

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 102ND SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (1992-1997) OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**

**AT 2.00 P.M.**

**ON MONDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 1997**  
**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (74)**

**Speaker (1)**

The Hon. Derek C. Jagan, C.C.H., S.C., J.P., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

**Members of the Government - People's Progressive Party/Civic (44)**

The Hon. Janet Jagan, O.E., M.P., Prime Minister and First Vice-President

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., J.P., M.P., Second Vice-President and Minister of Agriculture (Leader of the House)

The Hon. S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs (Government Chief Whip)

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

\*The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth Bisnauth, M.P., Minister of Education and Cultural Development

\*The Hon. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Absent- on leave)

\*The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P., Minister of Health

The Hon. M. Shree Chan, M.P., Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry

\*The Hon. Bharrat Jagdeo, M.P., Minister of Finance

The Hon. Moses V. Nagamootoo, M.P., Minister of Information

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

The Hon. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security

\*The Hon. F. Vibert DeSouza, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Local Government

\*The Hon. George E. Fung-On, M.P., Minister in the Office of the President

\*The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Public Works and Communications (Absent)

\*The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture (Absent)

**\*Non-elected Member**

Mrs. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Local Government  
 Mr. Cyril C. Belgrave, M.P.  
 Mr. Fazil M. Ali, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. Husman Alli, M.P.  
 Mr. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P.  
 Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.  
 Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, M.P.  
 Dr. Hughley H. Hanoman, M.P.  
 Mrs. Una A. James, M.P.  
 Mr. Alston A. Kissoon, M.P.  
 Dr. Moti Lall, M.P.  
 Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.  
 Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.  
 Mr. Lawrence E. Rodney, M.P.  
 Mr. Winslow M. Zephyr, M.P.  
 Mr. Reuben A. Gilbert, M.P.  
 Mr. Thakoor Silas, M.P.  
 Mr. Khadim Bacchus, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)  
 Mr. Samad A. Baksh, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)(Absent)  
 Mr. Harrinarine Baldeo, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)  
 Mr. Joseph DeSouza, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)  
 Mr. Eugene La Cruz, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)  
 Mr. Bagot Paul, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni)  
 Mr. Kum Karan Ramdas, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)  
 Mr. Ramrattan, M.P. a/k Balkarran (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)

\*Mr. Edward A. DaSilva, M.P.

### **Members of the Minority (29)**

#### (1) People's National Congress (26)

Mr. H. Desmond Hoyte, S.C., M.P., Minority Leader (Absent - on leave)  
 Mr. Robert H.O. Corbin, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P.  
 Mrs. Clarissa Riehl, M.P.  
 Mr. Dunstan Barrow, M.P., Chief Whip (Absent - on leave)  
 Mr. M. Idris Deen, M.P.  
 Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P.  
 Miss Amna Ally, M.P. (Absent - on leave)  
 Miss Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., M.P.  
 Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P.  
 Mr. Arthur A. Alexander, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly  
 Mr. Dharamdeo Sawh, M.P. (Absent - on leave)  
 Mr. Simon Ng-See-Quan, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. David Subnauth, J.P., M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. Reynold N. David, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni)  
 Mr. Aftabuddin Ahamad, M.P.  
 Mrs. Cyrilda A. DeJesus, M.P.  
 Mr. Kenrick Tyndall, M.P.  
 Mr. Phillip Bynoe, M.P. (Region No 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice)  
 Mr. Andy Gouveia, M.P.  
 Mr. Hukumchand, M.P. a/k Parag  
 Miss Joan C. Richards, M.P.  
 Mr. John A. Fredericks, M.P. (Absent)  
 Mr. Ivan Peters, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)  
 Mr. Hubert K.H. Hyman, M.P.  
 Dr. Abraham A.C. Fung-A-Fat, A.A., M.P.

3.

(ii) Working People's Alliance (2)

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine, M.P.

Mr. Matheson Williams, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)(Absent)

(iii) The United Force (1)

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P. (Absent - on leave)

OFFICERS

Mr. Frank A. Narain, A.A., Clerk of the National Assembly

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

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Sitting commenced at 2.12 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(I) Change in Seat for Mr. Edward DaSilva

The Speaker informed the Assembly that he had received a letter dated 12th October, 1997, from Mr. Edward DaSilva in which he stated that with effect from that day, he would be sitting with the Minority in the National Assembly.

(ii) Sympathy on Death of Attorney General's Mother

The Speaker, on behalf of Members of the Assembly and himself, extended deep sympathy to the Honourable Bernard De Santos, Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, on the recent death of his mother.



- (v) Minimum Wages (Employees in Drug Stores) (Amendment) Order 1997  
(No. 16 of 1997) made under section 9A of the Labour Act, Chapter 98:01,  
on 30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.  
(Circulated)
- (vi) Minimum Wages (Employees in Dry Goods Stores) (Amendment) Order 1997  
(No. 17 of 1997) made under section 9A of the Labour Act, Chapter 98:01,  
on 30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.  
(Circulated)
- (vii) Minimum Wages (Employees in Hardware Stores) (Amendment) Order 1997  
(No. 18 of 1997) made under section 9A of the Labour Act, Chapter 98:01, on  
30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.  
(Circulated)
- (viii) Minimum Wages (Mechanical Transport Employees) (Amendment) Order 1997  
(No. 19 of 1997) made under section 9A of the Labour Act, Chapter 98:01,  
on 30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.  
(Circulated)
- (ix) Labour (Conditions of Employment of Certain Workers) (Minimum Rate of  
Wages) Order 1997 (No. 20 of 1997) made under section 3(l) of the Labour  
(Conditions of Employment of Certain Workers) Act 1978 (No. 18 of 1978)  
on 30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.  
(Circulated)
- (x) Minimum Wages (Employees in Groceries) (Amendment) Order 1997  
(No. 21 of 1997) made under section 9A of the Labour Act, Chapter 98:01,  
on 30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.  
(Circulated)

6.

- (xi) Minimum Wages (Cinema Employees) (Amendment) Order 1997 (No. 22 of 1997) made under section 9A of the Labour Act, Chapter 98:01, on 30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.

(Circulated)

- (xii) Minimum Wages (Employees at Petrol Filling Stations) (Amendment) Order 1997 (No. 23 of 1997) made under section 9A of the Labour Act, Chapter 98:01, on 30th June, 1997 and published in the Gazette on 19th July, 1997.

(Circulated)

- (2) By the Minister of Health:

National Policy on the Rights of People with Disabilities in Guyana.

(Circulated)

- (3) By the Minister of Finance:

Customs Duties (Amendment) Order 1997 (No. 35 of 1997), made under section 8 of the Customs Act, Chapter 82:01, on 8th October, 1997, and published in the Gazette on 11th October, 1997.

(Circulated)

- (4) By the Second Vice-President and Minister of Agriculture (Leader of the House), on behalf of the Minister in the Ministry of Public Works and Communications:

Annual Report of the Ministry of Public Works and Communications for the year 1996.

(Circulated)

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Presentation and First Reading

(1) OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH BILL 1997 - Bill No. 30.1997

The Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the registration and regulation of industrial establishments, for occupational safety and health of persons at work, and for purposes connected therewith or material thereto.

(2) NATIONAL INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SECURITY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1997 - Bill No. 31/1997

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the National Insurance and Social Security Act.

## PUBLIC BUSINESS

### BILLS - Second Reading, Committee and Third Reading

ITEM 1 - ADOPTION OF CHILDREN (AMENDMENT) BILL 1997 - Bill No. 20/1997 published 24.7.97

The Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Adoption of Children Act.  
(Read a first time on 7.8.97)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Arthur A. Alexander

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine.

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clause 1 was passed as printed.

Clause 2

The following amendment by the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security was put and carried:

Substitution of a semi-colon for the comma in the third line of sub-paragraph (ii) of paragraph (a).

Clause 2 was passed as amended.

Clauses 3 to 5 were passed as printed.

Clause 6

The following amendments by the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security were put and carried:

(I) Substitution of the word “custody” for the word “possession” in the fifth line of subsection (1) of the new section 28.

(ii) Substitution of the words “fifty thousand dollars” for the words “four hundred dollars” in the fourth and fifth lines of subsection (2) of the new section 28.

Clause 6 was passed as amended.

Clause 7 was passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, the Bill was read the third time and passed as amended.



ITEM 2 - MAINTENANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1997 - Bill No. 21/1997 published 24.7.97

The Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend  
the Maintenance Act.

(Read a first time 7.8.97)

Mr. Hukumchand spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were passed as printed.

New Clause 3

On a motion by the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security the following was inserted as clause 3:

“Amendment of section  
13 of the Principal Act.

3. Section 13 of the Principal  
Act is hereby amended in the following  
respects

(I) by the substitution for the words  
“ poor law commissioners or a district  
commissioner ” of the words “the  
commissioners or the Deputy Chief Executive  
Officer of the Regional Democratic Council”.

- (ii) by the substitution for the words  
“not exceeding the sum of two hundred  
and fifty dollars a week, and any  
further sum, not exceeding the sum of  
two hundred dollars a week” of the  
words “such sum being within the limits  
prescribed by section 6”.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security the Bill was read the third time and passed as amended.

ITEM 3 - SUMMARY JURISDICTION (MAGISTRATES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1997 - Bill No. 22/1997 published 24.7.97

The Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the  
Summary Jurisdiction (Magistrates) Act.  
(Read a first time on 7.8.97)

The motion was put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time and was, thereafter, taken through its remaining stages and passed as printed.

ITEM 4 - PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION BILL 1997 - Bill No. 23/1997 published 29.7.97

The Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security moved the second reading of the following Bill:

11.

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the elimination of discrimination in employment, training, recruitment membership of professional bodies and the promotion of equal remuneration to men and women in employment who perform work of equal value, and for matters connected therewith.

(Read a first time on 7.8.97)

The following members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Arthur A. Alexander

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine

The Minister of Health

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 3 were passed as printed.

Clause 4

The following amendment by Dr. Roopnaraine was put and carried:

Insertion of the words “economic status” after the words “social origin,” in the third line of paragraph (a) of subsection (2).

Clause 4 was passed as amended.

Clauses 5 to 30 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, the Bill was read the third time and passed as amended.

ITEM 5 - MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT COUNCILS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1997 - Bill No. 25/1997 published 8.8.97

The Minister of Local Government moved the second reading of the following

Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the

Municipal and District Councils Act.

(Read a first time on 7.8.97)

Mr. Arthur Alexander spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Minister of Local Government replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

The Bill was read a second time.

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

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 6 were passed as printed.

Clause 7 was passed with the following amendment:

Substitution of the words “two hundred and fifty dollars” and “fifty dollars” for the words “two hundred and fifty dollars”.

Clause 7 was passed as amended.

Clauses 8 to 12 were passed as printed.

Assembly resumed.

On a motion by the Minister of Local Government, the Bill was read the third time and passed as amended.

MOTIONITEM 6 - CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

The Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security moved the following motion which was put and carried:

WHEREAS as a member state of the International Labour Organisation, Guyana is obligated to examine Conventions and Recommendations adopted by the International Labour Conference in accordance with Article 19 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation;

AND WHEREAS Article 19 states that all Conventions and Recommendations adopted by the International Labour Conference must be submitted to the Competent Authority of member states whether ratification of such Conventions is contemplated or not;

AND WHEREAS the submission of Conventions and Recommendations adopted at sessions of that Conference should always be accompanied or followed by a statement or proposal setting out the Government's view as to the action to be taken on the Instruments;

AND WHEREAS Guyana adheres to the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation of which it is a member since 1966;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana proposes to use the provisions of the Conventions and Recommendations adopted from time to time by the International Labour Conference as aims of policy and to ratify those Conventions which are in keeping with the social philosophy of the Guyanese society:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approve the conclusion set out in the State Paper on the undermentioned Convention and Recommendation adopted at the 83rd Session of the International Labour Conference held in June, 1996:-

- (a) Home Work Convention, 1996, No. 177
- (b) Home Work Recommendation, 1996, No. 184;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the decision of the National Assembly be conveyed to the Director General of the International Labour Organisation.

(Notice Paper No. 121 (MI01 Govt 84) published 7.10.97)

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.17 p.m., on a motion by the Second Vice-President and Minister of Agriculture (Leader of the House), the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.



D.C. JAGAN

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,**

**Public Buildings,**

**Georgetown.**

**13th October, 1997**