

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 1ST SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (1998) OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 2.00 P.M.

ON THURSDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1998
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (76)

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 (46)

The Hon. Samuel A. A. Hinds, M.P., Minister of Public Works and Home Affairs

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

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

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

*The Hon. Charles R. Ramson, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

*The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P., Minister of Education

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

*The Hon. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Minister of Human Services and Social Security

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

*The Hon. F. Vibert DeSouza, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

*The Hon. George E. Fung-On, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

*The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Health and Labour

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

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

*The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., Minister of Livestock and Fisheries

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

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

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

***Non-elected Minister**

Mr. S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P.
Mr. Cyril C. Belgrave, M.P.
Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.
Mr. Fazil M. Ali, M.P.
Mr. Husman Alli, M.P.
Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.
Mr. Navindranauth O. Chandarpal, M.P.
Mr. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P.
Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, J.P., M.P.
Dr. Hughley H. Hanoman, M.P.
Dr. Cheddi B. Jagan, M.P.
Mr. Alston A. Kisoorn, M.P.
Dr. Moti Lall, M.P.
Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.
Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.
Dr. Hari Narayen Ramkarran, M.P.
Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P.
Mr. Lawrence E. Rodney, M.P.
Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.
Mrs. Pauline Sukhai, M.P.
Mr. Winslow M. Zephyr, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly
Mr. Joseph M. DeSouza, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)
Mr. Heeralall Mohan, M.P. (Region No. 2 - Pomerook/Supenaam)
Mr. Ramratan, M.P. (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
Mr. Geoffrey A. Fraser, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)
Mr. Ramsundar Sankat, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)
Mr. Eustace S. Rodrigues, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)
Mr. Kumkaran Ramdas, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)

Members of the Minority (29)**(i) People's National Congress (25)**

Mr. H. Desmond Hoyte, S.C., M.P., Minority Leader (Absent)

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

Mrs. Clarissa S. Riehl, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Dunstan Barrow, M.P. (Absent)

Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P. (Absent)

Miss Jean M.G. Persico, A.A., M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P. (Absent)

Mrs. Cyrilda A. DeJesus, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Andy Gouveia, M.P. (Absent)

Ms Deborah Backer, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Colin Bynoe, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Lance Carberry, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. John S. DeFreitas, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Milton L. Ganpatsingh, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Andrew Hicks, M.P. (Absent)

Dr. Dalgeish Joseph, M.P. (Absent)

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

Mr. Sherwood Lowe, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P. (Absent)

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

Mr. Neaz Subhan, M.P. (Absent)

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

Mr. Joseph Hamilton, M.P. (Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Kelly Andries, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent)

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

(ii) The United Force (2)

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

Mr. Matthew Charlie, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

4.

(iii) **Alliance for Guyana (2)**

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Albertino Peters, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni)

OFFICERS

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

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

PROCLAMATION SUMMONING THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT

The Clerk read the Proclamation made by the President on 16th February, 1998, appointing the Parliament Chamber, Public Buildings, Georgetown, Guyana, as the place where a session of the Seventh Parliament shall be held and 2 o'clock in the afternoon on 26th February, 1998, as the time when such session shall begin.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

The Clerk called the names of the persons who had become Members of the National Assembly following the general and regional elections on 15th December, 1997.

Members who were present answered as their names were called.

(i) **Persons (53) who, following the general elections on 15th December, 1997, were declared on 30th January, 1998, by the Elections Commission, to have become Members of the National Assembly:**

- (a) **From the Alliance For Guyana**
Rupert ROOPNARAINÉ (Absent)

(b) From the People's National Congress

Ivor ALLEN (Absent)
Deborah BACKER (Absent)
Dunstan BARROW (Absent)
Colin BYNOE (Absent)
Lance CARBERRY (Absent)
John Simon DEFREITAS (Absent)
Cyrilda DEJESUS (Absent)
Milton L. GANPATSINGH (Absent)
Andy GOUVEIA (Absent)
Faith HARDING (Absent)
Andrew HICKS (Absent)
Hugh Desmond HOYTE (Absent)
Dagleish JOSEPH (Absent)
Kadim KHAN (Absent)
Sherwood LOWE (Absent)
Winston MURRAY (Absent)
Aubrey NORTON (Absent)
Jean PERSICO (Absent)
Volda LAWRENCE (Absent)
Clarissa RIEHL (Absent)
Neaz SUBHAN (Absent)
Raphael TROTMAN (Absent)

(c) From the People's Progressive Party/Civic

Fazil Mohamood ALI
Husman ALLI
Cyril C.L. BELGRAVE
Michael Shree CHAN
Komal CHAND
Navindranauth O. CHANDARPAL
Bernard C. DESANTOS
Shirley V. EDWARDS
Hughley H. HANOMAN
Samuel A. HINDS

6.

Cheddi JAGAN
Bharrat JAGDEO
Alston Amin KISSOON
Moti LALL
Odinga N. LUMUMBA
Sheik Feroze MOHAMED
Moses V. NAGAMOOTOO
Harripersaud NOKTA
Reepu Daman PERSAUD
Khemraj RAMJATTAN
Hari Narayen RAMKARRAN
Donald R. RAMOUTAR
Leslie RAMSAMMY
Lawrence Edward RODNEY
Clement James ROHEE
Philomena SAHOYE-SHURY
Pauline Roseann SUKHAI
Gail TEIXEIRA
Winslow Martin ZEPHYR

(d) From the United Force

Manzoor NADIR

(ii) Persons (10) who were elected by the Regional Democratic Councils on 16th February, 1998:

Region 1 - Barima/Waini
Joseph M. DeSouza (PPP/C)

Region 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam
Heeralall Mohan (PPP/C)

Region 3 - Essequibo Islands/West Demerara
Ramratan (PPP/C)

Region 4 - Demerara/Mahaica
Joseph Hamilton (PNC) (Absent)

Region 5 - Mahaica/Berbice
Geoffrey A. Fraser (PPP/C)

Region 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne
Ramsundar Sankat (PPP/C)

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Region 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni | (PNC) (Absent) |
| Region 8 - Potaro/Siparuni | |
| Albertino Peters | (AFG) |
| Region 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo | |
| Matthew Charlie | (TUF) |
| Region 10 - Upper Demerara/Berbice | |
| Sandra Adams | (PNC) (Absent) |

(iii) **Persons (2) who were elected by the National Congress of Local Democratic Organs on 20th February, 1998:**

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Kumkaran Ramdas | (PPP/C) |
| Eustace Rodrigues | (PPP/C) |

(iv) **Persons (10) who were not elected Members of the National Assembly but who have been appointed Ministers and have, by virtue of being Ministers, become Members of the National Assembly:**

George Fung-On

Carl Anthony Xavier

Charles Rishiram Ramson

Vibert DeSouza

Ramnauth Bisnauth

Henry Benfield Jeffrey

Satyadeow Sawh

Indranie Chandarpal

Clinton Collymore

Shaik K. Z. Baksh

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Clerk invited Members to elect the Speaker of the National Assembly in accordance with Article 56(l) of the Constitution and Standing Order No. 2.

The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, proposed and the Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud seconded Mr. Derek C. Jagan, C.C.H., S.C., J.P.

As there was no other nomination, the Clerk declared Mr. Derek C. Jagan, C.C.H., S.C., J.P., duly elected Speaker of the National Assembly.

Mr. Derek C. Jagan who was present was escorted by his proposer and seconder to the Chair.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

In accordance with article 56(3) of the Constitution and Standing Order No. 3(2), the Speaker invited nominations for the Office of Deputy Speaker.

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud proposed and the Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds seconded Mr. Winslow M. Zephyr.

As there was no other nomination the Speaker declared Mr. Winslow M. Zephyr duly elected Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly.

OATHS

The oath of office was made and subscribed by:

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

The Deputy Speaker, Mr. Winslow M. Zephyr, M.P.

The Hon. Samuel A. A. Hinds, M.P., Minister of Public Works and Home Affairs

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

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

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

The Hon. Charles R. Ramson, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P., Minister of Education

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

The Hon. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Minister of Human Services and Social Security

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

The Hon. F. Vibert DeSouza, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

The Hon. George E. Fung-On, M.P., Minister of the Public Service

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Health and Labour

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

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

The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., Minister of Livestock and Fisheries

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

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

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

Mr. S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P.

Mr. Cyril C. Belgrave, M.P.

Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.

Mr. Fazil M. Ali, M.P.

Mr. Husman Alli, M.P.

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

Mr. Navindranauth O. Chandarpal, M.P.

Mr. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P.

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

Dr. Hughley H. Hanoman, M.P.

Dr. Cheddi B. Jagan, M.P.

Mr. Alston A. Kissoon, M.P.

Dr. Moti Lall, M.P.

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

Mr. Kemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mr. Hari Narayen Ramkarran, M.P.

Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P.

Mr. Lawrence E. Rodney, M.P.

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.

Mrs. Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P.

Mr. Joseph M. DeSouza, M.P. (Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)

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

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

Mr. Geoffrey A. Fraser, M.P. (Region No. 5 - Mahaica/Berbice)

Mr. Ramsundar Sankat, M.P. (Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)

Mr. Eustace S Rodrigues, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)

Mr. Kumkaran Ramdas, M.P. (National Congress of Local Democratic Organs)

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.

Mr. Matthew R. Charlie, M.P. (Region No. 9 - Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

Mr. Albertino Peters, M.P. (Region No. 8 - Potaro/Siparuni)

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

REMARKS BY THE SPEAKER

In his remarks, the Speaker thanked Members for re-electing him. He congratulated those Members who had been re-elected and those who had become Members for the first time.

WELCOME TO PRIME MINISTERS OF GRENADA AND BARBADOS

The Speaker welcomed The Hon. Dr. Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada and Chairman of CARICOM and the Hon. Mr. Owen Arthur, Prime Minister of Barbados to the Opening Session of the Seventh Parliament and thanked them for their visit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Ministerial Appointments

The Speaker informed the Assembly of the following Ministerial appointments:

- (i) With effect from 22nd December, 1997:

Mr. Samuel Archibald Anthony Hinds, M.P., as Minister of Public Works and Home Affairs and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, M.P., as Minister of Finance and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Clement James Rohee, M.P., as Minister of Foreign Affairs and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Moses Veerasammy Nagamootoo, M.P., as Minister of Information and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., M.P., as Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs and a Member of the Cabinet

- (ii) With effect from 24th December, 1997:

Mr. George Fung-On, M.P., as Minister of the Public Service and a Member of the Cabinet

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., as Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Carl Anthony Xavier, M.P., as Minister of Transport and Hydraulics and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Charles Rishiram Ramson, S.C., M.P., as Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Vibert De Souza, M.P., as Minister of Amerindian Affairs and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Michael Shree Chan, M.P., as Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry and a Member of the Cabinet

Dr. Ramnauth Bisnauth, M.P., as Minister of Education and a Member of the Cabinet

Dr. Henry Benfield Jeffrey, M.P., as Minister of Health and Labour and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P., as Minister of Local Government and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P., as Minister of Livestock and Fisheries and a Member of the Cabinet

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., as Minister of Human Services and Social Security and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Clinton Collymore, M.P., as Minister in the Ministry of Local Government and a Member of the Cabinet

Mr. Shaik K. Z. Baksh, M.P., as Minister of Housing and Water and a Member of the Cabinet

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

On a motion by the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs, the nomination of Members of the Committee of Selection was deferred.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 2.58 p.m., the sitting was suspended to enable the Speaker to receive Her Excellency the President, Mrs. Janet Jagan.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 3.30p.m., the sitting was resumed.

ARRIVAL OF THE PRESIDENT

The President entered the Chamber and took her place on the dais.

WELCOME TO THE PRESIDENT

The Speaker welcomed the President and invited her to address the Assembly.

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

Her Excellency the President, Mrs. Janet Jagan, O.E., addressed the Assembly.

THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT

The Speaker, on behalf of the Members of the Assembly and himself, thanked Her Excellency for her Address.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.06 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

D.C. JAGAN

Speaker of the National Assembly

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
GEORGETOWN.**

26TH FEBRUARY, 1998.