

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 4TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST
SESSION (2006) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 2006
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (71)

Speaker (1)

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

Members of the Government (42)

(i) People's Progressive Party/Civic (41)

(ii) The United Force (1)

The Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice),
Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications (Absent – Performing the
functions of the Office of President)

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

The Hon. Shaik K.Z. Baksh, M.P., Minister of Education

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation (Absent)

The Hon. Dr. Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne),
Minister of Health

The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, M.P., (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequiibo),
Minister of Amerindian Affairs (Absent)

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

*The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R., C.C.H., M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs (Absent – on leave)

The Hon. Harry Narine Nawbatt, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

***Non-elected Minister**

The Hon. Robert M. Persaud, M.P., Minister of Agriculture

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

The Hon. Kellawan Lall, M.P., Minister of Local Government and Regional Development

*The Hon. Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

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

The Hon. Brindley H.R. Benn, M.P., Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

**The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P., Minister of Labour

The Hon. Priya D. Manickchand, M.P., (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice),
Minister of Human Services and Social Security

The Hon. Dr. Desrey Fox, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Education

The Hon. Dr. Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Health

The Hon. Jennifer I. Webster, M.P., Minister in the Ministry of Finance

The Hon. Manniram Prashad, M.P., Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P. (Absent)

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Chief Whip

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

Mr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P.

Mr. Albert Atkinson, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)

***Non-Elected Minister**

****Elected Member from the United Force**

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

Mr. Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Shirley V. Edwards, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Mohamed F. Khan, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.

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

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P.

Mr. Neendkumar, J.P., M.P.

***Mr. Steve P. Ninvalle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary

Mr. Parmanand P. Persaud, J.P., M.P., (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supernaam)

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

***Mrs. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary

Mr. Dharamkumar Seeraj, M.P.

Mr. Norman A. Whittaker, M.P., (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

Members of the Opposition (28)

(i) Members of People's National Congress Reform-One Guyana (22)

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Winston 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 (Absent – on leave)

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Anthony Vieria, M.P.

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***Non-elected Member

4.

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P.

Mr. James McAllister, M.P.

Mr. Dave D. Danny, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. Aubrey C. Norton, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)

Mr. Ernest B. Elliot, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mrs. Judith David-Blair, M.P., (Region No.7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P., (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Island/West Demerara)

Ms Africo Selman, M.P. (Absent)

Dr. John Austin, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)

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

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

Mr. Desmond Fernandes, M.P., (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)

(ii) Alliance For Change (5)

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

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mrs. Sheila V.A. Holder, M.P.

Ms Chantalle L. Smith, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. David Patterson, M.P. (Absent)

(iii) Guyana Action Party/Rise Organize and Rebuild (1)

Mr. Everall N. Franklin, M.P.

OFFICERS

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

Mrs. Lilawattie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The sitting commenced at 2.27 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read the prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

By the Minister of Finance:

- (i) Audited accounts of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for the period 18th December, 2002 to 31st December, 2003.

(Circulated)

- (ii) Audited accounts of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for the year ended 31st December, 2004.

(Circulated)

- (iii) Audited accounts of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for the year ended 31st December, 2005.
(Circulated)
- (iv) Audited accounts of the Guyana Securities Council for the period 24th September, 2001 to 31st December, 2002.
(Circulated)
- (v) Audited accounts of the Guyana Securities Council for the year ended 31st December, 2003.
(Circulated)
- (vi) Audited accounts of the Guyana Securities Council for the year ended 31st December, 2004.
(Circulated)
- (vii) Financial Paper No. 3/2006 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totaling \$1,694,288,004 for the period 2006-04-13 to 2006-11-17.
(Circulated)
- (viii) Financial Paper No. 4/2006 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totaling \$4,781,247,499 for the period ending 2006-12-31.
(Circulated)
- (ix) Annual Report of the National Insurance Scheme for the year 2003.
(Circulated)
- (x) Annual Report of the National Insurance Scheme for the year 2004.
(Circulated)
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(xi) Annual Report of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for the year ended 31st December, 2003.

(Circulated)

(xii) Annual Report of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for the year ended 31st December, 2004.

(Circulated)

(xiii) Annual Report of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance for the year ended 31st December, 2005.

(Circulated)

(xiv) The Value-Added Tax Order 2006 – Order No. 23 of 2006.

(Circulated)

(xv) The Value-Added Tax (Transitional) Regulations 2006 – No. 12 of 2006.

(Circulated)

(xvi) The Value-Added Tax (Amendment) Regulations 2006 – No. 13 of 2006.

(Circulated)

(xvii) The Excise Tax (Amendment) Regulations 2006 – No. 14 of 2006.

(Circulated)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-**For Written Replies****1. ACTION TAKEN ON RESOLUTION NO. 16 OF 2002****Member Asking: Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.****Minister Answering: The Hon. Minister of Home Affairs**

Will the Hon. Minister state what action his Ministry has taken since being notified by the Clerk of the National Assembly in 2002 about Resolution No. 16 of 2002 of the Eighth Parliament with respect to the following:

“That the National Assembly recognized the need for a policy to be crafted and appropriate regulations instituted in consultation with operators in the mini-bus sector, consumers and other stakeholders to introduce best practices and systems for the safe, efficient and fair operation of the sector”?

(Notice Paper No. 3 (Q2 Opp2) published on 2006-10-20)

Answer:

Please be advised that no record of any policy was located which dealt with best practices to provide for the safety of mini-bus commuters.

However, it must be noted that the following measures were undertaken:

- (i) Road Safety studies were done by Dr. Budhu, a Guyanese Road Safety Consultant who was contracted by the Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Transport and Hydraulics from IDB funding. These studies addressed, inter alia, the mini-bus Accident Rate Problem and the issue of traffic signals in 2001 – 2003.
- (ii) Public Consultations on Road Safety were planned by the then Minister of Transport and Hydraulics in collaboration with the then Honourable Minister of Home Affairs. These public consultations commenced in September, 2001.

- (iii) The issue of legislation being enacted to permit persons to attain the age of twenty five (25) years before being allowed to drive mini buses was raised. The current age is twenty one (21) years but the Police have for years observed twenty five (25) years as the standard for issuing motor bus licences.

2. SAFETY OF MINI BUS COMMUTERS

Member Asking: Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

Minister Answering : The Hon. Minister of Home Affairs

Will the Hon. Minister state specifically which policies were developed by his Ministry and the best practices introduced for the safety of mini-bus commuters since 2002?

(Notice Paper No. 5 (Q4 Opp4) published on 2006-10-20)

Answer:

The current legislation caters for motor-bus and not mini-bus. There is urgent need for specific legislation in relation to mini-buses and their operations. Specific legislation will be speedily drafted for the Ministry of Home Affairs.

There are current laws which specify the following:

- a) The conduct of drivers;
- b) The conduct of conductors;
- c) The conduct of passengers; and
- d) Seat Belt Act No. 4 of 2002.

3. **ACTION TAKEN ON RESOLUTION NO. 16 OF 2002**

Member Asking: Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Hon. Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

Will the Hon. Minister state what action his Ministry has taken since being notified by the Clerk of the National Assembly in 2002 about Resolution No. 16 of 2002 of the Eighth Parliament with respect to the following:

“That the National Assembly recognized the need for a policy to be crafted and appropriate regulations instituted in consultation with operators in the mini-bus sector, consumers and other stakeholders to introduce best practices and systems for the safe, efficient and fair operation of the sector”?

(Notice Paper No. 2 (Q1 Opp1) published on 2006-10-20)

Answer:

Steps are being taken to craft policy and appropriate regulations. Re:LO – 1554/SF-GY: Institutional Strengthening Component (New Amsterdam to Moleson Creek Road Project) **Administration and Regulations of Public Transport** (Procurement of Consultant in Progress).

***Please see APPENDIX for background information Re: Transport Sector Study**

4. **SAFETY OF MINI BUS COMMUTERS**

Member Asking: Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Hon. Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

Will the Hon. Minister state specifically which policies were developed by his Ministry and the best practices introduced for the safety of mini-bus commuters since 2002?

(Notice Paper No. 4 (Q3 Opp3) published on 2006-10-20)

Answer:

Steps are currently being taken to craft policy. Re: LO – 1554/SF-GY: Institutional Strengthening Component (New Amsterdam to Moleson Creek Road Project) Administration and regulating of Public Transport (Procurement of Consultant in Progress).

5. **IMPROVING SAFETY, EFFICIENCY AND FAIRNESS IN THE OPERATION OF MINI-BUSES**

Member Asking: Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

Minister Answering : The Hon. Minister of Transport and Hydraulics

Will the Hon. Minister state whether his Ministry has held any consultation exercises with operators of the mini-bus sector, commuters and other stakeholders with a view of improving safety, efficiency and fairness in the operation of mini-buses?

(Notice Paper No. 6 (Q5 Opp5) published on 2006-10-20)

Answer:

Some amount of consultation was done by consultants who conducted the Guyana Transport Sector Study 2005. The Administration and regulating of Public Transport Study will deal with those issues.

6. **HOMELESS FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS**

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering : The Minister of Human Services and Social Security

Could the Hon. Minister state:

What programmes are in place to take care of the many homeless families and individuals who now live on the streets of our Capital City?

(Notice Paper No. 9 (Q7 Opp7) published on 2006-11-13)

Answer:

The Government of Guyana recognizes the need to address the issue of homeless persons. The Night Shelter is located at East La Penitence and formally catered for persons who needed a shelter at nights. On the 2nd day of October, 2006, in recognition of the fact that the need for shelter had evolved from being a need for shelter at night, the Night Shelter became a Shelter, where persons are entitled to live. In addition to shelter the persons utilizing the services of the Shelter are provided with meals, medical care and counseling.

Studies have shown that persons become homeless for a variety of reasons. In view of this, there is presently a multi-sectoral plan being studied to address the needs of the homeless, not only in the Capital City, but throughout Guyana.

7. **CITIZENS WITH MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES (UNSOUD MIND)**

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering : The Minister of Health

Could the Hon. Minister of Health state what programmes are in place to care for those citizens with multiple personalities (unsound mind) who roam the streets of our capital city, frequently endangering lives and damaging property?

(Notice Paper No. 10 (Q8 Opp8) published on 2006-11-13)

Answer:

In answering this question, I do not seek to enter in any debate on the definition of who is a person with multiple personalities, now referred to as Dissociative Identity Disorder, since this seem to be a highly disputed term now within the cadre of experts in mental health.

The term "persons of unsound mind" appears in the Mental Health Ordinance 1930, which requires urgent revision. The Ministry of Health is working to complete a draft for a new Mental Health Bill, which will replace the Mental Health Ordinance of 1930. The question is being answered in the context of the next paragraph.

Homeless persons are not necessarily "persons of unsound mind". Some of the homeless persons are unfortunately persons with various levels of mental health problems.

The Government of Guyana, through a multi-sector program being led by the Ministry of Health and including the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Ministry of Home Affairs, GPHC, the National Psychiatric Hospital, the Municipalities and the Police force, is working to reduce the number of persons living as homeless, with no place to go. The Ministries of Local Government, Legal Affairs, and Tourism are also part of the effort. The University of Guyana will also be involved.

8. **ANESTHESIOLOGISTS FOR THE GEORGETOWN PUBLIC HOSPITAL CORPORATION**

Member Asking: Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Health

Could the Hon. Minister of Health say what steps are being taken to ensure the Theatre of the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation has its full complement of Anesthesiologists?

(Notice Paper No. 11 (Q9 Opp9) published on 2006-11-13)

Answer:

As with other specialist areas, we presently recruit staff from various sources. The staff recruited for the Anesthesiology Department at the GPHC is as follows:

- Consultant anesthesiologist – Head of Department;
- Registrar-level Anesthesiologists;

- Government Medical Officers;
- Nurse Anesthetist.

Recruitment is being done through the local medical pool and through the Cuban and Chinese Medical collaboration.

Presently, the staff includes:

- Dr. A. Harvey (Guyanese) – Consultant (Head of Department)
- Two consultants from the Chinese Medical Brigade
- One consultant from the Cuban Medical Brigade
- Dr. R. Acosta (Cuban/Guyanese) – Registrar
- Dr. Y. Martin (Guyanese) – Registrar

The following Government Medical Officers have been assigned to the Department:

- Dr. Narine
- Dr. Armstrong
- Dr. R. Abdulla

There are also several nurse anesthetists (Guyanese and Cuban) that have been assigned to the Department.

In order to guarantee better availability of trained personnel for the Anesthesiology Departments at GPHC and other medical institutions in Guyana, we have plans to introduce two new training programs, starting in 2007, in collaboration with UG and a number of international medical institutions. These programs are:

- Diploma in Anesthesiology (three year Program from which the graduates would become eligible for consultant level appointments).
- Nurse Technician in Anesthesiology (Nurse could be appointed as Nurse Anesthetist)

9. SHOOTING INCIDENT WHICH CLAIMED THE LIFE OF PARASRAM PERSAUD

Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs say whether the Government of Guyana is satisfied with the response of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela surrounding the shooting incident on Friday, October 6, 2006, in the Cuyuni River, which claimed the life of Parasram Persaud?
- (ii) Can the Hon. Minister say what initiatives the Government of Guyana is pursuing to ensure that the family of Parasram Persaud receives compensation for this death?
- (iii) What action is the Government of Guyana pursuing with respect to this incident?

(Notice Paper No. 12 (Q10 Opp10) published on 2006-11-13)

Answers:

Immediately after the incident the Government of Guyana requested an official report from the Government of Venezuela on the circumstances surrounding the tragic death of Mr. Parasram Persaud. The Government of Guyana is still awaiting the report. Reminders have been sent urging an early response. It is hoped that the investigation which is reportedly being conducted by the Ministry of Defence will be concluded shortly and made available to the Government of Guyana.

Meanwhile, the Guyana Police and the Guyana Defence Force have completed their own investigations into the incident. Once the official report of the Government of Venezuela is received, a determination will be made as to the course of action to be followed. A case for compensation may be open to the family of the victim.

10. **POLICY REGARDING THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF GUYANESE CITIZENS**

Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs

Could the Hon. Minister state:

What is the Government of Guyana's policy regarding the protection of the rights of Guyanese citizens living in sister CARICOM States?

(Notice Paper No. 13 (Q11 Opp11) published on 2006-11-13)

Answer:

The Government of Guyana is committed to a policy of protecting fully the welfare of its citizens wherever they may reside. On receiving reports of the infringement of the rights of Guyanese citizens living in a sister CARICOM country, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pursues the matter through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in that Member State in an effort to ensure that the just entitlements of these citizens are safeguarded.

In the cases where the Government of Guyana is represented by Honorary Consuls in these territories, for example, in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, these officials often act on behalf of the Government of Guyana in an effort to resolve any problems that may be encountered.

11. **COMPLAINTS OF UNFAIR AND/OR UNLAWFUL TREATMENT RECEIVED FROM GUYANESE LIVING IN CARICOM STATES**

Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Foreign Affairs

Could the Hon. Minister state:

For the period January 1, 2005 to October 30, 2006, how many complaints of unfair and/or unlawful treatment have been received from Guyanese living in CARICOM states by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and what has been the response and action taken in each case?

(Notice Paper No. 14 (Q12 Opp12) published on 2006-11-13)

Answer:

Guyana has received twelve (12) formal complaints of unfair and /or unlawful treatment from Guyanese living in CARICOM States.

In each case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana immediately approached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the respective countries requesting that their Immigration Department provide Guyana with reasons for the denial of entry of our Guyanese nationals.

Exchanges have taken place between the Immigration Department of Guyana and those of other CARICOM countries with a view to establishing more cooperative arrangements to deal with the problem.

At the highest level of CARICOM, Guyana continues to protest the ill-treatment of our traveling population.

It may also be added that very few complaints are received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Most of the reports are hearsay and carried in the media. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs can only act in cases where detailed information is provided.

12. **REPORT ON LOST WEAPONS OF THE GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE (GDF)**

Member Asking: Mr. Raphaël Trotman, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works & Communications

Could the Hon. Prime Minister state:

- (i) Is the Government in receipt of a report on the weapons which the GDF claimed it lost in February, 2006 and if yes, is the Government satisfied with the report?
- (ii) Will the Government commission an independent enquiry into the circumstances surrounding the missing weapons, and to receive sound recommendations as to how such an occurrence can be prevented in the future?

(Notice Paper No. 15 (Q13 Opp13) published on 2006-11-13)

Answers:

- (i) The GDF established a Board of Inquiry, the report from which was submitted to the Defence Board. The Defence Board is examining that report in conjunction with the pertinent and significant revelations emanating from a number of publicly known events in which a number of the guns were recovered.
- (ii) The Government is not yet at a point to make a determination whether an independent enquiry should be commissioned.

The Government would always welcome sound recommendations about how such an occurrence can be prevented in the future.

13. **SHOOTING INCIDENT IN THE CUYUNI RIVER ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2006**

Member Asking: Mr. Raphael Trotman, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works & Communications

Could the Hon. Prime Minister state:

Following the shooting incident in the Cuyuni River on Friday, October 6, 2006, have measures been put in place to strengthen border security in general and that with our neighbour Venezuela, in particular?

(Notice Paper No. 16 (Q14 Opp14) published on 2006-11-13)

Answer:

Yes! Measures have been put in place within resources available to strengthen border security. In the diplomatic arena we have transmitted our deep concern and dismay to the Venezuelan authorities. We are expecting to receive a report from them and we would be looking for arrangements which should mitigate against such an incident recurring.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-**Presentation and First Readings**1. **LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ELECTIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2006 – Bill No. 24/2006**

The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:

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

2. **CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2006 – Bill No. 25/2006**

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 Customs Act

PUBLIC BUSINESS-**(i) GOVERNMENT BUSINESS****MOTION****ITEM 1 - NOMINATION OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF SELECTION**

On proposals by the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Winston Murray, M.P., and Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., the Assembly nominated the following nine (9) Members to comprise the Committee of Selection (with the Speaker as Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 81(1)(2)):-

From the People's Progressive Party/Civic (5)

Hon. Samuel A.A. Hinds, M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works & Communications

Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P., Minister of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation

Mr. Donald Ramotar, M.P.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Chief Whip

From the People's National Congress Reform – One Guyana (3)

Mrs. Clarissa Riehl, M.P., Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P., Chief Whip

Ms Africo Selman, M.P.

From the Alliance For Change (1)

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

(ii) PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS

ITEM 2 - THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

At the request of Ms Chantalle Smith, M.P., the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS in 1991 Guyana signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

AND WHEREAS Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that "Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child";

AND WHEREAS the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child has consistently proposed the abolition of corporal punishment when the reporting process under the convention has revealed the continued existence of school corporal punishment;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana's report to the Committee of the Convention of the Rights of the Child of July 29, 2002 states: "Enhanced legislation is an integral element in this country's efforts to give tangible effect to the provisions of the Constitution Reform Commission.";

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana's report to the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child of July 29, 2002 further states "The Constitutional Reform Commission acknowledged that the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child should inform constitutional provisions to protect children's rights. The Oversight Select Committee of the Revised Guyana Constitution subsequently accepted the above recommendations and in 2001 these rights were accorded the status of fundamental and human rights in the amended Constitution",

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly declares the continued use of corporal punishment in schools in Guyana a violation of Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly declares the continued use of corporal punishment in schools in Guyana a violation of the Constitution;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly recommends the abolition of corporal punishment under the new Education Act.

(Notice Paper No. 22 (M3 Opp2) published on 2006-11-22)

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 2.46 p.m., the Assembly was suspended to allow the People's Progressive Party/Civic and the People's National Congress Reform – One Guyana to discuss proposed amendments to the motion on the National Development Strategy.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 3.07 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

ITEM 3 - THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

At the request of Mr. Winston Murray, C.C.H., M.P., the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS over 150 members of Guyanese civil society of various walks of life and from 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 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;

AHD WHEREAS the National Assembly of the Eighth Parliament unanimously passed a Resolution on 15th December, 2005 for an update of the National Development Strategy at the earliest practicable date,

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 the 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 authorizes its Sectoral Committee on Economic Services to monitor the policies and the implementation of the National Development Strategy by the Executive.

(Notice Paper No. 8 (M2 Opp1) published on 2006-11-13)

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.09 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 14th December, 2006.



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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Georgetown.

7th December, 2006.

RE: GUYANA TRANSPORT SECTOR STUDY

The Guyana Transport Sector Study funded by the European Union was undertaken by GOPA Consultants Inc. (Germany) in association with E & A Consultants Inc. (Guyana) during 2005.

The overall objective of the study: - is to ensure that future decisions concerning the Transport Sector in Guyana are based on a comprehensive analysis of the sector. The study was undertaken in three (3) phases.

Phase I: - Assessment and Information Gathering

Phase II: - The definition of a Sectoral Strategy

Phase III: - Formulation of an Implementation Strategy.

The Transport Sector Study was managed by a Steering Committee – the mechanism for orientation provision of feedback and approval of reports. Workshops were held for consultation and feedback from Stakeholders at each phase of the study.

The Consultant submitted the Final Report in January 2006 in four (4) volumes:-

Vol. I – Executive Summary

Vol. II – Main Report

Vol. III – Administrative Appendices

Vol. IV – Technical Appendices

A website www.guyanatransportstudy.com was created and maintained by the Consultants. The entire study is being published on GINA Website www.gina.gov.gy. The National Transport Sector Study has been approved by the Government of Guyana and will form the basis for Guyana's Transport Sector Strategy. The Government of Guyana advises however that some aspects of the study will require further analysis which will be addressed in due course.

The Final Report outlined the Draft Transport Sector Policy and a Ten (10) year Investment and Maintenance Implementation Programme in three (3) scenarios:-

Unconstrained Budget EUR380M

Moderately Constrained Budget EUR 252.4M

Heavily Constrained Budget EUR 158.7M

There is also a Technical Assistance Programme which includes among others-

- Administration and Regulating of Public Transportation.
- Evaluation and Development of Transport Policies
- Inter-Institutional and Inter-Disciplinary Coordination and Training
- Development of computerized Inter-Modal Transportation System, Planning and Data Management.
- Planning of Conceptual Urban Transport Plans for main cities.

IDB supported The Transport Sector Study funded by the European Union and is supporting Investments which flow from it. The above Technical Assistance Programme is funded by IDB (LO-1554/SF-GY: Institutional Strengthening Component)

The Administration and Regulating of Public Transportation

The aim of the study is "to establish a clear accountable, user-friendly, safe and economically sound public transport system through the introduction of appropriate regulations and monitoring systems". The scope of services will be grouped into three (3) principal areas of activities:

- I – Stakeholders Analyses
- II – System Analyses
- III – Statistical & Survey Analyses.

Status of the Administration of Public Transportation.

IDB gave no obligation to the ranking of the consultant (Mr. Van Buuren being ranked No. 1). The study is likely to commence shortly.

Responsibility of Public Transportation

Currently the responsibility of Public Transportation lies with several agencies namely Ministry of Public Works & Communications, Ministry of Home Affairs, Guyana Revenue Authority, Public Utility Commission, City Council and Ministry of Local Government.