

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 95TH 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, 30TH JULY, 2009
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

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. 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

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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.

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)

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***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)

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. (Absent – on leave)

Mr. Mohabir A. Nandlall, M.P.

Mr. Odinga N. Lumumba, 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 – on leave)

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

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

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*****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.

Mr. Keith Scott, M.P.

Ms Amna Ally, M.P.

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 – on leave)

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)

(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. (Absent)

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

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

(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 2.07 p.m.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

(1) By the Minister of Home Affairs:

The Annual Report of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the year 2006.

(Circulated)

(2) By the Minister of Finance:

(i) Financial Paper No. 1/2009 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totaling \$247, 406, 429 for the period 2009-07-16 to 2009-12-31.

(Circulated)

(ii) Financial Paper No. 2/2009 – Supplementary Estimates (Capital) totaling \$2,533,085,355 for the period ended 2009-12-31.

(Circulated)

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REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES –

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

Minutes of Proceedings of the 14th Meeting of the Committee of Selection held on Thursday, 9th July, 2009.

(Circulated)

(4) By the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development (Chairman of the Special Select Committee on the Local Authorities (Elections) (Amendment) Bill 2009:

Report of the Special Select Committee on the Local Authorities (Elections) (Amendment) Bill 2009 – Bill No. 21 of 2009.

(Circulated)

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE-

For Written Replies

1. **USED TYRES IMPORTED IN GUYANA**

Member Asking: Mr. Everall Franklin, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister state whether his Ministry has examined the cost to the country associated with the disposal of tyres?
- (ii) Is the Minister satisfied that used tyres imported into Guyana have satisfied the safety standards of the exporting countries allowing for use on their roads? If so, could the Minister state the international standard under which this commodity is classified?
- (iii) Can the importation of used tyres affect Guyana's credibility in its quest to receive compensation/payments in the form of carbon credits for its standing forests? If so, how?

(Notice Paper No. 391 (Q287 Opp 272) published on 2009-06-30)

Answers:

- (i) The Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce does not have the responsibility for the disposal of tyres.
- (ii) There is no international standard for used tyres. However, the Guyana National Bureau of Standards has developed a national standard to regulate the quality of imported tyres.
- (iii) There is no evidence to support that the importation of used tyres by Guyana would affect Guyana's credibility in its quest to receive compensation/payments in the form of carbon credits for its standing forests.

2. **SUPPLY OF WATER TO LETHEM AND SURROUNDING AREAS**

Member Asking: Mr. Overall Franklin, M.P.

Minister Answering: The Minister of Housing and Water

- (i) Can the Hon. Minister state whether his Ministry has examined the possibility of harnessing water from the remnants of the hydro-dam in the Kanuku Mountains to supply water to Lethem and other villages such as Moco Moco, Tabatinga, Kumu, St. Ignatius, Culvert City, in Region 9?
- (ii) If not, is the Minister prepared to urgently study this possibility?

(Notice Paper No. 392 (Q288 Opp 273) published on 2009-06-30)

Answers:

The possibility of harnessing the water resources contained in the Moco Moco Hydro-scheme has been examined. The results indicate that in order for the resources to be harnessed, the transmission from penstock which is located approximately 300m above the base of the mountain will need replacement. Considering that the demise of the hydro-scheme was as a result of a landslide which

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effectively destroyed the original transmission, any replacement would need to be designed to mitigate the effects of landslides. The estimated cost for such a replacement is in the order of G\$2,000,000,000.

There is also the challenge of distributing water from the scheme to the outlying areas which are as far as 35km. The estimated cost of installing this infrastructure would be in excess of G\$6,000,000,000.

The total capital investment therefore is in excess of G\$8,000,000,000 and would provide benefit to approximately 35,000 residents. The per capita investment cost is thus estimated at G\$229,000 and is more than 23 times the national average of G\$9,500 per customer for the provision of basic water supply infrastructure. As such, the Ministry does not consider this to be a feasible option for the supply of potable water to the residents of Region 9 at this time.

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

Motion to invite Interpol to conduct an investigation into the assassination of Ronald Waddle, the involvement of Guyana Government Officials in the murder of over two hundred Guyanese Youth and the involvement of the Guyana Government in facilitating the drug trade

A request by Mr. Robert Corbin, M.P., Leader of the Opposition, to move the adjournment of the Assembly on a definite matter of urgent public importance, to wit, the explosive sworn testimony, given on Tuesday, July 28, 2009 and Wednesday, July 29, 2009, in a New York Court by Selwyn Vaughn, a witness under protection of the US Government, was disallowed by the Speaker.

At 2.35 p.m., the Members of the Opposition withdrew from the Chamber.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

At 2.35 p.m., the sitting was suspended to allow for the Laws of Guyana, which were thrown to the floor by Mr. Robert Corbin, to be replaced.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

At 2.47 p.m., the sitting was resumed.

PUBLIC BUSINESS-

(i) **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

BILLS – Second Reading

ITEM 1 - ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (No. 2) BILL 2009 – Bill No. 32/2009
published on 2009-07-08

At the request of the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs the second reading of the following Bill was deferred:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Act and the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act to extend and specify the meaning of property and increase the penalty for damage to property.

(Read a first time on 2009-07-09)

MOTION

ITEM 2 - LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

At the request of the Minister of Agriculture the following motion was deferred:

WHEREAS the Fourth Assessment Report of the Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change has firmly established that concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are rising exponentially, leading to alarming levels of global warming and related sea level rise;

AND WHEREAS the cause of these phenomena is mainly anthropogenic;

AND WHEREAS if left unchecked, the effects of climate change can lead to marine inundation of coastal low lying areas, flooding from excessive rainfall, droughts, disruption of agriculture, food shortages, disease, population displacement and extinction of species;

AND WHEREAS several studies on the economics of climate change and its impact have concluded that the cost of inaction will in the long-term exceed the level of resources currently required for addressing these impacts;

AND WHEREAS the Conference of Parties in Copenhagen 2009 must reach an agreement that entails deep cuts in emissions, bold action on climate mitigation, and clear support for adaptation measures;

AND WHEREAS 20 percent of all green house gases results from deforestation and degradation;

AND WHEREAS a recent study done by the internationally reputable McKinsey Company has demonstrated that avoided deforestation represent a least cost solution for carbon abatement, lower than hybrid cars or wind power;

AND WHEREAS studies and analyses have confirmed that Guyana's forests could be deployed as mitigation against the adverse effects of climate change without either sacrificing our sovereignty or development prospects;

AND WHEREAS Guyana stands at the threshold of a great global opportunity to show the world how rainforest countries can use their rainforest to mitigate Climate Change and at the same time use it as the basis for a financial flow to provide adequate resources to pursue a low carbon development path with adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer as key elements;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Guyana has drafted a Low Carbon Development Strategy which is currently being discussed in a series of countrywide consultations,

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly:

1. Welcomes the commitment to public consultations including the parliamentary parties to contribute to the finalization of the Strategy;
2. Recognizes the pioneering nature of Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy;
and
3. Endorses Guyana's advocacy in the UNFCCC process for a new post 2012 Agreement that includes REDD, avoided deforestation and sustainable forest management, to be decided in Copenhagen in December, 2009 and support its use at international fora, including the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Copenhagen.
(Notice Paper No. 393 (M100 Govt58) published on 2009-07-08)

ITEM 3 - LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ELECTIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 2009 -

Bill No. 21/2009 published on 2009-05-25

The Minister of Local Government and Regional Development moved the second reading of the following, which was referred to a Special Select Committee:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to amend the Local Authorities (Elections) Act.

(Read a first time and committed to the Special Select Committee on 2009-05-28)

The following Members spoke to the motion:

The Minister of Labour

Ms Gail Teixeira

The Bill was then read a second time.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 3 were passed as printed.

The Schedule was passed as amended.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, the Local Authorities (Elections) (Amendment) Bill 2009 was read a third time and passed as amended.

MOTIONS

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

ITEM 4 - GUYANA'S ACCESSION TO THE PROTOCOL ADDITIONAL TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS OF 12TH AUGUST, 1949 RELATING TO THE ADOPTION OF AN ADDITIONAL DISTINCTIVE EMBLEM (PROTOCOL III)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and International Co-operation moved the following motion:

WHEREAS the emblems of the Red Cross have been used since the nineteenth century as universal symbols of assistance to victims of armed conflicts and natural disasters;

AND WHEREAS Guyana, already State Party to the Geneva Conventions of 12th August, 1949 and their Additional protocols of 8th June, 1977, is desirous of acceding to the *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12th August, 1949 relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III)* so as to create an emblem, the Red Crystal, that would be free from any religious, cultural or political connotations and enjoy the same legal status as the Red Cross and Red Crescent and may be used in the same way and circumstances.

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves Guyana's accession to the *Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12th August, 1949 relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III)*.

(Notice Paper No. 394 (M101 Govt59) published on 2009-07-27)


The motion was put and carried.

EMANCIPATION GREETINGS

The Speaker extended good wishes to all Guyanese on Emancipation Day.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.57 p.m., on a motion by the Minister of Education, the Assembly was adjourned to 2.00 p.m., on Tuesday, 4th August, 2009.


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

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

30th July, 2009.