

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 109TH SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION
(2006-2010) OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD
AT 2.00 P.M.
ON MONDAY, 11TH JANUARY, 2010
IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)

Speaker (1)

The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S.C., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly (Absent – on leave)

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. 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

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***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. Bheri S. Ramsaran, 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

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) (Absent – on leave)

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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.

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)

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

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 (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

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***Non-elected Parliamentary Secretary

4.

Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.

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.

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. (Absent – on leave)

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.

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P.

5.

Mrs. Sheila Holder, M.P.

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

Mr. David Patterson, M.P. (Absent – on leave)

(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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(i) **Death of Dr. Desrey Clementine Caesar Fox as a Minister**

The Deputy Speaker informed Members of the Assembly, that with the death of Dr. Desrey Clementine Caesar Fox, on the 11th December, 2009, a former Minister of the Government and Member of Parliament, a seat in the National Assembly had become vacant.

The vacancy is, in accordance with Section 99A of the Representation of the People Act, Chapter 1:03, to be filled by a person whose name is to be extracted from the list of candidates from which Dr. Fox's name was extracted.

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As Dr. Fox's name was extracted from the People's Progressive Party/Civic list of candidates, she had, in accordance with Section 99A of the said Act, called upon the Representative of the said list to further extract from that list the name of a person who is willing to become a Member of the National Assembly, to fill the vacancy in the Assembly.

(ii) **Resignation of Mr. Anthony Vieira**

The Deputy Speaker also informed Members of the Assembly that she had received from Mr. Anthony Vieira a letter dated 1st January, 2010 resigning his seat as a Member of Parliament with effect from that date.

With Mr. Vieira's resignation, a seat in the National Assembly had become vacant.

The vacancy is, in accordance with Section 99A of the Representation of the People Act, Chapter 1:03, to be filled by a person whose name is to be extracted from the list of candidates from which Mr. Vieira's name was extracted.

As Mr. Vieira's name was extracted from the People's National Congress Reform – One Guyana list of candidates, she had, in accordance with Section 99A of the said Act, called upon the Representative of the said list to further extract from that list the name of a person who is willing to become a Member of the National Assembly, to fill the vacancy in the Assembly.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS-

By the Minister of Agriculture:

The Ministry of Agriculture Annual Reports for the years 2007 and 2008.

(Circulated)

PUBLIC BUSINESS -

(i) **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

MOTIONS

ITEM 1 - CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 5/2009

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

In Committee of Supply

The Minister of Finance signified the recommendation or consent of the Cabinet and moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

Financial Paper No. 5/2009 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$1,449,775,969 – Advances made from the Contingencies Fund for the period 8th December, 2009 to 31st December, 2009.

(Notice Paper No. 415 (M118 Govt 73) published on 2010-01-06)

(Paper presented on 2010-01-07)

After consideration of the Schedule, the motion was put and carried.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the Assembly adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, That this National Assembly agree with the Committee of Supply in the following Resolution:

RESOLVED,

Financial Paper No. 5/2009 – Supplementary Estimates (Current and Capital) totalling \$1,449,775,969 – Advances made from the Contingencies Fund for the period 8th December, 2009 to 31st December, 2009.

8.

ITEM 2 - CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 6/2009

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

In Committee of Supply

The Minister of Finance signified the recommendation or consent of the Cabinet and moved the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

Financial Paper No. 6/2009 – Supplementary Estimate (Capital) totalling \$6,795,982,309 for the period ending 31st December, 2009.

(Notice Paper No. 416 (M119 Govt 74) published on 2010-01-06)

(Paper presented on 2010-01-07)

At 3.55 p.m., the Members of the Opposition, except Mr. E. Lance Carberry and Mrs. Deborah Back, withdrew from the Chamber.

After consideration of the Schedule, the motion was put and carried.

Assembly resumed

On a motion by the Minister of Finance, the Assembly adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, That this National Assembly agree with the Committee of Supply in the following Resolution:

RESOLVED,

Financial Paper No. 6/2009 – Supplementary Estimate (Capital) totalling \$6,795,982,309 for the period ending 31st December, 2009.

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BILL – FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD READINGS**ITEM 3 - SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (NO. 3 FOR 2009) BILL 2010 –****Bill No. 1 of 2010 published on 2010-01-06**

With the leave of the Speaker, and on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications, Standing Orders Nos. 13(n) and 54 were suspended to enable the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 3 for 2009) Bill No. 1 of 2010 to be introduced at that stage.

The Minister of Finance, in accordance with paragraph (2) of Article 171 of the Constitution, signified Cabinet's recommendation for the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 3 for 2009) Bill No. 1 of 2010 for consideration by the National Assembly.

Thereafter, on motions by the Minister of Finance, the following Bill was introduced and was read the first, second and third times and passed as printed:

A BILL intituled AN ACT to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sums necessary to meet the expenditure (not otherwise lawfully charged on the Consolidated Fund) of Guyana for the fiscal year ending 31st December, 2009, estimates whereof have been approved by the National Assembly, and for the appropriation of those sums for the specified purposed, in conformity with the Constitution.

(ii) PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**MOTION****ITEM 4 - REQUEST TO QUESTION, THROUGH COUNSEL, HON. DR. ASHNI SINGH, M.P., MINISTER OF FINANCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES**

At a request of Mrs. Deborah Backer, M.P., the following motion was deferred:

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WHEREAS at the 99th sitting in the 9th Parliament held on the 22nd day of October, 2009 the Honourable Dr. Ashni Singh, M.P., Minister of Finance moved a motion which resolved that this Honourable House signals its unanimous disapproval of a statement purportedly made by me, and that this matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges in keeping with Standing Order No. 32 with the view of finding me in contempt of this House;

AND WHEREAS at the aforesaid sitting the Honourable Speaker ruled that a prima facie case had been made out against me and referred the matter to the Committee of Privileges;

AND WHEREAS at my appearance before the Committee of Privileges on the 25th day of November, 2009 I enquired of my right directly or through counsel to question the Honourable Minister of Finance, Dr. Ashni Singh the mover of the aforesaid motion and the seconder of that motion;

AND WHEREAS by way of letter dated the 15th December, 2009 the Clerk of the National Assembly informed me that "... in order to question the mover of the motion, the Honourable Dr. Ashni Singh, either directly or through counsel, you would be required to table a motion in the National Assembly requesting leave of the House to so do.";

AND WHEREAS the rules of natural justice, dictate that an accused person be given an opportunity to question his or her accuser;

AND WHEREAS this National Assembly as the highest court of Guyana, is duty bound to adhere to the tenets of natural justice,

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BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Honourable House grant me leave to question, through my counsel, Honourable Dr. Ashni Singh, M.P., Minister of Finance the mover of the motion dated 22nd October, 2009 citing me for contempt of the House.

(Notice Paper No. 413 (M116 Opp 32) published on 2009-12-28)

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.03 p.m., on a motion by the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works and Communications, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.

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MRS. CLARISSA RIEHL, M.P.,
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Brickdam,
Georgetown.

11th January, 2010.