

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 58TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION
(2006-2008) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, 24th JULY, 2008
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (70)

Speaker (1)

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

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (41)

(i) People's Progressive Party/Civic (40)

(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 – on leave)

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 Co-operation (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 Essequibo), Minister of Foreign Affairs

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

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

The Hon. Robert M. Persaud, M.P., (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne), Minister of Agriculture

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*Non-elected Minister

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. B. H. Robeson 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

*The Hon. Pauline Sukhai, M.P., Minister of Amerindian Affairs

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P.

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal, M.P., Chief Whip (Absent – on leave)

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

Mr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P.

Mr. Albert A. 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 – on leave)

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) (Absent)

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

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

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P.

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

***Mr. Steve P. Ninvalle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport

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 in the Ministry of Housing and Water

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

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

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

Mr. Anthony Vieira, M.P.

***Non-elected Member

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

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

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

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

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

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

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.

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)

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

Mr. James K. Mc Allister, M.P.

(ii) Alliance for Change (5)

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

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

Ms Latchmin Budhan Punalall, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent – on leave)

Mr. David Patterson, M.P.

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

Mr. Overall N. Franklin, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

OFFICERS (2)

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 2.12 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Welcome to Caribbean Law Students

The Speaker, on behalf of the Members and himself, welcomed to the Assembly, the Caribbean Law Students who were attending a Legislative drafting course at the University of Guyana.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

By the Minister of Finance:

- (i) Financial Paper No. 1 of 2008 - Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totaling \$731,373,614 for the period 2008-04-03 to 2008-07-22.

(Circulated)

- (ii) Financial Paper No. 2 of 2008 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totaling \$4,109,239,962 for the period ended 2008-12-31.

(Circulated)

The Minister of Finance named Thursday, 31st July, 2008 for the consideration of the Financial Papers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

1. DECENTRALISATION OF THE ISSUING OF PASSPORTS

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following question:

*Will the Honourable Minister say why the system of issuing passports has not been decentralised to relieve citizens from the frustrations caused by the lengthy time they have to endure travelling to the Georgetown based Passport Office and waiting for their applications to be processed?

(Notice Paper No. 241 (Q166 Opp161) published on 2008-07-01)

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

Mrs. Sheila Holder asked the Minister of Home Affairs supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

Mr. Aubrey Norton asked the Minister of Home Affairs supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

2. PERSONS RELEASED ON PAROLE

Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P. asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following question:

*Could the Honourable Minister inform this National Assembly how many persons have been released on parole since the enactment of the Parole Act in 1991?

(Notice Paper No. 242 (Q167 Opp162) published on 2008-07-01)

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

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Mrs. Deborah Backer asked the Minister of Home Affairs supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

3. OVERCROWDING IN PRISONS

Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P. asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following question:

*Could the Honourable Minister share with this National Assembly what immediate initiatives he proposes to take to alleviate the overcrowding in our prisons?

(Notice Paper No. 243 (Q168 Opp163) published on 2008-07-01)

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

Mrs. Deborah Backer asked the Minister a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

4. TRAINING OF LABOUR INSPECTORS TO DETECT ABUSES SUFFERED BY CHILDREN

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P. asked the Minister of Labour the following question:

Could the Honourable Minister of Labour tell this National Assembly -

- (i) *How many Labour Inspectors currently in the employ of the Ministry of Labour are trained to detect abuses suffered by children and young persons in the labour force?
- (ii) *Say what remedies are in place to deal with such abuses?

- (iii) *Give an outline of the training received by labour officer in the area of child labour?
- (iv) *Give the number of batches and number of officers who benefited from such training?
- (v) *The frequency of refresher courses provided for these officers?
- (vi) *Give the number of cases of child labour identified and treated by his Ministry for the years 1993 to 2007?
- (vii) *Say how many persons/entities were prosecuted for employing under age children and how many prosecutors were successful for the years 1993 to 2007?
(Notice Paper No. 244 (Q169 Opp164) published on 2008-07-01)

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

Mr. Mervyn Williams asked the Minister of Labour supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

5. MECHANISMS IN PLACE TO ADDRESS AND COMBAT THE SCOURAGE OF CHILD LABOUR IN GUYANA

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P. asked the Minister of Labour the following question:

*Could the Honourable Minister of Labour tell this National Assembly what collaborative mechanisms are in place among the Ministries of Labour, Human Services and Education to address and combat the scourage of child labour in Guyana?

(Notice Paper No. 245 (Q170 Opp165) published on 2008-07-01)

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

Mr. Mervyn Williams asked the Minister of Labour supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

6. **POLICIES TO DEAL WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE THE VICTIMS OF THE WORST FORM OF CHILD LABOUR**

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P. asked the Minister of Labour the following question:

*Could the Honourable Minister of Labour tell this National Assembly what policies are in place to deal with children who are victims of the “worst form of child labour” as defined by the International Labour Organisation including post trauma counselling?

(Notice Paper No. 246 (Q171 Opp166) published on 2008-07-01)

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

Mr. Mervyn Williams asked the Minister of Labour a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

At 3.00 p.m., in accordance with Standing Order No. 22(1) the time allotted for the answering of oral questions elapsed. The Speaker, therefore, in accordance with Standing Order 22(8), directed that the unanswered questions be postponed to the next sitting.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Readings

1. **FISCAL ENACTMENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. 14 of 2008**

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 Income Tax Act and the Income Tax (In Aid of Industry) Act.

2. **MONEY TRANSFER AGENCIES (LICENSING) BILL 2008 – No. 15 of 2008**

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 provide for the licensing of persons carrying on the business of money transfer agencies; to make provision for the registering of money transfer agents and for connected purposes.

PUBLIC BUSINESS-

(i) **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

BILLS – Second Readings

ITEM 1 - COURT OF APPEAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. 12/2008 published on 2008-07-11

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Court of Appeal Act to provide for appeals by the Director of Public Prosecutions to the Court of Appeal and the Caribbean Court of Justice and for connected matters.

(Read a first time on 2008-07-17)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mrs. Clarissa Riehl

While Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan was speaking to the motion, the time for the suspension of the sitting was reached.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 4.00 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 5.06 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan continued and concluded his speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

The Minister of Labour

Mr. Basil Williams

Mr. Raphael Trotman

Mr. Anil Nandlall

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 7.35 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 8.12 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

Mr. Robert Corbin also spoke to the motion.

Thereafter, the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs replied.

The Bill was then read a second time.

Thereafter, the Bill was committed to a Special Select Committee.

ITEM 2 - TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill NO. 13/2008 published on 2008-07-16

The Minister of Finance moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Tax Act.

(Read a first time on 2008-07-17)

The Following Members spoke to the motion:

Mr. Winston Murray

The Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan ·

Thereafter, the Minister of Finance replied.

The Bill was then the 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.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the Tax (Amendment) Bill 2008 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.25 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Assembly as adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Friday, 25th July, 2008.



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

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam.

24th July, 2008.