

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE 84<sup>TH</sup> SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION**  
**(2006-2009) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD**  
**AT 2.00 P.M.**  
**ON THURSDAY, 9<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 2009**  
**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 (Absent – on leave)

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

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**

/...2

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. Charles R. Ramson, 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 (Absent – on leave)

The Hon. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, M.P., Minister of Housing and Water

Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

Ms Gail Teixeira, M.P.

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

Mr. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

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

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

/...3

**\*Non-Elected Minister**

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

3.

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)

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

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P.

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

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 (Absent – on leave)

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)

Dr. Vishwa Deva Budhram Mahadeo, M.P.

Rev. Kwame Gilbert, M.P.

**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

/...4

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

4.

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. (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

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

Ms Cheryl Sampson, M.P.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.

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. 05p.m.

**PRAYERS**

The Clerk read Prayers.

/...6

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-**

**For Written Replies**

1. **PENSIONERS OF REGIONS 1, 7, 8, 9 AND 10**

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

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

Could the Honourable Minister of Human Services and Social Security inform this Honourable House and pensioners in the remote communities of Regions 1, 7, 8, 9 and 10, whether any provisions have been put in place for:

- (i) Old Age Pensioners books to be delivered to each of these communities?
- (ii) The setting up of service providers to cash vouchers in these remote communities thus easing the burden of transportation costs?

(Notice Paper No. 369 (Q277 Opp262) published on 2009-01-30)

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security 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).

2. **LAYING OF REPORTS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY – BY THE MINISTER OF HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

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

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

Could the Honourable Minister of Human Services and Social Security inform this Honourable House when the following would be laid in this National Assembly:

7.

- (i) A Senior Citizens Policy Development Report and
- (ii) A National Policy for Senior Citizens?

**(Notice Paper No. 370 (Q278 Opp263) published on 2009-01-30)**

The Minister of Human Services and Social Security 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).

**For Oral Replies**

3. **THE LE REPENTIR CEMETERY**

Mr. Winston Murray, M.P., on behalf of Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., asked the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communication the following question:

\*Could the Honourable Minister of Public Works inform this National Assembly and the citizenry of Georgetown of the reason/reasons for the failure of his Ministry to cut down trees and clean the Le Repentir Cemetery as promised by the Minister as part of the Clean-up exercise for Carifesta X?

**(Notice Paper No. 367 (Q275 Opp260) published on 2009-01-30)**

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.

4. **DISTRIBUTION OF PRE-PAID METERS**

Mr. Winston Murray, M.P., on behalf of Mrs. Volda Lawrence, M.P., asked the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communication the following question:

\*Could the Honourable Prime Minister inform this National Assembly and the citizenry:

- (i) What criteria would be used for the distribution of pre-paid meters?
- (ii) Whether consultation with consumers would be undertaken before deductions are made against outstanding balances?

8.

- (iii) If there would be a public education program to ensure that Guyana Power and Light customers are fully aware of the conditions which would apply when pre-paid meters are installed?

**(Notice Paper No. 368 (Q276 Opp261) published on 2009-01-30)**

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.

Mr. Winston Murray asked the Prime Minister supplementary questions.

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.

Mrs. Sheila Holder asked the Prime Minister supplementary questions.

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.

5. **STREET LIGHTS IN VILLAGES OF BRITANIA, TEMPIE, UNION AND NO. 30**

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P. asked the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications the following question:

\*On August 22, 2008 the street lights went down during a heavy rain storm in the following villages – Britania, Tempie, Union and No. 30 Village. GPL made several un-kept promises to fix them. Will the Honourable Minister say whether electricity has been restored to these villages? If not, why not? And if not when will electricity be restored to rescue the residents of these villages from darkness and the crime risks associated with unlit roads?

**(Notice Paper No. 373 (Q280 Opp265) published on 2009-02-10)**

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.



**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS-**

**Presentation and First Readings**

1. **TIME LIMIT FOR JUDICIAL DECISIONS BILL 2009 – Bill No. 8/2009 published on 2009-03-23**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to specify a time limit in accordance with Article 197(3) of the Constitution within which a Judge shall give a decision on a civil case and any appeal case and for connected matters.

2. **ELECTION LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2009 – Bill No. 9/2009**

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

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Election Laws (Amendment) Act 2000.

3. **PRESIDENT HOYTE PENSIONS BILL 2009 – Bill No. 10/2009**

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 make special provisions relating to the pension of the late President Hoyte.

4. **OFFICE OF THE SPOUSE OF THE PRESIDENT BILL 2009 – Bill No. 11/2009**

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 make provisions for the establishment of a public office for the spouse of the President.

5. **FORMER PRESIDENTS (BENEFITS AND OTHER FACILITIES) BILL 2009 – Bill No. 12/2009**

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 benefits and other facilities to former Presidents.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS-**

(i) **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**MOTION**

The Speaker's consent was given in accordance with Standing Order No. 28(2) for the following motion:

**TRIBUTE TO MRS. JANET JAGAN, O.E., FORMER PRESIDENT OF GUYANA**

The Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That we, the Members of the National Assembly of the Ninth Parliament of Guyana, at this Sitting of the Assembly held on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2009-

/...11

- express our deep sadness at the immense loss to Guyana by the passing on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2009, of the former President of Guyana, Her Excellency Janet Jagan, O.E.;
- give honourable recognition to the enduring, selfless, committed and distinguished service which the late Her Excellency Janet Jagan, O.E., gave to Guyana and to the National Assembly of the Parliament of Guyana during her extensive, varied and dedicated career in public life as a pioneer in politics and the struggle for independence and women's rights, being among one of the first women Members of the Legislature in Guyana, the first female to be made Deputy Speaker in the world in 1953, one of the longest serving Members of the National Assembly, the first female Minister in Guyana, the first female Prime Minister on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1997 and the first female President of Guyana on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 1997;
- record our heartfelt sympathy and direct that such be conveyed to her children, grandchildren and relatives.

**(Notice Paper No. 379 (M93 Gov 55) published on 2009-04-03)**

The following Members spoke to the motion:

Mrs. Cheryl Sampson

Mrs. Indranie Chandarpal

Mrs. Sheila Holder

### **SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

At 3.50 p.m., the sitting was suspended for refreshments.

### **RESUMPTION OF SITTING**

At 5.05 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

The following Members also spoke to the motion:

The Minister of Labour

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport

Mr. Everall Franklin

Thereafter the Prime Minister replied.

The motion was then put and carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 6.52 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, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2009.

  
.....

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

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

**PARLIAMENT OFFICE,**

**Public Buildings,**

**Brickdam.**

**9<sup>th</sup> April, 2009.**