

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 68<sup>th</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION**  
**(2006-2008) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**

**AT 2.00 P.M.**

**ON MONDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER, 2008**

**IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM**

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)**

**Speaker (1)**

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

**MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT (40)**

(i) **People's Progressive Party/Civic (39)**

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

**\*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 (Absent - on Leave)

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 (Absent)

\*\*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)

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)

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. (Absent-on leave)

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 (27)**

**(i) Members of People's National Congress Reform-One Guyana (21)**

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 – on leave)

**\*\*\*Non-elected Parliamentary Secretary**

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.

Dr. George A. Norton, M.P.

Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P. (Absent)

Ms Amna Ally, M.P.

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)

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 Kisson, M.P., (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice)

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

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

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

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

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.

**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 2:23 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read Prayers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**

**Public Relations Programme**

The Speaker informed Members of the Assembly that as part of the Public Relations Programme of the National Assembly, Guy Enterprise Ltd., was in the process of preparing a booklet on the profiles of all Members of Parliament and that photographs of Members would be included in the booklet.

The Speaker therefore sought the co-operation of Members to have their photographs taken by Guy Enterprise during that sitting.

**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES-**

**By the Speaker of the National Assembly (Chairman of the Committee of Selection):**

Minutes of Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Selection of the National Assembly held on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2008.

(Circulated)

**ORAL QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE-**

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition asked the Ministers following questions which were disallowed by the Speaker:

1. Will the Hon. Minister of Agriculture explain why most of the villages on the East Coast are inundated when assurances were given to the Nation that huge expenditure was utilized to prepare the infrastructure to avoid any adverse effects of the anticipated heavy rainfall?
2. Will the Honourable Minister of Agriculture state why after nearly two weeks of flooding of the village of Dochfour that attempts are only now being made to fix the silted-up Koker at Hope?
3. Will the Honourable Minister of Agriculture inform this National Assembly when relief efforts will begin to aid the residents of the inundated villages along the East Coast of Demerara, the West Coast of Berbice and the Corentyne? Could the Minister state how much will be paid now and when the total compensation will be paid?
4. Could the Minister of Health explain to the National Assembly when a major Health initiative will begin in the badly affected flood areas along the Coast?
5. Will the Honourable Prime Minister explain to the National Assembly why the Civil Defence Commission has not yet begun a major relief initiative to the flood hit areas along the Coast of Guyana and in the Pomeroon?

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-**

**For Written Replies**

**1. CORONER'S INQUEST**

**Member Asking: Mr. Raphael G. C. Trotman, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs**

Can the Honourable Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs state the current number of Coroner's Inquest pending in Guyana?

**(Notice Paper No. 295 (Q211 Opp 206) published on 2008-10-27)**

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs did not pass copies of the answer to the above question to the Clerk of the National Assembly for circulation to Members as required by Standing Order No. 22(4).

**2. NUMBER OF PERSONS DETAINED FOR 72 HOURS OR MORE**

**Member Asking: Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P.**

**Minister Answering: Minister of Home Affairs**

Could the Honourable Minister of Home Affairs provide this National Assembly with a list of the number of persons detained for the year 2007, at each Police Station listed below, for 72 hours or more, who were subsequently released without any charges being preferred against them:-

- (i) Sparendam Police Station
- (ii) Beterverwagting Police Station
- (iii) Vigilance Police Station
- (iv) Cove and John Police Station
- (v) Brickdam Police Station
- (vi) Providence Police Station

**(Notice Paper No. 309 (Q225 Opp 220) published on 2008-11-05)**

The Minister of Home Affairs did not pass copies of the answer to the above question to the Clerk of the National Assembly for circulation to Members at that sitting as required by Standing Order No. 22(4).

3. **ENTITLEMENTS OF FORMER PRESIDENTS**

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

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

What benefits are former Presidents of the Republic of Guyana entitled to?

(Notice Paper No. 311 (Q227 Opp222) published on 2008-11-20)

**Answer:**

Former Presidents of Guyana are entitled by statute to:

- (i) A Presidential Pension.
- (ii) A Housing Allowance.

By Cabinet decision and custom and practice the following may also be provided according to the circumstances:

- (i) Security
- (ii) Household support
- (iii) Overseas travel
- (iv) Transportation
- (v) Utilities.

4. **BENEFITS RECEIVED BY WIDOW OF MR. HUGH DESMOND HOYTE**

**Member Asking:** Mr. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P.

**Minister Answering:** The Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications



What benefits has the widow of the third President of the Republic of Guyana, Mr. Hugh Desmond Hoyte, received since his death in December, 2002?

**(Notice Paper No. 312 (Q228 Opp223) published on 2008-11-20)**

**Answer:**

Mrs. Hoyte has received:

- The Statutorily authorized widow's pension

and by Cabinet decision:

- Security

**5. CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW NURSERY SCHOOL AT NUMBER 79 VILLAGE, CORENTYNE**

**Member Asking:                      Dr. John Austin, M.P.**

**Minister Answering:                The Minister of Education**

- (a) Would the Honourable Minister of Education explain to this National Assembly why a new Nursery School is being constructed in Number 79 Village, Corentyne where there is an existing Nursery School rather than in Scottsburg Village, Corentyne or Number 77 New Scheme, Corentyne, where there are no Nursery Schools?
- (b) Could the Honourable Minister of Education tell this National Assembly what will the existing building be used for after the new Nursery School building is completed?

**(Notice Paper No. 319 (Q 235 Opp 230) published on 2008-11-20)**

**Answers:**

The No. 79 Municipal Market has been extended and now encroaches on the present building that houses the No. 79 Municipal Nursery School. The dust, stench and noise nuisance emanating from the market into the Nursery School is not conducive to learning.

His Worship the Mayor of Corriverton, Mr. Roy Baijnauth, Councillors of the Municipality, parents and teachers have continuously lobbied for relocation of the existing school since 2005. A new building was budgeted for in the 2008 current budget and executed by the Works Department of Region 6, this year at a cost of \$7.6 million.

The land for the new building was provided by the Corriverton municipality and is in close proximity to the existing school. The present structure which is made of concrete cannot be moved to the new location.

Relocation of the existing school in January, 2009 will afford better utilization of the current resources. The old concrete structure presently used in the property of the Corriverton Town Council and will be re-possessed in January, 2009.

Following demographic change in Scottsburg and No. 77 New Scheme a school mapping exercise was conducted during the first quarter of the year using distance matrix and location of existing schools in order to level off any existing spatial disparities in the provision of the education facilities.

Scottsburg is located between Princetown Nursery School (less than half mile to the east) and No. 72 Nursery School (half mile to the west). Children from the No. 77 New Scheme attend the Princetown Nursery School.

**6. COMMISSION OF THE ELDERLY**

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

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Human Services and Social Security**

Would the Honourable Minister of Human Services and Social Security inform this Honourable House whether:

- (a) The commission of the Elderly is in force.
- (b) If yes, who is the chairperson and who are the commissioners?
- (c) How many meetings did the commission hold for the period January 2008 to August 2008?
- (d) Is there a program of activities for 2008?
  - (i) If yes, what are some of the activities completed and what other activities are on the agenda for 2008?

**(Notice Paper No. 326 (Q241 Opp231) published on 2008-11-28)**

**Answers:**

- (a) Yes it is in force.
- (b) The Chairperson is Justice D. Trotman  
The Commissioners are:-  
Winston Emanuel, Sarjoo Rajpat, Ann Greene, John DaSilva, Leila Chabrol, Adunauth Bhol, Deendyal Singh and Volda Lawrence, M.P.
- (c) No meetings were held for the period January to August, 2008.
- (d) No.
  - (i) While the Commission was inactive in 2008, departments of the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security conducted many activities year round in the ten (10) Regions for the elderly.

These activities were intensified across Guyana during the month of the elderly.

**7. SALARIES AND BENEFITS PAID TO PUBLIC SERVANTS**

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

**Minister Answering: The Minister of Finance**

Would the Honourable Minister of Finance inform this Honourable House:

- (a) How many public servants have benefited from the \$4,000 cost of living allowance?
- (b) How many government workers are receiving a salary of less than \$50,000 monthly?
- (c) What provision has this Government made to assist those government workers receiving a salary below \$50,000 monthly with the increase in the cost of living?
- (d) If provision has been made, could the Honourable Minister indicate under which line item the provision has been made and what is the amount allocated?
- (Notice Paper No. 327 (Q242 Opp232) published on 2008-11-28)**

**Answers:**

- (a) Approximately 16,000 employees (public servants, teachers, nurses, members of the disciplined services) are eligible for and have been receiving the temporary cost of living adjustment.
- (b) As indicated in (a) above.
- (c) A number of interventions, including:
- (i) Actions aimed at containing the pass-through of global price increases to the domestic consumer, such as:
- Zero-rating for the purposes of the value-added tax an extensive list of basic necessities, including an extension to this list announced in Budget 2008;
  - Reducing the excise tax on fuel in times of increasing fuel prices;
  - Providing a substantial cash subsidy to the Guyana Power and Light Inc. (GPL) to contain the increase in electricity tariffs (provided for in Agency 02, Programme 021, Line Item 6321), and financing a very substantial investment programme in GPL;
  - Containing the increase in fees and tolls charged by Government entities for services such as water, ferry and bridge crossings, etc.;

- Providing a cash subsidy for the sale of flour to bakeries and for the sale of small packets of flour directly to the consumer (provided for in Agency 21, Programme 212, Line Item 6321); and
- (ii) Actions aimed at increasing disposable income:
- Increase in the income tax threshold from \$28,000 to \$35,000 per month with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2008;
  - Payment of a temporary cost of living adjustment of \$4,000 monthly free of taxes from May, 2008 to all public servants, teachers, nurses, and members of the disciplined services whose gross pay does not exceed \$50,000 per month (met from the various employment cost allocations provided in the national budget); and
  - Payment of a 5 percent across-the-board increase with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2008, following a 9 percent across-the-board increase from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2007 (met from the various employment cost allocations provided in the national budget).
- (d) As indicated in (c ) above.

8. **CARIFESTA X**

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

**Minister Answering:** The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Could the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport inform this Honourable House:

- (a) How many tickets were printed for the various activities during CARIFESTA X?
- (b) What was the cost incurred for the printing of these tickets?

- (c) What was the budgeted revenue to be garnered from the sale of these tickets?
- (d) What percentage of the expenditure for CARIFESTA X was the revenue garnered from ticket sales budgeted to cover?
- (e) How was the shortfall met?
- (Notice Paper No. 328 (Q243 Opp233) published on 2008-11-28)**

**Answers:**

- (a) There were some events that required tickets, for these events 330,706 tickets were printed by Ticket Masters, Canada.
- (b) The tickets cost \$4,092,920 Guyana dollars (Approximately \$12 per ticket).

Questions c, d and e are invalid because it assumes that tickets were used to generate income. On the contrary the tickets were free.

**9. NATIONAL PROCUREMENT COMMISSION**

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

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

Could the Honourable Prime Minister tell this Honourable House when his Government will honour its commitment made to the National Stakeholders and the Guyanese people to provide their nominees for the National Procurement Commission?

**(Notice Paper No. 329 (Q244 Opp234) published on 2008-11-28)**

**Answer:**

The Procurement Act and Regulations of 2003 (8 of 2003) sets out in Section 16 subsections 2 to 8 the creation and membership of the National Procurement and Tender Administration. Subsections 2 and 3 state:

- 2: The Administration shall be managed by the National Board which shall consist of seven members, appointed by the Minister from among persons of unquestioned integrity who have shown capacity in business, the professions, law, audit, finance and administration.
  
- 3: The members of the National Board to be appointed by the Minister shall comprise –
  - (i) not more than five persons from the Public Service;
  - (ii) not more than three persons from the private sector after consultation with their representative organization.

The Government after various discussions put this matter, of the nomination of members to the Board, to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

The Government about three years ago did put forward some names to the PAC and the discussions then moved on to criteria more detailed than in the law which should be met by nominees, and details about modalities and procedures about choosing persons for nomination. This continues to be a work in progress at the PAC

**For Oral Replies**

**10. SUGAR SOLD BY GUYSUCO**

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

\*Will the Minister say at what price/prices has GuySuCo sold sugar to Trinidad and Tobago over the last three years?

**(Notice Paper No. 279 (Q 197 Opp192) published on 2008-10-21)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Agriculture replied.

Mrs. Sheila Holder asked the Minister of Agriculture supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Agriculture replied.

**11. ELECTRICITY TO THE RESIDENTS OF MADHIA AND ITS ENVIRONS**

Mrs. Latchmin Budhan-Punalall, M.P., asked the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communication the following question:

**\*Does the Government have early plans to provide electricity to the residents of Madhia and its environs?**

**(Notice Paper No. 280 (Q 198 Opp 193) published on 2008-10-21)**

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P., asked the Prime Minister a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

**12. POTABLE WATER IN MADHIA-REGION #8**

Mrs. Latchmin Budhan-Punalall, M.P., asked the Minister responsible for Housing and Water the following question:

**\*When will the residents in Madhia-Region #8 including Campbelltown receive potable water through their taps?**

**(Notice Paper No. 281 (Q 199 Opp 194) published on 2008-10-21)**

At the request of the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Minister responsible for Housing and Water and with the approval of the Assembly, the answer to the above question was deferred.



**13. PUBLIC SERVICE APPELLATE TRIBUNAL**

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P., asked the Minister of Public Service the following question:

**\*Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service Ministry tell this National Assembly when the Public Service Appellate Tribunal will be reconstituted?**

**(Notice Paper No. 313 (Q229 Opp224) published on 2008-11-20)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Public Service replied.

Basil Williams, M.P., asked the Minister of Public Service a supplementary question.

The Minister of the Public Service did not reply.

**14. EMPLOYMENT OF CONTRACTED EMPLOYEES**

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P., asked the Minister of Public Service the following question:

**\*Can the Honourable Minister of the Public Service Ministry tell this National Assembly which Ministry or Government Department has responsibility for the employment of contracted employees?**

**(Notice Paper No. 314 (Q230 Opp225) published on 2008-11-20)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Public Service replied.

Mr. Basil Williams, M.P., asked the Minister of Public Service a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Public Service replied.

15. **RESTORATION OF ANNUAL SUBVENTION TO THE GUYANA TRADES UNION CONGRESS**

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

\*Can the Honourable Minister of Labour say when will the Government restore the annual subvention to the Guyana Trades Union Congress?

**(Notice Paper No. 315 (Q231 Opp226) published on 2008-11-20)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

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

Thereafter, the Minister of Labour replied.

16. **LABELLING OF PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLIES**

Mr. Mervyn Williams, M.P., asked the Minister of Health the following questions:

- (i) \*Could the Honourable Minister of Health tell this National Assembly if there is still in place a government policy which requires that pharmaceutical supplies imported into Guyana and dispensed in Guyana be labelled in the English Language?
- (ii) \*Is the Honourable Minister of Health aware that pharmaceutical supplies purchased by the National Insurance Scheme for distribution to claimants are labelled in languages other than the English Language?
- (iii) \*What does the Honourable Minister of Health propose to do to remedy the situation of the National Insurance Scheme procuring and dispensing pharmaceutical supplies which are labelled in languages other than the English language, and how soon does the Minister propose to address this matter?

**(Notice Paper No. 318 (Q 234 Opp 229) published on 2008-11-20)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Health replied.

17. **ACQUISITION OF LAND IN JONESTOWN BY THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE**

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., asked the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications the following question:

\*Would the Prime Minister inform this National Assembly as to the grounds on which the Guyanese authorities granted permission to the Rev. Jim Jones and the People's Temple to acquire land in the Northwest, known as Jonestown, and,

- (i) How much land was given?
- (ii) Whether it was leased and or given by some other means? And
- (iii) For what period of time?

**(Notice Paper No. 321 (Q236 PPP/C No. 5) published on 2008-11-28)**

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., asked the Prime Minister supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., asked the Prime Minister a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P., asked the Prime Minister a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

18. **DETAILS OF REVEREND JIM JONES AND HIS FOLLOWERS'S PRESENCE  
IN GUYANA**

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following questions:

\*Would the Minister of Home Affairs inform this National Assembly about the details of Reverend Jim Jones and his followers' presence in Guyana in the 1977-1978 period, specifically:

- (i) What was the basis of his congregation's immigration to Guyana and how and who approved their visas and stay in Guyana?
- (ii) Were the People's Temple's members in Guyana both at Jonestown and elsewhere granted licenses to bear arms, which agency granted these gun licenses and how many were granted?
- (iii) Was an investigation held by the Guyanese authorities after the Massacre and what were the results?

**(Notice Paper No. 322 (Q237 PPP/C No. 6) published on 2008-11-28)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P asked the Minister of Home Affairs supplementary questions.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P., asked the Minister of Home Affairs a supplementary question.

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

19. **NUMBER OF CHILDREN KILLED IN JONESTOWN AND NUMBER OF PERSONS PERISHED IN THE JONESTOWN MASSACRE**

Mr. Norman Whittaker, M.P., asked the Minister of Health the following questions:

- (i) \*Would the Minister of Health inform this National Assembly if there are any records to show how many Guyanese children were killed at Jonestown and if their bodies were ever returned to Guyana and handed over to their families?
- (ii) \*Does the Ministry of Health have any records of the names, age, gender, ethnicity and nationalities of all 909 persons who perished at Jonestown prior to or after the removal of their bodies by American officials after the massacre?

**(Notice Paper No. 323 (Q238 PPP/C No. 7) published on 2008-11-28)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Health replied.

20. **REPORTS OF STRANGE ACTIVITIES IN JONESTOWN**

Mr. Norman Whittaker, M.P., asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following questions:

\*Would the Minister of Home Affairs inform this National Assembly if the Ministry of Home Affairs or the Guyana Police Force in the 1977-78 period were receiving reports from residents in the North West region about strange activities in Jonestown including

- (i) The presence of armed persons guarding the entrance and the parameters of the Jonestown settlement and their refusal to allow Amerindians to walk through the Jonestown property to hunt and fish as they had done for centuries?
- (ii) Amerindian children being taken into Jonestown and parents being disallowed subsequently from seeing them and or removing them from Jonestown?

**(Notice Paper No. 324 (Q239 PPP/C No. 8) published on 2008-11-28)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Home Affairs replied.

**21. PUBLIC ACCOUNTS REPORTS 1965-1992**

Mrs. Indra Chandarpal, M.P., asked the Minister of Finance the following question:

\*Would the Minister of Finance inform this National Assembly which years were the Public Accounts reports not prepared and laid by the Auditor General in the National Assembly from 1965-1992? And what were the explanations, if any, provided by the Auditor General and or the Ministry of Finance and or the Office of the President for the non-submission of the Public Accounts for any of those years?

**(Notice Paper No. 325 (Q240 PPP/C No. 9) published on 2008-11-28)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Finance replied.

**22. ASSET OR PROPERTY FROM JONESTOWN**

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M. P., asked the Minister of Finance the following question:

\*Would the Minister of Finance inform this National Assembly if there is any record of money amounting to several suitcases containing **US\$500,000.00** or any other asset or property from Jonestown handed over to the government?

**(Notice Paper No. 330 (Q245 PPP/C No. 10) published on 2008-11-28)**

Thereafter, the Minister of Finance replied.

23. **QUESTIONS ON THE JONESTOWN MASSACRE FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DAY**

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P., asked the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications the following question:

\*Could the Prime Minister inform this National Assembly if there were any questions to the Government of the day, before and after the massacre, by the then Opposition, and if these were put on the Order Paper and answered, and if not why not?

**(Notice Paper No. 331(Q246 PPP/C No. 11) published on 2008-11-28)**

Thereafter, the Prime Minister replied.

24. **BARBARA STOEN'S APPEAL**

By a written request from Mr. Moses Nagamootoo, M.P., and with the approval of the Assembly, the following question was deferred:

\*Would the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs inform this National Assembly on what grounds the Guyanese judiciary denied Barbara Stoen's appeal to gain custody of her child and remove the child from Jonestown?

**(Notice Paper No. 332(Q247 PPP/C No. 12) published on 2008-11-28)**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS, INCLUDING POLICY STATEMENTS-**

**Agriculture on-going response to the current Rainy Season**

The Minister of Agriculture made a statement on the agriculture on-going response to the current Rainy Season.

**REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE, TO WIT, THE FLOODS ON THE COASTAL BELT**

The Speaker referred to a written request which he had received from Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition to move the adjournment of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing the floods on the coastal belt. The Speaker being satisfied that the matter was definite, urgent and of public importance and could properly be raised on a motion for the adjournment of the Assembly, and with the leave of the Assembly, the request was allowed.

The motion accordingly stood over in accordance with Standing Order No. 12(3).

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-**

**Presentation and First Readings**

1. **LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ELECTIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. 24/2008**

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. **TRADE UNION RECOGNITION (AMENDMENT) BILL 2008 – Bill No. 25/2008**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Trade Union Recognition Act 1997.



3. **THE CHILDCARE AND PROTECTION AGENCY BILL 2008 – Bill NO. 26/2008**

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security, 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 Childcare and Protection Agency the duties of which are to implement the policy and decisions in relation to the laws governing children.

**REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE-**

In accordance with the earlier decision made, Mr. Robert Corbin moved the adjournment of the Assembly and spoke on the floods on the coastal belt.

**Presiding by Mrs. Clarissa Riehl, M.P.**

At 4.25 p.m., the Speaker withdrew from the Chamber and Mrs. Clarissa Riehl, M.P., presided during his absence.

**Return of the Speaker**

At 4.30 p.m., the Speaker returned to the Chamber.

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Prime Minister

Mr. David Patterson

Thereafter, Mr. Robert Corbin replied.

The Prime Minister concluded the debate on the motion in accordance with Standing Order No. 39(2).

(ii) **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

**LIVE AND UNEDITED BROADCAST OF THE SITTINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

At the request of Mr. Aubrey Norton, M.P., the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS the Constitution of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana enshrines the protection of Freedom of Expression in Article 146 (1) and guarantees the Guyanese citizen the "freedom to receive ideas and information without interference, freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference ....";

AND WHEREAS the people of Guyana are entitled to hear and/or see the presentations and representations made on their behalf in the National Assembly and be able to assess the contributions of all and make their own judgment;

AND WHEREAS the National Communication Network (NCN) is owned by the People of Guyana and has the widest coverage and is in a position to broadcast live and uninterrupted the proceedings of the National Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Opposition Members of Parliament are entitled to have their views heard in an unedited way by the people of Guyana;

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly agrees that the sittings of the National Assembly be broadcast live and unedited to the people of Guyana by the National Communication Network and that the cost of the broadcast be borne by the State;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly calls on the Government to allocate a broadcast frequency for a parliamentary channel as happens in most democratic countries;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly calls on the Government to begin the live and unedited broadcast of the sittings of the National Assembly no later than one month after the adoption of this Motion.

**(Notice Paper No. 320 (M82 Opp23) published on 2008-11-27)**

### **CHRISTMAS GREETING**

The Speaker extended Christmas greetings to Members of the National Assembly and their families. He thanked the media and the staff of the Parliament Office for their support during the year.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Robert Corbin, Mrs. Sheila Holder and Mr. Everall Franklin, on behalf of their respective Parties, also joined the Speaker in extending Christmas greetings to the Speaker and his family, Members of the Assembly, the media and the staff of the Parliament Office.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 5.30 p.m., the Speaker of the National Assembly adjourned the Assembly to 2.00 p.m., on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> December, 2008.

  
.....

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

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,  
Public Buildings,  
Brickdam,  
Georgetown.**

**22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2008.**