

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 51<sup>ST</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST**  
**SESSION (1998-2000) OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON TUESDAY, 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2000**  
**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (76)**

**Speaker (1)**

The Hon. Derek C. Jagan, O.R., 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., Prime Minister (Absent - Performing the functions of the Office of President)

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 (Absent - on leave)

\*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. 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, J.P., 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

\*The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

\*The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P., Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance

\*The Hon. Geoffrey Da Silva, M.P., Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry (Absent)

\*Non elected Minister

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Mr. S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P., Chief Whip

Mr. Cyril C. Belgrave, C.C.H., M.P.

Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.

Mr. Husman Alli, M.P.

Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Navindranauth O. Chandarpal, M.P.

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

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

Mr. Alston A. Kissoon, M.P.

Dr. Moti Lall, C.C.H., M.P.

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mr. Hari Narayan Ramkarran, S.C., M.P. (Absent)

Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P.

Mr. Lawrence E. Rodney, M.P.

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Local Government

Mrs. Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P.

Mr. Winslow M. Zephyr, M.P.

Dr. Bheri Ramsaran, M.P.

Mrs. Bijulee Moti, M.P.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Members of the Opposition (29)**

**(i) People's National Congress (25)**

Mr. H. Desmond Hoyte, S.C., M.P. Leader of the Opposition (Absent)

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

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

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

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

Dr. Faith A. Harding, M.P. (Absent - on leave)

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

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

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

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

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

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P. (Absent)

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

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

Dr. Dalglish Joseph, M.D., M.P. (Absent)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Kelley Andres, M.P. (Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent)

Mr. Thakechand Ramnauth, M.P. (Absent)

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

(ii) **The United Force (2)**

Mr. Manzoor Nadir, M.P. (Absent)

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

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

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine, M.P.

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

**OFFICERS**

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

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

**COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING**

The Sitting commenced at 2.00 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read Prayers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

(i) **Prime Minister Performing the Functions of President**

The Speaker informed Members that in the absence from Guyana of the President, the Prime Minister was performing the functions of the Office of President and had been granted leave from Sittings of the Assembly for such period.

(ii) **Functions of Prime Minister**

The Speaker stated that consequently, the Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud had been appointed to perform the functions of Prime Minister.

**(iii) Congratulations to National Awardees**

The Speaker announced that among those who were granted National Awards on the occasion of the 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Guyana's attainment of Independence, were persons associated with our Parliament.

They included Mr. Ashton Chase, Mr. Cyril Belgrave and Mr. Cecil Dhurjon.

**(a) Mr. Ashton Chase, O.E., S.C.**

Mr. Ashton Chase, an Attorney-at-Law and a Senior Counsel, was one of the first Ministers in the country. In 1953, he was the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce. From 1961 to 1964, he was President of the Senate and from 1965 to 1969 he was a Member of the House of Assembly and of the National Assembly.

In recognition of the distinction and eminence achieved by him as a Parliamentarian and a Trade Unionist, Mr. Ashton Chase was granted the highest award of the State, with his appointment as a Member of the Order of Excellence of Guyana.

**(b) Mr. Cyril Belgrave, C.C.H., M.P.**

Mr. Cyril Calvin Belgrave first became a Member of Parliament in 1976 and had continued to be such a Member since that time.

For his long service of an exceptionally high quality in the field of Trade Unionism and as a Parliamentarian, Mr. Cyril Belgrave was awarded with the Cacique's Crown of Honour.

**(c) Mr. Cecil Dhurjon, C.C.H., S.C.**

Mr. Cecil Dhurjon, an Attorney-at-Law and a Senior Counsel had been associated with our Parliament in the drafting of Bills since 1978 and for his long and outstanding service in the field of Law, especially in Legislative drafting, he was awarded with the Cacique's Crown of Honour.

On behalf of Members of the Assembly and himself, the Speaker extended to and placed on record heartiest congratulations and best wishes to Mr. Chase, Mr. Belgrave and Mr. Dhurjon.

**Congratulations to the Speaker**

With the leave of the Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs, at this stage, also joined in congratulating the three persons. He extended, on behalf of the Members of the Assembly special congratulations and best wishes to the Speaker on the grant of the second highest award of the State - the Order of Roraima - made to him for his outstanding service in the field of Parliamentary Affairs, also on the occasion of the 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Guyana's attainment of Independence.

Dr. Roopnaraine also joined in extending congratulations to the Speaker.

The Speaker expressed thanks.

(iv) **Leave**

The Speaker announced that leave had been granted to -  
 The Hon. Clement Rohee,  
 Mr. Ramratan, and  
 Mr. Winston Murray  
 for that day's sitting,  
 and  
 Mr. Kadim Khan up to 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2000.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.-****(1) By the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs, on behalf of the Prime Minister:**

Acquisition of Lands for Public Purposes (Berbice Campus of the University of Guyana) Order 2000 (No. 8 of 2000).

(Circulated)

**(2) By the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs:**

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding for the support of the Democratic Process in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana between the Government of Guyana, the Guyana Elections Commission and Donors.

(Circulated)

**(ii) Fifth Report on the Oversight Committee on Constitutional Reform**

(Dated May 15, 2000).

(Circulated)

**(iii) Sixth Report on the Oversight Committee on Constitutional Reform**

(Dated June 13, 2000).

(Circulated)

**(3) By the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs, on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs:**

- (i) Inter-American Convention against Corruption, adopted at the Third Plenary Session of the Organisation of American States, held on March 29, 1996.

(Circulated)

**(ii) Protocol VIII (Competition Policy, Consumer Protection, Dumping and Subsidies)**

Amending the Treaty Establishing the Caribbean Community.

(Signed on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2000 in St. Kitts and Nevis).

(Circulated)

**(iii) Protocol IX (Disputes Settlement) Amending the Treaty**

Establishing the Caribbean Community.

(Signed on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2000 in St. Kitts and Nevis).

**(Circulated)**

- (iv)** Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on September 10, 1996, and opened for signature in New York, United States of America, on September 24, 1996.

**(Circulated)**

**(4) By the Minister of Health and Labour:**

State Paper on the following Convention and Recommendation, which were adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 87<sup>th</sup> Session held in June 1999:

- (i) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999, No. 182
- (ii) Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation 1999, No.190

**(Circulated)**

**(5) By the Minister of the Public Service:**

Annual Report of the Public Service Appellate Tribunal for the year 1999.

**(Circulated)**

**(6) By the Minister in the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance:**

- (i) Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of Guyana for the year 1998.

**(Circulated)**

- (ii) National Development Strategy (2001-2010) A Policy Framework.

**(Circulated)**

- (iii) Constitutional Offices (Remuneration of Holders) Order 2000 (No. 10 of 2000).

**(Circulated)**

- (iv) Ministers, Members of the National Assembly and Special Offices (Emoluments) Order 2000 (No. 11 of 2000).

**(Circulated)**

- (7) In the absence of the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (Mr Dunstan Barrow), the presentation of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Public Accounts of Guyana for the year 1994, was **deferred**.

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS -**

### **Presentation and First Reading**

- (1) **ELECTION LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2000 - Bill No. 8/2000**

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

A BILL Intituled an ACT to amend the Election  
Laws (Amendment) Act 1996.

- (2) **CIVIL AVIATION BILL 2000 - Bill No. 7/2000 published 2000-06-05**

The Minister of Transport and Hydraulics, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time-

A BILL intituled AN ACT to make provision  
in respect of the regulation and control of  
civil aviation in Guyana and for purposes  
connected therewith.



**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

**ITEM 1- MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA, THE GUYANA ELECTIONS COMMISSION AND DONORS**

The Minister of Agriculture and 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 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2000, 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 national 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 reviewed the text of the Memorandum:

- do hereby state our full 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 by the target date of 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2001, by supporting the enactment of legislation in a timely manner, by taking action to maintain the desired electoral climate, and by contributing to confidence building measures.

**(Notice Paper No. 79 (M38 Govt34) published 2000-06-28)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine  
The Minister of Information.

Thereafter, the motion was put and carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 3.15 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.**

**4<sup>th</sup> July, 2000**