the motion.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 7.05 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 7.36 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. Carl Greenidge

The Minister of Finance

Lt. Col (Ret'd) Joseph Harmon

Mr. Odinga Lumumba

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Thereafter Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan replied.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 10(1)

At 10.00p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Standing Order No. 10(1) was suspended to enable the Assembly to continue with the debate on the motion.

Thereafter Ms Amna Ally, M.P., Opposition Chief Whip moved that Standing Order No. 10(1) be suspended to enable the Assembly to conclude with the item under Committee's Business.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 39(2), the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs concluded the debate on the motion.

Thereafter, the motion was put and carried on the following division:

FOR

Mr. T. Williams
Ms Marcello
Dr. Ramayya
Mrs. Garrido-Lowe
Mrs. Hughes
Mr. Nagamootoo
Mr. Ramjattan
Ms Ferguson
Mr. Morian
Mr. Allen
Mr. Jones
Mr. Adams
Ms Baveghems
Mr. Sharma

AGAINST

Mr. Jafarally
Mr. Damon
Dr. Persaud
Rev. Gilbert
Dr. Mahadeo
Mr. Neendkumar
Mr. Lumumba
Mr. Chand
Ms Shadick
Mrs. Chandarpal
Mr. Nadir
Ms Teixeira
Bishop Edghill
Mr. Whittaker

Mr. Bulkan
Mr. Bond
Ms Kissoon
Mr. Trotman
Ms Selman
Mr. Allicock
Ms Wade
Mr. Felix
Ms Hastings
Mr. Scott
Lt. Col. (Ret.'d) Harmon
Mr. Greenidge
Mrs. Backer
Dr. Norton
Mrs. Lawrence
Mr. B. Williams
Ms Ally
Dr. Roopnarine
Brig.(Ret.'d) Granger

Mr. Baksh
Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai
Ms Webster
Mr. G. Persaud
Ms Manickchand
Mr. Benn
Dr. Anthony
Mr. Ali
Dr. Ramsarran
Dr. Westford
Mr. R. Persaud
Dr. Singh
Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Mr. Nandlall
Dr. Ramsammy
Mr. Rohee
Mr. Hinds

(iii) **COMMITTEES BUSINESS**

MOTION

ITEM 5 - ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

COMMITTEE OF GUYANA ON THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF
GUYANA FOR THE YEAR 2009

Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, M.P., Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee
moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Report of the Public Accounts Committee of Guyana on the Public
Accounts of Guyana for the year 2009, be adopted.

(Notice Paper No. 111 (M46 Opp 28) published on 2012-12-06)

Ms Bibi Shaddick spoke to the motion.

Thereafter the motion was put and carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.43 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the
Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 20th December, 2012.

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HON. RAPHAEL G.C. TROTMAN, M.P.,
Speaker of the National Assembly

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

17th December, 2012.