

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 61ST 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, 7TH AUGUST, 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

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

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

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

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)

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

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 – on leave)

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) (Absent)

Mrs. Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H., J.P., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Housing and Water (Absent)

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. (Absent)

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Anna 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. (Absent)

(ii) **Alliance for Change (5)**

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

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P. (Absent)

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Mrs. Latchmin Punalall, M.P., (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)

Mr. David Patterson, M.P.

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

Mr. Everall 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 2.10 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

(1) By the Speaker of the National Assembly:

Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of Guyana and on the accounts of Ministries, Departments and Regions for the fiscal year ended 31st December, 2006.

(Circulated)

(2) The Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, presented the Guyana Sugar Corporation Inc., Annual Reports for the years 2004, 2005 and 2006.

(Circulated)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-

Presentation and First Readings

1. **TELECOMMUNICATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. 18/2008**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications and the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Telecommunications Act 1990.

2. **INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS BILL 2008 – Bill No. 19/2008**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to make provision for the interception of communications, the acquisition and disclosure of data relating to communications and the acquisition of the means by which protected communications may be accessed and placed in an intelligible form and for connected purposes.

3. **THE CRIMINAL LAW (PROCEDURE) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. 20/2008**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Criminal Law (Procedure) Act.

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4. **CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (PLEA BARGAINING AND PLEA AGREEMENT) BILL
2008 – Bill No. 21/2008**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the establishment of a system of plea bargaining and plea agreements in criminal procedure and for matters connected therewith.

5. **EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. No. 22/2008**

The Minister of Home Affairs, on behalf of the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs and the Government, presented the following Bill, which was read the first time:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Evidence Act.

PUBLIC BUSINESS-

(i) **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

BILLS – Second Reading

**ITEM 1 - SUMMARY JURISDICTION (OFFENCES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill
No. 17/2008 published on 2008-07-30**

The Minister of Home Affairs moved the second reading of the following Bill:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Act to prohibit the playing of music in a motor bus or hire car.

(Read a first time on 2008-07-31)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mrs. Clarissa Riehl

Mr. Neendkumar

Mr. Raphael Trotman

The Minister of Health

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

The Bill was then 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 Home Affairs, the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) (Amendment) Bill 2008 was read a third time and passed as printed.

ITEM 2 - MONEY TRANSFER AGENCIES (LICENSING) BILL 2008 – No. 15 of 2008
published on 2008-07-23

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

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.

(Read a first time on 2008-07-24)

The Bill was then read a second time.

Thereafter, the Bill was forthwith, without any question put, referred to a Special Select Committee.

(ii) PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTION

ITEM 3 - HONOURING LINDEN FORBES SAMPSON BURNHAM, O.E., S.C., IN

RECOGNITION OF HIS CONTRIBUTION TO GUYANA

While Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition was moving the following motion, the time for the suspension of the sitting was reached:

WHEREAS Mr. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, O.E., S.C., was elected to the Legislative Assembly (now the National Assembly), on the 18th day of May 1953, in the first General Elections held under Universal Adult Suffrage in the then British Guiana (now Guyana), and was appointed the Minister of Education in the First People's Progressive Party Government (PPP);

AND WHEREAS Mr. L. F. S. Burnham played a major role in the formation and development of both major political Parties in Guyana, in 1950, as the Chairman of the first mass political party in Guyana, the PPP and, in 1957, as the Founder Leader of the Peoples National Congress;

AND WHEREAS Mr. L. F. S. Burnham also played a major role, with others, in the struggle for political independence from Britain, which was accomplished on the 26th May, 1966;

AND WHEREAS Mr. L. F. S. Burnham also guided the smooth and peaceful transition of Guyana to Republican status on the 23rd February, 1970, while serving as the first Prime Minister of an independent Guyana;

AND WHEREAS Mr. Burnham served as a distinguished Parliamentarian for thirty years until 1980 when he became ineligible to remain seated on becoming the first Executive President of Guyana;

AND WHEREAS Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham was a major architect of the Caribbean integration movement, as exemplified by his role in the formation of CARIFTA, in 1968, CARICOM, in 1973 and the various other initiatives for the strengthening of Caribbean unity including, the promotion and hosting in Guyana of the first Caribbean Festival Of Arts, CARIFESTA, in 1972;

AND WHEREAS the 6th day of August 2008 will mark the 23rd Death Anniversary of the Late Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham who died while serving as Guyana's first Executive President from 1980 to 1985;

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly, on the FIFTY FIFTH YEAR of his ENTERING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, on the occasion of his TWENTY THIRD DEATH ANNIVERSARY and in the year of the 35th Anniversary of CARICOM, gives due recognition to Mr. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham for his extraordinary and outstanding career as a Guyanese leader;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly gives due recognition to the service of Mr. Forbes Burnham to the National Assembly and Guyana by requesting the Government to have prepared and published a collection of his speeches spanning his tenure in the National Assembly for display in the Library of the National Assembly;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly agrees that full sized portraits of each of the Presidents of Guyana should be commissioned and displayed in the Chambers of the National Assembly;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly calls on the Government to designate a State Institution to be responsible for historical Research and Documentation to Chronicle and archive all of the works of each of the Presidents of Guyana for the benefit of future generations of Guyanese.

(Notice Paper No. 256 (M73 Opp20) published on 2008-07-24)

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 5.10 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

Mr. Robert Corbin continued and concluded his speech.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

The Prime Minister

Ms Africo Selman

Mr. Raphael Trotman

The Minister of Labour

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 10(2)

At 7.30 p.m., on a motion by Mr. Basil Williams and seconded by Mr. E. Lance Carberry, Standing Order No. 10(2) was suspended to enable the Assembly to continue with the debate on the motion uninterrupted.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

Mr. Basil Williams

Ms Vanessa Kisson

Dr. George Norton

Ms Gail Teixeira

Mr. Mervyn Williams

Mr. Aubrey Norton

Mr. Donald Ramotar

Thereafter, Mr. Robert Corbin replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

(iii) COMMITTEE BUSINESS**MOTION**

Speaker's consent obtained in accordance with Standing Order No. 28(2) for the following motion to be proceeded with at that sitting:

THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONSIDERATION OF THE 2004 REPORT OF THE DISCIPLINED FORCES COMMISSION

The Prime Minister (Chairman of the Special Select Committee on the Conclusion of the Consideration of the 2004 Report of the Disciplined Forces Commission) moved the following motion:

WHEREAS by Resolution No. 33 dated 26th July, 2007 the National Assembly appointed a Special Select Committee to conclude the examination of the Report and recommendations of the Disciplined Forces Commission and report to the National Assembly six months from its establishment;

AND WHEREAS the National Assembly stipulated that the Special Select Committee of the Ninth Parliament takes cognizance of the work done by the Special Select Committee of the Eighth Parliament that considered the Report and its recommendations;

AND WHEREAS the Special Select Committee was required to present its Final Report to the National Assembly six months from the date of establishment;

AND WHEREAS the Special Select Committee was unable to complete its work by the deadline stipulated;

AND WHEREAS the Special Select Committee has requested an extension of the deadline for the submission of its final Report to 15th December, 2008,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves an extension of the deadline for the submission of its Report to 15th December, 2008.

(Notice Paper No. 265 (M78 Govt 45) published on 2008-08-05)

Thereafter, the motion was then put and carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.05 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Thursday, 14th August, 2008.



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HON. HARI N. RAMKARRAN, S.C., M.P.,

Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,

Public Buildings,

Brickdam.

7th August, 2008.